Chapter 6

Summary and Conclusion
‘Summary and Conclusion’ being the last chapter of this research work summarizes the findings of the research study, and draws conclusion by generalizing the research findings. The chapter also gives suggestions for further improvement of the situation under study.

6.1. THE MAJOR FINDINGS OF THE STUDY ARE AS FOLLOWS

SPACE AND FREQUENCY OF DEVELOPMENT NEWS

The content analysis of development news coverage in *The Hindu*, *The Assam Tribune* and *Dainik Jugasankha* shows that national English daily *The Hindu* devotes 9.59 per cent of its total newshole to the coverage of development news. Regional English *The Assam Tribune* devotes 9 per cent of its newshole to development news coverage and Bengali daily *Dainik Jugasankha* gives 6.24 per cent. This shows that the percentage of development news coverage is very low in all these newspapers. The study also shows that among the three newspapers, *The Hindu* devotes maximum amount of space to the coverage of development news.

In terms of frequency, *The Hindu* carries the maximum number of news items (1336) on development content followed by *The Assam Tribune* (926) and *Dainik Jugasankha* (776).

Thus the quantitative analysis reveals that the percentage of development news coverage is very low in all the three newspapers. Also it appears that the English newspapers both national and regional paid greater attention to development news than the language newspaper.

PLACEMENT

Among the news pages, the front page is the most important for attracting reader’s attention. Placement analysis of development news in terms of space reveals that *The Assam Tribune* devotes the highest 16.75 per cent of the total space on development news in the front page followed by *Dainik Jugasankha* (11.85 per cent) and *The Hindu*
(5.99 per cent). This shows that *The Assam Tribune* contributes relatively greater emphasis to development issues than *Dainik Jugasankha* and *The Hindu*.

Placement analysis in terms of frequency shows that *The Assam Tribune* publishes 16.2 per cent of the total number of news items related to development in front page. This is followed by *Dainik Jugasankha* (11.08 per cent) and *The Hindu* (5.16 per cent). Thus the study shows that *The Assam Tribune* places highest news items on front page both in terms of space and frequency. This indicates that the regional English daily *The Assam Tribune* gives more importance to the coverage of development news than *The Hindu* and *Dainik jugasankha*.

In inside pages, *The Hindu* devotes the maximum 94.01 per cent of its total space on development news content followed by *Dainik Jugasankha* (88.15 per cent) and *The Assam Tribune* (83.25 per cent). *The Hindu* publishes 94.83 per cent of total news items on development in inside pages, which is followed by *Dainik Jugasankha* (88.92 per cent) and *The Assam Tribune* (83.80 per cent). Data show that among the three newspapers *The Hindu* gives least emphasis on development content in terms of placement of news items. It appears to the researcher that *The Hindu* does not consider development news stories worthy enough to be placed in front page, and that is why, places only a negligible percentage of development news items in its front page.

Thus the researcher observes that all the three newspapers *The Hindu*, *The Assam Tribune* and *Dainik Jugasankha* is similar in their approach to the placement of development news items. The very preference of each newspaper to place development stories mostly in inside pages makes a statement about how the issue of development is perceived by these three newspapers, one national English daily, one regional English daily and one language daily, hailing from different geographical location and having distinct sets of readership. This observation also poses an open question about the kind of emphasis being given to the coverage of development related issues by the print media in general.
NATURE

The study on nature of development news coverage shows that most of the news items on development content in *The Hindu* are positive in nature. The researcher finds that 43.63 per cent of the total space devoted to development news in *The Hindu* is attributed to positive content. The percentages for negative and neutral content are 33.54 per cent and 22.84 per cent respectively. The findings reveal that *The Hindu* is more concerned with issues of positive development.

*The Assam Tribune*’s inclination for negative coverage of development issues is evident from its allocation of 41.72 per cent of total space on development news to negative stories. Positive content occupies 35.82 per cent and neutral content occupies 22.46 per cent in *The Assam Tribune*.

