

Research Paper



COMMUNICATION FOR COMPREHENSIVE RURAL DEVELOPMENT IN INDIA: A STUDY

Bhanupratap.A¹

¹Research Scholar, Department of Studies in Communication and Journalism, University of Mysore, Manasagangotri, Mysore, Karnataka, India

Ohila.M .P²

²Research Scholar, Department of Studies in Communication and Journalism, University of Mysore, Manasagangotri, Mysore, Karnataka, India

ABSTRACT

Development communication came to the Third World Countries in the 1960s as an important component of the development package. Many scholars have studied the role of communication in the process of development. The literature on development communication can be classified broadly into two schools of thought, namely, 'Old Paradigm' and 'New Paradigm'. The 'Old Paradigm' failed to do justice to development in the under-developed world. The quest for 'New Paradigm' in both development and communication has become a mission for academics as well as practitioners.

KEYWORDS: communication, development, knowledge, social transformation, human resources

INTRODUCTION

Development communication came to the Third World Countries in the 1960s as an important component of the development package. Many scholars have studied the role of communication in the process of development. The literature on development communication can be classified broadly into two schools of thought, namely, 'Old Paradigm' and 'New Paradigm'. The 'Old Paradigm' failed to do justice to development in the under-developed world. The quest for 'New Paradigm' in both development and communication has become a mission for academics as well as practitioners. According to them, the essence of the ideology of development communication is the creation of a new society on the basis of social justice and collective welfare. Communication is indeed a major development resource in the process of sustainable rural development in India. A new upward movement for development has begun with the decentralization of democratic system in Indian Republic. The article provides an overview of the communication support for sustainable rural development in India.

COMMUNICATION AND DEVELOPMENT

Communication is as old as the humanity itself. Communication has been viewed as the process of sharing information, experience and expertise between the source of communication and users of communication services. Communication is also defined as the exchange of information, education, entertainment, guidance, counseling and other services which benefit the mankind intellectually and

otherwise. Scholars have considered communication as a relatively linear process of information transmission, causing or contributing to change in knowledge, attitudes and behaviors. Others view communication as a complex process which is closely associated with social, economic, political and cultural structures and processes.

Communication etymologically implies sharing, a community of interests and social cohesion based on social needs and aspirations. The MacBride Commission (1980) states: "Communication maintains and animates life. It is also the motor and expression of social activity and civilization. The task of communication has become ever more complicated and subtle to contribute to the liberation of mankind from want, oppression and fear and to unite it in community and communion, solidarity and understanding. However, unless some basic structural changes are introduced, the potential benefits of technological and communication development will hardly be put at the disposal of the majority of mankind".

Development is the watchword of 21st century planners. Conscious efforts are made by the governments all over the world to achieve development encompassing all spheres of life – social, economic, political and spiritual. Development scholars have proposed various theories and models during the last 6 decades. Development agencies have set various goals for the achievement of development and followed certain models. The necessary key to any development is a change in the attitudes and actions of the



persons affected by the development. The concept as such acquired importance especially after the World War II. There are many theories of development that are only partially expressed in economic terms. Every country perceives development in unmistakable terms as an irreversible process to maintain and raise the living standards of its people. Practically it is impossible to reach a consensus on a working definition of development.

The concept of development has undergone series of radical changes over a period of time. This fixation with the 'Dominant Paradigm' in the fifties and sixties slowly gave way for a critical evaluation of its efficiency and relevance. Today in all developing countries, development is considered to be a subject of special concern. The economic approach is being replaced with social, political and cultural matrix which emphasizes a new set of indicators of development. The champions of new paradigm of development offered new definitions of development which emphasize growth with equity, decentralization, democratization, social justice, empowerment of the weaker sections and so on. Many scholars in Asia, Africa, Latin America, Middle-East and other parts of the under-developed world have seriously thought of alternative approaches to development to overcome the imbalance created by western model and to bring about just communication and development order.

