

Panchayati Raj System and Media approaches

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ABSTRACT

Rural society is the crown of India. Our 70% population is living in village and based on agricultural or traditional activities. Print and electronic, both media known as the fourth estate of any country. A social responsibility of media is very wide and important. Media can play its role as torchbearer to guide, aware, educate and motivate the Indian rural society. Media and society impress each other. Media can play its significant role to provide accurate, fair, timely, positive and critical information to the society. It can spread information regarding different plans, systems and procedure to educate the rural public. Healthy entertainment is also a part of responsibility of media. Role of media is very sensitive and important for deprived, local language users and weaker section. In my research paper, I shall discuss the duties and responsibilities of media towards rural section of our Indian society.

1. Introduction

Media and society is interconnected. Without society media is nothing and without media, society is unaware and alienated. Media and society are based on communication process. According to Mc Quail (2000:79-80), 'Some basic ideas about media tasks/functions in society are-

● Information

- providing information about events and conditions in society and the world;
- indicating relations of power;
- facilitating innovation, adaptation and progress.

● Correlation

- explaining, interpreting and commenting on the meaning of events and information;
- providing support for established authority and norms;
- socializing;
- co-ordinating separate activities;
- consensus building;
- setting orders of priority and signalling relative status.

● Continuity

- expressing the dominant culture and recognizing subcultures and new cultural developments;
- forging and maintaining commonality of values.

● Entertainment

- providing amusement, diversion and the means of relaxation;
- reducing social tension.

● Mobilization

Campaigning for social objectives in the sphere of politics, war, economic development, work and sometimes religion.

Although, Our Indian society has basic knowledge of many issues but it is not fully aware about latest technology and

process of media works. They are busy in arranging bread and butter or rat race of latest technologies. They are unable to understand, learn the proper use of technologies. Media is trying to make them aware about these. In the dazzling media's publicity, most of the persons are fighting to get the latest information and try to spread out everywhere. In this situation, many misconceptions can take place in society. To contain these misconceptions, media can play its vital role.

Generally, 'Media' refers to various means of communication like newspaper, Radio, Television, Internet etc. The term 'media' can also be used as a collective noun for press or news reporting agencies. In this sense, media can play its role to educate, aware and effect to mass at a time.

As per my observation, we can divide our society in six parts i.e. metropolitan, semi- metropolitan, urban, semi urban, rural and interior/ tribes/ information wise untouched society. Basically, our more than 70% brothers and sisters are living in rural areas. They are not much developed. Their development is the need and necessity of our Indian society. When our Rural Indian friends will be developed, our India will be leading force in the world because no other country has the capacity to provide multi talented youths and persons or useful weather for all foods, grains and productivity, natural process of agricultural activities, hand works, substitute technical qualities (jugad technology) and basic education and learning system. Anjela Kumari (2009:160) explained the difference between developed nation and developing nation. She said 'A developed nation provides most of its citizens with a stable personal environment. A developing nation does not. Today's developing nations were once developed nations. They change because their political systems separated from their social systems when European commerce was introduced. If the structure of international trade changes in the near future, social and political systems may be reintegrated, promoting political development.'

If India's well wishers want to influence the earth, they should work hard to develop our rural society. According to a veteran journalist Prof. Pradeep Mathur (July- Dec. 2006: 53-54); 'Rural development is need of the hour for a country like India, which is on the threshold of being a big power with the capacity to influencing the course of events on our planet.

However, this is a dream which we can realize only when we are a country with no internal dissensions and strife, a country with a fair economic system and cohesive social order. In fact the essence of development lies not in a regimented system where none dares to disagree but in all-inclusive dispensation in which everyone had an equal role. The quest for rural development must lead us in the direction of empowering those sections of society who are in the need of being empowered. This is the real meaning of democracy and this is the area in which media can and media must play an important role.'

