Chapter 2

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2.1. Research trends with relation to mass media

Shukla (2000) reveals that the major source of information for rural people is the radio (87%). About 95% people reported that they are familiar with listening to the radio either regularly or occasionally. A study by Jangir (1999) found a significant association between personal characterization i.e., age, education and income and with the knowledge level of respondents, whereas size of family was found to be insignificantly associated with the knowledge level of respondents. Khurana and Kapoor (1998), while studying the programme ‘KrishiDarshan’ reached the conclusion that rural women did not let their household work suffer at the cost of T.V. viewing. Evening ‘get together’ of the respondents (84.4%) was a deep rooted habit and Krishi Darshan was not found to have been seen enough to change their daily routine. Findings of a study done by Gupta (1992), revealed that the majority of the respondents preferred the radio listening (73.33%) to the reading of newspapers (66.67%) and television viewing (60.00%).
Brown (1986) found that in any society, feminine personality comes to define itself in relation and connection to other people more than the masculine personality does. In an analysis of the work of several Japanese films, researcher Yasuko (1977) revealed, ‘the predominance of the perception of women is either ‘wife or whore’, the dichotomy already found in media portrayals’. Studies on television programmes have also shown that media ‘present an extremely narrow range of female image, a young in traditional feminine occupations if employed at all, seeking identity through love, or marriage, deliberately home oriented, self sacrificing and dependable’.

Television helps to produce a crucial categorization of its viewers into masculine and feminine subjects. Mellen Camp (1990) traced this back to the 1950’s where she finds ‘the origin of the gender base of television with sport and news shows for men, cooking and fashion shows for women’.

Raymond Williams (1962) defined ‘communication as passing of attitudes from person to person’ while Berelson and Steiner were of the view that ‘communication as a process of transmitting messages using symbols, words, pictures, figures and graphs’. Sharma (1987) while discussing the role of media in development stated ‘media can be used for increasing literacy and socio-economic enhancement in both rural and urban areas’. Doob (1961) said that in the examination of the role of mass media in the transition of traditional societies or developing
nations to a modern form, the contributions of media can best be seen. Both Learner (1958) and Schramm (1964) have espoused the view that mass media prepare, instigate and undergird the development of a modern society.

A study by Westoff and Bankole (1997) found that ‘exposure to television, radio and print media was significantly and often strongly associated with reproductive behavior even with all of the many controls imposed in Africa’. Two years later (1999), the researchers reported similar results for Pakistan, India, and Bangladesh. A study by Roy (1969) found a significant correlation between the degree of exposure to the radio and amount of change in health. Singh and Singh (1981) also confirmed similar findings in their study on communication and development that ‘there is a positive correlation between communication and development of a region’. They were of the view that both communication and development processes support and reinforce each other.

Resta (2002) asserted that ‘radio enables the learners to take greater responsibility for their own learning and constructing their own knowledge’. According to Moore and Tait (2002), ‘the utilization of new communication technologies in distance education systems has compelled educators and trainers to forego radio as a low technique educational tool’. There is similar work of Agrawal
(1993) where he stated that, ‘the use of communication in terms of correspondence learning helps in improving the quality of education while bridging the social educational gap’.

Study by Jensen and Oster (2009) in India concluded that the launching of cable television lowered fertility. They were of the view that ‘television may affect fertility by providing information on family planning or changing the value of women’s status’ and that television exposures influence the rural masses to urbanized lifestyles, behaviors and values that are totally different than their own’. Hindin (2004) opined that ‘mass media have a role in terms of creating awareness and to initiate change in health sector’. The different literature on health communication also point out that there is a strong correlation between exposure to mass media campaigns and HIV and other contagious disease related behaviour change. One can cite the adoption of condom use, and the creation of awareness on the need for reduction in the number of sexual partners.

Faulder and Galda (1984) found that ‘educational radio programs have been used in a wide range of subject areas in different countries’. Goding and Ginsburg (1984) revealed that in Thailand, the radio is widely used for training teacher, for teaching mathematics to school children and for other activity. In Mexico, the
researcher searched out that radio was used for literacy training as well as for other programs also. Shears (1984) found that in Nigeria, radio was used for management courses for the agricultural sector. White (1976) found that in The Dominion Republic radio has been used for promoting primary education. Mohanty (1989) stated, being capable of reaching scattered audience simultaneously, radio has been extensively used in many third world countries for educational advancement as well as traditional or other alternative learning purpose for different categories of learners. The advantage of radio communication is that it is one of the fastest, cheapest, and powerful and most suitable way of communication for rural people.

Rao (1966), in a comparative study of two Indian villages, found a strong correlation between communication, social, economic and political development. In a survey of about 460 villages in Turkey, Frey (1966) found a clear correlation between communication and development. A study of Lerner (1958) showed that, ‘there is a strong correlation between communication and development which in about 50 countries, revealed that media participation highly correlated with literacy, urbanization, and political participation; Lerner also found that the degree of change in communication correlated with behavioural changes’. Similar findings were reported by Cater and Schramm (1959) for 100 countries and by Farace (1965) for more than fifty countries. Lerner (1958), while discussing the relation of development
with that of any mass media said that, ‘the greater the communication facilities are available, the greater or even faster modernization is possible’.

Hartman (1989) conducted a study of the role played by mass media in Indian villages in promoting social change and development. The study reveals mass communication was not a major and important source of information and influence than interpersonal communication in the adoption of new agricultural and health practices. Chakarborty (2000) conducted a study on the effect of personal profile and socioeconomic factors on knowledge gain through radio. The findings of the study revealed that, ‘education, social participation, extension contact, annual income, land size and economic motivation were strongly and significantly correlated with knowledge gain after radio broadcast’. Ugboajals and Idonu (1980) also confirmed in their study that ‘to achieve development material resources alone are not sufficient; source of information also plays an important role’. In an African context, the researcher found that, ‘there is a very strong correlation between communication and economic development’.

Wilbur Schramm (1964) recognized the significance of communication in the process of national development for the third world counties. He were of the view that ‘mass media motivate the lives of people by providing the information resources and
exposing people for learning opportunities’. Schramm’s conceptualization of the usefulness of mass communication for development became an important source of many development related programmes. Schramm has also identified the practical problems of using mass communication to promote social development and economic growth in third world countries where he developed a relationship between economic growth and development communication which has been the main principle for development programmes. He also concluded that ‘as economic activity grows, information is disseminated widely and knowledge can be gathered more broadly’. Lerner, Schramm and Rogers emphasized the role of mass media for socio-political change and development. Lerner (1958) categorised four stages of development which were industrialization, literacy, media exposure and political participation. He stated that ‘to achieve development, people have to be mobile, empathetic, and participatory’.

Gunawardana and Sharma (2007) conducted a study on information seeking behaviour of tribal and non-tribal farmers in Udaipur district of Rajasthan. The study revealed that there is a ‘strong correlation between personal characteristics such as education, extension contacts, and size of land holding, and information seeking behaviour of respondents on improved farm practices’. Chapman et.al., (2003) reported, the growth of rural radio stations shows not only the improvements in
information technologies but also makes the style of development process more participatory. Kumar (2004) also identified the ‘importance of radio for participatory communication and as a tool requires in both economic and social development’. Okigbo (1990) while studying the sources of political information among 375 respondents in a rural community in Nigeria found that, ‘radio was the major source of information, compared with other sources of information like relatives, traditional rules and other forms of mass media. The findings also showed that radio was closely followed in terms of importance by relatives as a source of information’.

John Fiske in his book Television Culture (1987) looks at, ‘television’s role as an agent of popular culture, and goes on to consider the relationship between this cultural dimension and television’s status as a commodity of the cultural industries that are deeply inscribed with capitalism’. The detailed textual analysis and audience studies carried out by Fiske (1987) shows ‘how television is absorbed into social experience, and thus made into popular culture’. Lembo (2000) develops a unique theoretical approach integrating cultural, sociology, post modernism and the literature of media effects to explore the ways in which people give meanings to their viewing practices. While recognizing the power of television, Lembo (2000) also emphasizes the importance of social and political factors which affect the lives of individual viewers.
Gupta (1995) observed that ‘radio and television are the best sources for creating awareness and interest among the people regarding a new message or idea but when it comes to adoption of the idea, interpersonal sources such as friends, extension agents, neighbours, family members are the most effective agents’. The researcher also found that there is a positive relation between knowledge and socioeconomic status of individuals, especially to their level of education. Tichenor et.al., (1970) along with other researcher developed their well-known knowledge gap hypothesis which shows that, ‘as the infusion of mass media into a social system rises, those who belong to higher socioeconomic status tend to receive this information at a faster rate than lower socioeconomic status, so that the gap in knowledge between this two groups tends to increase rather than decrease’.

