5.1 SUMMARY

Today we are living in the age of information and communication. As we know communication is one of the most fundamental characteristics of human society, whereas, information is the key to human progress. Mankind has travelled a long way to reach this present stage of development from the stone age to the atomic age, it was always a journey forward and the driving force of this journey was information. The eternal urge of man to inform and to be informed widened the horizons of knowledge, and provided a strong impetus to the development of society.

Since most people in our country live in villages and depend on agriculture for their livelihood, it is essential to bring rapid and sustainable development with the help of latest farm technology and effective communication system. If social change of vast magnitude is to take place within the democratic framework, the communication task is to inform, persuade and
educate the rural masses; only mass communication can play the required role to meet the future challenges.

The Indian society is a complex social system with different castes, creed, classes and groups. The high rate of illiteracy is one of the obstacle for mass media to reach out to 700 million people living in villages. The mass media is glamorous, impersonal and unbelievable in contrast to traditional performances whom villager see, hear and can touch etc. Similarly the participatory approach in campaign gives elaborate detail easily understandable. Therefore traditional media can be used to reach masses to involve them in process of development it is effective tool for social development. There are number of the schemes and programmes which do not incorporate adequate mass communication techniques suitable in different region for execution.

There are insufficient contribution by mass media towards the people living in rural area, who can be benefitted with effective use of various form of communication strategy through mass media

It is in this context, the present study that too, in rural area of Himachal Pradesh where even today the reach of mass
media, seems to be relevant to come up with some insights of communication effects on the rural masses. Although, impact of mass communication on rural population has been a subject of interest to many development-strategists, but limited efforts have been made in studying the effect of communication strategies in Himachal Pradesh rural people, particularly the traditional and participatory approaches effecting the village life socio economic upliftment.

It is true that mass media is not the sole instrument of change, but they have the power to influence decision and try to evaluate the effectiveness of what has been done. Unfortunately, there are hardly any serious studies particularly in the village setting of the impact of the mass media on Indian society. In recent years, attention has been given to evaluate the effect of mass media on individual's level of political awareness, knowledge and belief in different political ideologies and various other aspects of life.

OBJECTIVES

- The following were the objectives of the study:

- To study the impact of the communication strategy adopted for executing rural development programmes.
• To critically study the role of media to ascertain the general awareness level and contribution for improving living condition of target groups.

• To study the source of communication used by beneficiaries living in watershed areas H.P.

• To study the comparative effects of modern and traditional methods of communication among rural masses.

**HYPOTHESIS**

• The interpersonal communication is more relevant for popularising rural upliftment schemes for socio-economic development than modern mass media such as radio and television.

• The traditional media is effective tool for disseminating policies and programs among rural masses due to typical cultural ethos prevailing in the hill area.

**Delimitations**

The present study was confined in its scope in following manner:

• Only quantitative approach was followed in the conduct of study.

• The study was delimited to certain quantifiable indicators of community life.

• used to find out association, if any, between community life indicators, on the other.
Methodology

Descriptive method of research was followed in the conduct of the study. Since the purpose of the study was to explore effect of mass communication technologies adopted during the execution of the project and its loopholes if any viz a viz socio-political and cultural life of village community, it was planned to conduct field survey of some selected villages across the wide geographical range of Himachal Pradesh.

Research Tool: Questionnaire-cum-Interview Schedule

The present study was essentially empirical to look into usage of mass media, village life and linkages of both in a transforming rural set-up of Himachal Pradesh. In order to achieve this objective, a specially designed questionnaire-cum-interview schedule was designed for farmers consisting of:

- Socio economic factors of each family.
- Perceptions of beneficiaries of watershed project communication strategies and its understanding.
- Usefulness of mass media i.e. radio and television and newspaper reading patterns, preferences for particular medium, perceptions with regard traditional media in socio-personal life, and its role in social/family life.
Sample

From this point of view, the present study is relevant and timely effort upto some extent, to fill the gap in this direction. Since, the researcher himself belongs to the rural community and has worked as District Public Relations Officer for more than seven years in Solan district which also falls under watershed project surveyed villages Gol -Jamala and Amlidol, where the working of project was closely observed by the researcher himself. Therefore seems to be the positive factor to deeply and closely understand the various aspects of rural life and development taking place there. Rural background of researcher was also to be helpful in filling up of questionnaire in a proper way, personally involving in the process.

The area which falls in shiwalik hills of Himachal Pradesh was choosen for research as watershed project was under execution in this area. Out of the twelve districts of the state, namely, Solan, Sirmaur and Una were selected due to the watershed area of kandi project being implemented in these district. Moreover two villages from each district were selected and all the beneficiaries/family members constituted the sample of the study. As a whole analysis of data was based on Reponses
of 300 selected family members/beneficiaries who were benefitted from watershed project.

Collection and Tabulation of Data

The researcher, had gone to villages to collected data from the people who were not happy with survey at one time but I explained them the benefit and came out with some concrete suggestions and also give valuable information.

The responses of heads of people were tabulated on following aspects:

- Socio-economic factors.
- Usefulness of mass media, print and radio listening, television viewership and traditional media and its role in village life.
- views and perceptions of family members on selected indicators of village life.

Percentage analysis was used to explain the village life and mass media use by people along with their perceptions on selected indicators.
5.2 CONCLUSIONS

On the basis of analysis and interpretation of data following conclusions may be drawn:

Profile of Farmer/beneficiary
(i) Large majority of beneficiaries are male and more than 50 years age.
(ii) The size of their family is either small or medium.
(iii) The educational wise most of them are either illiterate or literate only upto middle class.

