Communication for Development in “Mithilanchal” - One of the poorest regions in India

How can communication / mass media play role in bridging the gap between different strata of society and help in development of the socio-economic condition in Mithilanchal?

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Acknowledgement:

Foremost, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to my advisor Ms. Zeenat Hasan for continuous support to my Master’s thesis, for her precious advice, patience, motivation, immense knowledge and enthusiasm. Her supervision helped me throughout in writing this thesis.

Besides my supervisor, I would like to thank the ComDev lecturers for guiding and supporting me all through the journey: Anders Hög Hansen, Ylva Ekström, Hugo Boothby, Yuliya Velkova and Mikael Rundberg. Thanks to lecturer Michael Krona for the invaluable supervision, advice and encouragement.

My sincere thanks also go to my fellow ComDev students from all different corners of world. It was wonderful working together and I will cherish the experience always.

My very special thanks for all who found time for interview and survey I needed to conduct for my research. It would not have been possible without them.

I would also like to thank my family for standing by me always. For this thesis, special thanks to my Grandmother Dr. Mrs. Gauri Mishra and my father Mr. Amarnatha Mishra for inculcating me with respect and love for my culture and tradition, for teaching me the value of my native land and language and help me represent my birthplace in different parts of globe.

Last but not the least, I would like to thank my husband Mr. Avinash Jha for encouraging me pursue my studies, for helping me with my career and learn more. His help in making me join this course and sail through it successfully cannot be expressed. I cannot thank him enough for his continuous cooperation, invaluable suggestions and being there for me always.

And above all Thank you God for everything.
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ABSTRACT

“There are many ways of conceptualizing development, ways that foreground economics, politics, culture, or a combination, and within each of those realms, ways that emphasize processes or structures or both and their relationships. Further, in some perspectives development is geographically inclusive, whereas in others the focus is the so-called Third World or developing countries and their aid needs”. (Wilkins, 2000, p.7)

Considering the term ‘development’ in above quote, this thesis focuses on poverty and under-development prevailing in Mithilanchal region in India, the caste system which divides the society and its direct and indirect consequences. India, whether called a Third World country or a developing country, the difference between the developed and deprived regions can be well spotted and the aim of this thesis is to track how communication and other media tools have been helpful in development of society so far and then analyse how similar development can lead to more liveable society.

The division of Mithilanchal region between the Elite and Mass led to control of Media by the powerful Elites. The flow of information was more diffusive (one-way / top to bottom) than participatory (both way) and with new media and ICT making its place globally, awareness increased along with the participation of people from different strata of society.

This thesis explores on how instrumental media has been in enlightening the society over the period of time, what impact media and its various forms have had in everyday life of commoners and how people living in deprivation look up to the media for it to be more available and accessible.

With the help of qualitative interviews and questionnaire surveys conducted in the region, the thesis concludes that people have had the benefit of media’s presence since long. Traditional - Communication media did leave impact on people’s lives and even today, those who live in these regions are looking forward to more economic, political and social development with the help of new media and ICT. The various positive transformations in unequal social structure brought out with help of communication is aimed to be discussed by the end of the thesis.
Chapter 1. Introduction

A strong, independent and free media can build a strong foundation of a stable society. The democracy, the freedom, the politics, the economy, the international relations, all need a powerful tool for communication and media has been proved to be instrumental in resolving local, regional and global issues and bringing in the required changes. Though the social structure depends on numerous factors, it is not static and because it is dynamic, media has a vital role to play in determining and influencing its framework, its stability, its strength and characteristics.

As Arjun Appadurai puts it, “This is a world where electronic media are transforming the relationships between information and mediation, and where nation, states are struggling to retain control over their populations in the face of a host of subnational and transnational movements and organizations.” (Appadurai, 1996, p. 189)

1.1 Overview

The republic of India is the seventh largest country by area, second most populated country with over 1.2 billion people (the first being China) in the world and is the world’s largest democracy. With a history of over 30,000 years, India has a rich cultural heritage and is home to six main religions of world.

The Indian caste system embodies much of the social stratification and many of the social restrictions found in the Indian subcontinent. Social classes are defined by thousands of endogamous hereditary groups, often termed as jātis, or "castes". India declared untouchability illegal in 1947 and has since enacted other anti-discriminatory laws and social welfare initiatives, albeit numerous reports suggest that many Dalits ("ex–Untouchables") and other low castes in rural areas continue to live in segregation and face persecution and discrimination.[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/India]

India is a union comprising of 28 states and 7 union territories. Bihar is the twelfth largest state by area and third most populated one. Ancient Bihar (which consisted of Anga, Videha/Mithila, Magadha and Vajji/Vrijji) was a centre of power, learning and culture in ancient and classical India [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bihar].
Mithilanchal is the region in North Bihar extended in Nepal and holds great value with reference to the famous epic ‘Ramayana’. Considered one of the economically poorest regions in India, agricultural, fishery, animal husbandry and poultry contribute to the main economy of the region. Although the region has a glorious history and is renowned for mythological, academic, cultural significance, it went through series of downfall resulting to be one of the poorest regions of the country. There are many aspects which led to the present situation and unequal distribution of the society based on caste and class has been a major one.

The research examines the issue of Elite and Mass divide prevailing in majority of Indian society. The intention is to look through the history of this division and understand the effect and consequence of this phenomenon. Further, talking about the elites and masses, “IN RECENT times, the concept of elite has been invoked frequently in discussing the problems and prospects of development in third world countries. There have been excellent opportunities to examine the social forces which are creating the new elites as well as their own role in the social transformation taking place there. It was believed that the elite, by virtue of their position as leaders in thought and action, were capable of inspiring effective programmes of social change.” (Sachchidananda, Lal, 1980, p.1).

Mithilanchal is still suffering from such orthodox issues and there needs to be a mode to bridge the gap. People need to understand the value of strength attained from education, communication and togetherness. People need to be aware of their rights, opportunities, facilities and freedom. People need to develop their standard of living and avail all basic necessities and comforts of life they deserve. They need to know about Media. Media has been instrumental in resolving biggest of issues and is considered one of the most powerful tool. The role of media has been incredible in Indian history and it is equally important in present day Indian democracy. Citizen journalism is making a prominent place for itself. With availability of digital camera, smart phones, internet and other technologies, a common citizen can play active role in bringing up unheard, unseen, unknown issue to public and government. Media has been a strong bridge between the citizen and government. When in past it was more ‘diffusive’ in nature and communication was one way (where people just heard and were not heard), at present it is more participatory in nature (where the citizen and the government both can communicate with each other). There is more transparency and it is easier to understand
This thesis focuses on influence of media on people, their belief and expectation from media in development of a region called Mithilanchal in Northern part of Bihar state of India. The region also spreads in Nepal but that will not be included here in order to keep this study focused.

1.2 Thesis Structure

Chapter 2 presents the Background where it talks about the Mass Media in Indian society, its history and presence in contemporary India. A brief background of traditional media tools is presented to know the varied forms of media in Mithilanchal. The chapter ends with introduction to Mithilanchal and understanding of the discrimination in Indian society.

Chapter 3 is about the Literature and Theoretical Framework on which the study is based. The theory of diffusive and participatory communication approach has been discussed to establish its relation with social development and further EE or Education – Entertainment or Edutainment is reached as a method which can be used by media as one of the solutions to address the problem and help in re-structuring the society.

Moving forward, a detailed account of Literature list chosen for review and the theories has been presented based on which the analysis will be done. Then the case study is explained with main issues and its consequences and the chapter ends with the main research question with an inference drawn from the analysis of entire discussion.

Chapter 4 outlines the Research methods and methodologies chosen for the thesis. It reasons the selected methods and how will it help in finding the answers through qualitative interviews and questionnaire surveys conducted on people from different strata of Mithilanchal.

Chapter 5 details the Field work. How was work done? Selection of participants, their support, feelings, expectations, reactions have been brought forward and then it is about the few interview respondents. The result of questionnaire survey has been displayed in this section for the data which helped in consolidating the final result.

Chapter 6 is the Analysis of the entire exercise. The outcome of the discussed theories and inferences made from the interviews and surveys.

And Chapter 7 is the conclusion where the role of media is discussed in light of finding
a resolution to the issues faced by the underdeveloped region of Mithilanchal.

The reference list has the books and web references made for the thesis and the details of the interviews are attached as appendix of the thesis which can be referred by readers for more detail.

_I have also referred to research done by my father (Amarnatha Mishra) as he had explored the Literature and Journalism of Mithilanchal in 1978-9 and had conducted survey on few significant aspects of the region and it was helpful in completion of this study. I have marked his name for the excerpt from his work and he can be contacted by the reader for more related details._
Chapter 2. Background

2.1 The Indian Mass Media

Indian Media consist of several different types of communications: television, radio, cinema, newspapers, magazines, and Internet-based Web sites/portals. Indian media was active since the late 18th century with print media started in 1780, radio broadcasting initiated in 1927, and the screening of Auguste and Louis Lumière moving pictures in Bombay initiated during the July of 1895. It is among the oldest and largest media of the world. Media in India has been free and independent throughout most of its history, even before establishment of Indian empire by Ashoka the Great on the foundation of righteousness, openness, morality and spirituality. The period of emergency (1975–1977), declared by Prime Minister Indira Gandhi, was the brief period when India's media was faced with potential government retribution.


The mass media plays vital role in modern India, where journalism is not limited to the professionals. Citizen journalism is an important part of Indian democracy and people are freely exercising their right to freedom of speech and expression. Corruption in Indian politics, the scams and unlawful incidents are brought in public views and are being fought for on daily basis. The media that had the privilege of manipulating the truth earlier are forced to present the real event in present digital era. Digital cameras, Smartphones, Blog writing, Social Media have brought in a revolution which does not limit the media to elite or privileged group as their property and instead has become a tool to show the truth and fight for justice. It is being used as a weapon to fight against corruption, against injustice, against illegal affairs. As Wilkins puts it “An important step of this journey has been the move away from an unconditional belief in the mass media and toward appreciating citizens’ media. Through this move, we have learned to believe in the power of the people to establish and develop their own communication outlets, to weave their own communication networks and effect social change in their own communicative and cultural terms. Now, a new learning journey begins as we, communication scholars as well as peace scholars and activists, come to accept that peace without the active and respectful inclusion of the peoples of the world will not happen.” (Wilkins, 2000, p. 157).
However, India has been known as an agricultural country and even now majority of Indian population resides in villages. Media in India has developed over the period but still the age old traditional media tools are used and practised in rural India for various communication purposes. It is understood that it is influenced and improved in various aspects but there are groups and communities who prefer sticking to the traditional tools than exploring and getting accustomed to the new age technology.

2.2 Traditional Media tools in India

On one hand, the metropolitan cities in India experience the presence of all kinds of modern media, updated communication channels, best of ICT, and are synchronized with the technological inventions of developed nations; on the other hand the rural India is still practicing the traditional media tools like Radio, Television, Theatre, Street play, Print media etc. for communication. Community radio has been a useful tool in health and agricultural development of rural India and programmes broadcasted there have been remarkably successful and popular in bringing in the intended changes.

There are people advocating to treat the traditional and digital media at par today. “With the growing importance of new information technology and social media tools like Twitter and Facebook, India has asked the United Nations to treat digital media at par with traditional media. “It is important not to treat the digital media, which in many countries caters to a different segment of society, differently from the traditional media, as that would be divisive," Trinamool Congress MP Derek O'Brien, who represented India, said at the 67th session of the UN General Assembly in New York.


Among traditional media tools, radio holds a special place as it is still recognised as a major source of information and is widely used in the developing world, he said while addressing delegates in the Special Political and Decolonisation committee.

"We are of the opinion that there is need to raise awareness about the importance of radio, and enhance international cooperation for improving and diversifying the content of radio broadcasts," the Rajya Sabha MP said, a copy of whose speech was made
Although the traditional tool has been instrumental in conveying the social message, in communicating the vital information, in educating the mass about livelihood and its various aspects, it has been in control of the elite or the powerful people of the society who control the information and treat media as their possession.

“The elite are recruited from a much diversified group which includes land-owners and moneylenders in the village. Local officials who are hand-in-glove with them, industrialists, higher bureaucrats and legislators and even teachers. They are in a position to hinder or manipulate reforms and if by any chance reform is legislated, they try to obstruct its implementation. Because of the power they wield, there has been little progress in land reform and none at all in eradicating corruption. The elite are, by and large, in favour of the status quo, since any programme that aims at equalization is unacceptable to them.” (Sachchidananda, Lal, 1980, p.2)

According to the class-dominant theory, "the media reflects and projects the view of a minority elite, which controls it". (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mass_media [Accessed 29th July, 2013]

The Elites controlled and manipulated the traditional tools of communication. In Mithilanchal, these tools symbolised the status, caste and class and represented the hierarchical structure of the society.

2.2.1 Few Traditional Tools of Communication in Mithilanchal

Since the research is focused on region called Mithilanchal, list of 13 main Traditional tools of communication used there are presented below. There are many more which can be added to the list but the following gives an idea of how communication flow in region has been more elite-centric or diffusive in nature.

1. Ghatak:

It is the go-between (messenger) for fixing up marriages, especially in Maithili Brahmins¹ and Karna Kaysthas² of the region.

¹ Maithil Brahmins are main upper caste people in Mithilanchal (More details are discussed in chapters ahead).
² Karna Kaysthas are also upper caste people of Mithilanchal.
2. **Naria: Hajam:**
Barber by caste, hajams were being sent by host to the guests to invite them on certain occasions such as, Mundans\(^3\), Upanayan\(^4\), Chaturthi (Fourth day of marriage) and Shradha\(^5\).

3. **Kahutia:**
Hajams play this role along with a Brahmin at the time of second Marriage (Duragman i.e. the ceremony when the bride leaves her parent’s home for her husband’s home for the first time) to communicate the message of the bride—from her father’s place.

4. **Lok-Din:**
It goes with the bride to her marriage place, where she explains the persisting situation at brides previous home and at the same time looks after the bride for four days and returns back with the message from the bride and her new home to communicate that to bride’s mother and other family members there.

5. **Samadia:**
It is being sent on special occasions from one place to some other place to convey the message of a general welfare of a family or a community.

6. **Rakhbars:**
Rakhbars are they who along with protecting the field informs the villagers about the prevailing state of the crop and in case of miscreants’ interruptions, make the villagers about it alert.

7. **Dholho:**
At the time of emergency such as attack, natural fury, calamity and epidemic, it informs the people of the area with beating the drum.

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\(^3\) Mundan is a ceremony in Hindus when the child receives the first hair cut.

\(^4\) Upanayan is the initiation ritual by which initiates are invested with a sacred thread, to symbolize the transference of spiritual knowledge. [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Upanayana](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Upanayana) [Accessed 1st January, 2013]

\(^5\) Shradha is a ritual performed to pay homage to the dead persons.
8. **Bharia:**
He is one who worked for the transportation of the presentations also carried the news with him.

9. **Godanparni:**
They also just on account of their being vagabonds carried the news with them and at times communicated it in practical form.

10. **Ghoors:**
Sitting around the fire-place in winter was the ideal place for communicating news especially about the scandals in the community. Ghoors were also a boon for the women of Mithila who because of feudal system could not get news at all.

11. **Sama-Chakeva:**
It is festival for the security of brothers celebrated by the young women folk in the month of Kartik on the Purnima day with the help of figures of birds and beasts made out of clay which symbolize the love for their brothers and communicates fraternity.

12. **Kirtana Party:**
Though it has disappeared today, till the 18th century it had played the role of propagating Maithil belief, Maithil customs, and maithil ceremonies and rites. It was one of the glorious achievements of Maithil School of communication.

13. **Sabhagachia-Sauratha:**
A place where all marriage meetings take place. It is also an important historical site and was once explored by interested persons. There is a frequent mention in the Bengal records of the humiliations that the British officers had to face and the early British administrations have severely criticised the attitude of some prominent maithil Brahmins. (From the research work of Amarnatha Mishra, 1978-79, p.20-22)

**2.2.1.1 Analysis**

Many of the above mentioned traditional tools are still present in Mithilanchal and are being practiced with same believe as it was 67 years back before Indian independence.
The terms like *Naria-hajam* and *Godanparni* are now considered derogatory as the reference is made to a particular caste/group of people or so called lower section of society. People don’t approve of being categorised and looked down upon in present society as they are more exposed to the equal or global social structure. People travel to bigger cities and are getting aware of them being exploited in their home. They react, when they are being referred by their caste, however, they lack the knowledge of method to be followed to remove this bias. The ceremonies, festivals, celebrations, rituals, communication systems are mostly named with reference to the higher-lower, gender or other social discrimination. In India before independence, these social norms were kind of accepted as the media was entirely controlled by the elite or the ruling political party whereas, now with communication media becoming more participatory, people have become more aware. The expectations have increased and the discriminated group of people want to eradicate these divisions and practice the equal status in society. People who are good at plumbing, shoe-making, hair-cutting, tattoo art, etc. are now avoiding to practice these professions and not teaching their children the same, just because these are looked down upon by the ‘elite’ in the society. The same discriminated or lower section of the society is now eliminating the surnames and family names which disclose their group or status.

The above traditional tools in Mithilanchal carry messages of discrimination and clear divide in the social structure.

### 2.3 Mithilanchal

Mithilanchal is an ancient kingdom situated at 25 degree 28’ and 26 degree 52’ north latitude and between 84 degree 56’ and 86 degree 46’ longitude. It is bounded on the north by the Himalayas and on the east, south and west by rivers Kosi, Ganga and Gandak respectively. It is 200 kilometers broad and nearly 400 km long. The ancient name of Mithila was Videh country, and it was discovered and inhabited by Videh Madhav. The name Mithila came to be known later after the name of King Mithi who was the father of King Janak. According to the Upanishads⁶ the King of Mithila was a patron of learning. Mithila witnessed during this period a galaxy of scholars, advancement of learning, economic prosperity, religious ferments, social developments, 

⁶ are a collection of philosophical texts which form the theoretical basis for the Hindu religion [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Upanishads] [Accessed 31st December 2012]
and other progress during the reign of philosopher King Janak. (From the research work of Amarnatha Mishra, 1978-79)

Talking about nineteenth century, as described by Sachchidananda and Lal, “In the second half of the nineteenth century, a small group of people proficient in the English language emerged in several areas under British rule. This qualification enabled them to secure appointments to some top-level and middle-level jobs such as membership of the provincial civil service, non-gazetted clerical posts, etc. Under the auspices of the alien government, knowledge of English also helped them to take up a variety of professions such as law, journalism, teaching and so on.

Besides, they were in a position to play another crucial role. When the British government decided to introduce a modicum of local self-government in the country, they were the persons who were initially called upon to shoulder this responsibility. In fact, this emerging class was the new middle class and it also assumed the form of an elite group.” (Sachchidananda, Lal, 1980, p.171)

Although, Mithilanchal had a glorious history of knowledge and learning (considering, Lord Buddha got his enlightenment in this land), over the period, discrimination on the basis of caste, creed, sect, religion, gender took over everything else and damaged the social fabric. People were being deprived of their own rights. And in Pre-independence era, it was the time of people who were educated and could speak or communicate in English apart from being from so-called higher ‘Elite’ class. They manipulated the media, journalism and communication for saving their own position.

