



**ANALYSIS OF MASS MEDIA COVERAGE ON NTFPS (NON TIMBER FOREST PRODUCTS) SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT: A CASE STUDY OF RURAL AND URBAN AREAS OF KASHMIR**

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**Abstract**

The main aim of the study is to analysis different mass media coverage on forest and forestry related information along with NTFPs (Non Timber Forest Products) vis-e-vis Medicinal Plants in north region of Kashmir. In the research work it will be also unearth mindset of the general urban and rural people towards the concern field i.e, forests. The study analyses all section of content present in the mass media in the form of news, op-ed, advertising, advertorial and infotainment. The research is designed with the aim to find out the contribution of information through different communications by the stakeholder of the forestry with this we can identified the gap of communication in terms of being part of contributors by educationalist in general, Environmentalists, NGOs, Concern departments (Forest department) and allied sciences participants.

**Keywords:** Mass Media, Urban and Rural Communication, Mass Media, Sustainable Development, forestry and NTFPs.

**Introduction**

Communication has yet to go long way to certain its stand for forest and forestry, as the studies are not in that degree to provide research platform in the J&K state and many other parts of India.

Most of the messages discoursed on mass media for the public are related to traditional forestry i.e, timber, deforestation, forest conservation and other conservation related issues by the concerns etc. Other slice of the forests like Non Timber Forest products has got little coverage even in the ration of rest forest related news the presence of NTFPs are equivalent to nothing. In context of non-timber forest products in J&K particular medicinal plants, more than 50% of the plant species used in British pharmacopoeia were reported to grow in the State of J&K. About 572 plant species have been reported to be of Medicinal value by various sources which belong to 109 different families of plants<sup>iii</sup> (Panjoo J.A DFO J&K Forester Deptt., 2010).



The extraction of NTFPs (Non Timber Forest Produces) especially “medicinal plants” in rural areas of Kashmir is degrading forest cover under a broad spectrum of anthropogenic threats that are mainly rooted in poverty but worsened by lack of knowledge, awareness and mismanagement. Developmental communication ought to play pro-active role in spreading public awareness and in education. Therefore, mass media impact on how they shape public perceptions is also unknown. There is vast gap in the form of information discriminated from the traditional forest to the modern means of forestry which is driven by the sustainability there is lack of management approach, as the biodiversity, bio-energy or climate mitigation.

Case studies of previous educations shoes that it often goes unnoticed that who the main contributors of relevant information are. Mass media is a powerful tool that is used to effect social change (Quigley, 2006). As this studies is carried out in Jammu and Kashmir state where most prominent means of communication are Print electronics. The reason behind the prominence of the print media is that it is easily accessible to the general public in terms of participation as the news inundates us daily with headlines and images, entering our thought processes and persuade our decisions about everything from the trivial to the crucial. News is a built version of social reality, a socially created product and not an objective reflection of reality but ultimately a subjective selection of facts (Corbett,2 Miguel Fabra-Crespo and Eduardo Rojas-Briales2006). Public opinion research has repeatedly confirmed that media both reflects and helps to shape public attitudes about a wide range of issues and serves as a valid indicator of public attitudes toward these issues (e.g., Burgess et al., 1991; Cockerill, 2003; Eliottet al., 1995; Fan, 1988; McCombs, 2004; Fabra- Crespoet al., 2012). Ample evidence exists of a strong relationship between the amount of news coverage of an issue and where such issues rank on the public agenda (Miller, 1997).

Mass media has by default the influence on the public by determining the importance of information not only that but also determine the space at large. Hence, issues that the media deems important eventually become important to the public. Public opinion influences the media to a lesser extent than the media influences the public (Ader, 1995).

Clearly, how reporters and editors present information has the power to influence reader opinion and could potentially affect policy decisions. Often, journalists do not have adequate information or lack technical skills, and editors impose criteria of impact, emotionality, timeline, objectivity, balance, etc. It is essential for mass media managers to obtain the support of the audience, as a newspaper or television channel is observed as simply one more consumer product instead of



as an informative tool (De Paz, 2007). Besides, the competence of web media and the flash news oppose the professional analysis of complex questions, such as those related to the environment.

Forests are not just a socio-economic or environmental resource; they are also a socio-cultural issue for most people. There is little knowledge regarding what drives public preferences and their influencing factors, considering the wide range of ecological, social, cultural and economic variables involved. Hence, these preferences do not have a singular nature, as such, but multiple natures that are historically, geographically and socially constituted. This is why in one country there can be a variety of social representations of forests and forestry as well as of rural areas, water, mountains, etc. The accelerated urbanization process of society has affected social perceptions by dissolving the roots of the population. In urban societies, this process increases the perception of a complex reality as virtual and within a global dimension. Analysis of the content of the news media has repeatedly been shown to produce results that parallel the findings of attitude surveys, as a single ex-post mechanism, for many public policy issues

### **Hypothesis**

There are set of hypothesis which are associated with the research work as in general, firstly there would be analysis of how the mass media in Jammu and Kashmir influence the construction of the social perception regarding different activates of forest and forestry particularly NTFPs (Non Timber Forest Products) vis-e-vis Medicinal plants. This was achieved by the analyzing various contents directly or indirectly related to forestry that NTFPs Medicinal plants in cover of three years in regional prominent daily newspapers.

The first set of hypotheses concern the following messages:

1. To what degree does the issues and topics of forest and forestry discussed in regional mass media (Newspapers).
2. What are the main topics of forestry and its concern subject usually discussed and get space in the regional mass media (Newspapers )
3. What is the ratio of the information coverage in the newspaper in terms of different sections i.e, Op-Ed, News, Advertising, Editorial.
4. Are there seasonal and occasional differences regarding publication of information?

The second set of hypotheses concern sources of information: