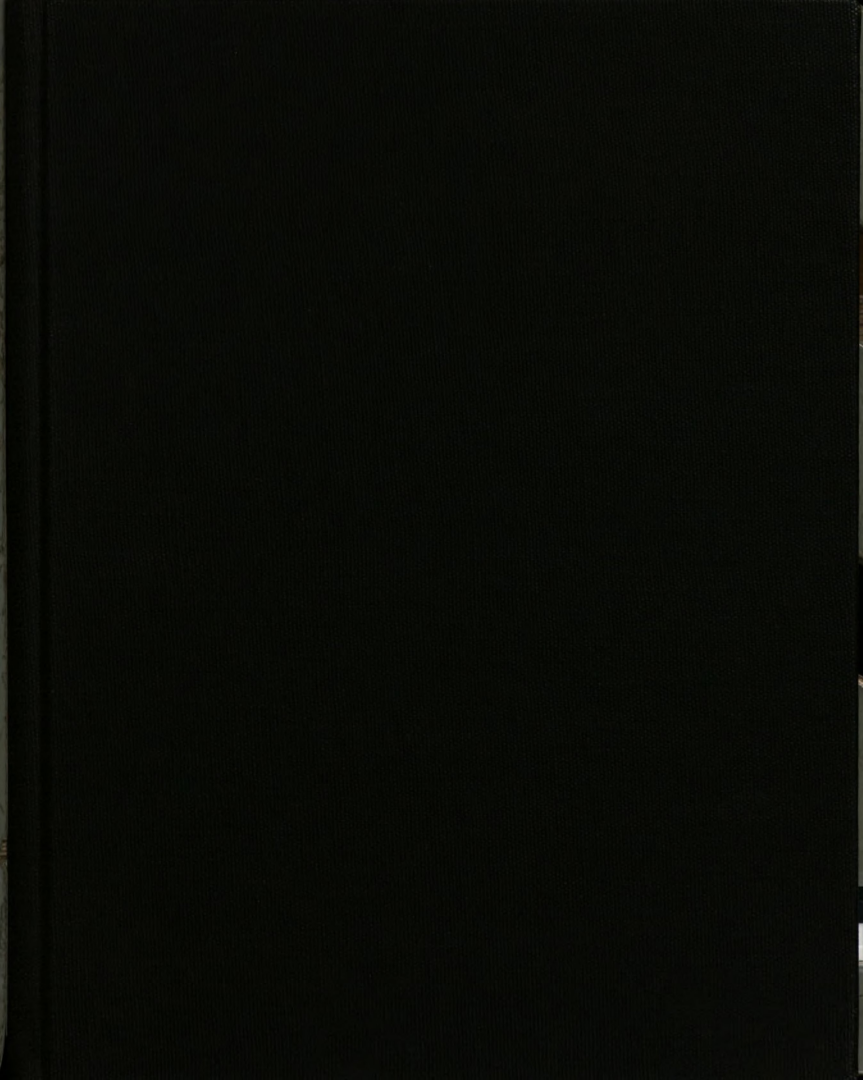
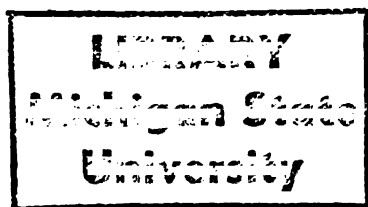






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A Case-Study of Kheda, India

presented by

Padmaja Chiruvolu

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**MASS COMMUNICATION AND PARTICIPATION
A CASE STUDY OF KHEDA, INDIA**

By

Padmaja Chiruvolu

A THESIS

**Submitted to
Michigan State University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of**

MASTER OF ARTS

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1986

ABSTRACT

MASS COMMUNICATION AND PARTICIPATION: A CASE STUDY OF KHEDA, INDIA

By

Padmaja Chiruvolu

This thesis attempts to examine the research statement that in a third world development context, mass communication process needs to approximate the process of interpersonal communication as much as possible. Mass media messages need to be generated through and fortified by interpersonal communication between the sender and the receiver to engender and facilitate participation among the viewers. Participation is applied in this thesis as it is conceptualized by Paulo Freire.

The examination of the research question is attempted thorough the case study of the Kheda Communication Project, Gujarat, India.

The case study concluded:

--that the mass media can be effective in generating participation when they approximate the process of interpersonal communication as much as possible; that the mass media encounter limitations that are unique to their capital intensive technology base and their dependence on governments for transmission facilities; that the internal social-structural factors effect the existence of the mass media projects.

Accepted by the faculty of the Department of
Telecommunication, College of Communication Arts and
Sciences, Michigan State University, in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the Master of Arts degree.

Director of Thesis

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I would like to thank my colleagues in the Department of Telecommunication, Michigan State University, who have been supportive of my efforts.

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CHAPTER ONE

OBJECTIVES

"Communication and national development," "development communication," "people-centered development," and "participatory development," etc., are some of the phrases often bandied about in academic debates on the role of the media in national development in less developed countries.

Mass media have been considered almost a panacea for the development problems of the "less developed" countries since the early 1960's. Introduction of technologies is seen in itself as a sole agent of social change. This arises out of an assumption that increasing technological sophistication automatically produces something called progress, in human terms. But if real human beings in real social formation make real social choices that give rise to certain communication technologies and systems, can there be such a thing as autonomous technology and, therefore, can there be a conception of progress that is isolable from the complex interrelationships that constitute the social formation?¹

A characteristic assumption underlying conceptions of mass media as autonomous technology for national development is that very little of value exists at the local level, and

that communication technology exists to tell people what to do, to direct them, in effect, to manipulate them.

Development efforts working on these assumptions have time and again demonstrated that the transfer of social experience on a humanistic level cannot be achieved on these premises.

The Kheda Communication Project in Gujarat, India (see map at the end of this introduction) drew worldwide attention from the early days of its inception--first, as a major experiment in application of direct broadcast satellite for development; second, as a communication project that experimented with programming strategies for a decentralized, yet integrated, communication network.

As a communication project that attempted to mold a medium of mass communication--television--to subserve the interests of a socio-economically, linguistically and culturally identifiable group of people, Kheda project is of great interest.

As a communication project that took into consideration, the criticisms directed at the ideology of autonomous technology in designing communication strategies for transferring social experience, a study of Kheda project is critical for the lessons it has to offer.

As far as this writer is aware, a comprehensive study of Kheda project to place it in perspective in terms of larger socio-political and structural issues, has not been

attempted. This then is the objective of this thesis. The thesis attempts to make a modest beginning.

This thesis attempts to examine the research statement that, in a third world development context, mass communication process needs to approximate the process of interpersonal communication as much as possible. To be effective, mass media messages need to be generated through and fortified by interpersonal communication between the source and the receiver. The roles of source and receiver need to be interchangeable.

The examination of this research statement is attempted through the case study of the Kheda Communication Project. This thesis is constructed around the following structure:

The first chapter delineates the objectives and the structure of the study. The second chapter sets forth the theoretical framework for the study. The third chapter on Review of Literature examines six different communication projects that attempted to apply the concept of participatory communication to achieve development. The fourth chapter. Focus on Kheda, deals with the evolution of television in general in India, followed by an outline of the history, location and mandate of the Kheda Project. The section on Program Development deals with the programming philosophy, categories of programming and the actual process of programming at Kheda. The Analysis chapter examines the Kheda project from various perspectives - as a contrast to

Doordarshan, as an experiment in decentralized broadcasting, as a participatory project. The last chapter outlines the conclusions of the study.

TV Stations and Projects

(as on 5.5.76)

Delhi 1959

Range : 68 kms.
Area covered : 14,300 sq. kms.
No. of villages : 2523
Pop. covered : 75 lakhs.

Bombay 1972

Range : 70 to 100 kms.
Area covered : 10,000 sq. kms.
No. of villages : 2500
Pop. covered : 85 lakhs.

Bombay 1973

Range : 52 to 90 kms.
Area covered : 15,000 sq. kms.
No. of villages : 1400
Pop. covered : 40 lakhs.

Jaipur 1973

Range : 30-70 kms.
Area covered : 4,000 sq. kms.
No. of villages : 2800
Pop. covered : 25 lakhs.

Jaipur 1973

Range : 65 kms.
Area covered : 8,400 sq. kms.
No. of villages : 1600
Pop. covered : 20 lakhs.

Calcutta 1975

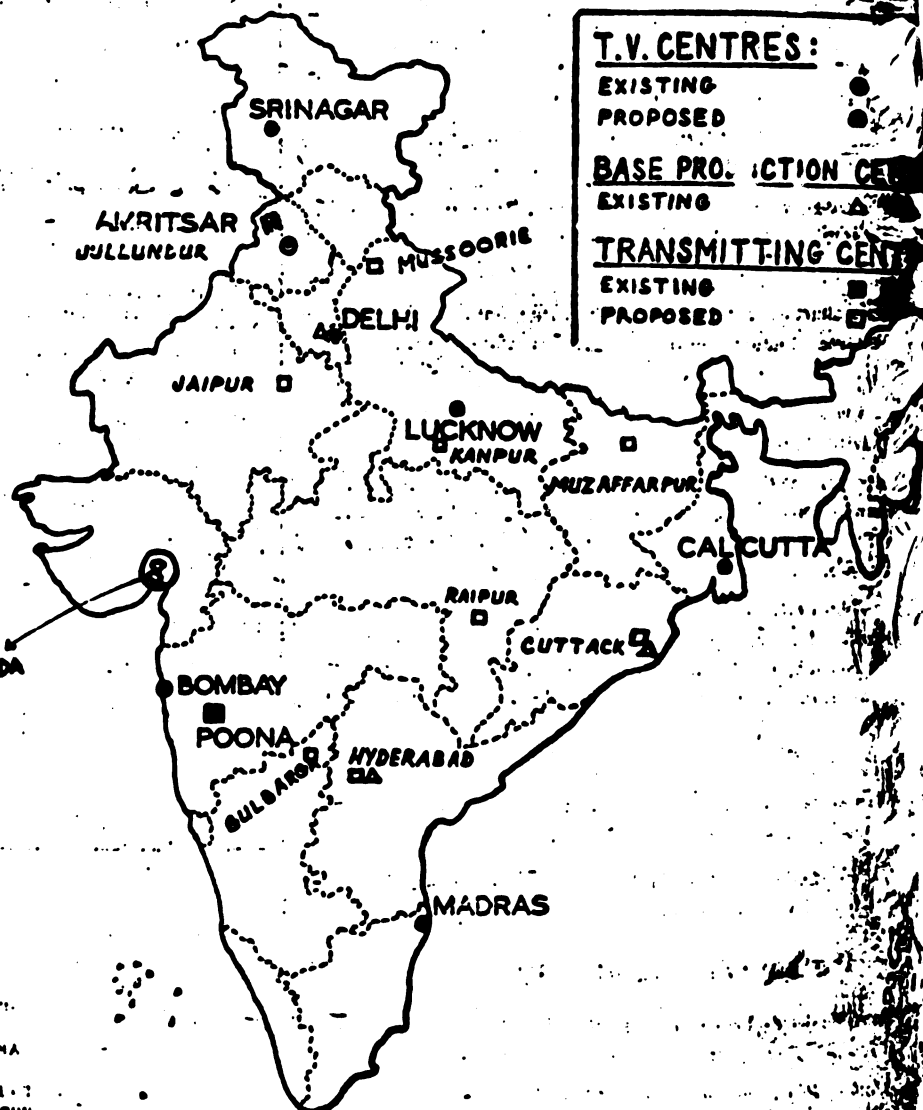
Range : 50 kms.
Area covered : 7,900 sq. kms.
No. of villages : 3000
Pop. covered : 115 lakhs.

