

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

A major need of the developing countries is to raise the standard of living of the people especially in rural areas. Raising standard of living in the developing countries calls for dissemination of information on farming, home making, industrial techniques, health among other things.

The required amount of information and learning is so much, the magnitude of desired social change is so big and the time needed to reach the standard is short, that only by making effective use of the great information multipliers, the developing nations can hope to achieve in a few years what the developed countries took centuries to achieve.

A new chapter in the history of mass communication in India began with the introduction of Television. Although it is the newest of media it is developing very rapidly. With the development and acceptance of colour in TV, we can expect even greater reality in this medium for the future.

Schramm (1964) opined that "Mass media are the great multipliers. Just as the machines of the Industrial Revolution are able to multiply human power with other

kinds of energy, so are the communicating machines of the Communication Revolution able to multiply human messages to a degree previously unheard of". He further says, "They have given the developing countries potential channels of information with which to reach fantastically large audiences to communicate with underprivileged masses despite the literacy barrier, to teach difficult skills by showing how they are done, to speak almost with effectiveness of face to face communication".

There is a growing recognition that mass media if appropriately used, can help bridge the information gap between "knowledge haves" and "knowledge have nots" (Shingi, Kaur and Rai, 1982).

In the opinion of Late Prime Minister Mrs. Indira Gandhi (1976) many of our people considered the television or SITE programmes, an extravagant luxury. City dwellers read newspapers and have access to other means of communication too, but through TV we are able to reach our villages. Villagers can now be enlightened about many things such as children's education, better farming practices and health and medical care. Women folk can benefit from useful hints on running their households. In a vast country like ours this is the only way we can reach far flung places.

Television mobilises a greater degree of attention than other mass media. The message is delivered with greater impact, because it mobilises two senses rather than one. Since sight as well as hearing is focused, Television offer a new kind of shared experience, in which millions can laugh at the same jokes, feel the same thrills and anxieties and respond to the same heroes.

Television in the fullest sense is a visual medium of entertainment, enlightenment and information capable of serving many different sections of the population. The media is capable of touching on all branches of knowledge and experience and exerting an all round influence for better human betterment.

Agarwal (1979) in "Vidura" says TV is going to play the following roles.

1. Information role of providing news on regional, national and international events.
2. Recreational role of providing music, dance, short movies, feature films, play and sport events.
3. Educational role of supporting the educational system existing in the pre-school, primary, secondary, professional and vocational areas.

4. Developmental role in areas of agriculture, health, hygiene and family planning.
5. National integration promoting "link language" including regional languages.

In a seminar on the need for TV in India, in 1969 the committee appointed by the UGC recommended that TV should be recognised not only as an important aid to development but as one of its pre-requisites. TV on a regular basis came to India on the 15th of September 1959 when the President of India formally inaugurated the first experimental television station to be set up by AIR in New Delhi. Soon after the formal opening of TV, 66 TV sets were installed all over Delhi in connection with a new experiment in community education. On 26th January, 1967, the new programme 'Krishidarshan' was inaugurated by the Prime Minister of India on an experimental basis. Its main purpose was to speed up the process of agriculture production by diffusing the knowledge of farm technology.

The Satellite Instructional Television Experiment had also started on 1st of August, 1975. Under this experiment, 2400 villages of India have started receiving developmental communication through ATS-6. India's prestigious satellite INSAT-1B became fully operational on

October 15th, 1983 heralding a revolution in the country's mass communication, meteorology and telecommunication networks.

In rural communities, communication is becoming increasingly important because more knowledge is required to perform the tasks and make the decision necessary in the present day living than that was needed in the past years. Whether the family gets sound materials and equipment for the household and makes the best use of them depends upon the kind of information received about them. Likewise the value of improvements in the area of education, health, recreation and community services is dependent upon how to and what extent information is communicated about them.

According to late Sarabhai, the national development is possible only if the most advanced technology was used to reach the remote villages of India. Sarabhai thought that one of the prime ingredients of development was the dissemination of information. Television was an ideal medium to convey information and news to illiterate and literate urban and rural viewers on whom it would have profound impact (Sarabhai, 1969).

It was decided to study the impact of Pij TV because Pij transmitter was the first district level

rural TV transmitter in the country and the first one with the villagers as the prime audience. Pij is a small village in Kheda district of Gujarat state. It was hoped that the experiences of Kheda transmission could serve as an example to other TV stations in India in reaching the rural masses.

An attempt was made in the study to analyse the content of Pij TV programmes and to study the impact of TV programmes on rural people. The Space Application Centre, Ahmedabad also expressed interest in testing their programmes at the field level and content analysed by the experts through the present study. Content analysis is frequently used in an evaluation to measure the treatment being administered. It was hoped that the content analysis of TV programmes will provide knowledge, new insights, a representation of facts and a practical guide to action.

The TV programmes on Green leafy vegetables, Polio, Vaccination and Laparoscopy were selected to study the impact on rural people. Widespread prevalence of malnutrition among large sections of the population, more particularly among the vulnerable sections has been highlighted in various surveys on diet and nutrition, carried out all over India. Ignorance regarding the

food one must eat, prestige value of food, food fallacies and prejudices have been found to contribute directly to malnutrition.

One of the many causes of underdevelopment of a nation is the poor health of the population. Underdeveloped countries report a high rate of mortality both infant and maternal and morbidity. One reason for this is the lack of awareness of proper health habits and practices. If proper information and knowledge are provided, villagers may adopt the proper health practices. So the programmes on Green leafy vegetables, Vaccination, Polio and Laparoscopy were selected.

It was imperative to study the impact of TV in disseminating knowledge about the topics selected. Exposure to the various media is a necessary precondition for any effect of content on rural people to occur. The investigator made an attempt to know the number of times the rural people were exposed to TV per week.

There is growing recognition that cultural factors have an important bearing in any development process. The investigator wanted to find out the association between socio-economic status and age of the respondents with the knowledge gain and retention.

Half of the rural population consists of females. These females participate in all agricultural and other allied activities on a regular basis. The role of farm women in decision making has been amply demonstrated in the study by Mulay et al. (1966), which has shown that women share major responsibilities in the decision making. Studies conducted in India are mainly on farmers only. So it was decided to select rural women also as samples along with the rural men.

Singh et al. (1967) studied the methodology used in the extension research at three centres in India. They reported that majority of the studies leaned upon "Ex-post facto" approach. Of the 94, only 12 were experimental studies. This shows the need for more studies by experimental method.

In a report published by Ministry of Information and Broadcasting called Mass Media 1979-80, it was stressed that the expression of media and the improvement of their performance will greatly depend upon the qualitative improvement in programmes of training and research for media. This study aims at improving the TV programmes qualitatively. Keeping the above facts in mind, a study was undertaken on the content analysis of the selected TV programmes on Green leafy vegetables, Polio, Vaccination

and Laparascopy and the impact of these programmes in terms of knowledge on rural people.

1.1 Assumptions

1. TV is helpful in promoting mass education especially among illiterates.
2. Rural people have some knowledge in the fields of health and hygiene, nutrition and family planning programmes.
3. Knowledge gained by rural people is measurable.
4. The information provided by the respondents is reliable.

1.2 Hypotheses

The null hypothesis of the study were as follows :

1. There will be no significant differences in the gain in knowledge between control and experimental groups in the areas of health and hygiene, nutrition and family planning programmes.
2. There will be no significant differences in the retention of knowledge of control and experimental groups after a lapse of 15 days, in the areas of health and hygiene, nutrition and family planning programmes.

3. There will be no significant differences in the gain in knowledge due to socio-economic status and age of the respondents.
4. There will be no significant differences in the retention in knowledge due to socio-economic status and age of the respondents.

1.3 Limitations of the study

1. Only 20 women and 20 men were selected as respondents to study the impact of one programme from the experimental villages and 20 women and 20 men from the control villages. Thus study is limited to 320 rural people.
2. The study is limited to the four selected TV programmes namely, Green leafy vegetables, Polio, Laparoscopy and Vaccination.
3. The study is limited to the Kheda district of Gujarat State in the year 1984-85.
4. The study is limited to the knowledge and retention gain measured on the basis of content in the knowledge test administered to the respondent.

1.4 Definition of the terms

Knowledge

Knowledge can be operationally defined as a body of information possessed by an individual which is in accord with the established fact.

Retention

It refers to the extent up to which materials originally learnt is recalled by the rural people after specific intervals.

Impact

This term is used to refer to gain in knowledge of rural people by viewing telecasts and the retention of gained knowledge by them.

Age

The age may be defined as the age of the rural people on the date of interview rounded off to the nearest year.

Socio-economic status

Socio-economic status of the head of the family was measured by using a socio-economic status scale developed for rural areas by Pareek Udai and Trivedi (1964). To determine socio-economic status, caste, occupation, education, social participation, land, house, farm powers,

material possession, type and size of family were studied as recommended by Pareek Udai and Trivedi (1964).

Reaction

Reaction can be operationally defined as the verbal response of people to some questions related with different aspects of telecast.