Chapter 1
The Framework of the Study
'The Framework of the Study' is the first chapter of this research work. This chapter introduces research topic, statement of the problem, review of existing literature, scope of the study, objectives of the study and research questions. It also explains the methodology adopted in the study and also defines operational terms mentioned in the research study.

1.1. INTRODUCTION

In a country like India, mass communication plays a crucial role in creating people’s awareness about policies and programmes, related to development. Since the commencement of national five-year plans in India, importance of the different types of mass media increased manifold. To achieve socio-economic objectives set in the plan, it is imperative that people must have adequate knowledge and awareness about various development programmes and actions. Mass media act as a mediator between the common people and the government. It transforms knowledge and information from the policy makers to the recipients, for whom policies mean to be. The First Five Year Plan emphasized the understanding regarding the need and appreciation for various development programmes and schemes along with the provision for improvement of mass media facilities.

The press (i.e., newspapers) being a pioneer among the mass media has always received attention, and exerts clout in the development process of a country. It has innumerable roles and functions towards society because it directly influences the latter. That is why, how the press should function in a state, is a matter of great concern for civil society. Siebert conceptualized the normative theories of the press to explain the role and functions of the press in a social system. An important proposition behind these normative functions of the press is that the press always takes the form and coloration of the social and political structures within which it operates. In the context of India society, the press has established the tradition of being the custodian of the rights of the people. During pre-independence days, the newspapers were
instrumental in fostering national spirit and they worked hard to develop the Indian nationalism. The press was used as a weapon by great nationalist leaders such as Bal Gangadhar Tilak, Mahatma Gandhi, Jawaharlal Nehru, and Abul Kalam Azad to fight against the British rule in India. Newspapers also played a major part in reforming Indian society. Raja Rammohan Roy, Swami Dayanad Saraswati, Sir Seyad Ahmed Khan used the press to launch crusade against different social evils, and created the condition for promotion of modern education among the Indians. The role of the press increased more after the independence. The press took a supportive attitude to the newly formed government. It helped in informing and educating people about various development needs and in mobilizing public support for different policies adopted by the government for initiating development process in the country. A major shift occurred after the declaration of emergency in 1975. Regressive measures were taken by the then government to suppress the press. During that time, some newspapers retained their independence and became critical of the establishment in their balanced, impartial and neutral reporting, while other newspapers opted to become government handouts in order to reap corporate benefits. The press acted as a watchdog to protect the interest of its citizen by providing checks on the functioning of the government. It exposed the malfunctioning in the government machinery and took it as a duty to inform and educate people on all important aspects of life. But not all newspapers walked into the same path. As newspaper industry in India is dominated by individual ownership, the political lineage and ideology of the owner came to be reflected in newspaper coverage. Along with these changes in the newspaper scenario in India, the newspaper coverage is also bound to change. Today, the elite and the powerful minority make news for the mainstream elite press in India. Garnering support for the vested interest groups and appeasing the ruling power has become the new agenda of the press. The position of the sincere and rightful editors is being marginalized by the corporate people taking over the charge of newsroom. Maximization of profit and advertising revenue are the new rulers dictating newspaper coverage. Newspaper coverage is skewed in favour of the dominant social group. Thus the dominant perception of what constitutes news is among the most important determinants of newspaper coverage now-a-days. The newspapers in India are deviating from their
role as being socially responsible institution. All these trends speak out that there is a serious problem with the Indian press which calls for serious introspection to redefine the journalism profession in India.

Vincent and Mahesh (2007) mention some of the serious defects in the functioning of Indian press. Firstly, the selection of news material for most news media is not proportionate to our realities. Publishers are placing commercial considerations above adequate emphasis on reporting the voices of under-privileged people and telling their stories. Secondly, an ‘ivory tower’ approach to English language news is depriving citizens of stories about their local affairs, and this again is a proportion problem. Thirdly, our English and native language papers are serving out divergent views of society on critical matters and this may be sustaining the chasm between the ‘well-connected elite’ of the country and ‘the others’.

The World Commission on Freedom of the Press or the Hutchins Commission (1947) mentions the key journalistic standards that the press should follow in its functioning. A responsible press should ‘provide a full, truthful, comprehensive and intelligent account of the day’s events in a context which give them meaning’. It should ‘serve as the forum for the exchange of comment and be a ‘common carrier of the public expression’. Thirdly, the press should give a ‘representative picture of constituent groups in society’ and also present and clarify the ‘goals and values of society’ (McQuail, 2005). But the Indian press is lacking in its duty to provide equal representation of various groups and communities living in Indian sub-continent. As pointed out by Sevanti Ninan “In 1982, the Second Press Commission complained, in its majority report, about the urban bias of the newspaper industry” (Ninan, 2007). Ninan reiterated that while the mainstream urban press is obsessed with celebrities, rural newspapers are obsessed with petty crime stories which command most of the space in local dailies.