2. Problems in rural development

Although media touch the remotest village and try to perform their duties to send the information as earliest as possible but some problems are there to educate, aware and develop the rural society. Dr. Sambhaji (Oct.2014-March 2015: 339-340) divided the problems related to rural development in seven parts- people, agricultural, infrastructure, economic, social and culture, leadership and administrative level. But in my views, we can divide the problems related to rural development in these parts-

- A. Individual level
- B. Family level
- C. Psychological level
- D. Professional level
- E. Agricultural level
- F. Indian Weather level
- G. Infrastructural level
- H. Local area level
- I. Social level
- J. Economical level
- K. Political level
- L. Cultural level
- M. Leadership level
- N. Administrative level
- O. Media and mass communication level
- P. Interest level

3. Analysis and general solutions of problems in rural development

Indian rural youth and persons are not taking interest to develop themselves. Because they are not interested to take more pains. They love to work traditionally. They never keep faith on technology. Most of the time, they saw the face of others to take decision on their behalf. They think it is the responsibility of some leader or powerful person or some heroes or in last, it's impossible to solve their problems. They forgot that every fight can be won only by unity and understanding. For the progress and development of rural areas, some reasons behind this are- introvertness, aggressiveness, lethargies, avoid the competition and change, initiative less ness etc. Everyone is aware about serials, movies, materialistic things, etc. but they close their eyes during the discussion of rural development. Sometimes family members also do not support development. If the head of the family decides to do something different, some family members create the scenes. If someone from the family get the job or small business, he or she forget the value of the family and start avoiding. This situation becomes unbearable and critical to the whole family. Psychological level is also a cause.

Sometimes change is required but family does not accept that. Although change comes with some problems and demands more adjustment but everyone is not mentally prepared for the change. So that individual wastes its time in psychological game only. Fighting spirit is better option to change the psychological vision.

Professionally our rural persons are also not update. Some become too much professional that they use chemicals for more production and do compromise with the quality and control. While some persons are busy with traditional techniques. Our rural persons don't want to sell their items at own risk. They depend totally on local agents, who misuse them. As Ranjit Rajadhyaksha (2004:26-27) wrote, 'Over the last hundred years' migration from villages to towns has been steadily increasing. The "push" factor has been, probably more important than the "pull" factor in this: the increased pressure of population on land has driven the most vulnerable section of rural population, the poorer tenants and laborers, to the cities and plantations. ("Dry" or non-irrigated areas have been more vulnerable too much pressure than "wet" or irrigated areas.)'. Our Indian rural land is capable to do production as per the weather. Agricultural wise our rural Indians can get more money but based only on nature is reason of defeat or loss. Area wise production can be the cause of progress but agent, joint ownership of land and misuse of rural person's simplicity becomes the negative part of the progress. Equal distribution of facilities can solve this problem. Some problems also affect the agricultural benefits as flood, drought, Gale storm, war, politics, sufficient water, barren agricultural land, boggy land, heavy rain or minimum rain etc. Indian rural persons also facing infrastructure wise problems. From ploughing the field till selling the crops; there are many steps of farming for a rural person. Sometimes loan from the private sources become the major cause of tensions for farmers and rural persons. High interest and illiteracy is the cause to face lot of problems of the repayment of loan. Mediators take advantage of their unawareness. Responsible persons don't take interest to educate the rural public about government plans, facilities and beneficial efforts.

Socially, the rural people are united and have the feeling of WE. But during the progress and availing the benefits, they suffer a lot. Nobody wants to share its future benefits to others. Simplicity and emotions are the barrier of their development. Hierarchy, caste system, untouchability, rituals, religious activities, orthodoxy, traditional business trends, insufficient transportation and communication system etc is the negative part in the journey of total rural development. Rural development is always slow due to economical and political process. Development of rural area should be the top priority of any country but it is not so. If any government plan for the benefits of rural area; self employment, cultural heritage, traditional famous work, hand works, crafts, area wise special items will be able to earn bread and butter. Education should not be earning the degrees. It should be to enhance the agricultural and hand work activities. Our Indian rural persons are good farmer, gardener, architect, mason, carpenter, electrician, technician, mechanic, blacksmith, manufactures, driver, tailor, cloth maker and planner. If the hand job work will increase and awarded, then per capita income will increase. And unemployment, poverty, migration and laziness will be invisible from the rural society. Political leaders and parties can

concentrate on this idea. Gandhi ji also motivated the self employment, small industries, hand jobs and to increase the per capita income. Her concept of education for SWAROZGAR and development of rural or traditional areas are the symbol of total development of rural society or India. Our Indian culture depends on hard work, work is worship, optimistic nature, simple living and high thinking, season and nature wise living style, healthy and timely food and routine work habits, early to bed and early to rise concept, honesty, punctuality and sincerity, Feeling of VASUDHAIV KUTUMBAKAM and helpful nature. If we will be truthful and honest by nature, nobody can be corrupt.

