

# **CHAPTER I**

## **INTRODUCTION: MASS COMMUNICATION**

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#### **Communication: Nature, Role and Research Studies**

Effective communication of new research findings and technologies in agriculture to rural farmers remains a promising strategy for increasing agricultural productivity. Generally, such information may include techniques of applying fertilizers, insecticides and pesticides to improved crop methods of cultivation, and soil conservation techniques of planting, maintenance, harvesting and storage of crops. There are also new technologies of animal husbandry as well as processing and for marketing various agricultural products for the farmers to adopt the new technologies and put them to use. The new ideas must reach their farms and homes through effective extension and mass media. The mass media are increasingly becoming a veritable instrument of adoption of innovations.

They are also becoming a veritable instrument for transforming Indian agriculture. People will derive pleasure from learning how the food they eat is produced and they may be encouraged to develop an interest in growing something themselves. Also, considering our competitive environment with rapidly changing job assignments and technological developments, adult education in agriculture should require multidimensional, comprehensive, cross-cultural content and systems approaches to guarantee increased food production.

There is also the problem of widespread illiteracy. Majority of the farmers cannot read and understand the

information at their disposal. In addition, the high cost of newspapers, radio and television limits the use of these channels to only rich farmers. Also, the editors and programme directors are more interested in producing programmes that are of high commercial value. Most often, the agricultural programmes are not timed to suit the farmers, consequently, most farmers are constrained to rely on third parties for agricultural information.

Communication is the process of social interaction by which people influence the ideas, behaviour of one another or social understanding and orderliness in the society.

Communication is an essential process of social life which is both interactive and purposeful. Communication is indispensable to development which is often considered as a means for breaking down the barriers in human interaction and thus achieving mutual understanding among people.

While the definitions of communication vary according to the theoretical frames of reference employed and the stress placed upon certain aspects of the total process – they include five fundamental factors an initiator, a recipient, a mode or vehicle, a message and effect, simply expressed, the communication process begins when ‘encoded’ translated into a signal or sequence of signal and transmitted via a particular medium or channel to a receiver who then decodes it and interprets the message, returning a signal in some way that the message has or has not been understood.

## **Concept of Communication:**

The term communication is a Latin word namely 'communis' it means to establish commonness, communication includes transmission and stimulation receiving the information. Communication means transmission of ideas, attitudes or emotions from one person/ group to another person or group. In effective communication the meaning conveyed to the recipient, corresponds closely to that intended by the sender.

"Communication is the imparting, conveying or exchange of ideas, knowledge, etc. by means of speech, writing or sign" (Oxford Dictionary, 1973:p 118)

**Some of the major definitions of communication are as follows:**

1. "Communication is the art of transmitting information, ideas and attitudes from one person to another".

**Emery, Ault and Agee**

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2. Communication is interaction among people.

**Henry Compton**

3. Communication is the process of passing information and understanding from one person to another.

**Keith Davis**

"Communication is an essential process of social life which is both interactive and purposeful. Again communication is often considered as a means for breaking

down the barriers in human interaction and thus achieving mutual understanding among people.”

### **Types of Communication:**

#### **1. Interpersonal Communication :**

It is the basic need of man. Without communication interaction among them could not have been possible. Here face to face relations are present with the help of words, pictures, symbols, expressions. People deliver the messages. This is a harmonious and effective way of communication. People listen patiently and express themselves, listening and speaking are the major parts with the help of which direct contacts are established among individuals. Cultural expressions of people, social norms and values and social stratification play a significant role in communication. Anthropologist Edward Hall says that ‘culture is communication’. In other words non-verbal communication symbols, signal etc. play a significant role in communication.

Interpersonal communication needs physical proximity of person. It involves focused communicative interdependence. There is exchange of messages and messages are coded in variety of verbal and non-verbal ways. It is relatively unstructured and marked by inflexibility.

## **2. Mass Communication :**

According to, Robert Escarpit, "Mass communication is a large aggregate unit, of diversified population, yet gives response to common cultural stimuli in a relatively uniform manner".

Mass Communication means any messages or cultural stimulus - such as a medium, that influences large and heterogenous population. Mass media also means, any means or instruments of people, such as books, periodical, radio, television and motion pictures.

According to Agee, Ault and Emery, mass communication is "The process of delivering information, ideas and attitudes to sizeable and diversified audience through use of media developed for that purpose".

Harold Lasswell's (1974) phrase: "Who says what in which channel to whom with, what effect explains the concept of mass communication.

According to Denis McQuail ( 1987) " Mass Communication can be defined as social interaction through messages".

In receiving the two types of communication we find the following contrasting sociological feature of interpersonal and mass communication. Whenever there is higher degree of face to face contact there we find more primary groups and primary relationships. In societies dominated by the mass media though there are interconnections between various population groups yet we find more secondary groups and secondary relationships.

Communication is as old as humanity itself, human beings started uttering sound perhaps a million years ago but the sound acquired meanings much later. It is said that human

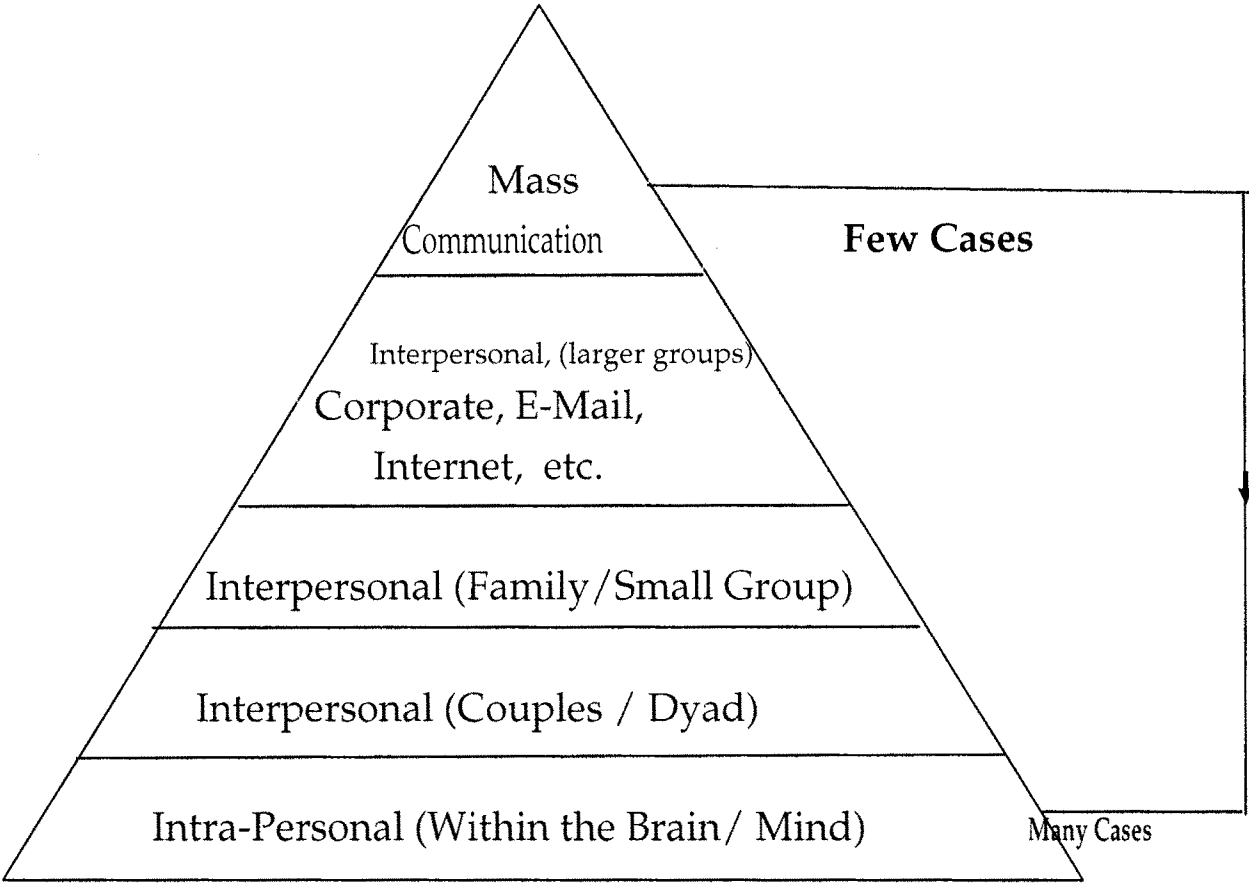
beings started exchanging thought through speech just thirty five thousand years ago. This is, comparatively speaking, a recent phenomenon in the history of human kind. 'Litho and wooden' block printing, and later mechanical printing presses using movable types (first in China, then in Kerala, and finally in Germany of Johan Gutenberg) appeared on or about December 27 (actually it occurred circa 1450 A.D.)

The next major steps in the technological evolution of mass communication were the telegraph (1844) the telephone (1870) and the wireless (1896). These inventions ultimately led to faster means of communication, using electric, electronic and radio- wave transmission of messages between distant regions on the globe, inaugurating the era of telecommunication.

What is important here is that the entire system of communication through the mass media is just an infant in human history. Mass communication is only one of the forms of human communication as the Macbride commission of the UNESCO observed in their report in 1980.

There are different levels of social and personal organization at which human communication takes place. A world famous communication sociologist Denis McQuail, has observed that Mass communication is "at the apex of pyramidal distribution", and interpersonal communication (processing information in the brain of a person) is at the base of that pyramid.

**Table 1.0 Showing different levels of Communication**



**Source: Denis McQuail quoted by Vilanilam I.V.: Growth and Development of MassCommunication in India, National Book trust, India 2003.**

Mass communication is the communication of mass produced messages for mass audiences consisting of millions of people who do not gather at any particular place



but individually receive the messages and programmes even while sitting in the comfort of their homes.(Vilani,2003)

Mass communication is the product of modern science and technology which are by and large the product of the free enterprise system.

“Mass production and destitution of message transforms selected private perspectives into proud public perspectives and brings mass public into existence. The media are the cultural norms of the industrial order from which they spring” – George Gerbner,

### **Traditional and Modern Communication in India**

Traditional beliefs and ideas were handed down orally. Eventually folk tales, myths, epic stories and myths evolved into a large treasure-house of the earliest thoughts, the Vedas, the Brahmanas, the Puranas, the Upanishads and later the great epics, the Ramayan and the Mahabharat (including the Bhagavad Gita), these early writings have inspired millions of Indians for centuries.

### **Satellite Instructional Television Experiment (SITE)**

SITE has been the most extensive educational and social research project ever conducted in mass mediated communication. Several steps taken as a result of SITE are worth mentioning. The Indian National Satellite (INSAT) system was put into orbit following the favourable result of SITE, the effectiveness of TV as a medium for educating the masses in rural areas was underscored by these tests.

Thousands of messages are there on topics generally considered development oriented. Examples are agricultural modernization through HYV seeds, better farming methods

and management, family planning, public health, social and educational improvements of women and children and better learning and teaching methods.

India is rich in agricultural technology and more of it is emerging everyday. However in many areas of India, full use is not being made in agricultural research because most of the results lie dormant in scores of laboratories and experiment stations. Only a fraction of this is useful information is disseminated to the actual users, the farmers.

Modern agricultural is characterized among other things by the salient role of communication as a factor of change and progress. Communication is a factor of change and progress. Communication facilities transmit the latest technology in agriculture, provides information about the changes that have occurred, the available alternatives, methods and means and the benefits of adopting new ideas. Communication also provides skills required for change and development. It gives planners and decision makers feedback on agricultural problems. The communication media are used as an effective and appropriate means to produce the incremental change in the knowing, thinking and doing of the things by the farmers, to help speed up the process of adoption of improved farm production technology including different methods of irrigation, importance of irrigation and water requirement of different crops.

The communication of agricultural information to a large number of farmers, particularly who are literate is also a challenge to all the concerned organizations and agencies of development . We have to ensure that the time lag between the development of new technological discovery and its transfer to farmers belonging to all categories must be as small as possible

still we find a wide gap between the available technology and its adoption by the farmers. Effective communication of agricultural information to the farmers is a most important pre-requisite to agricultural development.

### **Sociology of Mass Communication**

Sociology of mass communication is a new branch of sociology. It draws its methods and technique mainly from the social science methods and techniques such as survey research, field work, case study, observation, interview-schedule, etc.

Mass Communication research is the scientific study of mass communication behavior of human beings usually in current situations requiring the gathering of primary and quantitative information. It also includes the study of the communication, their media and the content of the messages.

Like most of the modern social sciences, sociology of mass communication is an interesting, inter-disciplinary and applied field since the II World War.

Sociological studies in mass communication have been given great importance in every walk of life. Urbanization, industrialization and modernization made the social condition more complex. Secondly, there is a great need for the study of sociology of mass communication in developing countries. Now a days vast changes are taking place in the communication technology, mass media are bringing a lot of changes in the life of the people both material and non-material life.

In sociology also a number of studies are conducted to understand the role of mass media to change the traditional habits of the people. Different media are used for example print media. In general the people are being affected.

Every one is interested in knowing the impact of mass media on the Indian society. In sociology also number of studies are being conducted to understand the mass media, and changes in the traditional habits of the people.

Sociology of mass communication is the study of the process of mass media and their effects. It defines the effects, impact, directly and microscopically. At the same time the role of people attitudes, group behavior values, norms, social relationships and opinion in communication are studied. Harold Lasswell, Paul Lazarsfeld, Willbur Schramm, Elihu Katz, Herla are some of the social scientists who have contributed many group and middle range theories in the field of sociology of mass communication.

### **Mass Media : Its Nature**

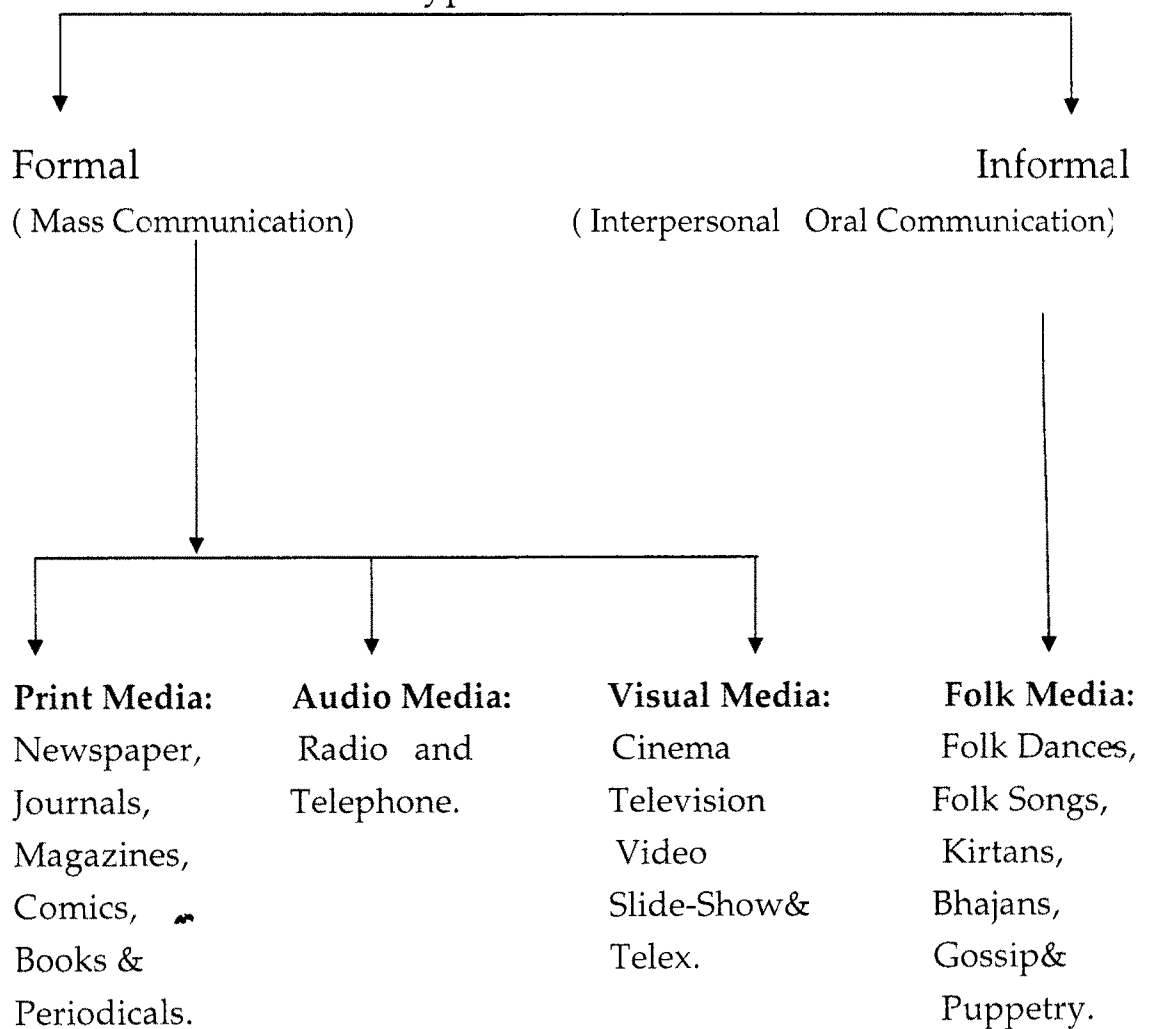
The mass media are the agencies of mass communication which influence the human behavior and the society. In general mass media is treated as a social system which is responsible for attitudinal changes and increasing ideas, knowledge in the society.

According to Edward Shills and David White (1968) media constitute new agencies of popular art and culture, mass media are the windows of the world. They are one of the dominant institution or social force in society which focus on particular behavior and grammar of social life.

All communication media are properly speaking extension of man as they help to project his messages and

obtain feedback. Mass media play crucial role in the functioning and changing of any society. Both the forces of change and opposition utilize different terms of media to suit their needs, modern technology has vastly increased the outreach of media and made its centralized control possible.

Table No.1.1  
Types of Communication



For the present study print medium i.e. newspaper, audio: radio, telephone and audio visual medium like television is selected. The nature of each selected medium is given here as follows:

## **Newspaper**

The Office of the Registrar of Newspaper for India commonly known as Press Registrar came into being from 1<sup>st</sup> July 1956. The duties and function of the Press Registrar are defined in the press and registration of books Act, 1867 as amended from time to time.

News is a report of an event accurately timely information which been accurately gathered and written by trained reporters for the purpose of serving the newspaper reader.

In the history of the newspaper in India, before independence newspapers were the political weapons, they created awareness against, injustice. Newspaper have undergone a fundamental change in the past few years. At present the newspaper generally concentrates on national and international events. They focus on welfare policies and development programs, science and technology art, recreation, agriculture and economy as well as on social deviance and social violence. Mass illiteracy and economic poverty are the main obstacles before this print medium in India for its wide circulation.

## 1) Radio

Radio broadcast started in India in 1927 with two privately owned transmitters at Bombay and Calcutta. The government took them over in 1930 and started operating them under the name of Indian broadcasting service. In 1936, the name of service was changed to All India Radio (AIR)-since 1957 it is known as Akashwani-and it was a separate department. It serves as an effective medium not only to inform and educate people but also to provide healthy entertainment.

In a vast country like India, where majority are still illiterate, radio plays and can play a very useful role in development of adult education. To achieve this, it has set up a chain of transmitting stations all over the country to meet the linguistic and cultural requirements of the listeners. As such, it has become a valuable means of refining and educating public tastes.

Radio is an interpretive, readily accessible and generous medium of entertainment. It is the poor man's library, his legitimate theater, his newspaper and his club, Radio acts as 'mobility multiplier' leading people to imaginary universe and preparing them for a change. It is a significant medium for a great revolution in the country side.

## 2) Television

Television transmission started in India on 15th September 1959 as an experimental service to impart social education to the urban slum dwellers in the capital. In the third decade of its operational life TV has emerged as an extensive network to serve the broad objective of information, education and entertainment.

TV leads powerful support to the major multimedia campaign initiated by the growth from time to time. Again television is a powerful medium, provides the innovation and adoption of innovation. Oscar Kats calls it "young field and unpredictable."

But it has all the possibilities of becoming an important item in the leisure time of the general public in times to come. It may be used to widen intellectual and cultural opportunities for the masses. It is an audio-visual aid. In a country like India, it is very useful for the removal of mass illiteracy and to control the over population. Like radio, television is also under government control. It is the electronic blackboard for the generations to come. Though it is said that TV is an idiot-box, still then it has become part and parcel of family and community life.

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## **Media and Change**

Mass media is helpful for creating social change in society.

Almost all the components of mass media are powerful agents of social change.

(Kuppuswamy)

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Communication system or network of TV, radio, newspaper, cinema, etc. can be helpful to illiterate masses of India or to the people living in metros. In short communication system in the developing society is needed in country like India.

Mass communication as a social institution has changed the entire social and personality structure of its members through its constant, dynamic flow of information, ideas about the societal events for social awareness and relationships.

Social change can be defined as a change in the social structure, or in particular in social institution or in the relationship between institutions. According to another definition, “Social change is a deviation from the accepted mode of life”. ( Gilin & Gilin 1948 )

## Communication Studies: A Review

Khan A.W. (1979) in his study "A Better information through Radio for small farmers", describes the program for small and marginal farmers should aim at educating them in regard to the scientific information which can be relevant to their situation. Small and marginal farmers must be educated in regard to special programs launched by the government for their benefit.

Mohammad Ayaz (1990) in his study "Agricultural communication in Pakistan" describes transmission of related information to farmers and feedback to the top planners and decision makers in agricultural problems. This paper examines the effectiveness of the mass media in Pakistan in providing information to the farmers, who are generally illiterate.

VijayRaghavan (1995) in his study "Communication problem and prospects of small farmers" explains the communication behavior of small farmers had positive and significant relationship with their educational status, social participation, socio-economic status, urban contact, contact with extension agency and value orientation.

Bajaj S.S. and Thorat S.S. (1978) in the study indicated significant association between awareness, trial and adoption and the use of various channels of communication. It has valuable implication for future understanding of role played by various channels of communication in bringing about change. In the present circumstances, large-scale adoption of recommended farm practices is essential to increase the output in farming. To be effective in this process one must know what technique and influence can be effectively used during different stages of adoption. Radio and films are effective in

creating awareness whereas adoption depends on the direct extension of the Gram Sevak ( VLW) and Agricultural Assistant (AA).

Radha Krishnan T., Chandrakrishnan K., Ravichandran V. (1960) say that farm telecast has emerged as one of the potential sources of agricultural communication in our country. Television has tremendous, ability in creating and maintaining interest of the audience.

These are a few studies which have been reviewed for the present study.