

Role of Media in Social Change

Abstract

Media is now an integral part of the life of the modern man who is guided and governed by media in several ways. Television, computer, internet, mobile and android phones are some of the popularly known means of media that serve the global culture to the people living in the various corners of the world; that make them familiar with the different cultures of the world, and that move their minds to join the ongoing global socio-cultural processes in order to make their life better and more blissful.

It is unquestionable to admit that media has played a great role in changing the society both positively and negatively. Awareness to the human rights, awareness to the various programmes and schemes meant for the public welfare, bringing closer to the mainstream, bringing closer to the various important ongoing socio-cultural processes, such as, modernization, sanskritization, women empowerment etc. are the positive sides of the role of media in bringing about social change.

Excessive individualism, indifference to the long-prevailing cultural modes of behavior, going against the traditions, over-modernity that makes one blind to the society and social norms, loss of faith in kinship system, loss of faith in the family system, loss of faith in the marriage system etc. are some of the negative sides of the role of media in social change.

The planned modern social change is the gift of media. It is media which, through its various effective means, makes the people familiar with what is going around in the world; it is media which forces the people to change the existing social system and to replace it by some new social system that can bring more satisfaction to the people and that can make the life of the people better ensuring them happiness, education, employment, respectable social status, liberty and rights guaranteed to them by the Constitution of India.

The findings of the study reveal that social change is the demand of all the times; several factors are responsible for the social change in the world, and media has been very effective in bringing about social change in the world.

Keywords: Media, Social change, Primitive, Tribal, Modern and advanced, Customs, Traditions, Ideology, Main Stream, Betterment, Planned Change.

Introduction

Change occurs when the existing system fails to satisfy the needs and demands of the people. Change is inevitable and occurs in all the spheres of life and world imaginable on the part of man. As everything in the world is changeable, society too is changeable that reveals changes from time to time caused and brought about by nature or by the policies and schemes meant for the welfare of the public.

Social change has reached every corner of the world, and even the most primitive societies and communities now reveal change. Of the various factors of social change, the economic factor, technological factor, cultural factor and ideological factor are the major ones that play a dominant role in bringing about social change.

The role of media in social change cannot be ignored. Media has proved itself one of the most effective agencies that force and motivate the people to link up with social change and to raise voice against the evils in the existing social system. Media has reached both the rural and the urban societies and the primitive and the modern societies.

It is true that media is easily accessible to the people of the urban society, but it cannot be denied that it is also accessible to the members of the primitive and the rural societies where the people are found incredibly influenced by media and the contents served by media. Media affects the people both positively and negatively. Positively



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Speaking, it motivates the people to be aware of the ongoing social trends in the world and to avail themselves of education and employment. Negatively speaking, it detaches them from the long-prevailing and long-established socio-cultural norms and traditions and forces them to enjoy individuality.

Obviously, media is responsible for the loss of people's faith in traditions, social institutions like family, marriage and kinship, religion etc. It is under the influence of media that nuclear families are increasing, aged-people are forced to live in old-age homes, pre-marital and post-marital as well as live-in-relations are being approved, and trend of inter-caste and inter-religion marriage is increasing.

Review of Related Literature

Kirk Johnson (2001), in *Media and social change: the modernizing influences of television in rural India*, analyzes the role of television in rural life, and the influence it has had on various social, economic and political processes that have been revolutionizing the landscape of village India in recent years. Data from ethnographic fieldwork in two remote villages in the mountains of Western Maharashtra (Danawli and Raj Puri) are presented in the context of development and social change.

In particular, the article establishes the framework and rationale for an ethnographic approach to the research. It discusses the unique characteristics of television that make it an important agent of cultural change. Furthermore, the article analyzes various social processes that include consumerism, urban modeling, restructuring of human relationships, linguistic hegemony, migration and the emergence of an information underclass.

Some villagers see these processes as positive, yet others view them as negative developments. The study concludes with a discussion of social change at both the structural as well as psychological levels and argues that the village audience is an active and vibrant participant in the use of media, which has ramifications for 'development' both at the village level and beyond.

Caroline Wilson (2004), in *Understanding the Dynamics of Socio-Economic Mobility: Tales from Two Indian Villages* takes a comparative approach by examining household livelihood mobility within two very different villages, in the same district administration of Madhya Pradesh (MP), India. Sadangarh is a multi-caste village, with significant commercial farming and non-farm sectors, excellent transport links to the district headquarters, which is half an hour away by bus, and externally politically influential elite amongst its community members.

In particular, links to external markets have significantly improved business and migration opportunities. Livelihood diversification has occurred primarily because of land redistribution policy, the implementation of modern farming techniques and cash cropping, the development of internal markets, the adaptation of traditional caste occupations and increased rural-urban linkages, in particular for trade and labour migration. However, economic integration has not benefited all. Pressures on natural resources

such as common land have reduced the viability of pastoralism and the livelihoods of foragers.

Additionally artisans' traditional livelihoods have come under pressure, as the tastes and preferences of the affluent have changed due to the extra income from agriculture and increased availability of cheap manufactured goods.

In contrast, Villanpur is economically and politically isolated from any major commercial centre, as a satellite village of a small town. It is comprised of a single caste group, traditionally involved in water-based activities but now almost all households are engaged in subsistence farming and local wage labour as their primary sources of income. Although the village has experienced structural change, its linkages to external markets are weaker and fewer in number.

Vani K. Borooah & Sriya Iyer (2005), in *Vidya, Veda, and Varna: The influence of religion and caste on education in rural India*, argue that Vidya (education), Veda (religion) and Varna (caste) are inter-linked in India. It examines whether, and to what extent, the enrolment of children at school in India is influenced by community norms such as those of religion (Hindu or Muslim) or caste (Scheduled or non-Scheduled).

The econometric estimates are based on unit record data from a survey of 33,000 rural households, in 1,765 villages, from 16 states of India. The equation for the likelihood of being enrolled at school is estimated separately for boys and for girls and, in each of the equations, all of the slope coefficients are allowed to differ according to whether the children are Hindu, Muslim or Scheduled Caste.

The main findings are that the size of the religion or caste effect depends on the non-community circumstances in which the children are placed. Under favourable circumstances (for example, when parents are literate), the size of the community effect is negligible. Under less favourable circumstances, the size of the community effect is considerable.

Lynn Vincentnathan & S. George Vincentnathan (2007), in *Village Courts and the Police: Cooperation and Conflict in Modernizing India*, examines the impact of modernization on India's panchayats (village courts) and the police. Because of modernization, people's attachment to groups and caste hierarchy is declining, and their needs for personal autonomy and social equality are increasing. Some accept these changes and others oppose them, leading to interpersonal and intercaste conflicts in communities, which panchayats find difficult to resolve. Panchayats are weakening and disappearing, while the police are expanding. While these changes are occurring, both the police and the panchayat elders, caught between tradition and modernity, respond to disputes in cooperative and conflicting ways.

Richa Kumar (2012), in *Life and Times of the Indian Villages*, produces a short history of rural India since independence, with a discussion on land reforms, the green revolution, and current trends of growing migration, non-farm employment and a

transformation of rural power structures including the caste system.

Looney, Kristen (2012), in *The Rural Developmental State: Modernization Campaigns and Peasant Politics in China, Taiwan and South Korea*, analyzes the causes of rural development in East Asia, as well as the relative success or failure of rural development policies among East Asian countries, providing detailed case studies of China, Taiwan, and South Korea. These countries exhibit a range of variation on the dependent variable, rural development, which is defined as improvements in rural living standards, agricultural production and the village environment.

Taiwan in the 1950s-1970s is the most successful case; South Korea in the 1950s-1970s is a less successful case; and China evolves from a failed case during the Maoist period (1949-1976) to a more successful case during the reform period (post-1978), but still one that is less successful than either Taiwan or South Korea.

This study expands and challenges the developmental state literature, which, despite its contribution to explaining industrialization in East Asia, generally ignores the role of the state in rural development, fails to account for variation among East Asian countries, and excludes China from the comparative analysis.

Mayur M. Prajapati, Rakesh N. Patel, Rakesh D. Dhandhukia and Khattubhai D. Solnaki (2014), in *Impact of agricultural modernization on sustainable livelihood among the tribal and non-tribal farmers*, observe that sustainable livelihood links with security to basic human needs, food security, sustainable agricultural practices and poverty has an integrating concept.

A large number of tribal communities are bereft of stable livelihood and thus they fall in the category of the vulnerable section of Indian society. Considering this fact, the study was conducted in Sabarkantha district of North Gujarat region of Gujarat state, as the economy of the district is basically dependent on agriculture. The farmers of Sabarkantha district are also innovative as well as enthusiastic in modern agriculture.

Secondly, the districts rank first with respect to the tribal population. Looking to the common situation of the inhabited villages for the tribal and non-tribal farmer, 11 villages of Bhiloda and Meghraj talukas, having scheduled tribal population of 41 to 50 range of percentage were selected purposively. Total 220 farmers were selected from these villages (20 farmers in each village). For measuring the agricultural modernization and sustainable livelihood of the tribal and non tribal farmer's teacher made tests were developed.

The thirteen major criteria of agricultural modernization and twelve sub indicators of sustainable livelihood were determined and total 200 score of agricultural modernization and total 300 score of sustainable livelihood was determined by conference method.

The results showed that in case of tribal group, there was positively and significant association

between the sustainable livelihood and seven criteria for agricultural modernization viz., extent of use of organic fertilizers, farming pattern, seed selection, available modern sources of energy equipments, extent of use of chemical fertilizers, use of plant protection measures and extent of use of improved dairy practices.

While in case of non tribal group, all the 13 criteria of agricultural modernization studied were possessed positive and significant association with sustainable livelihood. It indicated the impact of the agricultural modernization on the extent of sustainable livelihood among the non tribal respondents, while it was very low in tribal farmers.

The empirical results also suggest that significant sources of inter-group trust are trust in neighbours, trust in village council, development/modernisation and education. And sources of generalised trust seem to be inter-group trust, trust in village council, development and education.

Specific Objectives of the Study

1. To discuss the need of change in the various spheres
2. To discuss the social change in general
3. To explore the various fields and communities that reveal social change
4. To peep into the causes and factors of social change
5. To discuss the role of media in social change in rural India
6. To discuss the role of media in urban social change
7. To make focus on the positive effects of the social change brought about by media
8. To make focus on the negative effects of the social change brought about media
9. To evaluate the role of media in bringing about social change

Working Hypothesis

1. Change is inevitable in all the spheres
2. Society is changeable
3. Social change is a universal phenomenon
4. Social change is both planned and unplanned
5. Social change is both positive and negative
6. Several factors are responsible for social change
7. The modern world is governed by media
8. Media plays a vital role in bringing about social change
9. Media moves the minds of the audience and viewers to a great extent
10. Media leads the people to betterment

Methodology Adopted for the Study

For the study, both the primary data and the secondary data were used. The author's non-participant observation supplied primary data that eventually formed the basis of the conclusion, while the secondary data were collected from both the traditional and modern and advanced sources, such as, books, journals, Thesis, research papers etc.

In order to grasp the depth of the theme and title of the study, a thorough and careful study of the selected eight research studies was made. It enabled the author to get an adequate feedback on the

problem. The study, though descriptive in nature, is all scientific as for it all the steps of scientific research that ensure the scientific nature of a study were followed and undertaken.

The selection of the title and theme after due consideration and brooding which was followed by the prescribed process of social research paved the path for the study and facilitated it to produce its conclusions systematically. Since objectivity is the most required feature of scientific research, it was maintained throughout, and the author remained unbiased while collecting and analyzing the data.

Conclusion

Nothing in the world is without change, and the same is true of societies of the world at large that keep changing with the passage of time. The ideologies, customs, traditions, modes of living and modes of behavior in accordance with the situation etc. are changeable. Indeed, nothing is for ever, and everything changes in the world.

Change in society is caused naturally and in a planned way. Nature causes change in order to bring about balance in all the forces that run a society. On the contrary, planned change is brought about in order to make the life of the people in societies better and in order to bring the people closer to the mainstream and to link them with it so that they can enjoy their life in the best possible manner.

There are several factors that are responsible for social change. Karl Marx finds the economic factor responsible for the social change; Sorokin considers the cultural factor responsible, while Weblen believes the technological factor responsible for the social change in the world.

In the modern context, media is a very effective means of bringing about social change in the

world. All the societies whether primitive and tribal or modern and advanced are in the grip of media which has become an inseparable part of their life. Media not only affects the mentality of the people, but it also leads them to change by enabling them to be familiar with the global socio-cultural trends and processes.

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