



**INDIAN INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY GUWAHATI
SHORT ABSTRACT OF THESIS**

Name of the Student : SURESH GODUKA

Roll Number : 196105009

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Name of Thesis Supervisor(s) : Professor Amarendra Kumar Das

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SHORT ABSTRACT

This research evaluates the effectiveness of mass communication campaigns among the tea plantation worker communities in Assam, the world's largest tea-growing region. These workers play a significant role in global tea production. They are a heterogeneous mixture of about a hundred tribes and castes originating from different parts of India. They exhibit a rich diversity in respect to language, tradition, culture and social background, and are known collectively as the Tea Tribe in Assam. Since the era of British tea planters, they have settled in the close-quartered tea garden colonies. This isolation has led to unique socio-cultural dynamics within these communities, which presents both challenges and opportunities for mass communication. This research includes a field survey to measure the effectiveness of different mass media tools among the Assam tea plantation worker communities. The findings indicate that the reach and effect of the mass media tools among the population under study have been poor. This suggests a pressing need for a new approach that can effectively bridge the communication gap. In response to this need, the research work proposes a novel framework for mass communication design. It included designing alternative media tools, which were tested for usability among the target population. The testing process involved projective technique with recorded feedback. The findings from these tests are presented as recommendations and guidelines for designing messages, ensuring optimal effectiveness, of mass campaigns among marginalized communities, such as the Assam tea plantation workers. It considers the unique socio-cultural dynamics of these communities and seeks to create communication strategies that resonate with their experiences, capacity and context. The recommendations were validated by the producers of mass communication campaigns. This research underscores the need for adequate context-based designing of mass communication, addressing the unique communication needs of diverse communities. The research work may help in developing future models focusing on mass communication mediated by design interventions.