The role of communication in the processes of social change and economic development is now widely recognized by the scholars and policy makers all over the globe. Scholars have argued that the task of communications media is to expedite the process of development by mobilizing human resources behind the nation building endeavors. Development scientists have also examined the correlation between the communication and development processes.

Daniel Learner (1958) examined the correlation between development and communication. A key finding was the strong correlation between the spread of literacy and mass media systems in an urban setting that led to the emergence of a nucleus of individuals who were highly motivated and adopted modernizing influences within the Third World societies and spearheaded a climate of acceptance of change in these societies. Wilbur Schramm (1964) noted : "The task of mass media of information and the 'new media' of education is to speed and ease the long slow social transformation required for economic development, and, in particular, to speed and smooth the task of mobilizing human resources behind the national effort". Others scholars have also studied the role of communication in national development and suggested expansion, decentralization, democratization and localization of communication services in order to reach out to the people and enlist their active participation in the process of nation building.

CONCEPT OF DEVELOPMENT COMMUNICATION

The role of communications media systems was seen as critical in popularizing the beneficial effects of various development projects and enlisting active people's participation in the process of development. A new discipline called 'development communication' emerged on the basis of the writings of scholars who argued that communications media were agents of social change and indicators of national development.

The Food and Agriculture Organisation (1969) defines development communication as the planned and systematic use of communication, through interpersonal and mass communication channels:

1. To collect and change information among all those concerned in planning a development initiative, with the aim of reaching a consensus on the development problems being faced and the options for their solution;
2. To mobilize people for development action, and to assist in solving problems and misunderstandings that may arise during project implementation;
3. To enhance the pedagogical and communication skills of development agents (at all levels) so that they may dialogue more effectively with their audiences;
4. And last, but by no means least, to apply communication technology to training and extension programmes, particularly at the grassroots level, in order to improve their quality and impact.

A commonly used definition of development communication is the one given by Nora C. Quebral (1973): "Development communication is the art and science of human communication applied to the speedy transformation of a country from poverty to a dynamic state of economic growth that makes possible greater economic and social equality and the larger fulfillment of the human potential". While the Quebral definition remains a salient one, more recent definition reflects the thinking which has taken place over the past decade.

Romeo H. Gecolea (1982) observes: "Development Support Communication (DSC) may be broadly defined as an organization's planned use of information and communication resources to help achieve its goals. Communication resources include manpower, money, facilities and equipment, communication materials and media. The organizations referred to are those whose chief objectives is to deliver development oriented services in rural areas i.e., services intended to improve socio-economic conditions among rural families. These organizations or agencies would typically possess a network of field workers who undertake educational or motivational activities as part of their duties. The fields they deal with could be in agriculture, rural health, fisheries, family planning, forestry, farm credit, rural industries and other concerns".

RURAL DEVELOPMENT COMMUNICATION IN INDIA

The positive role of communication in rural development has been recognized in India before and after independence. Buddha, Basava, Raja Ram Mohan Roy, Jyoti Bha Phuley, Dayananda Saraswati, Govinda Ranade, Balangadhara Tilak, Gopala Krishna Gokhale, Mahatma Gandhi, Ambedkar, Periyar, Narayana Guru and many other philosophers, social reformers and nation builders had practiced development communication in an informal way. They were great development educationists and communicators who led series of social reformation and nation building movements in India during the pre-independence era.

Buddha fought against the dominant forces which ruled the ancient India and liberated the mankind from the draconian clutches of traditionalism which was responsible for uneven development of people in India. Buddha propagated truth, non – violence, equality, fraternity, freedom and collective welfare all through his life and established an

egalitarian society in India 2500 years ago. Goulet (1989) points out that the development of individual personality is brought about by the emphasis on four Buddhist principles: metta (kindness), Karuna (compassion), mudita (sympathetic joy), and upekka (equanimity). The Panchasheela and Astangamarga were great tools of emancipation and empowerment which are emulated by the mankind regardless of religion and region.

Basava established Anubhavamantapa which is regarded as the foremost democratic forum in Karnataka and created several Vachanakars who served the mankind as torch bearers and path makers. Basava also fought against the dominant forces which hindered equality and progress of the mankind. Basava created an egalitarian society in Karnataka and remains as the great social reformer, mass educator and development communicator in the history of Karnataka.

Mahatma Gandhi used traditional cultural symbolic systems, print media and inter-personal communication tools to propagate new ideas, values and behaviours among the masses. His papers namely-Indian Opinion, Young India, Harijan and Navajeevan were great tools of development communication since Gandhi provided multi-faceted education to the people of India. Satyagraha was the greatest instrument of development communication which was used to protest the anti-Indian policies and programmes of the colonial rulers. Gandhi also launched Sarvodaya Movement which used traditional forms and philosophies of communication to meet user needs in the rural and remote areas. This approach considered local culture as a facilitator of development in India.

Ambedkar was also a great visionary of 20th century and fought for social justice and economic equity all through his life. He also brought out Mooknayak, Bahishkrit Bharat, Samata, Janata and Prabuddha Bharat which stand as testimonials in the history of Indian journalism as master pieces of development communication. Mahesh Chandra Guru (2010) recalls the yeoman contributions made by Ambedkar as a multi-faceted personality thus: "Dr.B.R.Ambedkar enriched the Indian legacy through his historical contributions for educational, social, economic and political reformation of India before and after independence. Ambedkar strived all through his life for the empowerment of women and weaker sections against several odds. He was a multi-faceted great personality who has gone in history as a statesman whose contributions for the integrated development of the mankind regardless of religion, region, colour, caste, creed etc will be cherished for ever. He is also rightly remembered in the history of Indian media as the founder of 'parallel communication and journalism'".

The British rulers implemented the Government of India Act, 1935 which favored the control of radio broadcasting by the central government since it was a powerful instrument of propaganda and development. Radio was used as a means of dissemination of news about administration, agriculture, revenue and other aspects of development. There were about 85,000 radio receiver sets in the whole country before 1947. Radio was primarily used to broadcast news, current affairs, music and cultural programmes during those days. However limited efforts were made to provide development support broadcasting services to the people since radio was simple, cheaper, flexible and accessible medium of mass communication in the country.

The framers of Indian Constitution have accorded priority to *Freedom of Speech and Expression* vide Article 19.1.a which is a fundamental right to communication and development. The five year plan was a major instrument for achieving the goals of social change and economic development through public sector investment in industrialization under the leadership of Pandit Nehru. There was a significant difference of opinion between Nehru and Gandhi with respect to the adoption of development model and achievement of the goals of national development. Nehru wanted to industrialize the nation and achieve progress in accordance with the international thinking on modernization based on dominant paradigm of development. Gandhi argued that India can prosper economically by according priority to agriculture and rural development based on local culture, environment and experience.

Sukhamoy Chakravarty (1987) observes: "While the Gandhian approach has received a certain measure of support in the recent writings of ecologists and ecologically minded economists, in the early fifties such positions appeared to lack any substantive theoretical foundation. The debate at that time was between the relative merits free market capitalism and Soviet-type socialism and the possibilities of a model of a 'mixed economy' as adopted by India, but all placed their faith in increased commodity production as a means to attain a better standard of living rather than delimiting wants and needs as advocated by Gandhi".

The policy makers were greatly influenced by the western model of development which advocated that mass media could be utilized properly for the dissemination of new ideas and information which would facilitate adoption of innovative technologies, practices and behaviors that were necessary in the modernization process. People also needed information and education on government policies, plans and programmes concerning the goals of national integration, unity and progress.

The Government of India (1953) emphasized the role of communication in development in the First Five Year Plan document thus: "A widespread understanding of the Plan is an essential stage in its fulfillment. An understanding of the priorities of the Plan will enable each person to relate his or her role to the larger purposes of the nation as a whole. All available methods of communication have to be developed and the people approached through the written and spoken word no less than through radio, film, song and drama".

