5.1.1. Types of marketing communication media

There are various kinds of marketing communication media employed by companies for reaching out to the rural consumers in India. The different media are mainly categorized into two major types- the mass media and the traditional media. Mass media includes television, print, radio, and Cinema Theater while traditional media includes wall paintings, hoardings, haats, melas, street jathras, audio-visuals etc. In the rural areas of Uttar Pradesh, the various mass marketing communication media employed by marketers for creating awareness and promoting their brands are mainly television and print. FM radio is yet to reach these rural parts so they are not employed. As far as the use of traditional media in contemporary times was concerned, the following were the most striking ones:

Puppetry

Puppetry has been the most popular and well-appreciated form of entertainment available to the village people. It is an inexpensive activity. The manipulator uses the puppets as a medium to express and communicate ideas, values and social messages. Life Insurance Corporation of India used puppets to educate rural masses about Life Insurance.

Folk Theater

Folk theaters are mainly short and rhythmic in form. The simple tunes help in informing and educating the people in informal and interesting manner. It has been used as an effective medium for social protest against injustice, exploitation and oppression.

Government has used this media for popularizing improved variety of seeds, agricultural implements, fertilizer etc. BBLIL used Magician quite effectively.
Demonstration

"Direct Contact" is a face-to-face interaction with people individually and with groups such as the Panchayats and other village groups. Such contact helps in arousing the villager's interest in their own problem and motivating them towards self-development.

Wall Paintings

Wall Paintings are an effective and economical medium for advertising in rural areas. They are silent form of communication. Wall painting stays as long as the weather allows it to. The greatest advantage of the medium was the power of the picture completed with its local touch. The images used have had a strong emotional association with the surrounding.

5.1.2. Findings from mass media analysis

The impact of the mass marketing communication media in reaching out to the rural poor in Uttar Pradesh had been studied with respect to television and print media.

Impact of Print Media

The findings from studying the impact of print media shows that there is no significant relationship between exposure to print media and the poor rural consumers preference for brands with respect to the following product categories: Soap, Talcum Powder, Detergent Powder under FMCG sector, Bicycle and Pressure cooker under Consumer Durables sector, and SIM cards under the Telecomm sector. So there was no impact of print media for these product categories.

For the remaining product categories namely Shampoo, Hair oil and Biscuits under FMCG sector, wrist watches and TV sets under the consumer durables sector, there was a significant relationship between exposure to Print media and the preference for brands. So there was a significant impact of print media for these product categories.

Impact of Television Media

In case of television media there was a significant relationship between exposure to Television media and preference for brands all the product categories except Hair oil brands. In case of hair oil there was no significant relationship between exposure to Television media and the preference for brands among the poor rural consumers in U.P.
For the remaining products namely soap, shampoo, talcum powder, biscuits, detergent powder under FMCG sector, bicycles, pressure cookers, wrist watches, TV sets under consumer durable sector and SIM cards under Telecom sector there was an impact of exposure to TV on the preference of brands of these categories of products.

However these results cannot be taken at their face value because of the fact that very few households in rural districts of Uttar Pradesh had access to television or print and the majority of the households had access to none of the mass marketing media employed by marketers for reaching out to the rural consumers. The impact was seen on such a small scale that it seemed negligible when compared to the effect on the total population. So it was concluded that the impact of television and print media was very low in reaching out to the poor consumers in rural Uttar Pradesh because these two media were inaccessible to many of the rural consumers.

5.1.3. Findings from Traditional media analysis

For studying the impact of traditional media, three widely used marketing communications media from this category were chosen- wall paintings, hoardings and audio-visual presentation. The impact was analysed on the basis of whether there was a significant relationship between exposure to a particular traditional media as stated above and poor rural consumers’ preference for brands of tea and cooking oil.

Impact of Traditional Media

Impact of Wall painting: Findings from studying the Impact of wall paintings shows that for the product category tea, there was no significant relationship between the exposure to wall paintings and the preference for tea brands. However, for the product category cooking oil, there was a significant relationship between exposure to wall painting of cooking oil brand and the poor rural consumers’ preference for brands of cooking oil. So there was no impact of wall painting on tea brand
Impact of hoarding: in case of hoarding of tea brand there was a significant relationship between exposure to hoardings of tea brand and the poor rural consumers’ preference for tea brands. However, in case of hoarding for the cooking oil brand, it was found that there was no significant relationship between exposure to the hoarding and the poor rural consumers’ preference for cooking oil brand. So there was no impact of hoarding in case of cooking oil brand.