The study shows that *Dainik Jugasankha* surpasses *The Assam Tribune* in terms of giving negative coverage of issues related to development. The newspaper makes available 60.23 per cent of total space on development news for negative coverage of development news stories. The percentages for positive and neutral content are 22.56 per cent and 17.21 per cent respectively.

In terms of frequency, *The Hindu* publishes 43.41 per cent positive news stories out of total number of news items on development. Also it publishes 31.21 per cent negative news items and 25.37 per cent neutral news items.

Out of total number of news stories on development, *The Assam Tribune* publishes 44.6 per cent positive news items. Negative news stories account for 38.23 per cent and neutral stories occupy 17.17 per cent.

Similarly, *Dainik Jugasankha* publishes highest number (51.68 per cent) of negative news items. It publishes 36.08 per cent positive news items and 12.24 per cent neutral items.

Thus the analysis shows that *Dainik Jugasankha*, the language daily is more critical in its coverage of development issues, as it contributes the highest percentage of negative news stories both in terms of space and frequency. On the other hand, the national
daily *The Hindu* publishes highest number of positive news stories in terms of space. The study also shows that, *The Hindu* is more neutral in its coverage of development news as it publishes the highest number of neutral news items on development, both in terms of space and frequency. Moreover, the study also shows that *The Assam Tribune* devotes highest percentage of its total space on development news to negative news stories.

**FORMAT**

From format analysis, the researcher finds a similarity among *The Hindu*, *The Assam Tribune* and *Dainik Jugasankha* in terms of format in which development news is presented in these newspapers. On average hard news occupies almost half of the total space on development news in all the three newspapers. In terms of frequency, each of the three newspapers presents more than 60 per cent of development news items in hard news format.

*The Hindu* devotes 60.32 per cent of development news space to hard news. The second chosen format for *The Hindu* is article (15.08 per cent), the third and fourth chosen formats are soft news (9.04 per cent) and features (8.54 per cent) respectively. In case of *The Hindu*, the researcher discovers that editorial which is considered the mouthpiece of any newspaper organization for reflecting the stand of the particular newspaper on any issue pertaining to public interest, contributed to only 2.3 per cent of total space on development news. *The Hindu* contributes more space to the letters to the editor (3.43 per cent) than to editorials. By allocating more space to letters to the editor, *The Hindu* provides a platform for its readers to express their views and opinions on important issues and also to vent out their grievances.

*The Assam Tribune* gives 48.52 per cent of space to hard news and 14.31 per cent to soft news. On articles the newspaper devotes 12.2 per cent of development news space and on middles it gives 10.8 per cent. In *The Assam Tribune*, editorials occupy 8 per cent, letters to the editor 4.9 per cent, anchor stories 0.95 per cent and features 0.32 per cent of total news space on development.
"Dainik Jugasankha" attributes 43.35 per cent of total space on development news to hard news format, 19.1 per cent to soft news, 12.22 per cent to columns, 7.22 per cent to editorials, 6.6 per cent to articles, 5.73 per cent to features, 5.4 per cent to letters to the editor and 0.48 per cent to anchor stories.

In terms of frequency, out of total number of news items on development, "The Hindu" publishes 64.37 per cent hard news, 15.87 per cent letters to the editor, 6.29 per cent articles, 5.61 per cent soft news, 4.42 per cent features, 1.8 per cent editorials, and 1.65 per cent columns.

Similarly, "The Assam Tribune" publishes 63.1 per cent hard news, 12.74 per cent soft news, 9.94 per cent letters to the editor, 6.05 per cent editorials, 3.89 per cent middles, 3.5 per cent articles, 0.75 per cent anchor stories and 0.11 per cent features.

Likewise, in "Dainik Jugasankha", hard news occupies 66.1 per cent, soft news 14.7 per cent, letters to the editor 7.86 per cent, editorials 3.74 per cent, columns 3.48 per cent, articles 2.1 per cent, features 1.9 per cent and anchor stories 0.13 per cent of total news items on development content.

Format analysis reveals that hard news is the most common format adopted by all the three newspapers in covering development news. The study also shows that in comparison to "The Hindu" and "Dainik Jugasankha", "The Assam Tribune" publishes more editorials both in terms of space and number of items. It indicates that the newspaper takes a sincere stand on issues related to development. The analysis also shows that among the three newspapers, "Dainik Jugasankha" by devoting the highest percentage of space to letters to the editor provided a platform for its readers to express their opinion and views regarding various developmental issues in society.

**SUBJECT CATEGORY**

The top-ten most frequently appearing subject categories in "The Hindu" in terms of space are (in descending order) : energy and environment (15.23 per cent), education (13.58 per cent), agriculture (13.31 per cent), health (12.17 per cent), human rights (11.56 per cent), transport and communication (6.7 per cent), employment (5.86 per
cent), women empowerment (5.79 per cent), weaker sections (4.78 per cent), and land reforms and land acquisition (3.09 per cent).

The top ten most frequently appearing subject categories in *The Assam Tribune* in terms of space are (in descending order): health (16.5 per cent), energy and environment (13.9 per cent), education (13.27 per cent), agriculture (12.52 per cent), employment (9.3 per cent), transport and communication (8.36 per cent), human rights (8.15 per cent), other development (5.99 per cent), women empowerment (3.34 per cent), and poverty (1.9 per cent).

The top ten most frequently appearing subject categories in *Dainik Jugasankha* in terms of space are (in descending order): health (28.89 per cent), employment (13.15 per cent), transport and communication (11.31 per cent), education (9.76 per cent), energy and environment (8.54 per cent), agriculture (6.26 per cent), women empowerment (5.9 per cent), human rights (4.12 per cent), poverty (2.24 per cent), and weaker section (2 per cent).

Subject category analysis of all the seventeen development subjects on the basis of space in *The Hindu* indicates that the top-ten priorities do not include other development, poverty, housing, success stories, communal harmony and national integration, family planning and literacy. In *The Assam Tribune*, the less covered subjects are weaker sections, land reforms and land acquisition, success stories, communal harmony and national integration, family planning, literacy, and housing. In *Dainik Jugasankha*, less frequently appeared subject categories are other development, communal harmony and national integration, housing, land reforms and land acquisition, family planning, success stories and literacy.

In terms of space, the common neglected categories which do not appear in top-ten priority list in all the three newspapers are housing, success stories, communal harmony and national integration, family planning and literacy.

In terms of frequency, the top-ten most frequently appearing subject categories in *The Hindu* (in descending order) are: health (15.3 per cent), education (13.92 per cent),
energy and environment (12.95 per cent), human rights and agriculture each (12.1 per cent), transport and communication (7.34 per cent), women empowerment (6.9 per cent), employment (6.01 per cent), weaker sections (3.22 per cent), other development (2.62 per cent), land reforms and land acquisition (2.32 per cent).

Similarly, in The Assam Tribune the top-ten most frequently appearing subject categories in terms of frequency (in descending order) are: health (19.54 per cent), education (14.15 per cent), agriculture (12.2 per cent), employment (11.55 per cent), energy and environment (11.12 per cent), transport and communication (9.5 per cent), human rights (6.7 per cent), other development (4.86 per cent), women empowerment (2.27 per cent), and poverty (1.73 per cent).

Likewise, the top-ten most frequently appearing subject categories in Dainik Jugasankha in terms of frequency (in descending order) are: health (29.38 per cent), employment (14.95 per cent), transport and communication (13 per cent), education (9.92 per cent), energy and environment (8.25 per cent), agriculture (6.7 per cent), poverty (3.35 per cent), women empowerment (2.96 per cent), human rights (2.45 per cent), and other development (2.32 per cent).