Madras 1975

Range : 100 kms.
Area covered : 12,000 sq. kms.
Pop. covered : 61 lakhs.

Lucknow 1975

Range : 80 kms.
Area covered : 11,300 sq. kms.
No. of villages : 500
Pop. covered : 53 lakhs.



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¹Noble, D. (1979). Social choice in machine design: the case of automatically controlled machine tools, in Zimbalist A. (ed.), Case studies in the Labor Process, New York: Monthly Review Press. Quoted from Slack, Jennifer Daryl, The Information Revolution as Ideology, in Media, Culture and Society, 1984, Vol. 6, p. 247-256.

CHAPTER TWO

COMMUNICATION AND DEVELOPMENT

This chapter sets forth the theoretical framework for the study. The theoretical framework attempts to give a brief outline of widely accepted development theories during the Development Decade and the communication approaches that evolved out of these theories. The change in emphasis that occurred in the 70s through questioning some of the assumptions made by effects and diffusion oriented schools of communication research are traced and the importance currently being placed on the socio-political and structural issues of a communication context are outlined. A brief outline of some widely accepted mass communication models and the major features of interpersonal communication also form a part of this chapter.

The discussion of mass communication and interpersonal communication processes in conjunction with the discussion of alternative development theories converge on the concept of participatory communication for development.

A description of how participation is conceptualized by Paulo Friere and the socio-political and economic factors that impinge on participatory communication projects are also detailed here.

The role assigned to communication in any society is primarily a function of its socio-economic and political

history. Even in cases where development is the ostensible goal assigned to communication, the practice of this function is conditioned by the social-structural factors and historical imperatives of that society. The role assigned to development communication also is dependent on the definition given to development in these societies.

During the first development decade in the 1960s, the focus was upon the standard measurement of gross national product per capita (GNP/capita). This is also the standard measurement used by the World Bank and other economic development agencies for dividing the world into developed and less developed sectors. Those nations with a GNP/capita of more than \$1,000 are considered "developed"; while those below that figure are less developed countries. When the degree of development is measured primarily in terms of GNP/capita, then the goal of increasing development--i.e., moving from a "less developed" to a "developed" stage must be stimulation of the growth of GNP. The traditional theories of economic development relate increases in GNP growth to four major factors: capital accumulation, new resources, technological progress and population growth.¹

Describing the development process according to this strictly "economic model," Rostow set out the historical account of development in industrialized West in the following five stages:

1. The traditional society stage is where productivity is limited because of inefficiently developed economic techniques.

2. The preconditions for take-off are development of a "leading sector" in the economy which positively influences other sectors; increase in agricultural productivity to support leading sector activities; improvements in transportation and other forms of social overhead capital.

3. The take off stage is the interval when the old blocks and resistances to steady growth are finally overcome and growth becomes a normal condition for all sectors of society; the main feature of this stage is increase in ratio of savings and investment to national income.

4. The drive to maturity is the long interval of sustained if fluctuating progress, new teaching sectors supporting older ones.

5. The age of high mass consumption is where structural change no longer takes place at a rapid pace. Leading sectors shift towards consumer goods and services.

This theory is predicated on the belief that capital accumulation through the mechanism of savings and investment is the engine of development. Accordingly, much emphasis was laid on heavy industries, capital intensive technology and urbanization.²

The communication theories that emerged during this time also focused on increased productivity through rapid industrialization. Communication was perceived primarily as a tool to inform and influence people towards these goals. The role assigned to communication was "to disseminate new knowledge, impart new skills, introduce new values, raise aspirations of the people and create a sense of nationhood among the people." The chief proponents of these theories

are Wilbur Schramm, Daniel Lerner and Lucien Pye in their respective books Mass Media and National Development, The Passing of Traditional Society, and Communication and Political Development.*

The mass and interpersonal communication models that had found wide acceptance during this period were those developed by Harold Lasswell, Shannon and Weaver, and Berlo.³

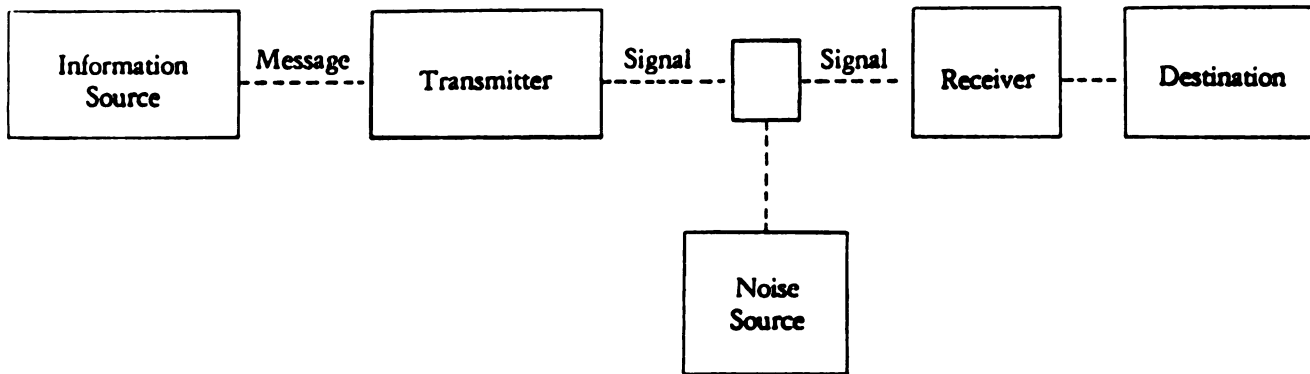
Lasswell's model of communication describes the process of communication with the help of a set of questions: who says what in which channel to whom and with what effect. This is a linear one-way model of communication that is inherently top-down and does not incorporate the concept of feedback in it.⁴

The Shannon and Weaver model diagrams the means by which information is physically carried from source to the receiver. Though this model incorporates the concept of noise--unwanted information--it also delineates communication as a linear one-way process.

*Schramm, Wilbur, Mass Media and National Development, Stanford: California, 1964.

Lerner, Daniel, The Passing of Traditional Society, Canada: Collier-MacMillan, 1958.

Pye, Lucien, Communication and Political Development, NJ: Princeton, 1967.

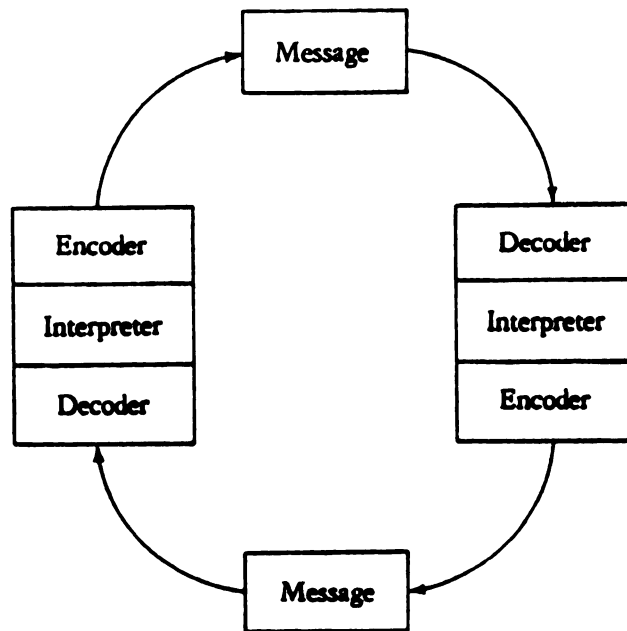


Shannon and Weaver's model (1949)

Berlo's model of communication identified the elements in an act of communication that is intentionally designed to effect certain changes in the behavior of a receiver. The main elements in this model are the source, message, channel, receiver and feedback. Once again, this is a linear one-way model of communication with emphasis on the communicator.

Subsequent models of mass communication developed by Schramm-Osgood (1954), Melvin DeFleur (1970), Riley and Riley (1969), and Westley and MacLean (1957) attempt to fill the deficiencies of earlier models of communication and to emphasize different aspects of the process itself.

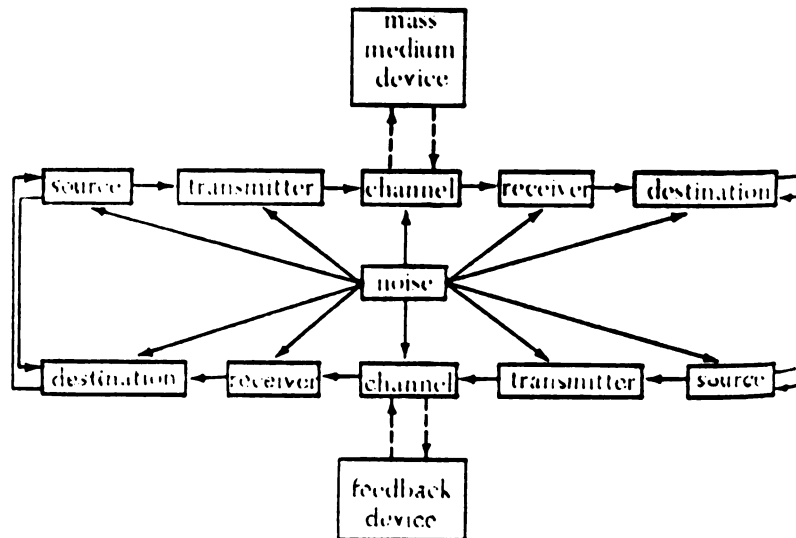
The Schramm and Osgood model of communication emphasized the circular nature of communication and the encoding, decoding and interpreting functions of the communicator and the receiver.⁵



Osgood-Schramm model (1954)

The Riley and Riley model emphasizes the social context in which communication takes place. The model in the words of the authors "seeks to fit together the many messages and the manifold individual reaction to them within an integrated social structure and process."⁶

In Melvin De Fleur's model, sources and transmitter are seen at different phases of the mass communication are carried out by the originator of the message.⁷



The DeFleur model (1970)

The model of mass communication developed by Bruce Westley and Malcolm MacLean, emphasizes the role of gatekeepers in the mass communication process. The gatekeeper C, serves as an agent of the audience, B, and selects messages and transmits them to receivers from the sender, A.⁸

The models of communication examined here are vertical and top down. They emphasize the communicators more than the receiver. The interest in receiver is primarily effects-oriented, so that communication at the level of the source is skillfully designed and manipulated to achieve the specific effects. Persuasion and aggressive attempts at changing the attitudes and behavior of the "target" audience is considered the primary and legitimate function of

communication.

These communication models evolved out of a capitalistic consumption-based economy where they were the basis of advertising campaigns. They were then applied in developing countries to promote development through communication links over the last several decades. As Rogers, the leading exponent of the diffusion school admits, the diffusion school grew in strength in the United States and was then applied in very different socio-cultural conditions in the third world.⁹ Rogers and Shoemaker feel that communication should be applied to development which they define as "...a type of social change in which new ideas are introduced into a social system in order to produce higher per capita income and levels of living through more modern production methods and improved social organization. Development is modernization at the social systems level."¹⁰

The typical research issues of the diffusion school dealt with how technological innovations are diffused in a social system, the characteristics of adopter categories, and the role of opinion leaders in the interpersonal network through which an innovation diffuses.

The major US communications research trends that evolved out of this philosophy--effects orientation and the diffusion school--came under heavy criticism in the 1970s from Latin American scholars.

Critiquing the diffusion school, Beltran (1976) enumerates three basic assumptions of this approach

--that communication by itself can generate development, regardless of socio-economic and political conditions.

--that increased production and consumption of goods and services constitute the essence of development and that a fair distribution of income and opportunities will necessarily follow in due time.

--that the key to increased productivity is technological innovation, regardless of whom it may benefit and whom it may harm.¹¹

Several research studies in developing countries reinforced this criticism. The failure of "trickle-down economics" also began to be apparent during this period. This trend of criticism shifted the focus of communication thought to issues of equity and the implications of social structure and power structure on attempts at bringing about changes in developing societies. This debate also brought to the fore different interpretations of development and underdevelopment referred to in the Introduction here.

Even after having achieved political independence from their colonizers, several third world countries have locked themselves into economic structures that are highly centralized and consumption oriented, following the Rostowian model of development. The structural inequities that are a feature of the socio-economic conditions of several of the third world countries facilitate a conscious neglect of the basic needs of a large majority of the

deprived population. The centralization of the economy concentrates power with the national elite who in the face of a steady decline in the quality of life of a majority of the poor people, promote a profit-oriented ideology of consumption that encourages the purchase of "non-essential", "luxury" goods such as cosmetics, soft drinks, household appliances, etc., among the sectors of the third world population that are deprived of even the basic needs such as food, shelter, health care, and literacy.

It is increasingly accepted now that the underdevelopment of the so-called third world countries is primarily a function of the colonial exploitation and transplantation of a capitalistic consumption-based economy in societies that are characterized by subsistence agriculture and domestic production. This top-down process of integrating a nation as a dependency into the world market through patterns of trade or investment is deemed to be the basis of "development" of the industrialized West and the "underdevelopment" of the third world countries.¹²

As a counter-measure to first world development initiatives imbalances in first world - third world power structures and social structure within the developing nations, several social scientists are converging on the prospect of empowerment of third world peoples through communication initiatives at the grass root level, applying the methodology developed by Paulo Freire. This methodology

is broadly identified under the rubric of "participation."

To quote Freire; "Critical and liberating dialogue, which supposes action, must be carried on with the oppressed at whatever the stage of their struggle for liberation. The content of that dialogue can and should vary in accordance with historical conditions and the level at which the oppressed perceive reality. But to substitute monologue, slogans and communiques for dialogue is to attempt to liberate the oppressed with the instruments of domestication. Attempting to liberate the oppressed without their reflective participation in the act of liberation is to treat them as objects which must be saved from a burning building; it is to lead them into the populist pitfall and transform them into masses which can be manipulated."¹³

In Paulo Freire's view, people are critical and creative beings capable of knowing and transforming their own environments. Education can either humanize, liberate and treat people as subjects who control their own lives, or it can domesticate, oppress, and treat them as objects to be manipulated. To be humanizing, he contends, education must involve the learners in a process of problem-solving in which they describe, analyze, and act to redesign their realities. According to Freire, this can be done only in a context of true communication, one in which learners and facilitators trust and respect one another. This process, which he calls conscientization (the term conscientization

refers to learning to perceive social, political, and economic contradictions and to take action against the oppressive elements of reality), leads to an awareness of the forces which shape one's life and a realistic understanding of one's ability to act to control those forces. This perspective implies changes in the relationship between outsiders and learners. The role of the outsider becomes one of raising questions and issues, not prescribing answers or solutions.¹⁴

The mass communication models that are outlined earlier are vertical, top-down and emphasize the importance of the source of communication. The communication systems prevalent in most developing societies are based on these models where a few sources address themselves to a large mass of heterogeneous and dispersed viewers. There is a tendency also to assume a uniformity of needs and aspirations across a broad and diversified population. The messages are developed by a handful of private/public organizations that are in decision-making positions. Receivers of these messages have no input into the agenda set by these organizations.

Mass media of this nature are characterized as capable of 2 well-defined ideological functions. 1. Reproduction, reinforcement and legitimization of the social relations of production. 2. Manipulation or superimposition of the interests of the dominant classes over the interests of

those under power.¹⁵

To break away from this role and to play a liberating role, mass media need to approximate the process of interpersonal communication as much as possible, instead of perpetuating the classical communication models where the receiver and sender are separated by a series of intermediary stages (in addition to noise and gatekeepers), through which the message is filtered.¹⁶ Communication for participatory development even when it occurs on a mass medium such as radio or television needs to have the roles of the sender and the receiver interchangeable. Communication messages that are area specific, culture and situation specific and contextual should originate through a process of research based on a system of discussion, investigation analysis in which the researched are as much a part of the process as the researcher. The program researcher has no preconceived theories or solutions to preconceived problems.¹⁷ Reality is jointly explored by the researcher and the community which develops its own understanding and solutions about its reality. There is a common search to solve common problems--the concern for a researcher at this juncture would be "good communication" and "good interactive learning" which involves a deliberate demystification of complex technologies like video and simplification of jargon.¹⁸ This interaction thrives on the knowledge of the learner--whether the learner happens to be

the "source" or the "receiver" of communication.

Conventional applications of mass media have been proved time and again to be good sources of information but not effective in motivating people towards change-- interpersonal communication is recognized for motivating attitudinal change. Summarizing a range of studies in agricultural communication and rural sociology, Rogers generalizes that mass media channels are relatively more important at the knowledge stage and interpersonal channels are relatively more important at the persuasion stage in the innovation-decision process.¹⁹ Attempting to fit adapter categories to media channel image, he also states that mass media channels are relatively more important for earlier adopters than for later adopters.²⁰ Considering that earlier adopters have more years of education, higher social status, greater degree of upward social mobility, larger family farm units with a commercial economic orientation, development efforts aimed at empowering less privileged people have to be distinct. Interpersonal communication channels can be expected to be the most important component of the communication package.

Each society is characterized by an interpersonal network that is unique to its needs and world view. Participation is an essential component of non-mediated interpersonal networks. These networks are considered much more affective in facilitating a critical understanding as

they are characterized by emotions, feelings, values and collective social experiences shared by the members of the culture. These networks evolve out of the collective memory of the group's experience in the given physical and psychological environment.

It is the primary contention of this thesis that to effectively generate participation, mass media process needs to approximate the process of interpersonal communication as much as possible. To be effective mass media messages need to be generated through and fortified by interpersonal communications between the source and receiver at the content selection and program utilization stages. The roles of source and receiver need to be interchangeable. Face-to-face interpersonal exchanges allow for constant feedback, ongoing correction of messages to suit the needs of the source and receiver, clarification and addition of information, and most of all they entail active and critical participation.

The contention has several implications for the nature, control, organization and funding of communication organizations. Conventional mass media systems that are spawned by consumption-based economic systems treat information and entertainment as commodities. Media have become primary vehicles for advertising rather than being critical sources of reliable information for the audiences.

According to Ivan Illich--"Once basic needs have been

translated into demands for scientifically produced commodities, poverty is defined by standards which the technocrats can change at will. Poverty then refers to those who have fallen behind an advertised ideal of consumption in some important respect."²¹ This system operates on the premise that the power of media should be used to change attitudes as well as transmit information which transforms a traditional society into a technology based one.

In contrast to this, mass media that are fortified by participation can encourage gradual growth of organized group activity, through a process of collective reflection and active involvement of members and an emphasis on self-reliance.

According to Uphoff, participation, like development, has economic, social and political dimensions. Most considerations and conclusions are shot through with value judgments. No assessments can escape normative implications. Uphoff concludes that participation even in "developmental" terms is inescapably political! Broader participation is likely to change the use and allocation of resources in society.²²

Oakley warns that the feasibility of participation in the mass media will depend on the political climate in which a campaign is being organized.²³ Lenglet and McAnany have argued that the significance attached to the mass media

in the education of the rural masses is due to the realization by governments that the mass media can be used to provide political and ideological support to the technical, economic, and social services they provide.²⁴ Macro economic policies may have an influence on the strategies encouraged by the governments to achieve participation. Gow and VanSant reinforce this:

"political commitment can be two-edged when it comes to the role of participation. While participation can take the form of widespread rural mobilization to support and implement government policy, it can also serve as an effective tool for government control of rural population."²⁵

There are several versions of participation currently prevalent - each a reflection of the ideology of its sponsors. Dharam Ghai describes two interpretations of participation: the one widely accepted is to view participation as an input to development. The people are "mobilized" to implement activities generally decided by outsiders. This instrumental and interventionist interpretation is contrasted with the view which regards participation as "empowering" the rural poor to play an effective role in rural development.²⁶

However, if a society is highly stratified and is dominated by powerful and oppressive elites, the degree of participation "allowed" or "tolerated" has its limits. According to Byram, the political situation will affect the extent to which popular participation can take place. For

some radio schools in Latin America, he predicts, there are limits to how far they can push popular participation.²⁷

According to Frances Berrigan, political restraints stemming from ideological stances, are not the only limitations. Access and participation also challenge the traditional hierarchies. Resistance is likely from influential persons and groups, such as those who are powerful in the commercial sector, or bureaucratic spheres or even media professionals. To accept the practice of access and participation invites the professional to adopt a responsive approach instead of a professional one.²⁸

Peter Golding describes professional ideology as the devotion to broadcasting's impartiality. The impartiality of broadcasting and of broadcasters is built into the notion of the institutional separation of broadcasting from the state. Though, most third world broadcasting organizations are not separate from the State, the professional detachment survives as a goal at the second level, that of daily production and occupational practice.²⁹ In contrast, non-mediated interpersonal communications tend to be closely wedded to social and political processes.

When access and participation are presupposed in a communication situation, the "professional" is required to respond with partisanship and purposiveness, rather than with detachment and impartiality.

This chapter attempted to provide a theoretical context

for analysis of Kheda Communication Project. Development strategies that were widely accepted during the Development Decade and the mass communication models that evolved out of these development perspectives are discussed in this chapter. "Empowerment" of the people following Paulo Friere's definition of participation is presented as an alternative to the development strategies of the 1950's and 60's.

An attempt is made here to describe a communication strategy that intermeshes mass communication technology with interpersonal communication techniques. The next chapter will examine a few communication projects that have attempted in different ways to incorporate this concept.

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CHAPTER THREE

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

This review of literature will outline communication projects that are illustrative of participatory communication. There are several projects which employ this mode of participatory communication. However, they are not cited here as they employ group media and audio-visual media other than radio and television. The choice of cases has been based primarily on their focus on socio-economic and political issues as opposed to the purely educational projects like Radio Mathematics of Nicaragua. In addition to this two other reasons for choosing these specific cases were: 1) that there is a substantial amount of analysis and literature existing about these projects, 2) that these projects have started out with a conceptualization of participation that is more rigorous, in the sense of extending the concept to decision-making in program content. Participation, in other words, is not conceived merely as another component in "development" but as a "process" as referred to in the earlier chapter.