The social responsibility theory states that the press has some obligations to society, and it should be truthful, accurate, fair, objective and relevant in its reporting of news and events (McQuail, 2005). For majority of Indian population newspapers are the
main source of news and information. Thus newspaper is the prism through which they view the reality around them. It is, therefore, important that newspapers should be objective their reporting of events and should present an accurate and diverse representation of constituent groups in society. Thus people's perception of reality is shaped by the newspaper coverage on actual happenings. Proportionate reporting of society helps in drawing attention to the difficult problems of society and building public consensus in finding solutions. But the newspaper coverage in India is far from being perfect. Space in newspapers is abundantly filled with trivial issues like politics, cricket and celebrity gossips. If by chance there appears a serious public issue, an element of sensation is added to it, otherwise it cannot be sold. When Indian society is fraught with numerous challenges like providing food, shelter, education and health care facilities to all, giving employment opportunities, improving transportation and communication network etc., most of the Indian newspapers are busy with catering to the need of the powerful dominant group of society. The growing rural-urban divide that is witnessed in Indian press is not healthy for the country in the long run. Many allege that the mainstream Indian newspapers are augmenting social disparity by deliberately ignoring the problems of majority of its population who are deprived of basic amenities and dignity of human life. Though it is expected that the press in India should adopt a pro-development approach in its functioning, however, the actual condition of development reporting in India presents a dismal picture. Sensationalism, trivialisation of important issues and underrepresentation of poor, illiterate, unemployed and weaker section is the common feature of newspaper reporting in India. Many newspapers appoint sports reporter to write exclusively on sports. But issues like the suicide deaths of farmers, the condition of people affected by natural calamities, the victims of Gujrat carnage has no reporter to write exclusively on them topics where human lives have to pay the price.

Thus it is being said that the press as an agent of mass communication has become inept in covering development issues which is the crying need in a developing society like India. It is in this respect that the importance of development journalism has assumed significance. Development journalism is the practice of journalism to report
on the development process of a country. The term development journalism that emerged in the 1960s defines itself as a kind of journalism which focused on the conditions of the developing nations and offering solutions to improve them (Narayan, 2011). Instead of reporting on day-to-day news, development journalism highlights long-term development processes. Development reporting covers individual projects, the entire planning process and its implementations, difficulties faced by people and efforts made to remove them, economic and social change in rural and urban areas, impact of development efforts in backward and tribal areas and various aspects of development and its socio-economic impact. According to Shelton Gunaratne, development journalism involves ‘analytical interpretation, subtle investigation, constructive and sincere criticism, and devoted association with the grassroots rather than with the elite. Thus, development journalism is pro-Third world, pro-development, pro-liberation, pro-marginalised and pro-poor groups. Development journalists analyses how development projects and welfare schemes contribute to the progress of the people. They work constructively to find lacuna in the projects, and expose the misdoings, so that proper action can be taken by concerned authorities.

However, it has been noticed that the press in India have not evinced the requisite interest in development journalism. In India, over 400 million people who reside in the rural hinterlands largely go unreported or underreported by the national and regional mainstream media. There are no full time reporters to cover the agrarian distress, rural poverty, suicides and migrations, or the hunger of the landless poor. The wedding ceremony of Bollywood stars Abhishek-Aishwarya got more coverage in newspapers than numerous child-marriages performed in many remote villages of Rajasthan and other states. The suicide death of thousands of farmers in Bidharva, Andhra Pradesh or women trafficking from Assam and West Bengal do not get much coverage in Indian press.

P.Sainath, the renowned development journalist and the winner of Magsaysay Award, for his writings on the actual condition of people living in India’s poorest districts, writes in his award winning book ‘Everybody loves a good draught’, “the press in India has proved increasingly inept at covering processes, especially development
process, the more elitist it gets, the less it will be able to do this. Even its coverage of events will suffer. Most big publications now cover a wide array of beats and issues. Newspapers find space for fashion, design and society/glamour column other than reporting on agriculture, employment, poverty and other development issues. Readers will be stunned to compare the space given to the death of a Rajan Pillai in jail to that given to the deaths of the children in Dhule. The biggest journals in this country give far more space to Imran Khan’s wedding than to the starvation deaths. In most publications, the correspondent covering education also often has several other beats to attend to. The same is true of those covering other social sector beats” (Sainath, 1996).

In India, where most of the populations live in countryside, and where most of the government revenue comes from rural belt, where the most significant components of development planning is concerned with the problem of rural areas, the newspapers showed much obsession with political reporting and celebrity gossips at the cost of reporting development issues and concerns. Kalpana Sharma, in one of her articles says, “Elections are a time when the media discovers India, the real India. If people complain that their Members of Parliament only visit their constituencies once in five years, the same can be said about the media. In the run up to any election, municipal, assembly or parliament, you find newspapers have full of stories about the “real” conditions in which people live, stories that could have been written at any point in the previous five years” (Sharma, 2009). Despite 70 per cent of the country’s population being based in rural areas where agriculture is the major income generating source, contributing to approximately 50 per cent of national income and investment, reporting on rural development has not received the amount of priority and importance in the Indian newspapers that it should have. Reporting development stories by the press is not as pervasive as reporting politics, conflict or even foreign affairs and defense. It is, by and large, confined to an inside weekly page. And that too by some selected newspapers and magazines. Rural stories rarely get front page treatment or as it is termed the “page one” priority, unless it is a disaster event such as starvation deaths, flood, famine or a policy pronouncement. This is not the case with
development journalism that focuses on people who are facing real problems and represents their actual condition with an intention to get administrator's attention to improve their lot.

If we study the state of rural reporting in Chinese media, we find that development journalism has received a high status in the journalism ladder of China. It has 'The Peasants Daily', the country's biggest national agricultural newspaper devoted solely to agricultural reporting. This newspaper caters to the needs of farmers and rural population. It reports on government policies on rural development, expresses views and opinions of peasants, spreads knowledge on rural economy and management, and science and technology. In India, it is hard to find a newspaper that exclusively reports on agriculture and allied activities. A well-known development journalist, Bharat Dogra states, "The press in India concentrates on political events, controversies, and personalities. Crime and entertainment in urban areas also find their coverage. It is no secret that our press is largely urban and elitist and bypasses the multitude people who live in rural and tribal India. Reporting from rural areas and about rural people is far and between, that too when some politician goes for inauguration, foundation stone laying ceremonies or for an aerial view of the flood affected areas. A genuine and powerful rural press is yet to emerge in India."