The five year plan documents also reveal the significance of communication in the process of rural development in India. The establishment of agricultural universities, directorates of development, extension divisions, media units, training organizations and other agencies reveals the significance of development communication in India. Though communication for development or development support communication grew out of agriculture and rural development communication, the term comprehensively includes all spheres of development such as education, health, family welfare, social change, environment protection, industrial development, employment, training, personality development and so on. All these spheres of development required planned, deliberate and systematic communication inputs to widen the horizon of development and expedite the process of development.

Scholars have also studied the role of communication in the process of rural development and suggested appropriate

media and measures for the improvement of the status of development communication in India. The government departments, non-government organizations, universities, training institutions and other agencies have borrowed the experience of these scholars and adopted communications strategies in the implementation of various development projects in the country. Development planning put right emphasis on expansion and utilization of communications media at various levels.

The Five Year Plans gave substantial emphasis to the expansion of mass media networks and information and publicity units all over the country with a view to provide development-oriented education to the people in urban and rural areas. Rural broadcasting was an important component of the expansion plan of All India Radio (AIR) and community listening sets were installed in villages on a cost sharing basis by the central and state governments. Radio Rural Forums project was implemented in 1956 under a collaborative project with UNESCO in order to establish a two-way communication link between village audiences and the programme organizers in the radio station. There was substantial increase in knowledge among the forum members on various aspects of national development as compared to the others, according to the studies. Initially this project was confined to Poona but was extended to all radio stations broadcasting rural programmes on the basis of the success of the project. However this project could not achieve overall success due to improper maintenance of radio sets, irregular supply of batteries and inadequate coordination between broadcasting centres and government agencies.

Narula (1994) traces the systematic use of communication channels in support of rural development in Indian context thus: "More specifically and aptly, development communication can be described as the systematic use of communication channels in support of national development. Thus, the concept is identified with ICE (Information, Communication and Education) about development plans. However motivation is added to these three dimensions because people are expected to be motivated in developing countries like India". The scholar has also identified the approaches to development communication in India which include – diffusion/extension approach, mass media approach, instructional approach, localized approach and planned approach.

The Government of India and state governments have formulated rural development policies and implemented programmes with a view to eradicate poverty, develop community infrastructure, generate gainful employment opportunities and improve the living standard of the people in the country. The community development programme was implemented in the country with a view to improve the social and economic status of villagers. The basic needs approach was followed in India on the basis of the recommendation of World Bank, UNESCO, ILO and other agencies since the usual indicators of development such as GNP and per capital measures did not facilitate the improvement of the quality of life of the citizens.

The Government of India established the Directorate of Field Publicity and created regional information units with mobile cinema vans that showed films on various rural developmental endeavors. The Films Division produced news reels and documentaries on communal harmony, national integration and other subjects related to development projects.

Agriculture and family planning were the thrust areas of development communication services offered by the government. The Green Revolution gave a fillip to the practice of development communication in the country.

Agricultural universities established Krishi Vigyan Kendras and spearheaded the campaign for increased agricultural production and productivity in the rural areas. Radio broadcasts, field publicity campaigns, extension programmes and audio-visual communications were the salient features of this campaign. Farmers' Functional Literacy Programme was started in the mid-1960s in order to ensure familiarity with the agricultural innovations, new seeds, fertilizers, cultivation procedures and crop protection measures among the people in the countryside. Significant use of various communications media was the salient feature of the Green Revolution according to some researchers. Subsequent research revealed that Green Revolution was limited to irrigated areas and affluent farmers who took the advantage of various incentives offered by the government.