Thus, subject category analysis of all the seventeen development subjects on the basis of frequency in The Hindu indicates that the top-ten priorities do not include poverty, housing, success stories, communal harmony and national integration, family planning and literacy. In The Assam Tribune, the less frequently appeared subjects are land reforms and land acquisition, weaker sections, success stories, literacy, family planning, communal harmony and national integration, and housing. In Dainik Jugasankha subjects like housing, weaker sections, land reforms and land acquisition, family planning, communal harmony and national integration, success stories and literacy appear less frequently.

In terms of frequency, the common neglected categories which are not included in top-ten priority list in all the three newspapers are housing, success stories, communal harmony and national integration, family planning and literacy.
Subject category analysis of all the seventeen subject categories of development news shows that top ten categories on the basis of both space and frequency in all the three newspapers do not include housing, success stories, communal harmony and national integration, family planning and literacy.

Thus format reveals that while all the three newspapers in their development news stories focused attention on health, education, environment, employment, agriculture, transport and communication, human rights, women empowerment, other development, weaker sections, poverty and land reforms and land acquisition, they ignored vital development issues like family planning, literacy, housing, communal harmony and national integration and success stories.

**QUOTED SOURCES**

Another observation of the researcher is that all the three newspapers *The Hindu, The Assam Tribune* and *Dainik Jugasankha*, differ significantly when it comes to quoting sources in news reports relating to development. Analysis of development news stories on the basis of persons or sources quoted shows that *The Hindu* quotes ministers 234 times (27.63 per cent), government officials and spokespersons 193 times (22.79 per cent), members of public 92 times (10.86 per cent), experts and intellectuals 80 times (9.44 per cent), rights activists 62 times (7.32 per cent), NGO office bearers 46 times (5.43 per cent), court order 45 times (5.31 per cent), police 39 times (4.6 per cent), reports and survey findings 31 times (3.66 per cent), political leaders 18 times (2.12 per cent), peoples' representatives 4 times (0.47 per cent), unofficial and newspaper sources 3 times (0.35 per cent).

Similarly, *The Assam Tribune* quotes government officials and spokespersons 184 times (31.13 per cent), members of public 126 times (21.32 per cent), ministers 101 times (17.09 per cent), experts and intellectuals 85 times (14.38 per cent), NGO office bearers 38 times (6.43 per cent), reports and survey findings 16 times (2.7 per cent), rights activists 14 times (2.37 per cent), political leaders 10 times (1.69 per cent), unofficial and newspaper sources 6 times (1 per cent), peoples' representatives and court order 4 times (0.68 per cent) each, police 3 times (0.51 per cent).
Likewise, *Dainik Jugasankha* quotes members of public 209 times (43.27 per cent), government officials and spokespersons 103 times (31.32 per cent), NGO office bearers 57 times (11.8 per cent), experts and intellectuals 34 times (7 per cent), ministers 28 times (5.8 per cent), peoples' representatives 22 times (4.55 per cent), reports and survey findings 17 times (3.52 per cent), unofficial and newspaper sources 5 times (1.04 per cent), political leaders 4 times (0.83 per cent), rights activists and police 2 times (0.41 per cent) each.

The study also points out that in terms of quoting sources; there is a significant difference between the two English dailies-*The Hindu* and *The Assam Tribune* and the language newspaper, *Dainik Jugasankha*. The two English newspapers in their news reports mention ministers and government officials and spokespersons most of the times whereas the language daily quotes members of public the highest number of times.

**TYPES OF COVERAGE**

Analysis on types of coverage of news stories on development shows that in terms of allocation of space to analytical news items, *Dainik Jugasankha* in comparison to other two newspapers contributes the highest 36.58 per cent of total space on development news. This is followed by *The Assam Tribune* (34.15 per cent) and *The Hindu* (26.39 per cent). This means that *Dainik Jugasankha* devotes more space than the other two newspapers, to news items which provided critical analysis, explanation and interpretation on various developmental issues. On the other hand, *The Hindu* makes available the highest 73.61 per cent of space for informative coverage of development news among the three dailies. This is followed by *The Assam Tribune* (65.84 per cent) and *Dainik Jugasankha* (63.42 per cent).