Klapper et.al., (1960) in their works undermined the great power of mass media in bringing about direct effects on the audience. The studies reported that people exposed themselves to persuasive messages in three ways which are selective exposure, selective perception and selective retention. The researchers pointed out that there was a tendency for individuals to expose themselves relatively more to those items of communication that were matched with their beliefs, ideas, values and other factors. Allport and Postman (1947), Jones and Kohler (1958), Lavine and Murphy (1958) found in their research that ‘even recall of information was influenced
by factors such as individual’s needs, wants, moods, perception, and other factors as much’. Lakshmana Rao’s (1966) study of two villages in India, Kothooru and Pathooru found that communication was the prime moulder in the development process. It was the contribution of mass media that brought the change in Kothooru. Traditional ideas, attitudes and behaviour as they existed in Pathooru slowly became a thing of the past.

Zajonc, (1968) opined that attitudes of audience identification is affected by the portals of mass media personalities. The researcher however stated, ‘that mass media exposure may produce and influence positive attitudes and behaviour simply through the dissemination of information. Individuals who are exposed to television programs that portray contraceptive methods or small nuclear families whether the programs are educational, promotional, or entertaining in nature may become positively parted with these issues’. He also stated, media images and messages that shows opulent may also influence fertility by increasing consumption aspirations, which in turn leads to decrease the preferences for a large family. There are many achievements of mass media campaigns which promoted family planning have been proved to be successful in countries like Mexico, Zimbabwe, Nepal, Uganda, Ghana, Bangladesh, Iran, and India. Barber and Axinn (2004) found that in Nepal, ‘there has been a positive correlation between mass media exposure and family planning for
example weaker son preference, smaller families and acceptance of contraceptive use.

La Pastina (2004) observed that tele-novellas in Brazil gives the message of women empowerment. Pace (1993) found that ‘the effect of television introduction in Brazil changed the scenario of social interactions, and changed people's perceptions about the status of their villages in the wider world’. Chong, Duryea and La Ferrara (2007) found positive association between exposure to cable with increases in enrolment in school, increased status of women, changes in naming patterns of their children; with the names of lead characters featured on tele-novellas and decision-making capacity within the family. The researchers also observed that even fertility ratio were declined in Brazil due to access to tele-novellas.

Modi (1985) studied the inter-relation between leisure, mass media and social structure in an empirical situation of Rajasthan. He showed comprehensive description of traditional forms, folk motifs and cultural roots of leisure and the new challenges from the mass media and its encroachment on leisure, culture and social structure. His work was based on an empirical study of a village in Alwar district of Rajasthan and the urban community in Jaipur of Rajasthan. His major findings were ‘there exists a clear con-comittance between the social structure and the structure of
leisure of a society and change in either of the two influences each other’. Thus, Modi establishes that ‘social structure influences the nature and form of leisure and the leisure itself helps in generating newer structure, social norms and culture’.

Fisher (2001) opined that the mass media are supposed ‘to act as multipliers of development and as agents of modernization’. Similar work of Sparks (2001) found ‘radio as the magic multiplier and the farmers are the main target group for information and change’. Mattelart & Mattelart (1998) stated that the media are seen ‘as prime agents for mobilizing people in favour of modernization by disseminating modern attitudes and are more influential in generating awareness of new practices and possibilities, than causing direct social change’. McQuail, (2005) opined that, the impact of media is better understood when compared by other modes of communication channel, including interpersonal interaction. Schramm (1964) said ‘the mass media function as a bridge to a wider world, and as the vehicles for transmitting new ideas and models from the north to the south, and within the south from urban to rural areas’. Lerner (1958) emphasized the ‘relationship between communication, urbanization, and modernization by considering that urbanization is an important component towards enhancing media exposure, which in turn, increases political and economic participation’. Hagen (1962) also emphasizes ‘the need for modernization for development by expanding the mass media’ because he believed
that the ‘traditional values may create obstacle to innovative personalities for the third world countries’.