There is significant change in second generation in regard to education standard, due to improvement in literacy status of state.
(iv) All families are engaged in agriculture and lesser number of them in government service or business and working in the factories which have come up in the area.
(v) Majority of beneficiaries are having small and medium land holdings.
(vi) The economic status of families, under study, is either average or low and only a small proportion of them may be stated in above average.

2. Reading Habits
Reading habits of people are very poor. Mostly depend on people who come outside or who have gone for work or occupation outside for information. They can understand better if communicated in their local dialect.

3. **Radio**

(i) A over thirty percent of them listen to and got the information about Kandi Project from radio. This mode of communication has been in use for years and large number of information is shared by others through it.

(ii) Most people prefer radio for Local news or entertainment. They are busy in morning hours in their agriculture activities and find time in evening to listen local news.

4. **Television Viewership**

(i) Although majority of people in the villages have television sets but it is merely a instrument for entertainment, popular serial like Ramayana and Mahabharat are viewed religiously in the community.

(ii) The beneficiaries no idea of any information perceived from television about Kandi Project.

5. **News Paper/Printed material**
The people agree that newspaper reaches them in the village, but a large number of them have no reach to it and the twenty percent who have reach to it, hardly get any information except news.

The extension staff had distributed printed material in the shape of pamphlets/booklets, but only very few could get the benefit of these.

6. **Song and Drama/exhibition**

The song and drama as a mode of communication have been very effective amongst the illiterate as well as in literate audience. Over 88 percent people have liked this mode of communication and they could understand the message better through it.

Although the exhibitions did not have any impact on masses still some of them showed the interest for display pictures.
7. **Workshops/Meetings**

(i) It has been found during, where people could interact the study that direct communication in workshops made them more aware of project. Over 88 percent people prefer this mode of communication for knowhow and better use in their day to day life.

(ii) Similarly the public meetings also are found useful tool to communicate in the villages.

5.3 **Suggestions**

India is a country where large number of people lives in villages and relies upon the primary occupation based on agriculture. There have been numerous initiatives for all round development of villagers throughout the world with different kind of projects and schemes, which mostly remain in paper or hardly make any impact for sustenance. But, I have experienced of one single initiative of a legendary man who settled in kotgarh a famous place for apple growing in district Shimla, from where the researcher also belong, popularly known Satyanand Stokes. Who came from USA as a missionary and turned out to be a great socio economic reformer. He introduced and gave know how for red delicious apple growing. Today whole Himachal boast
of over Rs.3000 crore apple economies due to his contribution. I have known about the participatory approach adopted by him to motivate people to diversify from traditional crop to cash crop with single efforts he inspired the whole place to grow apples for livelihood. Whereas, today most of the projects after giving promising start in the beginning utterly fail in the end. Even people don’t like most the projects and scheme formulated to them but nobody dare to inform the formulator about failure of projects timely. Some of the projects fails due to improper communication methodology. Mostly the feedback system in the programmes are weak, even the role and responsibilities are not included properly therefore in the end maintenance operation and management system collapse in the project area. It becomes very difficult to carry on the activities by villagers especially poor for the sustenance of programme as well as to meet out their day to day living.

When I experienced overwhelming response to apple growing on and around my district Shimla for economic dependence rather for prosperity then I felt that even after numerous socio-economic upliftment scheme execution in the state and elsewhere sometime donot yield fruitful result.
Moreover Agriculture like Horticulture never attracted people for better economic gains. Tried to find out loopholes of farming as well as the communication strategy to achieve the objective. One aspect was the geographical condition and water scare city in the area major bottleneck and the farmers dependence of rain water for agriculture production. The diversification from Agriculture to Horticulture at a stage when they are struggling for livelihood needs frequent involvement of extension staff to communicate after reading their behavior for decision making in local dialect. The hindrances of decision making to shift people from traditional cropping pattern remained always big challenge in illiterate as well as in literate masses in the villages. Besides this the informing and educating system of extension staff and mass communication strategies improvised for better communication village to village basis is big challenge in Himachal Pradesh. The State represent hundred of local dialect and no single language can commend in addition to this variation in cultural ethos are also to be kept in mind to create awareness and informing them.

Although there has been tremendous advances in science and technology, especially in the field of communication
technology but the role of communication in the development process has neither been adequately realized nor officially recognized in the form of a viable, integrated public policy. It has been felt by scholar that there should be some viable communication policy which could provide proper information and education through communication methodology suitable to geographical area of the particular place.

The linkage of the rural development programmes aiming at alleviating poverty among the rural masses through their contribution and active participation in the programmes with the mass communication for the social development of the village community has become the integral part of the community development programmes today.

The study was conducted in Shiwalik region of Himachal Pradesh, where people face acute shortages water. The finding as well as the strategies may vary in other parts of the country. The people require frequent workshops and meetings for better fullfilment of scheme, intensive involvement of implementing agencies with participatory approach as has been noticed in Kandi Project area where the extension staff discussed with them in inter-personal communication. Although they needs more and
more frequent visit for discussion and better information. There are ample scope to study the impact of traditional media for empowerment of village people. The usefulness of this media is relevant even after wide expansion of electronic media in the country. There is need to strengthen the feedback system also during execution of schemes in rural areas, so that the planners can get help to improvise the future formulation of the schemes. There is need to strengthen the electronic media rather shift to provide better information to rural masses so that it may not only remain source of entertainment.

Traditional media interpersonal media and mass media (Radio-ATV-Print) can be used to educate and inform the people so that they can become capable of improving quality of their life. People should also get closer to technologies, expertise and resources available in the society for betterment of life.