CONCLUSION

AND

SUMMARY

CONCLUSION

Development communication which is defined as the art and science of human communication applied to the speedy transformation of a country from poverty to a dynamic state of economic growth and makes possible greater economic and social equality and larger fulfillment of human potential is highly important for agriculture development. In the words of Everett Rogers (1976) development communication refers to the uses to which communication are put in order to further development. Here communication refers to the use of different types and media in the context of development.
The success of agricultural development programmes in developing countries largely depends on the nature and extent of use of mass media in mobilization of people for development. The planners in developing countries realize that the development of agriculture could be hastened with the effective use of mass media. In the wake of growing popularity of media in the country, it becomes essential for it to provide coverage to all the important issues of national concern. Agriculture is one such area which cannot be ignored at any cost.

This research has been conducted to analyse the coverage given to agricultural news and views in the three leading regional dailies in English, Hindi and Punjabi publishing in Punjab i.e, The Tribune, Punjab Kesari and Ajit. This six month study was carried out to analyse the nature of the write-ups i.e, news and views and their placement on the various pages of the newspaper, so as to reach some logical conclusion on the basis of quantitative study using the content analysis as the research methodology. Content Analysis has been developed by the researcher as a method to study the messages of print and visual media. This technique does not measure the effects of media or explain why a particular media message gets produced in the first place. This method enables the researchers to analyse and interpret the figures produced by content counts. Agriculture is such a vast field that until and unless its development is assessed in all its allied agro sectors, it cannot lead to a complete understanding. Therefore, the content analysis of all the agriculture content appeared during the study in these three papers was categorised and sub-categorised in every possible manner which could help understand the field of agriculture. How does an agriculture story becomes a top story or an active agenda was also studied in this research.

The hypotheses posed for the study are as follows:

- The first hypothesis has been that the daily newspapers especially English and Hindi are not a preferred media for advertising agriculture related products.

This hypothesis has been proved right. During the six months study it came to light that number of advertisements related to agricultural inputs had been very less. Two
advertisements on agro related inputs in The Tribune, six in Punjab Kesari and 45 in Ajit in a six months period is very discouraging. Taking into consideration the role of advertisements in revenue generation it is clear that no media can deny time and space to advertisements. Therefore, if number of these agriculture advertisements is less in these three papers, it means that advertisers of agriculture related products did not find English and Hindi newspapers (The Tribune and Punajb Kesari) a suitable media for advertising. Undoubtedly, they reposed some trust on Ajit as the number of agricultural advertisements in Ajit have been much higher than the other two newspapers. This also proves that advertisers in this sector rely more on Punjabi language papers because this way they can reach large number of Punjabi speaking people in Punjab. If Ajit is ahead of the other two, it could easily be concluded that this newspaper has countryside hold as compared to the others. In other words, it has a stronger rural base than English and Hindi media. Therefore, it has been able to attract the advertisers from agro sector also.

- The second hypothesis has been that agricultural content appear on the pages of newspapers in the news format only. The newspapers, irrespective of their language, contribute very little as far as editorials and articles are concerned. In other words, opinion pieces are very less in number.

This hypothesis has been proved right. The results of the study indicate that The Tribune, Punjab Kesari and Ajit published total 420, 389 and 330 stories on agriculture respectively during the six months period. However, the major part of these stories was in the news format. Going by the data, it comes out to be 403, 382 and 301. This means that 95.9%, 98.2% and 91.2% stories in The Tribune, Punjab Kesari and Ajit respectively were in news format only. In other words, just 4.1%, 1.8% and 8.8% content appeared in the form of views i.e editorials and articles. News are important because we come across what is happening around us. If more than 90% agricultural coverage is based on news coverage then it is a good sign that newspapers are trying to feed us with what is happening on the agriculture front.

News are an important source of information and awareness. However, apart from the news content of a newspaper it is the editorial part which elaborates the things in
wider perspectives. It is the editorials and articles which interpret the things for the readers. This study shows that there have been just 06 editorials and 11 articles in *The Tribune*, 03 editorials and 04 articles in *Punjab Kesari* and 10 editorials and 19 articles in *Ajit*.

As far as space wise coverage of news is concerned, it covered 89.2%, 94.8% and 79.8% in *The Tribune*, *Punjab Kesari* and *Ajit* respectively. But when we compare it with total news, this is a very negligible coverage or in other words, agriculture is not a priority area for all these newspapers be it an English, Hindi or Punjabi newspaper. The newspapers prioritize more on Political, Crime, Sports and Entertainment based stories. Thus, it could be anything else but not agriculture. Agriculture being a major thrust area of development definitely requires much attention and coverage from the media but results have been quite contrary to this. If the agricultural views i.e articles and editorials are less in number, it means less space for expert opinions on agriculture. Agricultural views covered not even one percent of the total newspaper space over a period of six months.

- The third hypothesis has been that the agricultural news seldom appears on the front pages of the newspapers. In other words agriculture is hardly a priority of a newspaper, be it English, Hindi or a Punjabi newspaper.

This hypothesis has also been proved right. The results show that out of the total of 403 agricultural based news stories in *The Tribune*, only 55 (13.6%) appeared on the front page. In *Punjab Kesari* 68 news stories (17.8%) out of total 382 were on front page and 84 (28%) out of 301 in *Ajit* published on the front page. The data here indicates that *Ajit*, the widely read Punjabi newspaper in the region covered more stories on the front page. Front page of a newspaper is always an eye-catcher for the readers, as they give much attention to the first page only. Most important stories are always placed on the first page. The prominence of a news items decreases with its placement on other pages of a newspaper. The news appearing on other pages seldom gets importance from the readers. Front page of a newspaper is always reserved for highly important news of international, national and regional interest. The obsession of newspapers with politics is open and clear. Agriculture never falls into a category
that it could entertain somebody. But agriculture surely is a field which sustains development of a country. Agriculture in India is the way of life. Therefore, talking about agriculture on the front pages may not suit a newspaper but is surely the need of the day.

- The fourth hypothesis raised for this study asserts that as such there is no thrust area or a specified agenda regarding agriculture.

This hypothesis has been proved right. The results of the study clearly show that as such there is no thrust area or a specified agenda regarding agriculture. For instance, two major concerns on agriculture front are farmer suicides and crop diversification. These are one of those issues which need to be high on media agenda. It is never a binding on any media or it can never be taught or told on what to write and what not to write or what ought to be written. But it is surely expected from the media that certain issues be talked about regularly so as to influence the policy makers on those issues which are closely linked with a major sector of development.

During the six month study, The Tribune published four, Punjab Kesari two and Ajit six news stories on farmer suicides respectively which account to be just 1.3%, 0.64% and 1.3% of the total space wise coverage of agriculture.

Similarly, there had been no news story, article or an editorial regarding crop diversification during the study period. Whatever is getting published on agriculture in newspapers is scattered and casual references. On the contrary, anything related with politics, crime, cricket, celebrities etc is laid bare at thread thin levels. But when it comes to agriculture, it is never done at micro levels. Thus, the macroscopic way of seeing at agriculture can not contribute in agriculture development in the way it should be. This clearly indicates that media never finds talking about agriculture lucrative or money-spinning.

Moreover, this is the age of corporatization, commercialization and conglomereration. This demands that industry is run on profitable lines. The media today is a big industry and thus is highly market oriented. Furthermore, media is basically urban oriented. It is always argued that media gives only what public demands. Going by the
agenda setting notions, agriculture can never be a priority sector for the people or even
the government if it is not an active agenda of mainstream media.

