

Family Planning Communication Policy in India—Implications of Research

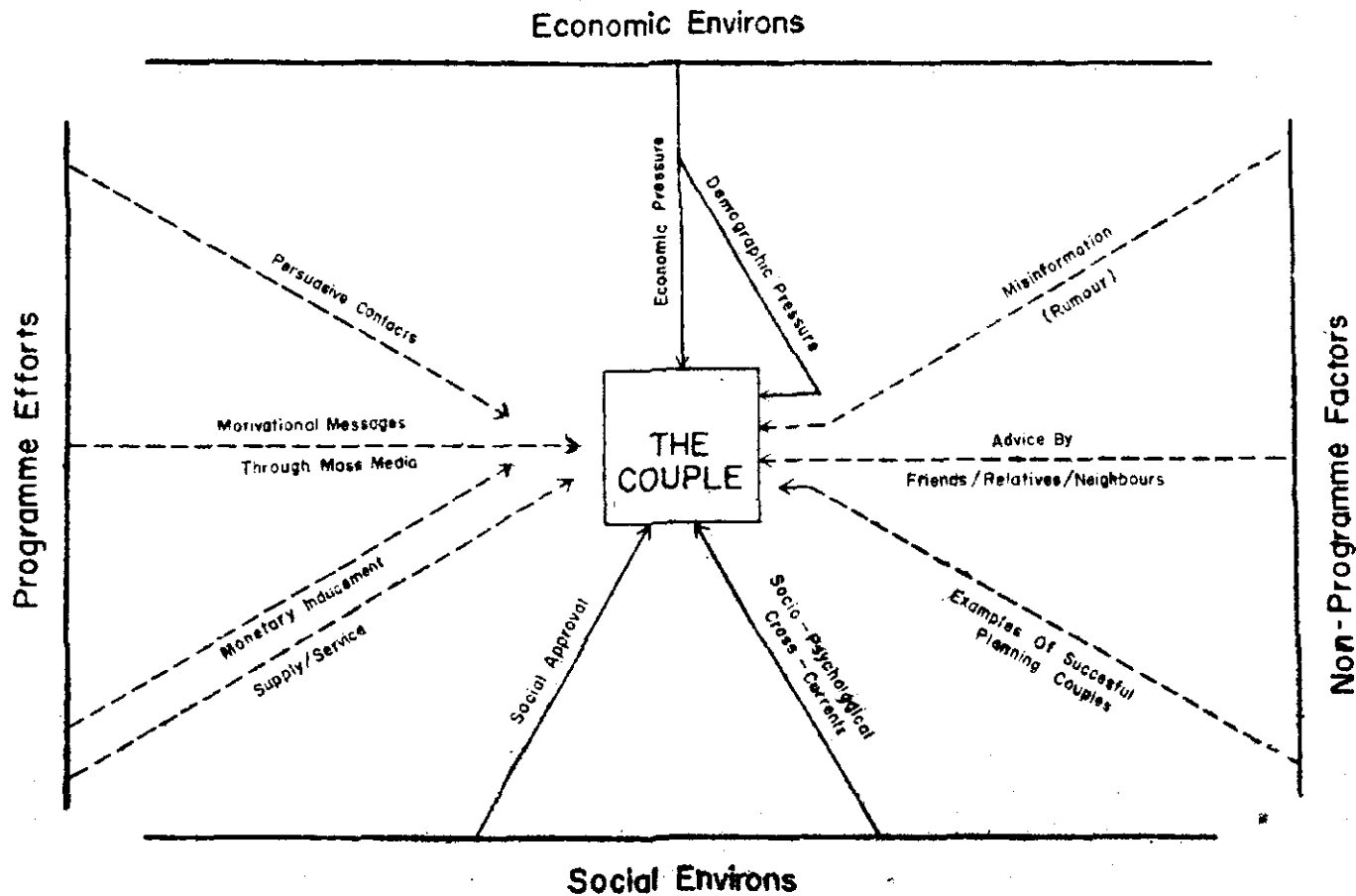
INDIA'S recently announced population policy has re-emphasised faith in voluntary family planning, and has proposed greater use of multi-media communication campaigns. This is a recognition of the power of mass communication media to help overcome resistance to change, and accelerate family planning innovations. This also is a confirmation of adherence to basic democratic principles, allowing couples the freedom of choice in family building activity. The couple should definitely have access to information about family planning methods and appropriate services. There are various ways to inform and educate couples about contraception. Each channel of communication has some merits and demerits. The media differ in terms of reach, effectiveness in communicating messages, comprehension and retention, costs, operational convenience and so on. India's family planning programme has gone through many innovations, and achieved a measure of success. The role of communication approaches in making this possible has never perhaps been consciously assessed. It may be useful, therefore, to have a look at some of the findings of communication research in India and consider their implications for the communication component of the family planning programme.

The Couples and the Decision Situations

We will first describe the decision situation of the couple—the target of most motivational programmes—and how communication fits into it.

As shown in the accompanying diagram, the felt pressure of excess childera,

THE DECISION SITUATION



Non-Programme Factors

Demography India

or its anticipation, conjoined with the economic constraints on the family leads, in principle, to acceptance of family planning, by a couple subject to social/religious approval and level of understanding of the benefits depending on the level of literacy and social status. Actual acceptance is further governed by the non-programme factors like spread of rumours, or diffusion of family planning messages through inter-personal channels of communication. Though the transmission of motivational messages through mass media and adequate provision of supply/service of good quality are necessary, persuasive communication of a personal nature by a motivating agent may play a decisive role in securing acceptance.

Target Couples-A Segmentation

The couples are in different stages of the life cycle, and have varying levels of contact with the family planning programme. The information needs depend on what phase a couple is currently in. It may therefore be useful to conceive of a scheme of segmenting the universe of couples (Simon, 1973). One way of achieving this is as follows :

- (i) Couples not aware of contraception (CNAC).
- (ii) Couples aware of contraception (CAC) but do not approve it (CACN).
- (iii) CAC-and approve it (CACA) but never used it (CACAN).
- (iv) CACA-used in the past (CACAP).
- (v) CACA-using currently (CACAC).

The above scheme of segmentation suggests that couples in group (i) should first be provided with knowledge about contraception, rather than attempting to Motivate them to adopt a method. The group (ii) couples should be persuaded to approve of family planning as a way of life. It has been observed that disapproval of family planning methods is associated with lack of knowledge of methods (ORG 1973). The group (ii) couples, may not have adequate knowledge about a method and knowledge on how to use should be imparted to them as a first step to secure their approval. The disapproval may be associated with non-exposure to media and lack of inter-personal communication. The disapproving couples are generally less able than others to express a view on ideal family size and spacing, etc. indicating that they are generally uncertain about these issues. This implies the need for (i) strengthening the media activities focussed on the disapproving couples; (ii) designing programmes for increasing inter-personal communication; and (iii) incorporating messages which faci-

literate formation of attitudes rather than directly secure acceptance of contraception. Since disapproval of family planning is more among the illiterates, the messages should be so designed as to be comprehensible by them. The channels of communication for putting across these messages should be so selected that the chance of exposing the illiterates is highest.

As shown in Table 1 the group (iii) couples are usually younger and with fewer children than groups (iv) and (v). It is apparent that they are in lower socio-economic strata of population, and most of them desire additional children. The communication programme should, in their case, specifically attempt to project family size ideal and to remove son preference. It should also try to remove the image of family planning as a means to terminate child-bearing and propagate the concept of spacing.

Group (iv) may contain couples who are dissatisfied users. The communication programme should try to reinstate their confidence in family planning and stop diffusion of misinformation. Those who are currently using contraception (Group v) and are satisfied should be encouraged to engage more in inter-personal communication.

Where does the Need Lie?

It has been often held that the rural areas being a main target of development activity the films and other mass media should address themselves to problems of rural development. Pertinent for the present purpose is the fact that in acceptance of family planning, the rural areas have lagged behind the urban as revealed by Table 2. The acceptance of small family norm is lower in smaller settlements. Indecision about ideal family size is prevalent among as high as 20 per cent of the couples in villages with population under 5000. The incidence of son preference is the highest in such villages. Awareness of family planning methods is much less prevalent in smaller villages; particularly in respect of spacing methods. Current users of family planning form 9.9 per cent in villages with population under 5000 as compared to 18.0 per cent in bigger villages, and 32.2 per cent in big cities. This implies the need for much greater concentration of motivational efforts in the small villages most of which lie in the interior, with poor infrastructural facilities.