The Department of Health and Family Welfare was also actively involved in the family planning communication programme implemented by the Mass Education and Media Division (MEMD). In 1966, the Mass Education and Media (MEM) organization was created within the department of Family Planning to promote health and family welfare. In 1970, the campaign for distribution, sale and use of condoms was launched on the basis of knowledge, attitudes and practices (KAP) formula. The extension education approach was adopted to facilitate effective implementation of health and family welfare programme all over the country with the help of a bandwagon of field workers spread across the length and breadth of the country.

Information, Education and Communication (IEC) was perceived as the appropriate communication model in the planning and the implementation of health communication programmes. Several television spots and quickies were aired regularly. In particular, expansion of extension communication services and applied research facilitated flow of development information into the rural areas. The non-government organizations also employed certain communication tools and techniques to reach out to the people and disseminate development information to the beneficiaries.

The Satellite Instructional Television Experiment (1975-76) is a landmark in the field of rural development communication in India. Satellite broadcasting services which were designed by Vikram Sarabhai were implemented by the Government of India in the rural and remote areas. Agriculture, rural development, health, family welfare, adult education, environment protection, national integration and other important subjects were covered by this project. Vikram Sarabhai (1968) noted: "If India wants to reduce the overwhelming attraction to cities, enrich cultural life, integrate the country by exposing one part to the cultures of the other parts, involve people in the programme of rural, economic and social development, then the best thing is to have TV via satellite".

Avik Ghosh (2006) commended the project thus: "SITE amply demonstrated that sophisticated broadcasting systems could be used in the context of rural communication quite effectively and that it was quite possible to organize and manage the maintenance of Direct Reception Sets (DRS) for TV viewing in rural areas. It also showed that programmes based on familiarity with the socio-economic and cultural

background of audiences and representing their field needs had greater likelihood of evoking involvement and interest. If the telecast was supported by coordinated follow-up by the field staff, the development objectives of the telecast were more likely to be met”.

The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) established a rural television project in Kheda district of Gujarat near Ahmedabad, where the Space Application Centre was located following the SITE project. The experiment was intended to overcome the limitations of SITE and facilitate production and dissemination of locally relevant and low-cost television programmes that would bring about social change and economic development in the countryside. The project attempted to promote self-reliance among the community by showing that the goals of social change and economic development could be achieved through optimal use of resources without depending on external sources. Instructional programmes on agriculture, animal husbandry, health, family welfare, functional literacy and other developmental issues were broadcast to the rural poor. The project considerably improved horizontal communication among the rural communities and facilitated a dialogue between the people and policy makers.

Karnik and Bhatia (1985) observed: “production methods followed a pattern of maximum interaction with the villagers of Kheda. An idea for a series was discussed by the production team and developed further through formative research (audience profile and felt needs assessment). Further research and pretesting was done using the convenient portable video equipment. Based on this research, scripts were finalized and pretested with the villagers for comprehension and acceptance of the format. This ensured that communication gaps between the producers and audiences were minimized. Topic research ensured that the programme content was relevant and appropriate for the audience. Prototypes were pretested to make sure that the villagers would understand and like the programmes which were modified based on the pretesting results. Sometimes, producers viewed programmes with the village audience in order to get a first-hand experience of audience reactions”.

Several institutions started using broadcasting technologies for development communication purposes in the country. Prominent among them include-Chitrabani in Calcutta, Xavier Institute of Communication Arts in Bombay, Centre for Development Communication in Hyderabad, Centre for Development of Instructional Technology in New Delhi, Jabhua Development Communication Project in Jabhua, and so on. These organizations produced slide-tape presentations, films and video programmes that supported the face-to-face communication work of voluntary organizations engaged in social work and rural development activities. Teachers, extension educators, development workers, social activists and others were also trained in the art and craft of producing low-cost materials and disseminating people-friendly development communication services.

International agencies like UNESCO, WHO, UNICEF and FAO extended necessary educational and financial support in order to promote the active participation of voluntary organizations as facilitators of social change and economic development in the country. Non-profit organizations also used communication tools and technologies to document their nation building activities and enlist support from various sources. Video became very effective tool of

development communication since it opened up communication channels both within the community and between the community and the outside world.

The progressive mass movements namely – farmer’s movement, worker’s movement, Dalit movement, women’s movement, writer’s movement, environment movement and so on began in the 1970s. These movements also became useful fora for the articulation of the points of view of the oppressed and depressed sections of Indian society. Several intellectuals, organizers and activists came to the street and protested vehemently against the anti-people policies and forces. These movements altered the way in which development was defined in the country. The social activism was suitably complemented by the media activism and judicial activism which made series of efforts to document the agonies of the people and facilitate the social and economic development of the marginalized sections of society in India. Several new tools and techniques of development communication namely pamphlets, protest marches, wall writings, street plays, public speeches, group discussions, demonstrations, agitations, documentaries, short films and so on were employed by these progressive organizations with a view to educate, organize, emancipate and empower the women and weaker sections of the society. These progressive movements also provided a rational dimension to the practice of development communication in India.

These progressive movements were also influenced by the international issues, trends and developments. Chipko Movement in Uttar Pradesh, Narmada Bachav Andolan in Gujarat, Silent Valley Movement in Kerala, Movement against Bhopal Gas tragedy, Movement against Enron Project, Movement against Cogentrics, etc demonstrated the strength of people and ‘bottom up’ mode of communication in the country. Effective networking of individuals, agencies and institutions became a possibility of progressive movements which strengthened the process of grassroots communication in the country. These instances aptly illustrate the innovative means of participatory communication that were adopted by the progressive organizations for reaching out to the people, registering the protest of the people, building public opinion against injustice and pleading for justice –centered progress in the country.

The National Literacy Mission (NLM) launched by the Government of India in 1988 facilitated communication skill development among the people through promotion of functional literacy. A variety of communication materials were required to improve the communication skills of the instructors, supervisors and field staff. It enabled the people to become aware of the causes of their deprivation and means of their empowerment through participation in the development programmes. This programme would become successful if the project authorities enlist the support and participation of educated people in the programme as trainers, motivators, volunteers and evaluators.

In the new millennium, mass media, government agencies, non-government organizations and social groups put forth united efforts toward creating awareness among the people about various developmental issues, trends and opportunities. The literacy campaign in Kerala, Kalajatha publicity campaign organized by Kerala Shastra Sahitya Parishad, Pudukkottai Case Study, Bharat Gyan Vigyan Jatha, Jabhua Development Communication Project, Indian People’s Theatre Association’s activities and Samudaya Experiment

in Karnataka State invited the attention of scholars and general publics for their notable contributions for development support communication in the country.

The Eighth Plan (1992-97) called for a review of rural communication and development approaches in the country. The document emphasized that personal issues should be emphasized in the communication campaign rather than national issues and argued for a convergence of communication services. It reads: "Based on a holistic approach to social development and population control, integrated programmes for raising female literacy, female employment, status of women, nutrition and reduction of infant mortality will be implemented". The Government of India laid emphasis on decentralized planning and implementation with a collaborative role for Panchayati Raj Institutions and non-government organizations. The plan document highlighted the development of grassroots level communication network and operations.

Rural newspapers were brought out as a new media vehicle for neo-literates. Special audience programmes were broadcast by All India Radio and Doordarshan for the benefit of farmers, artisans, women, children, youth and other beneficiaries of development projects. The print media and electronic media disseminated information on various development projects through special supplementaries and special audience programmes. Non-government organizations also used their own extension communication channels to reach out to the people. New media like tele-communication, computer communication and satellite communication were also tapped for the development communication purposes. A new era of e-governance, e-development, e-commerce and e-education facilitated the application of new information and communication technologies for various development projects. People had the benefit of interactive communication and participation communication mainly because of the intervention of new media.

