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## Mass Media Access And Reach: A Study Based On Rural Population Of Manipur In The Process Of Development

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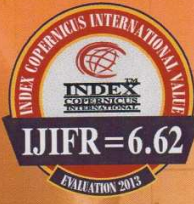
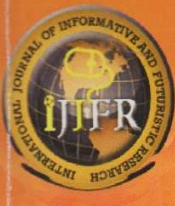
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# Mass Media Access And Reach: A Study Based On Rural Population Of Manipur In The Process Of Development

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## Abstract

Mass communication is a very important institutional mechanism in social development. It encompasses every walk of life in which people, institutions, companies or organizations are communicated valuable information. In this era of knowledge- based society, life without the means of mass communication is practically impossible. Mass communication empowers the masses and nourishes the roots of democracy. It is vital tool to bring a vibrant and participatory democracy in a country like ours. The concept of development communication is not just reporting of positive events alone. It is also reporting of negative things about events which have failed or where not able to bring positive results. Mass media are supposed to act as agents of social change, especially in developing countries like India. In the North- East region of the country, the role of mass communication in development is pivotal. Manipur is geographically isolated from the mainland of the country and its lack of transport system hinders media growth as well as development reach. Moreover for the lack of advance information technology, the state is lagging behind other states in terms of media reach and access. Also the catalytic effect of mass communication in the process of development is not properly examined. This article brings a brief about the mass media access and reach in Manipur.

## 1. Introduction

Mass media are made of social interaction. They facilitate interaction among individuals, between individuals and institutions and finally among institutions themselves. The media are also products of social ethos and orders. They reflect both these elements in their functions and contents. Media also belong to social institutions. Mass media are supposed to act as agents of social change, especially in developing countries like India. Access to information,



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may on the other hand alter the social structure. Though the impact of mass communication on socio-economic development has, therefore, not received as much attention among social scientists as other means of development. This is more so in India where 80 percent of the people live in villages and 70 percent are illiterate. Mass media have been considered as potential agencies for the development of people primarily because their reach is very wide. Further, television and radio have the power to overcome the literacy barrier and hence their interaction with illiterates may be higher. Consequently, mass media are very suitable instruments for the rapid development of underdeveloped countries like India, where material resources are in short supply and education of people low. The nature and extent of interrelation between mass communication and development in the social and economic life of rural population is one among them.

## 2. Literature Review

### ➤ The Interrelationship between Mass Communication and Development

Development of media and society is to be, considered as being interlocked. Expansion of media can produce development of society and vice-versa. This may be the reason why Verghese considers development as both instrument and product of development (Verghese, 1980). Schramm and Rugge when outlining the pattern of growth of media lay down that mass media tend to grow along with measures of economic and social development. When there are more radio sets, and newspapers in the society, the per capita income, literacy, and urbanization also are found to increase proportionately (Schramm and Rugge, 1967). Lerner gives a more precise relation between the different components of socio-economic development. According to him when there is 25 percent urbanization, the highest correlation of media consumption is with literacy (Lerner, 1958). Lakshamana Rao's (1966), monographic study of two Indian villages (Kothuru and Pothuru) is based on the anthropological approach. He has tried to study the role that communication plays in the economic, social and political development of a community. The findings reveal that communication helps in raising social and economic status of the people by meeting the rising demands of the time.

Joni C. Joseph (1997), in his study of two villages in Kerala (Mass Media and Rural Development), he found that the media communication is a better promoter of development for these section of rural population who have attained a certain level of socio-economic advancement. That is, the less advanced categories are benefiting less by development communication.

The mass communication has multiplier property. It produces development attitude rapidly (Lerner, 1967) and inculcates the capacity to empathize and facilitate psychic mobility. Development is a type of social change in which new ideas are introduced into a social system in order to produce higher per capita incomes and levels of living through more modern production methods and improved social organization (Rogers and Shoemaker, 1971).

### ➤ The Media's Role in Development

Media are an inseparable and the most important form of human communication. Communication is a symbolic behavior. Humans interpret and interact with symbols, shaping our understandings of the world and our own places within it (Wood, 1997).

The media's contribution to development occurs simultaneously along several storylines.

*Plurality and transparency*—the contributions that a plural media environment makes to good governance, transparency, and the functioning of markets (economic and political) which can be seen as the media's political economy role.





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*Behavioral* — the media's contribution to inspiring beneficial changes in the behaviors of individuals, groups, and organizations.

*Infrastructure and platform*—compelling content is essential for and the main driver investment in new convergent broadband infrastructure and platforms, which hold the potential for transformational development.

*Economic*— the media provide many jobs, especially in smaller-size enterprises.

*Trade*—trade in media, mainly audio-visual products—is substantial but asymmetric, certain trade barriers restrain investments and limit opportunities for developing country exports, and so the media's potential contribution to development. As the plurality and transparency storyline unfolds, it contributes to the economic, behavioral, infrastructure and platform influences of the media on development—which in turn inject feedback into the media system.

*Development communication in India*—The history of organized development communication in India can be traced to rural radio broadcasts in the 1940s. As is logical, the broadcasts used indigenous languages such as Hindi, Marathi, Gujarati and Kannada. Independent India's earliest organized experiments in development communication started with Community Development projects initiated by the union government in 1950's. The government, guided by socialistic ideals of its constitution and the first generation of politicians, started massive developmental programmes throughout the country. While field publicity was given due importance for person-to-person communication - also because the level of literacy was very low in rural areas - radio played an equally important role in reaching messages to the masses. Universities and other educational institutions - especially the agricultural universities, through their extension networks - and international organizations under the UN umbrella carried the Development communication experiments further.

### **3. Case Studies In Development Communication**

There is a slow but steady realization in the developing countries about the role of media in the process of development. Several experiments are carried out all over the globe to facilitate meaningful intervention of media in the process of development and several success stories also cropped in the field of development support communication. There are also coupled of leading milestone concerning development support communication. UNESCO, UNDP, WHO, G-7, SAARC and other organization have invested in the field of development communication. In particular, the Mc Bride commission submitted a report to the UNESCO in 1982 entitled 'Many voices, one world'. This report has called upon the policy makers all over the world to decentralized, democratic and localized media services. Consequently, several innovative services were launched through the media about various projects.

#### **➤ SITE – Satellite Instructional Television Experiment**

In 1972, UNESCO expert mission expert mission explore the possibility of utilising the satellite for national development endeavours. Accordingly, the department of atomic energy (government of India) entered into the agreement with the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA).

In the year 1975, SITE experiment began in 2400 villages covering Orissa, Madhya Pradesh, Bihar, Rajasthan, Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka. Everyday development related broadcasting service was made available from a satellite to receive as. For about four hours program on education, agriculture, health and family welfare were broadcast on the basis of the advisory committee in which included Central and State government officials, experts from Universities,



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teacher training colleges and social welfare. The Space Research Organization also set up its own audio-visual instruction division to plan and produced programs according to schedule. The program was carried out in between 1975-77 to enrich the people about the development activities. The SITE had ambitious goals in commuting rural modernization and development. It was also discovered that TV should be utilized as an effective medium of development at the grassroots level.

➤ **Press and Development**

The press is considered to be the Fourth estate of a democracy. Newspapers and periodicals are also devoting space for the discussion development issues. A new branch called 'Development journalism' has also come into existence over a period of time. In the rural areas also, the rural press is existing. Most of the rural newspapers and periodicals are not blessed with highly qualified non power and resources due to economic constraints. The leading newspapers and magazines are publishing special supplementary and columns for the benefit rural readers. New writings on agriculture, environment, health, family welfare, Panchayat Raj, rural development, social justice, women's welfare etc are cropping up in the print media. Several studies have also reported that coverage in the print media is inadequate and unsatisfactory. In the age of paid news, development journalism has also suggested that development journalism has also become a big causality. Studies also suggested that development coverage in print media should be enhanced as a matter of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR). Village Chathera experiment which remains as a milestone in the history of development communication in India. BG Verghese was associated with Hindustan Times as the editor and his regular fortnightly column entitled 'Our Village Chathera' assumes great significance as trend setting experiment in the field of development journalism in India.

➤ **Government Institution**

The Central and State Governments have also created several media networks and carried out information publicity and advertising campaigns. The ultimate objective this campaign is to take the programs of development to the doorsteps of the people. The government of India established All India Radio (AIR), Doordharsan (DD), Directorate of Advertising and Visual Publicity (DFP), Song and Drama Division, Photo Division, Film Division, Publication Division etc. to publicize the governmental programs in the urban and rural areas. The central government also carried out series multi- media campaigns in order to popularize the beneficial effects of government projects and facilities. The state government and union territories also created regional and local information and communication networks in the Post-Independence era. Today mass media in India carry social and public advertisement to create awareness among the people, inform and educate them on relevant aspects of social causes with an objective to bring out behavioural and attitudinal change in the long run. The area which covers under the social advertising is health care, child care, family planning and welfare, socio-economic upliftment schemes such as Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Guarantee Scheme (MGNRGA) etc.

➤ **Development in North-East Region of India**

Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Tripura were the great seven sister states of northeast India. The relationship of North East India (NEI) to mainstream India after the independence is often phrased in the language of development. Vast sums of funds are invested and planners are trying to find the solution to underdevelopment. However,





on the contrary, it is getting worse and development projects often contribute to the deterioration of the existing situation. A largely neglected aspect of such development is the part played by the planners and policy designers. The meaning of development is constituted by the knowledge and categories created by the designers and planner sitting in faraway places without having a clear idea about the region. Nation state, market and different kinds of institutions are designed to have a control over the region. The epistemological and the power aspect in various processes are often obscured by the development discourse often clubbed with the economic, technology and management aspects. What is absent in most of the public discussions and media reporting is that knowledge of the people being developed are ignored or treated as mere obstacles to rational progress and development in modern terms. In order for them to be able to progress, these regions such as NEI and its people have first to be constituted as underdeveloped and ignorant. On the contrary without such branding the state cannot justify that it possesses the knowledge to rescue the people of NEI from the darkness of underdevelopment.

➤ **Communication through Traditional Media**

Traditional media as a means of development and educational communication have been discovered about 45 years ago in India. It is significant tool in the process of motivating people in desired direction. It helps rural mass to accept social changes because it is familiar to audience and have positive feeling about what they hear. They are most appropriate for bringing about changes in attitude as they are informal and unscripted in nature. Traditional media can be the most effective in rural area, tribal area and among illiterates as they do not understand the language of modern communication. Therefore traditional media is nothing but the tool of communication having special characteristics to express socio-cultural, religious, moral and emotional needs of the people of society to which they belong.

➤ **Media Access and reach**

Media access is the availability of media to audiences and that various segments have to media. The term “media reach” is used to describe the number of individuals or homes exposed to a specific medium or combination of media within a particular time frame. It can be expressed either in numerical frequencies or percentage. Duplication in assessing the reach of a particular medium is different to avoid. If it is television generally the numbers of households owing television set are taken into account.

**3. Objectives**

- i.) To study media reach and access in rural Manipur.
- ii.) To find out the nature and influence the mass media exert on rural population in the process of development.

**4. Research Methodology**

Primarily the study will be done as case study of two villages representing different geographic and demographic category of Manipur. One from the Imphal East and another from Churachandpur district of the Manipur will be taken for case study. The methodologies used in the study were:

- **Observation**- participant, non-participant observation
- **Interview schedule** – open and closed ended question, Diaries, feedback mechanisms and other ‘self-documentation’







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➤ **Population and Sample**

The field work for the study was conducted in the two rural areas described below. 400 samples were selected for the study. The heads of households of these two areas constituted the Universe for the study. The primary data were collected by using a structured interview scheduled. The respondents were approached individually in their residences and purpose of the survey and the importance of their role in it were revealed to them. After establishing proper rapport the scheduled was administered to them.

**5. Media Scenario In Manipur**

Media are an inseparable and the most important form of human communication. Manipur media is the reflection of the social, economic and political relations of the state of Manipur. The democratic tool of the media in Manipur plays an important part in projecting the sentiments of the people and their opinions and views. The tabloid and the electronic media of the state Manipur have flourished well. 'Meitei Chanu' was the first print journal in Manipur. It was edited by Hijam Irabot Singh during 1925-26. However, the journal could not survive long and it vanished away from the news stand after 5/6 issues were brought out. In 1933, another paper 'Dainik Manipur' was published under the editorship of Gokulchandra at the Churachand Printing Press.

By the end of 1984, there were 33 daily newspapers and 14 weeklies circulating in all four corners of the State. As per the latest information from Directorate of Information & Public Relations, Government of Manipur, there are 22 newspapers in the state till the end of 2011. Moreover, two News Agencies is also operating in the state presently. Radio is one of the leading sources of infotainment for the people in Manipur. The Imphal station of All India Radio started broadcasting its programme on August 15, 1963 through a low power P- 50 MW transmitter with a handful of staffs. Presently it is a full-fledged capital station with two channels of broadcast, the primary channel named Kangla Channel on the medium wave and the Sangai Channel on the FM band. At present AIR Imphal is broadcasting its programme on a 300 KW MW transmitter. The Station has three transmitters i.e. Morning, Afternoon and Evening transmission. At present Manipur has two Manipuri news bulletin at 7.30 in the morning and another one in the evening at 7.30. The mid-day news bulletin will reportedly run for 5 minutes giving all the important headlines and news items. According to the census 2011 Manipur topped in radio listenership. Doordarshan coverage was brought under during the Asian Games in 1982 with a 100 W LPT installed at the present AIR, Imphal complex. This low Power Transmitter was upgraded to HPT of 1 KW in September 1987 and shifted to the present DDK, Imphal complex at Porompat. For the first time in the history of Manipur, the people of the region watch the first ever Regional Transmission on the 30th April 1993. The long awaited demand of the state was fulfilled in the year 2005 August with the origination of Manipuri News live from the Studio of DDK Imphal. The 1997s had brought a new era in Imphal city as two giant cable networks namely Satellite Education and Entertainment Network (SEEN TV) and Imphal Cable Television Network (ICTV) running parallel programmes with strong local programming contents contains, bringing a new wave to Imphal city. The unbearable demand of pay-channels made these two giant operators of Imphal and local pressures being faced awaken the two networks lately paving the way for unification. It was the beginning of 2003 January 27 history was created again and the two channel merged together to form "Information Service Television Network ISTV". And in 2014 there is a new cable network IMPACT TV has launched.



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**6. Findings Of The Study**

**Table 1: Media Access and Reach: 2001-2011- Manipur**

Code	India/ Manipur /District	Total							
		Total Households		Radio/Transistor		Television		Telephone	
		2011	2001	2011	2001	2011	2001	2011	2001
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
00	India	78,865,937	53,692,376	25.3	44.5	76.7	64.3	82	23
14	Manipur	50,7152	101,302	63.1	57.0	68.4	46.4	74.4	12.4
01	Senapati	1,519	51,423	45.7	27.3	27.9	5.3	39.3	1.4
02	Tamenglong	24,477	15,691	30.9	31.6	21.4	5.9	24.7	2.1
03	Churhanpur	49,916	38,525	32.4	27.5	35.1	8.8	48.6	2.6
04	Bishnupur	44,891	34,683	60.0	49.9	51.5	25.2	62.9	3.7
05	Thoubal	85,295	66,976	60.2	46.5	40.9	18.6	56.6	2.1
06	Imphal West	111,393	77,996	64.4	58.1	70.0	49.4	74.9	13.5
07	Imphal East	91,806	69,479	65.6	49.9	61.3	37.2	69.0	7.4
08	Ukhrul	35,790	22,539	39.1	26.0	20.6	7.5	33.9	1.1
09	Chandel	29,097	20,344	42.9	34.3	28.6	9.0	42.7	2.4

Source: Census of Manipur 2011

**Table 2: Media Access and Reach: 2001-2011- Manipur**

Code	India/ Manipur /District	Total							
		Total Households		Radio/Transistor		Television		Telephone	
		2011	2001	2011	2001	2011	2001	2011	2001
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
00	India	167,826,730	138,271,559	17.3	31.4	33.4	18.9	54.3	3.8
14	Manipur	335,752	296,354	50.0	38.2	36.7	16.6	48.9	2.9
01	Senapati	32,968	51,423	45.9	27.3	25.9	5.3	37.9	1.4
02	Tamenglong	21,069	15,691	27.8	15.8	21.4	5.9	18.7	2.1
03	Churhanpur	46,647	38,525	32.4	27.5	32.3	8.8	45.6	2.6
04	Bishnupur	28,147	22,484	58.8	48.4	47.9	20.7	59.2	2.2
05	Thoubal	54,653	43,573	59.6	42.8	35.1	14.0	51.9	1.5
06	Imphal West	41,512	34,666	62.6	53.0	59.1	37.7	67.1	6.8
07	Imphal East	54,014	50,149	61.2	47.4	50.6	30.6	61.7	4.8
08	Ukhrul	30,882	22,539	39.0	26.0	16.1	7.5	29.7	1.1
09	Chandel	25,860	17,304	44.9	34.5	25.9	7.2	42.4	1.4

Source: Census of Manipur 2011

**Table-3: Exposure to the mass media**

Age	Print		Radio		TV		Cinema		Internet	
	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
Under 30	31	23	42	12	54	0	54	0	22	32
21-40	68	43	82	29	104	7	104	7	25	86
41-50	78	45	91	32	111	12	115	10	8	115
Above 50	54	58	71	41	99	13	98	14	4	108
Total	231	169	286	114	368	32	371	29	59	341
Percentage	57.7	42.25	71.5	28.5	92.0	8.0	92.75	7.25	14.75	85.25





The latest information from Directorate of Information and Public Relations, Government of Manipur, there is 22 newspapers in the state till the end of 2011. According to 2011 census report of Manipur, the access and reach of radio in Manipur is 63.15 per cent. The data show that there is highly access of radio receivers in the state. And 50 per cent access and reach of radio in the rural area. Access and reach of television is 36.75 per cent in rural area. From study in two villages, it is found that mass media are highly access and reach. But press is less exposed compare to the other media. The major reason for this is the literacy barrier, communication and transport system.

**7. Mass Media And Rural Development Process**

Development of rural societies mainly depends on their progress in agriculture, animal husbandry, mother and child care, population control, and political consciousness of the people. For achieving advancements in these spheres modern practices have been devised. These have been getting into the rural society through various mechanisms including the mass media.

The following development practices were taken for the analysis:

- i.) Adoption of the HYV paddy seeds.
- ii.) Application of Chemical fertilizers.
- iii.) Soil testing.
- iv.) Medical care of the expectant mothers.
- v.) Immunization of children against diseases
- vi.) Adoption of birth control methods
- vii.) Political rights

The influence of the media on the adoption stages was analyzed. The adoption of the mass media was analyzed with the background variables namely age, education, occupation and income of the respondents. It was assumed that there exists a relationship between age and level of adoption of development practices propagated by mass media.

**Table 4: Level of Adoption of Development Practices Induced by Mass Media**

Age (in years)	Level of adoption			Total	
	Low (1-2 practices)	Medium (3-4 practices)	High (5 practices and above)		
Under 30	Count	31	20	3	54
	%	57.4%	37.0%	5.6%	100.0%
31 - 40	Count	69	40	2	111
	%	62.2%	36.0%	1.8%	100.0%
41 -50	Count	72	46	5	123
	%	58.5%	37.4%	4.1%	100.0%
Above 50	Count	73	36	3	112
	%	65.2%	32.1%	2.7%	100.0%
Total	Count	245	142	13	400

Adoption of development practices by people is the ultimate aim of development communications. It is to be remembered in this context that the adoption of unconventional practices depends on many factors. The background of adopter, the gains from the practices, the qualities of the agencies that advocate the practices are the main decisive factor for adoption by people. Regarding the qualities of the promoting agency, face to face contact, credibility of the agency, availability of the person who recommended the practice and failure can be fixed, are the favourable factors for accepting the recommendation by people. But in mass media, almost







all these aspects are absent. It is to be emphasized that they are effective agencies for making people aware of the existence of more productive and modern practices. 65.2 per cent of respondents have adopted modern practices ranging from one to two (low level adoption) , 32.1 per cent have three to four (medium level adoption) and only 2.7 per cent have one to eight (high level adoption) mainly due to the influence of mass media. The study revealed that adoption of innovations induced by mass media will depend on education and educated are more adopted than the illiterates. As regard to age, occupation and income there is no association between adoptions of development practices induced by mass media. From the study, it is found that maximum respondents are aware and had already adopted the development practices through awareness imparted by mass media. Large number of participation and adoption of development practices will lead to socio-economic development. This will definitely bring transformation to the rural areas.

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