Our administrators should also take the initiative to develop and educate rural society. They can make a bridge between government and rural society. If everyone plays their role honestly and don't take away other's benefits, our Indian rural society will become most productive and developed. Media can play significant role to develop and educate the rural society. Media is a good tool of communication system. Media can highlight the problems, planning and solutions of rural problems. With the help of media, governmental or non-governmental organizations can help to develop rural community and can motivate to urban community to migrate in rural areas and can start their business as joint venture with rural persons. If Indian government want to make India a crown again, the national leaders should plan to develop our rural community, motivate the next generation to opt farming and traditional business according to latest demand, self employment based education and start small industries concept. Uma Narula (2006:2-3) 'Basically communication is interaction between ourselves, with others and with our external and internal environments.' Narula continued, 'Communication is a social process, and countless ways in which human beings keeps in touch with one another. The messages in a shared environment could not only be oral, written, non- verbal, visual or olfactory but these could also be laws, customs, practices, ways of dressing, gestures, buildings, flags, gardens, exhibits, etc.' Our media can develop the interest among rural persons to take the valuable part of Indian development. Interest level of every Indian is the key of smooth and speedily progress and development. Mc Quail (2000:84-85) explained the correlation between media and development. He wrote, 'Theory of media and development has several variants, but most assume the superiority of modern (that is, secular, materialist, Western, individualist, etc.) ways and of individual motivation as the key of change. People need to want to 'get on' (Mc Lelland, 1961; Hagen, 1962). The contribution of mass media forms. They can help to promote the diffusion and adoption of many technical and social innovations that are essential to modernization (Rogers, 1962, 1976; Rogers and Shoemaker, 1973). They can teach literacy and other essential skill and techniques. They can encourage a 'state of mind' favorable to modernity (Lerner, 1958), especially the possibility to imagine an alternative way of life. Lerner described the Western-inspired media as 'mobility multipliers'. Thirdly, mass communication was seen as essential to the development of national unity in new nations (ex-colonies) (Pye, 1963) and of participant democratic politics, especially by way of elections..... Media remain one tool for implementing change in 'developing' countries, but they are severely limited by their dependence on infrastructure and by their high costs.

They are also associated in a negative way with cultural imperialism and dependency'.

After the study of Mc Quail's explanation of media and development, it's clear that development can derive with the help of media very fast. As media is known as the fourth leg of democracy, the responsibility of media is very vast. Some social responsibilities of media is as under:

- Media should serve his rural readers through fair, positive and timely information in a digestible, local and entertaining format.
- Some columns should be planned to inform for rural planning in simple words and layout.
- Media should create awareness among rural masses about different rural development programmes, objectives of these programmes and the scope of participation by the poorest segment of the society. They should write analytical news as to why the rural masses cannot reap the benefits meant for them in the rural development programmes.
- Hindrances and barriers, corruption, nepotism, favoritism and negligence of duty by public servants in implementation of rural development programmes should be nakedly exposed before the government and the public at large.
- Media should highlight the employment generation programmes.
- Problems and solutions of rural women laborers and child laborers should be studied, analytically explained and spread by the media.
- Media can aware the rural public about science, latest technologies, new inventions, success stories, rural resources, enhancement programme of productivity, health care services, family planning programmes, rules and regulations (to stop domestic violence, dowry, cruelty, rape, female feticide, sexual assault and aware about maternity benefits act, minimum wages act, equal remuneration act, etc.), small savings procedures, education system, benefit of girl child, etc.
- Media's responsibility to aware rural masses about water and sanitation system and their benefits.
- Media should aware the public regarding electrification and rural housing system.
- Media must be a harbinger of social change.
- Media should act as spokesman of rural mankind.
- Media should provide a truthful, comprehensive and intelligent account of the events in a context that, gives meaning.
- Facts and opinions must be based on objectivity and critical analysis based.
- Media must provide two way communications between readers and different organizations of the society.
- Small industries article should be published or presented by media.

- Poverty, unemployment, unawareness, agricultural crises etc can critically analyzed by media.
- Motivation is an easy way to develop the rural mass and media can do it perfectly.
- New technologies and techniques of agricultural activities can be spread through media coverage.
- Media should motivate the Indian rural youth to do hard work in their field of agriculture and use latest technologies to increase development.
- Media should plan to write article on village visit programme so that condition of villages will be change.

4. Conclusion

Last but not the least; I can say that media can play its valuable role to develop rural areas and agricultural activities. Media's positive and analytically way of working is helpful to make India as a developed country. But media need some freedom and faith from public. Studies are also required to suggest valuable ideas to develop Indian rural community.

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