The passage of the 73rd and 74th Amendments to the Constitution of India facilitated a third tier of governance institutions in the country at village, block and district levels. This system of governance also provided useful opportunities for the development of grassroots political leadership and intervention of Panchayati Raj Institutions in the process of integrated rural development in the country. The information and publicity campaigns were also carried out by the state government departments in order to enlist people's participation in the process of nation building. The self help groups also came into existence since local organizations are a necessary condition for effective implementation of various development programmes at the grassroots level. These organizations also provided adequate human resources to convey the development messages to the women and weaker sections in the rural areas. The grassroots women realized that they are masters of their own destiny through their direct participation in decision making and implementation processes.

In rural India, satellite communication was effectively used for training Gram Panchayat Members as effective change agents and catalysts of development. The Indian Space Research Organisation, Rural Development and Panchayat Raj department, Women and Child Development Department were involved in the this project which created notable awareness among the elected representatives. During 2002-04, several state governments including Karnataka

trained Gram Panchayat Members by using SATCOM technology with a view to prepare grounds for democratic decentralization and development administration through active people's participation. The training programme provided unique opportunity for participants to explore new ideas and initiatives toward effective implementation of grassroots level development programmes.

The communications media have played a role in the issues and concerns for basic rural development of the people but this role was largely restricted to the ruling elite and educated middle class in the urban areas. The implementation of Right to Information Act, 2005 has enabled the beneficiaries of government welfare programmes to become aware of the facilities and benefits. The goals of transparency, accountability, good governance and participatory development can be achieved well if this right is implemented all over the country. Communications media have also played a considerable role in demand generation by providing basic information and creating awareness about various development projects implemented by the government agencies and non-government organizations in the rural areas.

The development policies, models and programmes have not brought about absolute progress of the mankind in India during the last 65 years of national independence. Rural development communication initiatives have brought about limited success in the countryside due to urbanization, commercialization and liberalization of media in India. People's participation and empowerment of people are currently accepted as meaningful alternatives to communication and development in India. Communication scholars and social activists have advocated the need for participatory communication and development in the rural areas with reference to India.

Series of examples of participatory development are seen in the Indian Republic since the concept of sustainable development is adopted toward meeting the needs and aspirations of present generations without affecting the right to the progress of the future generations. The United Nations organized about 189 countries in September 2000 to commit themselves for development of underprivileged and disadvantaged sections of the population under the banner of Millennium Development Goals. India is also one of the signatories to the Millennium Declaration which reaffirms universal values of equity, mutual respect and shared responsibility for the conditions of all peoples and seeks to redress globalization's hugely unequal benefits. Eight Millennium Development Goals : 1. Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger, 2. Achieve universal primary education, 3. Promote gender equity and empower women, 4. Reduce child mortality, 5. Improve maternal mortality, 6. Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases, 7. Ensure environmental sustainability and 8. Develop a global partnership for development emerged from this declaration which has given a new dimension to the practice of development communication in India and other developing nations.

Several scholars have made a strong case for greater investment in the development of human resources in rural India and advocated for a meaningful social opportunity in this regard. The World Social Summit has emerged as a prominent forum for discussion on alternative path ways to development. People's participation and decentralized development are the buzzwords of development administration. Development communication needs to be

practiced on the basis of a shared vision and responsibility. India is a rapid progress in many spheres of human life including communication science and technology. Abdul Kalam (1998) has given a vision of a developed India by the year 2020. In this scenario, development communication has a crucial role in transforming the country as a model nation in the world in 21st century.

The practice of development communication has gained a new momentum in India after the recent international developments in the field of communication and rural development. Effective implementation of Millennium Development Goals, national development goals, regional development goals and grassroots development goals requires a more socially committed and professionally competent approach to development communication. The top-down model of development communication has failed to meet the aspirations of the people. Participatory communication and development has become practically relevant approach to rural development communication.

The private sector and commercial organizations have successfully used corporate communication and advertising campaigns to generate demand for their goods and services in this age of competitiveness. The government sector and non-government organizations are certainly lagging behind in generating public enthusiasm and active participation in the nation building activities through systematic practice of rural development communication for several reasons. The government functionaries and activists of non-government organizations are not working together on the basis of sound vision and missionary zeal in order to do absolute justice to their role as rural development communicators.

