

Role of Media in A Culturally Diverse And Intermixed Society: A Special Study of Poonch District

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Abstract— The present study is an attempt to understand and highlight the role of media in a culturally diverse society of a border district Poonch of Jammu and Kashmir a state of India. The study is an analysis of the role of media with the main aim to highlight the actual scenario and problems of the society which is a culturally and relatively intermixed district bordering with Pakistan lasting around five decades viz. for the period 1947 to present. Although the scope of this study is not very vast it is a limited one specifically covering a particular area of the of Jammu and Kashmir, but it will be very much helpful for understanding and highlighting the similar problems faced by number of other similar areas of the of the same Union Territory particularly and India generally which are facing many problems due to borders with neighboring countries and also having cultural affinities. The purpose of this study is to spread awareness among the backward and ignorant masses as well as to the authorities so that all the opportunities in this era of information and communication technology are fully utilized to make relation with their near and dear on the both sides of the border. For this media can play a very significant role as it is playing in other areas. But unfortunately even after 70 years of India's independence the backward areas in every sphere are not at par with the other areas. Media is one of the most important tools which can prove for the good governance through e- governance. This study has been undertaken with the help of secondary as well as primary data through quantitative as well as qualitative approaches. Furthermore at the preliminary stage the focus has been paid more on secondary sources of information by reviewing the existing available literature on the subject matter. Primary data has been taken through the living experiences in such areas since childhood and by interviewing scholars, teachers, and students from such areas. It also important to mention here that there is very little information available in existing literature with specificity of the role of media with respect to a bordering, backward and culturally intermixed area of the state of Jammu and Kashmir. Thus it is believed that this study can yield good results and will add something new to the existing literature.

Keywords— NE-Governance, Media, Affinities, Utilization, Union Territory.

Introduction

Media is the watchdog of a democracy, Media is also known as the fourth estate. In this era of information and communication technology the role of media has increased manifold. All types of media viz. electronic media, print media and social media in their own way are playing a significant and crucial role in a culturally diverse society of democracies all over the world since early 1960s to present. Despite this in backward areas of India especially in those areas which are not actually backward but having international borders and because of which they are

suffering from many problems and facing the same conditions, and even the worst from the other backward areas. In such areas the role of media is not up to the mark the pictures which has been portrayed by the media since very earlier times have nowhere been near to the reality and such areas are far away from e-governance and good governance.

Media can be a very important tool to spread awareness and information among the unaware and ignorant peoples of the backward areas. This can bring the culturally diverse as well as intermixed societies of the different countries. Peoples of different caste, religion, creed, sex can live in unity. Unity in diversity is very important for true democracies, for this now a day's electronic governance, media and other things which are associated with the information and communication technology are playing important role. So far as the border area of Jammu and Kashmir is concerned it is a culturally intermixed with those areas which are in Pakistan. After a series of wars after the partition of India and Pakistan took place and number of families were separated from each other. Even after a long time and technological revolution these divided families are still far away from each other.

This study is not only about the problems of these societies but it has also been stressed on multifaceted problems which are there because of border. This study has specifically focused on the role media highlighting these cultural and other problems of these societies. It has also been observed that media has failed in its work in the state of Jammu and Kashmir especially with respect to these backward and bordering areas of the state. Backwardness is not only the reason for such kind of problems, but it is also important to mention here that militancy and terror is also another big problem of the state. Thus it has been observed by many researcher and scholars that media has failed in its work because of the threat of terror. In other word it can be said that terrorism has been the root cause of the failure of every kind of attempt to jell the divided societies from the both sides of the border.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Most of the literature on the role of media in the state of Jammu and Kashmir has focused on a broader role of media and not on the role of media with special reference to the bordering, backward and a culturally intermixed society of the Punch district. A little information is available in the existing literature on media and culture. Pandita R (2013). In his study on scenario of print media in Jammu and Kashmir State argued that people in the state of Jammu and Kashmir are not having that much awareness and access to the media especially in backward areas. Pandita R is of the view point that there is a big need to spread awareness among the peoples through the enlightened citizens and government of the country as well as the state.

Kabir Agarwal (03 may 2018) argued that the situation of media in the state of Jammu and Kashmir has contributed to the poor ranking of the country whose long tradition of vibrant media could nonetheless enable it to rise again in the global index. Majid Maqbool (oct. 15 2018) says in the wire news that media's growth has been high during the past two decades, which has seen a big increased in the number of newspapers and periodicals in the state.

Accessing online version of news by the people having access to internet is a common scene these days, owing the fact, (IIMs) in its report about the pattern of news and newspapers consumption among Indian masses observed that 53% of total internet users among the respondents prefer, to read news on the internet out of which 75% users were alone from four metropolitan cities while as the percentage of people from non-metropolitan cities was far below.

Pandita Ramesh (2012) electronic sources of information have become an integral component of teaching learning process. Pandita also undertook study on the growing use of electronic sources of information and communication technology among the students, scholars and teachers. Besides this many other platforms like social media is also emerging in a tremendous way all over the world and India is also not the exception to this.

OBJECTIVES AND METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY

The main objectives of this study is to highlight and understand the problems of backward societies especially about the societies which are living in border areas and the role of media in its actual scenario in such societies. This study has specifically chosen some areas of Punch district of the state of Jammu and Kashmir which its border with Pakistan. This study is also an attempt to spread awareness among peoples of the state of Jammu and Kashmir and India so that justice can be done to the aggrieved peoples. Electronic governance is not functioning as per the desired objectives of these downtrodden and backward societies, good governance is also absent.

Media can play a very significant role for highlighting the issues of these isolated villages of the state. But media is also not as vibrant as it is in other states of India. This study aims at promoting the value of media and its role in today's world of information and communication technology. Media is known as the fourth pillar or estate of the state especially of a democracy. India is known as the biggest democracy of the world but unfortunately it has been observed on the basis of the conditions of such societies that India is the largest democracy only in theory and in practice. Freedom of press is also an important right of the peoples of all democracies so it should be promoted everywhere.

The present study is an analysis of secondary data as well as primary data. Secondary data has been retrieved from various official websites. More focus in this study has been paid towards qualitative approach to build a narrative for the role of media in backward areas and border area of the state Kashmir. Qualitative approach has been focused upon because of its suitability for studying and understanding the culture and governance. Quantitative approach has also been applied to some of the important aspects of this study to bring out some statistical data of the usage of electronic sources in these societies. Primary sources of information such as interview with scholars, students and teachers, also some personal experiences of living in such societies.

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CONCLUSION

In this era of information and communication technology media is playing a very crucial role in almost every sphere of the societies all over the world. There are still number of areas especially in underdeveloped and developing countries like India where the role of media is not at par with developed and advanced nations of the world. If we talk about India it can be said that India is one of the fast developing countries of the world, and the role of media is increasing day by day but this is true about only the metropolitan and other big cities of India. Every state of India is having its own types of problems, cultural diversity is the very feature of Indian society. Diversity in unity is very important for healthy advancement of the country as a whole. Media is also facing number of challenges in such a diverse country.

Overall the scenario of the role of media is good in the country but when it comes to the backward societies and which are at the international borders the role and position of media is not very positive. Even after more than 70 years of India's independence the condition of far flung areas has not improved at all. In the state of Jammu and Kashmir there are such places which are near to the border of Pakistan like district Poonch, Rajouri, Uri etc. the role of all types media with respect to such areas is totally negligible. It is believed that with the advancement of technology people can make their connections very easily, but this is not true with respect to such societies. Governance in such areas is also not good. Thus there is a great need of spreading awareness among the peoples, and also highlighting the importance, issues, and challenges faced by the fourth estate of a democracy.

Jammu And Kashmir State has been one of the most controversial states among the states of India because of its unique culture, history and number of other things. The role of media in this state is not up to the expectations because of number of problems such as illiteracy, backwardness, and most importantly terrorism. Government of India as well as the government of the state in this state has failed in governance many a times. It can be said that good governance is one of the most important factor bringing advancement in the state of Jammu and Kashmir. The role of media is also considered as one of the most important factor bringing good governance in the state especially for the downtrodden and backward section of the state.

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