Maithili is the language spoken by people of Mithilanchal. “Maithili has made a vast contribution in different forms and its status as one of the living languages of India is well recognized. Yet, the subjective regional consciousness or the we-feeling on the basis of common language or common territory etc., which is a necessary factor in nation-building, is absent among the masses in Mithila. Absence of consciousness among the masses has been attributed to “elite castes” ineffectiveness in transmitting their sense of regional identity to the former. This ineffectiveness seems to be the result of the contradictions between the elite and the masses in Mithila.” (Sachchidananda, Lal, 1980, p.187)

The multiple factors leading to Mithilanchal being underdeveloped and considered as one of the poorest region in India include its geography, the political scenario, the historical background apart from the social structure and this work will concentrate on
the social structure and media playing as catalyst in given scenario, the influence of media on people and their expectation from media towards development of society. There have been several reforms in line with the same and the intention here is to analyse how role of media has been the most effective one in reaching out to the mass, informing and educating the people about the availability of various opportunities, rights and forums which can help them improve their social condition and living standards.

2.4 Discrimination in Indian society

As Arjun Appadurai explains “These enumerative practices, in the setting of a largely agricultural society that was already to a large degree practically prepared for cadastral control by the Mughal state, had another major consequence. They were not merely a rehearsal for the counting practices of the Indian national census after 1870. They also accomplished a major and hitherto largely unnoticed task. The huge apparatus of revenue settlements, land surveys, and legal and bureaucratic changes in the first half of the nineteenth century did something beyond commoditizing land (Cohn 1969); transforming “lords into landlords” and peasants into tenants (Prakash 1990); and changing reciprocal structures of gift and honor into salable titles, which were semiotically fractured and were rendered marketable, while retaining some of the metonymic force that tied them to named persons. They also unyoked social groups from the complex and localized group structures and agrarian practices in which they had previously been embedded, whether in the context of “silent settlement” of inams in South India (Frykenberg 1977; Dirks 1987), of inams in Maharashtra (Preston 1989), of bonded laborers in Bihar (Prakash 1990), or of the Julahas in Uttar Pradesh (Pandey 1990). The huge diversity of castes, sects, tribes, and other practical groupings of the Indian landscape were thus rendered into a vast categorical landscape untethered to the specificities of the agrarian terrain.” (Appadurai, 1996, p. 126-127)

In India, particularly, the elite who ushered in independence were committed to ideals of modernization and more particularly, to egalitarianism. Thus, in the constitution and in the various policy statements we find an expression of these ideals. One of the cherished goals was to establish a classless and casteless society and yet these declared egalitarians policies have left masses impoverished, while the elite have feathered their
own nests. Historical experience has shown that no upper class has ever relinquished its privileges and divested itself of power simply because of good intentions and ideals. This can only be done by pressure from below. Fortunately, for the elite this pressure is not very strong in developing countries (Sachchidananda, Lal, 1980, p.2) “By situating strategic social change within this context of power, we can recognize both the ability of dominant groups to control hegemonic processes through perpetuating their ideological interests and the potential for marginal communities to resist” (Wilkins, 2000, p.2).

Chapter 3. Literature and Theoretical framework

Max “Weber’s is the theory of rationalization upon which rested much of the modernization theory that was applied in development research and whose treatment of culture was so impoverished. Weber equated reason with scientific and technical thought and saw modernity as the progressive application of scientific and bureaucratic thought throughout society. It was means-ends reasoning oriented toward causal analysis, prediction, and control. He modelled this philosophical conception on the autonomous ego whose internal subjectivity is separated from external, physical world and whose reason represents the effort to grasp the world objectively, or “instrumentally”, in thought. In this model, values, including cultural values, can only cloud reason.” (Wilkins, 2000, p.58)

The above theory helps explore through the role of media in form of mass-media / communication media, in bringing awareness to the un-favoured section of society. How technical advancement in media has helped people residing in undeveloped part of country, learn, earn and improve their livelihood?

To be able to explore and conduct the in-depth analysis, the theoretical framework of this research is based upon the following literature. The main points for discussion, the facts for analysis, the choice of methods and methodologies, the answers to how and why, the effects and consequences are all based on the theories from following literatures. Of course more data, literature and statistics have been referred for comparative analysis and support to discussion.
3.1 Theoretical framework

This part aims at bringing out the relation between social structure, communication, media tools involved, governance and the development based on same. As the topic suggests, the thesis aims to explore the role of media in development of region called Mithilanchal in India. How development communication can help in identifying various problems? How can it help in finding possible solutions through participation, dialogues and exchange of ideas among different communities? How communication can be planned and implemented in improvement of living conditions? The framework of main analysis is based on the literature mentioned in next section. However, in the beginning, the importance of above mentioned components in society will be discussed.

3.1.1 Communication

“We communicate with ourselves when we work through ideas, psych ourselves to meet challenges, rehearse ways to approach someone about a difficult issue and talk ourselves into or out of various courses of action. We communicate with others to build and sustain personal relationships, to perform our jobs and advance our careers, to connect with friends and meet new people online, and to participate in social and civic activities. Every facet of life involves communication. Although we communicate all the time, we don’t always communicate effectively. People who have inadequate communication knowledge and skills are hampered in their efforts to achieve personal, professional, and social goals. On the other hand, people who communicate well have a keen advantage in accomplishing their objectives. This suggests that learning about communication and learning how to communicate are keys to effective living.” (Wood, 2008, p. xix).

3.1.2 The communication approach (Participatory and Diffusion model)

Communication is related to every aspect of our daily lives and at the same time it plays vital role in determining the social structure of a society. The fact that ‘communication’ and ‘communications’ are still used indistinctly reflects this elusive conceptual ambiguity. For some, communication means community
empowerment and social mobilization; for others, the work of media and other information technologies; and for others, public relations and publications. (Hemer, Tufte, 2005, p.86)

Communication has the power to build and shape the culture, structure and living condition of a society and the approach of communication (diffusive or participatory), decides the pattern of information flow. By discussing the role of communication in bringing out the social change, the thesis aims at theoretically looking at the possibilities of changes for development at local, national and global level. Presently, “the field of development communication is commonly dominated by two conceptual models: diffusion and participation. The diffusion model – coined by Everett M. Rogers’ (1962) diffusion of innovations theory– focuses on knowledge transfer leading to behavior change using ‘social marketing’ (Kotler, Roberto, 1989, p. 24). On the other hand, “The participatory model –based on ideas from Paulo Freire’s (1970) Pedagogy of the Oppressed focuses on community empowerment” (Hemer, Tufte, 2005, p.123). It stresses on community involvement and horizontal dialogue as a medium for community empowerment. “Participatory campaigns concern interpersonal channels such as group meetings, open dialogue, workshops, localized media, interactive posters” (Hemer, Tufte, 2005, p.124) etc. In contrast to diffusion model, which is conceived as one-way, linear or top-down approach, participatory model is rather conceived as a bottom-up approach. And generally, where as in the former model, communication process is seen as a message going from a sender to a receiver, it emphasises mainly on sender and the media but in the latter, the emphasis is more on receiver and message. “Although participatory communication is often defined in contrast to the more traditional diffusion model, the two are not polar opposites. The diffusion model has evolved in a participatory direction since its initial formulation, and participatory projects necessarily involve some element of information transfer. Nonetheless, most development communication projects tend to identify themselves quite clearly as belonging in one or the other category” (Hemer, Tufte, 2005, p.125). And both the models share the objective of achieving development in social, educational, environmental, and economic fields. Although they have different theoretical models, and underlying frameworks related to the projects, design, strategies, policies, implementation, outcomes, etc. regardless of being diffusive or participatory, the communication for development strategy should be based on social, cultural, political, economic and historical factors in the community targeted for development.
3.1.3 Communication for Development

Development communication involves creating mechanisms to broaden public access to information on reforms; strengthening clients’ ability to listen to their constituencies and negotiate with stakeholders; empowering grassroots organizations to achieve a more participatory process, and undertaking communication activities that are grounded in research – World Bank, 2006 (Servaes, 2008, p. 15). The relationship between communication and culture lies at the core of development (Hemer, Tufte, 2005, p.89). Development Communication is the study of social change brought about by the application of communication research, theory, and technologies to bring about development….Development is a widely participatory process of social change in a society, intended to bring about both social and material advancement, including greater equality, freedom, and other valued qualities for the majority of people through their gaining greater control over their environment – Everett Rogers, 1976 (Servaes, 2008, p.14). It has been defined as “the strategic application of communication technologies and processes to promote social change” (Hemer, Tufte, 2005, p.123). Development should aim to improve the dialogic capacity of communities, particularly in poor areas of the world. The lack of access to communication and information is one of the most tangible problems in the developing world. Efforts should be directed at enhancing the opportunities for communities to talk and listen to others, identifying problems, determining goals, deciding courses of action, and assigning responsibilities. Communication is about building the community rather than transmitting information. Media technologies are instruments in facilitating the communication process rather than vehicles for exchanging information (Hemer, Tufte, 2005, p.87).

What is communication for development and social change? Scholars and practitioners may differ in the wording they use to define the subject, but their intent is constant. Put simply, development programmes cannot produce change without an ongoing, culturally and socially relevant communication dialogue among development providers and clientele, and within the recipient group itself. Therefore, all those involved in the analysis and application of communication for development and social change – or what can broadly be termed ‘development communication’ – would probably agree that in essence development communication is the sharing of knowledge aimed at reaching a consensus for action that takes into account the interests, needs and capacities of all
concerned. It is thus a social process. Communication media are important tools in achieving this process but their use is not an aim in itself – interpersonal communication too must play a fundamental role (Servaes, 2008, p.15)

3.1.4 Edutainment or Entertainment-Education (E-E)

Entertainment-education (E-E) is the process of purposely designing and implementing a media message to both entertain and educate, in order to increase audience members’ knowledge about an education issue, create favourable attitudes, shift social norms, and change the overt behaviour (Singhal & Rogers, 1999, p. 9). Entertainment-education is not a theory of communication. Rather, it is a communication strategy to bring about behavioural and social change. (Singhal, Sabido, 2004, p. 4). According to Singhal and Rogers, “The general purpose of entertainment-education interventions is to contribute to the process of directed social change, which can occur at the level of an individual, community, or society. The entertainment-education strategy contributes to social change in two ways. First, it can influence members’ awareness, attitudes, and behaviour towards a socially desirable end. Here the anticipated effects are located in the individual audience members…Second; it can influence the audience’s external environment to help create the necessary conditions for social change at the system level. Here the major effects are located in the interpersonal and social-political sphere of the audience’s external environment.” (Singhal, Rogers, 2004, p. 6).

The practice of E-E is not new to the society and has been existing since long. Media in its various forms has been instrumental in informing and entertaining the society. The traditional media tools at global, national, social and local levels have been active in transmission of knowledge and information making it entertaining and interesting, for people to understand, comprehend and identify with the issue and make the necessary move. However, the concept of E-E was developed later and gradually the policies, strategies, processes involved and the outcome and impact became a subject of study. “The E-E strategy began in developing countries, mainly in the form of radio and television soap operas dealing with health-oriented topics, where donor support was often provided, and where societies were not media saturated. Today, there exist multiple types of E-E, and the E-E strategy has been applied very widely.” (Singhal, Rogers, 2004, p. 8).
Development at different levels involves various factors and in order to bring even a miniscule change, these factors are to be considered. Any structure is formed when multiple parts or elements are held together in a certain way and change in any particular part has an impact on overall structure and it is the same in case of society. In order to modify or develop a social structure, development of communication media can be an option.

The increase in participatory communication can be used as a tool in minimizing the social problems like poverty, illiteracy, unemployment, gender inequality, caste system and more. “Overall, participatory communication hinges upon the achievement of development and empowerment ends by enabling communities to actively participate in the development process, including communication, from access, through participation, to self-management and whatever this entails. The evaluation of participatory campaigns has a dual focus, because development programs have two sets of goals; they seek to achieve some specific development end – referred to as an outcome and also to empower communities via participation – referred to as process” (Hemer, Tufte, 2005).

3.2 Literature list

The following three books are chosen to base the analysis, the methodology and the cultural background for the thesis.


3.2.1 Hall Stuart, *Representations: Cultural Representations and Signifying Practices*

The research has been based mainly on Discourse analysis and partially on Semiotic analysis. It brings out and analyses the historical situations in which the system was
made and brought in practice. It examines the presence of certain aspects in our society like caste system and how it affects the social fabric. What does it signify and what is the effect of it?

“The book uses a wide range of examples from different cultural media and discourses, mainly concentrating on visual language. These examples are a key part of your work on the book – they are not simply ‘illustrative’. Representation can only be properly analysed in relation to the actual concrete forms which meaning assumes, in the concrete practices of signifying, ‘reading’ and interpretation; and these require analysis of the actual signs, symbols, figures, images, narratives, words and sounds – the material forms – in which symbolic meaning is circulated. The examples provide an opportunity to practise these skills of analysis and to apply them to many other similar instances which surround us in daily cultural life.” (Hall, 1997, p.9)

Moreover “‘Culture’ is one of the most difficult concepts in the human and social sciences and there are many different ways of defining it. In more traditional definitions of the term, culture is said to embody the ‘best that has been thought and said’ in a society. It is the sum of great ideas, as represented in the classic work of literature, painting, music and philosophy – the ‘high culture’ of an age. Belonging to the same frame of reference, but more ‘modern’ in its associations, is the use of ‘culture’ to refer to the widely distributed forms of popular music, publishing, art, design and literature, or the activities of leisure-time and entertainment, which make up the everyday lives of the majority of ‘ordinary people’ – what is called the ‘mass culture’ or the ‘popular culture’ of an age.” (Hall, 1997, p.2)

He also says that “In recent years, and in a more ‘social science’ context, the word ‘culture’ is used to refer to whatever is distinctive about the ‘way of life’ of a people, community, nation or social group. This has come to be known as the ‘anthropological’ definition. Alternatively, the word can be used to describe the shared values of a group or of society – which is like the anthropological definition, only with a more sociological emphasis.” (Hall, 1997, p.2)

### 3.2.2 Pickering Michael, Research Methods for Cultural Studies

The applied research methods, its applicability to Cultural studies, the meaning, and significance can be understood on the basis of Pickering’s work. “Cultural theory is important for a whole host of reasons, but the purpose of research is not confined to constructing and refining theoretical models and templates. And while theory may shape
conceptions and direct us to some key questions, analysis should not be driven by it (Pickering, 2008, p.5).

“Stories are central to the ways in which people make sense of their experience and interpret the social world. In everyday life and popular culture, we are continually engaged in narratives of one kind or another. They fill our days and form our lives. They link us together socially and allow us to bring past and present into relative coherence” (Pickering, 2008, p.7).

The qualitative interviews are based mainly on the theory presented in this book and the selection of respondents for interview, the questions, the approach and analysis are influenced by the same theory.

3.2.3 Sachchidananda, Lal A.K., Elite and Development

Elite and Development is the book which mainly talks about the case study, gives the background of the selected theme, brings out a number of discussions around the division of society in Mithilanchal between Elite and Masses, the Social structure, the culture, tradition, and impact of various implemented systems on the same.

In this book Hetukar Jha makes an attempt to understand the contradiction in terms Socio-economic conditions prevailing in Mithila society through the ages”. (Sachchidananda, Lal, 1980, p.7)

Although this study revolves mostly around the discrimination prevailing in Mithilanchal region, the above mentioned book gives a detailed overview of Elite-mass divide, its various aspects, the impact and significance in different parts of country with a light on its history and linking the same as a part of culture. Readers get a clear picture of the situation and ability to visualize the issues led by the divide, through this book.

The book “Elite and development” in itself has been divided in 3 different parts where “The first part is devoted to an elucidation of the classical texts in elitist thought. The second section deals with the impact of these texts and prominently discussed in this section are the works of Burnham, Djilas, Mills and Lasswell. The third and the last section is devoted to a review of criticism and analysis of the relevance of the theories. Finally, it has been argued that these theories are not only relevant but an indispensable aid to the understanding of the power structure and power processes in any country whatsoever.” (Sachchidananda, Lal, 1980, p.9)
Further, I have tried to answer the following questions in line with various theories and definitions the authors have presented in Elite and Development.

Who are Elites? How are they superior to the rest? What makes them the privileged ones? What are the pre-conditions to be Elite? How do they qualify to be called one? What makes the rest or the masses? Why do they accept being called so? How are these systems formulated? What is the consequence of such partial treatments? What is the role of mass-media? How is it controlled? What happens to such a society?

3.3 The Case Study

3.3.1 Mithila: The reasons of underdevelopment

The region of Mithila covers most of the North Bihar districts and part of area south of Ganga. Mithila has a rich cultural heritage and its place in history rests chiefly on the contributions made to various systems of Indian philosophies and its development of other Indian languages during the medieval period (Sachchidananda, Lal, 1980, p. 187) The economy is not robust and the region is considered one of the poorest in India. Flooding destroys enormous amounts of crop every year. Due to absence of industry, a weak educational infrastructure and criminalized politics, the majority of the area's youth have had to relocate for education and earnings. http://en.wikipedia.org [Accessed 10th November 2012]

3.3.2 Inequality: Elite and Masses

If we take away the force majeure, one of the biggest reason of underdevelopment in the region is unequal development in the past, resulting in the population being divided into elite and masses, “The elite castes in Mithila are the Brahmanas and the Kaysthas while the masses are composed largely of lower castes and Harijans. These two categories are sharply divided, there being no Middle class” (Sachchidananda, Lal, 1980, p.7)

Sachchidananda and Lal, in their work about Elite and development, used the research by Hetukar Jha, who described Elites having following contradiction with masses:

a) Elite belong only to the upper caste groups particularly Brahmans and

7 India has a hierarchical caste system in the society...virtually all things, people, and groups of people are ranked according to
Kayasths\textsuperscript{9}, whereas the masses belong to the lower caste groups and the Harijans\textsuperscript{10}.

b) The masses are generally isolated
c) Among the demands raised by the elites for Mithila and the activities done by them for the fulfilment of these demands, the needs of masses are completely ignored
d) The masses are generally poor, oppressed and economically and socially exploited by village level elites
e) Thinking or doing anything for Mithila or Maithili is, in opinion of the masses, the sole concern of elite class only.

(Sachchidananda, Lal, 1980, p. 188)

\textit{The obstacle has been the continued hold of caste sentiments among the elite Brahmans and Kayastha caste of Mithila, which in turn has contributed to the growth of caste movement among the middle or the backward castes of the area.} (Brass, 2005, p. 79)

\textbf{3.3.3 Literacy & Knowledge of English language: Important role to play}

One common factor that I personally believe (owing to my origin from Mithilanchal), that is the cause for points b-e above, and which is possibly also the solution of most of the elite-mass divide, is Literacy.

\textit{Literacy has been depressingly low among all the lower castes in comparison with the Brahmans and Kayasthas} (Sachchidananda, Lal, 1980, p. 200). In particular knowledge of English is a big hindrance.

\textit{The history of Indian politics during the past century suggests that the most significant aspect of social mobilization for political change has been English education.} (Brass, 2005, p. 91)

\textbf{3.3.4 What is Development?}

Pati quoted Kuppuswamy (1976) to define development as what which involves the

\textsuperscript{9} Kayasths belongs to one professional caste of Hindus. (Mehta, 1990, p. 163)

\textsuperscript{10} Harijans is not a caste but a conglomerate of people of different castes who were taken to be untouchables by the Sabama Hindus. (Jaidev, Paswan, 2002, p. 124)
giving up or the modification of a number of old habits, beliefs, attitudes and values and the cultivation of some new ones which are necessary to live in the modern times. Development involves not only economic changes and increased production to meet the demands of all sections of the people for a higher standard of living, but also the recognition of changes in social structure so that those belonging to the members of the under-privileged castes can make use of this opportunity. (Pati, 2004, p. 66)

3.3.5 Mass-Media and Governance

“The discourses that help shape national policies and their modes of implementation come from at least two places: global conferences and mass media.” (Wilkins, 2000, p.19)

Effect of mass media on development of underdeveloped regions is well established. “We are all, to varying degrees, consumers of, or casual observers of media contents” (Hansen, 1998, p. 91)

Retarded economic development, low media consumption and poor mass consumption facilities go hand in hand (Pati, 2004, p. 66). The utility and necessity of media of mass communication in informing, educating and entertaining heterogeneous receivers is by now a well-worn topic. Besides disseminating the objectives and techniques of development programs to the rural folk, they act themselves as catalysts or change agents in terms of motivation to achieve the goals (Patil, 1994, p. 233). Wherever there is a progressive economy, and progressive development, there is a progressive mass media system, independent of all powers. Thus, the mass media and national development are inter-linked and inter dependent on each other. (Balan, 1992, p. 21)

Mass media are enormously instrumental in accelerating development in many areas of human endeavour. The potential of mass media in development was realized late in India, but since then multiple media exploitation in several development activities has taken speed (Pati, 2004, p. 67). But the distribution of mass media and development information availability in rural areas mirrors the unequal distribution of other resources. In a situation of unequal resource, information tends not to trickle randomly but flow along established channels defined by the social structure. So, for example, the result of the Green revolution in agriculture in India was certainly changed, but it was noted that the main gainers have been the rich and influential farmers in regions endowed with water and fertilizer facilities. (Sparks, 2007, p. 42)
3.3.6 Inference

Summing up the above discussion, we can summarize that:

- Mithilanchal region is underdeveloped mostly due to the Elite and Masses divide.
- Literacy and low penetration of English could be the reasons of underdevelopment.
- Development involves both economic and social structure changes.
- Mass media is proven carrier for development.
- Mass media communication is known to help widen the gap between the already-developed-to-certain-extent population, and the complete downtrodden.

3.4 Research Question

*How can communication / mass media play role in bridging the gap between different strata of society and help in development of the socio-economic condition in Mithilanchal?*

In my research, I have intended to explore the following sub-questions from the people of Mithilanchal, which collectively will answer the above mentioned Research Question.

3.4.1 Sub-questions

- How do they perceive the Elite-mass divide today?
- How, for them, is the situation of Literacy and English education?
- What kind of social structure change is perceived by them, compared to previous decades?
- What are the mass media instruments known to them?
- Which one mass media communication channel do they think brings/can bring the biggest impact in their socio-economic condition?
Chapter 4. Research Methodology

4.1 Method and Methodology

Michael Crotty described the research methods and Methodologies as below:
“Methods: the techniques or procedures used to gather and analyse data related to some research question or hypothesis. Methodology: the strategy, plan of action, process or design lying behind the choice and use of particular methods and linking the choice and use of methods to the desires outcomes.” (Crotty, 2003, p.3)

4.2 Discourse Analysis

Discourses are ways of referring to or constructing knowledge about a particular topic of practice; a cluster (or formation) of ideas, images and practices, which provide ways of talking about, forms of knowledge and conduct associated with, a particular topic, social activity or institutional site in society. (Hall, 1997 p. 6). According to Hall, “‘Discursive’ has become the general term used to refer to any approach in which meaning, representation and culture are considered to be constitutive.” (Hall, 1997, p.6) and “is more concerned with the effects and consequences of representation – its ‘politics’. It examines not only how language and representation produce meaning, but how the knowledge which a particular discourse produces connects with power, regulates conduct, makes up or constructs identities and subjectivities, and defines the way certain things are represented, thought about, practised and studied. The emphasis in the discursive approach is always on the historical specificity of a particular form of ‘regime’ of representation: not on ‘language’ as a general concern, but on specific languages or meanings, and how they are deployed at particular times, in particular places. It points us towards greater historical specificity – the way representational practices operate in concrete historical situations, in actual practice.” (Hall, 1997, p.6)

The study has tried to analyse the discrimination on various basis in social structure of Mithilanchal. The representative traditional tools and media controlled by the elites of society. The age old biased customs and practices leading to downfall and underdevelopment of society has been looked through. The feelings people have and the tradition they are restricted by do not synchronize in present day. People seek to have an
equal social structure and balance in reforms and laws. Through discourse analysis, the culture, customs and traditions have been tried to interpret. The complexity of behavioural, cultural and regional elements have tried to understood.

4.3 Semiotic Analysis

I have also tried to use Semiotics at places, semiotics being described by Stuart Hall as “Semiotics being the study or ‘science of signs’ and their general role as vehicles of meaning has taken a different turn, being more concerned, not with the details of how ‘language’ works, but with the broader role of discourse in culture” (Hall, 1997, p.6). Further he explains “In the semiotic approach, not only words and images but objects themselves can function as signifiers in the production of meaning. Clothes, for example, may have a simple physical function - to cover the body and protect it from the weather. But clothes also double up as signs. They construct a meaning and carry a message.” (Hall, 1997, p.37) Semiotic analysis has been helpful in analysing the significance of certain factors in Mithilanchal. The naming of ceremonies, traditional tools, functions represent the hierarchical social structure. The rituals in ceremonies represent the difference in status. The language has various nuances to indicate the difference and the age old proverbs, sayings and poetries has numerous interpretations.

The research is a combination of Qualitative interviews and Questionnaire survey. As I have my roots from Mithalanchal area, it is easier for me to locate the exact representation in "masses" that I am looking for, and hence the choice of qualitative interview. I also conducted questionnaire survey as it helped bringing in the input from larger section of people from different sections of society and made it easier to distinguish the same through analysis. The “Elite-Mass division and categorization is used in different ways in different ‘realities’ in the world, and in different theoretical discussions and literature", hence I feel Questionnaire survey is a better complement to Qualitative method. I prefer it from Quantitative method, as this method is more useful in case the target audience is unknown and not already stratified.
As presented above, I have primarily used qualitative interviews and questionnaire to support.

4.4 Qualitative Interview

The term qualitative interviewing is usually intended to refer to in-depth, semi structured or loosely structured forms of interviewing. Qualitative or semi-structured interviewing has its own character and despite some quite large variation in style and tradition, all such interviewing has following core features in common:

1. The interactional exchange of dialogue. Qualitative interviews may involve one-to-one interactions, larger group interview or focus groups.
2. A relatively informal style.
3. A thematic, topic centric, biographical or narrative interview, designed to have a fluid and flexible structure, and to allow researcher and interviewee(s) to develop unexpected theme.
4. Operates from the perspective that knowledge is situated and contextual, and therefore the job of the interview is to ensure that the relevant contexts are bought into focus so that situated knowledge can be produced.

(Mason, 2002, p. 62)

4.4.1 Selection and interview process of respondents

The qualitative interview method suits the current context perfectly, as we intend to understand the penetration of mass media and the impact it has in the remote areas of Mithilanchal. The understand the same, it is important that there is an interactional exchange of informal dialogue, in a fluid and flexible structure to produce the situational context of ‘impact’ and ‘change’ I’m trying to find out.

There are several practical challenges and conceptual questions to engage with in this kind of research, as described by Pickering (2008).

1. Selecting participants: Who and how many people should be interviewed in order to get an account that can be said to adequately reflect the chosen topic? The answer tends to be determined by the parameters within which the research will take place. The larger the parameters, the larger the number of participants.
2. **Making and maintaining contacts with participants:** Researcher must ask themselves why participants might agree to cooperate as well as think about what might deter them from allowing access. It should also be remembered that the interviewees are, in many cases, not just the provider of account. They are likely to be gatekeepers and/or sources of further information or interview contacts.

3. **On-going collection and analysis of interview:** Data collection and investigation tend to be different from political economy or textual analysis approach. At each stage the interviewer has to ask which question or lines of enquiry worked and which did not. As a research method, the sociological approach to investigating cultural production is probably the most difficult and erratic but it can also be very rewarding. It relies on gaining access to, and the cooperation of individuals who may be quite difficult to meet.

(Pickering, 2008, p. 60-63)

For my research purpose, my origin from Mithilanchal region is helpful and hence making and maintaining contact is easier. Selecting the participants is where I have been careful, so that the natural human bias doesn’t come to play. 7 persons from different caste, gender, background, age group and profession have been interviewed. They were identified on the basis of their 1) availability, 2) willingness to participate in study, 3) experience of unequal division of society, 4) concern for development of region. They have been interviewed at ease with ample interactions and keeping their emotions in mind. Intention was not to hurt their sentiments and questions were explained to make understandable and answerable. The interviews were mainly conducted on Skype (Video call) and notes were taken down for analysis. The interviews are not recorded but the interviewees are reachable and they are all available for further support in development study for Mithilanchal. As the education level of the persons interviewed wasn’t same, the communication language was in English, Hindi (Indian national Language) and Maithili (Language spoken in Mithilanchal).

Interviewing these entirely different 7 persons was a learning experience. The feelings and experiences they shared was overwhelming.

The details of the interviewees and the interview questions can be referred in Appendix I and II respectively.
4.5 Questionnaire Survey

As David Deacon says, ‘on the one hand, ‘the focus group interviews identified more complex connections between text and reception, [and] identified contradictions within the audience readings (ibid.). On the other hand, the self-completion questionnaire survey ‘highlighted what had been missed in the focus group analysis, namely, the importance of the viewers’ age compared to, say gender or social class’ (ibid.) (Pickering, 2008, p. 102)

Questionnaire survey was conducted on a wide range of people coming from different communities and different strata of Mithilanchal and then the analysis of the response along with the qualitative interview mentioned above was made.

4.5.1 The TAP Paradigm

The chosen area of study being a social topic, I have used TAP Paradigm for constructing question as mentioned by William Foddy in Constructing Questions for Interviews and Questionnaires

TAP the acronym for Topic Applicability and Perspective and detailed as:

**Topic:** The topic should be properly defined so that each respondent clearly understands what is being talked about.

**Applicability:** The applicability of the question to each respondent should be established:
Respondents should not be asked to give information that they do not have.

**Perspective:** The perspective that respondents should adopt, when answering the question, should be specified so that each respondent gives the same kind of answer. (Foddy, 1994, p. 193)

The details of the questionnaire survey can be found in Appendix III and the result has been represented in graphical form in Appendix IV.
Chapter 5. The Field Work

- I surveyed 30 persons and interviewed 7 persons across villages and cities of Mithilanchal and those who have moved from Mithilanchal to other areas.
- The interview and survey included people from both Elite and Mass. They were mostly the ones who have had tough way getting education and finding how media /ICT have been instrumental in the process.
- The interview questions were different from the questionnaire survey.
- I conducted interviews mostly on Skype as visiting there in person was not an option in given time.
- The main constraint during interview was that all participants did not have access to internet and many were not aware of the same at all. Arrangements were made to make them feel comfortable and answer as they wished.
- English was not the language of communication in every case and there being multilingual was an advantage for me.

5.1 Selection of Participants

The interviewees were selected on the basis of :
- **Age**: The participants were between 15 years to 80 years of age. It gave a range of experience from different age groups to analyse the changing face of society and role of media.
- **Gender**: The interview participants were 3 males and 4 females to keep it balanced and avoid any biased approach.
- **Caste**: The respondents were from Upper (Elite) caste and lower (mass) caste both.
- **Affluence level**: It varied as respondents were from different strata of the society

5.2 Survey result

- The detailed survey result can be referred in Appendix IV.
- It has been represented in graphs for each question and corresponding responds.
- The analysis has been made to verify the numbers of respondents with similar and different opinions.

Chapter 6. Analysis

After interviewing people from different caste, section, strata of society, there have been points of similar opinions and at a few places there have been disagreements for obvious reasons.

Media in various forms has long been used as a means of communication, especially by social movements who rely on the attention of traditional media, through which they reach their communities and people in power. By using different media outlets, social movements increase their chances of achieving social change (Castells, 2009, p. 302).

To keep the analysis simple, I would like to bring in the points in terms of main issues or reasons leading to the present situation in 21st century where on one hand people are still deprived of basic amenities in day to day life, whereas on the other hand their fellow citizens are having all the luxuries just because of the prevailing systems, rules, laws, which are at times biased and favour some of them and very often these deprived citizens are unaware of their own rights and have trained themselves to accept all partial treatments they are subjected to.

The most common response for what should be the start point for bringing in the required change has been:

6.1 Mandatory Education for all

Most of the respondents agreed at this point. Their unanimous opinion was that until the education system is improved, the thought process and biased mind set cannot be influenced. The children at their nascent stage should be taught about humanity without any discrimination, about value of unity and equality.

The education system needs to be organised and made compulsory for all regardless of any discrimination. The ethical or moral science is something to be instilled at early stage. People need to respect each other and not feel proud of them being in a
comparatively advantageous position.
An educated person need not be suppressed by others for work and earning a livelihood which is understood to be a major constraint in social development. Few respondents showed grievances against the setup they grew up in where they witnessed humiliation and disregard of their family members, relatives and community. They have a reaction within and they are looking for a change in system to have a better social structure where all are respected, given equal space and opportunities, where their future generations are easy and relaxed like any other human being.
In spite of having announced several free education programmes in India for the people living in villages and those below poverty line, the implementation is not done properly. It needs to be regulated and processed methodically. Primary education which is mandatory should be verified and people should know that it is for their betterment. A respondent said that she thought “going to school and sitting there for hours was wastage of time and that was the perception of her family and relatives”. They thought “they can work on daily wage and earn some money for those hours instead of wasting it”. With this thought how far can they go? There has to be a programme informing them about the value of education, the difference it brings in one’s personality, outlook, the kind of work they do, the quality time they can have with their families.
Talking about media, in history traditional media tools like street plays, theatre, drama, radio played important role in informing people about social systems, issues, value of education and work. As discussed in previous chapters, it was at that time being controlled by the upper caste, powerful groups who were the elites. They circulated the filtered information using media as a tool to maintain the status quo in society. They controlled the education system by barring the lower caste from entering schools or institutions.
However, the communication media today has introduced several online / distance education system. People have the option to earn and learn simultaneously irrespective of age, gender, caste, religion or any other discrimination.
Radio, Television, Internet all mediums are participating in educating the mass.
Few respondents were product of distant education system and they felt fortunate being introduced to communication media. They said that it was not possible for them to travel and live in a different place because of limited resources and family income but with the help of programmes introduced by IGNOU (Indira Gandhi National Open University), they could learn and grow in fields of their respective choices and are
settling down with jobs and salaries matching their expectations. We can see that people are more aware and alert than before about available possibilities for more learning and better prospects and media is reaching out with more avenues to learn and impart better systems for learning and information. The need is to connect the two points.

6.2 Gender Equality

“Gender equality is more than a goal in itself. It is a precondition for meeting the challenge of reducing poverty, promoting sustainable development and building good governance.” – Kofi Annan (7th Secretary- General of the United Nations, January 1997 - December 2006).

“Manifestation of gender bias abounds in Indian society in day-to-day experiences, so much so that most of the people accept it as something natural and unobjectionable – nothing worth noticing or questioning.” (Shelat, 2004, p.1)

Majority of respondents believe that the social structure cannot be improved until the men and women are treated equally. Female foeticide, no literacy for women, child marriage, and dowry system are still being practiced in different parts of India. Mithilanchal has a history of educated elite women. Since that time the women in lower caste or representing the mass work as maid servants, cleaners, daily wage labourers or other domestic help. These women feel elevated having a job in hand and being able to earn bread for their families. While analysing this part one of the respondents added an important point that these women who worked for other people are far more independent and liberated compared to the upper caste women who are not allowed to move freely outside their household owing to ‘purdah system’ which asks women to cover themselves and not to show their faces to strangers or in many cases to cover their head or face in front of senior in-laws.

“Laws and policies reflect gender bias and so do media, literature, customs and folk songs. Mythology and religious preaching play a crucial role in maintaining the gender myths and stereotypes. Societal attitudes, discrimination and double standards are the constant reminders of the persisting inequalities crossing the boundaries of time, nation and cultures”. (Shelat, 2004, p.1-2)

“Significance of Communication as a catalyst for social change has long been recognised. Though the concept of development and the paradigms of Communication for Development have undergone major shifts in the last forty years, communication
remains a key factor in the transformation of any social group. The effectiveness of communication as a catalyst for social change, however, depends a great deal on the social and political will. In absence of such a will communication can be effectively used for reinforcing the status quo.

Informal day-to-day communication within the family and community largely influences one’s perspective of gender. Mass Media, however, have become a crucial influencing factor today. It was observed by Ramamurti Committee “Efforts by the education system to incorporate a gender perspective and promote women’s equality need to be accompanied by intervention in the domain of media as well” (GOI, 1994a).” (Shelat, 2004, p.2)

Going by the above stated theory and analysing the first-hand experience of people from Mithila, their insight and opinion on what could possibly bring in the desired change, undoubtedly Media plays an important role. Media in form of edutainment is influencing a larger population and sending the required message through television programmes, serials, cinemas which people look forward to, look up to and imitate. Save the girl child, Stand against domestic violence, Say no to discrimination, Protest against rape and molestation have been few of the many issues media has brought up and has played as eye opener to larger audience.

An educated Mother can nurture the kid in right way, instilling the correct values and morals and only then the kids can be the right citizen. The women need to treat their sons and daughters equally and only then these kids will stand against gender biased system and will form a stable and developed society.

6.3 English Education

“On the whole the English educated elite in Bihar was, by and large, acting against the masses because it had discovered that their property and privileges could remain secure only through the process of ingratiation with the ruling power” (Sachchidananda, Lal, 1980, p.7).

The respondents while talking about the present scenario were in agreement talking about having better prospects with English education. India is a country with multiple languages and every state has its own language with varying dialects. The main language of communication being English, people with education background in English have better job prospects and have options of moving to metropolitan cities for better lifestyle.
In Mithilanchal, English education earlier was limited to elites. Admission in English school, pursuing higher education in Great Britain, employment opportunity in government sector or high paying sectors, were reserved for elites or upper castes. The senior most respondent born in an elite family in 1934 in Mithilanchal, when her father was SDO (Sub-Divisional Officer) in British government narrated the atmosphere they used to have at that time. Her Mother, having no formal education in English, could speak fluent flawless English just because of the visiting friends, regular parties and English environment around them. All six siblings including the respondent were given good education in English medium schools and they had the privilege of being exposed to all sorts of media like participation in plays, dramas, radio programmes, etc. They were considered high in society and the mass looked up to them.

India got its independence from British in 1948. But the English learning and control of language got mixed in the culture. In present day, with globalisation, English is kind of mandatory for all Indians for communication to move up in career graph. The young respondents are keen on English learning beside their regular education to have better opportunity.

Another respondent who has had education in Journalism from one of the premier Indian University and now after seeking volunteer retirement he runs his own institute for Spoken English and Mass Communication, informed that the young people are working really hard to master the language. He said that if government provides them better education environment, they can perform at par with others. These youths are regular for classes and are putting in all effort for learning by all means.

Though English education can be seen in small towns in Mithilanchal, in villages and remote areas it is not an option. People have no means or access to it. Hence, even if they move to cities for better opportunities, with this handicap, they end up getting low level jobs like the job of a security guard, labour, peon, etc. In spite of Hindi being the national language of India, even for government jobs, English is understood to be mandatory.

In Mithila, even now English speaking people, foreign educated people, people having lived overseas, are influential and they are listened by masses. Many respondents said that even after 65 years of independence from Britain and English, the mentality of Indians is still ruled by it.

