FROM SITE TO INSAT

By

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FROM SITE TO INSAT

SITE indeed was a great happening in the lives of those of us who were part of it. Logically INSAT should provide us with an opportunity of achieving salvation as SITE had, only given us an occasion to kindle our soul (to use common expressions from Hindu Metaphysics). We learnt a lot from SITE, a lot which should enable us to make decisions for INSAT. SITE was a first time for India in many things, but I would be making too tall a claim if I pretend learning in all the areas. Therefore, I would humbly state, in the areas in which I worked and learnt. This was the area of science education programmes for young children (7-14) of India.

The story of television in India is a very peculiar one. Television was to be introduced in India with the objective of "reaching and teaching the people". As you will realise from this statement, TV was to have more meaning for places away from urban, affluent areas. TV was to fill the many gaps in communication which are likely to exist between people staying in cities and those residing in rural, isolated areas. But this did not happen like in many other things where good intentions get lost due to many other overpowering and overwhelming factors. TV got introduced in urban areas and the educational objective got replaced by "television is to entertain".

Any how, as luck should have it, SITE came along. For a year, rural India saw the light of the day - for one whole year, something so very unusual, almost miraculous, happened to the rural child in India. He got to see a moving picture which, at the same time also produced meaningful sounds in a simple looking box called the television set. This was placed in a village school. He was able to see this on a daily basis, both in the morning and evening. He did not have to pay any money for it. The world which his books and teachers in his two-room school could never present to him came to him in a very intimate way. Not only did it satisfy his long awaited information needs, but it also gave him a lot beyond that. He could see and experience so much more than he had ever expected. Television gave him information by opening new horizons. It also entertained him. Television had fulfilled the objective "reach and teach the people". All this, however, should not be taken to imply that "all was achieved". Far from it, but it did make an interesting beginning at least meaningful enough to guide decisions in the future.

The objective of this presentation as I see it is to share with you some of the learnings which took place during and as a result of working with SITE children's programme and what can be its spin offs for making programmes for young children to be telecast with INSAT system.

The science education programme for young children of SITE produced in SAC, ISRO Studio in Bombay deviated from the production practices of Doordarshan. They utilized a production methodology which can be termed user based. For the first time, production of children's programmes utilized techniques of formative or pre-programme research. This was done with an objective of conducting programmes which will be addressing the needs of the children not only in terms of information and interest but also in terms of being more meaningful to their lives, environmental and learning situations.

I will refrain from listing and discussing the various formative research undertaken at the Bombay Studio activities at it does not fall within the purview of this paper. However I shall mention the main purpose of the formative research undertaken during the production of the science education programmes. We were seeking answers to the following queries namely:

(1) What kind of language will be understood by the village children?

(2) What kind of visuals will be understood and will hold attention?

(3) What format would be interesting and aid in children's comprehension of new ideas?

(4) How much content should be put into a programme of 10 to 11 minutes duration?

(5) How should the content be placed sequentially within the programme?

(6) What features enhance the credibility of the presentor?

(7) What kinds of presentations would be most effective?

(8) What kinds of characters and setting would have the most credibility for rural children? etc. etc.

No controlled experiments were designed to answer these questions. Quick feedback was generally required for the producers. Some studies were rough designed in advance; for example, an investigation to answer the first question of language. A script of more than one draft was taken to the target area to determine the language level that could be understood by the majority of the children. For question 4, "How much content should be put in a programme of 10 to 11 minutes duration" - several programmes of 10 to 11 minutes duration would be taken to the target villages. Trial groups of children would view these programmes and then be asked questions of comprehension and recall. From the results a decision would be made about how much content of what difficulty level should go into a programme of 10 to 11 minutes duration to seek an answer to "what kind of a presentor would be most effective?", different programmes of approximately the same subject matter and format, but different kinds of presentors were shown to children. From subsequent interviews with children, it was determined what kind of presentor would be most likely to result in better comprehension and liking of the programmes. In a similar manner, quick effective solutions were sought for the other questions by repeated indepth studies employing groups of children as subjects. A continuous and consistent input was supplied to the producers on an on-going daily basis. Formative research activities dealt with the total programme from its inception to its final production and broadcast.

Some typical findings from the formative research for the SITE children's programmes are the following:

(1) The programmes were most appropriate for children above 7 years of age, few - if any elements were suitable for rural children below 7.

(2) Programmes which appealed to Madhya Pradesh children also appealed to rural Dahisar near Bombay and Orissa children. All rural children like similar programmes

(3) A combination of interacting format with an element of familiarity seemed to work best for all rural children, regardless of region.

(4) All children responded in basically the same way to the characters or the presentors in the programme. A lively presentor with a lot of sympathy for children was preferred whether young or old, male or female.

(5) All children generally preferred a 'live' image of the presentor on the screen rather than only the voice of a narrator, other things being equal.

(6) An imageless voice with high credibility preferrable to image and voice when the presentor was lacking in warmth and feeling for children or had low credibility.

(7) All children loved music.

(8) Demonstrations and experiments were great favourites, especially those in which children were participants, giving the viewers a feeling of personal involvement.

(9) None of the children appreciated or understood heavy handed graphics and abstract symbols. Occasional use of simple but meaningful graphics especially when employed as an aid to a message already conveyed.

(10) Rural children were confused and distracted by frequent use of difficult or new words and by too many complicated messages. A 10-11 minutes programme was most effective when it had no more than two new messages.

Do these findings still stand today or have they changed? I am afraid I have no answer to this, on a systemic basis. It has been eight long years since SITE and this long a time would have added much to our knowledge if we had continued to explore, experiment and experience. INSAT is in orbit and production centres are in existence too and formative researchers are an integral part of the centres. Yet what evidence exists today as to whether the culture of the above mentioned programme production is being carried to validate or modify the formative research findings, is anybody's question.

As mentioned earlier on in this presentation that the answers to the questions were arrived at in a quick and rough way as there was no time to organize systematic studies in formative research. The time between SITE and INSAT was plenty to have carried on this work. My sense of understanding politics is of due poverty and therefore I have no idea why it happened like this but I do have a good sense of intuition which tells me that though SITE started and culminated with such commitment and excitement, its findings, learning and relations were soon forgotten. May be, we should have shouted ourselves hoarse, to let the findings be known and not behaved like typical researchers, who think their job is over as soon as the piece of research is finished.

Implications for INSAT children's programme: I can only present gut feelings and give suggestions on information that has come my way from time to time.

Programmes which address the information needs of the children (like knowing about their environments, how they stay healthy, who can help them achieve in school, what is happening in the country, etc.) are likely to be not only more useful and helpful but are equally likely to be enjoyed more as also enable the children to learn from them. Children can help the programme makers in determining what kinds of information will be useful for them as opposed to what the programme makers think it to be.

Programmes which address developmental objectives whether they be in the area of personality development, national integration or concept formation would have to be spread over time and produced systematically and methodically. These objectives cannot be achieved by an attitude which is expressed by programmes spread sporadically and produced casually.

Programmes which suggest alternatives or point to solutions, arouse curiosity and promote seeking of knowledge and likely to be more useful. Children seem ready to follow more formats, like animation and contrived situations than they were during SITE, so these should be explored.

Last but not the least systematic research needs to be undertaken to get a fix at what TV has done to the rural children in what way it has changed him if at all. Has it brought any difference in his daily routines, has it modified or changed his habits of health, personal cleanliness, nutrition and the way he learns at school? Has he discovered new ways of spending his leisure time? Does he communicate differently? Has his way of interacting with his family, friends and teachers changed in any way? etc. etc. In other words it is important to know if we need to alter or modify our concept of the rural child. For in order that we make appropriate programmes for all we need to know him, know him as he is today, not as he was 10 years back, we want to know how he has been changed in the light of changes that have occured in his environment.
I believe him to be a dynamic being so I would want to know how do I approach him now.

FROM SITE TO INSAT

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FROM SITE TO INSAT

The dream of Dr. Vikram Sarabhai was realised when the Satellite ATS-6 was used in 1975-76 to beam TV programmes to over 2,4000 villages in the country spread over six States namely Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Karnataka, A.P., Rajasthan and Orissa. SITE, even as an experiment, had a clear cut objective - to utilize the year long communication link by extending TV coverage to the rural areas by way of specially designed programmes for education, social change and national integration.

SITE was an experiment while INSAT is the thing. The pace of expansion through INSAT-1B has been at a brisk pace. By the end of the 6th Plan (March-April 1985), 70% of the population will be covered by television, which by then, will envelop the entire country in its magic. By 1985-86 there will be wo production centres using 179 transmitters to carry the programmes to the audiences. A great achievement but at the same time the responsibility at the program end gets enhanced manifold.

The latest working group set-up for "preparing software plan for Doordarshan, taking into consideration the main objective of assisting in tne process of social and economic development of the country, is to act as an effective medium for providing information, education and entertainment, brings out anomolies in the working of TV and impediments to be taken note of. The report by this Committee, headed by Prof. P. C. Joshi, apart from other things gives perspective to the prevailing situation at the executive end of the ministry - Doordarshan.

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It brings out the finer points which need attention for they come in the way of effective use of the medium. The report makes a special mention about the creative freedom for the professional communicator responsible for software and it clearly notes "day-to-day interference and encroachment in political and in administrative spheres in short caution against ending up into government planning of software - needs to be curbed." These have to be taken into consideration, if one is serious about the business of programming in any field. SITE was a big job which had been executed with a fair degree of success. Well nobody denied this fact but we or rather the people involved could not get over it. We were totally awed by our success. Probably, the success was more than what we were capable of or expected of ourselves.

The SITE experiment was effective for positive gains as well as the negative points, indicated in the findings of assessors, where things went wrong or did not work in line with the expectations. It is another thing that what is generally heard and talked about is confined to positive gain alone. The shortfalls in the experiment are generally side tracked. Though to my mind the lapses which came to the fore, are more important than the achievements - because today in view of the INSAT system, we at least know the pitfalls and the way to overcome them.

During SITE hard pressed for time, involved processes moved fast, that it seldom stood still for its portrait. Activity was at break neck speed, agencies and individuals in the field were activated as so much was at stake. A repeat of the same of what went into SITE may not be possible in late eighties, what is more there is a lot which needs reconsideration.

Take the software aspect of SITE. There was hardly time to experiment with modes in the preparation of the programmes. As they say in Chinese, 'if you want to reach fast, keep to the old roads.' By and large, old routine and values in broadcasting, were followed. It is as much applicable in the areas of programmes for the special audiences i.e. women and the children as any other. It may be difficult to come by evidence of breaking new grounds in communicating with these special groups. Whatever success achieved could perhaps be credited to the novelty of TV and not as much to experimenting with techniques in programmes suited to the requirements of audience in these categories.

Due to the time factor the studies regarding the target audience were not very comprehensive and at times they overlooked or could not totally understand the related groups - that is by way of understanding the communities closely, appreciate their requirements consonant with learning processes different from what was within the experience of the producers catering to them. The groups were varied in their comprehension level and holding divergent values in their life style. Although audience profiles were made available, but in actual practice they failed to be of much help.

In a way even the basic needs for meaningful programming remained unfulfilled which was rather unfortunate. Hence there is every need to see now that the producers are well oriented to the clientle they are to serve. Incidentally, even in the earlier stages Dr. Sarabhai was aware of the necessity and had made provision for the production teams t to tour the areas intensively. This aspect was somehow lost once the experiment materialized.

The other thing which went wrong was, sticking to the conventional lines set for programme-production inclusive of presentation. This contributed its bit in failures so far communicating with the special audiences was concerned. It was duly reflected in the assessments. For example, in most of the rural areas women invariably do not view programmes along with men folks. This was known after months had passed and too late for any corrections.

The reference should equally be relevant where preparing programmes for children is concerned. Take for instance, 'drawing lessons' or items of 'cut (paper) flowers' which appeared to be a fantastic and interesting programme but practically considering the absence of the requisite materials to practice later, in the villages the programme naturally proved pointless. In this way, after a while the demarcation in the programmes for different sections of the audience was lost and after a while it became free for all. I do not recall how much of it got recorded in the assessment reports but I do have some evidence of this bad (or lack of it) planning which I had compiled during the period of SITE.

The programmes were planned and produced with awareness that the selected groups were located in some of the most backward regions. No wonder the image of the potential audience was an ideal one and not what it actually was. How wrong was the thinking, became apparent only when I undertook an intensive tour of these areas. This was after SITE was more than half way through. The first hand exposure with the audiences in their own environment did prove a revealing experience and quite outside of what I had expected.

Touring in the clusters the viewing Centres in three States-Rajasthan, Bihar and M.P. took me around 86 villages. Once I got to know the children and women the erroneous picture I had held till then, began to fade. Instead of finding motly crowds of mentally dull and bored people they (the children) were lively, vibrant, specimens full of enthusiasm for the TV shows. They exhibited the eagerness to learn, react and could even decide as to what suited them most. As I said before by the time true picture registered it was too late for any radical changes in the programmes.

It may be well to record what I discovered, even though the means may not be acceptable to scientific assessors. The children by and large were found equipped with good comprehension. Their interest was not restricted to material falling into their share alone. They took equal interest in other programmes too. Most of them were able to reel out fixed points in the shows, acted as self-appointed publicity agents of TV shows, remembered salient points made in the utility programmes and conveyed the same to the adults and so on.

As regards women, one would say they were on the timid side, but only when I met them alone. In the reassuring presence of the opinion leaders in their respective communities, it is then that they opened up and discussed their requirement, aspirations, in short, reacting to shows and pointing out where it had failed to reach them. This part is well covered in the scientifically carried out researches and hence no need to dilate any further except for a few comments considered relevant.

There was general agreement about the need for instructional ideas going into the programmes and so also utility items including those on child care, nutrition, suggestions for improved diet occupations counselling etc. This can have meaning by follow up action of the points made ideas given at the receiving end. Not by itself but by a carefully organized activity introduced into the system. Making it possible to fill gaps in comprehension by way of whatever additional information required as help. Of experience we already know that unless due care is taken, the message and idea going out to the audience are likely to get lost without a chance for getting into practice. Supportive literature in print is hardly the answer because of the high rate of illiteracy in the rural areas. The answer is in activised groups of viewers at least in the community viewing one as which can instil the need for putting the suggestions into work by the people.

Utilisation of programmes can be productive for the user if attention is given to audience involvement. It calls for educating the user by developing proper attitude to what goes out to him through the media. Their psychology, frame of mind has to be developed for better acceptance of the benefits offered through software. The involved processes in communicating with virgin minds of rural population through sophisticated means like INSAT somehow miss the point totally. Yet another lesson learnt during SITE certainly deserves better consideration now when INSAT has become a reality.

The point being made is, in favour of maintaining a close touch with the audience by seeking their direct involvement. At this stage one may even go back to the experience of 'Teleclubs' formulated in 1959 when TV was first introduced in the country at Delhi. These were formed around groups of interested citizens with regulat membership limited to twenty in each case to act as a nucleus in the local community of better informed persons having initiative. These activised groups viewed specially devised programmes on social education. The convenor of each Teleclub ensured post broadcast discussions, filling up gaps in the comprehension where needed, decided on follow up action seeking TV Centres help where necessary through regular weekly reports.

The teleclub idea was very successful and it was proved by various assessments which includes one carried out by the UNESCO in 1962. At one time there were 170 active teleclubs functioning round and about Delhi both in the urban and rural areas. The success was possible by having a unit of staff charged with the responsibility of nursing the teleclub through close liaison with the membersby post and personal visits. The teleclubs functioned well for a decade that is till due attention was paid in keeping them alive and today the less talked about the subject the matter.

It may be difficult to suggest about the extent of any system's involvement in the use of its programmes; as regards initiative taken; kind of staff for purpose of improving utilisation; training of users etc. It will presumably depend on the particular conditions of working and prevailing circumstances at a given point of time. However, three general principles can be indicated for consideration.

i) The system should take a closer and continuing interest in the use made of the system!s output. It should encourage and help its users with training in the best use of what is offered. Also recognize these activities as charge upon its resources.

ii) The production staff should take direct interest in how their programmes are used which are collected by the Evaluation Teams. They should also take full interest in supportive literature on guides and materials. The feedback from the users in that case can be put to use in a constructive way for developing the programme output. It should also be used for midcourse changes in the production schedules wherever necessary.

iii) Any opportunity for collaboration with the institutions/associations that represent the users of its materials should be warmly accepted. In fact the system should itself seek such a collaboration.