- The fifth hypothesis has been that Punjabi Press leads the other newspapers as
  far as agricultural coverage (news and views) is concerned.

As far as this hypothesis is concerned the situation has been the other way round. This
hypothesis had been raised thinking that a Punjabi newspaper being more close to the
readers due to language factor could be raising issues more close to the hearts of
people of Punjab, the state which we call the food bowl of the country. However, the
findings reveal that it is the English newspaper i.e, The Tribune which is ahead of
others but the Punjabi newspaper i.e, Ajit falls at third position in this regard.
However, when we take into consideration the spacewise coverage i.e, the word
strength of a story, then it is the Punjabi newspaper gives a vivid picture of
agricultural coverage in the newspapers under study in terms of number of agricultural
based write-ups (news and views). The Tribune published about 420 followed by
Punjab Kesari at 389 and Ajit 330 respectively. It is however clear from the given data
that maximum numbers of write-ups have appeared in the English and not in the
language papers. This shows that English Press projected more stories on agricultural
development than Hindi and Punjabi papers.

Agricultural views are less in number as compared to agricultural news. The opinion
pieces are more informative than a news item because they are written by experts of
the field and are reminiscent in nature but news is just listing of the facts. The views
can prove helpful to the readers in one way or the other but have not been given much
coverage in the papers. Over the period of six months, Ajit has covered variety of
topics like agriculture and economy, use of improved variety of seeds and fertilisers,
kissan melas and farmer suicide etc. Yet, contrary to the belief that Punjabi Press pays
more heed to agriculture, Ajit has been far behind the English newspaper i.e, The
Tribune and Hindi newspaper i.e, Punjab Kesari as far as number of news is
concerned.
However, the contribution of Ajit, the Punjabi paper came out to be more than rest of the two papers when it comes to separate regular pull-outs in the three newspapers. The findings show that it is only Ajit which is publishing special pull-out on Thursday named as Nari Sansar which dedicates a one full page to agriculture every week by the name Sada Pind Sade Khet. This pull-out is exclusively dedicated to agriculture. No such pull-out was found in other papers. Therefore, the data regarding this has been kept all inclusive i.e; it has not been counted in the rest of the coverage.

When the 56 write-ups in special pull-outs in Ajit are added to its total 330 write-ups in regular pages, the figure becomes 386 which means that Ajit i.e, Punjabi Press still lacks behind the English paper i.e, The Tribune which published total 420 write-ups on agriculture during the six months. When we reanalyze the data on column cm² basis (Table 2.0), The Tribune covered 78379 col cm² space on agriculture and Ajit covered just 48300 col cm². However, when this 48300 col cm² are added to 18784 col cm² it becomes 67084col cm². Thus, it is evident that English Press outweighs the Punjabi and Hindi Press in development communication in agriculture sector.

- The sixth hypothesis has been that agriculture headlines are mostly political statements.

This hypothesis has been proved right. The agriculture headlines analysed during the content analysis of agricultural coverage that followed a mega event. This part of research was carried out to study how a mega event on agriculture takes shape and project the agro-issues and how it gets reported the following day.

The study of Agriculture Summit clearly proves that headlines in the newspapers during this time had been more of political statements rather than given emphasis on the agriculture. The headlines mentioned the statements of Chief Minister and other ministers and officials present on the occasion. In The Tribune 10 headlines out of the total 20, Punjab Kesari five out of the total nine and Ajit six out of the total eight have been the political statements made during the Agro-Summit. This makes it evident that a mega event like an agro-summit is not significant for the Press but the presence of political leaders and their statements are more valuable. Even here the agriculture takes a back seat and political lectures, statements and announcements become highly
important. There is nothing wrong in publishing such statements but it surely hampers objectivity in reporting and restricts critical evaluation of a situation.

- The seventh hypothesis has been that agriculture is an active agenda for the papers only when it is high on the government agenda.

This hypothesis has been proved right. The Content Analysis of Coverage of Agriculture Summit 2014 in The Tribune, Punjab Kesari and Ajit shows that agriculture becomes an active agenda for the papers only when it is high on the agenda of the government. The 20 news stories and one editorial in The Tribune, eight news stories, one editorial and an article in Ajit and seven news stories in Punjab Kesari in four-five days clearly indicates that newspapers depend heavily on the feeding by official machinery. If the government prioritises the agriculture sector only then the media would give priority to it. However, mega events like summits can not be held every now and then. But the agriculture development can be talked about whole the year round. The regular updates on agriculture sector through extension services of various government development agencies like agriculture ministries, agriculture departments, agriculture research and education institutions should reach regularly to various media organisations so as to sensitise media on agriculture.

Agriculture is one such specialized sector which needs expertise in agriculture understanding. This necessitates that there are very good reporters in the newspapers who themselves understand the pulse of Indian agriculture. It is such a vast and wide sector that unless and until the media men go to the fields, see the ground realities, understand the cultivation procedures, observe the socio-cultural nerve of the land and generalize the upcoming scenario, the agriculture stories can not become news. Today, the country is not just self-sufficient but surplus in food grain production to the extent that it has become unmanageable. On studying the three papers during the Agro-Summit, this assumption has turned out to be true in all respects.

With the spread of literacy in rural Punjab, newspapers have become an effective means of communication for spreading farm information among the masses. They act as a bridge between the source of technology and the users of it. Newspapers provide
information, education, awareness, guidance and entertainment to their readers. They provide news related to various fields including agriculture. Newspapers thus can be efficiently used to provide precise and practical information to the farmers regarding their farm problems, new agriculture policies and plans. Mass media can instruct people and educate them. Projects like Educational Television and Gyan Darshan are few such examples where media is used to instruct people, educate them and teach them basic skills.

To conclude, it can be said that agriculture and allied activities together form an important part of the Indian economy. Every new day agricultural sector has been facing new challenges and problems but is not getting due importance in the newspapers. The research findings clearly define the status of agriculture in Print media today. It is high time that Indian media especially the Print media realize the importance of agriculture in the economy and start giving the required coverage to agriculture based problems and issues.

**SUGGESTIONS**

Today, Media is a million dollar industry. The rules of industry are always governed by profit making theories. Corporatisation of media and conglomeration has changed the whole scenario. When the rules of industry govern the media, the media can never be expected to work as a missionary. The market orientations of media necessitates that business zeal replaces the professional zeal. Moreover this is the age of infotainment basically. It is not only the media which has changed over the years but the readers and audience have also come up with varied interests.

In the earlier decades of the 20th century, there was a clear distinction between the corporates and the media houses with each existing in a symbiotic relationship with other. In other words, corporate houses were content with advertising in the newspapers and the TV channels and the media houses were happy with the advertising revenues as long as they retained editorial autonomy. However, things began to change from the 1970s onwards wherein the media houses started to resemble corporate entities both in the way they were managed and run and in the
way, they added spin to their stories. It was no longer the case that media houses would criticize the corporates and still get advertising revenue. On the other hand, most media houses entered into partnerships with leading corporates wherein they published stories that were friendly to the advertisers.

There are many media organisations in the country that are owned and controlled by a wide variety of entities including corporate bodies, societies and trusts, and individuals. Information about such organisations and people is scattered, incomplete, and dated, thereby making it rather difficult to gather such information leave alone analyse it.

The absence of restrictions on cross-media ownership implies that particular companies or groups or conglomerates dominate markets both vertically (that is, across different media such as print, radio, television and the internet) as well as horizontally (namely, in particular geographical regions). The growing corporatization of the Indian media is manifest in the manner in which large industrial conglomerates are acquiring direct and indirect interest in media groups. There is also a growing convergence between creators/producers of media content and those who distribute/disseminate the content.

