CONCLUSION A N D
RECOMMENDATIONS

The growth and development of Communist movement in Kerala has been unique in the sense that they came in power through a democratic electoral process. Unlike other totalitarian societies like Russia or China Communists in Kerala succeeded in propagating their ideology in a democratic system, which already had been enlightened by the radical ideas and activities of various social reform movements and national movement.

Though an alien concept they succeeded in propagating their ideology among the public in an effective manner. They utilized all media resources - theatre, press, publications, art forms and word of mouth - to popularize Communist doctrine in Kerala. They treated communication as a means to shape the thought pattern of the public in accordance with Communist ideology.

From the beginning to their electoral victory in 1957, most of the time the Party was under political ban. Besides this, caste oriented social structure, variations in socio-economic status, high rate of illiteracy, limited access to media etc. hindered the effective dissemination of their ideology among the public. But they utilized imaginative forms of propaganda to reach each and every sector of
the society. The most striking feature of their communication practice is that they successfully utilized the complementary and reinforcing role of various communication channels existing in the society.

From the findings it is clear that, Communists placed great importance on communication. They used communication as an important tool to bring out changes in social structure. The four major elements of communication system of Communists are (i) individual verbal propaganda, (ii) publishing programme (iii) cultural activities and (iv) demonstrations.

The most important feature of their communication practice was the importance given to verbal propaganda and direct communication. Study classes, night schools etc. have functioned as effective forms of direct communication. In these classes policies and ideas of the party was transmitted through the press were discussed. The topics covered touched all kinds of social matters. Systematic house-to-house canvassing by party workers also helped to keep a direct contact with their cadres. According to Party's directions every party member should make day-to-day contacts with other
party members and non-party masses. In Communist concept words in the media alone do not effectively change people. It takes a combination of the media and direct personal contact to move people to action.

Press, forms another important mass medium of Communist party. They maintained an official party press and impressive array of publications along with their political activity. Even during the periods of political ban they maintained a steady flow of publications under various titles. Though their distribution was often interrupted by bureaucratic interventions the available copies were widely circulated and read by the party workers. Throughout the history of the movement, press has played a pivotal role in carrying the message of class struggle to the toiling people and wind of socio-cultural modernisation to the intelligentsia.

Another striking feature of the communication practice of the Communist party was the dissemination of ideology through cultural activities. The best elements of national tradition and cultural heritage of Kerala was its songs and art forms. Communists have the credit of the first to have initiated systematic attempts in
exploiting and manipulating the socio-political potential of various art forms and cultural activities in bringing out social change. They utilized songs, folk and classical art forms, theatre etc. for the propagation of Communism among the public. In sum cultural activities played a crucial role in creating a platform for the successful dissemination of complex revolutionary ideas among the party workers.

Demonstrations like Jathas, meetings, campaigns, etc have also played a crucial role in mobilizing the public towards the party's activities. It also provided them an opportunity to draw public attention towards the immediate demands of the party.

Communication practice of Communists in Kerala presents a striking model for alternative use of communication, which proved the potential of indigenous mode of communication and possibilities of integrated use of various communication channels to effect social development. Besides this, folk, traditional and participatory nature of communication gave a democratic and indigenous touch to their communication activities.
Their experience suggests that democratizing the process of communication by availing popular and indigenous communication media will facilitate the active participation of individuals in the social and political development. For them democratization of communication will lead to increased media exposure and increased literacy rate which in turn enhance social representation and political participation.

A democratic society can be effective, successful and deliver its goods only when it has a well-informed citizenry capable of playing an independent and decisive role by taking right and rational decisions on various aspects. But for hundreds of millions of people democratic communication is scarcely be a reality. Social, cultural and economic discrimination, limited access to media, high rate of illiteracy etc. hampered the democratization of communication and hence social development. In such places messages conveyed through mass media are not entirely relevant to the cultural or social reality of the surrounding masses. Studies have shown that mass media alone could not effect social development in such social situations.
Communication practice of Communists in different parts of the world presents alternative models of communication for development. Studies have shown that communication practice of Communists in countries like Russia, China, Tanzania, Cuba etc. have succeeded in mobilizing the mass for social change. Communists in Kerala succeeded in propagating their ideology in a cast oriented feudalist society ranging from illiterate village mass to the urban elite. The great success of their communication practice was the integrated use of various communication channels like interpersonal communication, traditional media, folk media and mass media to effect social development which enabled them to eliminate communication barriers like illiteracy, limited media exposure, and variations in socio-economic status.

But this does not mean that communication experience of Communists is transferable to other countries. It must be realized that social, cultural and economic conditions of different countries are different. So it is not easy to transfer the same communication policy to other countries. But their communication experience
provides us some guidelines for the effective utilization of communication for social development.

Communication experience of Communists suggests that the communication strategy designed should be strictly in accordance with social and cultural background of the people and in their language and dialect. The strategy planners should be aware of various modes and channels of communication existing in the society including interpersonal communication, traditional media and mass media. Ultimately every nation must find its own way and its specific design of communication strategy on the basis of its own economic, social and cultural preconditions.

Recommendations for Further Research

The available studies on Mass Communication indicate that not much work has been done on the impact of communication in the context of underdeveloped and developing societies. Certain areas in development communication are by and large remaining unattended by the communication researchers. The role of indigenous communication practices in development
communication is one among them. In India the process of communication is determined by a number of factors like social, economic and religious status, literacy rate, media exposure etc. The impact of these variables in the development communication process is not yet adequately analyzed. Such areas of communication should be explored further to formulate suitable communication strategies for implementing social development programmes.

In India majority of the people live in rural areas. Most of them belong to the lower stratum of the society. Social and economic backwardness, illiteracy, limited media exposure, etc. hampered the development process. Mass media had little impact on these areas. But traditional and folk media can do wonders in the development process in such places.

There are many examples for the utilization of alternative communication strategies in social development. Communist movement in Kerala indicates such a successful communication experiment, which proved the effectiveness of integrated use of various communication channels to effect social development. Communication activities of KSSP (Kerala Sastra Sahithya Parishad)
can be cited as another example. They utilized traditional, low budget media for the popularization of science and technology among the public. Studies on such indigenous communication experiments will be successful in bringing out the potential and possibilities of indigenous media in development communication studies.