Avoiding to be a party to these broad principles can leave the producers' sitting pretty by themselves unaware as to what their effort is really doing to their audiences.

The most dramatic change in the matter of communication theory according to Willbur Schramm is - "The gradual amanement of the idea of passive audience and replacement by the concept of highly selective audience, manipulating rather than being manipulated by a message - a full partner in the communication process" - appears applicable in the present context of communicating with special TV audiences in the INSAT situation. TV should remain an instrument of human relation helping to live and work together maintaining good health of the community.

For achieving this objective, to develop and sustain a poverty free living, the application of knowledge and skills at our disposal must be put in use. The opportunities for acquiring knowledge and skills should be made available to the community. This will help individuals in making effective contribution towards a better life. Particular attention should go to rural areas where the bulk of the population lives and where the need for improvement is the greatest.

Women should be shown ways to devote their time in the best possible way for bringing up their children; daughters given as much education as sons so that when the time comes they prove good mothers to their own children. No society has flourished without a degree of female emancipation. All womens' tasks - family health, food, nutrition and home management needs should get supplemented through well devised programmes that it is easy for women to adopt modern behaviour and attitude towards life which constantly keeps on changing with times.

It is no place to go into details which can follow taking care of the gaps and lapses noted during SITE, so that the going during INSAT-1B is smoothened and more purposeful.

A DECADE OF COMMUNICATION RESEARCH : SOME REFLECTIONS FOR THE FUTURE

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A DECADE OF COMMUNICATION RESEARCH : SOME REFLECTIONS FOR THE FUTURE

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SITE After Effects

Precisely eleven years ago right here in Ahmedabad, in this very month, we started planning and designing for Satellite Instructional Television Experiment (SITE) Social Research and Evaluation. Today, except one person from the original research group, every one has gone elsewhere. No matter where they are, they have been doing some communication research. This movement has opened up new vista of communication research methods and techniques. Several anthropology departments have started offering 'Communication Anthropology', a number of sociology departments have produced M.Phil and Ph.D level theses, extension education departments have focused their attention to television, and Psychology and Education departments along with child development departments have started discussing the use of educational technology particularly television for imparting skill and knowledge to young children and students.

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Several traditional journalism departments have also started communication research training. Outside the academic environment, professionals involved in agriculture, animal husbandry, family planning, health and nutrition, rural development, forestry, education/training and non-formal education, all seem to be catching up with the glamour of using video technology for bringing about desirable changes. Even educators are moving forward to embrace the "new religion" of video technology for solving some of their age old problems of pedagogy. The parallel growth of Government owned television with the help of satellite technology, has made us leap frog from a fairly information poor to a communication affluent country. These two trends are indicative of what is generally and broadly happening in the field of communication and communication research in the country. SITE in several ways was the beginning of what is happening today through Indian National Satellite (INSAT). To a large extent the same could be said about television related communication research. Let me pick up the threads from the past to link the present and to pre-empt the future.

In Early Seventies ...

In 1973, the term 'audience profile' and 'need assessment' studies were quite foreign to several of us. Even the term pre-testing of a TV programme was only occasionally heard during the conversation of the foreigners or foreign trained social scientists. It was during SITE, that the notion of pretesting of programmes caught the imagination of those who were working outside SITE project. But it was still a fashion to talk about it. The only illustration of systematic research related to pretesting available to us was from the English speaking world of 'Sesame Street'. Such an idea was considered premature, quite complicated, time consuming and imitative in the opinion of the creative producers whose intuitive feelings were more important than the research findings for producing good and meaningful programmes.

It was also the time when the production crew began to feel the dogmatic imposition of naive researchers' thoughts, far from a keen sense of artistic appreciation, and deprived of the understanding of fineries of production. Conflicts, clashes, puffing, and snuffing, propriety of positions, rights, privileges and prerogatives all became the part of the vocabulory of the producers, researchers, managers and decision makers.

Rooms were full of smoke emanating from pipes, cigars and cigarrettes. It was from these naivetties and arrogance there emerged a bit of tolerance and coexistence and to my mind a research tradition in communication that we had begun to recognise. It was referred as audience research in Doordarshan corridors, and communication research here and elsewhere in the country. Everyone of us who participated in those stromy days may have had different interpretations but those interpretations did not blur our common goal, nor the "objective reality" in which communication research as a whole has matured.// The value of communication research and evaluation as an integral element in the TV production process for planning decisions and mid-core corrections were not minimised then and cannot be underscored now. At this juncture, I would like to raise a question to myself as to what extent have we been in a position to prove our worth as communication researchers in academics and media organizations? Have we been able to create only jobs for the researchers in media organizations or in addition, have been able to make meaningful contributions? When I try to search an answer to these questions, I sometimes get perturbed because we have not, in several cases, been able to make meaningful contributions to the overall improvement of the production quality or help in acheiving the goals of i informing, educating, and entertaining the TV viewers. This is even more so when we look at the programmes made for half of the humanity - women. For children in SITE, we were to some extent able to produce quality programmes. It is in this perspective, that I would like to briefly express as to what has been done since SITE days and what can be done in future?

Achievements

First and foremost, we have been able to create visibility and awareness among the media personnel about the usefulness of communication research in producing programmes for education and development for special target groups. Also we have been able to enforce the idea that research can and should provide useful inputs and support for quality programme production. At an institutional level, this is clearly accepted by the very presence of Research and Evaluation Cell in SITE continuity areas and even the newly opened television stations are having Audience Research Units. A similar feature is also seen in the field of education. The result is increasing institutionalization of communication research in media and eductional organizations.

The second gain has been that of fostering of the team mode of production. This idea existed even before SITE and was fairly established for the production of educational and agricultural programmes. At that time the educators or the extension workers took the responsibility of acting as bridges between the subject matter specialists, producers, and the students or cultivators. During SITE, these roles were clearly defined and an additional element of communication research was incorporated in the production process. Since then the "ideal type" production teams consists of producer - subject matter specialists - researcher along with the script writer and production crew. This ideal type has been incorporated in almost all planning documents wherever there is a discussion on educational and developmental programme production.

In concrete terms, the production training of television personnel as of now, includes the researcher as a member of production team. As of now, I am not sure whether this idea of team mode of production has really been integrated into the total production process? Whether the communication researchers have really been contributing in the overall conception and realization of the production to achieve developmental goals or have they become an additional hand to the production crew or an additional name on the TV screen from among those who contributed in the final production.

Areas of Concern

There are two issues that must be squarely grappled with while we are discussing the team mode of production. First, whether the communication researcher acts as a generalized consultant in the overall realization of any programme or ~~act~~ as a specialized subject matter-cum-communication researcher who would act as a bridge between the viewer and the creative urges of the producer for realizing a programme that could be both stimulating, interesting, comprehensible, and artistically satisfying.

As I see today, the tendency among the researchers is to either get completely submerged in the production maze or take a very hardened, detached, and alienated view while performing the bridging role. In either case, the role of researcher more or less, remains a supporting one - a service function, and not a leading one. I think, it is this kind of conflict that I have been observing from the days of SITE and as of today. In the recent training programmes in which I have participated, I have had occasions to discuss these issues with the communication researchers. Many have expressed their keen desire to learn production as they feel insecure to be simply in the role of a researcher or insignificant in the production team.

During SITE, it was an experimental approach that loomed large over our minds. The over riding consideration was that of searching new ways and means to meet both technical and social objectives of the experiment. The complexity of the experiment, its time bound nature, its consonance with other external factors and above all a committed leadership brought diverse elements and temperaments together. On the way interface accommodation, appreciation, and retrospection were accepted norms of the "work ethic". In the INSAT framework, we have moved away from experimentation to an ongoing operation. In the hardware dimensions, the earlier work ethic continues but in the software such a work ethic is gradually vanishing as the very core of research capabilities have withered away and dissipated to accommodate other needs.

Communication research in the production process is yet to be matured as it is in great short supply and the few of us who had attempted seem to be moving away. It looks like the work environment of the production system is not cogenial to transplant such a team mode of production which is under great distress. For the future, one of the optimistic silver lining for communication researchers to work in team mode of production, would be to carve out specific kinds of production.

What I am suggesting is to move away from generalized communication research and focus our attention on specific areas for special target groups. In order to make out our task meaningful, we have to leave broad diffused audience research and focus on specific target audience researches in which it would again not be enough to say children or women, but we must further break it down and ask children of what age, socio-economic class and linguistic region? Similarly we must think of women not as a broad category but more specifically in terms of belonging to certain socio-economic class, region, setting and education. Once we start looking in this perspective, the country starts looking more like a mosaic made up of multiple distinct social groupings and hierarchies having distinct needs and aspirations and requiring unique media treatment in order to contribute for their development. So monolethic programming could be avoided. Once a series of such researches are conducted one can test the strenghs and weaknesses of formats, topics, treatment and presentation techniques that would enable a more generalized model to be used at the regional and national level over a period of time.

Since SITE days we have been continuously discussing and trying to identify the area requiring major research thrust. We have come a long way to recoginize and emphasize, that the limited resources of research must be utilized at the formative stages and that we must avoid <u>post facto</u> audit functions only as far as possible. Also we have been arguing time and again that while formative researchers should be an integral part of the production system it would be desirable to encourage outside agencies to take up the summative evaluation in order to maintain a high level objectivity.

These sentiments have been echoed on several occasions and have been also ~~been~~ accepted by the INSAT software planners. As a part of the plan, broad categories of communication researchers with special skills in subject matter areas were recommended. So far our achievements in this area has not moved beyond demonstration stage in meetings conferences and symposia. There is a gap between the pronouncements and practice. While holding the original contention, I think the time has come to put our ideas into practice which I think can be done only, if we focus on specific target groups for research.

My colleagues have been telling me that formative research must be fairly quick and dirty as it has limited purpose and few users. Hence, the nitty gritty and research jargons must be kept out of our work and we should be to the point, brief, and comprehensible. I have watched and occasionally participated in qualitative indepth quick and dirty research process. I have been trying to fathom how far and how much we have succeeded in this new found solace, far away from the rigorous methodology taught in the class rooms based on traditions of empiricism and scientific objectivity. I am sad to say that in the bargain, it seems, except for a few, majority have followed short cut methods which is not acceptable anywhere.

The steps and formats have taken over the content and systematic investigation. We started formative research from open ended schedule guides following systematic sampling techniques and moved to a "clinical approach". Over a period of time we gave in our systematic schedules and sampling techniques in favour of clinical indepth probing. This loss led to irreparable degeneration in our findings as it was difficult for many to be good at the clinical approach. Several of us may disagree with this diagnosis but there is no denial that we have deteriorated. Probably this is the reason why grafting of research has not borne fruits of better quality. I think we need to search overselves in great depth to answer this question.

A three prone approach to solve such a problem is essential in the present context. I think, we have to integrate communication research with a discipline based professional knowledge in an interdisciplinary framework. Such professionals I hope will be able to understand the needs and problems of specific target groups.

We also have to combine this with participatory research methods which will yield meaningful results for comprehending social reality. In addition training material on research methods using first hand experiences will help evolve an indagineous research methodology. Certain amount of fundamental research related to human communication in non-operational mode will be essential as such researches cannot be entrusted to those who are fully occupied with full time, day to day organizational responsibilities. This should be done in collaboration with the producer who is also free from production committments.

These are some of my concerns that I would like to share with you for further discussion and clarification.

4.

RURAL INDIA IS NOT IN THE PICTURE

By

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Paper for presentation at the ISRO-UNICEF Seminar on "SITE to INSAT: Production of programmes for women and children" at Space Applications Centre, Ahmedabad on November 26-28,1984.

RURAL INDIA IS NOT IN THE PICTURE

The TV network in the country is spreading rapidly due to the quick implementation of Doordarshan's special expansion plan. Consequently, the reach of TV is going to increase from 20 per cent to 70 per cent of the population by the end of this year, through several high power and low power transmitters. Programmes in Hindi and English from Doordarshan Kendra, Delhi, are being shown in the areas covered by these transmitters throughout the country, mainly to rural audiences. However, such programmes, which include imported film and video material, are geared to the needs and tastes of urban audiences and not to those of the rural masses.

Thus, they defeat the main objective of TV as defined by the government which is "to assist in the process of social and economic development and to act as an effective medium for providing information, education and entertainment", specifically in rural areas.

Why has this situation arisen? We all know that TV was started by the government with the main objective of accelerating the process of development. Despite so many changes in the plans and priorities of the government with regard to the development and expansion of TV during the 25 years of its existence, there has been no shift in the policy of the government as far as the developmental purpose of TV is concerned. However, if one objectively reviews the performance of TV during this period, it becomes quite evident that there has been a shift from the original intention of using it as a medium for education and development, since it has been dominated by poor quality entertainment programmes aimed at pleasing urban viewers.

<u>A widening gap</u>: Let us examine the reason for this widening gap betwen policy and performance in the context of the INSAT project, conceived and implemented in order to accelerate the process of development, particularly in remote rural areas of the country.

The utilisation plan of the TV segment of INSAT envisages the beaming of development-oriented TV programmes in the target areas on the pattern of SITE, which was the largest experiment in developmental communication to have been conducted in the world. These programmes have to be made according to the specific needs of the target audience, with the participation of the local people and in their language or dialect, if they are to be effective. To meet the needs of this kind of local programming, it was found imperative to decentralise production facilities. Accordingly, plans have already been made to set up base production studios in places like Hyderabad, Cuttack, Gorakhpur, Nagpur, Rajkot and Ranchi.

If we take stock of the actual utilisation of the TV segment of INSAT, it is evident that it is the programming area that is most lacking. This is clear from the fact that during the period when INSAT-1A was fully operational, it could not be utilised for telecasting original programmes in the nine districts of Andhra Pradesh, Orissa and Maharashtra covered by the first phase of the utilisation plan of INSAT. The reason for this is that the programmes were simply not ready.

Unfortunately, INSAT-1A failed in the sky. However, this provided adequate time for planning and preparing programmes for INSAT-1B, which was launched after a gap of about one year, in August 1983. However, this, too, was not done. The studios planned for Gorakhpur, Ranchi, Rajkot and Nagpur as a part of the second and third phase utilisation plan of INSAT are not fully operational. Consequently, the Area specific Programmes which are to originate from thse studios are not ready, though INSAT-1B was a year old on August 30, 1984. Thus, it is evident that programmes from Doordarshan Kendra, Delhi, are being telecast through these new transmitters in remote rural areas, not, perhaps, as a matter of policy but out of compulsion, since local-based programmes are not ready, and therefore, not available for transmission.

Lack of software planning: This style of functioning adopted by Doordarshan, where efforts are concentrated on meeting immediate crises and where long-term goals are overshadowed, is primarily due to a lack of software planning and management at both the directorate and TV station levels. Software planning and the management of a fast-moving creative medium like television which involves multiple resources and complex operations, demands speedy action and relative freedom from the structural and procedural ills of bureaucracy. There is, therefore, a paramount need to depart from traditional ways of functioning and to introduce and adopt new and dynamic concepts and techniques of management in this field.

This is particularly important at this juncture because Doordarshan is facing the most challenging period in its 25 years of existence with major projects like INSAT, the National programme, colour TV, the second channel, the special expansion plans, etc. being implemented almost simultaneously.

Working group: In order to tackle this problem, the ministry of information and broadcasting recently appointed a working group with Dr.P.C.Joshi as chairman to prepare a software plan for Doordarshan. The working group has already submitted its report. Unfortunately, the government has not yet released the report and the details of the recommendations made by the group are not known to the public.

However, from reports appearing in newspapers it is evident that the working group has found that no improvement in software is possible in the existing framework - the present management and style of Doordarshan hampers creativity and initiative at all levels. The group has therefore recommended the restructuring of Doordarshan along the lines of the Atomic Energy and Space Commission. This is a significant recommendation, but making structural changes at the level of the ministry of information and broadcasting and the Doordarshan directorate is a complex task, and might take considerable time to implement.

When I personally feel would be feasible even within the existing set-up, is to change the structure and working of the TV stations, making them more responsive to the peculiar needs and problems of TV programme production.

Structural changes: This can be done with the introduction of simple management concepts like planning, organising, leading and controlling as the basis of functioning of TV stations at all levels. The TV stations are the nerve centres of Doordarshan; they transform policies into realities. The management of TV stations along efficient lines, to facilitate the production of the right type of programmes at minimum cost, is therefore of primary importance.

One of the valuable findings of SITE, now accepted in all quarters, is that any programme produced with developmental objectives for a target audience has to be research-based in order to be relevant and meaningful. The production of such programmes demands a management system which can facilitate research and innovation by providing scope for multidisciplinary teams consisting of producers, researchers, scriptwriters, subject experts; differing production requirements for various types of programmes; sufficient lead time for each programme; creative freedom to producers; team spirit and technological developments.

At the same time, the system has to be such as to ensure regular and sufficient outputs to meet transmission commitments.

Experience shows that the existing bureaucratic structure and management system of Doordarshan stations is not capable of meeting these requirements; they are generally organised and managed along the lines of radio stations. Radio, being a separate medium, finds inbuilt strengths in its particular system of functioning. However, such a system is not suitable even for routine television productions because television is basically a visual medium which involves techniques, equipment, personnel, facilities and aesthetic qualities for programme production that are different from radio.

<u>A management system for TV:</u> Where a management system for TV is concerned, there is no special model which can be followed and adopted. It is not possible here to go into the details of alternative systems. However, it would be useful to recall the attempt that was made to create an organisational structure and management system to suit the complex operations and peculiar problems of production of rural development-oriented programmes for the PIJ station (Space Applications Centre, ISRO, Ahmedabad) during SITE.

The system succeded in meeting production targets [illegible] for the transmission of locally produced developmental programmes in Gujarati. The system was also able to facilitate high quality work and team work, while permitting a great deal of creative freedom to producers. Thus, the efficacy of this system as an R and D-cum-production-cum-transmission mode of operation of a local TV station for rural development has been proved.

It is therefore suggested that the experiences gained in the organisation and management of the PIJ station could be beneficially utilised to shape the structure and working of the new TV production centres coming up during INSAT, since both have similar aims and modes of operation. This would enable these INSAT stations to produce and present relevant, high quality programmes for target audiences, and would take TV closer to achieving its prime objective - rural development.

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RELEVANCE AND UTILIZATION OF SITE EXPERIENCES FOR DEVELOPING TRAINING PROGRAMMES TO PROMOTE UNIVERSALIZATION OF ELEMENTARY EDUCATION AND VOCATIONALIZATION OF EDUCATION AT THE SECONDARY AND HIGHER SECONDARY SCHOOL STAGES.

by

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Paper for presentation at the ISRO-UNICEF Seminar on "SITE to INSAT : Production of programmes for women and children" at Space Applications Centre, Ahmedabad, on November 26-28, 1984.

Relevance and utilization of SITE experiences for developing training programmes to promote universalization of elementary education and vocationalization of education at secondary and higher secondary school stages.

Exposure to the Educational scene in the rural primary schools during the SITE study provided many opportunities to closely observe the strengths and the weaknesses of the television system and its utilization for educational purposes. This experience of the SITE study has been utilized in planning the training programmes to promote universalization of elementary education and vocationalization of secondary education. Salient features of these programmes are given below:

1. Developing awareness about educational and vocational guidance in primary school teachers.

Importance of guidance in schools has been repeatedly stressed by various education Commissions from time to time. Due to limited financial resources and a very large large number of schools involved, however, only a few schools in some of the states have been able to provide guidance services at the secondary school level. The primary schools have remained neglected completely inspite of the assertions made by the Education Commissions that guidance should begin from the very beginning of the formal schooling, and available community resources should be utilized in this context, and parental participation should be sought, especially in the earlier years.

The fast expanding communication technology: radio and television in particular, in our country has provided a viable alternative to the traditional approach to train personnel, especially teachers, to organise guidance services at various levels of school education. To impart basic knowledge about guidance to the primary school teachers and other adults involved in the educational process of young children through mass-media, the Department of Educational Psychology, Counselling & Guidance of NCERT has taken up a project to develop instructional materials on the guidance of primary school children which may be transmitted to teachers through the mass-media.

This project aims to promote developmental guidance at the primary school stage by assisting teachers in effectively meeting the developmental needs and problems of young children especially in the age-group 6 to 11 years. Assistance to teachers will be provided in the form of knowledge on the developmental needs and problems of young children and the ways and means that teachers may adopt to resolve these in the course of their day-to-day interactions with children. This knowledge on developmental guidance will be communicated to teachers through the medium of educational broadcasts or telecasts and the Journal of Primary Teacher published by the NCERT.

It is expected that the aware ness about the developmental needs and problems of young children and ways and means that could be adopted to resolve them, will prompt many a teachers to try-out and experiment with the developmental guidance approach which, if adopted, will contribute to the healthier, happier, and harmonious (i.e. integrated) development of children's personality to meet the challenges of life effectively.

This may also contribute in achieving some of the psycho-educational aims of the universalization of primary education programmes, such as increasing the retentive power of schools by making the school-learning-environment more responsive to the development of children's potentialities (including the personal-social-emotional aspects of personality).

Preparation of the guidance materials for primary school teachers will be the major focus of the present project. Required formative research and evaluation to develop need-based materials will be undertaken. A limited follow-up of the impact of the proposed assistance to teachers in the form of teachers' acceptance of the suggested strategies for meeting the developmental needs and problems of young children will also be attempted.

Target Groups: Primary school teachers in rural areas of states covered by the INSAT-B transmissions will be the main target group, though transmission may be available to all those teachers as well as other adults who are responsible for the total development of children under their charge.

Methodology: To achieve the objective of this project the following procedure will be adopted:

(a) Children's behaviours in primary schools especially in rural areas, which require developmental guidance, will be identified in consultation with guidance and child development experts working at primary level of education, SIEs/SCERTs, teacher educators of primary/elementary teacher training institutions, and experienced primary school teachers. Findings of available Indian and foreign research studies will also be considered in this context. A two-day workshop will be organized for this purpose.

(b) Ten modules (talks) of 10 to 15 minutes will be prepared on the selected behaviour dimensions and how selected strategies/oractices (developmental guidance approach) could be utilized by the primary school teacher in his/her day-to-day teaching and interaction with children for developing integrated persons.

(c) Modules prepared on selected topics will be finalised in the Expert Group Meetings.

(d) Finalised modules will be presented to a selected group of primary school teachers for their comments and field try-out. In the light of teachers' feed back modules will be revised. A three-day workshop will be organised for this purpose.

(e) The field-tested modules will be released to the Journal of Primary Teacher, the All India Radio Division of Educational Broadcasts, and the Doordarshan, Division of Educational Programme, for transmission through the INSAT-B network.

(f) A follow-up study will be taken up to find out the impact of the strategy adopted to promote guidance in primary schools.

II. <u>Training of careers teachers using available educational technology.</u>

Availability of educational and vocational guidance services to youngsters, specially at the +2 stage of schooling, will go a long way to realise the objectives of vocationalization of education in the country. This will, however, require at least one teacher in each higher secondary or senior secondary school in the country who is professionally trained to carry out basic guidance functions for this purpose. Training of these teachers, in such large numbers, and within a short span of time, is feasible if the facilities of INSAT-1B, already available in many areas, are utilized for training purposes. A strategy to train careers teachers, is spelt out in this proposal which aims at training careers teachers in their respective school complexes, thus reducing the training costs to the bare minimum. It may be added that this training strategy has already been approved in principle by the National Conference on Guidance Services in Schools which was held in New Delhi on September 3-4, 1984.

<u>Training Strategy:</u>

The proposed training strategy is based on the assumption that the State Bureaus of Educational and Vocational Guidance, and other educational authorities at the secondary level of education in the states, will collaborate with the NCERT in organising the training of careers teachers using the available educational technology in the country, including the national TV network, radio, and other audio-recording and playing facilities supplemented by the printed textual training materials and personalised tutorial facilities.

Preparation of instructional materials for the training will be the responsibility of the NCERT. In fact much of this material has already been prepared by NCERT. Printing of instructional materials in the regional languages, if considered necessary will however, have to be taken up by the collaborating state agencies. This will involve the printing of about 200 pages in as many copies as the number of teachers the states may like to train as careers teachers. About 40 teachers can be trained at one school centre where TV viewing and radio listening facilities are available. Using these educational technology facilities which are expanding at a fast rate, the 30-day careers teachers training course can be effectively administered in about 15 days during school vacation period either in summer break or in Dussehra-Diwali break or in winter break, without affecting the normal teaching in the schools.

To implement the proposed training strategy, the requirement for one training centre to be located in a senior/higher secondary school will be (1) one tutor who will be administering the training to teachers (2) one classroom which can accommodate about 40 trainees and which has the TV viewing and radio listening facilities, (3) the printed instructional materials that trainees will require during the training, and (4) audio-visual aids in the form of posters/charts and art materials to demonstrate making of "aids to guidance" by the teacher trainee at the local level. In district and other big towns in a state where schools have the above mentioned facilities, the training centre can be organized and teachers from the nearby schools can come to this training centre to take the training for becoming careers teachers. It is suggested that in each collaborating state 20 such training centres may be organized, in each vacation period in a year, thus training about 20 x 3 x 40 = 2,400 careers teachers within a year. The number of training centres in each state may be increased or decreased depending on the required number of trained careers teachers in that state.

The training of required tutors for each training centre may be taken up by the State Bureau of Educational and Vocational Guidance with the academic assistance of NCERT wherever required. A common training programme for these tutors will have to be worked out for this purpose, and NCERT will have to do this task. The training of tutors will include (a) familiarization with the training strategy, (b) thorough acquaintence with the training materials, (3) mastery over instructions that the tutor will follow in administering the training programme to the trainees at the training centre. For this purpose a suitable teacher may have to be identified by the school principal who may have sufficient motivation for this type of work. An honorarium of Rs.100/- may be paid to the tutor for the professional service that he may render during the training course in addition to the TA & DA admissible to him as per the state rules. The trainees may be paid DA for the duration of the training, if permissible. If the training centre is so located that other schools from where teachers are drawn are within a radius of 8 kms, then no TA may be required to be paid to the teacher trainees.

It is estimated that for the training centre the running cost on the training programme, lasting for 15 days, may not exceed Rs.4000/-, which works out to only Rs.100/- per teacher.

At the NCERT level, the main cost of the training strategy will be in terms of TA and DA resource persons whose services may be given to the states for training tutors to man the training centres, and the cost involved in the production of TV and radio programmes. The CIET's collaboration will have to be sought for this purpose.

To implement the training strategy described above, a high level steering committee involving representatives of NCERT, Ministry of Education & Culture, Ministry of Information & Broadcasting, Doordarshan, AIR, and representatives of collaborating states will have to be set up to monitor the smooth functioning of the training programme.

1.

INSAT EXPERIENCES:

CANDID SCENES FROM ANDHRA PRADESH

by

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Paper for presentation at the ISRO-UNICEF Seminar on " SITE to INSAT: Production of programmes for women and children" at Space Applications Centre, Ahmedabad, on November 26-28, 1984.

INSAT EXPERIENCES

CANDID SCENES FROM ANDHRA PRADESH

Tiny transmitter boon

A crash programme with an outlay of Rs. 68 crores was announced by the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting in July last year for rapid expansion of television facility in the country. Under this special plan we have been having almost one TV transmitter a day during the past few months. With a total strength of 182 transmitters -- most of them linked to Delhi via INSAT -- it is assured that by the year end Doordarshan's coverage would be extended to 70% of the population.

As one of the six selected clusters, Andhra Pradesh has had the privilege of receiving TV programmes during the 1975-76 Satellite Instructional Television Experiment (SITE). Subsequently under the SITE-continuity scheme a high power transmitter (HPT-10 KW) was installed at Hyderabad in October '77. Asiad bbrought the tiny low power transmitter (LPT-100 Watt) to Kakinada in November '82.

Under the TV expansion scheme, drawn up for execution during the Sixth Five Year Plan (1980-85), it was originally proposed to have one high power transmitter (19 KW) at Vijayawada connected to Hyderabad. However, after the announcement of the crash programme, the Plan was altered to have as many as 13 transmitters in the State by March '85. Thus, came in quick succession the 1 KW transmitter at Vijayawada and 12 tiny transmitters (100 Watt) at Tirupati, Nellore, Cuddapah, Karimnagar, Visakhapatnam, Nizamabad, Warrangal, Rajahmundry, Kurnool, Adoni, Anantapur and Hahabubnagar (Map 1).

The Statehas since got the full complement of its sanctioned strength and no more TV centres are expected in the near future. However, the present low power transmitters at Vijayawada and Visakhapatnam are likely to be replaced with high power transmitters after some time.

70% population coverage - a myth

As of now, it is too far a cry to bring 70% of the State's five and half crore population within the reach of television. Even with liberal estimates, not more than 80-90 lakh people (17%) would be in a position to tap TV signals radiated either from Hyderabad or from Delhi via INSAT[1].

When we look beyond the physical possibilities, in terms of realities of potential reach of TV programmes, the picture is more distressing. The State has about 875 community sets to serve a population of about 18-20 lakhs in rural areas. The number of domestic sets in towns and peripheries is assumed to be around 2.5 lakhs[2] and these would not be accessible to more than 25-30 lakh persons. Thus, even on the higher side, there would hardly be 45-50 lakh persons having opportunities of exposure to TV. This restricts the potential reach of TV to about 10% of the State population even in ideal conditions like total interface with all available sets.

Loose ends in community viewing

One of the critical factors in rural TV communication is the operation of an effective delivery system. During SITE, despite best managerial capabilities and technical skills, ISRO was unable to eliminate the losses in exposure due to seepage in delivery. Problems like indifference of the custodians, mishandling of the sets, operational difficulties in set maintenance, etc. were frequently encountered.

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1. While Hyderabad covers about 35 lakh population, the 14 LPTs may be covering around 50 lakh persons

2. Precise figures are not available.

Doordarshan which handled the management of the community TV scheme at the post-SITE centres, faced a host of problems due to shortage of manpower, transport bottlenecks and inadequate support from the local administration.

Under the INSAT tutilisation plan, the Central Government transferred the entire responsibility of the execution of the community TV scheme to the State Governments. In Andhra Pradesh the Commisionerate of Information and Public Relations is in the overall charge of the administration of the scheme. Its Radio Engineering Division looks after the installation and maintenance of the conventional VHF sets in the coverage area of Hyderabad ground transmitter. Outside this zone, where the Direct Reception Sets (DRS) are planned for reception through INSAT, the scheme is entrusted to the Electronic Corporation of India (ECIL).

DRS in bad shape

Under the DRS scheme the augmented TV receiver sets were installed in 375 villages. Their distribution is indicated below:

District	No. of sets
Mahabubnagar	201
Kurnool	174
Total	375

Most of the DRS sets are said to be located in school buildings to facilitate group viewing among primary school children as well as adults.

Recently the Audience Research Unit of the Hyderabad TV Centre conducted 100% physical verification of the sets in three taluks of Mahabubnagar district and three taluks of Kurnool district. The verification exercise covering about 75 villages seems to have revealed that 60-70 per cent of the sets were not functioning. The main reason attributed to this unhappy situation is that ECIL was only contracted for the commissioning of the sets; and not for their maintenance Though occasionally its field staff attend to minor complaints, the organisation has not been entrusted with the responsibility of periodical maintenance. Taking into consideration the very high incidence of breakdowns and other irregularities in set operation, the Centre is contemplating to evolve a system for obtaining feedback on set operation.

Significant rate of breakdowns in VHF sets too

Reports are equally disturbing in respect of the functioning of the normal VHF community TV sets. Hyderabad zone has 502 sets and their position as gathered from the Radio Engineer's Office (Information Deptt.) is given below:

Table 1

Position of VHF Community TV Sets in Hyderabad zone (as on 1-10-84)

District	Sets located in gram panchayats		Sets located in schools		Total	
	No.	% not working	No.	% not working	No.	% not working
Ranga Reddy	124	16.9	78	23.0	202	19.3
Mahabubnagar	74.	40.5	29	27.6	103	36.8
Medak	76	38.1	29	27.6	105	35.2
Nalgonda	68	8.2	24	16.6	92	10.9
Total	342	25.1	160	23.7	502	24.7

With as many as 25 per cent of the sets going out of order at frequent intervals, the maintenance units are not able to promptly attend to the complaints calls. The Ranga Reddy district Deputy Engineer's office, which has 202 sets in its jurisdiction has only two technicians. It receives 10-15 complaints a month. Under the circumstance, an average time lag of 15 days is reported between the receipt of the complaint and the set repair.

Delhi umbrella:

The 14 Low Power Transmitters hang on to Delhi for transmission of programmes via INSAT. Except for the irrelevant 40 mts. of area-specific rural programmes designed for Hyderabad cluster, the audience seldom receive programmes in Telugu language. The frustrating experienceof watching Hindi programmes (which most of the people do not comprehend in the coverage area of the LPTs) is pictorially presented in Fig.1. The picture depicts the pain and pleasure of TV watching in upper-middle class family at Rajahmandry. The Hindi scare comples many TV owners to keep their sets closed, save for the film-based entertainment items.

Two faces of Hyderabad TV:

As an Upagraha Doordarshan Kendra, Hyderabad is expected to transmit essentially developmental programmes. However, because of the concentration of domestic viewing in Hyderabad city and suburbs, the service turns out to be largely entertainment-oriented. For illustration, the telecasts of the Centre (other than ETV) were analysed for a week (7-13 Oct., 1984). The programmes lasting for nearly 42 hours of transmission, reflected a composition presented in Table 2.

Table 2

Composition of programmes telecast from Hyderabad

Broad category	Per cent
Sports	24
Feature films and film-based items ...	23
News and Current affairs ...	18
Developmental programmes (agriculture, Health etc)	10
Music items ...	8
Plays-Features ...	8
Others ...	9

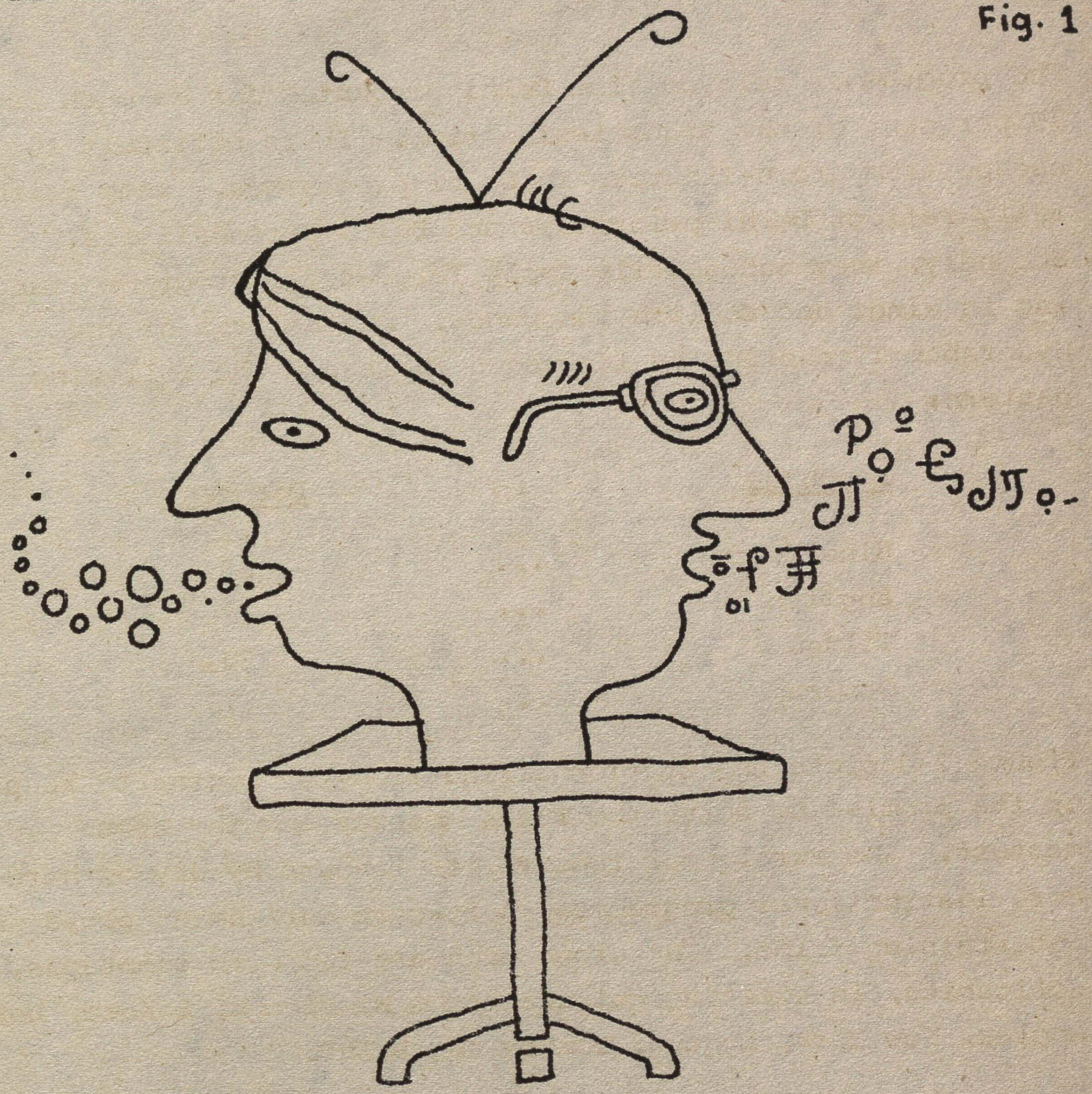
The programmes relayed from Delhi accounted for as much as 70 per cent of the transmission time. It is difficult to escape from urban-fixation in Delhi programmes. They faithfully reflect Delhi priorities and Delhi personalities. Secondly, they necessarily imply large-scale programme feeding in Hindi and English languages. An analysis of the Hyderabad TV content by languages indicated the following pattern:

Language		Per cent
Hindi/Urdu	...	33
English	...	32
Telugu	...	28
Others	...	7

Figure 2 depicts the station airing from two mouths to keep up its promise to serve the rural masses and the urban masters. The rural poor receive its favours by way of hard-core instructional programmes, soft-core enrichment plays and entertaining films. The urban rich are fed with sumptuous delicacies, in exciting colours, from Wimbledon, Lahore, Los Angles, New York, London, Bombay and Delhi.

TWO FACES OF UPAGRAHA DOORDARSHAN

Fig. 1.



- JAI SANTOSHIMA (Hindi Film)
- HYBRID SOTHI
- TAGUDU DOSHAM (Play) (Effects of alcohol)
- FOLK DANCES
- ALLAM MURABBA (For woman)

- BANDODU-GUNDAMMA (Telugu Film)
- KRISHNA LEELA (Ballet)
- Bharatanatyam
- Moolugulu Muchatlu
- VARTALU
- DELHI DURBAR
- SAMACHAR
- HARYANA PEACE MARCH
- CALCUTTA SAMMELAN

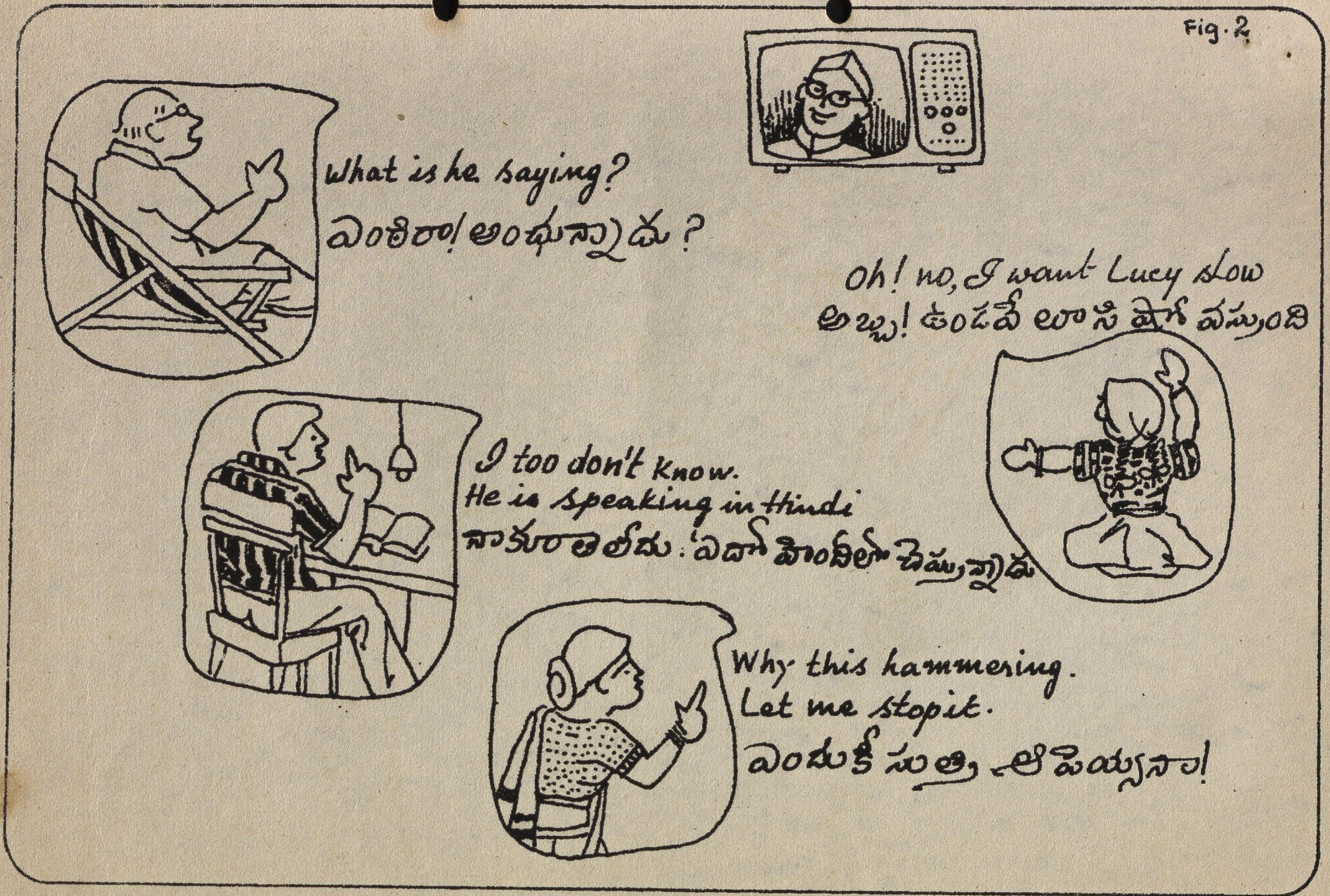
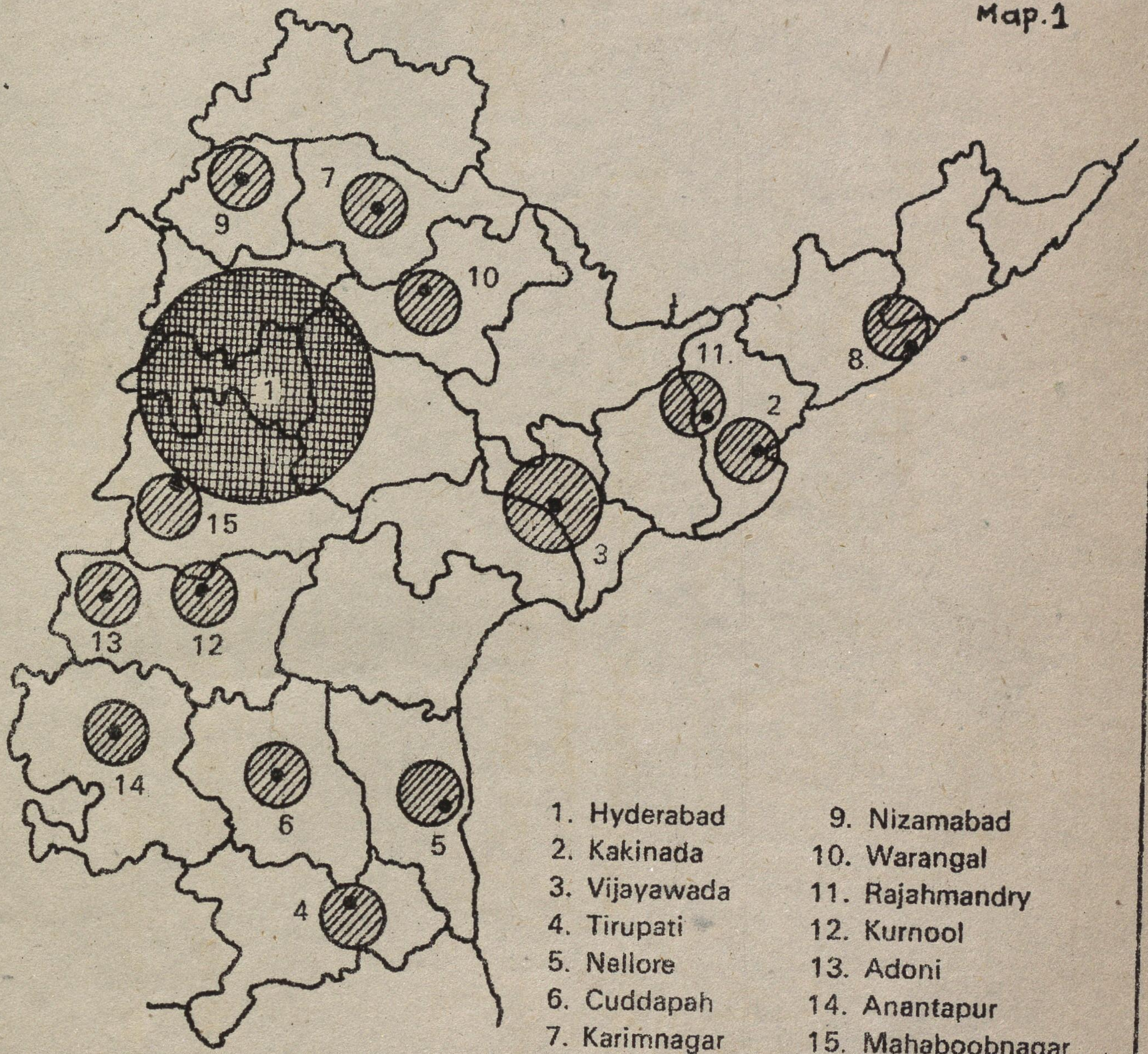

What is he saying?
ఎంటిరా! అంటున్నాడు ?
Oh! no, I want Lucy show
అబ్బ! ఉండవే లూసి షో వస్తుంది
I too don't know.
He is speaking in Hindi
నాకు తెలీదు: 'ఏదో హిందీలో చెప్తున్నాడు
Why this hammering.
Let me stopit.
ఎందుకీ సుత్తి, ఆపెయ్యనా!

Fig. 2

TELEVISION COVERAGE IN ANDHRA PRADESH

Map. 1



1. Hyderabad
2. Kakinada
3. Vijayawada
4. Tirupati
5. Nellore
6. Cuddapah
7. Karimnagar
8. Visakhapatnam
9. Nizamabad
10. Warangal
11. Rajahmandry
12. Kurnool
13. Adoni
14. Anantapur
15. Mahaboobnagar

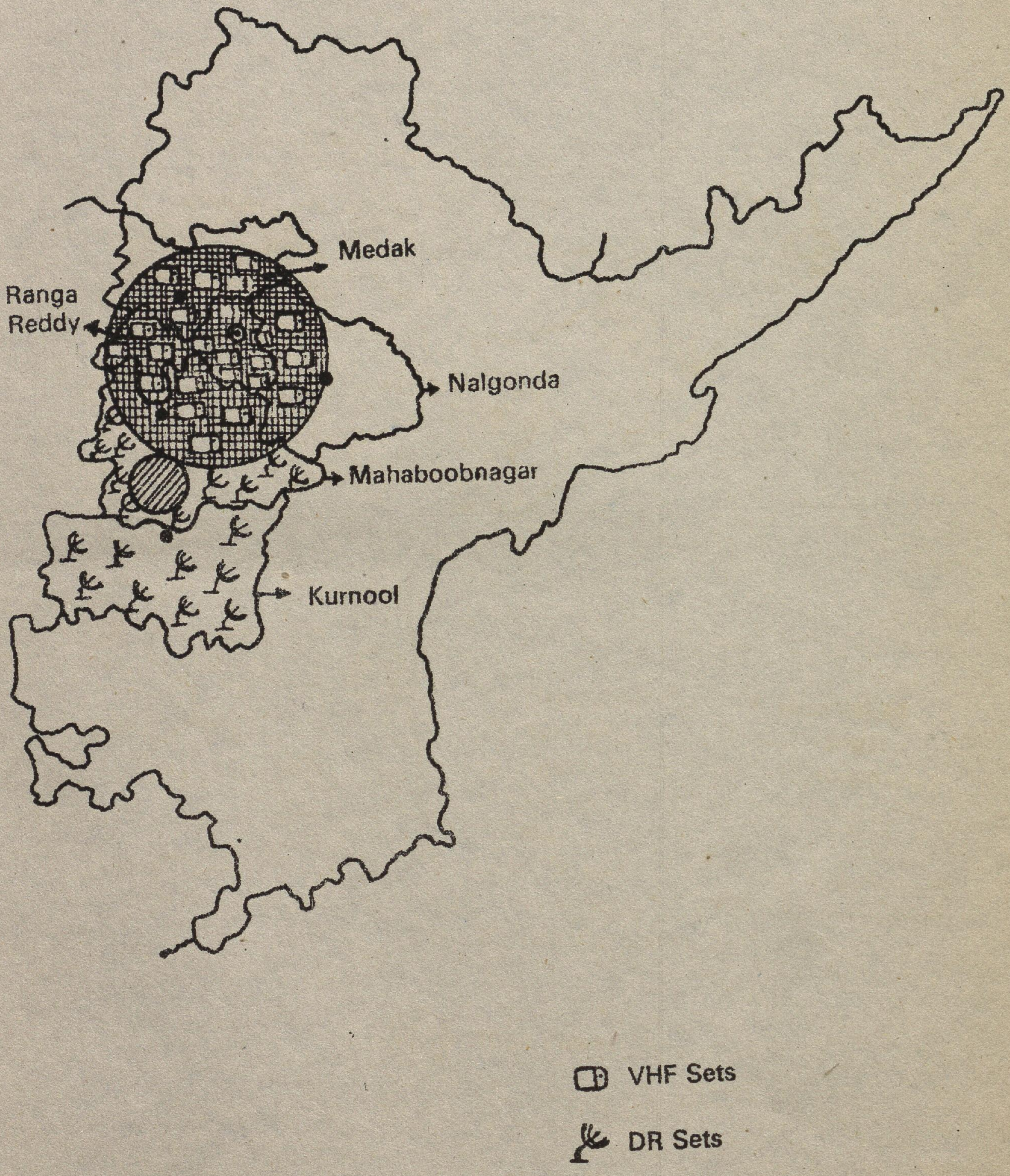
High Power Transmitter

Low power transmitter
(for satellite X'mission)

Scale: 1 cm = 50 km.

LOCATION OF COMMUNITY TV SETS IN A.P.

Map. 2



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KHEDA COMMUNICATIONS PROJECT
AN INTRODUCTION*

BACKGROUND

- India's first rural TV transmitter, installed at Pij, started operations in August 1975.
- This transmitter provides TV service to the district of Kheda. It covers about 400 villages having about 550 receivers
- Every evening about 100 villagers - primarily small farmers, landless labourers, women, and children - come to the community TV set to watch programmes for about one hour.
- The responsibility of producing developmental programmes is that of Space Applications Centre (SAC). Doordarshan provides programmes on news, current affairs etc. .....

CREDO: that forms the basis of all productions

- Development cannot take place in isolation; it requires changes in the social system and in the attitude of the individual. Besides gain of knowledge, it requires an awakening of the individual and his self-confidence.
With this philosophy the following objectives are setforth.
- Mobilise the community and the individual to break away from the oppression and bondages in the present social and economic system.

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* A note distributed by Mr. P.S.Bhatia at the Training of INSAT Programme Production Personnell.

- Promote self-reliance; involving a reduction in apathy, in dependence in God or others; implying improvising and an optimal use of local resources; necessitating a co-operative spirit and a willingness to take risks.

- Educate the community - particularly the deprived about their duties and rights, including minimum wages etc.

- Provide utility programmes in areas like agriculture, animal husbandry, health, family planning, crafts and skills functional literacy etc.

- Broaden the horizon of the viewers by showing them persons, places and events outside their immediate environment.

- Improve horizontal communication between the village communities and vertical communication between the masses and decision makers

- Inculcate a scientific temper among the younger generation.

APPROACH EVOLVED

- A series of programmes with a specific goal is more impactful than single slot programmes

- Working in team mode is found to be more effective. A team consists of a producer, a researcher, a script-writer and a content specialist.

- Before a series is produced, adequate pre-programme (formative) research is conducted. This includes pretesting of some scripts as well as programmes

- Programme production needs quick inputs from research. Use of light weight half-inch video equipment facilities.

- User agencies provide not only content expertise and field support, but also produce programmes. Their involvement ensures relevance, and timelines of information as well as follow-up action.

- The Project is engaged in collaborative experimentation with its audience. The objective is to discover effective means of communication

- Audience is made an integral part of the programme production process. It is encouraged to provide scripts, enact plays, and comment on the programmes transmitted.

- Apart from the conventional mode of transmission on TV is used as an effective channel of two way communication, both Horizontal (between villagers) and Vertical (between villagers and decision makers)

- While appreciating entertainment the audience looks forward to instructional messages of practical value.

MODUS OPERANDI

- Two major areas of programme production: Hardcore and Softcore
- Hardcore programmes include areas like Agriculture, Animal Husbandry, Health, Employment etc.
- Hardcore programmes produced with the involvement of audience as well as subject matter specialist. Bookish recommendations avoided. Programmes produced by making expert enter into a dialogue with audience. Animal Husbandry programmes produced by veterinary doctors.
- Softcore programmes focus on socio-economic and political issues
- Serials are the main stay of softcore programmes
- Serials produced for specific target audiences like - women, children, youth etc.
- Before a serial production is undertaken, the producer presents the proposal to the whole group. The proposal includes a brief on the format, objective, target audience etc.

- The need and relevance aspect of the issues posed are discussed. If necessary field visits undertaken.

- A few programmes are produced and pretested before transmission

- Transmission started only after about six programmes are ready

- Regular feedback collected on serials and modification suggested

- A script committee scrutinizes all the scripts of the programmes to be produced

- The script committee looks at not only the scripts of serials but also single slot programmes and even entertainment programmes.

FURTHER READING

- Another - TV, December 1978 issue of Seminar. Excerpts from this are given in "Television for Education and Development". Edited by B.S.Bhatia.

- An experience with rural writers - Television for Education and Development. Edited by B.S.Bhatia.

SITE WAS A GOOD EXPERIENCE - BUT TOWARDS WHAT

By

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Paper for presentation at the ISRO-UNICEF Seminar on "SITE to INSAT : Production of Programmes for Women and Children" at Space Applications Centre, Ahmedabad, between November 26-28, 1984.

The views expressed here are solely those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the views of the organisation to which he belongs.

SITE WAS A GOOD EXPERIENCE BUT TOWARDS WHAT

Yes, Satellite Instructional Television Experiment SITE - a 365 days programme was an experiment - well planned and well executed. In any experiment all possible efforts are made to see the result, and in most of the cases one hopes for a successful result. SITE was a pilot project for Indian National Satellite System (INSAT), which the planners had conceived, for using sophisticated space technology in order to gear up the pace of development, particularly in rural India. Thus, SITE, in the minds of the planners, was taken as a learning experience to provide guidelines to produce good and effective programmes, to trigger and catalyse the development activity with them, and assess their impact. Obviously the special target audience included women and children too.

Other than software, the hardware objectives of seeing the technical capability of satellite based television system has also been met. Satellite could successfully provide direct communication access to remote parts of India where terrestial television could not reach in want of extensive wide band microwave or cable network.

From SITE, we stepped into INSAT and the television signals beamed to the satellite is helping us to reach a geographical area of more than 160 transmitter range. Television programmes can be viewed by proportionate population - urban as well as rural. But the fact remains that the common rural masses are not in a position to afford private sets and community viewing sets are the only hope for them. The elements of community TV, at the receiving end consists of the selected villages for putting community TV sets, a public building in the village, availability of domestic electrification in the building (exceptions may be for battery operated sets), and some one to take responsibility of operating the set during transmission hours. INSAT Doordarshan plan is supposed to take care of these important elements.

Based on my continuous contact with a SITE village in north Bihar and my proximity with Kheda Communication Project as well as observation on INSAT programmes, this note aims at presenting some of the view points of the viewers of Ismailpur (Bihar) and numerous others like them elsewhere in the country. It will try to indicate what they experienced during SITE and what they expect with INSAT. Though the discussion stands valid for general viewers, the emphasis is on women and children. SITE or INSAT - any system, experimental or operational - cannot be discussed in isolation e.g. programme production or its utility and impact. The way it is planned and executed is equally significant.

One cannot forget the hard time, the village selection team had in collecting feasibility data. We visited a very large nnumber of villages scattered in the sands of Rajasthan, forests of Orissa and flood affected north Bihar. Utmost care was taken in selecting the SITE villages. I still remember the senior officials from Space Applications Centre, Ahmedabad, who were on their toes, to see the electrification work completed in time. Of course, it was a time bound programme. Special instructions were given to supply regular power during the TV transmission hours. Villagers on many occasions did not allow the flour mill to run with a fear that power supply to the TV may get affected.

When it came to operational stage - INSAT - power became scarce and villages in Bihar many a times do not get power for days together. SITE tried to count the days TV sets did not work while INSAT counts the days TV really works. Custodians are apa-thetic to it. Even the well planned, very localised Kheda Communication Project in a very progressive state like Gujarat could not ensure more than 20 per cent of sets to be operational. Reasons may be many. Village selection has gone in the hand of the district administration and the amount of influence working at that level is known.

TV for School Children:

Television has been useful in basic learning of the children. Children learning language, imitating actions, making dolls and learning about the immediate environment through TV havebeen reported from various SITE studies. But there had been problems in syllabus based courses and science programmes which constituted the bulk of the morning SITE telecast. Programmes were not comprehended by the lower primary children of 5-8 years of age studying in class 1-3. It was observed that the science mainly those of cause and effect can be taken comprehended after 9 years of age (Sinha 1981). This was also because no post telecast discussion took place in a majority of the schools (Bhaskaran 1977: 157) which should have been there as per the original plan. The standard of teaching through television was higher than the general village school standard. Equipments for practical demonstration were not available in most of the schools. INSAT should have take care of the SITE results that programme comprehension was poor among younger students as the morning telecast of INSAT emphasises more on syllabus based teaching. But it should take care of the village standard and have more "out of class" type programmes. Providing a TV set for each school is a big question particularly in the rural context where large number of the schools are one room one teacher school and many of them do not have even a pitcher full of water. In the absence of these, planning for INSAT may increase the existing gap in children's education between the TV schools and non-TV schools.

<u>TV for women and Children:</u>

The experiences of SITE are supposed to be an input for INSAT. The five fold development objectives to improve village agriculture; education; health, hygiene and nutrition; promote family planning; and inculcate a sense of national integration was attempted. Different studies on the social impact of SITE (Agrawal et.el: 1977, Agrawal 1978; Sinha 1981; Planning Commission nd) showed that health, hygiene and nutrition was one area where there were indications of a definite gain. This is also the only major area where women gained more than men and children adopted some of the innovations. We have already had a look at school education. Agriculture and animal husbandry look like a sole proprietory of the men. In this situation, the results of the SITE in the area of health and nutrition be emphasised and the potentials be explcited.

In the whole development process communication (in this case television) has a very limited role to play i.e. giving information/message input. The micro analysis of SITE impact study (Sinha 1981) has already indicated that many ideas could not be translated into practice because of some economic, social or cultural factors. Though awareness and attitude formation are positive indicators but it has to reach to the stage of adoption. Adoption is not only the apparent gain but is also a motivational factor for others. A successful adoption has a miraculous demonstration effect.

Surveys as well as case studies recorded that the villagers adopt those innovations which do not involve any additional expenditure or need little expenditure. The suggested physical inputs should be available in viewer's nearby surroundings. Many a times recommendations are interpreted, adjusted or manipulated according to local needs and availability of the things required. This is the key point for the success of any programme aiming at motivating to rural audience, particularly women. During SITE, the most popular and effective programme in the areas of health, hygiene and nutrition, which concerned women and children, were Gharelu Ilaj (house remedies) and Yogabhyash (Yogic exercises) respectively. Women talking about nutritious food, vitamins and taking preventive measures against hook worm, and children taking bath in clean water and talking about general cleanliness are the pointers of success of the instructional objective of SITE. The beneficiaries are women and children.

In a situation where nothing more than information input could be provided, INSAT should exploit these areas where only information input can help rather than interviewing experts on different subjects (may . health, hygiene and nutrition) who most of the times, suggest consulting the local officials which the rural viewers cannot be really afford. Experts or a high officials are not the characters the rural audience are well acquainted with and it leads to the question of credibility, effecting the total impact of the programme. What emerges is that the trust-worthyness of television could directly benefit the viewer without intermediate human medium where credibility is low and there is a built-in distrust from the past experiences.

After the INSAT telecast is over late in the night my mind goes back to the rural audience. I just do not see any correlations between what they like, they need, what they want and what is being offered to them, except the news. You all know very well what dominates the news. Television has become a news-cum-entertainment medium to them The whole exercise of development communication which we did for SITE or Kheda Communication Project has gone. May be, it is because the regional programme production centres are not yet ready to take up the responsibility. But definitely there seems to be a shift in the whole philosophy of the medium. Strategy has changed and the emphasis is quite different. The development medium is becoming more and more urban news-advertisement-entertainment medium.

It has also become commercial. Entertainment programmes attract larger audience. It was always there. Films produced by Children's Film Society used to attract large audience during SITE. But these occasions are exploited by the business houses. Of course, they also put aids which aim at the welfare of the women. Now, the rich housewives need not waste time in preparing "nutritious food". Here is "MAGGI-TWO MINUTES NOODLE". To reduce women's drudgery in stove operation and cooking you have a whole range of NIKY TASHA ~~plates~~ which you see every time when you watch a feature film on TV or other good "entertainment" programme. Whom are we trying to develop - common masses? the affluents? or the manufacturers? I sincerely wish this valuable time could be utilised for giving ideas to the rural women about how to prepare nutritious food out of maize, jowar, wheat or how to build smokeless chulla from earthen pots and country tiles.

If INSAT aims at developing our rural masses a different strategy has to be followed taking into account the SITE results, particularly the areas where communication alone has helped.

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7.

STATUS OF HEALTH CARE DELIVERY SERVICE IN KARNATAKA - a case for planned intervension through Communication

Prof. P. Bhaskaran *

Introduction

One of my academic pre-occupations for the last three years has been to find some practical solutions for the problems in the implementation of the health care delivery services in the rural areas of Tamil Nadu and Karnataka which include the problems in the management and administration of health, hygiene, nutrition, maternal and child health care services, etc. This has resulted in two major studies in the field of health care management. Of these, the first one is a report based on the data obtained through a carefully planned and extended field experiment in the Konganapuram Block of the Salem district in Tamil Nadu (1) and the second is based on the field survey data regarding the status of implementation of the health care delivery services in the Kolar district of Karnataka.(2)

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(1) P. Bhaskaran : An Integrated Approach towards the Implementation of Health and Family Welfare Schemes - an experimental model developed for the DANIDA Assisted Tamil Nadu Health Care Delivery Project in the Konganapuram Block, Salem District, IIM, Bangalore.

(2) P. Bhaskaran: New Dimensions in the Evaluation of Health Care Services - A Model approach for evaluating the performance of the Health Care Delivery System at the Primary and Sub-Health Centre levels, IIM, Bangalore.

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~~These two studies~~, as we are going to see in our subsequent ~~discussions~~ have shown that even though more than seven long years have been passed since we have completed the SITE in about 2400 villages spread over six states, yet a large majority of the rural masses in the rest of the country are still living in a shameful state of ignorance, dirt and squallor. This is because, they are still untouched by the formal and non-formal system of education, mass media and all such channels of inter-personal and mass communication. In other words, there exist a wide communication gap between the intended beneficiaries of the various development schemes and the functionaries who manage these programmes. Unless this gap is bridged by carefully designed mass education campaigns, preferably by using the audio-visual aids like films and television programmes followed by field demonstration methods and rural leadership training programmes, the functional efficiency of the systems which implement the schemes, will be much less than the desired opimum. Therefore, it is needless to say that in the years to come the INSAT programmes will have a leading role to play in providing the much needed education and enlightenment to the rural masses and thereby helping them to improve the quality of their life style.

There is no doubt that we need to reach out to the rural masses through the T.V. channel so as to provide communication support to the functionaries and to bring about attitudinal changes among people in all aspects of their day-to-day life such as Agriculture, rural employment schemes, education, health, hygiene, sanitation, family, mother and child welfare, entertainment, social and cultural activities, etc. But, considering the characteristics and the likely interest of the co-sponsors of this seminar

I have decided to limit the scope of this presentation to spell out the needs for programmes which would help the general improvement of health and health related services - and that too on the limited amount of information I have from the rural areas of Karnataka. The ideas presented in this paper, therefore, can at the best be considered as indicative of the need for the different kinds of programmes but in no sense exhastive because both in terms of the content and in its geographical coverage it tries to cover only a limited area.

A CASE FOR PLANNED INTERVENSION THROUGH COMMUNICATION

Like many other habits, health care is also a habit. It is born out of several factors, especially, a person's social and economic environments. The social environ may be an individual's familiar values, values of his community, his religious orientation etc. which were handed over to him by tradition. The economic environment includes his general economic status with reference to the community of which he is a member, his occupation and other kinds of class characteristics. All these factors added to the personal characteristics of an individual will have considerable bearing on his health care habits. Over and above all these, there is one more factor which has a great deal of influence on the health habits of the people viz., the availability of the services at a cost they can afford. The last mentioned point is very important because, it may even subsume all other factors mentioned before. If this is the case, then one of the major functions of a Health Care delivery system operated by the government like that of ours, in addition to the preventive and curative measures provided to the beneficiaries, is to change the influence of the social and economic environment by a process of education and inter-personal and mass communication so as to help the people acquire new values by a great deal of effort on the part of the mass media and all the health functionaries who are working at the different levels of the system, especially those in the hospitals, PHCs and SHCs. More emphasis was placed on the role of the audio-visual media, especially the films and TV programmes, the lower and the middle level functionaires such as the ANMs, Health visitors, other para-medical staff and the doctors who are employed in the hospitals and the PHCs because, as it is mentioned often, as far as the planning is concerned there is nothing seriously wrong with our approach but time and again we have failed to implement the various health and family welfare schemes and consequently, to reap the optimum benefits which could result from them. It is our contention that if there is adequate communication support to the programmes and if the health functionaries in each and every places are doing their assigned tasks or expected duties effectively then there would be a great deal of attitudinal and behavioural changes among the people even if they are not fully satisfied with the other kinds of curative services provided by the health institutions of which there are ever so many technical and financial constraints. Thus, one of our main attempts in this study is to verify these assumptions. In order to do this, we need some tangible evidence obtained on the basis of first hand information and hard data.

1. <u>Women's Age at the Time of Marriage Among Different Communities</u>

One of the facts in which we were interested was the prevailing practices regarding marriage, particularly the average age of the women at the time of their marriage among the different castes or communities.

This is because, as we are all aware, the age at which **women** are married is an important determinent of the social change that has taken place in each community. This will also, to a large extent reflect the attitudinal changes of the individual members of the community as a result of the constant educational and communication campaigns carried out in the past if any, by the media paramedical staff attached to the respective PHCs and SHCs.

According to the data collected from the 24 villages included in the sample, the women in this area, irrespective of their caste or community, generally marry when they are between 13 and 19 years of age. The only difference which was noticed however, was that in some of the communities they do so more frequently than the others. For example, cent per cent of the Baljigas, members of the scheduled caste and scheduled tribes, followed by 87.5 per cent of the Vokkaligas, 83 per cent each of Vysyas and Lingayats, 82 per cent of Muslims, 60 per cent of Palliyars, 57 per cent of Brahmins, 50 per cent of Kurubas and 60 per cent of other minor communities who are residing in the area are still practising the custom of early marriage, that is, when the girls are between 13 and 19 years of age.

Similarly, a comparison between the villages where the PHCs or SHCs are located and those of the remote villages has indicated that the high incidents of early marriage among the women were more prevalent in the group of remote villages compared to those of the SHCs and PHC villages. This finding was consistent in all the 8 PHC areas which indicated that these villages have been neglected both by the media and by the health staff in this regard. In other words, the mass communication media and the health functionaries were neither trying to educate the people about the new laws regarding marriage, nor were they giving the necessary information to them regarding the ill-effects of early marriage upon the health of women and its implications on the family planning programme.

2. Average Number of Children per Woman and the Percentage of Still Births

These questions are also related to a whole host of other issues which apparently are the concern of the health department. For example, early marriage will certainly result in a greater number of child births per woman, on an average. Frequent child birth, especially at an young age will weaken the health of the mother, and as a result, her chances of having still born babies will be greater.

According to the data obtained in this study, all these assumptions were found tenable. For example, the average number of children per woman taking the entire area into consideration, were 4.3 to 5.3. This average figure in the case of the PHC and the SHC villages were 4 to 5 whereas the same in the case of the remote villages was between 5 and 6. One should remember that these figures are only averages but in certain cases the actual number even exceeded 8. Therefore, it appears that two points are important here. One, that the health and family welfare department has been claiming that like in other areas, they were also carrying out intensive campaigns to make the people adopt the idea of the small family norm. According to this norm the maximum number of children one can desirably have is only three! Second, that they are also claiming that they have been distributing the family planning materials such as pills, condoms etc. among the eligible couples so as to induce them to adopt the temporary methods of family planning easily. Judging from the negative results, however, one can easily deduce the kind of impact these family planning activities have had in this area and what kind of services they have been providing to the people. This is especially so in the case of the remote villages. This concern for the present state of affairs may assume more importance if we consider the fact that compared to the villages which have PHCs and SHCs the number of remote villages are far too many and they form almost 90 to 95 per cent of the total number of villages in the entire state.

Therefore, if these villages are not given the attention due to them it will certainly result in the failure of the entire programme.

Regarding the incidents of still births during the previous year, there was a considerable amount of variation in the figures from one place to the other. For example, during the last one year the villages which come under the Kamasamudram PHC area, had registered the highest percentage of still births (18.2 per cent) and those of the Namagundlu area the lowest (0 per cent). This data has also indicated that incidents of still births was higher among the remote villages (3.7 per cent) compared to those of the SHC (2.9 per cent) or PHC villages (3.3 per cent).

In our view, there is nothing more surprising in the entire **data** than the inability on the part of the people to cite the specific reasons why these still births happen. The truth was that the people simply did not know why they happened and there was no health functionary or our mass media to explain to them and to educate them as to why the reasons could be and how could they possibly prevent their occurence in the future.

3. <u>Details of Abortion Cases</u>

Illegal abortion may be looked upon as a social problem by the social scientists but for the medical professionals it is only a health problem. Rather, a problem, which may often lead to serious complications and even death. During the survey therefore an effort was made to understand the intensity of this problem. According to the data, illegal abortion was practiced in most of the villages for various reasons. The only one PHC area where it was not practiced was in Kaiwara. On the other hand, in all the villages which belong to Dibbur PHC people resorted to illegal abortion frequently.

In terms of the PHC, SHC and remote village dimensions, the analysis has indicated that in 75 per cent of the PHC villages, 50 per cent of the SHC villages and 25 per cent of the remote villages people are still going to the local quacks in order to get rid of pregnancy illegally.

The number of such abortion cases during the past one year among 21 of the 24 villages where the study was conducted, was estimated to be about 72. The number of such cases did in fact vary from place to place. Of these, however, the villages which fell under the Kamasamudram, Malur and Siddlagatta PHC areas claimed 25 per cent, 24 per cent and 22 per cent respectively. They were proportionately higher than the other places viz., those villages which fall under the Dibbur, Namagundly, Sugutur and Gudibanda PHC areas. In terms of proportion, they claimed 14, 10, 3 and 3 per cent respectively.

Another aspect of this problem in which we were interested was the nature of the complicated cases but none was reported from any village.

Certainly we were interested in knowing whether there was any particular community or communities who were more prone to this practice than the others but in general people were reluctant to give specific community names except in places such as Krishnapura, Malur and Gudibanda. If what people reported was without any prejudice, this information would certainly be very useful for, it would help us concentrate our communication effort on these communities.

Further, we are also of the opinion that the facilities for the medical termination of pregnancy must be made available in all the PHCs to all those who need this service, irrespective of the fact that the particular women need this service are married or single. This is because, it is not the moral issue which is involved here but a medical problem. Therefore, there must be facilities for MTPs in all the PHCs as and when required.

4. Mortality Rate Among Children

In all, there were 141 cases of child mortality during the past one year in the area where the study was conducted. Out of the 24 villages in as many as 14 villages cases of child mortality were reported. Areawise the deaths of children were reported from all the PHC areas. However, in the case of Kamasamudram its occurrence was the highest. This area alone accounted for 56 per cent of the total deaths reported in the entire area. The next highest was from Siddlagatta PHC area (21 per cent). This was followed by Dibbur (7 per cent) and Malur (6 per cent). In the rest of areas, Namagundlu claimed 4 per cent, Kaiwara and Sugutur 2 per cent each and Gudibanda only about 0.7 per cent.

Regarding the reasons for these deaths, it is stated that the kinds of diseases which generally affected the children were responsible for them. In some cases they also mentioned that poxes and liver trouble were the reasons for child mortality in their villages.

5. Breast Feeding Practices

When do mothers start breast feeding after child birth? Do they discard or do they feed colostum to the babies? Before they start giving mother's milk do they generally give anything else to the babies? How long do they generally continue breast feeding? and when do they start giving supplementary food to their children?

The answers to all these questions were exceedingly important for guaging the attitude changes that have taken place among the rural people as a result of the improved health care delivery system now made available to them on the one hand and the constant interaction of the paramedical staff and their effort to educate the masses on various aspects of the child care practices on the other.

In the past, for example, there were many superstitious beliefs and customary practices associated with breast feeding. First of all, they did not breast feed their babies until a couple of days after they were born. This is because, they sincerely believed that colostrum was a bad form of milk and if they gave it to their babies, their children would fall ill. Therefore, they used to remove the colostrum for a couple of days and then only they begin to breast feed their babies. Another reason was that they also used to give castor oil to the new born before they started breast feeding. This they practised because of the belief that there will be some accumulated dirt within the children's system and unless it was removed by using purgatives like castor oil it would give rise to childhood diseases.

Once they start the breast feeding they continued it for two to three years before they weaned their children. Moreover, the mother's milk was the only food a child got until it was four to six months old.

Now, let us see what had happened to these practices as a result of the new health schemes and as a result of the periodic visits of the ANMs and other health workers and their efforts to educate the rural masses through personal counselling on the various aspects of health, family welfare, and child care practices.

According to the data, in about 67 per cent of the villages, SHC villages and the remote villages it was found that in 88 per cent of the first, 50 per cent of the second and 62 per cent of the third they began breast feeding three days after the child was born. In one of the SHC villages, however, this happened only 5 days after the baby was born.

Colostrum is the milk secreted for a few days after parturition which has high protein and immune body contents.

Therefore, from the health point of view this must be given to the new born babies. These are the scientific facts and the ANMs, Health visitors and other medical personnel are supposed to educate the people on the importance of giving colostrum to the new born and to dispel their wrong beliefs about it. Surprisingly, however, the data did not indicate even a slight degree of change in the habits of the people. For example, people from all the sample villages, except a PHC village, said that giving colostrum to the babies was harmful. They therefore used to discard the colostrum. Had they been told of its benefits by the paramedical staff who were visiting these villages they certainly would not have followed their old practice of discarding the colostrum.

Now-a-days, in all the PHC and SHC villages, the new born babies are given glucose water for the first three days. In addition to this, in some villages, they also give castor oil. In the case of the remote villages the practice of giving glucose water is prevalent only in 50 per cent of the sample but in about 88 per cent of them castor oil was given to the babies as their tradition demanded.

Further, it seems from the data, that the duration of breast feeding was normally two to three years because, nearly in 62 per cent of the villages the people reported it and only in the remaining 38 per cent did they say that the normal duration of breast feeding was one year. Most of the villages where people said that they normally start weaning the child in about a year, belonged to the PHC villages. The percentage of villages which fall under this category among the SHC villages and the remote villages was only 25 per cent each.

6. Supplementary Diet for Children

The last question in this section was about the practice of giving supplementary food to the babies. The data in this case suggested that in as much as 92 per cent of the villages the supplementary food was given to the children only after 6 months and of which 29 per cent did so only after one year. Here again, the health functionaries and the mass media have not been fully found very useful in educating the people and thereby changing their age-old practices and beliefs.

Regarding the type of foods given to the children there was practically no difference between the food taken by the adults and those given to the children. In fact they were also given the same Ragi, Malts and Rice. Some people also had to give their children biscuits, baby foods such as Farex, Glaxo etc. and cow's milk. Of these biscuits were said to be popular in all the villages. Farex and other baby foods were habitually used only in the PHC villages. Similarly, cow's milk was given as a supplementary food to the children in 25 per cent each of the PHC and the remote villages and 38 per cent of the SHC villages.

7. Type of Common Diseases Among Children

The type of diseases which were reported to be found commonly among children in the area, irrespective of the fact whether a particular village belongs to the SHC, PHC or the remote village areas included fever, cough and colds. The incidents of dysentary and diarrhoea were also very common whereas scabis was reported to be found commonly only in one of the remote villages.

8. Treatment for Diseases

The data has indicated that in the whole area, except in two of the remote villages viz., D Kalavanchi and Hale-gudibanda, the children were taken to the PHC/SHC or other hospitals for periodic medical examinations. However, this has, in general, been done only when they had some problem. The only exceptions were Kamasamudram and Beechaganahalli villages. On the other hand, in D Kalavanchi and Halegudibanda, the people were not taking their children to their PHC or SHCs. This suggests that they generally resorted to local form of treatment, probably the treatment given by the Mantric.

In about 63 per cent of the villages the doctors were available for advice. Included in this were 88 per cent of the PHC villages, 75 per cent of the SHC villages and about 13 per cent of the remote villages. On the other hand, out of the 24 villages in the sample, only in 7 had the ANMs advised the people. Of these, six were remote villages and the other a SHC village. Yet another source of advice in about 35 per cent of the villages were the elders.

In as much as 92 per cent of the sample villages allopathic treatment was given to the children for diarrhoea but in two remote villages viz. Doddashivara and Kongarahalli only glucose solution was given. Among the villages which resorted to allopathic treatment for diarrhoea 75 per cent of the villagers took their children to the PHC/SHC for treatment immediately and in the other 21 per cent they did so only after a day or two.

9. Immunization

One of the priority activities of the health department at the PHC level is immunization. Included in this category are primary vaccination, DPT injection, popularly known as the Triple vaccine, polio vaccination and BCG, the vaccination. Among these the utmost priority should be given to the primary vaccination. This in fact is the general policy of the department.

According to the data collected from the 8 PHC areas, however, the extent of coverage of these programmes was not satisfactory, especially in the case of the remote villages. For example, among the different kinds of immunization services provided in these villages, the coverage of the primary vaccination was only to the extent of 88 per cent. According to the rule, however, it should have been cent per cent. Similarly, the extent of the polio, BCG, and DPT vaccinations were still less - only in 80, 75 and 71 per cent of the villages respectively.

Another interesting finding which has emerged from this data was that the villages which did not get these services fully were mainly the remote ones. For example, out of the entire group of villages where DPT injection was not given to all the children, as much as 86 per cent, were the remote ones. The remaining 14 per cent were the SHC villages. Similarly, the villages where the children had not been vaccinated for polio, tuberculosis, and small pox were all the remote ones. In other words, all the PHC villages and most of the SHC villages have been provided fully with the immunization facilities but a large proportion of the remote villages thave been totally neglected. In short, among the remote villages the extent of different kinds of vaccinations viz. BCG, Polio, DPT and small pox was only 37, 75, 25, 75 and 37 per cent respectively.

10. Prenatal and Antenatal Care

Yet another area in which we focused our attention was the various aspects of prenatal and postnatal care. This is because, according to the present system of community health care delivery services, a great deal of emphasis has been placed on the maternal and child care services. For example, the ANMs and the LHVs attached to the PHCs and SHCs are supposed to visit all the villages which come under their respective areas and to render the required services and medical advice regularly. In order to supplement their efforts in this regard, trained dais provided with medical kits are also appointed in each of the villages. Of course, this is in addition to the regular services rendered in the PHCs and SHCs by the qualified doctors and dispensing facilities.

Therefore, it was our assumption that there would be a great deal of awareness regarding the new practices of prenatal and post-natal care among the women in all the villages and also that corresponding behavioural changes would have been effected. In order to ascertain these assumptions we sought answers to the following questions:

1. Did pregnant women from the villages go for periodic medical check-ups during pregnancy and after delivery?

2. If so, where did they generally go? to the SHC/PHC or Hospital etc?

3. How frequently did they do this?

4. Did the ANMs/LHVs visit them periodically and given them the required medical help and advice?

5. In case the expectant mothers from the villages did not visit the PHC/SHC etc. did they consult the Dais in their respective villages?

6. Were these Dais helpful and, if so, how? etc.

From the answers we have obtained to the first question it can be said that the people from almost all the villages (83 per cent) have been going to the PHC and SHCs for the periodic check-ups. A closelook into the data, however, has indicated that the villages from where the women did not go for these periodic check-ups has rendered that they were all from the remote villages. More precisely, this accounted for 50 per cent of the remote villages included in the sample which has indicated that the services, which were made available in the PHCs and the SHCs were for some reason or other beyond their reach. Regarding their preference for the PHC or SHC the people from the other 50 per cent of the villages who went for the periodic medical check-up during pregnancy and after delivery mostly (80 per cent) preferred the PHCs but even among the nearly half of them also made use of the facilities available in the SHCs. However, all those who belonged to the PHC villages with the exception of only the people from one village viz. Sugutur went to the PHCs to get the medical help. But those who belonged to Sugutur said that they preferred the private clinics to get these services rather than the PHCs.

Regarding the frequency of these period medical examinations the people said that they underwent these medical examinations once in every 7 days; once in fifteen days or once in a month depending upon the kind of problems each individual had to face.

On the question of the village visits, made by the ANMs and LHVs, people from all the villages said that they visited these villages periodically.

But when they were asked whether the ANMs distributed medicines or not, except for the people who belonged to two of the remote villages and one SHC village, all said that the medicines were provided, whenever there was a need for such medical help.

In other words, the data has clearly indicated that the paramedical staff working at the lowest levels were indeed attending to their duties related to the curative aspect of service rather seriously. The only one point that did not support this contention was the lack of knowledge on the part of the patientswho had been treated for some domplications by these paramedical staff. The probably explanation was that they have never been told what their complications were. Hence they were ignorant about their problems.

Another interesting finding which has emerged from this study was the all important role of the Dais in the villages irrespective of the fact whether the village was a PHC/SHC or a remote one. This is because, in all these places people consulted Dais whenever they had any problems. In most of the villages (79 per cent) these Dais were said to be very helpful. This included 88 per cent each of the SHC and PHC villages and 63 per cent of the remote villages included in the sample. The kind of help they rendered was mainly medical in nature as reported by the people from 75 per cent of these villages.

One of the reasons why these Dais have not been adjudged as helpful was because they could not provide the required medical help on account of the fact they were untrained for the work and moreover were not supplied the necessary medical kits. Therefore, under the circumstances, it is obvious that they cannot be of much use to the public.

11. Food Habits During Pregnancy and After Childbirth

When we asked the people whether the women ate more food during pregnancy and during the lactation period only in 33 per cent of the villages was the answer given in the affirmative in the case of the former question. In the case of the latter, however, the percentage of positive response was more than 83 per cent.

An analysis of this data in terms of PHC, SHC and remote villages has shown that in 63 per cent of the PHC villages the women ate more food during pregnancy whereas in the case of SHC and the remote villages their proportions were only 25 and 13 per cent.

The proportion of villages where the women consumed more food during the lactation period were 88 per cent, 88 per cent and 75 per cent respectively of the PHC, SHC and the remote villages.

The practice of giving special foods to women during pregnancy was noticed only in 67 per cent of the villages which included 75 per cent each of the SHC and PHC villages and 50 per cent of the remote villages. During the lactation period, however, the women were given special food in as much as 88 per cent of the villages. This included cent per cent of the SHC villages, 88 per cent of the PHC villages and 75 per cent of the remote villages.

Regarding the sources of this information the data has clearly indicated that in as much as 88 per cent of the villages this information was given to them by their elders.

In addition to these elders it is said that the ANMs, LHVs and doctors also have been giving them the necessary advice. In terms of proportion, however, in 63 per cent of the villages, the ANMs had advised the people to eat special food during pregnancy and during the lactation period. They gave this advice in 88 per cent of the SHC villages, but only in 50 per cent each of the PHC and remote villages. The percentage of villages where the LHVs advised the people was only 33 of which 50 per cent SHC villages and 25 per cent each PHC and remote villages.

The proportion of villages which received this advice from the doctors was only 21 per cent. This included 50 per cent of the PHC villages in the sample and 13 per cent of the SHC villages. What was noteworthy in these findings, however, is that there was not even a single remote village which received such advice from the doctors.

In short, the data has clearly indicated that in all types of villages, in the majority of cases, the elders still provide the necessary advice and information in such matters. Next came the ANMs who were followed by the LHVs and the doctors. Alas, radio, films or any other media have not even been mentioned once.

Further, while the ANMs and LHVs tried to impart their knowledge to a larger number of SHC village people which incidently are their headquarters, the doctos did so in the PHC villages. Thus, it can be seen that those who did not benefit by expert advice were those people who lived in remote villages. In about 50 per cent of these remote villages none of the inhabitants had received either advice or information from any member of the health staff.

12. Place of Child Delivery

There are facilities to admit the child delivery cases in all the PHCs and SHCs but still a large number of deliveries in the villages are performed at home with the aid of the old ladies in the village. There can be several reasons for this state of affairs which include the mere physical distance between the PHCs/SHCs and the residence of the patients; lack of beds available in the PHC, SHC at any given time, ignorance on the part of the people etc.

What was surprising in our findings, however, was the fact that even those people who belonged to some of the PHC (37 per cent) and SHC villages (63 per cent) did not report that they were making use of these facilities. As a result only in about 54 per cent of the villages did the people report that they had gone to the PHC/SHC for the deliveries and in two of the 8 SHC villages the people had also gone to the general hospital for the same.

When the child deliveries took place in the patient's homes, invariably in all the villages, the old ladies provided the required assistance. The ANMs also provided their assistance in 87 per cent of the villages. However, their help was not available in three of the remote villages viz. Mullahalli, D Kalavanchi and Kongarahalli.

The proportion of villages where the LHVs provided the assistance was about 38 per cent. Most of the villages where the LHVs attended the delivery cases were PHC villages (62 per cent) or SHC villages (38 per cent). Only in 13 per cent of the remote villages was her assistance available to the people.

In addition to these, there were trained and untrained Dais who rendered these services to the villagers who needed them. Our of the 24 villages where the study was conducted in as much as 83 per cent of the, people used the services of trained Dais. These villages included 88 per cent of the PHC villages and 75 per cent of the SHC villages and 88 per cent of the remote ones. The services of the untrained Dais were available in 29 per cent of the sample villages. The remote villages or the SHC villages (38 per cent) came under this category.

Regarding the details of complicated child deliveries, such cases were reported from 25 per cent of the PHC villages, 38 per cent of the SHC villages and 13 per cent of the remote ones.

On the question of the normal gap between the first and second child, in 75 per cent of the villages this period was said to be between 1-2 years and in the remaining cases it was between 2-3 years.

This data has clearly indicated that the message of 'spacing' had not reached the people in most of the villages including those where the PHCs and SHCs are located. This is because, the people in 88 per cent of the SHC villages said that the normal gap between the two child deliveries in their villages is only 1-2 years.

13. Periodic Medical Examination After Delivery

The last question in this section was about the pattern of visits to the PHCs/SHCs by the village women for the periodic check-ups after child delivery.

According to the data only about 38 per cent of the villages reported that their women visited the PHC or SHCs for the periodic check-ups after their delivery. However, most of these villages (75 per cent) were the PHC villages. People from 25 per cent of the SHC villages and 13 per cent of the remote villages also had gone to these places for periodic medical check-ups. An analysis of the frequency at which they went for the check-ups indicated that in 50 per cent of the PHC villages the same was once a week but in the case of the rest they visited these places only once in two weeks, probably because of the distance involved. Whenever the check-ups were necessary, they invariably chose to go to the PHCs.

Those villages from there the people had gone to the PHCs for the periodic check-ups said that they also got the required medicines regularly from there.

14. Sources of Drinking Water

The non-availability of clean drinking water is said to be one of the major reasons for the prevalence of such diseases like cholera, jaundice, dysentery, etc. Hence these diseases are aptly called waterborne diseases.

Among the 24 villages in Karnataka where the study was conducted only 8 had a regular supply of tap water. The villages which did not have this facility included all the remote villages and the SHC villages except Doddashivara. Among the PHC villages, Dibbur also did not have this facility.

In all the villages a large number of people depended on the surface wells for all their water requirements. Hardly ever these wells are chlorinated.

Another interesting observation particularly relevant from the point of view of public health is that in the entire area there was no other source of water which was used exclusively for domestic purposes. The sources from where water was taken for drinking purposes also serviced the other domestic needs.

15. <u>Sewage Disposal</u>

Disposal of waste was one area which was completely neglected throughout the region. In fact the conditions which were found in these villages may be similar to a large number of villages throughout the country and the main reasons for this may be the general economic backwardness of the majority of the inhabitants of these villages and the lack of organized services for maintaining these places clean.

Coming back to our discussion, only in three out of 24 villages there were some facilities for the disposal of waste. This is because, in these places, the respective panchayats have engaged people to do the cleaning operations.

In all the other places the residents themselves were supposed to do the cleaning and to make arrangements for the disposal of waste. This, in practice however, did not work satisfactorily because, there were only very few houses which had compost pits and all the others threw their rubbish all over the place. As a result the general standard of sanitation and even personal hygiene was very poor throughout the area.

Further, when asked how many houses in each village had bathrooms, the people belonging to 48 per cent of the villages of the entire area said that no household in their village had a bathroom. In the remaining 52 per cent only very few houses had bathrooms. It is estimated that the total number of houses in the area which had bathrooms would not exceed 1540. This, in proportion to the total number of houses in the area, works out to be 10 per cent. Out of these more 50 per cent were only make-shift bathrooms. In other words, effectively only 5 per cent of the houses had bathrooms worth the name.

16. Disposal of the Human and Animal Waste

The next question was about the lavatories. It was found that none of the villages which did not have bathrooms had no lavatories and even out of the 52 per cent of the villages which claimed to have bathrooms in some of their houses only 20 per cent had lavatories and that too in a very few houses. In other words, people in general preferred open air defacation which, from the public health point of view, is a serious hazard. But unfortunately, hardly any effort has been made by the public health officials and other para-medical staff to educate the masses in these matters. This has become very clear from the responses which were obtained when they were asked about their willingness to construct lavatories. More specifically, when the people were asked whether they would be willing to build private or public bathrooms in their respective villages only the people residing in 16 out of 24 villages answered in the affirmative but the others categorically stated that they were not interested.

In another attempt to ascertain their views on the construction of lavatories the villagers were told that they could construct a new type of lavatory which would cost them only Rs.400 each. After explaining the various aspects of this project they were asked whether they would be willing to build these lavatories for their own use. An analysis of the responses obtained from them has indicated that only those villagers who had shown their willingness to build bathrooms showed interest in trying out the new type of lavatories.

It has already been established that the people in this area in general, are poor. As a result they cannot afford many conveniences which are essential for healthy living. The data collected from the people regarding the pattern of human and animal waste disposal is a typical case in point. For example, most of the households in the area who had cattle did not have separate cattle sheds on their premises. When they were asked why they did not try to build the same for their cattle, in every village the people said that they cannot afford to do so because of their poverty. But, for a discerning person it is easy to understand that these people were really victims of their attitudes which showed plainly in their readiness on their part to change their old habits and povery was used as an excuse to continue living the way they have always lived. More than this, the public health personnel and other paramedical staff who are supposed to be the watchdogs of the health of these communities are not educating them properly. From the information gathered from the field, it was evident, that their duty ended with the distribution of medicine.

17. Superstitions

When the people were asked why certain diseases such as small pox, chicken pox, Balagraha, etc. occurred in all the villages they said that the cause of such diseases was the displeasure of the gods and goddesses. They also believed that the 'evil eye' can cause diseases, especially among children. All these clearly indicate that there is a need to educate the people in order to dispel their superstitious beliefs.

It is, therefore out duty to enlighten the people by persuading them to adopt hygienic practices in the day-to-day life.

18. Food Habits

The data regarding the food habits of the people in this area did not show any significant difference between one person and the other. The staple foods in the entire area were Ragi, Rice, Jowar and Wheat in that order. They ate almost the same type of food for the breakfast, lunch and dinner, which shows such classifications are alien to the people in this area. This is because, they are generally poor and they cannot afford the variety available to the so-called elite.

Similarly, there was no difference between the food habits of the adults and the children. The whole family ate the same food throughout the year.

Regarding the consumption pattern of pulses it was observed that habitually people ate less quantities of these.

In the case of vegetables, in about 67 per cent of the villages their consumption rate was less than adequate and in about 29 per cent of the rest the same was grossly inadequate. Thus, only 4 per cent of the villages in the sample reported an adequate consumption of vegetables by the inhabitants.

Milk was consumed in sufficient quantities by the inhabitants of only 38 per cent of the villages. Of the remaining, in 42 per cent of the villages the same was less than adequate and in the other 20 per cent it was grossly inadequate.

Edible oil was rarely used in 50 per cent of the villages. In another 33 per cent, its use was reported to be in less than adequate quantity and in the remaining 17 per cent, its consumptions was grossly inadequate.

They should also be told of the importance of eating nutritious food. The point that needs to be emphasized in this connection is the distinction between rich food and nutritious food. This is because they can get nutritious food from the easily available local food stuffs like green leafy vegetables, pulses, fruits like papaya etc. which need not necessarily be expensive.

19. Methods of Treatment for Snakebite, Dogbite, etc.

In order to understand more about these superstitious beliefs and practices the people were also asked to give information as to what they would do in a situation when a person is bitten by a snake, a dog or stung by a scorpion.

From the responses which emerged from the discussion with the villagers it became clear that the superstitious beliefs and practices were not only restricted to the common diseases found among children but were also prevalent in other situations where even the lives of the victims were sometimes threatened.

For example, in response to our question regarding the type of treatment given for snakebite, the people in all the villages replied that they used to take the victim immediately to the local 'Mantric' and whatever he prescribed was faithfully carried out. The same was the practice followed if someone was stung by a scorpion. If there were complications, as a last resort they may take the patient to the hospital for treatment.

Of the three situations presented above, however, only in the case of dogbite was the victim directly taken to the hospital for treatment. The reason stated for this deviation from their usual behaviour was that the injection given for dogbite was free and also because there was no superstition or customary treatment associated with it.

Based on these findings, therefore, it can be said that we should try to reach out to these villages and should also do more than merely distribute medicines, carry out immunization, family planning work, etc. We should concentrate more on the preventive aspect of health care which includes an enhanced and systematic communication with the masses and their education.

From the foregoing details of the research findings the readers must already have drawn the conclusions as to what kind of an intervension strategy would be the best suited for making the health care delivery system to function effectively and what its programme requirements are or rather what are its expectations from the INSAT Television Programmes.

But this is only one part of the story because, if the INSAT system has to give us what we want, we should at first do our home work seriously which would help us clear our thoughts as to what we really want to improve our efficiency. In other words, the user agencies and departments should conduct serious research in their respective fields of operation and spell out their real problems and programme-needs. Then only the producers would be able to think clearly and constructively about the formal content and other creative strategies of the specific programmes.

SOME REFLECTIONS ON RESEARCH — THE SITE EXPERIENCE IN KARNATAKA.

LEELA RAO.*

The experiences of the SITE year were varied. Too much was condensenced in too short a time. Too much had to be done in too little a time. Looking back it seems obvious that we should have paused sometimes atleast to wonder what was happening.

The academic approach to research prides itself on being systematic. The clarity of problem statement, the refinement of data collection tools, the precision of analysis and the logic of the results. Seen from any perspective, SITE was a challenge.

Faced with a time bound deadline, an unfamiliar communication technology in an unfamiliar setting and the bewildering complexity of the social context, the statement of problem was perhaps, the only clear understanding we had. We were aware of the information gaps that existed in the rural and urban sectors. Infact, the SITE experience, besides confirming our belief, also indicated that the information gap was widening and that there was an urgency in bridging this gap. It further highlighted the paradox that information reach was least where it was needed most.

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If space technology was the answer to bridging this information gap, then SITE was indeed a big step in the right direction. However, information reach is but one requirement. It is equally important that we get a clearer understanding of information processing both at individual and group level, that might eventually result in social action.

It is perhaps unrealistic to expect that a year long project would provide us all the clues to the complex quiz of information processing. At best we could only say that there was a social context in which information processing takes place. SITE brought home very clearly, that we needed to come to terms with a uniquely Indian and highly complex social context in the rural setting. Imported models and methods of enquiry were inpractical and meaningless.

To the struggling researcher searching for the elusive 'target' audience, even the simple demographic variables of age and sex become formidable. Some how distinctions of child, youth and adult seem meaningless when you are confronted with a fourteen year old mother of two, if at all you are able to verify the age in the first place. It seems some how non-scientific to process the opinions and suggestions of this child mother, filtered through the husband or elders in the family, and subjected to the rigorous reliability tests.

The most significant part of research becomes the search for appropriate tests of significance. The question is not whether data is available. There is an abundance of it. It is just that what is available, some how does not seem to fit into our preconcerved approach of analysis. They refuse to fall neatly into the classifications of the 'dependent' and 'independent' variables and get lost in 'miscellaneous' or 'other' categories. Consequently the excitement of collecting such diverse, conflicting data is not reflected in the rather dull and lengthy final report that only talks of participant observations. Sadly the participation is highlighted, the observation appears only as an after thought. It is not surprising then that with the completion of the report there is a sense of unease. After all the struggles of evolving an 'indeginous' design, the unpredictable, frustrating field work, the warmth and concern of the 'audience' who really wanted to help, the final research findings seem to be a set of questions. Perhaps this should have been the beginning after all.

There can be no two opinions that the beginning should always be with an assessment of needs.. The question begins with the task of identifying what these needs are? Whose needs are they and how are they to be assessed? To truly reflect the information needs of the people, we need to evolve newer methods of measurement. Breaking information needs into compact compartments of health needs, hygiene needs, agricultural needs, and so on is a text book solution to the basic problem. The recepient of information is an integrated whole being for whom these varied information needs are interactive and inter-dependent. The concept of co-ordinated effort in content design thus means more than the get together of the various user agencies. Not a mixture but a compounding of ideas. This to be further translated into meaningful signs and symbols. A challenge for a communication expert and the media professional.

That research efforts should have a broader base of enquiry seems equally obvious. This must encompass communication issues as well as approaches. Concentration on "effects" to be broadened to a search for better understanding of "effectiveness". Information access need not necessarily result in improved ability to understand information. The focus must shift from means of communication to the content of communication.

Relevance of message does not always depend on the usefulness of information alone. The perceived utility of information is derived from a social context, in which non-media parameters assume importance. The influence of these non-media factors in the assimilation/acceptance of information has already been recognised as crucial in communication policy formulation in many countries, developed and developing. It would appear logical that we try to identify these non-media parameters that will assist in the communication planning process, be it at national or local level.

If the SITE Philosophy of rural orientation is to continue, the delivery system becomes a natural target of interest. Much debate has gone on the cause of decentralised communication efforts, to the extent of recommending a new parallel system for rural communication complete with managers, producers and researchers. Centainly the idea should be strengthened with more research data. At the same time it might be worthwhile also to explore the available communication resources in the rural sector and identify ways and means of integrating new technologies to the existing pattern of communication. Whatever the approaches, a management orientation to communication activities seems essential.

Looking through a gap of eight years, deliberations on SITE might tend to be prescriptive. However, SITE also gave a firm footing to communication research in the country and provided insights to the future. Of things yet to come. The research of today must imbibe this spirit of anticipation — to look ahead.

SITE EXPERIENCE : SOME SUGGESTIONS

by

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Paper for presentation at the ISRO-UNICEF Seminar on "SITE to INSAT: Production of Programmes for Women and Children" at Space Applications Centre, Ahmedabad between November 26-28, 1984.

SITE EXPERIENCE: SOME SUGGESTIONS

Paul Julius Reuters' use of the carrier pigeon, to send stock price information from Brussels to Aachen, was not exactly an innovative effort -- except for exploiting an existing means of communication for a purpose not tried earlier. With the advent of telecommunication transmitting information, commercial and other, quickly across distances became a reality.

In 1865, Reuters took credit for carrying news about the killing of President Lincoln, being ahead by two days of competing news agencies. A hundred years later, "Early Bird" offered the international communication system, based on the now-legendary geo-stationary idea of Arthur Clarke, that made it globally possible to witness events as they happened: cutting down traditional notions of time and space. New uses were predicted for satellite communication.

Technological possibility tickled scientists. This created resonance in potential user agencies. SITE was a fall-out from the conquest of distances by communication satellites. Few dared to warn that technological feasibility is neither the index of success nor an undisguised blessing. Platitudes spewed. The faith in the curative and rejuvenating propensities of television was reflected at a Delhi seminar on "Software Objectives of TV" organised by All India Radio (of which telecasting was a part then) during February 16-18, 1973: "Television must be utilised in the development process as an instrument of social change and national cohesion unhesitatingly upholding progressive values, and involving the community in a free dialogue. Indian television has to shun the elitist approach and consumer value systems and evolve a truly national model. Television as a support to better education should assist the teacher effectively. It should cater to both in-school

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and out-of-school education. "A plethora of "shoulds" for which little justification, indigenous or international, existed. Pious wishes of this kind had preceded the expectations of SITE. Problems of social change, national cohesion and education were there and they needed to be solved. However, as a change of pillow is no cure for migrane, shift to newer communication technologies alone is poor panacea for age-old national illnesses.

SITE was an experiment in teaching. After nearly a decade of it there is some appreciation as to who learnt what. The hardware magicians had their lessons which got transferred to the INSAT series. The software pundits appear to be still in square one. If the so-called "radio paddy" syndrome of Thanjavur farmers have come for national applause, implications of the perception of SITE as "Radio-cinema", as another means of entertainment, still remains to be grasped by all and sundry in the decision-making chain of Doordarshan use for development. The meat of the new medium, wittingly or unwittingly, stays film-centric with its pictorial avatar of Vividh Bharathi.

What the occasional or regular viewers of SITE learnt is not the burden of this brief paper. What the software personnel (be they subject matter specialists, programme producers or social scientists) could have, is quite relevant now and will remain so for many years to come. The Department of Communication Bangalore University, held a meeting of experts on SITE evaluation, April 20-22, 1977, and it was attended by representatives of all agencies -- except the Planning Commission -- involved with the evaluatory exercise. The declared purpose of the meeting was to review and collate available SITE studies and findings, and based on them, to suggest guidelines for implementation by policy makers and planners. The guidelines were widely circulated then among men that mattered, be they ministers, bureaucrats, educationists, scholars or professionals. Like many SITE communication acts this too did not have intended effects. As one of the advertising principles is repetition, and as the guidelines have as much relevance and validity now as they had during the immediate post-SITE years, they are repeated in the pages that follow.

While chairing a session of the ICCTR-UNICEF Delhi seminar on women, children and the media held September 1984, the UGC Chairperson suggested that user agencies such as the Commission be provided with a list of recommendations that they could benefit from for INSAT purposes. Many others have sought similar suggestions in recent years. Most of the 12 guidelines below deserve to be repeated and acted upon by those who are in a position to do so.

Guideline 1. On Policy for Future TV:

Television policy can be in terms of utilisation, strategies of the physical infrastructure (i.e., T.V. network, how many TV sets and where?), Or in terms of programme production (local units regional units, languages, etc.). It is recommended that:-

a) In view of the audio-visual nature of the medium which will have more effect on audiences, rural TV centres should be established taking into account the fact that rural audiences have limited access to other media, and that they are, by and large, illiterate, and have limited exposure to the outside world due to poor transport and communication facilities;

b) Since television viewing in villages will continue to be mainly in the community viewing form for quite sometime to come, top priority should be made in central and state government budgets to ensure the installation and maintenance of community TV sets in each local centre;

c) Programmes produced for rural TV centres be of a localised nature, in view of the fact that the programmes of a general nature did not attract as large an audience as expected, and were not very effective in terms of catering to local needs of the audiences.

d) The major thrust of rural TV should be to reach under privileged sectors;

e) There should be proper co-ordination, both horizontal and vertical, among media, extension agencies, field publicity units and other rural development agencies: and

f) In order to make programmes more useful, on the spot guidance and effective follow-up activities, (demonstrations, supply of necessary inputs etc.) should be taken up.

<u>Guideline 2. On Persuading and Motivating Viewers:</u>

In order to persuade and motivate rural masses to view TV programmes regularly, it is recommended that:-

a) Programmes should be locally and functionally relevant based on the needs, aspirations and problems of the rural audiences;

b) Rural TV programmes should be in local languages and where possible, in local dialects;

c) There should be segmentation of programmes designed to suit specific needs and special interests of various categories of audiences, since their needs are varied. Segmentation should also be done area-wise, in cases where the programmes may not have universal appeal for the entire area of coverage. When this is done, the name of the area for which a programme is specially designed should be mentioned during the telecast, and the concerned target audience agencies be informed ahead of the telecasts;

d) In programme production, emphasis should necessarily be on outdoor (field-based) items. Hardware should not become a constraint in producing field-based programmes. Also production units should be adequately staffed. Lack of trained personnel should not be a constraint on programme productions.

e) TV centres should prepare schedules in consultation with a committee consisting of local officials, experts and users. Scheduling of TV programmes have been done in an arbitrary manner so far. Scheduling of programmes for each day should be done in such a manner as to strike a proper balance between instructional, informational and entertainment programmes; and

f) Frequency of the same programmes or a different programme based on the same theme, should be carefully worked out after assessing audience reactions. A quick feedback is necessary to find out their viewing preferences, how often the themes should be repeated and whether the same programme should be shown again. This is in view of the fact that many programmes, both informational and entertainment were repeated to such an extent that viewers were annoyed with the repetition.

<u>Guideline 3. On Themes for Rural TV:</u>

Although TV is being used for multiple purposes, for a rural TV centre, it is recommended that:-

TV should cater to different aspects of rural life. Programmes on agriculture, health, nutrition, family welfare, social customs, etc., should be telecast as part of a total package for rural development, rather than in isolation for programme scheduling purposes.

Guideline 4: On Information Load of TV programmes:

Studies in the Karnataka Cluster have shown the rural audience, have limited comprehension of messages. The tendency of production personnel to strictly adhere to the instruction materials of subject matter specialists was a possible contributing factor to the high information-load of the programmes. It is therefore recommended that:

a) Individual programmes have less information-load and;

b) Detailed information on a particular subject should be presented through a series of programmes, rather than in a single one.

Guideline 5. On ETV as a Component of Multi-Media Package:

Studies have demonstrated that TV can be an effective component of multi-media programmes for training. However, in the larger context of the utilisation of educational technology in formal and non-formal education, it is recommended that:-

a) Proper planning and co-ordination between various media be a pre-requisite. For this purpose it is necessary to determine how TV fits into overall development programmes, and to conduct research to decide on the components of proper media mix. Based on this, working models need to be evolved through experimentation in limited areas such as agriculture health and education. SITE experience indicates that training programmes with good supportive co-ordination were successful whereas others were not;

b) In view of the fact that the Government of India policy lays greater emphasis on non-formal education, and in the light of SITE experiences for both adult and children's programmes, the main and immediate emphasis of ETV should be supportive to non-formal education programmes. If TV is to be so used, there should be a specialised infrasturcture as set up for the SITE

Science Programmes for Children. There is need to provide pertinent information to producers in such subject areas as science, agriculture, health and other priority development areas;

c) ETV in the formal structure should first concentrate on training of teachers and development of syllabus-oriented packages of programmes, which should be pre-tested in schools in backward areas; and

d) Activity-oriented programmes for children should be one of the main features of ETV. While producing these activity-oriented programmes, consideration should be given to tools and materials accessible to children within their locale.

Guideline 6. On Service Facilities:

Considering the paucity of service facilities and the intended use of such facilities by the rural people, it is recommended that:-

a) Programmes designed on the use of certain inputs, services and facilities must be telecast, as far as possible, after assuring the availability of such inputs in the TV coverage area. Where such inputs are not available, programmes may be geared to practices for which they are not necessary. However, efforts to create awareness and demand for such inputs among the masses through telecast need to be encouraged.

Guideline 7. On TV Care-Takers:

The role of TV care-takers should be clearly defined. In future, convenors should be selected for community viewing, keeping the following factors in mind:-

a) They should be opinion leaders;

b) They should be literate; and

c) They should have friendly relations with all segments of the community concerned.

Guideline 9. On Media Credibility:

Credibility of TV as a source of information was found to be high. It was also found that credibility of specific programmes (general information and agriculture) was very high compared to news. It is, therefore, recommended that:-

The production of news programmes be made a professional enterprise. All institutions engaged in communication research and training should be strengthened so that they provide specialised and quality training in the areas they handle.

Guideline 10. On Communication Training:

Taking into consideration the research experiences of SITE and the existing institutions available for training, there is a great and immediate need to expand training facilities at National and Regional institutions. The committee recommended that:-

Adequate physical infra-structure, including TV production facilities be made available to all training institutions. Exposure to communication process and research should form an essential part of the training given to production personnel.

Guideline 11. On TV Research Utilisation:

In view of the several SITE evaluation studies and related developmental communication researches, there is a urgent need for utilisation of these research findings by policy makers. It is, therefore, recommended that:-

a) Research findings reach TV centres and concerned user agencies in time;

b) A national body consisting of communication researches be formed to examine studies conducted by various agencies and make specific recommendations to potential users such as TV centres and the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting and;

c) Media organisations have a processing cell to interpret research findings;
(In this context it is suggested that researchers write in a popular style, avoiding use of technical jargon and statistical details, so that their findings can be easily understood and used.)

Guideline 12. On TV Research:

For television research to be functional, it is recommended that:-

a) It be problem-oriented and pragmatic;

b) It be a continuous process, preceding and succeeding production; and

c) It involves, as far as possible, team research, consisting of researchers, producers and user agencies.

The dilemma of satcom users is to arrive at the right media mix and to maintain the proper balance between communication systems that are already operative in a given culture and those that are becoming increasingly available to the society The new communication environment, unlike in the past, is a creation of political will, and not the outcome of stages of development. This has to be purpose-oriented, considering the large national investments.

Technologies bring about changes in society and, therefore, policy planning calls for comprehensive coverage of both hardware and software. It demands an understanding of what folk media, print, telephone or cinema has done in the past. The question is not only one of setting up newer facilities and acquiring ability to operate them but also one of appreciating the origins of communication technologies (the carrier pigeon, for example), their potential and limitations for social communication. The act of picking up INSAT signals, amplifying them and rebroadcasting via LPTs is no great "service" by itself to the communities covered.

A generation ago not a single man-made satellite circled the earth. If the infant INSAT appears to be used in amateurish fashion, the fault is not with the satcom system. Neither film nor radio has been adequately used for purposes other than entertainment, deposite all the shiboleth about their potential for modernisation. Media, new and so new, reflect largely the ethos of the ruling elite and their class whereby mass interests get distorted and ignored. India is blessed not only with the strong centre at the expense of weak states but also by an increasingly strong metropolis-based media system at the risk of local facilities. This may be convenient and rewarding for the continued domination of the urban-based upper classes who enjoy setting up transmitters rather than mini studios in various parts of the country.

Instead of culture-oriented and need-based communication we have technology-dictated communication efforts. Before high powered technology came, there existed conventional wisdom as exploited by a Sankarachariya or Gandhiji.

The distance between "professed" -- improving the quality of life, for example, of Indian masses -- and "practised" communication culture at present, be it the private press or the public broadcasting, is glaring enough even for the blind to recognise. Who owns the media is not all that important as long as media are run professionally and in social interest. Demands of technological revolution and its capacity to deliver goods remain to be founded on more exacting professional requirements, and on policy planning. These have to be rooted on an understanding of the sociology of communication and a culture of competence, plus on the political will for use of satcom for larger social good.