According to the respondents, Media is kind of instrumental here in form of edutainment. The radio and television serials, programmes and cinema have English
language awareness but that is miniscule. Social media however is more in English and people are kind of getting habituated to it but again these people are in small towns or these are the students who have access to internet. People understand how important it is but they have constraints. There are schemes for imparting English language education using media but implementation of the same and availability in Mithilanchal will take time as of now.

6.4 Caste Harmonization

As we have talked above about the division of society on basis of caste and the consequences of the same, it is important to take cognizance of it and make necessary arrangements for eradication of this divide. In India, it has changed remarkably over the years and people are getting over this difference and accepting each other on more humanitarian grounds. But in small towns and cities and regions like Mithila, it is still a big issue. Caste system is a big obstacle in development of the region. The upper caste people cannot accept the lower caste people at same level as their own. The age old rules, culture and tradition has conveyed it through the generations and changing it all needs initiative.

During interview, the respondents were of opinion that the politics plays an important role here and it is not just the social structure to be blamed. “Caste has played a significant role in the politics of Bihar ever since its creation in 1912, before which it was part of the greater Bengal. “However, as the base for political functions in intra-party conflict of the Congress Party”, observes the Director of a Survey Research Unit, caste came to be widely recognized only after adult franchise became a living reality for the mass of the people.” Consequently, caste-consciousness, like politics itself, has now percolated to every important aspect of group life in the state, especially due to caste-based electoral politics and reservation in jobs.”(Chaturvedi, 2007, p.30).

There are reservations in educational institutes and work places by government for lower or backward caste people. During elections, the politicians’ campaign and promise people for development and upliftment of their community and caste while asking for vote. Different political parties use different aspect of caste system for electoral benefits. People support leaders from their own caste and this deepens the divide and communal clash increases all the more.

This needs to be controlled and minimised. If the government will divide the society for its own benefit, it will be tremendously difficult to come out of this vicious circle.
As discussed above the caste system is kind of fading away in big cities and people are looking at things from global perspective. Media is also playing an important role bringing out such issues and reaching out to people. They are trying to talk and resolve these issues. But with kind of population India has and where majority of them lives in villages, Media needs to work more seriously in these areas. Communication for development of these backward regions is the need of the hour. Social issues are always been brought in public in form of cinema, theatre and other traditional tools, but its time media talks to them, listens to them, helps them get rid of this man-made differences and people can create and live in harmony together.
Chapter 7. Conclusion

Stimulating participation, changing media policies, contributing to behavior change, increasing access to media, and expanding opportunities for getting information have all been proposed as the goals of interventions in development communication. What is needed is to further discuss the problems that the field addresses, and to examine ways to reach goals rather than to offer predetermined solutions (Wilkins and Mody, 2001) (Hemer, Tuft, 2005, p. 87)

The extensive research and process of writing this thesis has helped me have an insight on the issue I have known so closely. Reading the history of Mithilanchal, the social structure, the communication tools used, the part media played, the diffusive approach of information transfer, and all other aspects that led to the present issues without having any solution to it, a very clear image of society floats in eyes and it is easy to decipher how and what can bring in the change that is required. The interviews and survey were of great help in getting the point of view from different strata of the society and their invaluable suggestions can help making the difference. The interviewees were very honest with their opinion and are keen on contributing their bit to help improve the condition of their native place.

Going through the response and result of interviews and survey respectively, if an inference is made to find the answers to sub-questions mentions in section 3.3.1

➤ How do they perceive the Elite-mass divide today?

➤ It has decreased compared to how it was before but still people in villages adhere to the rules and try to maintain distance from each other. The age old traditions remain same and so is the mind set of residents.

➤ How, for them, is the situation of Literacy and English education?

➤ This sector needs a lot of work. According to the people of Mithilanchal, things cannot change until people get basic education. The teachers should be given good salary and students should be given all facilities for education.
The foundation needs to be strong to have a stable society. With Globalisation, English is a required factor and people think that language can help with better infrastructure for the society and can help in creating more employment for people which will again improve their lifestyle and living standard.

➢ What kind of social structure change is perceived by them, compared to previous decades?

➢ The main points put forward by majority of respondents were:
  - **Gender Equality**: Couple of respondents said, “Men and Women complement and complete each other and both should be treated equally”. In order to have a better social structure both the genders should have same space, rights, education, responsibility and opportunity. Women should be respected and not considered a burden or an object.
  - **Education**: As discussed above education is the building block of society and 100% literacy will bring the best change in social structure. Poverty, unemployment are linked with this and forms a never ending vicious circle.
  - **Caste & Class discrimination**: Any society should be based on humanitarian grounds and absolutely not on these discriminations made by man. No job is small or ought to be looked down upon. Untouchability, caste-bias are evils of society and gradually rusts the basis of it. People do not want it anymore. Complete eradication of this system is needed.

➢ What are the mass media instruments known to them?

➢ The traditional mass media tools like print media, radio, television are the most popular ones and then it the new technological advancements like communication through internet, mobile phones, and distance education programmes have big following.
Which one mass media communication channel do they think brings/can bring the biggest impact in their socio-economic condition?

It was kind of tricky question for them and I got mixed response on this. The Radio and Mobile phone being most used and popular tool. FM Radio on Mobile phone can be instrumental in learning and communicating at same time. The above answers are consolidated draft of all interviews and analysing the above, we can reach to some conclusion. There is not a definite answer to the problem but it is considerably clear. Further as explained earlier, the answer to these 5 sub-questions, collectively answer the main question under study. It is kind of understood that people in Mithila consider media as a link between the divided castes and class and it is believed that media can help in improvement of the overall condition.

It is also an observation that the elite-mass divide exists in India on another level as well. That is, the politicians, Bureaucrats, Businessmen, Celebrities and those in power and influential position are the elites. They like to be treated that way. The distance is maintained from the common man.

This study has explored through the problems of Mithilanchal and has identified some important points which need cognizance of public, government and media. The communication media, the mass media, the media in all other aspects can help improve the condition. Poverty, illiteracy, unemployment, gender-discrimination, caste-discrimination, are few prevailing problems of the region and these can be resolved by: Introducing various programmes and reforms. Communication is needed in every sector and by all means and for that Media can be most helpful instrument.

Listening to celebrities, foreign returned people, and English speaking persons is the normal tendency of people residing in villages and undeveloped societies and it is applicable to people of Mithilanchal as well. If Media communicates social issues and measures to be taken for the same through the influential people, it might have better impact on them.

Communication based distance education system has a big following and people from
different parts of society including those from remote areas are trying to get education using this channel. More of such systems for different programmes can help in development of these regions.

“Since the dawn of history, every power, whether religious, political or private, knew that control over communication is control over society. Today, all over the civilised world, there is a debate on how to give the people access to the media of communication including that of broadcasting. The inequality of progress possesses perhaps the most important single challenge and threat to human kind”. (Pati, 2004, p.13)

With the help of technological advancements various sectors have developed and so has media and communication sector. People have more ways of reaching out to government and vice versa. It is necessary for the public voice to be heard. People should be aware of their rights and must make themselves heard. The Status of women is one of the main concerns. Historically, women in Mithila had no say in any social issue. They were not even allowed to raise their voice in front of their husbands. Talking to grown up or adult sons was also bound with many rules and was considerably restricted.

At present, the scenario has changed but still it needs a lot of considerations and improvements. Female foeticide, women education, child marriage, widow-remarriage, dowry system, are social evils against women to name a few.

Women in Development (WID): “Success depends on dialogue, which suggests key roles for feminist communication scholars and activists. The effectiveness of our contributions, however, depends on our understandings of communication. Process of communication and development are inseparable from the cultural contexts in which they occur. Therefore, an analysis of communication in development must consider the cultural values of the groups involved”. (Wilkins, 2000, p.7)

Media has developed with the passage of time and as earlier it was more based on human beings and transfer of message was mainly through persons travelling and conveying the message, now it is more technical and web based. There is a significant change in the entire system.
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Appendix I – Interviewees

1. **Dr. Mrs. Gauri Mishra**: 80 years

   Born in elite family, she has dedicated her life to Mithila, Maithili and its development. She has done immense research on the language, literature, arts, crafts, culture and tradition of Mithilanchal. She is knowns at ‘Maan-jee’ which means Mother and has been conferred with title ’Mother Teresa of Mithila’. She started the Master Craftsman Association of Mithila and helped the downtrodden, deprived Maithil women in becoming self-dependant. The Self Employed Women’s association of Mithila was established by her and she introduced Mithila (Madhubani) paintings in international arena.

   Interviewing her was a learning experience for me and her enthusiasm and will to work for her people is inspiration for many.

   She said “The customs are made by the powerful section of the society for their own convenience but if the so called ‘poor’ or ‘lower section’ cease to support them, they won’t remain powerful”. At the age of 80, she volunteers to participate in activity for educating the children of Mithilanchal and she looks forward to women empowerment. She also said, “Only a woman can help another woman and only then a balanced society can be formed. If the mother stands against female foeticide, if a mother supports her son and daughter for equal education, if a mother-in-law stands against dowry system, only then these social evils can be killed. Women must help other women.”

2. **Mr. Amarnatha Mishra**: 62 years

   Born to elite parents, he did graduation in History but his urge to learn communication and journalism made him pursue his Bachelor and Master degree in Journalism from BHU (a premier university in India). He worked as Public relations officer in Sanskrit University of Mithilanchal but then opted for voluntary retirement and set up his own Spoken English and Journalism learning centre for students who want to learn more and seek support. He also trains them for free in case the fee is unaffordable for the students. He helps them learn, find opportunity and pursue their careers.

