

# Journal of Content Community & Communication

Volume 3 Year.2 June 2016  
ISSN No. 2395-7514

Asian Communication Studies at  
the Crossroads: A View to the  
Future from an Asiacentric  
Framework

**Leading and Managing Virtual Communities of Practice (VCOPS):**

A Contextual Understanding and Exploration

**Measuring Prominence through Cumulative Prominence Score:**

An Analysis of Media Coverage of Assam Serial Blasts

**Media and Environmental Degradation:**

A Study to Understand and Evaluate the ROLE of media for Developing Awareness on the Environmental Degradation of Amarkantak

**Engaging Social Media in Health Communication:**

Scope and Challenges of the 21st Century

**Digital Culture:**

A Paradigm Shift in Communication Perspective in Post- Globalized World

**Political Economy of Air Pollution in India:**

A Conceptual Analysis of The Role of Media

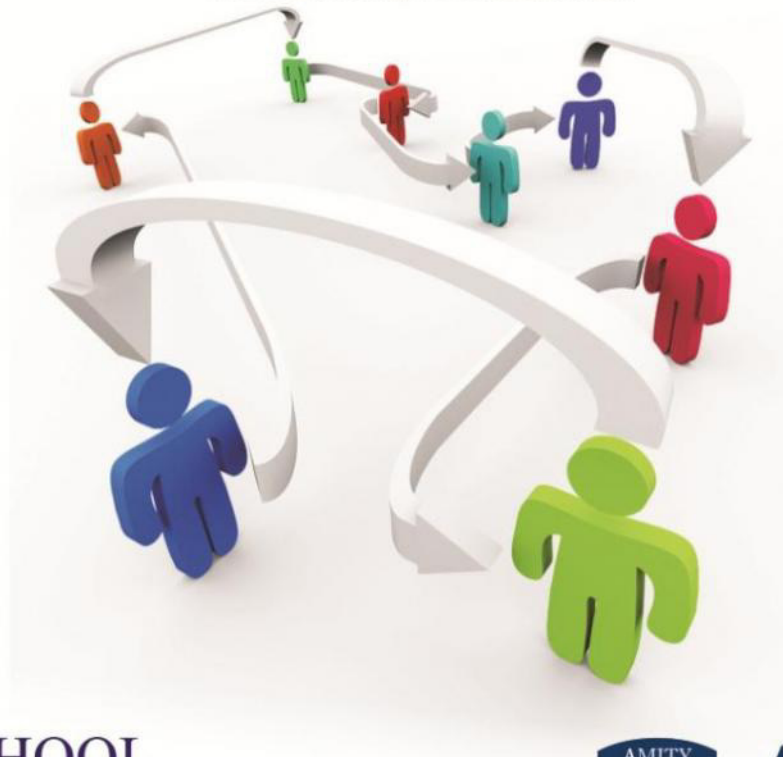
**A Study on The Influence of Music in Television Commercials that Endorse Food and Beverage Products**

**Thought for Food:**

Using Participatory Theater with Indian Youth to Curb Food Wastage

**Woman's Identity in Hindi Cinema:**

A Content Analysis of 'Mother India'



AMITY SCHOOL  
*of* COMMUNICATION



AMITY  
UNIVERSITY  
— MADHYA PRADESH —

[www.amity.edu/gwalior](http://www.amity.edu/gwalior)

# **JOURNAL OF CONTENT, COMMUNITY & COMMUNICATION**

ISSN 2395-7514

Vol. 3, Year 2, June - 2016

Amity School of Communication,

Amity University Madhya Pradesh, Gwalior

The views expressed in the articles are those of the contributors and not necessarily of the Editorial Board or the Institute.

The Editorial Board invites original, unpublished contributions in the form of research papers, articles, book reviews and case studies.

No part of this publication may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, or stored in any archival system of any nature without prior written permission. Application for permission for use of copyright material including permission to reproduce extracts in other published works shall be made to the publishers. Full acknowledgement of author, publisher and source must be given.



## Call for Papers

**Dear Sir / Ma'am**

It gives me immense pleasure to inform you that Amity School of Communication, Amity University Madhya Pradesh, Gwalior, India has successfully published two issues of its referred and peer-reviewed journal named "**Journal of Content, Community & Communication**".

This is a call for papers to all academicians/industry champions, like your good self to contribute for the upcoming issue. May I also, request you to circulate this "call for papers" among your colleagues, peers and friends for their contribution to JCCC.

Manuscript must be typed in Microsoft Word Format, as per JCCC Guidelines (enclosed). Last date of receipt of the completed soft copy of the manuscript is **15/11/2016**. All contributions would be peer-reviewed by a very experienced and illustrious Reviewer Board and Editorial Board.

All communications may be addressed to **jccc0615@gmail.com**.

Note: Publication in JCCC is free. Your contributions based on your research work must be related to any subject of Media Studies.

Looking forward to a fruitful intellectual association with you.

Warm Regards

**Dr. Sumit Narula**

(Chief Editor, JCCC)

Amity University Madhya Pradesh,

Gwalior-474005

Email: **jccc0615@gmail.com**

---

**Amity School of Communication  
Amity University Madhya Pradesh  
Gwalior-474005**

# Journal of Content, Community & Communication

---

## **Chief Patron**

**Mr. Assem Chauhan**  
Additional President  
Ritnand Balved Education Foundation

## **Patron**

**Dr. Sunil Saran**  
Chancellor  
Amity University Madhya Pradesh  
Gwalior, India

## **Chief Advisor**

**Lt. Gen. V.K. Sharma, AVSM (Retd.)**  
Vice Chancellor  
Amity University Madhya Pradesh  
Gwalior, India

## **Advisory Board**

**Prof (Dr.) M.P. Kaushik**  
Pro Vice Chancellor,  
Amity University Madhya Pradesh  
Gwalior, India

**Prof (Dr.) V.K. Kuthiyala**  
Vice Chancellor  
Makhanlal Chaturvedi National University of  
Journalism & Mass Communication  
Bhopal, India

**Prof. (Dr.) Keval J. Kumar**  
Founder Director  
Resource Centre for Media Education & Research  
Pune, India

## **Editorial Board**

### **Chief Editor**

**Dr. Sumit Narula**  
Director, Amity School of Communication  
Amity University Madhya Pradesh,  
Gwalior-474005, India

### **Editor**

**Mr. Aditya Kumar Shukla**  
Assistant Professor, Amity School of  
Communication  
Amity University Madhya Pradesh,  
Gwalior-474005, India

## **Members**

**Prof. (Dr.) Pradeep Krishnaatray**  
Director Research & Strategic Planning  
Center for Communication Programs  
John Hopkins University, India

**Prof. (Dr.) Naren Chitty**  
Chair in International Communication,  
Faculty of Arts, Macquarie University,  
Australia

**Dr. Nirmala Mani Adhikary**  
Associate Professor  
Centre for Media Studies  
Kathmandu University,  
Kathmandu, Nepal

**Prof. (Dr.) Geeta Bamezai**  
Professor  
IIMC, New Delhi, India

**Dr. Surbhi Dahiya**  
Associate Professor  
IIMC, New Delhi, India

**Melissa A. Fitch, Ph.D**  
Associate Professor  
Spanish and Portuguese  
College of Humanities,  
University of Arizona

**Prof. (Dr.) Sukhnadan Singh,**  
Head, Department of  
Communication  
Dev Sanskriti Viswavidyalaya,  
Haridwar, Uttarkhand, India

**Prof. (Dr.) Manish Verma**  
Amity School of Communication,  
Amity University Rajasthan,  
Jaipur, India

**Prof. (Dr.) Neeru Johari**  
Jagannath Institute of Management  
Studies, New Delhi, India

**Prof. Pushpendra Pal Singh**  
MCNU Journalism & Mass  
Communication, Bhopal, India

**Dr. Yoshitaka Miike**  
Associate Professor  
Department of Communication  
University of Hawai'i at Hilo, USA

**Dr. Ashu Pashricha**  
Department of Gandhian & Peace  
Studies, Panjab University,  
Chandigarh, India

**Prof. (Dr.) APS Chauhan**  
Department of Political Science  
Jiwaji University, Gwalior-474001,  
Madhya Pradesh, India

**Dr. Mini Mathur**  
Associate Professor  
Marketing, MICA, Ahmedabad

**Dr. Manish Pathak Sehlat**  
Associate Professor  
MICA, Ahmedabad

## **Contact Us**

The Chief Editor, JCCC  
Amity School of Communication  
Amity University Madhya Pradesh  
Gwalior, 474005, India  
Phone: Landline: 0751-2496052  
Mobile: 09560452625, 09685424152  
Email: jccc0615@gmail.com

## **Subscription**

Single copy: Rs. 250  
Annual: Rs. 500  
Students and research scholars  
Single copy: Rs. 200, Annual: Rs. 400  
Institutional Membership: Rs. 500 (Annual)  
Please remit your subscription through  
Draft in favour of Amity University Madhya Pradesh Gwalior.

## **Published by**

Amity School of Communication  
Amity University Madhya Pradesh  
Gwalior, 474005, India

---

**Amity School of Communication  
Amity University Madhya Pradesh  
Gwalior-474005**

# JOURNAL OF CONTENT, COMMUNITY & COMMUNICATION

## CONTENTS

VOLUME 3	YEAR 2	JUNE, 2016
<b>EDITORIAL - Asian Communication Studies at the Crossroads: A View to the Future from an Asiacentric Framework</b>		<b>1</b>
<i>Yoshitaka Miike</i>		
<b>1. Leading and Managing Virtual Communities of Practice (VCOPS) A Contextual Understanding and Exploration</b>		<b>7</b>
<i>Anil Behal</i>		
<b>2. Measuring Prominence through Cumulative Prominence Score: An Analysis of Media Coverage of Assam Serial Blasts</b>		<b>21</b>
<i>Syed Murtaza Alfarid Hussain</i>		
<b>3. Media and Environmental Degradation (A Study to Understand and Evaluate the ROLE of media for Developing Awareness on the Environmental Degradation of Amarkantak)</b>		<b>31</b>
<i>Manash Pratim Goswami</i>		
<b>4. Engaging Social Media in Health Communication: Scope and Challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century</b>		<b>38</b>
<i>Mausumi Bhattacharyya &amp; Priyanka Roy</i>		
<b>5. Digital Culture: a Paradigm Shift in Communication Perspective in Post- Globalized World</b>		<b>44</b>
<i>Soumik Chatterjee</i>		
<b>6. Political Economy of Air Pollution in India: A Conceptual Analysis of The Role of Media</b>		<b>50</b>
<i>Kiran Bhatia &amp; Santosh Patra</i>		
<b>7. A Study on The Influence of Music in Television Commercials that Endorse Food and Beverage Products</b>		<b>56</b>
<i>Disha Ramesh &amp; C. Velayutham</i>		
<b>8. Thought for Food: Using Participatory Theatre with Indian Youth to Curb Food Wastage</b>		<b>60</b>
<i>Karman Khanna</i>		
<b>9. Woman's Identity in Hindi Cinema - A Content Analysis of 'Mother India'</b>		<b>67</b>
<i>Aarti Kapur Singh</i>		

### Guidelines for the Contributors

---

**Amity School of Communication  
Amity University Madhya Pradesh  
Gwalior-474005**







## EDITORIAL

# ASIAN COMMUNICATION STUDIES AT THE CROSSROADS: A View to the Future from an Asiatic Framework

Yoshitaka Miike

University of Hawai'i at Hilo, USA

### 1. Introduction: Nkrumah's Afrocentric Consciousness

Kwame Nkrumah (1909-1972), the first President of Ghana who was called *Osagyefo* [victorious leader], once stated: "I am an African, not because I was born in Africa, but because Africa was born in me." This is a profound statement about Afrocentric consciousness. Likewise, in a very real sense, Asia must be born in the hearts and minds of many Asian communicators and communication scholars. For the last decade, inspired by Molefi Kete Asante (2014, 2015) and Maulana Karenga (2000/2001, 2014), two giant scholars in Africology and founders of African American Studies, and their Afrocentric metatheory and *Kawaida* philosophy, I have propounded and developed an Asiatic paradigm for Asian communication studies from indigenous perspectives (see Miike, 2010a, 2010b, 2012, 2014a, 2014b, 2015, in press-a; Miike & Yin, 2015; Yin, 2009).

In this guest editorial, from the Asiatic paradigmatic framework, I wish to present a view to the future of Asian communication scholarship in the globalization era. More specifically, I would like to suggest that Asian communication studies at the crossroads should (1) re-center Asian cultural traditions in theory and research, (2) learn from Asiatic communication pioneers and their pioneering works, and (3) move beyond comparative Eurocentrism and engage in global dialogue. These suggestions correspond to the three key themes of this new journal of the Amity School of Communication from India, namely, content, community, and communication.

### 2. Content: Re-Centering Asian Cultural Traditions

Hamid Mowlana (1994), an eminent Iranian forerunner, pointedly opined that "[c]ommunication research, like any scientific study, depends essentially on the quality of theory or conceptualization to give it direction and focus" (p. 354). Indeed, as Wimal

Dissanayake (1981), a distinguished Sri Lankan trailblazer, emphatically asserted 35 years ago, without indigenous theoretical advances would there be no breakthroughs and leaps in local communication research in the Asian milieu and no original and creative Asian contributions to communication theory on the global scene (Miike, 2012). Asiaticity as an overarching metatheoretical framework addresses this crux of the paradigmatic issue in Asian communication scholarship and pinpoints the problematic hierarchical arrangement of "Western theories" and "non-Western texts."

Simply put, Asiaticity is the non-ethnocentric and non-essentialist act of placing Asian ideas and ideals at the center of any inquiry into Asian peoples and phenomena. The Asiatic metatheory insists on revivifying and revitalizing Asian cultural traditions as theoretical resources for Asian voices and visions. The Asiatic agenda maintains that more theories should be constructed out of Asian cultural heritage and cumulative wisdom. Theory building in an Asiatic sense is thus the self-conscious process of actively centering diverse and distinct traditions of Asia as essential intellectual resources and developing concepts, comparisons, postulates, and principles in order to capture and envision Asian communicators as subjects and actors of their own realities rather than objects and spectators in the lived experiences of others. In the Asiatic enterprise, therefore, Asian cultures are no longer treated as peripheral targets of data analysis and rhetorical criticism. They become central resources of theoretical insight and humanistic inspiration (Miike, 2010b).

There are four content dimensions of the Asiatic paradigm, that is, four aspects of Asian cultures that can be proactively centered in describing, interpreting, evaluating, and envisioning the profiles of Asian communicators and the pictures of Asian communication: (1) the linguistic dimension; (2) the religious-philosophical dimension; (3) the historical

dimension; and (4) the aesthetic dimension (Miike, in press-a). All cultures use language as a common code of communication and a symbolic vehicle of indigenous epistemologies. Cultural values and communication ethics have been largely shaped by religious-philosophical underpinnings. No culture exists without its own history, from which its members learn important lessons about relational communication, environmental communication, and spiritual communication. Every culture performs communication in rituals and ceremonies that gives a sense of binding and belonging to its members and appeals to their ethos and aesthetics.