Thus, it is being said that development journalism is one of the most neglected fields in the Indian press. Yet, it has the most potential to contribute substantially in the process of development. The main sources of information for development journalism are the poor, the rural, the weak, the marginalized, the voiceless, not the powerful, the elite or the rich. For the development journalist it's not the sound bite or the scoop or the information leaks that make for news as much as social issues and development in their global and national contexts. Development journalism is thus not propaganda and certainly not government propaganda. Rather it has the potential to be a partner of government in discovering what sort of policies the authorities might pursue. Field reporting on the living conditions of rural people helps both government officials and NGOs, who work for rural development. Development journalism deals with multiple
issues of public interest which includes housing, employment, food, drinking water, clothing, education, health-care, sanitary improvement etc.

In the light of the above discussion, the present study is an attempt to find out the nature, extent and frequency of development news in English and Bengali print media, i.e., one national English daily, one regional English daily and one local Bengali daily. The study seeks to measure and analyze the coverage of development news in each of the three newspapers in terms of space, frequency, placement, nature, format, subject category, persons quoted in news items and types of development news coverage.

1.2. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

There are huge uproars among intellectuals, social scientists and media fraternity that the status of development reporting in Indian press is not very encouraging. The national, regional and language newspapers are no exception here. Whereas, the present social condition and democracy demands voice of each and every individual should be heard, read and represented in media, the reality is quite different and seems to elude them. As the nature of press determines to a large extent what constitutes news, the English and regional language newspapers complacency to serve only to their particular group of readers have left no place for the marginalized section whose concerns needs to be presented. There is a crying need to listen to those who are living in dismal conditions, uninhabitable for a decent living. Today our society is plagued with burning issues like providing food, education, employment and health care to all, providing safety and security to the indigenous and tribal communities, eliminating injustice perpetrated by the powerful section to the meek and the weak ones, rehabilitation of people displaced by development projects, the exploitation of rural poor in the hands of rich and wealthy class, empowerment of women and the physically challenged people and many more that demand urgent attention from media, government and civil society groups. Whereas the readers of English newspapers consists of the powerful group of society such as government officials, policy-makers and educated intellectual class, the language newspapers by dint of their language advantages can reach out to each and every people residing in every
across the country. Thus both the English and language newspapers have huge scope to become leaders of society by highlighting the problems and issues which are impeding the growth and development of people. Thus these newspapers as part of a society can assume a greater positive role in societal problems and can offer solutions. By highlighting the problems faced by society, they can force the administration to take action. In this respect, development journalism has a vital role to perform. In development journalism newspapers promote the positive values of news in consonance with the needs of the society (Murthy, 2006). The present study is an attempt to assess newspaper coverage of some development issues which needs urgent attention. Thus the study seeks to measure and analyze the coverage of development news in one national English newspaper, one regional English newspaper and one local Bengali language newspaper in terms of space, frequency, placement, nature, format, subject category, persons quoted in news reports and types of coverage. The researcher is optimistic that the analysis of development news in these three newspapers will open a new dimension in understanding how issues related to development are perceived by the mainstream national, regional and language press in India.

1.3. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The researcher has found the following available studies which state that the pattern of development news coverage differs from newspaper to newspaper and from country to country. For example, Mustafa (1974) found that Malay language newspapers devoted half of their news hole to development news while the English language dailies devoted 32 per cent.

Barghouti’s study (1974) of Jordan media found that political news got more prominence than agricultural news. Emmanual (1976) in his study of Ghana press observed that development news content was greater in the wire services than in newspaper reports.

Sutopo (1983) examined six Indonesian national newspapers and concluded that Indonesian newspapers published more development than non-development news and
that each newspaper in the study had a different view about which development issue needed most deserving attention.

Shah and Gayatri (1994) in their study of two Indonesian newspapers found that nearly 45 per cent of total news hole was devoted to development news. Maslog’s study (1996) of the Philippines newspapers revealed that the newspapers gave more importance to politics and sports than development issues.

Kwame Ameyaw Domfeh’s study (1999) of environmental news coverage of four newspapers for a period of six months in 1997 in Ghana showed that a total of 152 news items on the environment were identified in the 48 editions examined. The state newspapers had 115 news items and the privately owned papers had 37 news items on environment.

Nadeem Ul Haque and Arif Sheikh (1994) in their study of daily newspapers in Pakistan found that newspapers devote extensive space to international news. Domestic news is usually confined to the statements of politicians and political parties with very little space given to economic issues or court proceedings.

Arjun Banjade’s study (2002) of online newspapers from South Asia – The Kathmandu Post of Nepal, The Hindustan Times of India and The Daily Star of Bangladesh showed that these newspapers devoted a large proportion of space to development news. Most of the development news in these newspapers dealt with economic news. These newspapers quoted private spokespersons rather than government authorities or influential political personalities. Another study by Arjun Banjade showed that Gaunle Deurali Weekly, a true community development newspaper, is used as a platform for local leaders and villagers to express what is important to them rather than being a channel for the government or political elite to push their agenda. Two-thirds of the news items dealt with development issues, and non-development news does not get special treatment in terms of use of accompanying photos or graphics. Moreover, most of the development news was related to soft development issues, mostly covering activities of local organizations and clubs in social awareness programs, instead of physical infrastructure development. The study
also revealed that almost one-fourth (24.0 per cent) of development news items were with a photo or a graphic whereas less than one-fifth (18.6 per cent) of the non-development news items were supported with photos or graphics. This showed that the newspaper did not give preference for development news in terms of use of photos or graphics.