Rogers and Shoemaker (1971) in their model of diffusion of innovations have formulated five stages which are awareness, interest, evaluation, trial, and adoption or rejection. They were of the view that, ‘decisions of the people whether or not to adopt innovative ideas are influenced primarily by interpersonal factors e.g. friends, family, government officials, opinion leaders etc. rather than directly by the media’. The theory also believes that the media is a powerful motivator to directly cause change in a society. They found that, weaknesses of the diffusion of innovation hypothesis lies in this area. Mass media may create general awareness and facilitate development of appropriate attitudes. Without the involvement of human interaction mass media messages cannot be disseminated’.

Uganda Broadcasting Council (2004) produced the national Electronic Media Performance Study, which revealed that, ‘community FM stations have the potential to meet the needs of the people by producing local content in local dialect, and thus providing people a opportunity to contribute their views on the programmes relevant to their needs’. The objectives of the study included gathering people’s views to inform a review of the current national broadcasting policy and regulation. The
project used household surveys and focus groups, covering 24 sample districts. With regard to community broadcasting, it concluded that ‘the FM radios have helped to fulfil the rural people’s education, information, and entertainment needs’.

Campbell et al., (2003), conducted a study ‘on communicating research to support knowledge interventions in agricultural development - case studies from Eritrea and Uganda’. The researchers administered questionnaires and household surveys with farmers in eastern Uganda, and revealed that ‘63% of subsistence and 80% of semi-commercial farmers have got information on improved agricultural technologies on radio. The researchers concluded that the Plan for Modernization of Agriculture (PMA) messages had reached the rural areas because of radios, which have helped to change people’s attitudes about the technologies to adopt and new crop varieties to grow’. The study, however, did not specifically mention whether the mass media was the only factor that influenced farmers’ decisions.

During 1950-51 in the Middle East covering Iran, Egypt, Turkey, Syria, Lebanon and Jordan, Lerner (1958) found out that ‘mass communication served as the great multiplier in development, spread the requisite information immeasurably, more quickly and widely’. The analysis of Lerner also revealed that ‘there was high degree of correlation between media growth and national growth’. He argued that ‘the person who changed his attitude in a developing society was usually a mobile personality who had high
capacity to identify with new aspects of his environment, that are out of his habitual experience’. Lerner opined that, ‘the first element required in social of development is the infusion of modern or mobile personality, the second element is the mobile multiplier; which is the mass media’.

2.2. **Research trends with relation to folk media**

Pathak (1984) did an analysis to study the effectiveness of puppetry as a means of communication for educating rural women in the village of Gujarat regarding the issues on education and health. The findings of the study revealed that there was knowledge gain and change in opinions among rural women in the areas of education, health and other social practices. The study also observed that change in opinion was retained better even after the programme was over. Kaur, Malaviya and Rami (1985) experimented with traditional media in communicating Home Improvement Messages. The researchers found that ‘string puppets were the most effective folk form for communicating child development and nutritional messages, consumer education, saving and credit facilities and on income generation’. Similar findings of Gupta (1986) also revealed puppetry was effective in promoting education, income generation and importance of educating women and girls. The researcher also found the effectiveness of folk and traditional media in carrying the message of adult education.
Kumar, (1981) stated that, in context of Indian society where about 70% of the population resides in rural areas, the traditional media continue to provide the main source of entertainment and also of instruction and education in religious, social, economic and political sphere of life. Traditional folk media includes folk song, folk dance, folk theatre, street plays etc are the real organs of mass media in India. They are participatory in nature and communicate much more effectively than that of electronic media and personal level. In promoting social awareness and enhancing the process of societal development, street plays have been used widely by many government and non-governmental organizations.

Yadav (1993) found ‘exposure to street play was effective in developing unfavourable opinions and in raising the awareness level of high school students regarding differential treatment to women’. Adoyo (2004) observed that, ‘in African context sensitive information is never disseminated in a direct way but through songs, dances and plays using proverbs and poems. As a result, it motivates the listeners to do something to change the situation they find themselves in’.

Valbuena (1993) revealed that in southern Singapore, ‘folk media programme has helped rural farmers in their development process through the various strategies used in the production, storage, preservation and even marketing of rice’. Van Den
Ban and Hawkins (1996) reported that in Java state of Indonesia, shadow puppets were utilised to promote agricultural innovations. In Benue State of Nigeria, the use of fertilizer and tractor was promoted through traditional folk songs. Mathur (1994) while analysing the role of communication for development and social change defined that, ‘traditional folk media as culture and community based media. He said that traditional folk media existed even before the advent of the modern mass media. It was through the utilization of these media that some of the dynamic religious movement in India spread for the wide’.

Parmer (1975) analyzed the role of folk media in rural and urban audience and explained how they can be utilised as communication tools. The researcher pointed out that folk media are the tools of ‘special nature’ and this nature lies with the fact that they have no grammar or literature, yet they have high functional value. Wang and Dissanayake (1984) defined folk media as communication system embedded in the culture which existed before the arrival of mass media, and still exists as vital mode of communication in many parts of the world, presenting a certain degree of continuity, despite changes. Pye (1963) argued that traditional media play an important role not only in traditional society but also in a transitional society and modern society. It is important to understand the degree of integration between traditional forms of communication and modern media of mass communication. In
modern society, the traditional communication system is well integrated with the modern mass media. But in case of a transitional communication system the two are structurally segmented and bifurcated.

In 1940’s, Indian People Theatre Association (IPTA) used various popular regional theatre forms like Jatra of Bengal, Bhavai of Gujrat, Tamasha of Maharashtra and Burkatha of Andhra Pradesh to spread social awareness and political education. Mukunda Das and Utpal Dutt used the medium of Jatra for generating the spirit of patriotism and political awareness among the people of Bengal. P.L. Deshpande, Shahir Sable, Habib Tanveer, Balwant Gargi, Gurusaran Singh, Rattan Thiyam used the medium as technique of promoting national identity and social awareness among the Indian masses. Adoyo (2004) stated that, ‘folk media are interactive and participatory in nature and allows different possible solutions by motivating audience participation which is aimed at changing the behaviour of people’. Dube (1990) asserted that alongside of the interpersonal network, the traditional media occupy an important place in the context of Indian society in the process of social change and development.
Kerala Sastra Sahithya Parishad (KSSP, 1977) a voluntary non-governmental organization in Kerala organized Science Jatha (Science Procession) to generate the message of people's participation in the process of development. The main themes of the projects were on health, education, environment and social inequality. The jatha or procession consisted of street dramas, songs, and other several folk forms. Palmgreen (1984) opined that, ‘individual beliefs system about what media segments can provide are influenced by social institutions, culture, and media in relation to social institutions and culture’. He also pointed out that ‘social circumstances includes the availability of media and personal characteristic such as extroversion, introversion and dogmatism also influence individual belief system’.

D.K. Sujan (1993) has identified some advantages and disadvantages of using folk media in development communication in comparison to modern media. The advantages are like variety of interest patterns, cultural roots, direct rapport with audience and possibility of converting the messages into most suitable one. The disadvantages are like the forms cannot be universalized, cultural barriers and limited coverage area. Various government agencies and researchers in India found that folk forms are beneficial and credible channels for promoting social change. Johnson, (2005) said that, ‘the traditional culture of folk performances in India ranges from street plays to regional folk songs. Folk programmes, especially folk theatre in India
originates from the early development of the civilized society. Folk art of any country, has evolved with the society and so they become a part of the culture of that particular region. He also stated that folk art cannot develop in isolation because they are the manifestations of the society and culture itself to which they belong’.

Shah and Joshi (1992) found various factors responsible for the diminishing popularity of folk dramas. Firstly, in part kings, landlords and other rich person who patronized the performances. The second factor is their length and duration of time. Thirdly, there is a dearth of good writers for these folk dramas. Lastly, the influence of different mass media such as television, radio, and films also cited as a major cause for this. Ghosh, (2006) opined that, ‘the values, attitudes, beliefs and culture of the people are reinforced and perpetuated through folk forms. The various issues in a society can be presented in the form of satire by the folk performers for removing societal evils and practices’.
Reference:


