CHAPTER -1

INTRODUCTION AND RESEARCH DESIGN
Communication is a basic instinct of man and a social, economic, cultural and political need. Development of communication has gone through many stages such as speech, writing, symbols, art, music, printing, telegraph, telephone, wireless, electronic devices, etc. Today, communication systems have become increasingly sophisticated, varied and equally complicated.

Media is thought of and used as a device for communication. But in a developing country like ours, wedded to the democratic political system, mass media is expected to play a very challenging role of being "an extension of the man". (1)

In the absence of physical mobility of an individual at all the places at all the time at all the happenings, mass media works as "an ear which listens to the spoken words by other individuals", as "eyes which watch the happening around" and works as "a master which interprets and analyses the collected information". (2) Whatever may be the reaction to this simile awarded to mass media, one thing is certain that in the present context mass media has acquired prime importance both as a means to progress and as a determining factor in the social and intellectual development of an individual as well as the society. (3)

Difficult task of communicators

A more penetrating dimension is added when the mass media is to be used for public consciousness and awareness. In this context, the task of the communicators is to cross the barriers of the time and the space to reach people. In India, communication has to meet the political communication needs of more than 800 million people (4). It has to reach the eyes, the
minds and the ears of these people.

This concept acquires different perspective because of the presence of diverse linguo-ethnic groups in our continental nation.

To-day, the mass communications system has many other constraints such as financial, structural and ideological. The greatest handicap to the communicators is the political interference of direct and indirect varieties. This makes their task all the more difficult.

Communication revolution:

In spite of the constrains, the communication revolution has ushered in and a new information age has set in. Efforts to percolate this new information to all in general and to the unprevilaged people in particular has become the duty of all the mass media (5).

Historical perspective:

Here is the glimpse of major three mass media's growth:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Figure</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Source</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>41</td>
<td>'62</td>
<td>TV INDIA, DDI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>84,114</td>
<td>'72</td>
<td>TV INDIA, DDI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20,95,537</td>
<td>'82</td>
<td>TV INDIA, DDI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>456,00,000</td>
<td>'92</td>
<td>TV INDIA, DDI</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Original Source: Ogilvy Benson and Mathers


If we look at distribution of TV sets, according to N.C. Chowla, The Times of India. (19.1.1986), the figure is 15 lacs in 1986. ORG study revealed 120 lacs TV sets in 1987.
### Audience Build-up

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Figure</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Source</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>270 lacs</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>TV INDIA, DDI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>380 lacs</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>TV INDIA, DDI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>800 lacs</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>TV INDIA, DDI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2600 lacs</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>TV INDIA, DDI</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Original source: IN INDIA; PATHFINDERS; MEDIASEARCH QUOTED IN TV INDIA, DDI.

According to official figures by the Doordarshan, 25% of the population was covered by telecast in 1981 whereas in April 1989, 73% of the population was covered by 335 transmitters. [52 High Power transmitters, 237 Low Power transmitters and 47 Very Low Power Transmitters].

### Radio

#### No. of Transmitters

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Figure</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Source</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>186 TOTAL</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>Manorama (88)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>142 MW</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>Manorama (88)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40 SW</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>Manorama (88)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4VHF (FM)</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>Manorama (88)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Coverage

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Figure</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Source</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>95% Population</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>Manorama 88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>86% Area</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>Manorama 88</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
These figures reveal the pacing and phenomenal increase of resources at the disposal of all mass media. It also demonstrates how communication revolution has taken place in spite of all the constraints, particularly on TV and radio as they are in the public domain. Curiously enough, these media are being utilised by people in an increasing measure. This is because of introduction of modern technology and increasing literacy.