Review of Participatory Projects

According to Jeremy O'Sullivan and Mario Kaplan, a number of participatory communication projects in Latin America, have concentrated their efforts in the development of popular culture. O'Sullivan and Kaplan quote Azcueta to describe popular culture as "...born in the Culture of Poverty and the Culture of Domination and its main characteristics are: its collective nature, a community expression, it is both pluralist and universal and it is creative and belongs to the proletariat ... The media that it uses include: music, popular theater, and the development of folklore, which becomes an expression of the traditions of the past, often ignored or abused by the dominant mass culture ... Popular culture and popular mass communication are vital factors in the creation of a new society."¹ Even though the basic philosophy of popular culture proposes to awaken people from the domination of cultural imperialism, O'Sullivan and Kaplan feel that communication projects that concentrate on popular culture are generally considered less explosive from a political perspective, as they avoid an overt statement about changing the power structure in the society.²

Radio Tabacunda:

The Radio Tabacunda (Ecuador) Project was designed to provide programming for farmers by farmers, and uses the forty radio school centers which broadcast on the Tabacunda

transmitter. "Auxiliaries" were given tape recorders and cassettes. They were free to record whatever they wished, in close collaboration with the local population. There were an estimated 42,000 illiterate adults in this area. The programming contained a great deal of music at first, and this has continued to feature strongly. But there were reports of development projects, such as the collective which recorded how they had joined together to build new houses for co-operative members. Prior to the use of recorders, community participation was limited to those who could write and read. Recording enabled many more of the illiterate population to have a means of expression.³

This project came into being with the funds made available by the University of Massachusetts Non-Formal Education Project, under the leadership of Padre Isias Barriga.⁴ According to the UNESCO report, this project demonstrates the fairly minimal outlay needed to provide an interactive communication system. However, they emphasize, through the existing radio centers, there was also a grass roots person to person link through auxiliaries. Without this network, such a project would be difficult.⁵

Movimento de Educacao de Base:

A more widely known project using radio is the "Movimento de Educação de Base" (MEB) in Brazil.⁶ The project originated in 1960 from a contract between the

Ministry of Education of Brazil and the Catholic Bishops' Conference. The project started with conscientization and politicization as its primary objectives. Conscientization is defined here as, "the discovery of self and of the dignity of the human person, together with the realization that the person, in cooperative association with other persons, can humanize the world." Politicization is defined as, "conscious participation in the decisions relevant to the life of the nation, with clear understanding that the local problems cannot be solved without taking into account the more global framework of national and world problems."⁷

According to O'Sullivan and Kaplan, MEB's work was initially aimed at mobilizing and educating the peasants of the Brazilian Northeast, who were illiterate and poor and had very little access to rural schools and health facilities.⁸

MEB had a decentralized organization, composed of a) the Regional Sistema Educativo, b) the local team, c) the animators and the national team. MEB broadcast its promotional and educational messages through eleven stations in the northeast, some of them belonging to the Catholic Church but the majority through ordinary commercial stations from which radio time was purchased. According to McAnany however, the mass medium given greater importance was not radio but printed matter, especially when the new text book Viver e Lutcu (to live is to struggle) appeared in 1963.⁹

Marina Bandera, MEB's Secretary-General, confirms this: "For MEB, radio is not the axis of the work. Radio serves as motivation and support for the activities in general. The job is based on the dialogue of the local team with the rural population."¹⁰

Summarizing the main lessons from this experience, Bordenave says: a) if campesino mobilization for social change is the goal, radio cannot be the main element of the communication strategy, but it can provide a useful supportive tool for encouraging local dialogue, b) for a popular animation movement, the general political situation of the country and particularly the ideological orientations of its leaders are critical factors; opposition from these sources will only lead to the disadvantage of the campesinos whom the movement set out to benefit.¹¹

The second conclusion emerged from the fact that with the change in government in 1964, there was also a loss of interest in campesino participation. The movement which operated as many as 5,000 radio schools and which imparted literacy skills to 400,000 campesinos before 1964, dropped to less than 2,000 schools and 100,000 new literates in 1970.

This is a critical problem faced by mass media systems that attempt to function in a participatory mode in the larger socio-economic and political system that does not subscribe to a similar ideology. Even in instances where

public rhetoric supports participatory efforts, a fine line is drawn where participation ceases to be perceived as an "input" into development and begins to be looked upon as a "process" that empowers people to undertake collective action. In such instances, mass media institutions face unique constraints that non-mediated communication can bypass. The pressures exerted by the source of financial support and the authority that permits transmission facilities appear to be the two recurring constraints communication projects appear to be contending with.

Radio Educative Rurale:

The Pilot Project in the Use of Communication Media for Adult Education in Senegal originated as a result of cooperation between the Government of Senegal and UNESCO. The project falls into 2 distinct parts, a) experimental television, broadcast mainly during 1965 and 1966, but continuing until 1969, b) rural educational radio (Radio Educative Rurale), aimed at organized listening groups at the end of 1968 and eventually expanded to cover audiences throughout the country.¹²

According to Bordenave, for television, the clientele consisted of listening groups of adults, some mixed, but most composed of women--TV audiences were in and around Dakar. The TV part of the project was small scale and strictly experimental, from 250 to 255 women were reached directly by 121 programs. Radio, however, began with 57

listening clubs in three administrative regions. The potential radio audience was about 800,000.¹³

The objectives of this project were to evaluate the utility and effectiveness of modern techniques of adult education, and to train future specialists of Senegal and other African countries in the production and utilization of these methods and techniques. The inquiries conducted by Professor Fougeyrolles show that the television programs, according to viewers, helped them to take better care of their homes and children, taught them much about preparing food and personal hygiene. The influence of TV, according to Professor Fougeyrolles, went far beyond the tele-club, thanks to deliberate efforts to disseminate what had been learned, as well as through spontaneous conversations with neighbors and relatives.¹⁴

RER results are evident, according to Bordanave, in the enthusiasm of rural listeners and government officials alike and in the changes in government policies and actions directly attributable to the dialogue established through the channel.¹⁵ According to a UNESCO evaluation of this project, however, the principal lesson of the television pilot project, a lesson which is even more evident from the subsequent analysis of the educational radio, is that effectiveness of the medium of communication depends essentially on the overall organization of services into which it is integrated and the socio-political framework in

which it operates.¹⁶

The conclusion, once again, is that radio, television, or any one medium is not self-sufficient. To be effective, any medium must be coupled with effective community organization.

Campo y Productividad:

Another project which used both radio and television was the Campo y Productividad (Farm and Productivity) project in Mexico. This project was sponsored by the National Productivity Center, originally set up with ILO support, and planned by Dr. Luis Ramiro Beltran. A series of television programs were designed to "motivate and sensitize the farm audience for parallel and/or ulterior instruction training processes and to diffuse basic concepts, administrative policies and technological processes."¹⁷

Research reports found that the series was an effective way of passing on informational and motivational material. However, it was also found that there should be much more interaction between the viewing groups and the programme-makers, so that modifications to the programmes could be made all the time. Another research recommendation was that group leaders should be carefully trained and have a clear idea of the objectives and orientation of the series.¹⁸

Tanzanian Year 16:

One of the earliest developing country video projects that employed portable video was the Tanzanian Year 16 in 1971-72. The objective of the project was to produce a record of the historical experience of the Ujama movement. The record, however, was not to come from the organizers nor officials, but from the people themselves. Video was to be used as a "means of self-expression, so making people more critically aware of their situation, to promote a dialogue between villagers and also to build up a large library of audio-visual materials on all aspects of development."¹⁹

During the project, a six-member video team spent time in three villages, up to six months, showing day-to-day life, attending meetings, taking part in discussion, sitting in on adult education classes and participating in village festivities. Discussions and situations were taped and playbacks were also taped.

The video workers considered that the process had been successful in stimulating the communities, in making them more critically aware, and in turning passive attitudes into active ones.

Participation in Theory

The problem of what participation would mean in practice was addressed at the UNESCO international conference on "Self-Management, Access and Participation" held in Belgrade in 1977.²⁰ The conference defines access

as the ability of the public to come closer to communication systems, and that in concrete terms, it can be related to two levels of choice and two levels of feedback.

At the level of choice, access implies:

1. The individual right to communication materials, the right to listen to or view desired programs, when a person wants, where he/she wants.

2. the availability of a wider range of materials, the choice of which is made by the public instead of being imposed by production organizations (informal and educational materials, services and alternative programs).

3. the transmission of materials requested by the public.

At the level of feedback, access implies,

1. the interaction between producers and receivers of messages.

2. direct participation by the audience during the transmission of programmes.

3. the right to comment and criticize

4. measure of keeping in touch with producers, administrators, and the managers of communication organizations.

At the Production Level, participation implies:

1. unrestricted opportunities for the public (individuals or groups) to produce programs and to have access to professional help.

2. making available to the public technical facilities and production resources (i.e., a more advanced level of participation.

At the decision-making level, participation implies involvement of the public in:

1. programming: content and duration of programs; scheduling of programs.

2. the management, administration and financing of communication organizations.

At the planning level, participation comprises the right of the public to contribute to:

1. the formulation of plans and policies for communication enterprises: definition of objectives, principles of management and future programming.

2. the formulation of national, regional and local communication plans.

Participation in Practice

Applying this framework to the case studies:

--in terms of access, among Tabacunda, MEB, RER, Tanzania and Mexico projects, except for Mexico projects, all the projects have incorporated large and significant components of interaction between producers and receivers of messages, the right to comment, criticize and direct participation by the audience during the transmission of programs. The means of keeping in touch

with producers, administrators and the managers of communication organization also formed a part of the projects. In some of the projects, for instance, Tabacunda MEB, Tanzania, and RER, this component appears to have played a more meaningful role in terms of influencing decision-making at a higher level. In case of video project in Mexico, this component is weaker by its very nature of being an experimental project.

--in terms of participation, at the production level; all the projects except the Mexico project have provided for unrestricted opportunities for the participating communities to produce programs and to have access to professional help. Technical and production resources are made available to the communities. At the decision-making level, though all the projects have provided for involvement of the communities in deciding content of the programs, control of scheduling/utilization and length of programs remained with the organizations.

The management and administration of communication projects is external to the communities. Financial sponsorship is from respective governments or from governments in collaboration with international organizations. With the management and administration resting entirely with the communication organizations and financing coming from governments and international organizations, the communities are not involved in

formulating plans and policies for these communication enterprises. The organizations define objectives and chalk out future programs without involving the public to any great extent.

The projects that have the ideological support of the funding sources, for instance, MEB of Brazil, RER of Senegal, and video project of Tanzania, have generated participation to a remarkable degree. Some of these projects have used the existing interpersonal networks (Brazil), some have created these networks for developing along with the mass media component (Senegal) and Tanzania project used the mass media component as essentially an additional catalyst for enhancing and refining interpersonal activities. However, as in the case of MEB, any project can achieve its objectives only as long as the government/the funding source, supports the project. In case of MEB, with the change in government in 1954, the system now operates as a conventional organization, offering fundamental education.²¹

The review of the media projects reveals that the capital intensive technology of the media places the responsibility for the initiation of the projects and for defining the objectives with the sponsoring/funding entities. This does not necessarily constitute an obstacle as long as the ideology of the sponsoring entity is in harmony with the objectives of the project. Another

critical aspect revealed by the review is the varied role interpersonal networks play in each of these projects. Each of the projects also reveals the profound influence the objectives, socio-economic and political conditions have on the viability of the project.

The next chapter, Focus on Kheda, outlines the history of television in India, the history of the Kheda project itself with a brief outline of Kheda, location, socio-economic profile, the objectives of the project itself, its mandate and its transmission functions. This chapter aims to place the Kheda Project in perspective in terms of the national television in India, and in terms of the national objectives for television and the Kheda mandate.

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CHAPTER FOUR

FOCUS ON KHEDA

This chapter aims to place the Kheda project in perspective in terms of the history and objectives of the national television in India and also in terms of Kheda's own mandate and its programming functions. This chapter will present a brief sketch of the evolution of television in India followed by a focus on Kheda - its location, history, mandate, organizational structure, and the transmission functions. Program Development is treated as a separate, but major subsection under this chapter.

