

COVERAGE OF DEVELOPMENT NEWS IN NEWSPAPERS (WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO RURAL AREAS OF KANPUR)

Virendra Kumar Vyas^a, Srachna Sachdeva^b

^{a,b} JMC, Arts, Mahatma Gandhi Chitrakoot Gramodaya University, Chitrakoot, Satna, MP.

^b Corresponding author: srachna_sachdeva@rediffmail.com

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Abstract: To grow and lead a successful life, it is essential for people to be able to adapt to the changes in the field of social, economic and technological spheres. People not only feel free to talk about the process of development but also sincerely become a part of the development process. For a country to lead its people to growth and sustainable development, it is important that information and knowledge about such changes is made available to them on priority basis. India being a country where more than 70 % of people live in the rural areas and are engaged in cultivation, it is very important that people are provided with the facilities of better living so that they may have a say in the process of sustainable development.

In this respect, the development communication is very crucial which states that in order to achieve overall development, it is important that all the facilities and indexes of progress reach to the grass root level. Development communication is the communication of policies, programs and other facilities for the betterment of the lives of the people. The concept of Development communication is defined by Dr. Nora Quabrel in these words, "Development Communication is the art and science of human communication applied to the speedy transformation of a country and the mass of its people from poverty to a dynamic state of economic growth that makes possible greater social equality and the larger fulfillment of human potential".

In India, where the main occupation of the people is agriculture, it is essential that the technological tools are open to the reach of the people living in rural areas to make improvements not only in the agriculture field but also serve as an aid to better their lives. Facilities to help the village people to fulfill their ICE needs i.e. the need to be informed, communicated, and educated must be provided by the

government so that they could be brought forth to the front row as a torch bearer for a developing India.

Information of their use has to be made available to them by the media. The media which is the cheapest for them and easily available to them is the print media and especially the newspapers. It is important to see how the newspapers are delivering the news which speaks of their problems and also finds solutions to their problems. The research problem is to analyze, evaluate and understand how newspapers are contributing towards the coverage of needs and progress of the rural people, what news about development issues is given in the newspapers.

Keywords: Communication, Development news, Media, News, Sustainable Development

Introduction

For people to grow and lead a successful life, they should be able to adapt to the changes in the social, economic and technological spheres. For a country to lead its people to growth and development, it is important that information and knowledge about such changes is made available to them on priority basis. India being a country where more than 70 % of people live in the rural areas [1], it is very important for people to be provided with the facilities of effective communication so that they have a say in the progress of the country.

In this respect, there emerged a whole new concept known as 'Development Communication'. In order to achieve overall development, it is important that all the relevant information about indexes and facilities provided reach to the grass root level. Development Communication is the communication of policies, programs and other facilities for the betterment of the lives of the rural people. The concept of Development Communication is defined by Dr. Nora Quabrel as "the art and science of human communication applied to the speedy transformation

of a country and the mass of its people from poverty to a dynamic state of economic growth that makes possible greater social equality and the larger fulfillment of human potential, communication which aims at making public programs and policies real, meaningful and sustainable. Such information must be applied in some way as part of community development but it must also address information needs which communities themselves identified.”[2]. Development communication is the “analytical interpretation, subtle investigation, constructive criticism and sincere association with the grass-root.”[3].

Chalkley has explained that the main task of the journalist is to inform and give the readers the facts. His secondary task is to interpret, to put the facts in their framework and where possible to draw conclusions..... Not only to give facts of economic life and to interpret those facts, but also to promote them and bring them home to the readers[4].

Galtung and Vincent have proposed ten points out of which in a point they say that “there is always the possibility of reporting about development not critically in terms of the problem, but constructively in terms of positive programs.”[5]

In India, where the main occupation of the people is agriculture, it is essential for technological tools to be accessible to people living in rural areas to make improvements not only in the agriculture field but also to serve as an aid to better their lives. Facilities to help the village people fulfill their ICE needs, i.e. the need to be informed, communicated, and educated, must be provided by the government so that they can come forth as representatives of a progressing nation. To achieve overall sustainable development, there are four major aspects of rural life that must be taken into account : (a) Agriculture (b) Village industries (c) Education (d) Health and other basic amenities/services

From the early stages of the introduction of the mass media in India, various attempts were made to exploit its potential for development purposes. As early as 1933, rural radio broadcast and other services were started in various cities and in different languages on a regular basis. This was followed by television which was exploited for the promotion of literacy, social change and development. Two well-known experiments, SITE(Satellite Instructional Television Experiment) and Kheda Communication Project were launched in 1975, and to a great extent achieved the basic purpose. Print, the oldest form of media, mostly plays the role of a silent spectator, sometimes

pleading on behalf of rural people, but by and large ineffective. Experiments like B.G. Verghese’s in Chhatera village to highlight development related issues in a daily newspaper are only exceptional examples.[6]

In a country where a large number of people are living in rural areas, it is the duty of the government to see whether their basic needs are fulfilled, whether they are able to use latest methods of cultivation and if they are availing other facilities. Information related to the use of new tools and technologies has to be made available by the media. The media which is the cheapest and easily available to them is the print media and especially the newspapers. It is important to see how the newspapers are delivering news which speaks of their problems and also finds solutions to them.

Research Problem

The research problem is to analyze, evaluate and understand how newspapers are contributing towards the coverage of needs and progress of the rural people, what type /amount of news about development issues is given in the newspapers.

Objective

Following are the objectives of the research work: (1) To analyse the number of news items relating to rural development. (2) To study how much space is allotted to such news in the newspapers. (3) To see the kind of problems addressed in the newspaper. (4) To diagnose the role that the newspapers play in rural development.

Hypothesis

- (1) The ratio of development news is less as compared to other news and advertisements.
- (2) It is news related to crime which often finds more space in newspapers.

Methodology

In order to analyze the research problem, this study is based on an observation method called content analysis in which the content of newspapers is taken into consideration. The *dak* edition of two popular newspapers published from Kanpur; Dainik Jagran and Aaj are selected as it would bring to light the attention of both the newspapers towards news of rural needs.

For both the newspapers, 10 copies ranging from 20th October 2011 to 30th October 2011, i.e., for a period of 10 days are collected and analysed for its content. The unit of study is the pages covering news from Rama Bai Nagar in both the newspapers.

Table 1: News on rural development and the news on crime

News items in DJ	News items (crime) in DJ	News items (development) in DJ	News items in AJ	News items (development) in AJ	News items (crime) in AJ
40	8	5	48	9	11
40	9	2	29	6	13
13	10	6	48	9	10
29	4	3	42	9	8
40	7	2	33	9	12
53	5	3	38	3	11
23	9	2	33	4	14
25	10	6	26	4	13
40	12	1	46	1	11
23	14	8	37	5	12
326	83	38	380	59	115

DJ= DainikJagran AJ- Aaj

Table 2: Space allotment to development related news

Space allotted (in square centimeter)/ day in DJ	Space allotted (in square centimeter) /day in AJ
680 (21.90%)	1063.85 (22.84%)
400.5 (12.90%)	626.25 (13.45%)
871.75 (28.08%)	790.5 (16.97%)
589.5 (18.99%)	2633 (56.55%)
296 (9.53%)	1158 (24.87%)
510.5 (16.44%)	204 (4.38%)
213.5 (6.87%)	552 (11.85%)
1036 (33.37%)	554 (11.89%)
130 (4.18%)	238 (5.11%)
1444.5 (46.53%)	1058.25 (22.72%)

Total space 6172.25(19.88%)

8877.85(19.06%)

Table 3: Space left for other news and advertising

Space left for other news and advertisement / day in D J	Space left for other news and advertisement / day in AJ
3104 – 680 = 2424(78.09%)	4656 – 1063.85=3592.15(77.15%)
3104 – 400.5 = 2703.5(87.09%)	4656 – 626.25=4029.75(86.53%)
3104 – 871.75 = 2232.25(71.91%)	4656 – 790.5=3865.5(83.02%)
3104 – 589.5 = 2514.5(81%)	4656 –2633=2023(43.44%)
3104 – 296 = 2808(90.4%)	4656 –1158=3498(75.12%)
3104 – 510.5 = 2593.5(83.55%)	4656 –204=4452(95.61%)
3104 – 213.5 = 2890.5(93.12%)	4656 –552=4104(88.14%)
3104 – 1036 = 2068(66.62%)	4656 –554=4102(88.10%)
3104 – 130 = 2974(95.81%)	4656 –238=4418(94.88%)
3104 – 1444.5 = 1659.5 (53.46%)	4656 –1058.25=3597.75(77.27%)

The number of news stories about rural issues, the space allotment to such news, news presentation etc. is analysed.

It is also very important to have a feel of the pulse of the newspaper and how it operates. As to know more about the newspaper's stance towards such news, interviews of media persons from both the newspapers are conducted.

Data Analysis

In order to analyse the news content, following observation was made

Table 1, shows the total number of news items given in a newspaper, news on rural development and the news on crime. It is clear from the table that out of 326 stories in Dainik Jagran, only 38 are on development issues. Crimestories are greater amounting to 83 stories. Likewise, in Aaj, out of 380 news stories published, only 59 are related to rural development and 115 news stories are about crime.

Total print area available on each page amounts to 1552 square centimeter. The pages that are covered under each newspaper. In Aaj newspaper page number 2, 4, 5. Total space available is $1552 \times 3 = 4656$ cc per day. In Dainik Jagran newspaper page number 3 and 4 are studied. Total space available is $1552 \times 2 = 3104$.

Average of the space in 10 days left for other news and advertising on Ramabai Nagar pages is; in Dainik Jagran 63.40%, in Aaj 80.93%. In this paper, we find in terms of the number of news items relating to development issues that there are a maximum of 8 stories published in Dainik Jagran. Over a period of 10 days, 326 news stories were published in the Ramabai Nagar pages excluding advertisements, of which only 38 were related to development issues. Most of these were about the problems and a few were constructive. A maximum of 9 stories were published in Aaj in a single day on Ramabai Nagar pages. In a period of 10 days 380 news stories were given on Ramabai Nagar page, out of which only 38 related to the development issues. Most of the news given was about the problems in implementation of Government schemes and a few were about educating the people living in rural area.

In this research paper, we find that the biggest news story's dimension in this period of 10 days study was 178×34 .i.e. 578 square centimeter, spread over 8 columns and the smallest being 3×8 .i.e. 24 square centimeter spread over a single column. The maximum coverage to development news was given on in Aaj. It was on the 30th October (1444.5 square centimeter which amounts to 46.53% of the total

space) and in Dainik Jagran it is on 23rd October (2633 square centimeter which amounts to 56.55% of the total space.) As to the space allotment for development news in both newspapers is almost equal which amounts to 19% approximately which is very less comparing to the space left for other news and advertisements (almost 81%). As regards the presentation of news in both newspapers, the pages could incorporate more color and photos to enhance the appeal of the pages. As far as the language is concerned, the newspapers are using a standard language format which is easy for anyone to read and understand.

In an interview with Mr. Anil Dwivedi of Dainik Jagran and Mr. Sarabjeet Singh of Aaj, following points came to light with reference to the development related news. Regarding the question on the newspaper's policy towards development, it is said that if the newspaper is issued for *dehat*, then yes, importance is given to the news about the problems in implementation of various schemes and policies of government in the area. As far as the policy is concerned, the newspaper is more concerned with its reach to the common man. There is no specific policy, but neither of the newspaper allows any personal views.

In response to a question on what news on rural areas is given importance, the answer was that newspaper takes up the news which is concerned with the needs and problems of the common man. Representatives of both newspapers said that they just highlight the public issues. They take up local issues in public interest. Their effort is to attract the attention of the governing body and the governed people, and the rest is automated itself.

As far as the attention & interest of people is concerned, people are more interested in the news of and about their locality. The reader is able to feel a bond and connectivity with the newspaper when he is able to read about his surroundings. This is one of the reasons why more efforts are made and more pages on local news are given in a particular edition of a newspaper.

In answering a question on edition planning, they said that the prime responsibility of a newsperson is to help to increase the circulation of the newspaper. The *dehat* edition planning is different from the city edition. On what type of news is given importance, the answer is that crime is the *prima facta*. It is given prominence over other news. News regarding accidents becomes the second most prominent news, which is followed by news of local problems and so

on. If there is crime related news, it is given importance over other news and after its display, if space excluding advertisement is left, it is allotted to cover development related news. In reply to a question on awareness in people of rural areas, it is said that the rural population is slowly yet steadily getting the facilities of sanitation, health & hygiene, education. They are able to understand the problem but not the remedy to solve it. But yes there definitely there is a change in the attitude, behavior and understanding of people in rural areas.

Discussion & Conclusion

(1) "Change cannot happen without communication. Projects cannot achieve success without communication. We want to make communication a pillar of development that every development project must have a communication component in it. We have persuaded The Bank that they should provide lending for communication as a stand-alone activity, just like any other." [7]

(2) "Communication is a means to sustainable development, not an end in itself." [8]

The above quotations by Paul Mitchell, Director of Communication, The World Bank and by Wijayananda Jayaweera, Director, Communication Development Division, UNESCO clearly outline the role of communication in bringing about a change in the society.

(3) The role played by media specially the press has to be very effective because the reach and accessibility to this media is very high. As the education level of people is improving, there is an increment in the reading habits, and there is a tendency among people in the rural areas to read newspapers which are easily available, cheap for them to afford and help them get some useful information.

(4) A well- defined mass media and inter-personal communication infrastructure is necessary for development communication. It is necessary that these infrastructures should be accessible to the people both physically and socially. The content of the messages should be balanced. The content should be both rural and urban oriented and addressed to masses in both sectors. The message should be need based and appealing to the audiences

(5) The content given in newspaper has to strike a balance among different kinds of news. Although a newspaper is a reflection of the society, focusing only on crime is not useful; it is the responsibility of the newspapers to draw attention to the developmental activities taking shape around them.

(6) In both newspapers taken for study, it is found that due to the interest of people in crime related stories more often they get highlighted in the newspapers. In order to be constructive, the newspapers have to cater the information which is useful for their development.

(7) To overcome the barrier of literacy, the newspaper should promote the literacy programs run by both government and the non- government sectors which will be a catalyst in bringing about a positive change in the development processes.

(8) Therefore the development programs should focus primarily on poverty reduction programs, rural development programs and development of quality of life for all. These goals cannot be achieved without help of the mass media which can work as a watchdog, bringing to light the government and non-governmental efforts, the pitfalls and can work as an intermediary, i.e., it can bridge the communication gap between the government and those who are ruled.

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