Information Technology

Information technology has changed in the last decade, and as it is changing rapidly, we are at the critical juncture in the age of communication revolution to capitalise on the development. As the world advances, the role of communication also has to advance and at the same time, it has to be more complex and more subtle. (P.C. Joshi in "New Information Order")

Pertinent question:

The pertinent question to the mind of each and every communicator is that will new information order unfold their abilities? Will this new information order lead to greater creativity and productivity? Will it contribute to the process of national integration? Will it lead to socio-economic transformation and political-cultural awareness? (7) Effective communication is the essential condition of progress. Progress means enabling the communicator and the receiver to express themselves.
Political Communication in democratic setup

The government today is democratic and elected representatives have to work for promoting the welfare of people. It has to take measures where people feel that three basic principles of freedom, equality, and unity are reflected in their everyday life. In this context Political communication has to ensure not only the survival of democracy but take measures for its rapid growth and enlist people’s participation.

Misconception of Common man:

Today, concept of common man of political communication system is that “it is politically motivated”. It is also believed that “political communication is to create congenial atmosphere to the interests of the party-in-power and politicians at the helm of affairs”. This concept is very shallow and narrow. Today, governing the nation embraces the entire existence of human being right from birth to death. There is not a single aspect of human being on which governing authorities have no link or hold. It is all embracing, and indirectly the public communication systems covers the issues and processes spread over such a broad spectrum of the life of the people.

Operational definition

Operational definition of the term “Political Communication” in this thesis is ....” Communication that embraces all aspects of governing the nation.”

Scope and boundaries:

According to this definition, the scope and boundaries of political communication assume a newer angle with the main thrust on explaining what is meant by “governing the nation”. By the term "Governing the nation", I mean communication to work at two levels

(i) Those who are governing the nation and
(ii) Those who are governed and their interaction of the both.
The first level of those who govern the nation includes the executive, legislature and the judiciary within the framework of the constitution. Another level of those who are the sovereign people but as the governed they are at the receiving end i.e. people. Since it is the goal of democracy that people's supremacy should prevail, the second level can not be ignored or considered to be of lower level. Both the levels should be considered as equal partners in the process of political communication in a democratic set-up. Both the levels should jointly and harmoniously work together to bring the developmental activities at the door of common man. Political communication should be a link between the government and the people.

Approach:

Political communication can meet with the gigantic challenge embodied in the previous definition by adopting following approach:

1. Imparting information
2. Offering interpretation with analytical perspectives
3. Providing environment for democratic socialism
4. Performing the role of a catalyst
5. Representing citizens' voice.
6. Educating citizens about their rights and duties
7. Checking misuse of power

Research Design:

In order to understand the aims and objectives of political communications, channels of political communications, barriers and filters of communications and how best it can be more effective, following research design was evolved.
Research Design

Research design is like a blueprint. It was evolved for (i) formation of a problem for research; (ii) delimiting the boundaries of the proposed research and elaboration of its substantive components; (iii) sources and method of data collection; (iv) data analysis and implications of the research findings.(9)

OBJECTIVES:

The main objective of this thesis is to understand the scope, limitations, reach and dimensions of political communication through mass media in India. The related objectives of the study are as follows:

1. To find out the perception of the adult citizens regarding the term "political communication"

2. To find out their existing knowledge of political communications channels and their exposure to these channels. Also to find out credibility and effectiveness of these channels and reasons for the same.

3. To analyse political content presented by mass media channels.

4. To ascertain the adult citizens' rating regarding the performance of mass media (contentwise and presentationwise)

5. To find out whether present political communication build up public opinion in a significant way

6. To find out whether present political communication channels make people politically conscious and to ascertain the extent and reasons.

7. To ascertain how far the Government ownership affects political content and its presentation

8. To find out whether political communication
channels incorporate various important basic concepts of democracy.

9. To find out people's expectations from the present political communication channels.

10. To ascertain what measures should be taken to make political communication through mass media more effective.

**Theoretical framework:**

In mass-media communication, proper and full understanding of democratic concept is a pre-requisite. In absence of such a concept, no communicator can project his presentation effectively. Understanding this concept in its true sense in India to-day is very difficult. No ideological polarisation is taking place. Every political party lowers down the image of the other party. As a result, for petty political gains, politicians misuse mass-media. In democracy mass-media and communicators should be public-oriented. If this is to be made a living reality, people have to be "eternally vigilant" and public opinion should not be allowed to be changed by the politicians. They must be compelled to work for people and not for parties and personalities. In a democracy, people's supremacy and right to have all information should reign. For securing fundamental rights, they have to be very vigilant at all stages. Freedom of expression and liberty then, alone can be had. Eternal vigilance is the price of liberty. For this purpose, people will have to be provided useful, relevant, impartial and detailed information and analysis intelligible to people. Interpretation and investigation should also be with this view. The theoretical framework followed by me is of Professor Lasswell: 'A convenient way to describe an act of communication is to answer the following question:
Following American political scientist Professor Lasswell's communication model, I have studied political communication with null hypothesis.