Impact of Audio visual: With respect to audio visual media, there was no significant relationship between exposure to audio visual media and preference for both tea and cooking oil brands. So it could be concluded that there was no impact of audio visual media in reaching out to the poor rural consumers in U.P.

The results of these analyses showed that wall paintings and hoardings had an impact in reaching out to the poor rural consumers with respect to only one of the two product categories, viz. cooking oil and tea respectively. Even when there was an impact, it was not on a large scale due to the fact that many of the poor rural consumers in Uttar Pradesh were unable to read or comprehend the messages on wall paintings and hoardings.

The results from the audio-visual presentation showed that there was no significant relationship between exposure to this media and the poor rural consumers’ preference for brands of tea and cooking oil. This meant that the impact of such media was nil. One reason for this was the fact that the poor rural consumers did not trust the source of information as it was conducted by an outsider not known to them, they had apprehensions against the presenter.

Therefore, it was concluded that of the three traditional media audio-visual presentation had no impact on the poor rural consumers while each of the other two traditional media-wall paintings and hoardings had have an impact in reaching out to the poor villagers for one of the two product categories-tea and cooking oil considered in this study. So the reach was very limited.
5.1.4 Findings from experiment for analysis of the impact of new media

The analysis of the impact of new media suggested that new media had a huge impact in reaching out to the poor rural consumers in Uttar Pradesh by creating a difference in the preference of brands between consumers who were exposed to such media and those who were not exposed to it. In this research study the impact of new media was analyze through an experiment. The preference of respondents for brands of toothpaste as a product category was taken before the experiment. Then the experiment, in the form of an audio for the advertisement of Babool toothpaste brand was interspersed in a hit song. The audio was then played on an occasion when many villagers had assembled for a marriage ceremony. Another set of responses was taken after the experiment for noting down the preference for toothpaste brands. The null hypothesis stated that there was no significant relationship between exposure to new media and the preference for toothpaste brand. The alternate hypothesis stated that there was significant relationship. It was seen that after the experiment, majority of the respondents showed their preference for the brand of toothpaste communicated through the audio song. So it was concluded from this analysis that new media had an impact in reaching out to the poor rural consumers in India especially in Uttar Pradesh. The media used in the experiment generated interest among respondents and had a higher recall value because it had the local flavour attached to it in the form of the Bhojpuri song into which the message was interspersed. Respondents were heard humming the song later on along with the advertisement for the Babool Toothpaste brand. In terms of reaching the majority of the population, this new media could be easily relied upon. Events like marriage ceremonies, celebrating the birth of a male child, pujas and other such occasions are frequently seen in villages in U.P. loud music is a part of all these celebrations. So such medium of marketing communication can be employed in generating a wider reach and impact among the poor rural consumers.

5.1.6. Findings From structured interview

The poor mass media reach as well as non-feasible traditional media in reaching out to the poor rural consumers in India showed that there still seemed to be a strong need for some
more new marketing communications media. Due to illiteracy and ignorance of the poor rural consumers and lack of availability of electricity as well as electronic appliances in many poor rural households, the task of reaching out to these consumers in rural markets has become a very challenging one. Companies should focus on creative media solutions for reaching out to them in a cost effective manner. If the Indian advertising industry is to tap rural India, it has to draw itself in local colours and modes of communication to make it relevant to the rural masses. It has to gain the trust of the masses by undercutting existing dependency on conventional advertisement. This should be done with different innovative marketing communication media. Poor Media penetration has to be overcome by extensive use of new media, events, presence in high congregation areas like haats and weekly bazaars, fairs etc. Street plays and societal marketing also increase the brand awareness among people. Wall writing, horse cart, bullock cart panels, pamphlet distribution are some other effective means of sending out a message. The framework provided in this study will help marketers in generating some ideas for coming up with marketing communication media solutions for such rural areas in India where mass media and traditional media do not succeed heavily in creating the desired impact among the poor rural consumers. This research study will also help in creating the sensitivity among marketing students and marketers alike on marketing communication media issues pertaining to rural India.

The solution to the problem of limited reach of mass media could be to ensure the accessibility of these media to the target audience. As discussed earlier, the obstacles and hindrances are many due to lack of proper infrastructure, poor electricity supply, low literacy levels etc. so, this could be a really challenging task for the marketers targeting the mass or poor population of northern Indian state U.P.