For the purpose of elucidating the psychology of Asian communicators and enunciating the dynamics of Asian communication, therefore, Asiacentrists ought to revalorize (1) Asian words as key concepts and their etymologies as cultural outlooks and instructive insights, (2) Asian religious-philosophical teachings as behavioral principles and codes of ethics, (3) Asian histories as multiple layers of contextualization and recurrent patterns of continuity and change, and (4) Asian aesthetics as analytical frameworks for space-time arrangement, nonverbal performance, and emotional pleasure. The indigenous explorations of Babbili (2008) and Jain and Matukumalli (2014), for example, are such Asiacentric attempts to theorize Asian communication in its many and varied forms.

By using these four elements of Asian cultures as theoretical resources, it is possible for Asiacentrists to theorize as Asians speak in Asian languages, as Asians are influenced by Asian religious-philosophical worldviews, as Asians struggle to live in Asian historical experiences, and as Asians feel ethically good and aesthetically beautiful. This way of relating culture as theory for knowledge reconstruction, not as text for knowledge deconstruction, allows us to rediscover and recover Asian cultural locations and cultural agency and improve the self-understanding and self-assertion of Asian communicators in global and local contexts (Miike, 2014b). India is one of the oldest civilizations in the world. India is immensely rich in her linguistic, religious, and aesthetic diversity. It goes without saying that much remains to be mined and mobilized for "an Indian concept of India" and "India's part in the future of the world" (Schramm, 1977, p. 4).

### **3. Community: Learning from Asiacentric Pioneers**

The Asiacentric pursuit of communication theory is not new. As a matter of fact, there are already many theoretical foundations on which Asiacentrists can base their research endeavors (see Miike, in press-b). Recently, Adhikary (2014), Adhikary and Shukla (2013), Dissanayake (2009), Kumar (2014), and Sitaram (2004) provided excellent overviews of indigenous communication theories in the cultural tradition of India. Classical Indian concepts such as *rasa*, *sadharanikaran*, and *sphota* exemplify the global significance of local knowledge for communication theory in human diversity.

The field of Asian communication theory emerged in the early 1980s when the discipline of communication in the West was in a state of ferment. The so-called empirical and critical schools of communication research were preoccupied with metatheoretical debates and discussions within the Western paradigm (Rogers, 1985). The groundbreaking works of Indian communication pioneers such as Binod C. Agrawal, Anantha Sudhaker Babbili, Nemi C. Jain, Keval J. Kumar, Uma Narula, Usha Vyasulu Reddi, Tulsi B. Saral, Kusum J. Singh, Kogil S. Sitaram, I. P. Tewari, and Jaswant S. Yadava have contributed substantially and significantly to the establishment and development of the field of Asian communication theory.

Three landmark edited volumes of Dissanayake (1988), Kincaid (1987), and Nordstrom (1983), in particular, have been critical and central to the emergence and evolution of the Asiacentric project of communication theory. These volumes are the collections of selected papers presented at two international conventions and one international symposium. The two conventions, "Communication Theory from Eastern and Western Perspectives," were held in Honolulu, Hawai'i on December 15-23, 1980 and in Yokohama, Japan on July 20-23, 1982. They were coordinated by the East-West Center (EWC) in Hawai'i. The three-day symposium, "Mass Communication Theory: The Asian Perspective," was hosted at Thammasat University in Bangkok, Thailand on October 15-17, 1985. It was organized by the Asian Mass Communication Research and Information Center (AMIC) in Singapore (see *Asian Mass Communication Bulletin*, 1985, Vol. 15, No. 6, p.

16). Another conference on "Rhetoric: East and West" was held at the EWC in Honolulu, Hawai'i on June 12-18, 1988. Papers presented at this National Endowment for the Humanities conference and published in various outlets also yielded additional insights into communication theorizing from East-West comparative perspectives.

These well-planned meetings in the 1980s represented the unified intellectual move to search for Asiatic theoretical models and modules of communication among four groups of scholars working in different fields in different regions: (1) U.S. and European rhetorical communication theorists who were interested in Asian classical traditions of thought and international diplomacy; (2) South and Southeast Asian development communication researchers who were dealing with issues of cultural continuity and social change; (3) Northeast Asian intercultural communication experts who were building bridges across the Pacific for international business and understanding; and (4) West Asian international communication specialists who were critical of the politics and policies of world information flows and cultural representations (Miike, in press-a).

"Learning without thinking is perplexing. Thinking without learning is perilous," Confucius perceptively observed (*Analects*, 2: 15). His wise counsel tells us that our thinking is most productive and progressive when we "cherish the old to know the new" (*Analects*, 2: 11) and learn from a vibrant community of our own intellectual predecessors. It behooves us, therefore, to acknowledge and honor Asiatic pioneers in communication research and expand and enrich their theoretical legacies. As I wrote elsewhere, moreover, "it is imperative for us to 'create a community of a larger memory' of our fields so that we know on what ground we can build and in what direction we may proceed. It is also time, and past time, to invite communal transformations through connected memories rather than isolated struggles through divided memories. Can we re-member (in the literal sense of the word) and imagine ourselves within a larger memory of common and collective struggles?" (Miike, 2013, p. 5).

#### **4. Communication: Engaging in Global Dialogue**

Claude Alvares (2011a, 2011b), a prominent Indian historian, offered a poignant critique of

Eurocentrism in social sciences and problematized the "apemanship and parrotry" knowledge structure of Eurocentric curricula at non-Western universities. No doubt, in the same vein, theoretical Eurocentrism and methodological Eurocentrism are major drawbacks in Asian communication research and education (see Miike, 2010a, 2010b; Shi-xu, 2016; Yin, 2009). Nevertheless, I want to call attention to comparative Eurocentrism here especially in relation to imposed and self-imposed communicative divides among Asian scholars and students.

A point to be made is clear and simple. Our dialogue must be truly global, multilingual, and multicultural, not just East-West or North-South conversations in English about Eurocentric intellectual traditions and the lifeworld of cultural Western Europe. There is no reason why we should always use Western Europe and European America as the privileged points of reference. Asia ought to engage more in Africa, Latin America, and Eastern Europe and acknowledge similarities among them. Asia should not be in constant dialogue with Western Europe and European America alone and seek only for connections and commonalities with them. The non-Western world and its intellectual universe have been fragmented by comparative Eurocentrism in a number of respects. We must overcome comparative Eurocentrism in communication theory and practice. In her thoughtful and thought-provoking review of the state of the art in intercultural dialogue scholarship, Lee (2016) critically pointed out that intercultural exchanges should serve not as hidden spaces for affirming Western hegemony and superiority but as open platforms for dignity, equity, and justice toward the common good.

Comparative Eurocentrism deters us from (1) demonstrating internal diversity and complexity within a non-Western region or nation, (2) exploring links and interconnections, and identifying collective identities and common values, among neighboring non-Western cultures, (3) examining similarities and differences from non-Eurocentric perspectives, and (4) projecting non-Western visions of the global village (Miike, 2010b; Miike & Yin, 2015). Five types of alternative non-Eurocentric comparisons can enlarge the theoretical horizons of non-Western communication research: (1) continent-diaspora comparisons (e.g., Indian culture and communication in India

and Singapore), (2) within-region comparisons (e.g., Indian and Nepali cultures), (3) between-region comparisons (e.g., Indian and South African cultures), (4) diachronic comparisons (precolonial and postcolonial Indian cultures), and (5) co-cultural domestic comparisons (e.g., North and South Indian cultures).

Mutual referencing and learning among Asiatic communication theoreticians and practitioners are possible and desirable. Agrawal (2010) and Reddi (1992), for instance, formulated insightful and instructive reflections on the development of Indian communication studies (with its emphasis on agriculture, health, and marketing) and methodological issues and challenges in the sociocultural landscape of India (e.g., sampling frames, social distance, "desirable answering," and operational definitions for measurement and data analysis). Communicologists from different Asian countries and cultures may share similar standpoints regarding the dominant U.S. influence on the birth of the discipline and the heavy reliance on quantitative survey research. Additionally, due to the different scopes and foci of research, rhetorical and intercultural communication experts in Northeast Asia and media and development communication specialists in West Asia, South Asia, and Southeast Asia can have fruitful conversations so as to take stock of cultural continuity and social change in the broader context of contemporary Asia.

Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o (2012), a renowned Kenyan writer and critic, contended that "[t]he links between Asia and Africa and South America have always been present, but in our times they have been made invisible by the fact that Europe is still the central mediator of Afro-Asian-Latino discourse" (p. 14). He substantiated his contention by ruminating on the presence and influence of Indian culture in Africa and urged us to "make the invisible visible in order to create a more interesting—and ultimately more creative and meaningful—free flow of ideas in the world" (p. 18). Ngũgĩ (2013) proposed a new concept of "globolectical imagination," which calls for "a struggle against the view of literatures (languages and cultures) relating to each other in terms of a hierarchy of power" (p. 42). Asiaticists should embrace and espouse this mindset of "globolectical imagination" and participate in global dialogue beyond comparative Eurocentrism.

## 5. Conclusion: The "Look East" and "Act East" Initiative

As Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced, the time is ripe not only to "look East" but also to "act East." This Indian initiative in international and intercultural relations is indeed timely for Asian communication studies at the crossroads. It is my sincere hope that the *Journal of Content, Community and Communication* will take the "look East" and "act East" lead in Asian communication research with the spirit of celebrating human commonality in the global society and cherishing cultural particularity in the local community. We should not let the "robber baron" culture of "rugged individualism" be the global culture of our future (see Hsu, 1983; Tsurumi, 2005). The human condition impels us to set our sights on more humanistic and ethical visions for a just and sustainable world. For such visions, I daresay, there is a great deal of room for Asiatic critiques and contributions (Miike, 2014a, 2015).

Wilbur Schramm (1907-1987), who is considered as the founder of communication studies in the United States (Rogers, 1994), chaired the advisory committee of the Indian Government on the development of information infrastructure in 1963. Based on the recommendations of this committee, the Indian Institute of Mass Communication (IIMC) was established in New Delhi in 1965. On November 21, 1976, Schramm (1977) returned to the institute and delivered a special lecture entitled "Communication and Development: A Revaluation." He made the following remark in the lecture: "I have got to the point, I am old enough, that I do not just look for 0.5 significances; I look for changes that make some difference" (p. 4). There is no question in my mind that the *Journal of Content, Community and Communication* will make many changes that make a difference for human freedom, flourishing, and fulfillment.

## References

- Adhikary, N. M. (2014). *Theory and practice of communication: Bharata Muni (Indian Tradition of Communication, Vol. 1)*. Bhopal, India: Makhanlal Chaturvedi National University of Journalism and Communication.
- Adhikary, N. M., & Shukla, A. K. (2013). Discursing communication from the perspective of mainstream Hindu

- philosophy. *Dev Sanskriti: Interdisciplinary International Journal*. Vol. 2. pp. 51-56.
- Agrawal, B. C. (2010). The many shades of communication research in South Asia. *Media Asia: An Asian Mass Communication Quarterly*. Vol. 37, No. 1. pp. 7-9.
- Alvares, C. (2011a). A critique of Eurocentric social science and the question of alternatives. *Economic and Political Weekly*. Vol. 46, No. 22. pp. 72-81.
- Alvares, C. (2011b). Steeped in Eurocentrism. *Economic and Political Weekly*. Vol. 46, No. 42. pp. 77-79.
- Asante, M. K. (2014). Afrocentricity: Toward a new understanding of African thought in the world. In M. K. Asante, Y. Miike, & J. Yin (Eds.). *The global intercultural communication reader* (2nd Ed.). New York, NY: Routledge.
- Asante, M. K. (2015). Afrocentricity and culture: Challenging the inhuman in contemporary ideas. *Black Studies: Journal of the Japan Black Studies Association*. No. 84. pp. 5-12.
- Babbili, A. S. (2008). Ethics and the discourse on ethics in postcolonial India. In M. K. Asante, Y. Miike, & J. Yin (Eds.). *The global intercultural communication reader*. New York, NY: Routledge.
- Dissanayake, W. (1981). Towards Asian theories of communications. *Communicator: Journal of the Indian Institute of Mass Communication*. Vol. 16, No. 4. pp.13-18.
- Dissanayake, W. (Ed.). (1988). *Communication theory: The Asian perspective*. Singapore: Asian Mass Communication Research and Information Center.
- Dissanayake, W. (2009). The desire to excavate Asian theories of communication: One strand of the history. *Journal of Multicultural Discourses*. Vol. 4, No. 1. pp. 7-27.
- Hsu, F. L. K. (1983). *Rugged individualism reconsidered: Essays in psychological anthropology*. Knoxville, TN: University of Tennessee Press.
- Jain, N. C., & Matukumalli, A. (2014). The functions of silence in India: Implications for intercultural communication research. In M. K. Asante, Y. Miike, & J. Yin (Eds.). *The global intercultural communication reader* (2nd Ed.). New York, NY: Routledge.
- Karenga, M. (2000/2001). Mission, meaning, and methodology in Africana Studies: Critical reflections from a Kawaïda framework. *Black Studies Journal*. Vol. 3. pp. 54-74.
- Karenga, M. (2014). *Nommo, Kawaïda, and communicative practice: Bringing good into the world*. In M. K. Asante, Y. Miike, & J. Yin (Eds.). *The global intercultural communication reader* (2nd Ed.). New York, NY: Routledge.
- Kincaid, D. L. (Ed.). (1987). *Communication theory: Eastern and Western perspectives*. San Diego, CA: Academic Press.
- Kumar, K. J. (2014). Theorizing about communication in India: *Sadharanikaran, rasa, and other traditions in rhetoric and aesthetics*. In C. Christians & K. Nordenstreng (Eds.). *Communication theories in a multicultural world*. New York, NY: Peter Lang.
- Lee, E. L. (2016). Intercultural dialogue in theory and practice: A review. *Journal of Multicultural Discourses*. Vol. 11, No. 2. pp. 236-242.
- Miike, Y. (2010a). An anatomy of Eurocentrism in communication scholarship: The role of Asiaticity in de-Westernizing theory and research. *China Media Research*. Vol. 6, No. 1. pp. 1-11.
- Miike, Y. (2010b). Culture as text and culture as theory: Asiaticity and its *raison d'être* in intercultural communication research. In T. K. Nakayama & R. T. Halualani (Eds.). *The handbook of critical intercultural communication*. West Sussex, UK: Wiley-Blackwell.
- Miike, Y. (2012). Cultural traditions and communication theory: Clarifying the Asiatic paradigm. *China Media Research*. Vol. 8, No. 3. pp. 3-5.
- Miike, Y. (2013, December). On inheriting the fields of international and intercultural communication: A personal reflection. *NCA IICD Newsletter*. pp. 4-7.
- Miike, Y. (2014a, December). *Between conflict and harmony in the human family: Asiaticity and its ethical imperative for intercultural communication*. Paper presented as Keynote Address at the 4th SHNU International Conference of Intercultural Communication, College of Foreign Languages, Shanghai Normal University, Shanghai, China.
- Miike, Y. (2014b). The Asiatic turn in Asian communication studies: Shifting paradigms

- and changing perspectives. In M. K. Asante, Y. Miike, & J. Yin (Eds.). *The global intercultural communication reader* (2nd Ed.). New York, NY: Routledge.
- Miike, Y. (2015). "Harmony without uniformity": An Asiatic worldview and its communicative implications. In L. A. Samovar, R. E. Porter, E. R. McDaniel, & C. S. Roy (Eds.). *Intercultural communication: A reader* (14th Ed.). Boston, MA: Cengage Learning.
- Miike, Y. (in press-a). Asiaticity. In K. B. Jensen & R. T. Craig (Eds.). *The international encyclopedia of communication theory and philosophy*. West Sussex, UK: Wiley-Blackwell.
- Miike, Y. (in press-b). Non-Western theories of communication: Indigenous ideas and insights. In L. Chen (Ed.). *Handbooks of communication science: Vol. 9. Intercultural communication*. Berlin, Germany: De Gruyter Mouton.
- Miike, Y., & Yin, J. (2015). Asiaticity and shapes of the future: Envisioning the field of intercultural communication in the globalization era. In L. A. Samovar, R. E. Porter, E. R. McDaniel, & C. S. Roy (Eds.), *Intercultural communication: A reader* (14th Ed.). Boston, MA: Cengage Learning.
- Mowlana, H. (1994). International communication research in the 21st century: From functionalism to postmodernism and beyond. In C. J. Hamelink & O. Linné (Eds.). *Mass communication research: On problems and policies—In honor of James D. Norwood*. NJ: Ablex.
- Ngũgĩ, T. (2012). What is Asia to me? Looking East from Africa. *World Literature Today*. Vol. 86, No. 4. pp. 14-18.
- Ngũgĩ, T. (2013). A globalectical imagination. *World Literature Today*. Vol. 87, No. 3. pp. 40-42.
- Nordstrom, L. (Ed.). (1983). Communication: East and West [Special issue]. *Communication*. Vol. 8, No. 1. pp. 1-132.
- Reddi, U. V. (1992). Perspectives on communication research in Asia. *Interaction: Journal of the National Council of Development Communication*. Vol. 10, No. 2. pp. 1-21.
- Rogers, E. M. (1985). The empirical and critical schools of communication research. In E. M. Rogers & F. Balle (Eds.). *The media revolution in America and in Western Europe*. Norwood, NJ: Ablex.
- Rogers, E. M. (1994). *A history of communication study: A biographical approach*. New York, NY: Free Press.
- Schramm, W. (1977). Communication and development: A reevaluation. *Communicator: Journal of the Indian Institute of Mass Communication*. Vol. 12, No. 2. pp. 1-4.
- Shi-xu. (2016). Cultural Discourse Studies through the *Journal of Multicultural Discourses*: 10 years on. *Journal of Multicultural Discourses*. Vol. 11, No. 1. pp. 1-8.
- Sitaram, K. S. (2004). South Asian theories of speech communication: Origins and applications in ancient, modern, and postmodern times. *Human Communication: A Journal of the Pacific and Asian Communication Association*. Vol. 7, No. 1. pp. 83-101.
- Tsurumi, Y. (2005). Dysfunctional corporations and flawed business education in America. *Japanese Journal of Administrative Science*. Vol. 18, No. 3. pp. 179-192.
- Yin, J. (2009). Negotiating the center: Towards an Asiatic feminist communication theory. *Journal of Multicultural Discourses*. Vol. 4, No. 1. pp. 75-88.

\*\*\*

# LEADING AND MANAGING VIRTUAL COMMUNITIES OF PRACTICE (VCoPs): A Contextual Understanding and Exploration

Dr. Anil Behal<sup>1</sup>

## ABSTRACT

*An increasing amount of work is performed today in geographically dispersed team settings that transcend the boundaries of time, space, culture, and territory. Therefore, the need for a greater understanding of the complexities involved in leading and managing these communities of practice could not be greater. Any group of individuals meeting together for a common, well-defined purpose over a certain period of time, can be loosely defined as a "community of practice" (CoP); however, when the work is primarily carried out in cyberspace using computer mediated communication (CMC) and its attendant tools and accessories, we generally refer to such communities as "virtual communities of practice" (VCoPs). While the extant literature on networking technologies reveals a lot of research already conducted on the technographic profile, virtual experiences of community members, and the impact of technology on communication, it is relatively mute when it comes to an understanding of the emotional experiences of leading and managing VCoPs. It is generally believed that the same set of principles and techniques that are deployed by successful leaders in face-to-face settings will in effect, be equally productive in cyberspace as well. An attempt will be made in this paper to illuminate various aspects of leading in cyberspace with special emphasis on the intersection of "virtuality" and "emotion." Some questions that are addressed in the overview have to do with the kinds of anxieties that are invoked in a leader when working virtually, how the leader copes with such anxieties without losing focus on the task at hand, and what kind of renegotiation and accommodation must occur, in order to account for the absence of non-verbal communication, spatial indicators, and other paralinguistic cues that are typically taken for granted in face-to-face settings. Using their own feelings and emotions as a guide, what might leaders do in a virtual setting that can enhance the frequency and quality of communication, the development of "swift trust" between members, and the creation of a values-driven enterprise where the leader's external authority and control are no longer the primary determinants of members' motivation and sense of purpose? The paper explores in depth, "contextual leadership," and examines VCoPs through two different lenses (worldviews), namely "communitarian" and "network."*

Keywords: *Virtuality, VCoPs, CoPs, swift trust, contextual leadership, communitarian and network worldviews*

### Defining Communities of Practice: Overview

Wenger (1998), one of the earliest researchers of CoPs began writing about them nearly two decades ago as the Internet started to play an increasingly active role in communication, newsgroups, and information dissemination by electronic means. This is how Wenger conceptualizes CoPs:

Communities of practice are everywhere. We all belong to a number of them—at work, at school, at home, in our hobbies. Some have a name, some don't. We are core members of some and we belong to others more peripherally. You may be a member of a band, or you may just come to rehearsals to hang around with the group. You may lead a group of consultants who specialize in telecommunication strategies, or you may just stay in touch to keep informed about

developments in the field. Or you may have just joined a community and are still trying to find your place in it. Whatever forms our participation takes; most of us are familiar with the experience of belonging to a community of practice. Members of a community are informally bound by what they do together, from engaging in lunchtime discussions to solving difficult problem and by what they have learned through their mutual engagement in these activities. A community of practice is thus different from a community of interest or a geographical community, neither of which implies a shared practice." (Wenger, 1998, p-1)

Wenger's description illuminates a critical aspect of CoPs, i.e., "members of a community are informally bound by what they do together." While there may be CoPs that formally come into existence at the behest of an organizational directive where employees are given no choice

---

1. CEO, ORGDYNE Training & Consulting, LLC



but to join the group, these communities do not necessarily grow, flourish, and do productive work because of directive leadership. On the contrary, research is beginning to show the negative impact of active hands-on leadership, even though there is some evidence of an initial spurt in community development at the very early stages, possibly as a result of some direction by a leader (Gilmore & Warren, 2007).

What happens when the element of “virtuality” is introduced to the mix and members are expected to meet, interact, and work almost entirely in cyberspace? What kinds of anxieties are triggered in the leader(s) and followers? How are these anxieties managed and/or metabolized in the pursuit of work, and what challenges and threats must community members expect to face in such unfamiliar territory, which often feels impersonal, detached, and almost completely devoid of human emotion?

Leading and communicating in cyberspace can often trigger very complex emotions, a sense of paranoia, and a unique kind of “disembodied” relatedness; all of which a leader must understand in order to be effective (Civin, 2000). Providing a “holding environment” (Winnicott, 1971) can be extremely challenging in an amorphous setting such as the Internet; however, without a transitional space, community members will not feel nurtured and held. There is always an inherent danger that a very directive, hands-on leader may unwittingly create a dependency group, which followers often respond to by taking a counter-dependent stance. The situation is further exacerbated because everything that is said or written in cyberspace typically appears in text, audio, or video form and is faithfully archived, leaving behind a very disconcerting and unforgiving electronic trail.

Therefore, paradoxically, the informality and relaxed nature of a VCoP must coexist, albeit underplayed, with the ever-present threat of something previously spoken or written coming back to haunt a leader or member. More than an actual threat, the perceived nature of the threat must trigger some persecutory anxiety and paranoia in individuals. How does a leader then create a safe environment (transitional space) that facilitates learning and growth in the group?

There is some debate in the academic community, whether “leading” and “teaching” in the virtual setting are in some way synonymous. With the advent of social media networking and

its emphasis on technology as a means of facilitating accelerated learning within organizations, a deeper understanding of the role of a leader as “teacher/group facilitator” is clearly warranted. The earliest leaders in our lives are in fact teachers and parents, yet when we join an organization, the responsibility for learning gets typically self-directed or entrusted to leaders, many of whom have no clue what it means to lead VCoPs.

Leaders make the mistake of assuming that they are at the head of the pack, and feel responsible for getting people from point A to point B (a tactical function typically within a manager’s domain). Their bosses, using this yardstick, often measure their effectiveness as leaders. So what does getting a learner from point A to point B mean to a leader?

Let us examine this and other aspects of leading VCoPs, by looking at the experiences of two co-leaders (teacher researchers) Gilmore and Warren (2007) at an institution of higher learning in UK. An attempt will be made to draw parallels between their experiences and those of other leaders who run contemporary business organizations that have been charged with leading and managing “e-learning portals.” Their study is chosen as a backdrop because it explicitly uses a combination of “ethnography” (participant observation) and “grounded theory” (generating theory as part of social research) to make sense of data.

Grounded theory involves “generating theory and doing social research as two parts of the same process” (Glaser, 1978:2). Using inductive reasoning, emergent data themes can be explored alongside existing literature as the ethnographer makes sense of empirical observations.

An important distinction between the functions of leading and managing as they relate to VCoPs may be pertinent. The latter function is relegated to overseeing technology, ensuring its smooth functioning and reliability, meeting deadlines etc. Leading, on the other hand, would involve all other functions that serve to facilitate learning within the community. In this way, we can think of leading and managing as complementary, yet uniquely different in their foci. While not discounting its importance, we would like to think of managing VCoPs as a “technology support” function at best. Our emphasis in this paper will be on leading VCoPs while understanding that occasional references to leading in physical settings are unavoidable.

Fineman (2003) suggests that virtuality reorganizes feeling within the environment of the workplace. How this process of reorganization occurs in cyberspace, is something that we will look at as we discuss the experiences of the two researchers who had little or no prior experience of teaching in a VCoP. Gilmore and Warren, Senior Lecturers at Portsmouth Business School in UK are both experienced educators; however, at the time of undertaking the project, their practical understanding of the virtual medium was limited to email and asynchronous communication such as bulletin boards, newsgroups etc. All the work was carried out in real-time through synchronous chats, using a widely used e-learning platform known as WebCT (now acquired by Blackboard Inc.).

The objectives of the study were two-fold (Gilmore & Warren, 2007, p-582):

1. To explore the nature of the educators' emotional responses to online teaching.
2. To prompt further consideration as to how virtuality transforms many of the face-to-face interpersonal means by which feeling is formed and expressed in a virtual setting, and by extension, to the physical workplace as well.

Throughout this paper, the word "virtuality" is used to mean technology-enabled media, which in fact, is the commonly accepted contemporary meaning of the term. It is, however, important to understand that the expression has been around for hundreds of years with conflicting meanings and imagery. Its etymology can be traced back to the late 1400s, when reference to the term implied an individual endowed with virtue or power (Oxford English Dictionary, 1989) to something "disembodied" without external form or physicality. It was not until early to mid-1980s that the expression came to be directly associated with the Internet, which is the way it is used today. Technology creates a world of make believe, meaning that we cannot touch or relate to it, as we would relate to something or someone in a temporal setting; however, it feels amazingly real (despite its amorphous nature), once we actively immerse ourselves in it.

Baudrillard (1994) speaks of virtuality as being at heart of everyday life, such that the external world that we now apprehend and make sense of, is made up of "hyper-real" simulations and mediated images and/or constructions of reality that don't really exist at all but, appear to be the

real thing. Given the challenges of working with real people in a socially-constructed, technology-enabled make believe world, we can well imagine the anxieties that leaders might have to deal with, as they go about their work in VCoPs.

The two researchers from the University of Portsmouth Business School divided their study into four sections; however, given the scope of this paper, we will focus more on those areas of their research findings that support and elaborate the ideas that we are working on.

1. Leaders' anxieties often emerge as a result of the intersection of virtuality and emotion. These anxieties are different from those that we see in face-to-face settings.
2. VCoP leaders must be able to facilitate the development of "swift trust" in an amorphous medium such as the Internet. Without trust, the community cannot accomplish its explicit and implied objectives.
3. Leaders must have the capacity to use their own feelings and emotions in the service of e-learning/teaching.

As we later get into the depth portion of this paper that deals with Wexler's (2005) ideas on "contextual leadership," an attempt will be made to explore if a change in context impacts leadership styles and outcomes, if in fact all or most of the work is still being carried out in VCoPs. This introduces a new complexity that is worth examining, especially because we know that a change in context both impacts and calls for different styles of leading and managing in physical organizations.

Little or no distinction is generally made between the terms, online learning, virtual learning, e-learning, and virtuality, given the broad range of application of computers and the Internet; from serving as mere repositories of information, to fully interactive learning communities (both asynchronous and in real-time). For the purpose of our exploration however, we will be making reference to "real-time" online communication only, which can be offered in a variety of ways, including but not limited to chat rooms and web conferences.

Despite the "immediacy" of real-time communication as in synchronous chat rooms or the lack thereof in asynchronous bulletin-board type settings, the focus here is on the "virtuality" of leading VCoPs, as opposed to teasing out the

differences between the two methods. The supporting literature for this paper has been primarily drawn from journals that speak to both methods. VCoPs typically use a blended approach, because not all communication and work can be carried out in real-time. Some work, must inevitably happen asynchronously, even face-to-face.

An interesting and very noteworthy observation made by the two researchers from UK is that prior to launching the VCoP, the extent of the training and initiation that they received at the University had more to do with the technological aspects of the WebCT platform (a largely management function related to technology), how to structure the look and feel of the virtual room, roles and responsibilities of students, how to locate and work with online resources, and other logistics that would convince one of the sterile nature of the medium. There was little or no mention of the facilitation challenges around emotionality, especially as they pertain to the virtual medium. Both researchers came away from the training classes, feeling that the medium was being essentially presented and promoted as though it were an extension of their current teaching experiences in a physical classroom. So, there was already some skepticism in their minds around what leading a VCoP would entail.

According to Coppolla et al (2000) write, "this computer-mediated communication channel remains impoverished with respect to emotional expression. The affective role required online tutors to find new tools to express emotion, yet they found the relationship with students more intimate (Coppolla et al., 2002: 178, 186). The expression of emotions in virtual settings has been a recurring topic of debate over the years, yet a discourse around the dynamics of emotions is relatively absent when it comes to online learning and teaching in VCoPs.

To paraphrase Gurak (2004), emotion was a significant area of Internet research in the late 1980s to the mid-1990s; one that still has importance as technologies facilitate more sophisticated interaction between increasingly diverse sections of the world's population. There may be several reasons for the omission of emotions from the discourse; however, two that readily come to mind are the seeming discomfort around discussing emotions (one's own and others'), and the mistaken perception that VCoPs are but an extension of physical settings and therefore warrant no additional training other

than a technology overview. This can pose a serious challenge to nascent leaders who may naively believe that leading a VCoP is no different than leading a face-to-face team.

As someone who has worked very extensively on the Internet for nearly two decades, I can certainly testify to its relevance. I even argue that if VCoP leaders are not exposed and/or trained to handle the complexity involved with emotional dynamics, they will quickly find themselves struggling to make sense of the iterative process. After all, much of what transpires in VCoPs may follow a sequential pattern. The ability to decipher this intricate pattern of communication has a lot to do with understanding and interpreting emotions.

The two researchers Gilmore and Warren facilitated the VCoPs over a 12-week timeframe, with "real-time" biweekly seminars that lasted for 50 minutes. Each seminar was themed around a different sub topic under an overall module entitled "Virtual Society and its Implications for Business Activity and Institutional Organizations." The participants were not geographically dispersed distance learners, but enrolled at the University. The goal, therefore was not to enable participation using virtuality, but as "part of an andragogic strategy to enable students to experience what it was like to interact purposefully using a virtual medium." (Gilmore and Warren, 2007, p-588). Each researcher led 12 of the total 24 sessions and the ethnographic component of the exercise involved individually and collectively recalling the emotional experiences, during and immediately after each session. This was conducted via email and face-to-face conversations.

Given the research design's subjective experience component and the overall purpose of the study, a real-life experience of the researchers could only be had by completely immersing themselves in the role of participant observer. As Willis (2009:9) notes, an ethnographic approach requires what he describes as a sense of the "poetry of experience" in that researchers often need to pay attention to data which are "metaphorical, indirect, and atmospheric [rather than] literal or rational..." (2000:9).

Both Gilmore and Warren reported to each other, a heightened sense of emotionality (a different experience from their traditional role as teachers in a physical classroom) as they began leading the seminars. An important point to note here is that the altered emotional experience was

possibly as a result of what is invoked in leaders by virtuality. To the nascent leader it may be experienced as "something different," which is felt but cannot be immediately described, possibly because it is out of conscious awareness. Nevertheless, it is data to be carefully considered. While the researchers reported experiencing very similar emotional reactions, possibly as a result of their long standing sentient ties as colleagues, it is my understanding based on years of experience working in virtual media, that there are strikingly similar, albeit irregular emotional patterns that often surface when working virtually, if one is able to observe these unique fractals.

Inter subjectivity will inevitably creep in when working intimately in VCoPs because the leader subjectively influences and is influenced by followers. It is not unlike the inter subjective experiences in psychoanalysis, of an analyst and analyse and working together intimately, or in the case of a VCoP by extension, the interactions between a group analyst/facilitator and the group members. Drawing on both psychoanalytical and social constructivist accounts of emotion, the researchers admit to the possibility of a blurring of boundaries between the actions of students in the seminars and their own emotional reactions as leaders (a composite exchange) that can sometimes give the semblance of a very mixed bag. Three important categories of emotionality, namely intimacy, play, and pride/shame were specifically conceptualized by the researchers, using a social constructivist perspective. To these I add from my own experiences, the well known "dis-inhibition effect" (Civin, 2000) often experienced in virtual settings, and the importance of "swift trust" (Jarvenpaa & Leidener, 1998), especially when working in temporary virtual teams that are charged with producing a deliverable within a certain timeframe. These are briefly outlined below:

#### **Intimacy/dis-inhibition effect:**

As previously noted in this paper, the Internet is often perceived as a rather sterile and impersonal setting where the potential for misunderstanding exists. As we move work from the traditional face-to-face settings to VCoPs, the absence of paralinguistic cues (such as intonation, gestures, and facial expressions etc) and the removal of socio-spatial indicators (such as seating, subtle hierarchical differences between leaders and followers) give rise to a need for mental

reorganization, in order to make sense of how to act and behave in a VCoP where communication is typically text-driven, as opposed to verbal. The familiar ways of constructing emotion now have to give way to something quite challenging for most leaders and followers who choose to work in VCoPs. To further compound matters, the "dis-inhibition effect" (Suler, 2004, p-1) can be a very troubling phenomenon to nascent leaders. Here is how Suler describes it:

It is well known that people do things in cyberspace that they would not ordinarily say or do in the face-to-face world. They loosen up, feel more uninhibited, and express themselves more openly. Researchers call this the 'dis-inhibition effect.' It is a double-edged sword. Sometimes people share very personal things about themselves. They reveal secret emotions, fears, and wishes. Or they show unusual acts of kindness and generosity that we may call 'benign dis-inhibition.' On the other hand, this effect may not be so benign. Out spills rude language and harsh criticism, anger, hatred, even threats. Or people explore the dark underworld of the Internet, places of pornography and violence, places they would never visit in the real world. We might call this 'toxic disinhibition' (Suler, 2004, p-1).

It is precisely this "disinhibition effect" unconsciously experienced by participants in cyberspace that may also contribute to a great deal of intimacy. The "disembodied" nature of relationships does not suggest that the body actually disappears in cyberspace, but that it is reconfigured and mentally reconstructed in order to find new and unique ways of relating and expressing online.

While it is generally agreed that the democratic nature of VCoPs may in fact be because of the absence of paralinguistic cues and socio-spatial indicators which contribute to a diminution of status and authority, it would be wrong to assume that these groups can be leaderless. Leaders play a pivotal role in creating a holding environment (Winnicott), even if it means they must become a screen for others' projections and fantasies. The skill lies in being there invisibly. The researchers reported a growing sense of intimacy and closeness to the students, possibly because the students were more forthcoming and candid. They were more casual, less guarded and formal, and more willing to engage in intellectual discourse. With the reduction of the power/authority differential between leaders

and followers in VCoPs, learning and sharing are enhanced.

### **Play/holding environment/swift trust:**

There is a well-known correlation between “play and creativity” which often results in freer expression, more trust, and perhaps even complex thought. Not only did the researchers have to modify their own roles as leaders, but also quickly establish a safe environment (potential space) that would be conducive to learning and sharing. “Potential space” is an expression borrowed from Winnicott’s theory and talks about a hypothetical area of mutual creativity between an infant and the mother (Moore and Fine, 2000). This idea has been extrapolated to concepts such as virtual space, theatrical illusion, liminality, and the suspension of disbelief, negative capability, and objective correlation. In the words of the researchers:

“The online seminars allowed us to see the messiness of learning—our own as well as that of the students as well as the open-ended character of this process, its fragmented nature as well as the ‘eureka moments.’ Therefore, one of the most salient outcomes of the experience was the recognition of the tutor’s affective role—a crucial aspect of which is the creation and maintenance of a potential space.” (Gilmore and Warren, 2007).

I suggest that the creation of the potential space by the leader may in fact contribute to trust building which is yet another important aspect of working virtually. Jarvenpaa and Leidner (1998) wrote a seminal paper entitled “Communication and Trust in Global Virtual Teams” at a time when new applications were being sought in order to harness technology for geographically dispersed work teams worldwide. They introduced the seminal notion of “swift trust” which has increasingly found its way in contemporary literature on temporary virtual teams. While swift trust would be of greatest relevance in hastily formed “temporary teams and networks” such as cockpit crews, task force, sports teams etc., it is nonetheless very relevant to VCoPs as well.