CONCLUSION

The vision of twenty-first century may remain empty and the progress toward that goal tardy if the policy makers and implementers of various rural development programmes fail to establish the communications network at various levels and widen the base of informed, skilled and competent people for participatory and balanced development in the countryside. Development communication is the premise of progress in our modern society. What is new is the realization in today's increasingly democratizing world, lack of development communication and restraints on the flow of information directly undermine development of every kind in the rural areas. The challenge facing the society today is how to widen the reach of rural development communication, how to make accessible to people everywhere and how to empower the rural people in every respect. It is here that the social responsibility of the media, government and non-government bodies assumes profound significance. The country needs a communication strategy which should be considered as a sub-system of the integrated rural development system. Optimum use of all communication channels in proper combinations can certainly bring about rural development in the country. In the absence of planned, systematic and sustainable development communication, inclusive, integrated and sustainable rural development is blocked, poverty is spread and self-reliance becomes a casualty.

REFERENCES

1. Quebral, Nora C (1973) *What Do We Mean by Development Communication*, *International Development Review*, February, 1973, p.25.
2. Kakar, V.N. (1987) *Communication in Family Planning: India's Experience*, National Institute of Health and Family Welfare, New Delhi, India.
3. Government of India (1953) *First Five Year Plan*, The Publications Division, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, New Delhi.
4. Chakravarty, Sukhamoy (1987) *Development Planning – The Indian Experience*, Oxford University Press, New Delhi, India.
5. FAO. (1969) *Toward a Strategy for Agricultural Development: FAO's Five Areas of Concentration*. Rome, Italy.
6. Gecolea, Romeo H (1982) *Primer on Development Support Communication*, Asia and Pacific Programme for Development Training and Communication Planning, UNDP, Bangkok, p.1.
7. Ghosh, Avik (2006) *Communication Technology and Human Development: Recent Experiences in the Indian Social Sector*, Sage Publications, New Delhi, India, p-41.
8. Goulet, D (1989) *Participation in Development: New Avenues*, *World Development*, 17(2):165-178.
9. Government of India (1992-97) *The Eighth Plan Document*, Planning Commission, New Delhi.
10. Guru, Mahesh Chandra B.P. (1997) *Ambedkar: The Great Communicator*, unpublished paper.
11. Guru, Mahesh Chandra B.P. (1997) *Grassroots Development Communication System in Karnataka State: An Evaluation*, Ph.D Dissertation Submitted to Mangalore University, Karnataka, India.
12. Kalam, Abdul A.P.J. and Y.S.Rajan (1998) *India 2020: A Vision for the New Millennium*, Penguin Books, New Delhi, India.
13. Karnik, Kiran and B.S.Bhatia (1985) *The Kheda Communication Project*, Unpublished Report, Development and Communication Unit, (DECU), ISRO, Ahmedabad, India.
14. Lerner, Daniel (1958) *The Passing of Traditional Society: Modernizing the Middle East*, Macmillan, New York, USA.
15. MacBride International Commission for the Study of Communication Problems (1980) *Many Voices, One World*, Report of the UNESCO, Paris.
16. McKee, Neill (1992) *Social Mobilisation and Social Marketing in Developing Countries: Lessons from Communicators*. Southbound, Penang.
17. Nair, K.S. and Shirley A.White (1987) *Participation is the Key to Development Communication*, *Media Development* 34(3):36-40.
18. Narula, Uma (1994) *Development Communication: Theory and Practice*, Har-Anand Publications, New Delhi, India.
19. Sarabhai, Vikram (1968) *Satellite Television: Implications for Developing Nations*, Paper presented at the U.N. Conference for the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, Vienna.
20. Schramm, Wilbur (1964) *Mass Media and National Development: The Role of Information in the Developing Countries*, Standard University Press, Stanford, California, USA.