The Messages

It is possible to classify the messages on the basis of the contents as follows :

(A)-Family Norms ; These messages either highlight population problem, or need for limiting or spacing children; (B)-Family Planning-General: Appeals to couples to approve and adopt family planning as a way of life; (C)-Family Planning—Specific Method : Requests couples to adopt specific method of family planning; (D)-Family Planning-Specific Programme : Inform couples about special campaigns, etc.

In a young programme type-A and type-B messages predominate, while in a mature programme such as that of India type-C and type-D messages are more prominent. To illustrate the impact of (D) type messages, we may refer to our earlier study. This study revealed that in rural Gujarat around 74 per cent of couples, with 3 or more children and not desiring to have more children, were using family planning in 1970. This percentage fell to 45 in 1973 after mass vasectomy campaigns. Further, among the non-sterilized couples with at least one son and one daughter, contacted for vasectomy, 21 per cent did not accept operation because of desire for more children, while 15% did not accept from fear of side effects of vasectomy. Thus there is a need to propagate the small family norm, as also to promote family planning methods *per se*, or to remove misconceptions about these.

It has been suggested at times that to popularize small family norm, dangers of over population may be emphasised. More specifically Mittal (1976) recommends that the attention of the parents be drawn to the fact 'that unemployment is increasing'. Such a suggestion would require most careful consideration, since it is not unlikely to create an anti-government reaction to the effect that it is not able to tackle the unemployment situation.

It is suggested that the media operators in family planning may profit by considering how advertising profession handles commercial campaigns. In this connection we may draw attention to following guidelines for planning a campaign (Manoff 1973):

- (i) The message should be simple, brief and devoted to one idea, (*SIMPLICITY/BREVITY*).
- (ii) It should be directed to a specific target group (*SPECIFICITY*).
- (iii) It should be such that members of the audience can remember it (*MEMORABILITY*).
- (iv) It should be such that circumstances allow the exposee to act according to the knowledge gained (*FEASIBILITY*).

It should, however, be recognized that commercial advertising has been applied more in urban areas and among the educated people; the professionals in this field have little experience of designing messages for rural illiterate masses. Even so, it is better to take their help in designing messages than to do it in a non-professional manner. Family planning mass media operators in India adopted a benefit selling approach (e.g., 'a small family is a happy family') borrowed from commercial advertising. But their approach lacked specificity and they failed to translate the ideas into meaningful communication campaigns.

His Communication Strategy

An understanding of the limitations of the conventional media prompted India to adopt "a two-fold strategy" of "making fullest use of the existing facilities and finding and utilising all other available channels of communication" (DFP 1972). A mix of conventional and local media forms the core of the communication strategy. In addition to registered song and drama troupes, the programme makes use of hoardings, bus boards, POP display tablets, shopping bags, match box labels etc. There is a mass mailing project for despatching printed publicity materials directly to village addresses, especially opinion leaders. There is, again, a growing literature on population education in the schools and colleges. The programme of mass communications is actively supported by extension education and home visits by field workers. The Family Planning Department has full-fledged communication and media offices at central, state and district levels. The Department is routinely supported by various media units of the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, viz., AIR, Directorate of Field Publicity, Song and Drama Division, Directorate of Advertising and Visual Publicity (DAVP), etc. Table 3, an extract from a ministerial document, illustrates the extent of mass media effort in the non-conventional sector.

The Conventional Mass Media

The most powerful media television, radio, films and printed matter, are unfortunately the least useful in India today because of its vastness in size, the limited reach of these media, and extremely low levels of education. TV is restricted to a handful of cities and villages. The country has over 7000 commercial cinema theatres, 50 radio stations, more than a crore of radio sets and 600 daily newspapers (DFP 1972). But, the level of exposure of the people to these media is still unduly low (see Table 4).

Only about one-third of the couples are exposed to printed matter, cinema or radio. Among the rural couples, forming over 80 per cent of the target couples, exposure to press is as low as 3.6 per cent, even the cinema exposure is only 14.1 per cent. In urban areas a much larger percentage of couples are exposed to radio, newspaper, films etc., which give information on family planning, but their contribution toward actual adoption is quite limited (Kaur 1976). Exposure is naturally low among the poor, and lower still among the illiterates. A recent survey in a few villages in Uttar Pradesh revealed that a high proportion of the adults (65.1 per cent) listen to radio at least sometimes. But many of these adults do not listen to radio regularly; the ownership of a radio set is as low as only 17 per cent of these U.P. households. Radio ownership is lower among low caste households (9.8%) than other families (23.6%); less than 6 per cent of families, with income as low as Rs. 200 or less, own radio sets in the villages surveyed. This restricts full utilization of the capacity of radio "to carry a message to the villages more efficiently than wall newspapers and pamphlets" (Schramm 1971).

Comprehension of messages received from radio is found to be satisfactory, making the radio a powerful medium for reaching people belonging to all sections of the society. Its potential can be more fully realised if (i) radio receiving sets are more easily available at a cheaper cost to poor villagers, and/or (ii) community sets are installed and properly maintained.

Effective Use of Mass Media

The radio broadcasts some special programmes for villagers on agriculture, industry and family planning. But the awareness of some of these special programmes for villagers is extremely low, though exposure is reasonably high among those who are aware of them (Ghosh 1976). In the UP study, only 41.5 per cent of the adults were found to be aware of the evening programme, which discusses family planning frequently as one of the subjects. Awareness of this programme is lower still (30.4%) among the illiterates. About 60 per cent of the adults, who are aware, listen to the evening programme. There are also special programmes in the radio specifically devoted to family planning; the situation in respect of these programmes is not significantly different. This implies (i) the need for further improving the quality of programmes so that these are attractive to villagers, and (ii) special effort should be made by the field workers to inform villagers about these programmes, and urge them to listen to these,

It has been suggested that the film can make as great, if not a greater, contribution than radio to national development (Hopkinson 1971). This has prompted policy makers to make use of this medium for development communication. How effectively are the films now being utilised for the purpose? Adequate information is not readily available in this regard but it seems reasonable to assume that the situation is not radically different from what has been observed about agencies such as field publicity units which handle a major share of family planning film shows.

It was observed in the UP study that owing to a large number of difficulties the film shows are mostly concentrated in the urban areas. The major hindrance is related to constraints on vehicular fuel and other resources. A recent study points out that the film shows arranged by the district family planning office also suffer from similar logistic problems (Mittal 1976). This situation restricts the utility of film shows to a great extent. This fact is often used as an excuse by field officers for not arranging film shows in the villages. One solution to this problem is to work out feasible targets for number of film shows in different locations so as to maximize the utility of the programme subject to various constraints including restriction on POL budget (Ghosh and Rao 1976).

Choice of films by the communicator should be judicious. Some of the family planning films (e.g., "*Sapna*", "*Do ya Teen Bus*", "*Umbrella*") are meant for couples in reproductive age while others (such as "*Stop-think*", "*For them a future*", "*The Danger Signal*") are meant for the general public. Some communicators are seen to use these two types of films without distinction. Films appropriate for the potential audience group should be selected for screening a show.

Attendance in film shows is often small because of lack of advance publicity. In some village programmes only 16 per cent of the married adults were observed to attend. This pinpoints the need for proper and adequate advance publicity whenever a film show is arranged in a village. There is no attempt to integrate mass media activity with personal contact (Mittal 1976).

The following conclusions of the UP study should be of interest to family planning media planners:

- (i) Coloured films, which are usually very popular with the audience, are not necessarily associated with good recall characteristics and comprehensibility.

- (ii) Animation films are better understood by the audience, although these films imply below average recall capacity.
- (iii) The films having duration of 15 or 20 minutes are better recalled than those lasting 10 minutes, but comprehensibility is similar (Ghosh 1976).

Further, unlike films on agriculture and allied fields, family planning and health films are less recalled and understood. The understanding of films is comparatively lower among females, illiterates, lower income groups etc. This point should be borne in mind while designing films for rural audiences.

A normal film show in a village consists usually of 4-5 films in which a number of messages are incorporated. This usually makes it rather difficult for an illiterate villager to comprehend the messages or even to appreciate it as of educational value, Rahman (1974) comments "The film flashes by before it has made its point". The films are found to be powerful enough in changing attitudes (Ghosh. 1976). But, their occurrence in a village is too infrequent to produce any significant impact on the society (Rahman 1974, Ghosh 1976). The following findings of research by Rahman are very instructive (Hopkinson 1971):

- (i) The audience in a developing country are mainly 'illiterate', and for them a photographic reproduction is a novelty, let alone a motion picture,
- (ii) The people have difficulty to understand the commentary which accompanies a film show, unless it is 'brief, simple and direct',
- (iii) There is a need to produce special documentaries *only* for rural audiences.

