



The Role of Grass Root Medium as Mass Communication Media: A Study

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ABSTRACT

This Paper is an attempt to identify the role of traditional media on rural development through effective communication. It identifies types of traditional communication channels available for rural development, it examines the effectiveness of these channels of communication, and establishes how messages are packaged and presented in performance.

KEYWORDS : River Hiran, Phytoplankton, Distribution , Diversity and Density.

Introduction:

Mass communication is relatively a recent phenomenon in India. It eventually means dissemination of information, ideas and entertainment by the communication media. The media may such as folk songs, dance, drama, idem and lather puppetry. The media available to us are basically two kinds, those which are a modern mass media and traditional media. Communication with the people is necessary in any society and in any form of government. People must be told about the government plan, program, policies activities and achievement etc.

The need for communication with the people through different media has an achieved great importance. Mass communication media have played an important role in disseminating information, ideas and in providing information and entertainment to our people in a purposeful and effective manner. Folk art is commonly believed to be expression of rustic mind. The folk establish direct rapport with the audience owing to its proximity with the community. They facilitate active participation of the people without any co-erosion or compulsion.

Folk media are expression of attitude values and beliefs they are active and highly functional, cultural institutional useful in charging values attitudes norms of traditional society in order to provide a proper element of development. Face to face communication is very easy in folk media. It is local and they are designed to geographical and social needs of particular region each region has different varieties of folk art they are easily and economically available. It is channel for transmission of knowledge and beliefs.

The Indian mass media like TV, Radio and News Paper reach is limited. Folk media like *Yakshagana*, *Pupperty*, *Harikata*, *Veeragase*, *Jogi songs* and *Ballads* in traditional experience reach large majority of audience, humorous, religious, linguistic group, across the country have their own distinctive folk and traditional media. The folk theatrical performance like *Yakshagana*, *Pupperty*, *Harikata*, *Veeragase*, *Jogi songs*, *Bisukamsale* these folk arts are used in development communication the help with government department like information and publicity, Song and drama division, Field and publicity, Women and Children welfare, Health and family welfare, Forest also in advertisement and films.

Traditional media have introduced filmic style songs and other element of cinema into their folk form. Folk art is used for development communication, *Pupperty*, *Yakshagana*, *Harikata*, *Veeragase*, *Jogi songs* are used for provide awareness. Folk art communication among the characters and to the audience is through and interactive language of hand gestures used in combination with facial expression and body movement, so it is not only for literate but also for illiterate people.

Folk media consist of folk songs folk theatrical forms including *Yakshagana*, *Pupperty*, *Harikata*, *Veeragase*, *Jogi songs*, *Storytelling forms* and *Street Theatre*. It consists of traditional forms of communication which are still used in traditional communities in all over the world. Folk media are simple but strong they are with stood the test of time their dominant characteristics are not easily perishable. Despite the availability of sophisticated communication technology tra-

ditional media continue to be relevant and meaning folk media hold for all time.

Communication meaning and scope:

The word communication has been derived from the Latin word *communise* meaning *common*. A Communication which means exchanging of thought and feelings with one and other is called communication. The scholars defined communication indifferent way interaction, interchange, dialogues sharing communion and commonness are ideas the crop up in any attempt to define the term '*communication*'.

Communication involves active interaction without physical, biological and social environment. Now these days the communication is done through media like Radio, TV, Cinema and also internet which are reach the people very quickly and easily.

Objectives of the study:

The main objective of this study was to find out possibility of *Veeragase* as medium of development communication with special reference to *Chikkamagalur* district in Karnataka. Other objectives of this study were to understand the characteristics of *Veeragase* as a medium of communication, to analyze *Veeragase* & *Harikatha* programmes of development communication, to know use of *Veeragase* in mass media and lastly to find out problems and prospects of *Veeragase* & *Harikatha* artists.

Method of study:

The researcher has used interview method for this study. He interviewed *Veeragase* artists like *Bassappa*, *Jagadeesh*, *Anil kumar.S.L*, *Dilip kumar.K.M*, *Shankar.H.L.* & *Harikatha* artists like *G.R. Keshav Sharma*, *S.S Shivanda Shasthri*, *Shankrappa Shasthri* and *Hallappai Shastri*. The secondary data was collected from books, research theses, articles and websites.

Folk Media, Meaning and Feature:

Traditional media are media with a difference. They are essentially traditional art forms used as channels for communication to convey information of contemporary significance. They identified by different name culture namely traditional media cultural media, rural media. Folk media, grass root media or indigenous media. These older media are free from technology. Folk media consist of folk songs, folk dance, folk theatrical forms including *pupperty*, *storytelling form* and *street theater*. It consists of traditional forms of communication which are still used in traditional communities all over the world. Folk media means any folk performing art which is flexible and adaptable to communicate the needs and demands of changing society.

Feature of Folk Media:

Folk media is powerful media and communication as some important feature of folk media is as follows,

- Oral and local Language dependent media.
- Credible medium because it's religious.
- Easily accessible to rural mass.
- Known Artists or Performers.
- Traditional, Rural and Cultural media
- Free from technology that's why Folklore is more flexible media.

- Nobody can take credit for inventing folk forms.
- It reflects the tradition, culture, music of particular people.
- In Folk Forms audience also involve.
- The media act against social evils.

Mass Media in Development communication:

Folk and Modern Mass Media is substitute to one and another. These days' mass media which is developed in larger extent Radio, TV, Cinema, News Paper and Internet all are recognized as mass media. TV, Radio is very nearer to the people. Through this many awareness programs are conducted. Mass media is not only influenced the developed nation but also the developing country.

- AIDS awareness.
- Importance of Literacy
- Pulse polio relates awareness.
- Women developmental programs.
- Health awareness to women and children.
- Rural development issues.
- Social evil like dowry, Abortion of Female baby etc.

Advantages of Folk Media:

The appeal of Folk media is quite personal and at an intimate level because it has got direct influence on people. As in the case of colloquial dialects the familiar format and content of mass media gives much clarity in communication. The numerous and different forms of mass media can be exploited to cater to the needs of the people for immediate and direct rapport. The folk media is so flexible that new themes can be accommodated in them.

Indian folk forms are a mixture of dialogue, dance, song, clowning, moralising and prayer. Though the folk media attracts a small audience, the impact on them is at a much deeper level inviting the audience participation. As the moral instruction campaigned is with entertainment. Being dramatic and lyrical, it satisfies our innate need for self expression. The tradition and culture of ancestors are preserved and disseminated by the folk media in a lively manner.

Veeragase:

Veeragase is a dance folk form prevalent in the state of Karnataka, India. It is a vigorous dance based on Hindu mythology and involves very intense energy-sapping dance movements. *Veeragase* is one of the dances demonstrated mainly in procession like the *Dasara* procession held in Mysore. This dance is performed during festivals and mainly in the Hindu months of Shravana and Karthika.

Veeragase gets its name from the Hindu legendary warrior *Veerabhadra*. According to a legend, the Hindu God Shiva was married to *Dakshayini*, whose father *Daksha* was against this marriage and hence bore enmity with Shiva. When he performed a yagna, he invited all the Gods except Shiva. Much against Shiva's wishes, *Dakshayini* went to the yagna uninvited and was insulted by *Daksha*. Unable to bear the insults, *Dakshayini* jumped into the sacrificial fire. Hearing this news, Shiva got very angry and started to perform the *Tandava* dance which created turmoil in the world. When one of the sweat drops from Shiva fell on to the earth, it gave rise to the warrior *Veerabhadra* who went to *Daksha's* yagna, disrupted it and killed *Daksha*. When *Daksha's* wife pleaded mercy, he regained his life. This story is narrated by the dancers performing *Veeragase*.

In contemporary days, it has been used as a medium to make people aware of their sanitation, central and state government plans, environmental issues, effect of pollution, health sense, area cleanliness, social evils like dowry, illiteracy, child labor, child education, importance nutrition food for children, importance of breast feeding and female baby abortion, major health deceases like HIV, dengue, polio etc. *Veeragase* artists like *Bassappa, Jagadeesh, Anil kumar.S.L, Dilip kumar.K.M* and *Shankar.H.L.* are doing appreciable job in creating awareness among people through *Veeragase*.

Veeragase Performers:

The performers of *Veeragase* are called *Lingadevaru* and are devotees of Shiva. The dancers put on a white traditional headgear and a bright red colored dress. They also adorn themselves with a necklace made of *Rudraksha* beads, a hip-belt called *rudra muke*, and an or-

nament resembling a snake and worn around the neck called *Nagabharana* and anklets. The dancers smear *vibhooti* on their foreheads, ears and eyebrows. They carry a wooden plaque of Lord *Veerabhadra* in their left hand and a sword in their right hand.

Veeragase Performance:

Female artists do not traditionally perform this art, but females have started to be a part of stage performance of non-religious nature which merely as a folk dance.

The dance troop usually consists of two, four or six members. A lead singer in the troupe narrates the story of *Daksha yajna* as the dance is being performed. A huge decorative pole called *Nandikolu* which has an orange flag at the top is held by one of the dancers. Traditional percussion instruments called *sambal* and *dimmu* lend music to the dance. Cymbals and *shehnaoy* and other instruments like *kara-di* and *chamala* are also used. The dance also involves a ritualistic piercing of a needle across the mouth of the performers.

Harikatha:

Harikatha may be define as a versatile and a composite art in which a single person indulges in the act of dramatization, consisting all the vital components of the theatre craft such as music, dance and dramatic presentation of the themes. *Harikatha* is a solo recitation which is a combination of literature and lilting lyrics which reflects rich musical and literary material in its content. *Harikatha* is known in one form or the other with different names like *Katha, Katha Keerthan, Shiva Katha, Katha Kalashepam, Kathaprasangam keertan* and *Sankeertan* etc in the country.

The present form of *Harikatha* is believed to be 150 years old and existed even during the early sixteenth century. Most of the religious festivals and special occasions are marked by '*Harikatha* programmes'. The medium of *Harikatha* is the cheapest and the simplest mode of communication. It is a theatre craft which does not require a stage, set, scenery, costumes and other paraphernalia.

The *Harikatha* artiste is accompanied by two or more members and wears a simple, casual dress. The principal performer is the chief singer narrator of the story and is called *Dasa* or *Keertankar*. He is accompanied by few artistes in background to give him vocal support. Musical instruments like the mridanga, the tabala, the violin, the harmonium and the cymbals are played by them while the *Keertankar* plays castanets (a two part chinking instrument made of wood).

One of its important characteristics is that it enables the artiste to alter the message according to the mood of the audience and in the process of face to face communication, gauge the impact of the message on them. If the impact is adverse, he is free to change or disband the course through smooth switch-over to the old stories.

The other characteristic is its secular nature. It should be clearly said '*Harikatha*' is non-ritualistic and may be staged on any occasion, religious or social. The theme is varied but it is usually centered on spiritual values and stories from Epics like *Ramayana* and the *Mahabharata* and *Puranas* or the Bible.

According to *Shankarappa Shastri*, we can see more than 20 mythological stories. Among them most of the stories belong to *Ramayana* and *Mahabharata* and they can be used to part by part according to the situation, and also *Basavanna's* stories, Goddess mythological *kirthana's* small stories, *Chola Maharaja's*, *Kirathaka Sankanna's*, *Devaradasimaia's*, *Machi Mahadeva's*, *Bellavadi Channamma's*, *Akka Mahadevi's*, *Allama prabhu's*, *Bedara Kannappa's*, *Yadeuru Siddlingaiana purana*, *Renuka devi purana*. It tells us the historical prominent role of religious leaders..

The duration of each performance may be from 1 hour 30 minute to whole night it takes place. In contemporary days, it has been used as a medium to make people aware of their sanitation, central and state government plans, environmental issues, effect of pollution, health sense, area cleanliness, social evils like dowry, illiteracy, child labor, child education, importance nutrition food for children, importance of breast feeding and female baby abortion, major health deceases like HIV, dengue, polio etc. *Harikatha* artists like *G.R. Keshav Sharma, S.S Shivanda Shastri, Shankrappa Shastri* and *Hallappai Shas-*

tri are doing appreciable job in creating awareness among people through *Harikatha*.

Government departments are using trained *Harikatha* artists. They deal the subject according to the training, which was given to them. Therefore, these people are doing great job to make people understand their life. For amusement of audience, the artists use proverbs, idioms and critics.

Suggestions to strengthen *Veeragase & Harikatha*:

- *Veeragase & Harikatha* Performers should be adequately rewarded in monetary terms.
- Increase the exhibition of *Veeragase & Harikatha* not only in India but also in outside of India through the help of NGOs and government departments.
- Media should make use of advanced technology to preserve their repressive and exhilarating original folk tune for future are and reference instead of erasing valuable recording.
- Provide extra facilities to learn young artist, make use of original *Veeragase & Harikatha* artist to give training to youths.
- When the *Veeragase & Harikatha* is adopted its format, style, cloths, dialogues, musical instruments and costume should not be exchange.

Conclusion:

Traditional media are media with a difference they are essentially traditional art forms used as a channel of communication to convey information of contemporary significance. *Veeragase & Harikatha* the famous folk theatrical performing art of Karnataka it is a unique medium of art, make extensive use of independent creative element like gesture, vocal expression, pitch of dialogue, body moment, dance, costuming and music instruments. The rare combination of such creative devices will strengthen the process of communication.

This study found that *Veeragase & Harikatha* folk art used for development communication in any form of society people must be told about the government plan and programs, policies activities success and achievement give awareness about AIDS, Pulse polio, Literacy, women development, health awareness and social evil like dowry, female baby killing etc. Besides *Veeragase* enjoys great degree of credibility due to its religious and ritual significance for the medium is local, personalized and easily accessible to the ordinary masses. More improvement is need to this folk art.

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