"The present channels of mass media of political communication do not effectively transmit political content that should make the viewers politically informed and aware a function of a mature democracy".
An in-depth study of the mass media need be done to bring out the what, how and the why of the limits of communication channels and the lines on which it can be improved and made effective.

**Nature of research inquiry:**

To test out this hypothesis, I evolved a research methodology aiming at exploratory study. Since people-oriented analytical literature is very scarce, I adopted a method of combination of survey of literature (secondary data) as well as empirical approach to understand adult citizens' attitude, approach, knowledge, practice, aspirations, problems etc. on one hand and the political communicators on other hand.

**Review of literature:**

Review of literature in form of Government publication was attempted to remain informed with official version of communication scene of the country in general. Secondary data in form of media critics' articles, reviews, books, newspaper clippings, Doordarshan programmes, radio programmes were reviewed to conceptualise hypothesis, to devise proper research method, technique, tools and to evolve an analytical framework.

**Research Method:**

Survey method

**Research technique:**

It is quite impossible or impractical to collect data about people by observation in the field of political communication. Interviews and questioning are commonly
I used to gather information. I, too have followed interviewing and questioning techniques.

**Research tool:**

Since the study was conducted at two levels, two different tools were devised. The first level was of adult citizens and interview schedule was devised for them (Appendix -1). The second level was of political communicators. An interview guideline was devised for them (Appendix - 2).

**Study area:**

Study was carried out in Ahmedabad District of Gujarat

**Sampling frame:**

Adult Citizens

**Sampling procedure:**

Non-probability

**Sampling method:**

Accidental

Sample size : 200 Adult citizens

50 Political Communicators

Variables : Area :

100 urban adult citizens; 100 rural adult citizens

Sex :

100 male adult citizens;
100 female adult citizens.
Frame of Analysis:

Data was entered into a computer and a specific software programme was prepared to analyse data issuewise, sexwise, agewise, incomewise, areawise and educationwise.

Content Analysis:

In order to understand the role being played by mass media at present, content analysis of all the three major mass media i.e. TV, radio and Press was carried out for the period of two weeks (July 1, 1988 to July 15, 1988). A proforma (Appendix-3) was developed to analyse content in terms of:

- Subject, area, information, awareness, duration, space, approach, format, presentation style, production agency and language.

Reporting research:

The information obtained from secondary data sources and the analytical interpretation of primary data is reported in this thesis.

The outcome of intensive interaction with the communicators and the receivers coupled with the survey of literature and content analysis is presented in this thesis.

Chapter-I deals with the introduction of the subject; definition, scope and limitations of the thesis. It also provides information on the research hypothesis, method, tool and technique, and the analysis frame.

Chapter-II reviews the existing literature. Focussing various viewpoints on the reach and extent of mass media, its content and presentation, filters and barriers.
Chapter III attempts to analyse political communication from the viewpoint of information, area, presentation style, production agency and language.

Chapter IV portrays the communicators' perceptions of political communication through mass media on the various aspects like effectiveness of the content, presentation, censorship, autonomy, political awareness etc.

Chapter V portrays the adult citizens' perceptions of political communication through mass media on people's involvement in politics, knowledge and exposure of political content, credibility of mass media, opinion building, public awareness etc.

Chapter VI analyses the flaws of political communication and their removal of ideological, operational and human level.

Chapter VII offers the perspective that emerges from the review of literature, content analysis, intensive interaction with the communicators and the receivers. The perspective lays stress on people-centered political communication.
References:

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13. Louise Kidder, Seltiz Wrightsman and Cook's, "Research Methods in Social Relations, 1980"