   He explored various aspects of Mithila through his research and he wants to contribute
every bit for the development of his society. He said “Strong and approachable media can help build a strong society. Participation of people with healthy balance can resolve major social issues”. He understands the mass communication and media and how it can help in development of the region with the power it has. He is helping the deprived youths by teaching them English and Journalism and is looking forward to a better state of affairs with more and more people participating in communication for development. His research work in Mithilanchal has been a great source of knowledge in this study.

3. Mrs. Anshu Mishra: 29 years
Born in upper caste, poor family, she had very limited resource. Her father was the sole bread earner of the family and she did not have enough money to pay her fee. Also, being a girl the society was not in favour of her being educated. She was supposed to get married and bring up children. She wanted to be something in life and be independent. She studied from borrowed books and her determination forced her to fight all odds and leave her home. She went to another town to learn and worked at her mentors place to get help in education in return. She did her graduation through distance education system and found a job in a school and now is earning and is self-dependent. She said “Our society is not for girls. A girl born here has either to be dependent on her father, brothers, husband or sons. This society cannot accept a strong, self-going girl as it is used to the stereotyped dependent picture of them”. Anshu believes in fighting for rights and “come what may” is her approach towards life.

4. Mrs. Heera Devi: 25 years
She was born in lower caste, poor family and married at age of 5. Not educated, she grew up at her in-laws place. She gave birth to 2 daughters and at age of 17 her husband died of some unknown disease. She is now working as a domestic help to bring up her daughter and has made it a point that they are educated. She is help from her employers in educating her kids. “I cannot let my girls live the life I have lived. I must educate them” is what she says. She left her village and now lives in a town to buy education for her little girls.

5. Mrs. Sangeeta Devi: 35 years
She was born in lower caste, poor family. Married at very young age, she has 3 children. Her husband died when she was 20 years old and she was not allowed to work in her society. She left her village to bring up her kids. She wanted to educate them but 1 son and 1 daughter do not want to study because they find it useless and 1 son is putting in all efforts to learn and help his mother. Sangeeta believes in fate and says that people who commit sins in present life are born in lower caste families in next life. She has accepted her life as god’s decision and has made peace with situation she is in.

6. Anonymous: 55 years
He is lower caste, poor family. His religion is Muslim and has a large family of 17 members. He had no opportunity to study as he had to start work at a very young age. He works as a tailor and driver. He is a skilled person and happy human being and believes in small happiness of life. He blames politicians for all problems and downfall of society and thinks only fair politics and corruption free government can establish a healthy society.

7. Anonymous: 18 years
He is born in upper caste. He is studying English and doing his graduation from local college. He wants to go overseas for studying and trying his best to secure good marks. He has to take care of his Mother and sister and he wants to get a very good job after finishing his studies. He said “right attitude can make the difference. Everything is out there on internet, I just need to grab it and have it. I don’t have to wait for people to help me. I need to understand and use it”. The positivity with which he spoke was impressive.
Appendix II - Interview questions

‡ Respondent talking about their background.

1. How many members do you have in your family?
2. How many adults are in your family?
3. How many of them are literate till high school?
4. Do you have English medium school in your village?
5. How many earning members do you have in your family?
6. How many members of your family want to earn but are unable to get a job?
7. Can you communicate in English? If yes,
   - Do you think you have better possibility of finding works than others in your family/village?
   If No,
   - Can anyone in your family communicate in English? If yes,
     - Do you think that by being able to communicate in English, they have better possibility of finding works than you?
     If No,
     # Do you know anyone in the village who can communicate in English?
     If yes,
     - Do you think that by being able to communicate in English, they have better possibility of finding works than you?

8. Do you own a radio? If yes,
   . Has it created any new opportunity in terms of work, or learning about your own work, for you?

9. Do you own a television? If yes,
10. Do you have an active mobile phone connection? If yes,
   , Has it created any new opportunity in terms of work, or learning about your own work, for you?

11. Have you heard about computer? If yes,
Have you heard about internet? If yes,
   - Have you heard about/are active on social media like Facebook, Youtube, or anything similar?
      , What attracts you to the social media? What do you use it for?
      , Has it created any new opportunity in terms of work, or learning about your own work, for you?

12. Is there any other mass media that you are exposed to consistently? Which ones?

13. In the last 10 years, has the living situation of you and your family improved or has it gone for worse?
   If Improved
      i. Is it because of more earning adults?
      ii. Is it because of more literacy in the family
      iii. Is it the effect of one of the mass media (like Radio, TV, Internet, etc.)?
      iv. Which particular mass media has affected you most?

14. Which is the most used mass media by you?

15. Has it brought any change in your life?
   If yes,
      i. In what way?
      ii. Explain in details.

16. Do you think that people in your village who had certain level of wealth and
literacy 10 years back, have benefitted more from the mass media usage than you?
Appendix III - Survey Questionnaire

Gender:
Age:
Family income:
No. Of persons in Family:
No. Of earning members in the family:
Caste:

=================================

Literate / Illiterate: ● Cannot read and write at all ● Can only read basic words / sentences ● Can read and write basic words and sentences ● Can read and write well ● Fluent in Hindi and English

Generation of literacy: 1st / 2nd / 3rd / more than 3

Are Men and Women equally educated in family? (Are men in family educated more or both men and women are provided equal opportunity?)

What is level of literacy in your family? How many people are: Just Literate (Can read and write basic words / sentences): / High School: / Higher Secondary: / Graduate: / University: / Illiterate (Cannot read and write):

Do you read Newspaper daily?

Do you own a radio / television / refrigerator / computer?

Do you have internet connection / cafe for accessing websites?

Do you have computer education in schools in your area?

Do you understand English?
Can you communicate in English?

Do you have schools imparting education in English medium, in your area?

How important is English for finding jobs?

Do you think English education can help you find better job in your area?

Do you think English education can help you find job in bigger town / city?

Do you think English education can help improve the social condition in your area?

What do you think is needed most for development of your region?

Do you think Media has any role to play in improvement / development of society?

Are you able to raise and reach your voice to concerned person / departments with the help of media?

Are you aware of distance education system?

How many people do you know have taken advantage of distance education?

Do you know if taking distance education helped them in finding better earning opportunity?
Appendix IV – Survey result

Following represents distribution of sample data across major considerations:

**Gender:**

- Intention was to have similar number of people from both Male and Female to get a fair overview

**Age:**
Most of the respondents were students and were very honest and straightforward with their opinion and suggestions.

**Family income:**

- Family income was very different for each person and I have tried to
Number of members in Family:

![Family size chart]

Number of earning members in the family:
I tried to balance the respondents from both the sections of society to be able to make a comparative analysis.
Literate / Illiterate:

- Illiterate are the people who cannot recognize any alphabet of written character and have had no formal education.

Generation of literacy:
- The aim was to investigate since when the respondents’ family started to recognize value of education and its advantages.
As observed through the research, the female education is still not considered important by a large segment of society.

**Level of literacy in family:**

![Bar chart showing the level of education in family]

- It was observed that even if few people want to go for education, the poverty and low source of income becomes a major constraint and they prefer working than learning.

**Newspaper reading habits:**
Newspaper reading is supposedly elite and people try to find employment, education, matrimonial from newspaper apart from the national and state information.

**Ownership of Radio / Television / Computer?**

- Radio is a popular communication media and the region in topic has a
large audience to radio. The news, programmes, music and plays are favourite amongst the masses as well as elites.

Do you have internet connection / cafe for accessing websites?

Student today are more inclined towards internet and even if they don’t own a computer, they access internet through cyber cafes. Social media (like Facebook, Twitter, Orkut, LinkedIn) is a craze and the younger generation is trying hard to access and keep updated on that. Of course the internet based education and opportunities posted there are very important reasons for following.

Do you have computer education in schools in your area?
• Few schools have introduced computers but it is not accessible for masses as these schools are expensive and not affordable for all.

**Do you understand English?**

- English is kind of main language of communication in India and a big section of Indians can manage communicating in English. Many can manage basic conversation in English and the standard of command on
Can you communicate in English?

• People who can understand the language do not always have the confidence of conveying the same. Reason being they do not have enough opportunity to speak and practise the language.

Do you have schools imparting education in English medium, in your area?
English medium schools have all the subjects being taught in English but the government schools have English just as a subject and the rest is taught in the local language. The teachers there are also not very efficient in language teaching.

**How important is English in finding jobs?**

- People feel they will have better prospect with fluency in English.
Communicating in English has more impact and it leaves an impression on others. They feel English can help in finding opportunities in employment.

**Do you think English education can help you find better job in your area?**

![Bar chart showing responses to the question: Can English education help in finding job in that area?]

- As it is not compulsory to speak English in state level jobs. Many think the right education is what they need. They feel English can be an advantage but not the sole reason to find a good job.

**Do you think English education can help you find job in bigger town / city?**
The majority think, India being a multi-lingual country, moving out of one state will need English understanding to find a decent job. In metropolitan cities, English can help in finding official jobs. Otherwise, they feel that they might land up in manual jobs like labour, guard, driver and all.

Do you think English education can help improve the social condition in your area?
The respondents think English education will come with basic knowledge, education and literacy and if that is gained the social issues will be dealt with more learned people than illiterates who feel handicapped in improving the situation.

What do you think is needed most for development of your region?

- It was kind of unanimous answer. Education for all is what they feel is
Do you think Media has any role to play in improvement / development of society?

- They had few queries with this question as they first understood what media is all about. They think it is only through communication based media the change can be brought.

Are you able to raise and reach your voice to concerned person / departments with the help of media?
People are still unaware and ignorant. They have ideas, they are ready for change but they do not know where to begin from. They seek guidance.

Are you aware of distance education system?

The students have good picture of distance education system.
How many people do you know have taken advantage of distance education?

Do you know if taking distance education helped them in finding better earning opportunity?
As there are not many good schools and few are not affordable, people seek distance education. Also they can earn along with these study programmes and can support themselves and their families and moreover, the degrees and certificates from these institutes are well accepted by most of the organizations for employment and further education.