In terms of frequency, *The Assam Tribune* publishes the highest number of analytical news items (15.44 per cent) followed by *Dainik Jugasankha* (15.21 per cent) and *The Hindu* (12.42 per cent). On the other hand, *The Hindu* publishes the highest number of informative news stories (87.57 per cent) followed by *Dainik Jugasankha* (84.79 per cent) and *The Assam Tribune* (84.56 per cent).
Analysis on type of coverage of development news stories shows that on average each newspaper devotes more than 60 per cent of their space on development news to informative coverage of developmental issues. This indicates event reporting practice of all the three newspapers and point out their preference for factual reporting of news events rather than presenting a critical and analytical explanation of various issues and events of development.

6.2. CONCLUSION

The findings of the study seem to prove that development news coverage is not very significant in Indian newspapers. Although both *The Hindu* and *The Assam Tribune* give more space to development related news than the language daily *Dainik Jugasankha*, the percentage of development news out of the total newshole is abysmally low in each of the three newspapers. In terms of frequency also, the national and regional English newspapers publishes more news items on development in comparison to the local language newspaper. The study also shows that the national and the regional English dailies assign more space to development issues than the local language daily. Whereas, the language dailies are mainly read by common people and hence, possess great potential to aware people about various developmental needs in our society, but the study shows that these newspapers are lagging behind in performing their duties.

The study also shows that in Indian newspapers stories related to development find its place mostly in inside pages. The study emphasizes that *The Hindu*, *The Assam Tribune* and *Dainik Jugasankha* publish more than 80 per cent of development news in inside pages and less than 17 per cent in front pages, both in terms of space and frequency. The researcher also finds that in giving importance to the issues of development by placing development news stories in front and inside pages, *The Assam Tribune* allocates more emphasis and publishes highest number of news items related to development in front page both in terms of space and frequency. On the other hand, it appears that *The Hindu*, places least emphasis on the issue of
development as among the three newspapers, it comes at the end in accommodating
development news stories in front page. The language newspaper, *Dainik Jugasankha*
comes second in placing development news items in front page. The study also reveals
that in terms of placing development news stories in inside pages *The Hindu* comes
first, while, *Dainik Jugasankha* and *The Assam Tribune* comes second and third. Here,
the researcher makes an inference that the regional and local language newspapers are
more focused and sincere in their attempt to highlight development issues than the
national newspaper.

Moreover, the study also shows that the national daily, *The Hindu* takes a positive
approach towards developmental issues whereas the language daily, *Dainik
Jugasankha* and the regional daily, *The Assam Tribune* stress more negative aspects of
development. The local language daily, *Dainik Jugasankha* is more critical about
development issues, this is evident from the fact that *Dainik Jugasankha* publishes
highest number of negative news stories both in terms of space and frequency. On the
other hand, the national English daily, *The Hindu* has a more positive approach in
reporting developmental issues than the local and regional dailies. It is evident from
the allocation of highest percentage of total space on development news to positive
news items by *The Hindu*. Also it appears that *The Hindu* adopts a neutral attitude in
giving coverage to development related news.

Thus the study concludes that the language and the regional dailies are more vocal in
highlighting negative aspects of development more than the national English daily.
The national English daily's pro-positive coverage of development issues establish
their eagerness to keep distance from the actual development needs of the society. It
exhibits a sense of complacency among its readers about the actual state of
development in the country, which is not very favourable to the public interest.

From this study the researcher finds that hard news is the most common format of
development news. In each of the three newspapers more than 60 per cent of the
development news appears in hardnews format. Among the three dailies, *The Assam
Tribune* publishes more editorials both in terms of space and frequency. *Dainik
Jugasankha gives maximum space on letters to the editor in terms of space and in terms of frequency, The Hindu publishes the highest number of letters to the editor. Dainik Jugasankha publishes the highest number of soft news both in terms of space and frequency.