The UP study yielded some information on effectiveness of cultural programmes as well. These programmes are also less attended by people in low socio-economic groups and by women. The composite programmes are popular and effective. Humorous items like caricature are seen to be effective in transmitting a message. Religious discourse and puppet show are less popular, although puppet shows are quite effective. The messages are often found to be either absent or too crude in a cultural programme. Well-designed cultural programmes do influence attitudes. However, these media are more effective in maintaining existing high level of motivation than in inducing innovative behaviour. The programme administrators should be careful in selecting troupes and in monitoring the programmes to make sure that the cultural programmes do not turn out to be mere entertainment. Investment of additional funds on folk media shall be utter wastage of

resources unless quality of programmes (message orientation in particular) is improved. Emphasis by programme managers on quantity of film shows and cultural programmes has resulted in poor quality of programmes, and ineffective/low utility programmes mostly organized in urban settings and adjacent villages. This implies the need for introducing scientific management control system for monitoring programme activities (Ghosh 1976). A proper information system is conspicuous by its absence in mass media activities by district family planning offices (Mittal 1976).

Inter-personal Communications

It has been shown that the practice of family planning is distinctly higher among those who engage in inter-personal communication on family planning (ORG 1973). This finding may be due to the fact that a significant programme activity stimulates channels of inter-personal communication (Schramm 1971). How far has the programme activity in India been significant enough in generating oral communication among various population segments ? In this regard the ORG study has yielded the following conclusions :

- (i) Openness to inter-personal communication increases with the size of settlement : 23.9 per cent couples in villages with population below 5000 talk freely about family planning, compared to 47.5 per cent in cities with population in excess of 0.5 million. Inter-spousal communication is only 14.5 per cent and 40.2 per cent in the two types of settlements respectively.
- (ii) Extent of inter-personal communication increases with educational level of wife.
- (iii) Inter-personal, especially the inter-spouse, communication increases with the number of living children.
- (iv) The never user disapproves among couples engage much less in inter* personal communication than never user approvers and ever users.

The Gujarat experience has shown that inter-personal channels of communication with friends, relatives and neighbours is effective in creating awareness of vasectomy (Ghosh 1966). Similar conclusions have also been reported elsewhere (Dubey and Devgan 1969).

A campaign for popularising free distribution of Nirodh was organised in Andhra Pradesh in 1970-71. The campaign, called Andhra Pradesh Nirodh

Fortnight Campaign (APNFC), was intended to create a high degree of awareness and specific knowledge about Nirodh among the eligible couples in the state. A very high degree of inter-personal communication was observed during this drive (ORG 1972). About 62 per cent of those aware of the campaign stated that some person or other had talked to them about it. Friends, relatives and neighbours were the more important communicators; relatives and neighbours predominated in the rural and friends in the urban areas. The extent of inter-personal communication was seen to rise with educational level. The family planning workers and relatives were the major sources of information about Nirodh, especially for the illiterates. A recent study of urban industrial settings reports : "personal friends, relatives and neighbours were the most important communicators of the message of family planning and they were also the most frequently mentioned sources of influence in changing respondents* attitudes in favour of family planning adoption" (Kaur 1976). Availability of a higher-than-usual incentive induces greater inter-personal communication. The motivational role of accepters was found to be substantial in the Gujarat campaigns (Ghosh 1976). The population policy planners should try to devise a communication strategy which not only results in greater knowledge and adoption, but also increases inter-personal communication. As a study of diffusion at micro-level suggests :

- (i) the transmission of information, advice, and influence by early family planners is backed mainly by their personal experience with the innovation, but later users are induced to act more because of social energy than personal experience;
- (ii) the mass media do not play a major role as a primary source of information, but they help to increase inter-personal communication and thus the ability of (the acceptors; and
- (iii) whether an acceptor is a successful change-agent or not depends mainly on his/her level of knowledge and conversational skills, and to a certain extent the general attitude of the people to family planning, but not by the acceptors' socio-demographic status (Verbrugge 1973).

