PREFACE

Today society is moving in the age of information and communication. Most of the countries have reached the information age and are still processing for the new technical devices and their network. As a developing country India has more than two hundred years history of press, eighty years of radio broadcasting and nearly four and half decades of fairly successful Doordarshan (TV).

In India, women comprise of nearly fifty percent of total population of which the maximum number live in rural areas. The function of communication in the context development is to inform, educate and motivate the rural women to accept new ideas and technologies in various walks of life, in order to increase their capabilities for their productive roles. In this situation, communication, formal and nonformal can significantly play a role to cater to the needs of rural women to a great extent as it offers the facility of reaching a large number of population through print and electronic media.

Fundamentally speaking, men and women are equal, their problems are the same in essence, they have the same kind of feeling. Each is a complement of the other. One cannot live without the other’s active help. But, man has somehow, dominated over women since ages. Women have in turn developed an inferiority complex and believe that they are inferior to men. But, Indian history shows that the males seem to have recognized women having equal status.

In this context, if men and women are provided with proper information and education, they will make a remarkable contribution to society. Women in comparison to men are gifted with equal mental capacities. She has the right to
participate in the activities along with man, and she has the same right of freedom and liberty as the man.

The concept of women empowerment enlightened in the year of 1985 in the world. The government of India declared the year 2001 as Women Empowerment Year, and has envisaged several programmes for women development. National commission for women development, and women and child development departments have their own communication systems to reach out their programmes. But there is a need to develop necessary communication infrastructure to reach out to the rural women. Their should be emphasis on the media infrastructure at every level of the society. So, mass communication media have started giving more general and specific programme on women issues. Like women education, law, health, enterpreneurship, employment etc, too have received greater attention in the media.

The present study was taken up in Davanagere and Gulbarga districts in Karnataka with a major aim to find out the role of media in enriching women power. The study has also made an attempt to assess the role of communication on rural women, their media habits, awareness on various issues like participation in politics, and other organization, awareness about Government policies and programmes and benefits of self help groups. This study is exploratory in nature but it also makes an attempt to find out the significance of the two districts on media habits, their awareness and self esteem.