

## Topic: COMMUNICATION SKILLS

BA PART III, 7<sup>th</sup> PAPER, By: Dr. AMARJEET KUMAR, Home Science Department, Rohtas Mahila College, Sasaram.

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### COMMUNICATING TO THE RURAL POPULATION

**Education** is considered by the national leaders and planners as one of the **most important factors for Human Resource**

**Development**, leading to economic development, technical progress and creating a social order based on freedom, social justice and equal opportunities. Unfortunately, every effort made by the Government to develop the poor and the disadvantaged sectors of the society through proper adult learning strategies has not yielded the desired results for many reasons. The main problem being the illiteracy level among the rural population, it can be stated that the lapses are due to the failure on the part of the planners and change agents in properly encoding the messages and in utilizing the proper media for the intended learners. In order to overcome this problem, developmental communicators tried using 'Folk Media'. Folk Arts are the **expressions or methods and when these arts are used in conveying messages, they form a media of communication**. This is the most suitable media for rural or illiterate adults, for extension education or community development work. Mass media has a wide reach yet it has not been properly understood and used. Radio still remains a music box and is a one-way communication media. Television is bound to remain a luxury or else used mainly for entertainment. Films have always been a medium of entertainment. Under these circumstances, **traditional folk arts have been used as a media for propagating several ideas of modernization to the illiterate masses successfully.**

**Folk arts are the spontaneous expression of the tribal and peasant people all over the world**, which is evolved by themselves to suit their own needs. In folk arts, cultural symbols are used and expressions is given to people's lifestyle and values through spoken words songs and rhythm. They are theme carriers and are ventilated without any stipulated rules or regulations. The cost involved in organizing such programs and the need for trained organizations is limited in comparison with the mass media. Due to this folk media of communication gives pleasure to both the artists and the audience and becomes a **participatory communication** in delivering **developmental messages**. In rural areas of Tamil Nadu, a number of folk-arts is in existence. Over the years the use of these arts has diminished and only a few have been developed and is made available in educational program. Folk arts are broadly classified into **folk songs, folk drama and folk dance**.

**Folk Songs** are the spontaneous, meaningful expression of the village folk tuned to a very simple, melodious music which is very much characteristic to each area. Folk songs are sung at many occasions like marriage, birth, death or at work. Example: **Thalattu Drama** is an art, serving feast for the eyes, ears and mind simultaneously. It not only amuses but also instructs the audience. Dance and drama had not been identified as two different arts during early days. They were called "Koothu" in ancient Tamil Nadu. Example: **Therukoothu**.

**Folk Dancing** is the characteristic dancing of the people of a country or state, some are very ancient and have their origin in the history of the nation. They contain special steps and gestures that have deep meaning to members of that group. Dancing is accompanied by singing and music and the dancers take different forms while dancing. Example: **karakattam**

**Puppetry** or puppet show is one of those interesting folk arts where dolls are animated by human fingers, to dance move or perform, so as to mimic human actions. Puppetry first appeared in India and spread to other countries. Even before people could write and reason, puppetry was a means of presenting religious and historical traditions of a country. The different types of puppets used are - string puppets, shadow puppets, glove or hand puppets and finger puppets.