Evolution of Television:

Television started in India as an experimental service on 15th September 1959, with reconditioned closed-circuit television equipment bought from Philips and cameras and projectors donated by United States Information Service. Under a 1959 agreement with UNESCO, all India Radio received \$20,000 to finance production of programmes for social education, organization of viewing centers, purchase of 100 plus television receivers, and evaluation of results.¹ Television was assigned a specific and well-defined role. It was to be used exclusively for imparting social education

and that its development would be undertaken to make it an instrument to support the strategy and programs of social and economic development.²

For five or six years, the programs were directed to schools during the day time and thrice a week in the evening to viewers in farmers' teleclubs from a transmitter located in a suburban extension of metropolitan Delhi.³

Introduction and development of TV was low priority with the Government of India almost until late 60s. However, in the late 1960s, the Government of India had begun seriously examining the techno-economic and other aspects of the long-term plan for TV coverage of the entire country. New developments in the satellite technology, such as Applications Technology Satellites, which make significant simplifications in the ground terminals possible, also reduced the costs of the ground terminal. This permitted satellite communication to become practical for domestic television distribution and direct broadcasting.⁴ Direct broadcast to communities and classrooms is economically superior for population densities less than 500 and 800 persons per square mile.⁵

Two events of great forethought prepared the ground work for satellite TV coverage of India. They were: 1) the setting up of an experimental satellite communication earth station at Ahmedabad in 1966-67, 2) the initiation in January 1967 of the Krishi Darshan (television programs

aimed to establish the use of TV for development and simultaneously to generate expertise in software and organization of such projects).⁶

The UNESCO panel of consultants on space communication, meeting in June 1966 suggested a satellite pilot project in India. After carrying out systems studies with the help of some foreign institutions and a joint study by India-USA in 1967, the Government of India signed a memorandum of understanding to conduct a limited experiment using the ATS-F satellite of NASA in 1969.⁷

This agreement spelled out objectives of the experiment, which included demonstration of the value of satellite technology; gaining experience in the development and management of a satellite-based instructional television system; enhancing Indian capability in the design, manufacture, development and operation of village TV receivers and broadcast facilities, etc. The institutional objectives were in the fields of health, family planning, agriculture, national integration, education, teacher training, etc.⁸

The Department of Atomic Energy which was assigned the responsibility to put up a proposal for the coverage of India by a satellite system around mid-1970s also drew up a set of objectives:

-Television can be a most important tool for development. In this context, its impact is as relevant, if not more so, to the isolated rural communities, where the bulk of our population resides

as it is to the urban population already subject to other major influences of modernization.

-National television programs accessible through community receivers to all our clusters of population, urban as well as rural, permitting shared audio-visual experiences, can be a most important factor for national integration. Therefore, it is necessary to have a broadband communication system suitable for a national hook-up of television, particularly reaching remote areas where the population density is less.

-By providing entertainment and instruction of a high standard, TV can produce a qualitative improvement in the richness of rural life and thereby reduce the over-whelming attraction of migration to cities and metropolitan areas.⁹

The Department of Atomic Energy report also recognized that programs made in one central place beamed all over the country will not satisfy the needs of a diverse country like India. The complexity of allocating time between various uses and various regions from the three video channels available was recognized at this time.

The report also proposed 20 major studios, each attached to a transmitting station, so that programs of strictly local interest can be telecast when the satellite program is not of particular interest to the local area. It envisioned that the satellite system could be used for transmitting some programming of strictly local interest each day. The resultant decentralized programming was expected to be of high quality and low cost.¹⁰

There was a stated preference at this time for shunning an elitist bias in programming. For instance, a recommendation of the seminar on Software Objectives held in

February, 1973, was "Television must be used in the development process as an instrument of social change and national cohesion by unhesitatingly upholding progressive values and involving the community in a free dialogue. Indian Television must shun an elitist approach and consumer value system and evolve a true national model."¹¹

In August 1975, the Government of India launched the Satellite Instructional Television Experiment using ATS-6 satellite. The Indian government invested 188 million dollars in this program. Television programs dealing with rural health, agriculture, family planning, and teachers training were beamed to 6 clusters of 400 villages each.¹²

The direct broadcast system experimented with during the Satellite Instructional Television Experiment proved the feasibility of taking television programs to remote and hitherto inaccessible villages. However, it also generated skepticism about the excessive centralization that this system engenders. Analysis conducted at this stage indicated the cost effectiveness of the use of direct reception sets and low power transmitters along with high power transmitters for a national television configuration.¹³ It was in 1976 that a separate entity, Doordarshan, was created for television. Prior to this, television was a part of All India Radio, the national broadcasting monopoly run by the federal government's Ministry of Information and Broadcasting in the capital.

Doordarshan is a Department under the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting. The Minister of Information and Broadcasting is the final authority on issues related to this Ministry. There are several Departments under this ministry such as the Department of Information and Public Relations, the Song and Drama Division, All India Radio, the Press Information Bureau, the Films Division, and Doordarshan (Indian National Television). Each of these departments is administered by a Director General, who reports to the Secretary to the Minister of Information and Broadcasting.

Doordarshan has created two posts of Deputy Director General, one each assigned to Bombay and Calcutta, for administrative convenience. Each of the stations in the country is administered by a director who reports to the central office in Delhi. Depending on the size of operations, the number of producers, production assistants, engineering and other technical staff varies.

At each level of operation in the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, the production operations are supported by a large secretarial staff.

Television which was a part of All India Radio initially, but was created into a separate entity only in 1976. The administrative as well as the production staff were trained in All India Radio. The administrative and programming philosophies of AIR are transferred to

Doordarshan.

All India Radio is funded through license fees. Doordarshan also initially inherited this mode of financing. With the creation of commercial channels on both AIR and Doordarshan, both entities have acquired a degree of financial viability that has prompted the government of India to abolish license fees.

Following the termination of the satellite project, India launched its own satellite, INSAT-1B. INSAT-1B is equipped with two broadcast transponders, Each transponder transmits different sets of programs. One distributes the local language programs back to the several states in which they are produced. The viewing time of rural audiences for evening telecasts is between 6 pm and 9 pm. To accommodate all the programming in different languages, each language's allotment is 40 minutes per evening, in addition to 45 minutes for school children each morning.¹⁴

The second transponder beams the national and regional programming. These programs are produced by Doordarshan and can be viewed in villages and in any of the 40 cities that now have television transmission.¹⁵

With the launching of INSAT and the introduction of color during the Asian Games in 1982, Doordarshan has undertaken a massive \$2,320 million expansion which proposed to install 20 to 30 transmitters every month between July and December, 1984.¹⁶

INSAT system is expected to take television to over 15,000 electrified villages in 6 states. But the government has committed itself to supplying 2000 direct reception sets and 2000 UHF sets by the end of the 6th Five-Year Plan in April 1985.

The Indian government also reduced the excise taxes to bring down the price of a color television set from \$850 to \$550 and of a black and white set to \$120, thereby providing an incentive for rapid increase in the number of individually owned sets.¹⁷ In 1984, the Government of India augmented the satellite service by adding a commercial channel. Thus, programming sponsored by advertisers was introduced into the developmental fare offered by Doordarshan. As early as 1965, a decade before the launching of the SITE, the Indian government introduced film-based entertainment component from India's Hollywood-equivalent into what was till then programming designed for farmers and school children. This entertainment component maintained a steady increase in direct proportion to the increase in the number of television sets owned individually by the urban population. The addition of a commercial channel in 1984 to the satellite system is only a culmination of this trend.

Given the socio-economic condition of the rural and a large section of urban population in India, community viewing of television was conceived of as a viable solution

to overcome the inability of individuals to buy television sets. In the rural areas, wherever community sets have been installed during SITE, the average audience per set is estimated to be about 300 to 400 people.¹⁸

However, only about 800 of the 11,000 villages in the SITE program receive their television through direct reception sets. The rest located within the range of high power transmitters in the larger metropolitan centers, use VHF sets. The reason for this is that only in and around cities is the density of television sets great enough to warrant the construction of a land-line system to feed the local transmitter.¹⁹ The location of the transmitter very close to the urban centers predetermines the audiences, leading to a rapid increase in the number of individually owned sets in the urban areas.

The more vocal urban middle-class exerts pressure and influences programme fare towards more commercial entertainment. This is threatening to make Indian television more urbanized and centralized as only four new production centers are planned, making them 13 in all. No new satellite uplinks are contemplated. The original conception of national television was not centralized production, but cost-effective centralized transmission with greater number of programming centers.

The vision of Vikram A. Sarabhai the eminent Indian space scientist who proposed a satellite-based communication

system for India, had been that television would be a powerful social force only if its reach extended beyond the cities.²⁰ Thus, the Space Applications Center (SAC), which initiated the SITE project, envisaged local facilities capable of local production, with limited rebroadcast of national signals. SAC envisaged the use of direct broadcast only where the population density was sparse. Looking for technological options that would not only reduce but meaningfully complement the centralization caused by direct broadcasts, SAC conceived the idea of "limited rebroadcast," giving birth to the Kheda system.²¹

The Pij television transmitter installed in Kheda district with funding from International Telecommunication Union, the United Nations Development Program, and the Department of Space, was meant primarily as a transmitting facility for local programs produced by SAC Software Systems Group in collaboration with Kheda villagers.

This local transmitter and its community-rooted programming is considered one of the most significant contributions of SITE. It is the first television transmitter in the country to be located in a rural area to serve a cluster of villages with development support television broadcasts. This television station was visualized as a model station for future local television stations for the future satellite television system.

Kheda Communication Project:

Location: Kheda district is located in the western state of Gujarat in India. The 2 million population of this district is spread around 5 talukas.²² The population of men is slightly higher than that of women in this area.

This is primarily an agricultural district. Rice, wheat, millet, groundnut, and oil seeds are cultivated along with cash crops like cotton and tobacco. 48% of the workers are cultivators, 23% are agricultural laborers. Other occupations include tending livestock, mining and quarrying, household work, construction, trading and transport communication.

4.4% of the population holds 15+ acres of land. 75% of the population has no landholdings or less than 5 acres of land. The literacy rate is 38.45% in this area. It is slightly higher than the all-India rate of 34%.

The state of Gujarat was governed by the Indian National Congress from the time India attained independence until the time of the SITE project in 1975. Kheda district has a thriving dairy cooperative movement. The tradition of cooperative organization in this area goes back to pre-independence days. Thus, the district also has a well-established transport network established by the dairy cooperatives consisting of milk collection truck routes.

History: The Pij transmitter, about 50 km south of Ahmedabad, in the district of Kheda, went on the air on

August 1, 1975, as a part of SITE. The 1 kw transmitter was linked to the ISRO studio at Ahmedabad through a microwave link, and to the satellite through a receiver-only terminal at Pij village. The primary coverage of the transmitter is about 35 km, covering most of the villages in Kheda district. With assistance from the local cooperative organization, 550 community television sets were provided to about 400 villages of Kheda district. During SITE, Pij transmitted 30 minutes of local programs made by SAC of ISRO and 30 minutes of the national programmes originating from Delhi.²³

After the conclusion of the SITE project, SAC continued this service re-titling it the Kheda Communication Project. A special Memorandum of Understanding between ISRO/Department of Space and the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting was necessary to enable the NASA-equivalent in India to continue operating a television program service, once its experimental mandate under the SITE project was over. Under this arrangement, Kheda Communication Project has the responsibility of producing the developmental and educational programs for transmission from Pij, while Doordarshan produces news, current affairs and other programs. ISRO was also given the responsibility of training Doordarshan staff. Under the new agreement, the production costs and training costs are to be shared by ISRO and the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting.²⁴ On July

25, 1985, on the day Doordarshan commissioned a high-powered transmitter in Ahmedabad, the capital city of Gujarat state, the government shut down the low powered transmitter in Pij, which was transmitting Kheda programmes. In August 1985, 10 years after its original inauguration in July 1975, the Government of India announced its decision to move the Pij transmitter to Madras, the capital city of Tamil Nadu state, to facilitate establishment of a second channel for the city.²⁵

Mandate of KCP/DECU: Development and Educational Communication Unit was created with a mandate that included programming production, development and adaptation of video hardware, communication research; training, consulting and studies in fields of interest to space application.

Production of television programs, for the Kheda area is the major activity of DECU, through KCP.²⁶

Credo of the Kheda Communication Project: the Kheda Communication Project has a well-defined clearly stated credo:

--Development, economic, social, cultural or ideological, implies a break from the status quo, from inertia; it implies movement, change. Change requires certain attitude, motivation, information and of course, appropriate physical and social infrastructures. It also requires the objective understanding of one's predicament--the family and social constraints one works within. This necessitates the development of a rational outlook, a scientific attitude towards life.

--Development implies a social change, education, awareness and economic development. However, economic development cannot take place in isolation. It requires changes in the social system and in the attitude of the individual, it implies breaking away from bondages and oppression; and most importantly, it necessitates an "awakening of the individual and his self-confidence. In trying to accelerate development, communication can play a very major role. TV, in particular, can be a powerful tool in creating a 'climate' for development.

--The prime target audience is invariably the lower classes/castes who are the most oppressed. Keeping this audience in mind, programme's content, presentation, etc. are designed.²⁷

Organizational Structure and Financing of KCP:

The scientific ministries under the Government of India are organized as departments. The secretaries in charge of the scientific ministries are scientists and subject specialists, as opposed to the secretaries of other ministries who are Indian Administrative Service bureaucrats. The secretaries of the scientific ministries are also in complete control of the agency. These ministries have so far been under the direct control of the Prime Minister of India, as the Prime Minister holds the portfolios of Department of Space, Department of Electronics and Department of Atomic Energy. This provides the secretaries of these ministries, direct access to the highest decision making authority in the country.

The Department of Space's ISRO is organized into several centers with each center focusing on one aspect of space research, such as rocket launching, space technology

applications and the like. The Space Applications Center is a wing of ISRO. The Space Applications Center is subdivided into eight divisions, each of which concentrates on an aspect of space application, for instance, remote sensing, weather forecasting, etc. Software Systems Group, a division of Space Applications Center, undertook development of a small part of television programming for the Satellite Instructional Television Experiment, and was responsible for social research and evaluation of its impact.

Until 1977, there were 3 divisions within the Software Systems Group:

1. Kheda communication Project
2. Social Research and Evaluation Group
3. Educational Resources Group

The Kheda Communication Project was in charge of producing the program content with the local populations around Pij village. The Social Research and Evaluation Group conducted on-going formative, processual, and summative evaluation of all programming operations. The educational Resources Group was responsible for extension and training.

In 1977 the Software Systems Group underwent a reorganization due to the recruitment of several of its researchers by Doordarshan stations that were a part of the SITE. The Educational Resources Group was made responsible for extension and training of television personnel

nationally in the methods evolved by SAC in program development and research.²⁸

In 1983, Development and Educational Communication Unit (DECU) was spun off as a separate organization with a specific mandate (outlined earlier). The Manager of Kheda Communication Project reports to the Director of DECU. There are 5 producers and 11 production assistants with the SAC while Doordarshan has 3 producers and 3 production assistants. The SAC also has script writers on its staff. Most of the producers are graduates and degree/diploma holders in cinema direction, film editing, dramatics, from institutes like the Film and TV Institute of India, and the National School of Drama.³⁰ There are also 3 full-time writers with reputations as good writers in the local language, Gujarati.³¹

How did the space agency acquire a television transmitter for Pij village? Since the ground segment for SITE was the responsibility of ISRO, UNDP was approached to provide funds for earth station equipment development. UNDP sanctioned \$1.5 million which was executed by International Telecommunication Union. The UNDP fund was utilized in developing a full complement of earth station equipment, in procuring Ahmedabad SITE studio equipment and for installing the high power transmitter in Pij. Ahmedabad Studio was primarily responsible for developing programming for Kheda communication Project. The Pij transmitter transmitted the

programming to this district.³²

SITE started at a time when broadcast television was still utilizing highly expensive, sophisticated and complex video equipment (2" quad VTRs and 35 mm film equipment, etc.).

SITE recognized early the foreign exchange requirements involved in setting up such studios and also the fact that such equipment renders the productions studio-bound. To overcome the shortcomings of expense and studio-bound production, SITE made an early decision to acquire 1", 3/4" and 1/2" VTRs for the facilities at Ahmedabad and Bombay production facilities. 1/2" portable systems were used extensively to cut down costs of field based programmes.

The philosophy behind experimenting and adopting small gauge video equipment during SITE was to demonstrate that the quality of the equipment is highly suitable for program production for rural development. As a tool for mass education, small gauge video equipment was seen as ideal for setting up low cost television studios and field production vans.³⁵

In addition to the use of portable equipment, the studios also are equipped with two plumbicon camera chains, one T/C chain with optical sound (16 mm film projector, 35 mm slide projector and vidicon camera chain), 1" IVC VTR, one 8 input vision mixer, and other broadcast standard equipment.

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However critical the hardware decisions, it is ultimately the process of program development and the programs themselves that determine the "worth" of a broadcast facility.

This subsection outlined a brief history of the Indian national television, its objectives, its dilemmas of rural-urban conflict and class interest conflicts that are influencing not only the nature of its service, but also form a context for Kheda system. This chapter also outlined the history, organizational structure, location, programming functions, and hardware facilities of the Kheda project. This history of Doordarshan and Kheda form the context for the next subsection on program development at Kheda.

PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT

Approach to software: The Space Applications Center had serious concerns about the nature of programming that the government radio and television monopoly could be expected to create, given its origins and structure after examining the conventional broadcasting system. The homogenizing nature of centralized communication and dangers of the dominance of the rural areas by a few elite around the broadcasting studios in large cities led to experimentation with a new concept of decentralized, yet integrated communication system. This desire to break away from the tyranny of centralizing technology led the SAC scientists to develop and modify small format video to match broadcast quality. This has broadened the reach of the production process to distant areas where people live instead of confining the process to urban based studios.³⁶

The motivation for rendering television "people centered" arose out of their alternative view of development. Development was defined as a process which involved each individual in searching for ways that were satisfying to himself as an individual and that meet the needs of the community and the society at large. It was thought that the principal barrier to such a process was the absence of a sense of community, or the absence of a feeling of belonging to a wider system. This absence prevented the members of

the community from mobilizing their energies towards concerted action, leaving only the alternative of each for himself. When this alternative was put into operation, it was felt stereotyped solutions to problems become the major response. The objective of programming for television in the context of SITE proposed by space agency staff consisted of attempts to generate a sense of worth in the individual self at one level and to generate a sense of pride in belonging to the wider system at another level.³⁷

SAC staff, realized that the system of operating the medium geared to this kind of programming would call for a very high degree of participation from the audience as well as user agencies. Three kinds of programs were envisaged under this participatory approach:

- programs that would be used as a forum for discussion between participating villages and participating clusters.
- programs that play the role of a "mirror" which reflects back to the audience the set of processes it is living with
- programs that provide a forum for discussions between groups that were responsible for providing services and the users of these services³⁸

It was recognized that program-makers were not wise men with solutions to the problems of the villagers, that they could only use the medium to promote communication and interaction amongst the villagers and between villagers and decision-makers, and to promote awareness. However, it was also recognized that the medium was not "objective." Decisions on what to show and what not to show were based on

subjective judgments. To that extent, the role was not merely to act as mirror, but to promote reflection.³⁹

Program Categories:

Following the processes in individual existence such as the individual and his work, the self and the kin, the self and the community, and the larger system, categories of programs were derived. Each of the categories was broken down into sub-areas like family and kin, community, larger system, weather and local affairs. Each of these areas led to serials, features, instructional programs, documentaries and interviews.⁴⁰

The programs were categorized into four general areas by SAC. Softcore 46% (socio-economic 32%, women 6%, children 8%), hardcore 25% (agriculture 6%, animal husbandry 5%, health 7%, science 4%, fisheries 3%), general information 11%, entertainment 10%, miscellaneous 8%.

About 32% of the programs were based on socio-economic themes. These programs included topics such as untouchability, prohibition, social beliefs, superstitions, employment, minimum wages, exploitation, and cooperation among the oppressed.⁴¹

Process of Program Production:

In keeping with the overall philosophy, the focus of Kheda Communication Project was on the objective of generating participation and not on program production per

se. The process of program production was designed from this perspective.⁴²

As a result of this perspective, skepticism was expressed about stratifying audiences into faceless aggregates based on an image of them only as economic units of productivity and income. Talking of "target" audiences was considered meaningless. "Statisticizing" human beings beyond meaningful limits and taking decisions based on these bases was considered self-deceptive.⁴³ Therefore, statistical information was used for facilitating an understanding of the major occupation and lifestyle of the larger number of people residing in the area. For instance, population was categorized into interest groups by their occupation and landholdings. Cultivators were 48% of the total workforce. Seventy-five percent of the people either have no landholdings or hold less than 5 acres of land.⁴⁴

Formative Research

Formative research on the lines of the concept developed by Children's Television Workshop in the United States, formed the basis for Kheda programming.

During 1972-73, Kheda Software Systems Group was experimenting with formats for the science programs of the SITE project. The Software Systems Group, being part of a scientific organization, had a marked preference for determining program needs and content through scientific social science research. Each of the producers at the

Software Systems Group was assigned a specific program area. All productions were done in a team mode. Each team was assigned a producer, a researcher, a scriptwriter and a subject specialist. Scientific needs assessment of the area was done to determine the topics for programming. A lifestyle profile of the area was compiled to determine the language and format that would be most suitable for each topic. Pilot scripts were written following these guidelines. The scripts were pretested in the area of the telecast to determine if the program was being understood by the audience, in terms of content, language and format.

Collective decision-making and working in team mode was a new experience for both the social scientist and the producers. The conflicts arose on issues of control over choice of topics and choice of content between the social science researchers and the producers who tended to depend more on their intuition. This led the Software Systems Group to systematize and lay down a method of operation for programming in general.

A pilot series for children was developed on the lines of Children's Television Workshop. Briefly, the development of the series began with an extensive needs assessment of children in the Kheda district. This evolved into a scriptwriter's handbook which contained a content brief for each of the sixty segments in the series and guidelines for formats. The producer, researcher, scriptwriter team was

free to exercise creative freedom within this framework. After producing the pilot, extensive pretesting was also done.

Following a similar programming philosophy with regard to socio-economic issues as well, each of the producers in the Kheda Communication Project was assigned one area of programming. The producer was a part of a researcher, subject expert, scriptwriter team. When a program idea was generated, the researcher, subject expert, scriptwriter, producer team had a series of meetings with authorities, political activists, user agencies and the local people of the area in which the program was to be produced. Formative research data was gathered by the team and presented to the content experts and user agencies, as well as the people in the area. Several different program strategies were developed and pretested to gauge which of the strategies had the most success in conveying the information fully.⁴⁵

The team mode was put into practice in different ways. In the area of health, regular meetings were held with the District Health officials. In these meetings, topics were suggested by health officials according to the relevance and priority of health problems. They also provided the necessary information for developing instructional messages. Occasionally the health officials were invited to Kheda Communication Project to discuss the video data collected by the Kheda researchers. The researcher, who after the series

of meetings was in possession of technical information and the official point of view, visited the villages and found out the field reality. Information thus processed was again discussed with the district level officials. Appropriate modifications were made and a strategy of appeal and presentation were decided upon by the producer in consultation with the researcher.⁴⁵

As a part of formative research efforts, Kheda Project ensured that the responsibility for content and structure was distributed evenly between the subject experts, the researchers, and the producers who were part of the production team. Often, subject matter experts were trained in production techniques by the Kheda Project so that they could themselves design and produce programs of greater relevance. For instance, animal husbandry programs were produced by AMUL (Anand Milk Union Limited, a large scale dairy cooperative in the district) veterinary officers, who also functioned as producers and did formative and extension work. AMUL has a widespread network of active dairy cooperatives spread across Kheda district. It also has an active infrastructure that provides veterinary aid, distribution of support literature and visits to AMUL by village women.⁴⁷

Viewer Participation

The programming process also incorporated a major component of participation from the viewers. As mentioned earlier, a third of Kheda programming, 32%, was based on socio-economic themes. The programs include themes such as superstitions, prohibition (alcohol), social beliefs, untouchability, employment, minimum wages, exploitation, and cooperation among the oppressed, etc. There was a great need for scriptwriters for series based on these themes -- scriptwriters who were familiar with rural life, understood the rural people, and their language. To overcome this problem, scripts were invited from the villagers. There was a good response. A scriptwriter of the Kheda Communication Project went through their scripts and suggested modifications. The scriptwriter also organized a one-day workshop for scriptwriters from the villages. This workshop was attended by the producers, the researchers, and the writers. This also facilitated the thinking of the Kheda team and development of insights into the problems of the village community. As partners in this activity, viewers and production teams got the opportunity to share their experiences and shared a sense of involvement. This also succeeded in involving the community in Kheda programs. Fifteen to twenty scripts were received each week of which about 50% were usable. Initially women did not write, but with some encouragement, several scripts were written by

women as well.⁴⁸

For the series "Tamara TV Mate Tame Lakho" (You Write for Your TV), all the writers were from the villages of Kheda. This series also attracted a very large audience as the scriptwriters were from the village community themselves.

All previews were done at joint meetings of the teams. When the ideas were converted into scripts, they were brought to a committee consisting of a producer, a writer, a researcher to examine and evolve a consensus. The scriptwriter and producer were consulted for clarification and modification.⁵⁰ Whenever a new format was used, or when it was feared that something may be misunderstood in a program, or a negative and unintended message may be conveyed, the programs were pretested on the village community.

After transmission, the programs were analyzed once again. The analysis took four forms -- transmission analysis, feedback, viewer's letters, and content analysis.⁵¹

Transmission analysis was primarily a researcher's point of view, conveyed to the producer. Feedback was a major and critical part of programming. During the course of a series, a constant monitoring of audience reactions was undertaken to tune the content and format of programs to the needs and tastes of audiences. Apart from formative

research that played a significant role in the design of programs, process evaluation and periodic summative evaluations of programs also guided the production teams. The research tools used for gathering this information were oftentimes participatory observation and in depth interviews. Some survey research techniques were also used.⁵² Some significant changes in structuring and scheduling of programs resulted from the feedback efforts, as can be illustrated from the following example:

--"Dahimani Vato", a successful women's series of more than 60 episodes was made, in which a good, old, wise woman was featured as the main character. While this series was successful, it was observed that there was a certain amount of preaching in it, and there was always a solution to every problem in each episode. It was felt that such an approach served only a limited purpose. It was not realistic and therefore could not have a lasting effect. It was therefore decided that this new series should avoid preaching solutions and should pose questions to get people thinking of their own solutions. The format was changed to have a young couple as lead characters. The husband was a quiet, straight-forward person who took life as it came, with no questions. The wife, on the other hand, was curious about everything. She did not accept anything without thinking.

Feedback on these programs revealed that the people liked the programs, the characters and the style of

presentation. Women suggested that this program be transmitted second or third instead of at the start of the evening's transmission in order that late-arriving viewers did not miss any one of the episodes in this series. This suggestion was followed by the Kheda Communication Project.⁵³

Viewers' letters were analyzed to see which programs they liked and which they disliked, who wrote the letters and from which villages, etc. Some of the letters were answered in an attempt to let the audience know about the "credo" or guiding belief system of the project, Kheda, its limitations, and that the Kheda Communication Project welcomed criticisms. Every month, the three best letters were selected and the letter writers were invited to the studio to participate in a program of questions and answers which was also telecast.⁵⁴

Content analysis was carried out on programs that were transmitted every month. This was used to provide guidelines for planning and to keep track of the time and topic-distribution of the Kheda transmission.⁵⁵

The proximity and involvement of the audience, and the limited duration of the transmission had made introduction of research into the operational television system possible. The research, formative, processual and summative, enabled production of programs which were relevant, meaningful and useful to Kheda audiences.⁵⁶

It was earlier thought that those programs aimed at improving the economic position of the villagers were of prime importance. However, research indicated that that economic improvement was often stymied by social and structural problems in village society. Accordingly, in the last few years (early 80s), the focus of programming has shifted from the purely economic to socio-economic and social-structural issues, even as the earlier programs in agriculture and animal husbandry have continued. Programs on cottage industries involving self-employment and on outside employment have also been made.⁵⁷

Apart from specific development-support programs, KCP/DECU also produces programs which have a higher entertainment content. These programs use and promote local folk forms and local talent, while also bringing in new cultural forms and creations from outside. Much of the program production was done outdoors, but studios were also made use of, specifically for the very popular drama programs.⁵⁸

A most notable aspect of the Kheda television programming was that it was the only television center which did not show commercial entertainment films. The demand for movies was often voiced from urban pockets within the area of its coverage. KCP considered the argument that movies increase the audience size misleading because the kind of audience movies draw is urbanized rural elite. Kheda

research also substantiated the thinking in that audience size remained consistently large over the years for programs using the traditional folk form 'Bhavai' and 'Tamara TV Mate Tame Lokho' (You Write for Your TV"), which involved participation of the local audiences.

Apart from facilitating participation of the viewers, Kheda Communication Project also played a problem-solving role. To illustrate, local television programs acted as a mediator of communication between the farmers with an irrigation problem and the authorities in charge of the project⁵⁹, they facilitated interaction between a community health worker scheme and the community⁶⁰, and brought incidents of grain adulteration to public knowledge.⁶¹ The weekly feature which dealt with such issues took up a specific problem and discussed it in detail through interviews with affected villagers and government officials. The producers would then moderate a solution and follow it through to its implementation.

The village scriptwriters were being trained to send feedback on the programs and also for formative work in the community.⁶² A series of seven episodes was also produced on themes of exploitation.

Kheda Communication Project was seen as a communication laboratory by SAC. The work was seen to imply experimentation, analysis and a striving to do something meaningful, and innovative. However, as a learning

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experience there were problems and mistakes that troubled the project.

Problems:

The major problems that the Kheda Project faced were those related to set maintenance and operation. The set operation depended on several variables such as whether the village was small or big, which caste was dominant, and who the owners of the television sets were.

An analysis of the operation of the sets in this district revealed that small villages were more regular viewers than big villages (small 78%, big 32%). Rajput caste dominated villages were more regular viewers than Patel dominated villages (Rajput 70%, Patel 33%). Sets owned by the AMUL cooperative were more regularly used than those owned by Panchayats (local self government body) and others (AMUL 64%, Panchayat 22%, Others 14%).

Erratic supply of electricity in lean seasons acted as a deterrent on occasion. The custodians of community television sets were not paid employees. The responsibility of operating the set every night and being answerable for its maintenance was not clearly defined and assigned.

Social and political factions in the village society determined the nature and composition of the viewers at the community sets. Weather conditions also played a role in the community viewing activity.⁶³

The villagers who participated in the programming and

were vocal in voicing their opinions occasionally faced physical threats from the landlords. This intimidation sometimes acted as a deterrent for the fearless participation of the villagers.

Within the program production teams of Kheda, there were conflicts between the more intuitive, artistic producers and the more scientific social science researchers in determining the topics and contents of the programs. However, the team mode of functioning was found so effective that it evolved into a standard format within the Kheda system.⁶⁴

The literature on Kheda cites several studies of impact of Kheda programming. A study on the health programs indicated knowledge level in television and non-television villages as:

-cholera prevention	76% in TV villages
	32% in non-TV villages
-vaccines for diseases	56% in TV villages
	24% in non-TV villages
-How malaria spreads	63% in TV villages
	20% in non-TV villages

On agriculture programs

-places for soil testing	46% in TV villages
	6% in non-TV villages
-sources for agricultural credit	47% in TV villages
	26% in non-TV villages
-precautions in buying hybrid seeds	60% in TV villages
	12% in non-TV villages

In the area of socio-economic problems, 67% of TV

villages as against 43% non-TV villages were aware of minimum wage. While 52% of the TV villagers suggested that the poor should unite to get the minimum wage, while only 7% did so in non-TV villages. Twenty-five percent of television villages thought of cooperative farming as a way of improving their economic condition, while only 7% of non-TV villages thought so.⁶⁵

The first subsection, Focus on Kheda, in this chapter, attempted to place the Kheda project in perspective in terms of the history and objectives of the national television in India and also in terms of the Kheda project's own credo, location, history and mandate. The second subsection of this chapter, Program Development, dealt with the programming philosophy of the Kheda group, programming categories, and the process of program development. The chapter concluded with a look at the problems encountered by the project. The next chapter will analyze the issues that emerged in the preceding chapters.

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CHAPTER FIVE

ANALYSIS

The Kheda Communication Project started as an alternative prototype for creating a "climate" for development through people centered approach.

One can examine the project in terms of the framework for participation and access laid out by the Belgrade conference cited in an earlier section of this thesis to understand if this Kheda Communication Project was indeed an alternative.

Access, at the level of choice:

The right of individuals to communication materials, the right to listen to or view desired programs, when a person wants, where he/she wants. Kheda society is governed by traditional and authoritarian relationships. The Kheda Communication Project introduced a wider range of communication materials which were not within easy access. The range of information about socio-economic issues, about health, nutrition, animal husbandry and family planning that formed the content of Kheda television, by its very nature of being 'new' information for a large section of the Kheda population, would not have been demanded by the audiences.

The choice of such material was made by the production organization. The viewers through their participation as scriptwriters and through feedback, however, had a great deal of input into selection of topics on socio-economic issues.

Kheda Communication Project responded constantly to the needs and demands of the public. Feedback and formative research components of the production process, in association with the team approach to production ensured a degree of responsiveness of the medium to the viewers that is rarely seen elsewhere.

Access at the level of feedback:

There was a constant, in depth, and effective interaction between the producers and the receivers of messages. Participation of viewers in programming by means of scriptwriting and various means of feedback was also constant and intensive. This encouraged comments and criticisms from the audience that were incorporated into programming to attune it to the needs of the audience.

Participation at the level of production:

The Kheda Communication Project made training of personnel from user agencies and audience groups in design, scripting and production of programs a critical aspect of its activity. By conducting such training programs, the project succeeded in demystifying television from its image

of being a complex technology that is beyond the reach of ordinary people. This demystification generated a lot of interest and enthusiasm for the medium as not merely a carrier of information from elsewhere but also as a vehicle for communicating with others in the community. Availability of Kheda Project resources and technical facilities broadened the extent of participation.

Participation at the decision-making level

The audience could dictate the content and scheduling time for programs. However, as a matter of policy, demands for feature films were ignored by the project, as such a demand did not fit in with the mandate the project laid down for itself, given the limitation of time resources available. Given the thirty minutes available each day for local programming, the time slot was critical for the project if it was to achieve any of its goals.

Kheda viewers did not have much role to play at the level of planning, in terms of definition of objectives, principles of management or future programming. ISRO as the parent organization was instrumental in designing the project, defining objectives and also responsible, through SAC, for day to day management of the project.

What were the factors that contributed to the uniqueness of Kheda?

The Kheda project was initiated as an experimental project to innovate and develop prototype programs for local programming in the satellite Instructional Television Experiment. The initiation and design of the project came from a group of scientists experimenting with applications of satellite technology. This group of scientists had no experience with and no preconceived notions of what television technology, its organization and programming culture for rural development, was to be like. The organization and systems of programming evolved through experimentation over time. The parent organization, ISRO, itself is a goal oriented scientific organization with clear objectives. More significantly, ISRO was independent enough of political pressures that it could venture out, look at rural reality and stir awareness among the rural audiences toward their immediate existence. As a goal oriented scientific organization, ISRO also had an organizational structure that encouraged innovation and rewarded creativity. The Kheda system was a limited broadcast facility, that retransmitted programs from the national network at a more convenient time for the local audiences. Kheda system also had local low cost programming facilities. The transmitter in Kheda was located in a predominantly rural area.

A brief look at the national television, Doordarshan, will reveal that organizationally Doordarshan is a bureaucracy in the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting. As a new broadcasting wing of this ministry, and as an offshoot of All India Radio, Doordarshan inherited the work culture and organization structure of All India Radio. The organization of Doordarshan is highly centralized and heirarchical. The structure for dissemination of programming nationwide is also highly centralized. The program production centers are located at major urban centers and the dissemination is through a network of transmitters that merely transmit centrally produced programming as several of the transmitters are not equipped with production facilities. Most of the transmitters, as mentioned elsewhere in this thesis, are located close to urban centers, leading to urban preferences and demands on the nature of programming.

Kheda, once again, is a case in point to illustrate this. After the closure of the transmitter, programs produced at Kheda are still transmitted by Doordarshan for forty minutes every day from a transmitter located in Ahmedabad city. But this has only set off another controversy. The urban audiences resent having to watch programs targeted for a rural audience. The SAC-run Kheda system which had resisted film based entertainment so far, has been drawn into the fold of escapist commercial

entertainment. The rural audiences in Kheda feel that realistic avenues of change stimulated by rurally rooted programming has been taken away from them.

Lack of transmitters located in the rural areas and local programming facilities preempts any need for interaction with the audiences, and the conventional wisdom that audiences want more film-based entertainment is invoked as an easy way out. With the introduction of commercial programming, software on Doordarshan has become responsive to advertising agencies and the tastes of urban audiences. Centralized transmission is imposing this fare on audiences with other concerns elsewhere in the country.

Perhaps the most significant distinction that sets apart Kheda Communication Project is that it started out with a clearly stated credo and programming philosophy. Doordarshan inherited its programming philosophy from AIR. AIR started as a colonial service and has not changed its work culture or programming philosophy after independence. Doordarshan operates to a similar set of standards. The concern with the rural poor in the Kheda credo and the operational systems that Kheda evolved over time to serve this population and to facilitate participation from this segment of the audience was in fact what the national network ostensibly set out to achieve, but did not.

Commercialization of Doordarshan appears to have distanced the medium from the masses even further. The

programming decisions have become the domain of civil servants in Doordarshan and executives in advertising agencies. There has already been a Central Bureau of Investigation inquiry into Doordarshan operations and allegations of corruption. The worry seems to be whether commercialization and the taint of corruption have created a money-making monster¹

The Government of India cited development imperatives as primary at each stage of expansion of the television service. But programming for development issues is minimal and lacks direction. This lack of direction has was recognized early by Kiran Karnik, who in 1973, reviewing the UN Panel Meeting on satellite instructional system, pointed out that "the simplistic approach that the programs are meant for development was taken and there was little discussion on what 'development' meant in terms of a better life".²

Several critical decisions at the second phase of expansion have determined the course of national television. The decision to install transmitters without augmenting local programming facilities, as well as the fact that the existing facilities are equipped primarily for studio bound production, successfully keep the viewers out of the programming equation.

Kheda project's major contribution in this area is to demonstrate the vital importance of portable equipment that

can be taken to the areas where rural people live and work. This contributes to reality based programming as opposed to programming that develops out of preconceived urban notions of what the rural reality is.

An even more specific contribution of the Kheda project is its planned demystification of television as a technology - by training user agencies as well as the rural audiences in using it to develop their own programming. This is a significant contribution because the more a technology is rendered esoteric, the fewer uses it has for ordinary people. It also becomes more out of reach and expensive for ordinary people.

A critical problem faced by Doordarshan as a centralized institution and as a bureaucracy of a central ministry is the excessive political interference which stifles creativity. At points in its recent history, Doordarshan officials were told what to do at regular Wednesday meetings by Information and Broadcasting Ministry bureaucrats.³

Kheda Communication Project was not a hotbed for political skullduggery and corruption because it was not a money machine. The success of its programs in exposing the roots of exploitation led to pressure from large landlords that it did not cave-in to. The awareness generated by the programming on socio-economic issues seemed to have displeased the local elite who objected to the language used

in some of the programs and on occasion tried to prevent the villagers from viewing the shows.⁴ Within the Kheda organization itself, there appears to have been a clarity of vision and partisanship with the poor which guided the project.

The degree of awareness among the rural poor created by the project has become political threatening enough to close down the transmitter and to move it to Madras City to provide a second channel. The closure of the transmitter triggered off a series of protests from the Kheda audience. The Kheda audience began a relay hunger strike in batches of 20 to protest the action.⁵ As of October, 1985, resistance was successful because engineers appointed to dismantle the tower have not done so. A housewife, Kashiben, is quoted as saying "we are prepared to pay any price to keep this transmitter here. We owe a lot to it".

The station director of Ahmedabad Doordarshan, however, in his privileged position of never having to doubt the wisdom of his biases, declared: "There is no reason at all for Kheda villagers to protest. They are only doing it because of the instinct of possessiveness. Actually, the villagers want entertainment".⁶

Kheda project involved audience/viewer participation at every stage of programming. Given the mission that the project was to create a "climate" for development through participation, there was a constant interaction with the

audience causing a critical awareness of issues. The nature of production organization was such that this interaction was as much a learning experience for the production team as it was for the viewers.

The ability of the production teams to interact, learn and open channels of communication between and among the rural communities was perhaps the most important factor in the success of communication messages of Kheda project. A success on a similar scale does not appear feasible with a centralized communication organization that is far removed from and often unsympathetic to the viewers it is meant to serve.

Apart from the organizational structure and philosophy and the management practices, the commitment of the personnel also contributed to the effectiveness of the project. Mr. B.S. Bhatia, manager of KCP, says, "Producers had taken on the roles of social workers. It is not their job to go around mobilizing villages to fight their battles, but they did as they were committed and were not making programs just because they had transmission time to fill".⁸

There are many similarities between the Kheda project and the projects reviewed in an earlier section of this thesis. Like MEB, of Brazil, RER of Senegal, Campo y Productividad of Mexico and Tanzanian Year 16, the Kheda project was also funded by agencies external to the local

area--the Government of India, UNDP and UNESCO. As soon as the project crossed experimental stages and began its existence as a continuing project, the pressure on the organization also began to change, culminating in the closure of the transmitter.

Almost all the projects reviewed offered three significant conclusions. 1) that radio or TV cannot be the primary focus of a communication effort to conscientize the population, 2) that interpersonal networks are critical for consciousness raising activities, 3) that ideological orientations of the leadership has a significant influence on the survival of media projects in any situation.

The Kheda project once again substantiated all the three conclusions.

The Kheda district has a history of successful participatory and self help organizations. AMUL dairy cooperative, considered a well organized and one of the most successful cooperatives in Asia is situated in this district. Amul already had developed an extensive and efficient network of communication between village milk collection centers in this area. It has an excellent reputation for providing supportive services for dairy farming. This infrastructure of efficient supportive services is often cited as a reason for AMUL's success. The Kheda Communication Project had the support of AMUL in its field efforts. There was also transfer of television

technology from KCP to AMUL.⁹

This chapter on Analysis examined the Kheda Communication Project in light of the Belgrade ideal for participating projects and found that Kheda did, in fact, enhance access and participation of the community in the media project. The analysis compared the Kheda project with Doordarshan, analyzed the Kheda project in terms of the social-structural problems, rural-urban conflict of interests among the audience segments and also compared the Kheda project with some of the projects referred to in the Review of Literature.

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CHAPTER SIX

CONCLUSION

The Kheda Communication Project has been widely acclaimed as a success by communicators as well as those interested in rural development efforts.

From the case study of the Kheda project, it can be concluded that:

1. Mass media can be effective in generating participation when they approximate the process of interpersonal communication as much as possible.

Among the projects reviewed in the thesis, each of the projects had a different equation with interpersonal communication. The MEB project of Brazil used the existing interpersonal networks; the RER project of Senegal created additional interpersonal networks to develop along with the mass media component; Tanzania project used the mass media component essentially as an additional catalyst for enhancing and refining interpersonal activities that were already existing. The Kheda project generated some new interpersonal networks that were necessary for the mass media project, in addition to using the interpersonal networks that were already existent in the district.

However, the Kheda project operated within a context

that did not lend any political support. There are laws enacted by both the state government and the central government of India with regard to untouchability, minimum wages, working conditions and to protect the weak against injustices, but there is no ideological or structural change in Indian society that supports the laws. The traditional oppressive relationships persist.

Given this context, the Kheda project once again illustrates the critical importance of factors other than efficient communication models that determine the life of a project when the internal inequities of a social system are not dealt with in the first place. In the context of a society in which there is equitable distribution of resources, the mass media can ensure participation of the people by approximating the process of interpersonal communication as closely as possible. This directly leads us to the next conclusion.

2. Mass media are technology-based communication channels. Technology implies a fair amount of capital outlay. Capital outlay brings ideological control from the financiers.

The political and economic power elites may not necessarily desire a society that involved power-shaping with the deprived majority in the decision-making process. As long as it was on an experimental status and under the exclusive direction of the ISRO scientists, the Kheda

project pursued is commitment to the oppressed. After the conclusion of the one-year pilot project, SITE, the Kheda project entered an uncertain phase which culminated in the closure of the transmitter in 1985 by the Government of India's national television monopoly, Doordarshan.

While the Department of Space's ISRO has its own resources to continue its experiment in local programming, it has no mandate to be involved in television transmission which is the monopoly of Doordarshan, a division of the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting. Experimenting with satellite applications is SAC's charge, not running operational systems. The conclusion of the experiment and the launching of the operational Indian National Satellite (INSAT) system put the control of television programming back in the hands of the government television monopoly, now grown prosperous with advertising revenues.

The Government of India, represented primarily by rural and urban elite, is quite likely to be wary of any project that involves a component of participation of the poor.

3. Participation of community in matters of concern to its well-being is not a slogan, or a myth. It can exist in reality. As with any other approach to generate participation, use of mass media for this purpose also presupposes a high degree of political will, commitment and integrity.

From a communicator's point of view, the Kheda project may be termed a pioneering effort in development communication. It proved the efficacy of a whole range of concepts that have been debated long.

The sobering conclusion, however, is that without political will on the part of the central government, even a small corner in rural Gujarat cannot have a participatory communication project, using television. The same corner in rural Gujarat can have a participatory communication project, that does not require either financial sponsorship or permission to transmit from the Government of India. This, perhaps, is the single most important limitation of mass media in countries like India, where radio and TV are government run.

Other audio-visual media like cassette recorders, VCRs, slide and tape presentations, and a whole range of traditional and folk forms are not constrained by these limitations. The audio-visual and folk media are also applicable in highly decentralized situations. These media deserve a closer examination from the advocates of participatory development.

Ironically enough, Kheda project was honored with the UNESCO Award for Rural Communication for 1984, just before the closure of the Pij transmitter. In response to the closure of the transmitter Mr. Kiran Karnik, Director of Development and Educational Communication Unit of SAC, said,

"It was a very worthwhile experience. We learned a lot in the process".

The Kheda Communication Project has demonstrated that mass media can be very successful as tools for development communication when they approximate the process of interpersonal communication. But the history of the project also highlights the importance of larger socio-economic and political factors that impinge on the communication environment.

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