The family planning programme may specially enlist the support of acceptors by directing their motivational endeavours in a desired direction. The success of this strategy would depend on the ability of the programme to make the acceptors as well-informed as possible about the methods. It is important to make 'full disclosure of facts from the beginning' to prevent unfavourable rumours (Schramm 1971). If an IUD acceptor is told at the time of insertion that a little bleeding is possible, or a vasectomized person is informed that exces*

sive sex after operation may cause some weakness, they would not resent if such things happen in their own situations, and would not blame the programme. At the same time, it is imperative that utmost care is taken of the acceptors of both terminal and non-terminal methods. Any complication social, physical or physiological, traced to the use of contraception must be treated with top priority. Satisfaction of the acceptors will induce them to diffuse the innovation. The programme should emphasise quality of services, and not merely quantity. This means that if in the area of a family planning centre with a good record of target achievement, any complaints of poor quality of service are substantiated, the PHC-staff should be reprimanded and not rewarded. This policy should result in substantial benefits to the programme by way of creating a favourable climate in which people would either themselves opt for contraception, or could be easily persuaded to do so.

Personal Persuasive Communication

What role do the change agents play in inducing acceptance of family planning ? It is the common experience of family planning researchers in the developing countries that there is a wide gap between the level of awareness, favourable disposition to family planning and its actual adoption. In India 78 per cent of the couples in the reproductive age-group are aware of at least one method of contraception, 59 per cent approve of adopting birth control methods, but only 13.6 per cent are currently practising contraception (ORG 1973). Many of the disapproving couples fail to give valid reasons for their disapproval. It seems clear that although the couples are basically favourable to family planning, some latent reasons hold them back from actual acceptance. Possibly, the observed hesitancy is the manifestation of their limited knowledge about the available methods, and misconceptions regarding the after-effects of contraception. A visit of motivating agent, or a family planning worker, to a hesitant couple should help to clear the vagueness in knowledge about family planning. Such visits may result either in the acceptance by the couples of a method right-away, or in making them more certain about acceptance of a method in the foreseeable future. This would not result from exposure to mass media, which are only one-way flows of communication. If, however, mass communication activities are coupled programmatically with individual communication by change agents, the results are likely to be even more encouraging. It cannot be gainsaid that family planning workers' contribution to whatever success the programme has achieved has been substantial. It is even so worthwhile to ex-

plore ways of improving the effectiveness of the family planning workers. **One** way is to bring about closer supervision. Another way is to give them some training on persuasive techniques, work planning and management, etc. To effectively link family planning worker's effort with mass communication support is another welcome step. The success of the personal persuasive communication is conditioned by such variables as the persuasiveness of the communicator, the communication message content, socio-cultural differential between the communicator and the individual, his socio-demographic characteristics and pre-contact attitude to family planning.

We may illustrate here the role of personal persuasive communication on future use intention from the Gujarat experience with the mass vasectomy campaigns. The data refer to the 3806 eligible couples (currently married, wife in 15-49 age group) interviewed after the second mass vasectomy campaign. Among the never user approvers (i.e., those who have never used any method of family planning but approve of its use in general), a higher proportion (40%) of those visited by family planning workers proposed to use a method in the near future than in the case of those not visited (24.5%). The never user disapprovers (i.e., those who have not used any method of family planning any time and do not approve of its adoption except under some 'special circumstances') demonstrated the effect of persuasive call even more glaringly. As expected this hard-to-motivate group exhibited a lower rate of intention to adopt: 8.6 per cent couples proposing to use, against 33 per cent in case of never user approvers. Among never user disapproves, 15.3 per cent of those visited by family planning workers expressed intention to use family planning in future compared to only 3.9 per cent of those not visited. This shows that home visit by a family planning worker acting as the channel of the persuasive communication helps to mould the attitude of the non-acceptors of family planning for accepting family planning in the future as well. Further, among the never user approvers who were subjected to persuasion for under-going vasectomy, a higher proportion (45.2%) proposed to adopt a family planning method in the future than those not contacted for vasectomy (29.7%). The never user disapproves contacted for vasectomy operation displayed higher rate of intention to adopt (21.8%) compared to those among them who were not contacted (6.1%).

This indicates the abiding influence of the persuasive communication activated during the mass vasectomy campaigns in Gujarat. However, very little is known about the way the task of communication is carried out by the family planning

workers **in** a normal programme, or the actual message transmitted to the couples by them. It is shown that the family planning workers often talk generalities during their first visit mainly to establish rapport with the **clientale**. Only about one fifth of the **ANMs** and one-tenth of the **male** family planning workers in **Gujarat discussed** family planning during a first visit to an **eligible couple** (Ghosh *et al.* 1976). The Gujarat study as well as the UP study highlight the motivational approaches adopted by the change agents (Ghosh *et al.* 1976, Misra *et al.* 1973). The important **findings** of these studies, relevant in the present context, are :

- (i) The **male** workers take the help of satisfied users **in** their motivational effort. The female workers concentrate their efforts among pregnant women.
- (ii) Most family planning workers claim that they make use of the **Eligible Couple Registers (ECR)** in selecting the couples, but there is also evidence to show ECR is not adequately used.
- (iii) **Homophily** works better among higher castes and among the Muslims, while heterophily is more useful in motivating couples of the lower castes.
- (iv) The family planning workers seek and receive the help of villagers in their motivational work. The most helpful among the villagers are educated persons, village heads, school teachers, earlier acceptors etc. In low performance PHCs the family planning workers seem to depend more on the village leaders than in the high performance PHCs.
- (v) **Discussion** of general topics such as economic condition, health, medical facilities, social life etc. along with family planning is more useful in motivating couples than talking merely about family planning.
- (vi) The working relationship between doctors and extension educators, frequency of contacts of family planning workers with their immediate supervisors are important determinants of success in the **family** planning motivational work.

The implications of these findings to the family planning programme are evident. The Target Couple Register is recognized as a **useful** tool in organizing and **implementing** persuasive communication. Some attempt has been made to improve upon its form, but more research is needed to make ECR a handy device for planning persuasive communication for family planning (Mosley and Dey 1972, Ghosh 1975). It should be useful to step up the **efforts** of motivating pregnant women to undergo postpartum tubectomy if desired family size has

already been attained or otherwise, to adopt a non-terminal method. The finding about homophily/heterophily implies that it would be better to use Muslim workers in areas inhabited mostly by the Muslims. Similarly, as far as possible high caste Hindus should be utilised for persuasive communication at least in the rural areas where caste still plays a dominant role. It is quite natural for the family planning workers to avail of the help of the local leaders in undertaking the communication task at least in the early phase of work in a village. But as the programme matures while the workers should definitely win the confidence of the leadership, they may function on their own without having to depend on the leadership except in exceptional circumstances. It may be useful to discuss with the leaders and chalk out a plan of motivational work in a village. The family planning workers should, however, be careful that they are not being misled and their work is in keeping with the policies and programmes of the government. A study recommends preparation of a yearly mass communication plan at district level (Mittal 1976). There is also a suggestion to integrate operationally mass media activities with field visits; e.g., the village, where a film show is arranged, should also be visited by family planning workers within a few days (Kaur 1976, Mittal 1976). Training programmes for family planning officials should impress upon their mind the value of cooperation, coordination and adequate supervision of lower level staff, and also how these can be achieved. The communication and extension specialists should try to devise messages suitable for different types of couples discussed earlier. Attempts should be made to prepare programmed instructions on persuasive communication for family planning workers.

Discussion

The population policy-makers, programme administrators, social scientists and communication planners should join hands for deciding the media mix and the content of messages to be transmitted to various segments of the target population. Mass communication has proven capacity to change attitudes and its use to convert the disapprovers should go on. Specificity in this task will certainly pay. The task ahead is to devise measures for improving the management of media activities.

Way back in 1967, Bogue had suggested some steps for making family planning programme sociologically sound. Some of these measures are still worthy of consideration, while others need be revised in the light of experience over the last decade which has witnessed many programme developments. Bogue's first

recommendation that there should be more emphasis on information transfer rather than action motivation is no longer valid because level of awareness has substantially risen since. Motivation for action is to be emphasised more now in view of the large gap between awareness and practice of family planning.

It has been shown that non-acceptance of family planning by a couple often has an origin in fear or misconception about a method of contraception (Ghosh *et al* 1976). Some obstacles to family planning have been identified and techniques for eliminating or tackling these have been discussed in the literature. Important among measures for improving the management of communication activities are : setting spatial targets for film shows and cultural programmes, introducing planning and information systems, streamlining resource allocation, and bringing about organizational improvement through restructuring and apt training programmes.

Research on operational aspects of communication (cf. Ghosh and Rao 1976) should be given a high priority. Similarly, research on processes of behavioural change through communication (cf. Kar 1975) should be emphasized. Communication intervention in family planning will be more successful in furthering the goals of family planning programme if communication policy and programme are based on **available** findings, and at the same time sound research **is** undertaken to evaluate the current approaches to build up knowledge for re-orienting the strategy in the future.

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Appendix

**TABLE 1—CHARACTERISTICS OF GROUPS III, IV AND V-A
COMPARISON (India 1970)**

<i>Characteristic</i>	<i>Group</i>		
	<i>III</i>	<i>IV</i>	<i>V</i>
Age of Wife—Average	29.7	31.0	32.0
Living children—Average No.	2.5	3.0	3.8
Living Sons—Average No.	1.4	1.7	2.1
Percentage desiring more children	64	48	21
Percent with literate wife	13	42	42
Percent earning over Rs. 200 p.m.	21	43	41
Percent non-manual workers	25	44	45
Percent urban couples	14	34	36

SOURCE : **O.R.G.** 1973.

**TABLE 2—IDEAL FAMILY SIZE, DESIRE FOR SON, AWARENESS OF
METHODS AND PRACTICE OF FAMILY PLANNING (India, 1970)**

Per cent of couples

<i>Characteristic</i>	<i>Group</i>	<i>Urban</i>			<i>Rural</i>		<i>Total</i>
		<i>Above 5 lacs</i>	<i>1-5 lacs</i>	<i>Below 1 lac</i>	<i>5000 and above</i>	<i>Below 5000</i>	
Ideal Family Size	1-3	59.1	54.8	49.2	48.1	36.5	40.2
	4-5	27.5	32.9	36.2	35.5	36.5	35.9
	As many	3.6	4.3	4.8	4.2	6.9	6.3
	Can't say	9.7	7.7	9.8	12.1	20.1	17.5
Desire for Son		81.9	85.3	85.0	86.1	89.8	88.5
Awareness of Method	Vasec- tomy	78.8	84.1	81.3	77.0	70.5	72.9
	Tubec- tomy	76.5	80.8	77.2	70.3	56.8	61.6
	Loop	68.3	70.3	64.5	53.3	39.7	45.6
	Condom	59.8	56.2	48.6	34.7	18.2	25.7
Practice of Family Planning	Current user	32.2	29.0	23.9	18.0	9.9	13.6
	Past user	8.4	10.2	8.0	5.6	3.6	4.6
	Ever user	40.6	39.2	31.9	23.6	13.5	17.0

SOURCE : **O.R.G.** 1973.

TABLE 3- MASS EDUCATION AND **MOTIVATION—FACILITIES AND ACTIVITIES**

<i>Channel</i>	<i>Facilities</i>	<i>Activities (1970-71)</i>
Films	(i) 166 Central Mobile Field Publicity Units (30 exclusively for family planning) (ii) One mobile A.V. unit in each of the 335 districts of India	27,067 family planning film shows by central units, and 40,000 film shows by state units
Radio	(i) 150,000 community sets (ii) Special FP cells in 36 radio stations	18,167 family planning items broadcast using 117,973 minutes of broadcasting time
Press	(i) Six central feature units for family planning (ii) 17 information units	241 features, and 1281 other items released through press
Song and Drama	(i) 400 registered troupes (ii) Thousands of local parties/ artistes (iii) Six regional and one central FP Song and Drama officers (iv) Four departmental troupes	4054 programmes organised by central units
Exhibition	(i) Six regional FP Units (ii) 26 regional exhibition units (iii) Mobile exhibition sets/kits for districts and rural centres	61 FP exhibitions by central units
Display	Hoardings, Bus boards , Rickshaw plates , Metallic plates , Match box tables Match box lables, wall paintings etc.	(Statistics not available)
Mass Mailing	Listed address of opinion leaders	2.5 million addresses

SOURCE : Department of Family Planning 1972.

TABLE 4—EXPOSURE OF COUPLES TO CONVENTIONAL MEDIA (India 1970)

<i>Medium</i>	<i>Per cent of Couples Exposed</i>			
	<i>Total</i>	<i>Rural</i>	<i>Illiterate</i>	<i>Income upto Rs. 200</i>
Any of the following	35.7	28.0	27.0	28.7
Press	7.9	3.6	2.5	3.0
Cinema (3 times a year or more)	20.0	14.1	14.0	16.0
Radio (Vividh Bharati) (1 day a week or more)	10.8	6.5	5.8	6.8

SOURCE : O.R.G. 1973.