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Role of Television Programmes in Rural Development: A Study of Select Districts in Karnataka

Mass Communication

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Mr. Hampesh K. S — Lecturer, Department of P.G Studies in Mass Communication & Journalism, S.D.M. College, Ujire, D.K. District, Karnataka - 574 240

Dr. Sathish Kumar — Assistant Professor, Department of Mass Communication & Journalism, Kuvempu University, Jnana Shayadri, Shankaraghatta, Shimoga District, Karnataka - 577 451

ABSTRACT

The role of communication in development has become part of a much larger debate on the process of social change and the nature of development itself. There exists a wide variety of views about the role and relevance of mass communication to development. This study was conducted to evaluate the role of television programmes in rural development. Using the procedure of survey method, this study found out the worth of development programmes. Its results were based on the response of viewers. The views of rural people were collected by using questionnaire prepared by researcher because no standardized tool for the purpose of study was available. Results of the study indicated that development programmes were very useful for rural people and majority got benefit of it.

Introduction

Television has been given considerable importance in many countries as a source and a tool of teaching. The success stories of using television for development in many countries has negated the concept that television is basically an entertainment oriented medium and it is hostile to thoughts. Television is adaptable and can follow different approaches when used in the different developmental situations. This medium has been used for formal, non-formal and informal education. Importance of television to communicate information, idea, skills and attitudes has been affirmed by research studies.

Television also continues to benefit the masses by making them conscious of the environment, rights, duties and privileges. It is a source of teaching etiquettes, language skills, hobbies, social relations and religious believes. Role of television is neither fixed nor easily tangible and measurable. The role is directly related to the question of how the planners are serious and determined to use television. The role could either be enormous or, on the contrary very meager depending upon the specific tasks and available resources.

The media, with specific reference to the collective entity of newspapers, radio, television and the Internet play a very important role in development. Development involves changes or advancement in a nation aimed at improving the political, economic and social lives of the people. The real influence of the media in development will depend on the media themselves, the societies in which they operate, and the audience they reach. None of these factors are the same everywhere, at all times, or under all conditions. The media in dictatorships, for example, are not likely to exercise the same influence as those in democratic societies. Even among similar types of government, other factors, such as technology, the target audience and the message, may influence the extent of media impact in the society.

In the 1960s, communication scholars and media experts were quite sure that television and the other media of mass communication would help national development. The media were considered the prime motivators of development. Eminent communication scholars such as Daniel Lerner, Wilbur Schramm and Everett M. Rogers, who based their theories of development and media efficacy on the important work of Walter Rostow, namely, *The Stages of Economic Growth,* stressed that the economic and technological development achieved by the Western nations were the result of increased media use (Vilanilam, 2005).

The role of media in development communication is decisive. Media circulate knowledge that will inform people of significant events, opportunities, dangers and changes in their community, country and the world. They provide a forum where issues affecting the national or community life can be aired. They teach those ideas, skills and attitudes that people need to achieve a better life. They create and maintain a base of consensus that is needed for the stability of the state. (Sen Shitak, Rommani: 2011)

Scope of the Study

The study was limited to only four areas of television programmes i.e. agriculture, health, education and employment programmes. Further, it examined the role of television in rural development in selected areas and its impact on these spheres of development. Both primary and secondary data were used for the study. The data included both qualitative and quantitative, based on some programme analysis. This study was supported by percentage analysis in selected areas.

Purpose and Objective of the Study

This study was aimed at identifying the role of television programmes in rural development. This study intended to discover the usefulness and limitation of media in society.

Significance of the Study

This study will be a humble contribution towards the rural development as a whole. It serves as a source of encouragement to modern television programme planners. This study will also encourage other cultural studies in communication pattern and finally will guide others who want to know and understand the communication and development.

Limitation of the study

The study was conducted in selected districts of Karnataka state. The study gives a brief background history of the communication. The study also identifies the communication tools used by the people in the past and present day. Due to possible lack of maximum time, this study was limited to information collected from population figure of the society under study. The low literacy rate, the non-availability of previous study on the topic and scarcity of previous study on the topic and scarcity of the text books are all part of the limitations.

Sample

A convenience sampling technique was adopted for this research. The sample consisted of the 600 rural people. In the terms of geographic units different villages from different taluks of the selected four districts were selected. It helped for demographic categories.

Selection of Villages

Study data for this research work was collected through first hand details of information. The region selected consisted of five villages each from eight taluks of selected districts of Karnataka namely, Thirthahalli and Sagara from Shimoga District, Sringeri and Tarikere from Chikmagalur District, Hosdurga and Chalkere from Chitradurga District, Honnali and Channagiri from Davanagere District.

Questionnaire

The researcher constructed a structured but a fixed alterna-

tive questionnaire. This was administered to the respondents identified. The questionnaire mainly contained two parts. Part-1 dealt with the personal information of respondents such as name, gender, village, age, qualification, occupation and income. Part-II contained questions pertaining to television exposure and content preference.

Data coding and analysis:
After obtaining the data from the respondents, the data were coded and the tables and cross tables were prepared. Percentages and other appropriate statistical tests were used in order to examine the relationship between variables.

Analysis

- The survey results showed that 53 per cent of the respondents were more exposed to television followed by 24 percent respondents termed radio as their favorite media, 20.8 percent respondents termed newspaper as favorite media and 2.2 percent respondents termed other media like internet, mobiles etc. as their favorite media. About 33 percent of respondents were spending 2 hours to watch TV daily, 28.7 percent respondents 1 hour, 25.5 percent respondents more than 2 hours and 12.8 percent respondents were spending about 30 or less than 30 minutes to watch television.

- About 37.8 percent respondents said that television contained more rural development programmes, 29.7 percent respondents said newspapers contained more rural development contents, 28.5 percent respondents said radio contained more rural development contents and 4 percent respondents said other media (Computer, mobiles etc.) contained more rural development contents in their preferred media. About 36.5 per cent respondents termed agriculture was desired objective of media, 30 percent termed education was desired objective of media, 20.5 percent respondents termed health was desired objective of media and 13 percent respondents termed employment was desired objective of media.

- About 39.8 percent respondents said media exposures were more on political issues, 36 percent respondents termed media exposures were more on social issues, 19 percent respondents said media exposures on economic issues and 5.2 percent said media exposures on cultural issues and 49.3 percent respondents said media act as a mouthpiece of development programmes, 30.5 percent subjects said that they don't know about media acting and 20.2 percent respondents said media did not act as a mouthpiece of development programmes.

- About 58.8 percent respondents said media programmes play a vital function of educational level of viewers and 47.2 percent respondents said mass media were highly useful in their profession.

- About 46.7 percent respondents termed TV channels need improvement in content, 27.8 per cent respondents termed channel need improvement in technical, 15.2 percent respondents termed channel need improvement in other aspects like quality of programmes, quality in programme theme and 10.3 percent respondents termed in timing and etc.

- About 90.2 percent respondents termed they were watching more Kannada TV channels, and 83.8 per cent respondents termed Kannada TV channels telecast more developmental issues .

- 27 percent respondents said they watch more Etv (Kannada channel) and 26 per cent respondents termed they watch Chandana for developmental issues and 52.8 percent respondentswatch Annadatha programme, 34.3 percent respondents termed they watch Krushi Darshana programme, 9.7 per cent respondents watch Marali Mannige programme and 3.2 percent watch other agricultural programmes in the channels for development.

- About 34.3 percent respondents termed they watch Total Health programme, 29.2 percent respondents aware of Health Show programme, 27 percent aware of Nitya Sanjivine programme and 9.5 percent aware of Health Line programme in the channel and 41 per cent respondents watch Adult Education programme, 30.8 percent watch Youth programmes, 16.8 percent respondents termed watch IGNOU programme and 11.3 percent watch ETV programme (Educational Television) for development purpose.

- 47.3 percent respondents watch Employment Advertisement, 31.2 per cent watch of Margadarshan programme, 16.3 per cent respondents termed watch AIR Hostess programme and 5.2 per cent aware of other programmes for employment and 77.7 per cent respondents termed these programmes were helpful in development process.

Conclusion
The role of television rural development is not in doubt. The role covers the political, economic, agriculture, health, education, employment and social spheres. The television set the public agenda and acts as the gatekeeper of public issues. It performs the watchdog role especially in transparency of development programmes. As the fourth estate, the TV provides the checks and balances in relation to the three branches of government, as created by the Constitution.

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