G.E Ifenkwe's study (2008) analyzed five leading national newspapers of Ghana for a period of twelve months to ascertain their level of coverage and reportage of environmental and rural development information and specialty events. It was found that rural development news coverage was the highest (31.48 per cent) in the fourth quarter, and the least in the third quarter (17.79 per cent) of the year. Sixty nine percent of rural development information/news appeared as features, while others were presented as editorials (13.04 per cent), advertorials (9.27 per cent) and pictorials (8.38 per cent). The Sun newspapers (23.65 per cent) scored highest in reporting environmental and rural development news, followed by The Punch (22.5 per cent) and The Champion (21.3 per cent) newspapers. The Sun newspaper also exhibited consistent leadership in promoting activities in the health and population/family planning sub-sectors, while The Champion disseminated more information on rural infrastructures and environmental matters.

Studies analyzing the status of development journalism in Indian newspapers show that development issues are not getting adequate coverage as compared to the newspapers of other third world countries such as Malaysia, Ghana and Indonesia. The researcher found that newspapers from these countries devote nearly half of the total newshole to development related news whereas Indian newspapers hardly give one-tenth of their space to development news out of the total newshole of a daily newspaper.

Vilanilam's study (1975) of four Indian dailies revealed that the English dailies—The Times of India and The Hindu gave 9.2 per cent and 18.8 per cent of space respectively for development news, whereas the two native language papers Aaj (Hindi) and Malayala Manorama (Malayalam) gave 19.5 per cent and 10.3 per cent
respectively. However, this study concluded that all four newspapers devoted more space to government and political news than to development news.

Mohapatra (1984) pointed out that the two newspapers – *The Times of India* and *Samaj* (Oriya) devoted 25 per cent of editorial space to development news. But, these news items were all about demands, complaints, and opinions. Space devoted to serious issues of the country like family planning and literacy was insignificant.

Haque (1986) in his study of development news versus human interest stories in seven dailies in India found that the average of development news in seven dailies is 10.5 per cent of the total news space, dailies varies with a range of 4.9 per cent to 18.3 per cent and with a consensus ranking of 5 among the 10 subject categories of news. Among the seven dailies, only *The Hindu* devoted 18.3 per cent of space to development news. However, political and government news occupied nearly one-fourth of the total space in all the seven dailies.

Apart from news items, editorials and letters to the editor also contain development related issues. In India researchers in their analysis on editorials found many newspapers focus on the policy decisions of the government as well as development related issues in their editorials. For example, Ranade’s study (1971) of editorials in six newspapers during 14 days revealed that out of 192 editorials, 35 (18 per cent) (all papers put together) were on education, health/medicine, agriculture, science, social, cultural and sports while the rest were on political and economic issues. Another study on editorial of three national dailies- *The Hindu*, *The Times of India* and *The Hindustan Times* by Srinivasan (1985) showed that 27.3 per cent, 27.8 per cent and 46.3 per cent respectively were devoted to cover politics. The study also analyses the treatment given to the issues in the editorials on a three-point scale-favourable, unfavourable, and neutral, and noted that favourable editorials were more in all the three papers.

Similarly, through letters to the editor readers express their opinions on development issues, and also vent out their grievances and complaints. Rukmini (1979) in her study of letters to the editor published in three English dailies of Andhra Pradesh observed
that the two dailies — *Indian Express* and *The Hindu* give more emphasis to national issues than local and state issues while the regional English daily *Deccan Chronicle* focused on local and state issues compared to the national dailies. In a study of letters to the editor, Devi Prasad *et al.* (1992) found that a majority of those letters dealt with civic amenities such as power, communications, public transport, etc.

Another study by CMS ENVIS on the coverage of environmental news in leading dailies showed that politics (national and international), business and crime cover 83 percent of total newspaper space in all major dailies. The business news covers a maximum of 34.7 per cent of the total space in the newspaper, which is followed by 25.99 per cent of political news. The coverage given to crime related news is 11.58 per cent whereas educational news gets only 1.1 per cent of space in the newspapers. The international news gets maximum reporting in ‘*The Hindu*’ newspaper i.e. 21 per cent followed by politics (19 per cent). In ‘*The Times of India*’, 20 per cent of the space is devoted to international news whereas politics has 20 per cent coverage. ‘*The Hindustan Times*’ follows with 17 per cent of international news and 18 per cent of political news items.

Although the role of women in development cannot be undermined, issues related to them do not get much coverage in Indian newspapers. For example, Dasgupta (1976), in her study on women’s issues in four English dailies published from New Delhi in 1975, observed that women’s issues received no attention in the six subject categories social, economic, political, art and culture, biographical and other issues. Bhatnagar’s study (1996) of women’s issues in six English newspapers published from New Delhi in 1987 indicated that only 280 (1 per cent) items in the sample reported about the problems and welfare activities about women. Important items like women’s education, rights and wage rates of women workers did not receive adequate coverage in any newspaper under study.

The growth of regional newspapers in post-independent India has been tremendous. Regional newspapers have outnumbered the English dailies in circulation and readership. However, the coverage of development related issues has not received
much attention in these papers. Apart from this, regional papers also dedicate much space to local issues unlike the English dailies as evident in the following studies.

Ahmed’s study (1986) showed that the regional press devoted more than half of the space to regional news. This study based on the four Malayalam newspapers in Kerala revealed that regional press devoted a large proportion of the space to political news rather than news on the development of the State.

Jaya Patil and Vasanthi Rajendran’s analysis (1990) of rural development reports in two national dailies, ‘The Hindu’ and ‘The Economic Times’, a specialized journal ‘Khadi Gramodyog’, and a weekly ‘Economic and Political Weekly’ and a fortnightly ‘India Today’ showed that the maximum number of rural development issues were taken up by the Economic and Political Weekly (30.43 per cent) followed by The Economic Times (26.08 per cent), The Hindu (26.07 per cent) and Khadi Gramodyog (7.85 per cent).