The study also shows that the regional daily The Assam Tribune and the local language daily Dainik Jugasankha publishes maximum number of news items on health. Whereas, frequency wise, The Hindu gives top priority to health category; and in terms of space also The Hindu receives top ranking in energy and environment category. It is surprising to note here that though India is predominantly an agricultural economy, in none of these newspapers agriculture receives the most important priority. All the three newspapers focused on health, education, energy and environment, employment, agriculture, transport and communication, human rights, women empowerment, other development, weaker sections, poverty and land reforms and land acquisition. Analysis of all seventeen subject categories of development news shows that top ten priorities do not include housing, success stories, communal harmony and national integration, family planning, and literacy in these newspapers. Thus vital development issues like family planning, literacy, and housing are not getting enough attention in news agenda of any of three newspapers under study. This illustrates the disturbing trend of development reporting in Indian newspapers.

Debate on environment and energy is gaining huge popularity and attention across the world, and the media is bringing it to the larger audiences. Being a prominent English national daily, The Hindu also following the line of world media, it gives top ranking priority to issues related to energy and environment. However, both the regional and language daily give more importance to health than the aforesaid issues. This may be due to the recent health reforms initiated by the Govt. of India.

The study shows that the English newspapers have a tendency to quote government sources in the news reports on development. The language newspaper, on the other hand, likes to quote common people as they are the real spokesman of the development of a country.
The researcher also observes that the issues reported by all the three newspapers are mostly linked to events. Much in-depth coverage is not given to developmental issues reported in these newspapers. From the study it appears that the reporters lacked an investigative spirit and an in-depth understanding of various developmental issues.

6.3. RECOMMENDATION

On the basis of the findings of the study, the researcher concludes that development journalism in India is not receiving the kind of importance that it deserves in the context of Indian society. This study brings to light a very discouraging picture of development reporting by the newspapers in India. Not only the low share of development news reports is alarming but also the overall presentation and coverage of such reports in terms of placement, nature, format, subjects, quoted sources and types of coverage, is a matter of serious concern. This may be due to lack of awareness or concern on the part of the sample newspapers’ publishers, editors and reporters about numerous problems which people are struggling with. Perhaps they have forgotten their duty of being the vanguards of democracy. This calls for a change in reporting practice of the journalists of newspapers under study. Their reporting should be in consonance with actual development needs of our society. According to the researcher the standard of development journalism can be improved if following measures are taken.

1. Editors and reporters should be aware about the development process of the country. They must have a clear understanding of the various development needs of the Indian society, and regarding various terms and concepts used in development. There should be a sense of strong commitment on the part of the journalists and editors that they should involve themselves in the actual problems of the people and offering solutions to them. The press in India should be credible enough to highlight the urgent needs for development, and by doing so, they will able to draw attention of the government, civil society and people at large.
2. Newspapers should appoint full time reporters to cover development beats like agriculture, employment, health, education, poverty etc. There should also be full-time rural reporters to report exclusively on the problems and needs of the rural people.

3. India is predominantly an agricultural economy. Agriculture provides employment to half a billion people in India (Gupta, 2008). But agricultural reporting is not given enough importance in Indian newspapers. This should not be the case in Indian press. The newspapers should devote a special segment regularly to report on agriculture and allied activities. Here, the language newspapers have a great responsibility, as language dailies are not only read but read out to illiterates also. Thus by spreading latest knowledge and innovation on agriculture, the newspapers can help farmers to increase agricultural productivity.

4. The English newspapers in India mainly reach to the policy-makers, intellectuals and educated people who constitute a dominant segment of society. The views and opinions expressed by these newspapers can act as a catalyst in forming public opinion. Thus by reporting issues of development which needs urgent attention of government and policy-makers, these newspapers can play their part of being the protector of public interest.

5. There should be an attempt to undertake more research studies to ascertain the practice of development reporting by Indian media. For this various mass media channels like newspapers, radio, and television can be included in the study.