

ROLE OF COMMUNICATION IN NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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Communication and its Impact

In any nation, communication was more than just interplay between the source and receiver. It served as a social system fulfilling certain social functions. Thus, the mass media came to serve as agents and indices of modernization in the Third World countries. During the second half of the 19th century several mass media appeared on the communication scenario. In this developing process we enter and live in a communication era, with rapid expansion in the reach of mass media, and improved techniques for the interpersonal exchange of ideas. This process of advent and growth continued up to first few decades of the 20th century. Communication is central to this task in many ways. It enables planners, when identifying and formulating development programmes, to consult with people in order to take into account their needs, attitudes and traditional knowledge. Only with communication will the project beneficiaries become the principal actors to make development programmes successful. Movies, News Papers, Radio, and Television, Cable network, Internet, New media and Social media were used as mass communication tools around the globe during this era. A decisive role can be played by communication in promoting human development in today's new climate of social change. As the world moves towards greater democracy, decentralization and the market economy, conditions are becoming more favorable for people to start steering their own course of change. And the role of mass media, researchers are considered that it is necessary for a successful transition from a traditional to a modern society.

Communication is the common theme in the issues outlined. For if development can be seen as a fabric woven out of the activities of millions of people, communication represents the essential thread that binds them together. On the one hand, communication as dialogue and debate occurs spontaneously in any time of social change. The increased freedom of expression in recent times has been almost simultaneous with changes in the global political structure. On the other hand, it is communication as a deliberate intervention to affect social and economic change that holds the most interesting possibilities. A development strategy that uses communication approaches can reveal people's underlying attitudes and traditional wisdom, help people to adapt their views and to acquire new knowledge and skills, and spread new social messages to large audiences.

The planned use of communication techniques, activities and media gives people powerful tools both to experience change and actually to guide it. An intensified exchange of ideas among all sectors of society can lead to the greater involvement of people in a common cause. This is a fundamental requirement for appropriate and sustainable development. Nature & Objectives of Development:-

Development refers to a change process geared at improving or making better, the life and environment of man. That development involves the creation of opportunities for the realization of human potentialities. Development is neither a simple nor straight forward linear process. It is a multidimensional exercise that seeks to transform society by addressing the entire complex interwoven strands, living in pulses which are a part of an organic whole. Where the media comes in development process is through what is called "development communication". This is the type of communication which is consciously packaged by the sender such that the message content or the information sent could persuade, encourage or convince the receiver or target audience to adopt an attitude and participate in actualizing a development plan or goal. At certain instances, the message sent aims at making the target audience adopt a positive attitudinal change towards a development purpose. Development communication has been engaged in finding a niche in the efforts to tackle the formidable problems of underdevelopment and marginalization of millions of people and thousands of communities worldwide through a process of directed social change.

Development of the Society or a country depends upon its goals and achievements. Proper planning and implementation of programmes, new initiatives will strengthen the nation in development. In this process media should play positive role to uplift the society and the nation in general. The mass communication will facilitate in making the people to understand their environment; lead them to active participation in the development programmes.

Mass media and its role:-

Mass media in India are actively involved in the tasks related to the different aspects of national development and they are assisting government and masses in social, economic and political development. Thus, mass media have contributed to the mobilization of human resources requires a great deal of attention of what the population knows and thinks of national development, and especially to the encouragement of the attitudes and social customs and provision of knowledge, which will be favorable to the development, the mass media have undertaken the job quite competently. Research studies

by communication scholars also have proved that mass media have immensely aided and assisted the rate and score of development.

Media's role in national development can be analyzed from political, economic and social perspectives. In the political sphere, media's role can be found in areas of democracy and good governance, political transparency, foreign policy, human rights, war on terrorism, and public relations. In the economic sphere, media can play their roles in the areas of economic policy and growth, economic empowerment, advertisements and tourism, business and investment, etc. In the social sphere, media's role cover social issues, such as corruption, criminal violence, communal conflicts, prostitution, war on drugs, population control, education, food security.

Basically the media are described as performing three functions or roles of information, education and entertainment. These are the conventional social functions the media render to the public, but which is equally applicable in broader sense in national development pursuit. It could be said that through educating, informing and entertaining, the media thereby make the society, or the nation as well as the leadership of the very society, aware of the importance and need to undertake certain processes or process of national development. Also attached to these three basic roles of media is another role of persuasion, the mass media are therefore seen for their role in furnishing the public with necessary information to achieve development or change goals.

According to the APJ Abdul kalam, former president of India, son of the soil ...the media should take up the some of the objectives like....

- a) A media movement: Developed India.
- b) Media becoming a development partner in the programme of PURA (Providing Urban amenities in Rural Area)-connectivity in the focus.
- c) Celebrating every aspect of the success of the people particularly in rural areas.
- d) Evolution of a corruption free India.
- e) Promoting an enlightened society.
- f) Media should bring honour to womanhood.
- g) Scanning and digitizing all old issues of the print media for future generation research.
- h) Media should evolve a code of conduct.

According to Social scientist Wilbur Schramm, role of media in development with proper communication can be divided into three parts:

- (i) To inform – 'Information is power.' For the development of the society, correct social, political and economic influence is very important. Media helps the people to be aware about and develop a consensus upon important national and international development issues. It also helps them understand the various obstacles in the process of development.
- (ii) To instruct - Mass literacy is an essential criteria to development. This is possible by imbibing basic skills among the people. Mass media plays an important role can instruct people and educate them. Projects like SITE and Gyan Darshan are few such examples where media is used to instruct people, educate them and teach them basic skills. These basic skills help people to develop their standard of living.
- (iii) To participate – All development activities are based primarily on people's participation. Voluntary and continuous participation of the citizen of the country is necessary for continued development. Schramm has further adds that modern communication technologies can be effectively used to multiply the messages and reach out simultaneously to a wide heterogeneous audience.

Some of the communication experiments for development in India

Several experiments have been done in India using the press, radio and television with the intention for creating widespread awareness and participation of people in development.

Udayavani's Experiment : The Udayavan's experiment also known as 'Identify Backward Villages Experiment' (IBVE) from 1981 to 1984 attempted to identify ten most backward villages in the Dakshina Kannada District of Karnataka. The problems and activities of the selected villages were given regularly extensive coverage by the newspapers. By the end of the experiment, most of the villages had access to infrastructural facilities. The newspapers were successful in motivating the villagers to actively participate in development by creating mass awareness through its coverage.

Radio Farm Forums : 'Radio Farm Forums' was the first major experiment in the use of radio for rural development. It was launched by the "Pune All India Radio Station" on 19th February, 1956 with the assistance of UNESCO. The project was a field experiment that

evaluated the effects of radio farm forums, each consisting of listening groups of 15 to 20 persons, who decided the contents of the radio programme and decided the plan of action. It was found that information dissemination and action based on it.

Kota's Development Broadcasting Unit: The Development Broadcast Unit of the AIR Station, Kota, Rajasthan was founded by the Asia-Pacific Institute for Broadcast Development (AIBD), Koalampur and by the Ryerson International Development Centre, Canada. The programmes of 20-minute duration were made involving the local people in their own language and were titled Nai Kiran(New Ray of Light). These programmes broadcasted till the end of September 1988 focused on health issues, promoting hygiene, sanitation and environmental cleanliness, enrollment of students in schools and problems of rural people. These programmes were highly successful in creating interest among rural communities regarding development issues of their community.

Community Radio: The first community radio in India was launched in Chitradurga, Karnataka in July, 1998. The programmes were broadcasted in the local dialect of the people and highlighted issues on health and family welfare, women's empowerment, micro-credit, watershed management, rural development and non-formal education.

Satellite Instructional Television Experiment (SITE): The Satellite Instructional Television Experiment (SITE) was India's first educational And developmental experiments in television. This project was launched on August 1st, 1975 by the

ISRO using the US supplied Application Technology Satellite (ATS-6) with the assistance of NASA, UNDP, ITU and UNESCO. For a period of one year, development messages on diverse topics such as agricultural modernization, animal husbandry, health, hygiene and sanitation, family planning, nutrition, social and educational improvement of women and children, better teaching and learning techniques were telecast via satellite to community television sets installed in 2,400 villages in 20 districts of 06 states in India: Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Orissa and Rajasthan. The project came to an end on 31st, July, 1976. The evaluation revealed that though success came in terms of public took keen interest in health, hygiene and etc.,

Kheda Communication Project: In the Kheda Communication Project, television was used exclusively for development communication and the local TV station became a local production centre. It was started in 1975 in Pij village, Kheda, Gujarat. In the 443 villages included in the project, 607 community sets were installed. The programmes were in local language, spoken by the people, and focused on the rights of the deprived people, minimum wages of workers, how to fight oppression, injustice and other social themes specific to the villages. The Kheda project emphasized decentralized and participatory broadcasting, addressing several social problems affecting the lives of the villagers.

Jhabua Development Communication Project: Launched in November, 1996 by ISRO, the Jhabua Development Communication Project is a satellite based direct television broadcast system for district level development in Jhabua, a predominantly tribal district of Madhya Pradesh. Through community television sets, this project broadcast development oriented programmes every evening, which were rooted in the cultural ethos of the tribal people.

Training and Development Communication Channel: The Training and Development Communication Channel developed by the Development and Educational Communication Unit (DECU) and ISRO is operational since February, 1995. It is a one-way video and two-way audio tele-conferencing channel shared by a number of users. This channel is extensively used by the state governments and NGOs in rural development, to conduct training programmes for health, panchayati raj, watershed management, field workers and training of rural audiences.

Conclusion :-

Development is not a matter of higher economic indices alone. It is not to be confused with higher consumer consumption or product proliferation. What really matters is peoples social and cultural advancement together with their economic will being measured in terms of higher per capita consumption of food, a safer environment for living and working and of courses, the spiritual freedom to pursue nobler aspects of life, cultural and artistic attainment and the freedom to express one's views without fears. Unrestricted pursuit of wealth, unlimited consumption of goods and higher creature comforts and possession of modern entertainment media will not bring in human development. And everywhere, social diseases such as alienation, crime, drug addiction are widely prevalent. The media leads to formation of attitude through establishing of values for the society or nation and thereby building a climate of change in the society or nation. The responsibility of informing people about development projects and programmes is another major role of media to national development. Such programmes designed and proposed by policy makers could be entirely new to the people at whom they need to be enlightened, educated and mobilized by the media. Offering solutions to problems is another developmental role of the media, in that they are not only expected criticize government officials and condemn their actions, but also as watchdogs of the society, they should review, appraise or criticize, as the case may be, activities of government agencies and programmes. This type of overall analyze by media indicates to sustainable development and full pledged progress in any nation.

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