Vilanilam’s analysis (1993) of ten dailies (eight Malayalam and two English), during the period between June 1987 and May 1988 found that science and technology news including development news occupied less than 5 per cent of the newshole. Preetha and Karippai’s (1966) study of farm news in two Malayalam dailies in Kerala found that hardly 1.33 per cent of the newshole dealt with farm news.

Srivastava’s study (1996) on coverage of environmental news in four dailies (two English- The Times of India and The Hindustan Times) and two Hindi dailies – (Dainik Jagran and Nav Bharat Times) in 1995 found that environmental issues occupied only 0.7% of the total print area. No editorial appeared on the subject in the entirety of March 1995.

Bhatnagar (1996) who analysed the development news content of four Telegu dailies in 1991 revealed that among the four dailies, Andhra Pradesh devoted more space to development news than the other dailies. However, regional news occupied more space than national and international news in all the sample dailies.
D.V.R. Murthy's study (2001) of developmental news in four Indian dailies – *The Hindu, Indian Express, Andhra Jyoti and Eanadu* for a period of one year i.e., from 1st January, 1995 to 31st December, 1995 revealed that only 5.8 per cent of the total no. of stories in all papers consisted developmental category. Similarly, of the total of 252 editorials, only 20 editorials reflected developmental themes. *The Hindu* devoted 9.8 per cent of its editorials to developmental themes in comparison to other dailies. Of the two regional dailies, *Eanadu* devoted more editorials to development. In the category of letters to the editor, a total of 86 letters (13.5 per cent) appeared on development. The highest no of letters appeared in *The Hindu* (38), followed by *Indian Express* (17), *Andhra Jyoti* (16) and *Eanadu* (15).

Ram Singh and K.K. Chandra's analysis (2004) of agricultural news coverage in six daily newspapers-Dainik Jagran, Aaj Daily, Hindustan Daily, Amar Ujala, Amnat Varta and Ajad Patrika exhibit that agricultural news, agro-climatic conditions, agricultural marketing and prices were given maximum coverage than the news on horticulture and vegetables, animal husbandry, crop production etc. The study also showed that farmers really enjoyed and benefited in reading news of horticulture, vegetables and animal husbandry which helped them to increase their production and net income. But such news was extremely sparse in all newspaper during study period.

Another study by Tarun Kumar Bose (2007) on national and regional newspapers in Jharkhand revealed that regional newspapers cover developmental news, more than the national newspapers. It was found that though regional newspapers highlight women's issues, there is dismal coverage to adolescent girls or women trafficked for mining in Jharkhand. Also there is little sensitivity among the newspapers towards women's developmental needs. Hardly there is any coverage of gender justice, women's empowerment, environment, poverty, malnutrition, women's health, dalits, weaker section etc.

Vilanilam's study (2009) of seven Indian dailies showed that the English newspapers gave top priority to foreign news whereas there was very little foreign news in the Malayalam newspapers. *The Hindu* and *The New Indian Express* gave the least
amount of space to national development news as compared to the space devoted to political news. The Malayalam newspapers are similar with the English newspapers in their approach to the coverage of development news. Also there was significant difference among the seven newspapers on the basis of ownership as far as the number of editorials and features on globalization and development-related matters were concerned. The English newspapers published significantly more information on these matters than the Malayalam newspapers. Another finding was that the Malayalam newspapers as a group devoted very little space to foreign news and matters related to liberalization, privatization and globalization. Their main focus was in covering soft news, particularly human interest stories, accidents, religious news, especially on temple festivals, pilgrimages, tributes to VIPs, especially departed souls and above all to political and governmental news.

From the above discussion, we understand that the practice of development journalism varies in different newspapers according to their priorities and range of circulation. Thus, the study proposes to undertake an empirical study to examine the intricate relationship between the press and development journalism at three different levels, namely, national, regional and local.

1.4. SCOPE OF THE STUDY

In a developing country like India, the press as an agent of mass media can play a decisive role by disseminating messages relating to development. But the print media in India is often accused of neglecting development news which has much significance in the uplift of the masses. The coverage of developmental issues in the English newspapers and in the Indian language newspapers differs in a number of ways. English newspapers are read by educated, elite class who consists of policy-makers, government officials and intellectual class. While the language newspapers are read by common people. Therefore, it is an urgent need to find out how issues related to development are perceived and treated by the English and language newspapers in India. The present study is an attempt to measure the extent and frequency of development news, and to assess the nature, placement, format, subjects, sources
quoted in development news reports and kinds of development news coverage in two English dailies and in one language daily, in particular and the Indian press in general.

The expansion of the media and information technology have widened the scope of development communication and journalism and blurred the time and space dimensions all over the world. Development journalism has special importance in the context of developing countries particularly India whose economy is growing at a faster rate and is vibrant to the global changes taking place in the last few years. The present study will be useful in evaluating the coverage of development journalism at national, regional and local levels. It will also help the policy makers and the media professionals in formulating their strategies for development communication.

1.5. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The main objectives of the study are:

1) To measure the extent of space and frequency of development news as published by the three selected daily newspapers.

2) To make an assessment about the nature of development news as published in sample dailies.

3) To ascertain how much emphasis is given to development news by the selected newspapers.

4) To determine the common formats in which development news is presented by the sample newspapers.

5) To find out the most frequently appearing subjects of development news in sample dailies.

6) To find out the sources that are most frequently quoted in the development news reports published in selected newspapers.

7) To find out the type of coverage as given to development news in the selected dailies.
1.6. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The study addresses the following research questions:

RQ1: How much space is given to development news in the three sample dailies?

RQ2: How many number of news items appear on development news in the selected newspapers?