Besides, the readership profile too has changed drastically. Global dimensions of the media have added the global interests and demands. If the media is changing then the demands of the people too are changing. It is basically the glamour world we are living in. Media is not merely globalized but politicized also. Agriculture hardly suits the glamour world. This is the main reason that agriculture has been marginalized in the media. Talking about the marginalized sector and sections of the society, agriculture does not fit into the business model of media industry.

However, the newspapers being the vehicle of mass communication need to target not only the generalized interests of the readers but those specialized interests also which are linked with all round development and basic necessities of life. Agriculture development is just one of them. Therefore, there must be self-binding mechanism in the media which ensures that media works for the larger benefits of the society.
As agriculture is an important sector of the Indian economy, it requires much more space and coverage in the Print media.

More expert opinions and ideas related to agriculture should be covered by the newspapers as these are informative in nature and proves helpful to the farmers.

Besides, health, education, jobs, careers, fashion; a regular weekly pull-outs covering agriculture and related issues is the need of the hour.

Farm information should be extended to the farmers through kissan melas, farm demonstrations, farm journals etc. and this should further get coverage in the Print media.

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SUMMARY

The beginning of 'agro' or 'agriculture' marks the beginning of 'civilized' or 'sedentary' society. Climate change and increase in population during the Holocene Era (10,000 BC onwards) led to the evolution of agriculture. During the Bronze Age (9000 BC onwards), domestication of plants and animals transformed the profession of the early homo sapiens from hunting and gathering to selective hunting, herding and finally to settled agriculture. Eventually the agricultural practices enabled people to establish permanent settlements and expand urban based societies. Cultivation marks the transition from nomadic pre-historic societies to the settled neolithic lifestyle sometime around 7000 BC. As per the modern definition of agriculture which would be "an aggregate of large scale intensive cultivation of land, mono-cropping, organized irrigation, and use of a specialized labor force", the title "inventors of agriculture" would go to the Sumerians, starting ca. 5,500 BC.

The journey of agriculture has ever since remained a journey of technological evolution. From planting by hand in the fields, plowing of land, invention of extensive irrigation based on hydraulic and hydrostatic systems, innovation of three field system of crop rotation, usage of moldboard plow, new agricultural practices like enclosure, mechanization, four field crop rotation and selective breeding to mechanical innovations i.e, the use of tractors, the agriculture has come a long way.

Agriculture in India has a significant history and a major industry today. Being an important sector of Indian economy and mainstay of Indian population, agriculture has always got attention from the policy makers and the agriculture scientists. This sector has witnessed key developments since Independence.
Total geographical area of India is 328.7 million hectares, of which 141.6 million hectares is the net sown area (land use statistics 2010-11). IBEF puts it at 179.9 million hectares, ranking the country second in the world in farm output. Majority of Indian population relies on agriculture for employment and livelihood so much so that the country has emerged as a major player in the global agricultural market. According to 2011 Population Census, nearly 68.84 percent of India's population lives in rural areas and depends on agriculture and allied activities as their main occupation.

The agricultural sector has always been an important contributor to the country’s GDP. This is due to the fact that the country is mainly based on the agriculture sector and employs around 65 to 70 percent of the total workforce in India. Although the contribution of agriculture and allied activities had been 13.9 percent in India’s GDP according to Economic Survey 2013-14. But its importance in the country’s economic, social, and political fabric goes well beyond this indicator. Most of the rural poor depend on rain-fed agriculture and fragile forests for their livelihoods.

K.N Prasad (1994) noted that diversity is the hall-mark of Indian agriculture. Firstly, agriculture is inextricably related to land. Secondly, farm products are generally joint products. Thirdly, with economic development, the demand for agricultural products increases less rapidly than that for industrial products. Fourthly, changes in the growth rate of aggregate demand have little effect on the growth of agricultural output, provided outlays of rural programs remain unleashed in real terms. Fifthly, the adverse weather conditions due to natural calamities and uncertain rainfall. Sixthly, agriculture is a perennial business irrespective of prosperity and depression. Seventhly, agricultural wages are lower than industrial wages and finally agriculture thrives on a set of values and motives different from that on which industry thrives.
World Bank (2011) report on India mentions that with a population of just over 1.2 billion, India is the world’s largest democracy. In the past decade, the country has witnessed accelerated economic growth, emerged as a global player with the world’s fourth largest economy in purchasing power parity terms, and made progress towards achieving most of the Millennium Development Goals. Nevertheless, disparities in income and human development are on the rise. Preliminary estimates suggest that in 2009-10 the combined all India poverty rate was 32% compared to 37% in 2004-05. Going forward, it will be essential for India to build a productive, competitive, and diversified agricultural sector and facilitate rural, non-farm entrepreneurship and employment. Encouraging policies that promote competition in agricultural marketing will ensure that farmers receive better prices.

Dependence of India on agricultural imports convinced the planners that India's growing population, as well as concerns about national integration, security and political stability, required self-sufficiency in food production. This perception led to a program of agricultural improvement called the Green Revolution in the late 1960’s.

The term Green Revolution refers to the renovation of agricultural practices beginning in Mexico in the 1940s. Because of its success in producing more agricultural products there, Green Revolution technologies spread worldwide in the 1950s and 1960s, significantly increasing the amount of calories produced per acre of agriculture.

The growth in food-grain production was the result of concerted efforts to increase all the Green Revolution inputs needed for higher yields. India at that time was at the brink of mass famine in the early 1960s because of its rapidly growing population. The green revolution actually made its beginning in Mexico in 1940’s. Due to the success of the Green Revolution in Mexico, its technologies spread worldwide in the 1950s and 1960s. Countries all over the world in turn benefited from the Green Revolution work conducted by Borlaug and this research institution. Borlaug and the Ford Foundation then implemented research there and
they developed a new variety of rice, IR8, that produced more grain per plant when grown with irrigation and fertilizers. Today, India is one of the world's leading rice producers and IR8 rice usage spread throughout Asia in the decades following the rice's development in India. (Amanda Briney in his article)

According to Dantwala (1986) for more than half a century prior to independence, the performance of Indian agriculture was quite dismal. The disastrous Bengal famine in 1943 rudely awakened India to the dire necessity to rapidly augment food production and streamline the distribution system.

Since Independence, the Indian economy has been premised on the concept of planning. This has been carried through the Five-Year Plans, developed, executed, and monitored by the Planning Commission. Five-Year Plans are centralized and integrated national economic programs. The First Five-Year Plan was one of the most important because it had a great role in the launching of Indian development after the Independence. Thus, it strongly supported agriculture production and it also launched the industrialization of the country (but less than the Second Plan, which focused on heavy industries). It built a particular system of mixed economy, with a great role for the public sector (with an emerging welfare state), as well as a growing private sector.

About the time the First Five Year Plan was launched (1950-51) the country was experiencing severe food shortage and the consequent upsurge in food prices. The First Five Year Plan stated: During this period agriculture, including irrigation and power were given the top-most priority. The plan however took care to emphasize that in an under-developed economy with low yields in agriculture, there is no real conflict between agricultural and industrial development. The Second Five Year Plan (1956) was severely criticized for shifting the emphasis from labour intensive agriculture and small-scale production to large-scale capital intensive heavy industry.
In India, right from the start of the Five Year Plans, development of agriculture has been believed to hold the key to the rapid development of the country. The end of planning in India has been to create a sizable surplus in agriculture and to utilize it for achieving sustained development of agriculture and other sectors of the economy.

Despite the significance of agriculture sector in India, due to the various challenges posing the sector it is declining. Initiatives to enhance the agricultural productivity, competitiveness and rural growth are being taken. Introduction of Information and Communications technology (ICT) has emerged as a major source for development in India, and especially in agriculture sector. ICT enables smooth dissemination of required information at the right time which is crucial to improve productivity, plan better, and therefore deliver better results. This revolution in information technology has made access to information easy and cost-effective. The extensive use of ICT and its infrastructure would therefore be a critical component of the strategy to revitalize the national extension system.

Though ICT has a huge potential, ICT models have certain barriers. There is a huge digital divide between the urban and rural population. Most of the ICT models are based on internet and computers, which are not accessible to the rural population due to low income levels and high levels of illiteracy. Along with limits the regular reach to the majority because various reasons like insufficient power availability in rural areas, poor ICT infrastructure, ICT illiteracy, non-availability of timely relevant content, non-integration of services, poor advisory services and lack of localization, and in particular non availability of agricultural information kiosks/ knowledge centres at the grass root level add to the problems in agro sector.

Mobile phones are omnipresent and cost effective means to revolutionize agriculture in India. According to the Government of India census 2011, mobile penetration in rural India stands at an astounding 51 percent. Mobile phones therefore can be effectively utilized for myriad
purposes including generating, processing, transmitting, disseminating, sorting, archiving and retrieving critical information and data.

The scientists from headquarters, Krishi Vigyan Kendra and Krishi Gyan Kendra also deliver radio and TV talks regularly for the benefit of the farming community. Integrated use of both the conventional as well as upcoming electronic media like Intra and Internet, information kiosks, cable TV, mobile telephones, vernacular press and other print media is the way forward—by pooling and effective use of ICTs. The radio and Doordarshan (public television broadcaster of India) cover special activities carried out by the university such as kisan mela, agricultural officer workshops, training, field days, kisan goshti, etc.

In the epoch of new media technologies, agriculture is still looking for a small place in Indian media. Through this research, the researcher has tried to bring forth the plight of Indian agriculture and the coverage it gets in Print Media. The assessment of agricultural content has been done on both qualitative and quantitative basis. The agricultural content has been studied under the various categories falling under agricultural content. The categorization of agricultural content has been done like this: crop production, food and grain management, horticulture, floriculture, pest management, irrigation, agro economy, agro education and technology, food and public distribution, cooperative societies, farmer problems etc.

**STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM**

Media plays an important role in development communication through circulation of knowledge, providing forum for discussion of issues, teach ideas, skills for a better life and create a base of consensus for stability of the state. From the early stages of the introduction of the media in India various attempts were made to exploit their potential for development purposes.

The problem which the researcher has taken up has been the coverage of agricultural content by the leading papers of Punjab. Agriculture, being the most important sector of the Indian
economy and the provider of occupation to more than 60 percent of the population; has not given much attention by the Indian media. The research problem deals with the amount of consideration which agriculture is getting in Print media. The study of the selected papers for six months has given an idea about the quantitative and qualitative aspects of the agricultural coverage. It is about time that media especially the Print media should start giving enough space to various agricultural issues, problems, farmers’ woes and grievances etc. Media is considered as a catalyst for bringing change in the society and agriculture is one sector which requires immediate attention.

**SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY**

Media plays a crucial role in the development of a country. Agriculture is a prominent sector in the developing countries especially in India and media can play a significant role in the development of this sector. The economic development of these agrarian countries is largely dependent on agriculture as it is key to the fulfillment of the needs of a nation in many ways such food security, earns foreign exchange, capital formation and industrial expansion. The planners in the developing countries have realized that the success of their programs and policies regarding agriculture depend much on the effective use of mass media. Today, media holds the power to influence the decision making of the people.

In the present era of commercialization of agriculture, there is a need for an efficient, fast and accurate system of technology transfer. Therefore, an effective agricultural communication system is required to provide timely information to the farmers. Print media, especially newspapers can play an important role as means of communication for transfer of technology to the farmers.
It will be appropriate to know the contribution of printed matter in bringing about any kind of agricultural change in the country. Thus, the study ‘Critical Analysis of Agricultural Content in The Tribune, Punjab Kesari and Ajit’ assumes a great significance as it can throw ample light on print media and its contribution in agriculture development. The newspapers selected for the study are the leading papers of North India, the region which contributes a lot to the agro-economy of India. All the three newspapers are old papers of this region, thus playing a key role in the development of this part of the country. The study of these three papers thus becomes very important to understand the relationship between print media and the agriculture development.

**OBJECTIVES**

Broadly stated, the objective of this study has been to measure the agricultural content in the three leading regional newspapers in three different languages i.e, English, Hindi and Punjabi. These newspapers namely The Tribune, Punjab Kesari and Ajit have been subjected to systematic counting of their agriculture development content with following objectives:

1. To measure the column centimeters of advertising share in the three newspapers i.e, The Tribune, Punjab Kesari and Ajit selected for the study to determine what percentage of available space goes particularly to all the advertisements and especially to agriculture advertisements.

2. Write-up wise analysis of agricultural content in the three newspapers as this analysis is a significant projection of different kind of content on the basis of news and views.

3. Page-wise analysis of agricultural content in the three newspapers so as to understand the agriculture development agenda of Print media i.e, placing and ranking of an agricultural issue.
4. Analysis of agricultural content under various categories and sub-categories devised for studying various agricultural perspectives and sectors so as to understand various patterns in agriculture content.

5. Comparative analysis of agricultural content of English, Hindi and Punjabi newspapers.

6. Analysis of the coverage given to agriculture to study how the agriculture stories become the headlines.

7. To study when and how the agriculture becomes an active agenda of the newspapers i.e, how many stories these newspapers do on agriculture with full zeal and vigour.

HYPOTHESES

Hypothesis is made of two Greek words, which means it is some sort of sub statement, for it is presumptive statement of preposition which the investigation seeks to prove. Hypothesis stimulates critical thought and offers insight into the confusions of phenomenon. The present study is based on the following hypotheses:

i) Daily newspapers especially English and Hindi are not a preferred media for advertising agriculture related products.

ii) Agricultural content appear on the pages of newspapers in the news format only. The newspapers, irrespective of their language, contribute very little as far as editorials and articles are concerned. In other words, opinion pieces are very less in number.

iii) The agricultural news seldom becomes a part of front pages. In other words agriculture is hardly a priority of a newspaper, be it English, Hindi or a Punjabi newspaper.

iv) As such there is no thrust area or a specified agenda regarding agriculture.
v) Punjabi Press leads the other newspapers as far as agricultural coverage is concerned.

vi) Agriculture headlines are mostly the political statements.

vii) Agriculture is an active agenda for the papers only when it is high on government agenda.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study aims at investigation of inclination of Print media towards development communication. Agriculture is one such field of development where communication is highly important. The key to success is that flow of information remains continuous and multidirectional. Agricultural development can never be seen in isolation as it embraces economic as well as social growth patterns of a country. It is thus pertinent that agriculture becomes an agenda for mainstream media. Media, by placing importance on agricultural issues, problems, innovations, information and education, can initiate the Governments and people place an equal importance on the same. The Agenda Setting theory says the media (mainly the news media) are not always successful in telling us what to think, but they are quite successful in telling us what to think about.

Every research methodology consists of a planned and cognitive application of meaningful and appropriate research methods to solve the research problem. Content Analysis is vital to this study in order to explore the agricultural content. This is a multipurpose research technique especially for carrying investigation in the field of communication research. Ekmann and Sjoberg (1965) in ‘Annual Review of Psychology’ stated that content analysis is the analysis of recorded information and personal documents such as letters, diaries and newspapers for the purpose of direct measurement of the frequency or duration of an event or of indirect measurement of subjective phenomena such as motives, attitudes or values.
The three leading newspapers chosen for the content analysis i.e, *The Tribune*, *Ajit* and *Punjab Kesari*, are English, Punjabi and Hindi Dailies respectively. These newspapers have been tabulated and analyzed write-up wise i.e, News, Articles, News features, and Editorials and page-wise i.e, front page, editorial page, oped page, last page and any other page over the period of six months i.e., from April 1, 2009 – September 30, 2009 for analysing the agricultural content. The agricultural content has been further studied under various sub categories i.e, crop production, crop procurement, horticulture, floriculture, food grain management, dairy farming, agro economy, government schemes, relief measures, farmer problems, minimum support price, cooperative sector, agricultural engineering, agro machinery, kissan unions, kissan melas, crop damages, grievances, farmer demands, farmer suicides, food and public distribution etc.

Besides, the Content Analysis of agricultural coverage following a mega event has also been conducted to find out the specific coverage given to that event in the newspapers. This part of research has been carried out to study how a mega event on agriculture takes shape and project the agro-issues and how it gets reported the following day. This event was Progressive Punjab Agriculture Summit 2014 organised by Punjab Government at Fateh Burj, Baba Banda Singh Bahadur War Memorial, Chappar Chiri, Mohali from 16th to 19th February, 2014. This analysis has been done to observe agriculture agenda setting of the newspapers.

The content analysis may take the quantitative form if it is to study the trend in the coverage of the content, space devoted to a particular subject for a specific period etc. In short, content analysis will be quantitative if it deals with the frequency of occurrence, trend of coverage of the content, and the duration of an event and time. On the other hand, content analysis is qualitative if it deals with the qualitative characteristics of the content like the information
level of the content, the direction of the content or motives, attitudes and values of the
origination of content.

**HISTORICAL OVERVIEW OF THE PAPERS UNDER STUDY**

The papers under study i.e, *The Tribune*, *Ajit* and *Punjab Kesari*, are the prominent papers of this region. According to the report by Audit Bureau of Circulation (July-December 2013), The Tribune has the circulation of 3,26,568 copies, Punjab Kesari 1,066,461 copies and Ajit has 4,10,790 copies. All the three papers have huge circulation and are widely read.

**The Tribune**

The Tribune was started as a weekly from Lahore in 1881 by Sardar Dyal Singh Majithia, who was a highly educated nationalist and patriot. He had inherited a vast estate from his father which he wanted to utilise for awakening the people of Punjab and India. The first issue of The Tribune appeared on February 2, 1881. During India’s long struggle for independence, The Tribune played a distinctive role as an exponent of public view. On the eve of independence, the offices of The Tribune were ransacked. It moved to Simla and later on to Ambala in May 1948. It found a permanent home in Chandigarh in 1957. The Tribune is a truly trust-managed paper. The policy of paper continues to be liberal in politics; secular in outlook, balanced and objective in reporting and temperate in language, official acts and measures may be boldly criticised, but in a fair and candid spirit. Subjects possessing provincial and local interest should receive prominent treatment, along with questions of national importance. Religious controversies shall be avoided in the columns of the paper and an attitude of strict neutrality shall be maintained in regard to all creeds and sects.

The Tribune group launched two sister publications in Hindi and Punjabi- Dainik Tribune and the Punjabi Tribune in 1978. Both the newspapers have got a modest success.

Presently, The Tribune has got four editions from four different cities- Jalandhar, Chandigarh, New Delhi and Bathinda covering local, regional, national and international
news events. It has got regular weekly supplements like Education, Jobs and Careers, Health and Fitness, Science and Technology and Real Estate catering to various strata of the society. In its 130th year of publication, The Tribune is one of the leading dailies of North India, with a never ending popularity. Currently, Raj Chengappa is the Editor-in-Chief of the newspaper.

**Punjab Kesari**

Late Lala Jagat Narain was the founder of Punjab Kesari Group (erstwhile Hind Samachar Group). Lala Jagat Narain, a Congress Party leader, was born at Wazirabad, Gujranwala District (now in Pakistan) in 1889. He graduated from D.A.V. College, Lahore in 1919, and joined the Law College, Lahore. He left his studies in 1920 at the call of Mahatma Gandhi to join the non-cooperation movement. He was sentenced in two and a half years imprisonment, in jail he acted as Lala Lajpat Rai’s Personal Secretary. In 1924 he became the editor of Bhai Parmanand's Weekly Hindi Paper Akashvani. He participated in all the Satyagraha movement and was in jail for about nine years on different occasions.

Lala Jagat Narain had come to Jalandhar as a refugee from Lahore and started an Urdu daily, Hind Samachar in 1948. Urdu then was the language of the salaried urban men of Punjab, the people who could afford the time and money for a newspaper. But Urdu in independent India lacked government support. In the schools of Punjab, Punjabi and Hindi became the languages and Gurmukhi and Devanagari the scripts of instruction. In 1965, Lala Jagat Narain founded Punjab Kesari, a Hindi daily.

This group is North India’s oldest newspaper group. Today three of the country’s leading newspapers i.e. Punjab kesari (Hindi), Jag Bani (Punjabi) and Hind Samachar (Urdu) are being published from Jalandhar, Ludhiana, Palampur, Ambala, Hisar, Panipat and Jammu & Kashmir and Mohali.

Punjab Kesari Group’s associate daily ‘Punjab Kesari’ was launched on June 13, 1965 with an initial print order of 3500 copies which was a record at that time. It is the first newspaper
of the country which has introduced new concepts in printing technology. It incorporated special magazine supplement with its all daily editions which was a new innovation in the history of Indian language papers as well as among National English Dailies at that time. It is also the first fully colored newspaper published in North India. Trust, independence, impartiality and honesty are the core values which this newspaper follows. The paper believes in consistency and high ethical standards in its working.

**Ajit**

Daily Ajit is one of the leading Punjabi newspapers. This newspaper is widely acclaimed by the common people, as it publishes all the information related to their daily life. Ajit is one of the newspapers of the state of Punjab that are printed in the Punjabi language. This news resource of Jalandhar offers all the important information pertaining to the state of Punjab as well as the rest of the country.

Ajit was started as an urdu paper from Sikh Missionary College, Amritsar in 1941. Initially it was a weekly paper but became daily in 1942. After the independence, it started publishing from Jalandhar. In 1955, it was changed into Punjabi Ajit Patrika and finally in 1957 it got its name- Ajit.

Daily Ajit or simply "Ajit" is a Punjabi Newspaper published daily from Jalandhar (Punjab, INDIA). Ajit calls itself "Punjab Di Awaaz" or voice of Punjab. Its weekly supplements are Dharam Te Virsa (Monday), Film Ank (Tuesday) Chota Parda (Wednesday), Naari Sansar, Sadi Sehat, Khed Jagat, Sade Pind Sade Khet (Thursday), Baal Sansar (Saturday) and Ajit Magazine, Kahani Ank, Dilchasplian (Sunday).

AjitJalandhar.com is the online home of Daily Ajit Punjabi newspaper. Most NRIs get the Punjab news from the website of Ajit Jalandhar. Ajit reaches the world including Canada, Australia, Italy, UK (England), United States Of America (USA), Dubai, UAE, Germany, and many other countries where the Punjabi people live.
DATA PRESENTATION & INTERPRETATION

The analysis and interpretation of the data collected through content analysis of the three selected papers (*The Tribune, Punjab Kesari and Ajit*) is given below. This includes such information as the number of agricultural news, views, visuals, ads and the space provided to these in the period under study (April 1, 2009 to September 30, 2009). The researcher has also conducted an event study of Progressive Punjab Agriculture Summit 2014 (February 16-19, 2014)

Space-wise coverage given to the news, views and ads in the three newspapers:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Newspaper</th>
<th>Total space given to Ads (col cm²)</th>
<th>Total space given to News and Views (col cm²)</th>
<th>Total Content (col cm²)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>The Tribune</strong></td>
<td>3487311 (40%)</td>
<td>5243279 (60%)</td>
<td>8730590</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Punjab Kesari</strong></td>
<td>2257003 (33.8%)</td>
<td>4416145 (66.2%)</td>
<td>6673148</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ajit</strong></td>
<td>2220378 (39%)</td>
<td>3469207 (61%)</td>
<td>5689585</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Advertisements are a source of revenue generation for the media. A newspaper typically generates 70-80% of its revenue from advertising and the remaining comes from sales and subscriptions. Hence these advertisements play a role of a facilitator. In a newspaper this space which has been sold, represents the business point of view. The table shows that in *The Tribune*, the leading English daily in northern India, 40% space was the sold space. *Ajit*, a leading Punjabi daily from Jalandhar followed it with 39% and *Punjab Kesari*, another Hindi daily from Jalandhar with 33.8%. The portion of the paper that is not advertising is called the Editorial content. This means that it is both news and views. Advertising and Editorial...
content are typically based on a ratio of 405 and 605 respectively. Both are directly proportionate to each other. Increase of ration of any of the two means the decrease of the ratio of the other. Therefore, the editorial content in *The Tribune, Punjab Kesari and Ajit* automatically becomes 60%, 66.2% and 61% respectively. Thus, *Punjab Kesari* outweighed the others as far as editorial content was concerned.

**Space-wise coverage given to agricultural news and views in the three newspapers:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Newspaper</th>
<th>Total News/views coverage of a Newspaper (col cm²)</th>
<th>Coverage given exclusively to Agricultural News (col cm²)</th>
<th>Coverage given exclusively to Agricultural views/opinion pieces (col cm²)</th>
<th>Total coverage given to both news and views on Agriculture (col cm²)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Tribune</td>
<td>5243279</td>
<td>69932 (1.3%)</td>
<td>8447 (0.16%)</td>
<td>78379 (1.5%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Punjab Kesari</td>
<td>4416145</td>
<td>38009 (0.86%)</td>
<td>2051 (.05%)</td>
<td>40060 (0.91%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ajit</td>
<td>3469207</td>
<td>38582 (1.1%)</td>
<td>9718 (0.28%)</td>
<td>48300 (1.4%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Tribune is a leading regional daily and leaving its imprints since 1881, has circulation of 3,26,568 copies, Punjab Kesari which was started in 1965 has the circulation of 1,066,461 copies, similarly Ajit which started off as an urdu paper was changed into a Punjabi paper in
1955 has a circulation of 4,10,790 copies. The total circulation of all the three newspapers thus becomes 1,80,3819 copies. In other words, these are reaching roughly 1,80,3819 households. Readership of all these papers goes much beyond the circulatory figures depending upon the varied number of readers in these households.

This means these papers have a considerable base in the society and are catering to diverse needs of large number of people. But when it comes to agricultural coverage in an agrarian society, its agriculture coverage is in very dismal shape.

As the table clearly indicates *The Tribune, Punjab Kesari and Ajit* have given very less space to agriculture i.e., 1.5%, .91% and 1.4% respectively. This is very negligible coverage or in other words, agriculture is not a priority area for all these newspapers be it an English, Hindi or Punjabi newspaper. Though the study of other kinds of news and views have not been made a part of this research, yet it is most likely that these newspapers prioritize more on Political, Crime, Sports and Entertainment based stories. Thus it could be anything else but not agriculture. The table further indicates that agriculture appears in the pages of the newspapers more in the form of news than the views like the editorials, articles or news features.

Agriculture being a major thrust area of development definitely requires much attention and coverage from the media but results have been quite contrary to this. Even the agricultural views in form of articles and editorials are very few, meaning less space to expert opinion about agriculture. Agricultural views covered not even one percent of the total newspaper space over a period of six months.

**Page-wise breakup of agricultural news coverage in the three newspapers**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Newspaper</th>
<th>Front page</th>
<th>Last Page</th>
<th>Any other Page</th>
<th>Total no. of news items</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Tribune</td>
<td>55 (13.6%)</td>
<td>96 (24%)</td>
<td>252 (62.4%)</td>
<td>403</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
It is not only the space in column cm$^2$ but also the placement of a news item which matters a lot in a newspaper. Placement of a story adds prominence and importance. “The front page is a newspaper’s front door. It’s the first thing a reader sees. The stories that appear there are ones that will be talked about all day.” It is the newspaper only which decides what should be talked about. In other words, the issues which the newspaper bosses find important and interesting, becomes the front page news. This is how they set an agenda. Our years of experiences have eventually taught us that it is the predisposition with politics, crime, sports, scandals etc. that becomes the headlines of a newspaper. The data here further strengthens the fact that agriculture is the least priority area.

The table clearly indicates that *The Tribune* covered just 13.6% of the total agricultural coverage of the newspaper on front page. *Punjab Kesari* did comparatively better as it got published 17.8% of its total agricultural stories on its front pages. *Ajit*, did a handsome job in this respect as it placed 28% agriculture stories on its front pages. This data clearly marks the trend that Punjabi Press leads the others on this front when it comes to front page coverage. However, the data reveals that *The Tribune* i.e, the English Press has been ahead of *Punjab Kesari* and *Ajit* i.e, Hindi and Punjabi Press respectively in publishing agriculture related items. This belies the general notions that vernacular Press talks more about agriculture, the predominant occupation of this region.

If *The Tribune* covered it less on front page, it covered it more (24%) on its last page which is another important page of a newspaper. The last page is mostly reserved for one kind of stories in most of the newspapers. For instance, *Ajit* caters to NRI segment settled in countries like Australia, Canada, England, USA etc. This is very important segment for
Punjab as Punjabis in large numbers are settled abroad and they have their extended families in Punjab. This page is thus genuinely important page for most of the Punjabi readers. On the contrary, in *The Tribune* and *Punjab Kesari*, last page is open for every kind of news. Given the importance of this page, it is good that agriculture related items find a good place in the newspapers.

An Event Study was conducted to find out the specific coverage given to that event in the newspapers. This part of research was carried out to study how a mega event on agriculture takes shape and project the agro-issues and how it gets reported the following day. Punjab Government under the Progressive Punjab campaign organised the Agriculture Summit 2014 held at Mohali, near Chandigarh from 16th to 19th February, 2014.

This Agriculture Summit had been organized to catalyze the process of improving the sustainability and economic viability of farming. It was an Agro-Technology and Business event to transform Agriculture from sustainable to profitable, localized to globalized and production driven to market driven. More than 300 reputed National and International Companies/ Exhibitors had participated in the event under exclusive industry and sector specific pavilions and more than 1 lac visitors comprising of farmers, entrepreneurs, researchers, faculty, students and other stakeholders from across the country visited the event and attended the Technical Sessions and Farmers Summit.

The study made it clear that the event was not given due importance by all the papers. On one side, *The Tribune* gave coverage and space to the event and highlighted the issues of crop diversification, direct sowing of paddy, subsidy on power and water supply, FDI in agricultural sector, progressive farming techniques and also the displaying of sophisticated agricultural machinery discussed over the period of four days but on the other hand *Punjab Kesari* has given a little coverage to the event, giving space to it on the third page of the newspaper; thus making it less important. The paper also called the summit as a political rally
by the government. *Ajit* on the flip side had been in favour of the whole event and gave a positive coverage to it. The opening day news coverage focused on the demand for the allotment of separate budget by the Chief Minister. The paper also highlighted the opinions of various agricultural experts about Indian agriculture, its problems and immediate solutions that were present on the occasion.

Apart from news coverage, very less space had been given to the expert views/opinions regarding the summit. Among the English papers, *The Tribune* had come up with one editorial focusing on the need of crop diversification and newer innovations on the agriculture front. On the other hand, *Ajit* gave a good amount of space and coverage to the whole summit and also gave space to the opinion pieces about the same.

On studying the coverage and space given to this, mega show by the government, it has been found that it was only the Punjabi paper- *Ajit* which gave good amount of coverage to the event, *The Tribune* followed closely at the second place and *Punjab Kesari* at the third.

The table below shows the coverage by the three newspapers during February 17-20, 2014:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Newspaper</th>
<th>Total no. of news stories</th>
<th>Total no. of views</th>
<th>Placement of News</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| The Tribune | 20 | Editorial- 1  
Article- Nil | Front Page- 2  
Second page- 18  
Any other- Nil |
| Punjab Kesari | 9 | Editorial- Nil  
Article- Nil | Front Page- 1  
Second page- Nil  
Any other- 8 |
| Ajit | 8 | Editorial- 1  
Article- 1 | Front Page- 2  
Second page- Nil  
Any other- 6 |
SUMMARY OF THE RESULTS

This research has been conducted to analyze the coverage given to agricultural news and views in the three leading regional dailies in English, Hindi and Punjabi publishing in Punjab i.e., The Tribune, Punjab Kesari and Ajit. This six month study was carried out to analyze the nature of the write-ups i.e., news and views and their placement on the various pages of the newspaper, so as to reach some logical conclusion on the basis of quantitative study using the content analysis as the research methodology. Content Analysis has been developed by the researcher as a method to study the messages of print and visual media. This technique does not measure the effects of media or explain why a particular media message gets produced in the first place. This method enables the researchers to analyze and interpret the figures produced by content counts. Agriculture is such a vast field that until and unless its development is assessed in all its allied agro sectors, it cannot lead to a complete understanding. Therefore, the content analysis of all the agriculture content appeared during the study in these three papers was categorised and sub-categorised in every possible manner which could help understand the field of agriculture. How does an agriculture story becomes a top story or an active agenda was also studied in this research.

The hypotheses posed for the study are as follows:

- The first hypothesis has been that the daily newspapers especially English and Hindi are not a preferred media for advertising agriculture related products.

This hypothesis has been proved right. During the six months study it came to light that number of advertisements related to agricultural inputs had been very less. Two advertisements on agro related inputs in The Tribune, six in Punjab Kesari and 45 in Ajit in a six months period is very discouraging. Taking into consideration the role of advertisements in revenue generation it is clear that no media can deny time and space to advertisements. Therefore, if number of these agriculture advertisements is less in these
three papers, it means that advertisers of agriculture related products did not find English and Hindi newspapers (The Tribune and Punjabi Kesari) a suitable media for advertising. Undoubtedly, they reposed some trust on Ajit as number of agricultural advertisements in Ajit have been much higher than the other two newspapers. This also proves that advertisers in this sector rely more on Punjabi language papers because this way they can reach large number of Punjabi speaking people in Punjab. If Ajit is ahead of the other two, it could easily be concluded that this newspaper has countryside hold as compared to the others. In other words, it has a stronger rural base than English and Hindi media. Therefore, it has been able to attract the advertisers from agro sector also.

- The second hypothesis has been that agricultural content appear on the pages of newspapers in the news format only. The newspapers, irrespective of their language, contribute very little as far as editorials and articles are concerned. In other words, opinion pieces are very less in number.

This hypothesis has been proved right. The results of the study indicate that The Tribune, Punjab Kesari and Ajit published total 420, 389 and 330 stories on agriculture respectively during the six months period. However, the major part of these stories was in the news format. Going by the data, it comes out to be 403, 382 and 301. This means that 95.9%, 98.2% and 91.2% stories in The Tribune, Punjab Kesari and Ajit respectively were in news format only. In other words, just 4.1%, 1.8% and 8.8% content appeared in the form of views i.e editorials and articles. News are important because we come across what is happening around us. If more than 90% agricultural coverage is based on news coverage then it is a good sign that newspapers are trying to feed us with what is happening on the agriculture front. News are an important source of information and awareness. However, apart from the news content of a newspaper it is the editorial part which elaborates the things in wider perspectives. It is the editorials and articles which interpret the things for the readers. This
study shows that there have been just 06 editorials and 11 articles in *The Tribune*, 03 editorials and 04 articles in *Punjab Kesari* and 10 editorials and 19 articles in *Ajit*. As far as space wise coverage of news is concerned, it covered 89.2%, 94.8% and 79.8% in *The Tribune, Punjab Kesari and Ajit* respectively. But when we compare it with total news, this is a very negligible coverage or in other words, agriculture is not a priority area for all these newspapers be it an English, Hindi or Punjabi newspaper. The newspapers prioritize more on Political, Crime, Sports and Entertainment based stories. Thus, it could be anything else but not agriculture. Agriculture being a major thrust area of development definitely requires much attention and coverage from the media but results have been quite contrary to this. If the agricultural views i.e articles and editorials are less in number, it means less space for expert opinions on agriculture. Agricultural views covered not even one percent of the total newspaper space over a period of six months.

- The third hypothesis has been that the agricultural news seldom appears on the front pages of the newspapers. In other words agriculture is hardly a priority of a newspaper, be it English, Hindi or a Punjabi newspaper.

This hypothesis has also been proved right. The results show that out of the total of 403 agricultural based news stories in *The Tribune*, only 55 (13.6%) appeared on the front page. In *Punjab Kesari* 68 news stories (17.8%) out of total 382 were on front page and 84 (28%) out of 301 in *Ajit* published on the front page. The data here indicates that *Ajit*, the widely read Punjabi newspaper in the region covered more stories on the front page. Front page of a newspaper is always an eye- catcher for the readers, as they give much attention to the first page only. Most important stories are always placed on the first page. The prominence of a news items decreases with its placement on other pages of a newspaper. The news appearing on other pages seldom gets importance from the readers. Front page of a newspaper is always reserved for highly important news of international, national and regional interest. The
obsession of newspapers with politics is open and clear. Agriculture never falls into a
category that it could entertain somebody. But agriculture surely is a field which sustains
development of a country. Agriculture in India is the way of life. Therefore, talking about
agriculture on the front pages may not suit a newspaper but is surely the need of the day.

- The fourth hypothesis raised for this study asserts that as such there is no thrust area
  or a specified agenda regarding agriculture.

This hypothesis has been proved right. The results of the study clearly show that as such there
is no thrust area or a specified agenda regarding agriculture. For instance, two major concerns
on agriculture front are farmer suicides and crop diversification. These are one of those issues
which need to be high on media agenda. It is never a binding on any media or it can never be
taught or told on what to write and what not to write or what ought to be written. But it is
surely expected from the media that certain issues be talked about regularly so as to influence
the policy makers on those issues which are closely linked with a major sector of
development. During the six month study, The Tribune published four, Punjab Kesari two
and Ajit six news stories on farmer suicides respectively which account to be just 1.3%,
0.64% and 1.3% of the total space wise coverage of agriculture. Similarly, there had been no
news story, article or an editorial regarding crop diversification during the study period.
Whatever is getting published on agriculture in newspapers is scattered and casual references.
On the contrary, anything related with politics, crime, cricket, celebrities etc. is laid bare at
thread thin levels. But when it comes to agriculture, it is never done at micro levels. Thus, the
macroscopic way of seeing at agriculture cannot contribute in agriculture development in the
way it should be. This clearly indicates that media never finds talking about agriculture
lucrative or money-spinning. Moreover, this is the age of corporatization, commercialization
and conglomeration. This demands that industry is run on profitable lines. The media today is
a big industry and thus is highly market oriented. Furthermore, media is basically urban
 oriented. It is always argued that media gives only what public demands. Going by the agenda setting notions, agriculture can never be a priority sector for the people or even the government if it is not an active agenda of mainstream media.

- The fifth hypothesis has been that Punjabi Press leads the other newspapers as far as agricultural coverage (news and views) is concerned.

As far as this hypothesis is concerned the situation has been the other way round. This hypothesis had been raised thinking that a Punjabi newspaper being more close to the readers due to language factor could be raising issues more close to the hearts of people of Punjab, the state which we call the food bowl of the country. However, the findings reveal that it is the English newspaper i.e, The Tribune which is ahead of others but the Punjabi newspaper i.e, Ajit falls at third position in this regard. However, when we take into consideration the spacewise coverage i.e, the word strength of a story, then it is the Punjabi newspaper gives a vivid picture of agricultural coverage in the newspapers under study in terms of number of agricultural based write-ups (news and views). The Tribune published about 420 followed by Punjab Kesari at 389 and Ajit 330 respectively. It is however clear from the given data that maximum numbers of write-ups have appeared in the English and not in the language papers. This shows that English Press projected more stories on agricultural development than Hindi and Punjabi papers.

Agricultural views are less in number as compared to agricultural news. The opinion pieces are more informative than a news item because they are written by experts of the field and are reminiscent in nature but news is just listing of the facts. The views can prove helpful to the readers in one way or the other but have not been given much coverage in the papers. Over the period of six months, Ajit has covered variety of topics like agriculture and economy, use of improved variety of seeds and fertilisers, kisan melas and farmer suicide etc. Yet, contrary to the belief that Punjabi Press pays more heed to agriculture, Ajit has been far
behind the English newspaper i.e, The Tribune and Hindi newspaper i.e, Punjab Kesari as far as number of news is concerned.

However, the contribution of Ajit, the Punjabi paper came out to be more than rest of the two papers when it comes to separate regular pull-outs in the three newspapers. The findings show that it is only Ajit which is publishing special pull-out on Thursday named as Nari Sansar which dedicates a one full page to agriculture every week by the name Sada Pind Sade Khet. This pull-out is exclusively dedicated to agriculture. No such pull-out was found in other papers. Therefore, the data regarding this has been kept all inclusive i.e, it has not been counted in the rest of the coverage.

When the 56 write-ups in special pull-outs in Ajit are added to its total 330 write-ups in regular pages, the figure becomes 386 which means that Ajit i.e, Punjabi Press still lacks behind the English paper i.e, The Tribune which published total 420 write-ups on agriculture during the six months. When we reanalyze the data on column cm² basis (Table 2.0), The Tribune covered 78379 col cm² space on agriculture and Ajit covered just 48300 col cm². However, when this 48300 col cm² are added to 18784 col cm² it becomes 67084col cm². Thus, it is evident that English Press outweighs the Punjabi and Hindi Press in development communication in agriculture sector.

- The sixth hypothesis has been that agriculture headlines are mostly political statements.

This hypothesis has been proved right. The agriculture headlines analyzed during the content analysis of agricultural coverage that followed a mega event. This part of research was carried out to study how a mega event on agriculture takes shape and project the agro-issues and how it gets reported the following day.

The study of Agriculture Summit clearly proves that headlines in the newspapers during this time had been more of political statements rather than given emphasis on the agriculture. The
headlines mentioned the statements of Chief Minister and other ministers and officials present on the occasion. In *The Tribune* 10 headlines out of the total 20, *Punjab Kesari* five out of the total nine and *Ajit* six out of the total eight have been the political statements made during the Agro-Summit. This makes it evident that a mega event like an agro-summit is not significant for the Press but the presence of political leaders and their statements are more valuable. Even here the agriculture takes a back seat and political lectures, statements and announcements become highly important. There is nothing wrong in publishing such statements but it surely hampers objectivity in reporting and restricts critical evaluation of a situation.

- The seventh hypothesis has been that agriculture is an active agenda for the papers only when it is high on the government agenda.

This hypothesis has been proved right. The Content Analysis of Coverage of Agriculture Summit 2014 in *The Tribune, Punjab Kesari and Ajit* shows that agriculture becomes an active agenda for the papers only when it is high on the agenda of the government. The 20 news stories and one editorial in *The Tribune*, eight news stories, one editorial and an article in *Ajit* and seven news stories in *Punjab Kesari* in four-five days clearly indicates that newspapers depend heavily on the feeding by official machinery. If the government prioritizes the agriculture sector only then the media would give priority to it. However, mega events like summits cannot be held every now and then. But the agriculture development can be talked about whole the year round. The regular updates on agriculture sector through extension services of various government development agencies like agriculture ministries, agriculture departments, agriculture research and education institutions should reach regularly to various media organisations so as to sensitise media on agriculture.

**Research Findings:** The major findings of the study show that in terms of space given to the agriculture based news stories the three selected newspapers have not contributed much. *The*
*Tribune* has given 1.3%, *Punjab Kesari* 0.86% and *Ajit* 1.1% space to agricultural news. The space wise coverage provided to the agricultural views (editorials, articles, features and letter to the editor) in *The Tribune* has been 0.20% of the total area whereas it has been 0.06% in *Punjab Kesari* and 0.28% in the *Ajit*. On studying the agricultural advertisements and agriculture based visuals it has been given 0.02%, 0.13% and 0.58% and 23%, 5.8% and 8.9% space in *The Tribune, Punjab Kesari and Ajit* respectively.

Agriculture is one such specialized sector which needs expertise in agriculture understanding. This necessitates that there are very good reporters in the newspapers who themselves understand the pulse of Indian agriculture. It is such a vast and wide sector that unless and until the media men go to the fields, see the ground realities, understand the cultivation procedures, observe the socio-cultural nerve of the land and generalize the upcoming scenario, the agriculture stories cannot become news. On studying the three papers during the Agro-Summit, this assumption has turned out to be true in all respects.

With the spread of literacy in rural Punjab, newspapers have become an effective means of communication for spreading farm information among the masses. Newspapers provide information, education, awareness, guidance and entertainment to their readers. Newspapers thus can be efficiently used to provide precise and practical information to the farmers regarding their farm problems, new agriculture policies and plans. To conclude, it can be said that agriculture and allied activities together form an important part of the Indian economy. Every new day agricultural sector has been facing new challenges and problems but is not getting due importance in the newspapers.