Therefore, based on the above findings from the study, the need for a more creative and new media was felt which could be utilized for reaching out to the poor consumers in rural areas. The conceptual framework for making marketing communication media effective for reaching out to the poor rural consumers in Uttar Pradesh was developed to provide a workable solution to the above problem of poor reach to the poor consumers in rural India.
5.1.7 The conceptual framework for effective marketing communications media

The conceptual marketing communication media framework given below highlights the importance of incorporating and leveraging technological advancements to deal with the following three aspects that form the backbone of the framework-

a.) Attempt in partnering with locals: Companies should try to partner either with local organizations or even influential local individuals to create the maximum impact

b.) Attempt in innovation in target audience- creating awareness about brands through children can help in providing a solution to the marketing communication media problems in rural areas of the country. These children in turn will take the brand message to their respective households. Sending sales team in schools for presentations on relevant product categories will help in creating a lot of buzz and awareness among the consumers in rural areas of U.P.

c.) Attempt in innovation in occasion or event for creating awareness and promotion of brands: as was evident from the experiment, some creativity and innovation is required in identifying the appropriate events and occasions in rural regions where companies could pitch in with their marketing communication. Innovation is required in devising newer media and newer methods of utilizing these events/occasions for creating awareness and promoting brands.

d.) Attempt in innovation in using technological gadgets like mobile phones for reaching out to the poor rural consumers is also the need of the hour. Technological advances can be used as an important opportunity by marketers in creating and devising new marketing communication media for reaching out to the poor consumers in rural India. Through the experiment conducted in this research study one such use of technological advances had been leveraged to create the desired medium of marketing communication for a brand.

Fig: 5.1 Conceptual Framework for effective Marketing Communication Media
5.1.8 Discussion of results

A marketing communication media framework has been proposed in this research study which would serve as an important set of ideas for reaching out to the poor rural consumers in the very backward regions of India, especially in Uttar Pradesh. An extensive statistical analysis of the survey data has been done to understand the marketing communication media reach in the rural markets and to discover the most suitable type of marketing communication...
media. Data collection was done in a very cautionary manner so as to arrive at meaningful and correct data. In this study, a comparative analysis of the various marketing communication media like the traditional marketing media, the conventional or mass media and the new media had been done. The purpose of carrying out the comparative analysis was to understand the ‘impact’ of the different marketing communication media in reaching out to the poor rural consumers in Uttar Pradesh.

5.1.9. Academic contributions:

The study makes a significant contribution to the field of knowledge by developing a new standpoint for the examination of the impact of Marketing Communication Media. This step, even if seemingly small, is significant as it orientates the field towards a new perspective. The contribution of this study, however small, will be highly significant in stimulating the thoughts of academia and marketers alike in devising better marketing communication media for reaching out to the poor consumers in rural regions. This will eventually lead to a change in the lives of the poor rural consumers who would be able to be more aware about various brands and make well informed purchase decisions.

This research will be an add on to the existing body of knowledge on rural marketing in general and rural marketing communication media, in particular, in India, especially in the state of Uttar Pradesh. Majority of the MBA students in India lack specific knowledge about various remote regions of the country and how marketing communication issues are dealt with there. This study hopes to bridge that gap and create awareness among them about such matters which may help them later in their career if they chose to work on rural marketing aspect of the companies that they might join in future. This study also hopes to give an edge to marketers planning to promote their brands and create awareness among their consumer base in the rural areas of Uttar Pradesh. Since many rural consumers fall prey to imitation or duplicate brands due to ignorance and lack of proper knowledge or illiteracy, marketing communication media assumes greater importance in these rural areas. Reaching out to these poor consumers in India is absolutely vital not only for the success of the companies but also for the overall improvement in the quality of life of the poor rural consumers by enabling them to have the original brands. This can be achieved by selecting some new media for
spreading brand awareness, knowledge and information to the target customers in the remote areas of the country.

This study may also form the basis for further research related to the field by generating interest among the readers on the subject. Though studies have been conducted on overall rural marketing in India, this study attempts to provide some specificity in terms of locations or regions covered in the research and also in terms of one specific aspect of rural marketing viz. marketing communication media and its reach and impact in rural India. So to sum it up it can be said that the study attempts to academically contribute to:

- the enhancement of the knowledge of marketing students
- supplement the existing literature in this field of study
- to provide some ideas of new media to marketers who are trying to reach out to the poor rural consumers in Uttar Pradesh-the most populous state in India.

5.2.0. Managerial Implications

The implications that this research study would have on marketing managers can be many. Firstly, this research gives a clear idea on the various marketing communication media that can be employed for reaching out to the poor rural consumers in U.P. The study also highlights the importance of targeting the poor consumers in rural India and how it can create a win-win situation to both marketers and the target audience alike.

This study indicates the need for different kinds of innovations in marketing communication media for reaching out to the poor consumers in rural areas in India.

Thirdly, this study shows the impact of various marketing media like mass and traditional media in reaching out to the poor rural consumers in U.P. The results of the analyses indicated that the impact was significant for certain media for specific product categories only. Even if there was an impact of these two types of media- mass and traditional, it was low. So the implication for managers would be either to enhance the reach and accessibility of these two
media or to solve the issues through product innovations like the problem of lack of electricity can be solved by developing battery operated electronic items and so on. Another method could be to educate the consumers about their brands so as to tackle the illiteracy problem. This can be done by educating the consumers on the brand logo, colour, packaging features etc. But if this seems to be a very challenging task particularly because of the problems thrown by the rural markets, the other way out could be to innovate and leverage the technological know-how to reach out to the target audience in these areas of Uttar Pradesh where the media accessibility is very low.

Fourthly, this research study shows, through experiment, that the impact of new media is considerably higher in rural areas. The structured interview conducted in the study also corroborates the above findings. The respondents felt that the new media was better than traditional media and mass media. More such creativity is required to provide solutions to the media problems in reaching out to the poor consumers in rural Uttar Pradesh in an effective manner.

Fifthly, the framework provided in this study will act as an aid to managers. The framework on new marketing communication media proposed in this study pinpoints important aspects that can serve managers in providing ideas on developing new, and creative media for reaching out to the target audience in the remote regions of India, particularly in the rural regions of U.P.

This study hopes to give an edge to marketers planning to promote their brands and create awareness among their consumer base in the rural areas of Uttar Pradesh. Reaching out to these poor consumers in India is absolutely vital not only for the success of the companies but also for the overall improvement in the quality of life of the poor rural consumers. This can be achieved by designing some new media for spreading brand awareness to the target customers.

5.2.1. Limitations:
Though the intended sample size was much more but due to difficulty in getting respondents agree to fill in the questionnaire, the sample size had to be cut down. Many of the respondents just walked away preferring not to believe the researcher and reveal information to her. Some of them even expressed severe doubts about the authority that was behind this research study and asked whether it was for the government or for some private companies. They were not willing to buy in the explanation given to them as to why the study was being conducted and what purpose it would serve in improving their awareness levels and in improving their life styles. So, getting the targeted sample size was a big hurdle and that might act as a limitation for this study. Another limitation was that only two districts lying in eastern Uttar Pradesh could be considered for this study and that might not be a true representative of all the districts in a very large Indian state like Uttar Pradesh. Hence, since this work is based on the data obtained from two districts in Eastern Uttar Pradesh, generalization will be limited. This study is not an exhaustive one in terms of the various product categories that are available in rural India and this study could encompass on a small assortment of product categories only. Again, of the product categories selected for this study, not all brands that have their presence in rural markets have been included in the study but only the major ones were taken into consideration based on the frequency with which they were advertised.

This study has used the difference in the preference of brands between customers who were exposed to various marketing communication media and those who were not exposed to them as an indicator of the impact of those marketing communication media. This can be a limitation as there can be other ways of studying and analysing the impact of marketing communication media in reaching out to the poor consumers in rural areas.

Any study which is based on primary data collected through survey instrument, viz. a structured questionnaire as is applicable in this thesis, has to put up with the fact that there can be a variation between what the truth is and what has been recorded, in spite of every effort put in by the researcher to ensure that the questionnaire is carefully designed and administered. So this could be a possibility in this study.
Another important limitation was that in analysing the mass media, it was not clear as to how many advertisements and of what brands were aired in the region during the period of the research and data collection.

As many of the respondents were illiterate their questionnaires had to be filled in by the researcher herself which was very time consuming. The possibility of human error cannot be ruled out no matter how carefully the field investigation was carried out.

5.2.2. Directions for future research

Future research can be done in other rural districts of the country to compare/validate the results of this study.

This study has used the difference in the customers’ preference of brands between those who are exposed and those who are not exposed to various marketing communication media as an indicator of the impact of those marketing communication media. There can always be other and better ways of analysing the impact of marketing communications media for reaching out to the poor consumers in rural areas. Further studies can be done to explore them.

There can always be the possibility of developing a better framework than the one proposed in this study. This research pertained to a limited number of product categories in each of FMCG, consumer durables and telecomm brands. Research with other product categories can be explored to validate the findings of this study.

Apart from exploring other product categories, even other sectors or industries can be looked at to make the findings more robust. Some more experiments with new marketing communication media can be taken up by future researchers working on ways of reaching out to the poor rural consumers in India. In order to cover up the limitations pointed earlier, further research needs to be done in the areas highlighted there which would supplement this study and make it more robust.