RQ3: What kind of emphasis do the three selected newspapers place on development coverage as measured by placement of news items?

RQ4: What is the nature of coverage of development news in the selected newspapers?

RQ5: What are the common formats of development news that appear in the three dailies?

RQ6: What are the common subject categories of development news getting most of the coverage in the three newspapers?

RQ7: What are the most frequently quoted sources in development news reports?

RQ8: What type of coverage most of the development news items receive in the three dailies?

1.7. METHODOLOGY

This study is an attempt on the part of the researcher to bring to light the role played by the print media in informing, educating and communicating people about various subjects related to development of our society. For this, the study undertakes a comprehensive qualitative and quantitative content analysis of three newspapers namely The Hindu, The Assam Tribune and Dainik Jugasankha.

1.7.1. CONTENT ANALYSIS AS A RESEARCH METHOD

Bernard Berelson defined content analysis as "a research technique for the objective, systematic, and quantitative description of manifest content of communications" (Berelson, 1952). Content analysis is one of the commonly used research
methodologies used by scholars dealing with media and communication. Content analysis entails a systematic reading of a body of texts, images and symbolic matters, not necessarily from an author's or user's perspective. Content analysis is a method of communication analysis as well as a method of observation (Kerlinger, 1973). In content analysis, the content of communication becomes the basis of inference. Charles Wright (1986) in *Mass Communication: A Sociological perspective* writes:

> Content analysis is a research technique for the systematic description of communication content according to certain usually pre-determined categories. It may involve qualitative and quantitative analysis, or both. Technical objectivity requires that the categories of classification and analysis be clearly and operationally defined so that other researchers can follow them reliably.

### 1.7.2. SAMPLE

For the study, the researcher selected three newspapers, one English national daily, *The Hindu* published from Kolkata; one English regional daily namely *The Assam Tribune* published from Guwahati; and one Bengali local daily namely *Dainik Jugasankha* published from Silchar.

### 1.7.3. BASIS OF SELECTION OF NEWSPAPERS

1. The three newspapers are selected keeping in mind their circulation, geographical location and language. *The Hindu* is a prestigious English national daily. Though the parent edition is published from Chennai, the newspaper enjoys wide readership in the north-east region. It has created a niche for itself in terms of nationwide circulation and also maintains high journalistic standard.

2. *The Assam Tribune* is the largest circulated regional English daily in Assam. Because of the respect it has earned over the years, the newspaper has a strong influence on the policy makers of the state.
3. *Dainik Jugasankha* is a leading Bengali daily newspaper of Barak Valley. It has the highest circulation among all Bengali dailies of Barak Valley as well as whole Assam.

### 1.7.4. SAMPLING TECHNIQUE

The sampling technique adopted in the study is purposive sampling. Purposive sampling is also known as judgmental sampling or relevance sampling. In this type of sampling the researcher purposively chooses particular units of sample, which according to his judgment about some appropriate characteristic required of the sample numbers, are thought to be relevant to the research topic and are easily available to him. In this technique, some variables are given importance and it represents the universe but the selection of units is deliberate and based on prior judgment. This sampling technique aims at selecting all textual units that contribute to answering given research questions.

### 1.7.5. THE UNIVERSE AND THE SAMPLE SIZE

The universe for the present study comprises of all the editions of the three selected dailies during the period of three months i.e., from 1st January, 2010 to 31st March, 2010. Thus the study includes ninety editions per daily (31+28+31=90). Thus 270 editions are selected as sample. Out of these 270 editions there are eight holidays. Therefore, in all, a total of 262 editions of all the three newspapers are analyzed by the researcher.

### 1.7.6. VARIABLES

The developmental news items published in each of the three sample newspapers during the period of study are the variables in the present study. For studying development news, all news items including hard news, soft news, editorials, articles, letters to the editor, features, columns, middles and anchor stories covering development news are considered as variables in this study.
Quantitative variables:

1. Extent in terms of total space in column centimeters.
2. Frequency in terms of number of items on developmental news

Qualitative variables:

1. Emphasis in terms of placement of development news in the front page and inside pages.
2. Nature of developmental news content as positive, negative and neutral.
3. Format of developmental news in terms of hard news, soft news, editorials, letters to the editor, articles, features, columns, middles and anchor stories.
4. Subjects of development news as mentioned in development subject categories.
5. Sources quoted in news reports are classified into government officials and spokespersons, ministers, peoples’ representatives, experts and intellectuals, political leaders, police, rights activists, members of public, NGO office bearers, court order, reports and survey findings, unofficial and newspaper sources.
6. Type of coverage in terms of analytical and informative.

The data collected from newspaper content is quantified both in terms of column centimeters and number of news items. In qualitative analysis the placement, nature, format, subject categories, most frequently quoted sources in news reports and types of coverage of development news are studied by the researcher.

1.8. DEVELOPMENT SUBJECT CATEGORIES:

Development news in this study is divided into the following subject categories:

15. Weaker Sections.
17. Other Development.

The sub-themes in subject categories as coded by the researcher are mentioned below:

1. Agriculture :

Farming; fertilizers, organic and inorganic; cattle, local and imported; animal husbandry; poultry; artificial insemination; seeds; improved methods of cultivation; agricultural tools and implements; mechanization of large farms; dairy development; increasing production of meat, fish and vegetables; horticulture; rice, wheat and other grain production; exports and imports of seeds, grains and other fertilizers; coffee, tea and other plantations; import substitutions; price increase and price reduction; farmers suicide, (Vilanilam, 2009); improved food production; irrigation facilities (Murthy, 2001); genetically modified crops;
controversy over Bt Brinjal, production of various crops; indigenous innovations in agriculture and allied activities; strategies to increase farm growth; food security; condition of farmers; problems in farming, fisheries, horticulture, tea cultivation, muga cultivation; agricultural extension services; agricultural development schemes, National Agriculture Development Programmes.

2. Health:

Chikunguniya, mosquito menace; infant mortality, neo-natal care; public health and hospital cleanliness; plastic and drainage clogging; new drugs and life-saving drugs; medical research; drinking water availability and distribution; different medical systems; cultivation of medicinal plants; polio and other diseases; diabetes, heart disease, bird flu, HIV/AIDS, (Vilainalam, 2009); swine flu; eradication of epidemics; promotional activities such as conducting free medical camps, organizing workshops, conferences and meetings relating to health and longevity, (Murthy, 2001); homoeopathy campaign; illegal medical practices; reports on fake drugs; awareness on tobacco abuse and alcohol addiction; National Tabacco Control Programme; pulse polio immunization; mental health care; health service in rural and urban areas; anti-leprosy campaign; National Rural Health Mission, National Urban Health Mission; health and hygiene for women; health schemes for children, Child Health Campaigns, Smile India Operation; development of health infrastructure; sanitation campaigns; garbage management; sound pollution and health effects, cell phone and health effects; health care schemes and implementation.

3. Education:

Pre-primary (Nursery and Kindergarten) admissions and donations; school bus accidents; safe arrangements for picnic and study tours; strikes in colleges and schools; quality improvement efforts; UGC and National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC) activities; professional education for degrees and diplomas in medicine, engineering, nursing, physiotherapy, and so on; research in universities, colleges and institutes of higher learning; entrance tests and admission
procedures; self-financing institutions and interactions with government on fees, number of seats, etc.; educational training institutes; training in job methods; tools and equipments for reducing drudgery and labour saving devices; collaboration in education; vocational education; computers and computerization; internet; Information Technology (IT) for education; Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA); training of teachers; politicization of teachers and administrators (Vilanilam, 2009); library movement; development of educational facilities, reforms in educational systems (Murthy, 2001); education and employment; higher education reforms; education schemes; debate on rural MBBS course; deemed varsity debate; elementary education; infrastructural development in education sector; activities of National Commission on Higher Education and Research; e-learning facilities; mid-day meals; accidents and tragedies in educational institutions; Right to Education; anomalies in education sector.

4. Transport and Communication:

Road facilities, bus and train facilities; betterment of road conditions; postal and telecommunication facilities (Murthy, 2001); air connectivity; upgradation of rail network; metro line projects; initiatives in road safety; infrastructural development of transport facilities; problems in transportation; ordeals of pedestrians; passengers and travelers; anomalies in construction of roads; traffic menace; construction of bridges.

5. Family Planning:

Family planning measures; use of contraceptives; family planning camps; promotion of family welfare; survey reports on family planning programmes (Murthy, 2001).

6. Housing:

Housing for the masses; housing for the victims of natural disasters; housing for the displaced; housing for the elderly (Vilanilam, 2009); promotion of low-cost houses; national housing needs; (Murthy, 2001); housing for the homeless people.
7. **Literacy:**

Promotion of literacy; literacy missions; distribution of books (Murthy, 2001); efforts towards adult literacy; literacy level among adults and children; literacy statistics.

8. **Energy and Environment:**

Studies of the working and living environment of the people; avoiding air, water and soil pollution; avoiding endosulfan and such other deadly carcinogenic pesticides and insecticides in the living environments of citizens; national power grid and river projects; power generation and energy sufficiency; making electricity available to all; forest preservation; global warming; Tree Planting; National Thermal Power Corporation (NTPC) and other energy development projects; alternative sources-wind, solar, geo-thermal, nuclear and so on; climate change; floods and droughts, earthquakes and other natural disasters; rain water harvesting; conservation and storage of drinking water; rejuvenation of conventional sources of water such as domestic wells, streams, ponds and rivers (Vilanilam, 2009), wildlife conservation; rural electrification; Rajiv Gandhi Electrification scheme; development project induced calamities (draught by river dam); Haiti earthquake devastation; industrial pollution; sustainable development; sustainable water management; national and international efforts to environmental protection; Copenhagen, Kyoto Conference; river restoration; disaster management; effects of dams and development projects on environment; illegal mining and environment; erosion of land; forest management and preservation; conservation of wetlands; water management; river pollution.

9. **Employment:**

Creation of jobs; unemployment problem; problem of the educated unemployed; job-degree de-linking; women’s employment; part-time employment; the National Rural Employment Guarantee Schemes (NREGA) and its implementation; workers’ welfare and protection; Provident Fund, Gratuity and other welfare
measures such as Pension Schemes; Workers’ health schemes; improvement of working conditions; mechanization of traditional modes of production; occupational health and hygiene; industrial safety; night classes for workers; part-time educational opportunities for workers; workers’ recreational facilities; improvement of production; protection of labour laws (Vilanilam, 2009); dharna and strikes by workers; Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Schemes (MNREGS); rights of domestic workers; labour rights, panels for better implementation of job schemes; wages of workers; corruption in employment sector; Pay Panel Reports; alternative employment opportunities; agitation by employees; condition of women workers; Bharat Nirman Programme.

10. Poverty:

Poverty eradication measures; research and survey reports on poverty statistics; people living below poverty line (BPL); poverty indicators; distribution of ration cards; Public Distribution System; NGO activities in bringing down poverty level; hunger and malnutrition; condition of rural and urban poor; recommendation of committees for policy formulation on poverty eradication.

11. Women Empowerment:

Issues of women empowerment; Women Reservation Bill; role and participation of women in social, political and economic activities; AIDWA, self-employed women’s organization; steps to improve the lot of women in general; Ladli Scheme; activities of Women Commission; women entrepreneurs; schemes for development of women.

12. Land Reforms and Land Acquisition:

General comments about land ownership and distribution in India; the need for land reforms in the development of agriculture; land acquired for dams; land acquired for automobile factories, power generation plant and other projects and industries; agitations demanding rehabilitations of displaced people in areas acquired for dam and for other development purposes; activities of Medha Patkar
and other social activists; Development, Displacement; Rehabilitation of affected people, (Vilanilam, 2009); encroachment issue; forest rights of people.

**Human Rights:**

Violation of human rights, civil rights, RTI; prison reforms; discrimination against Dalits, Adivasis, Scheduled Tribes, Schedule Caste and minority communities; custodial death; activities of National Human Rights Commission, human rights activists and human rights organizations; human trafficking; bonded labour; street children; child labour; police atrocities on people (police’s anti-people action); child marriage; practice of dowry; crime against children; untouchability; action of Khap Panchayats; ethnic killings; denial of women’s rights; honour killings; rights of children; women trafficking.

**13. Success Stories:**

Achievements of common people in social, educational, political and economic field that can motivate others; bravery awards; achievement of poor students; rare feat achieved by less advantageous students and people; common people’s struggle in achieving success.

**14. Weaker Sections:**

Socio-economic conditions of religious, linguistic, ethnic and cultural minorities, physically challenged people, marginalised groups and facilities to improve their condition and status; help and support to the physically challenged people; rights of the disabled; senior citizens; victims of calamities; upgradation of conditions of slum dwellers; constitutional safeguard to indigenous people; social attitude towards HIV-infected children.
15. National Integration and Communal Harmony:

Promotion of national languages; federalism; brotherhood and communal harmony among communities living in India; spirit of inclusive nationalism; strengthening of Indian democracy; Hindu-Muslim unity.

16. Other Development:

Urban development; rural development; upliftment of villages; good governance; use of traditional wisdom; welfare schemes; infrastructural development; compulsory voting; e-governance; inclusive growth; utilization of funds for development projects; issues of economic development; issues of village development; annual budget.

1.9. OPERATIONAL DEFINITIONS

Analytical coverage: Analytical coverage refers to process reporting of development news. It ensures in-depth study and continuous reporting of development phenomena by journalists in order to assess the impact of development on the people and nation.

Article: A special piece of writing on a particular topic written by an expert on the subject.

Anchor: News story appearing at the bottom of the front page of a newspaper.

Column: Column is an individual piece of writing expressing opinion of the writer on any issue or theme. People who write columns are known as ‘columnist’.

Column Centimeter: Unit of measurement in which space is sold in a newspaper. Each unit is one column wide and one centimeter high. In this present study, as all the newspapers are in hard copy form, all measurements are made in column centimeters since the column centimeter is the easiest identifiable unit when measuring newspaper content in terms of space.

Development news: Content of news items dealing with various sub-themes mentioned in the development subject category.
Editorial: An important written material in a newspaper that expresses the editor's opinion about an issue.

Features or Human Interest stories: These news stories involve adventure, disaster, or a triumph. Human interest is also involved when it depicts extra-ordinary persons in ordinary situations. Human interest stories resemble anything that appeals to everybody not because of interest in the subject but because everybody shares human experience.

Hard news: All news reports that are presented in an objective and dispassionate manner answering five Ws and one H about any event.

Informative coverage: Informative news coverage refers to event reporting of development news. There is no in-depth analysis and comprehensive coverage of events of development. Informative development news only informs readers about simple events relating to development.

Journalism: Journalism is popularly defined as 'a report of things, as they appear at the moment of writing, not a definitive study of a situation' (Agee et al. 1979). Etymologically, a journal is a record of events, almost a diary where the journal-keeper enters salient points of daily occurrences. The journalist is associated with reporting the news, and offering interpretations and opinions based on news. Statement of opinion and interpretation is also part of journalistic duty and practice, which is expressed through editorials and 'opposite editorial' page (op-ed page) articles (Vilanilam, 2005).

Letters to the editor: Letters to the editor are the letters on relevant issues sent by the public to the editor of the newspaper concerned.

Middle: Middles are the extension of the letters to the editor appearing on the editorial page of a newspaper.

Negative content: Contents dealing with conflicts, death, murder, suicide, negligence, violence, delayed decisions affecting development, disorganization, indifferent
attitude of the government or any other group of individual, instability and weakness, negative occurrences of developments concerning developmental subjects.

Neutral content: Contents reflecting neither positive nor negative conditions.

Newshole: The amount of space given to news content in a newspaper. In this study the news hole is measured by computing the area of the printed space in each newspaper and then subtracting from it the area devoted to advertisements, jokes, comics, cartoons, crossword puzzles, index to contents, masthead, weather charts, transportation timings, film charts and public notices (Vilanilam, 2009).

Non-news space: Space devoted to advertisements, jokes, comics, cartoons, crossword puzzles, index to contents, masthead, weather charts, transportation timings, film charts and public notices.

Positive content: Contents dealing with social cohesion, co-operation, stability, strength, positivity, any plan, program or policy of the government for the benefit of the people or place, financial assistance, advocacy and awareness generated, developments and growth pertaining to developmental subjects.

Print Space: Total space available for printing in a newspaper.

Soft news: Those news items that present a human interest angle to any news story with an element of the reporter’s subjectivity getting into the story.

The press: Reporters, editors, feature writers, columnists and reviewers are identified as journalists. This term also includes those who write for syndicates, press associations and magazines. They are all part of what is generally termed ‘the press’ that is, the print media. But today, the term ‘press’ covers not only print media journalists but journalists from all media (Vilanilam, 2005). In this study, ‘the press’ refer to newspapers only.