In psychoanalytic parlance, when individuals feel more nurtured and held, their tendency to fragment, split, and act out in groups is greatly reduced. Consequently, they are then able to invest more psychic energy into work. Paraphrasing the researchers, there was a playful dimension in the virtual seminars that

contributed to intimacy and trust, in addition to the capacity of engaging in complex thought, possibly because of the absence of paralinguistic cues and freedom of expression without the accompanying embarrassment that one might be wrong.

### **Pride and shame:**

One of the most critical pieces of the study has to do with the complexity of feelings and emotions generated in the researchers (counter transference) as a direct consequence of undertaking for the first time, a project to lead VCoPs. That experience of pride and joy around the accomplishment when mixed with shame at their previous assessment of the students’ abilities (as it related to the face-to-face setting), produced a paradoxical interchange which called into question their entire notion of teaching and higher learning.

In face-to-face settings the true potential of group members is sometimes obscured because of their reluctance to speak up for fear of embarrassment around potentially being wrong. The research data suggests that the students felt more intellectually stimulated because of the erosion of the body that often produced feelings of embarrassment in traditional face-to-face seminar settings. It should also be kept in mind that the spontaneity and freedom of expression expressed by the students, which in turn produced a sense of pride in the researchers, might have to do with the reduced hierarchy in a VCoP as opposed to a traditional classroom. This of course warrants more research, for if the engagement and participation rules would likewise be modified in a traditional classroom, would students feel as enthused to participate as they did in the VCoPs?

In summarizing the overview section of this paper, I would like to suggest that when it comes to VCoPs, “teaching” and “leading” seem to share many commonalities. The key aspect that makes “virtuality” so different from face-to-face settings is the absence of paralinguistic cues and socio-spatial boundaries, which in itself produces a very unique experience that simply cannot be replicated elsewhere. And for that reason alone, leading a VCoP as though it were similar to a face-to-face setting, would be a grave mistake.

As the hierarchy between leaders and followers is reduced or eliminated in virtual settings, a reorganization and renegotiation of the reasonable and customary rules and feelings needs to take place, in order to make room for a

new experience. VCoP leaders must unlearn many of the behaviours and practices that otherwise seem quite effective in face-to-face settings. Leaders will need to be more mindful and tolerant when they are confronted with behavioural interactions that they would not expect in face-to-face settings. The permissiveness, dis-inhibition, and the lax nature of a VCoP can be quite disconcerting to a highly directive, hands-on leader who is used to an authoritative style of leading.

### **A Contextual Understanding of Leadership in Virtual Settings**

"Leaders are made, not born," writes Wexler (2005). He argues that they cannot be understood in a vacuum. There is no simple answer as to why certain people select one leader over others. Those who look for a master story within capitalism to encapsulate the effective leader are, he asserts, "caught and blinded within the headlights of a particular worldview." Rather, leaders can be understood and evaluated within the cognitive lens of four distinct and competing worldviews – entrepreneurial, regulatory, communitarian and network."

In a multi-billion dollar industry dedicated to understanding leaders in particular and leadership in general, there seems to be an obsession with focusing on individual leadership traits, the successes and failures of leaders, and the controversies and scandals surrounding leadership. The list of CEOs who were extremely successful in a particular context, but miserably failed in another is long, yet the relevance of a changing situational context is something that is not discussed at any great length in contemporary leadership literature, with the exception of the recent work of Mayo and Nohria (2007), including Wexler (2005) and others. The critical importance of "context" and its influence on leadership style and effectiveness only started appearing in leadership literature over the past decade or so. Mayo and Nohria have discussed the "importance of environmental factors and individual action of leaders coming together to produce a specific, sometimes unique context for businesses" (Mayo and Nohria, 2007). They narrate the case of Bob Nardelli of GE who assumed the position of CEO at Home Depot. Despite a highly successful and illustrious career at GE, Bob was unable to shake off his "command and control" mentality (so engrained in him over the years), and adapt to a highly participative culture at Home Depot. He quickly

found himself to be totally lost at sea in the new company, where he did not last very long. Bennis (1989) in his book entitled "Geeks and Geezers" refers to "adaptive capacity" as the acumen of highly adaptive leaders who have the capacity to succeed in multiple contexts. Others have talked about "chameleon leadership" as a leader's capacity to adapt and change her style to fit the culture, context, and conditions of an organization and/or its "evolving contexts."

A Google Scholar search on "contextual leadership" yielded several journal articles that make passing references to context and cross-cultural influences in leadership; however it seems that an in-depth study of contextual leadership was attempted only in 2005. Perhaps, Wexler provides the most thoroughly researched and comprehensive account of contextual leadership.

For the purpose of the in-depth section of this paper, we make references to Wexler's work; in particular his "communitarian" and "network" lenses (worldviews) that seem germane. What happens when virtuality intersects with each of the two worldviews is something that has not been explored in contemporary leadership literature, and needs a better understanding.

Bennis (1989) sums up contemporary leadership in one short sentence, as he writes, "to an extent, leadership is like beauty, it's hard to define, but you know it when you see it."

If beauty is in the eyes of the beholder, it stands to reason that one individual could be raving about a highly successful and charismatic leader in a particular setting, while someone else in the same setting could be seeing that person as egocentric, self-serving, and manipulative. It is also entirely possible that individuals in one setting (context) may see that leader as highly effective, benevolent, and caring, while the same leader in a command and control "authoritative" culture could be seen as too touchy feely, indecisive and ineffective. Therefore, if something so dramatic can occur with a mere change in context, such that it significantly impacts the success or failure of a leader, it is definitely worthy of further study. Wexler (2005) discusses contextual leadership within the four faces of capitalism; however "capitalism" is not thought of in the traditional sense, as related to a nation's political economy. Here is how he explains this further:

"Capitalism is not employed here as the antitheses to communism or in tension with socialism, but as the human investment of time, capital, passion, and energy in either getting things done by oneself or paying others to engage in instrumental actions (Wexler, 2005, -26)."

If we look at "contextualism" as one of several worldviews or sense-making devices (Pepper, 1942) and the four faces of capitalism as operating within that worldview, it is easy to see why Wexler conceptualizes the four contexts from an economic standpoint that impacts and is impacted by surrounding worldviews, rather than looking at each setting as something that exists in a vacuum; almost like a water-tight compartment.

Contextualists, by their very nature prefer not be boxed in a particular worldview, but rather choose to be active and involved participants in instrumental action. They are able to change and adapt their identity; respond to crises; deal with uncertainties, not with a view to control or dominate complexity. The goal is to become more resilient, depending on the context that one is operating in, so that the ambiguity born of complexity is dealt with rather than eliminated. Wexler talks of contextualists speaking a "polyglot" tongue; meaning that it is not a pure language but a combination of several languages. The same texts can be made sense of, using a variety of languages or approaches. As traditional contextualism meets modernity, it becomes clearer that colonizing other worldviews and making them appear as though they belong to one's preferred worldview is no longer possible. Effective leaders must be able to not only make sense of, but also navigate and engage with other worldviews that may not necessarily conform to their own. This poses a challenge and also presents an opportunity.

From the standpoint of VCoPs, where it is not uncommon today to be leading a community of members who are geographically located in different parts of the world, accepting and honoring differences becomes a precursor for a leader's effectiveness. Also, leaders, of necessity, must be able to operate in an open system with competing priorities, new changes and challenges, and conflicting viewpoints of stakeholders. This is particularly true when working virtually with a group of strangers, many of whom one will never meet face-to-face.

By contrast, managers might operate in closed systems with manageable boundaries, rigid rules, and norms, locked in a preferred worldview. The debate continues unabated, whether managers can become leaders with the right training and attitude. Does the expression "managerial leaders" even have some relevance in contemporary organizations that are all about meeting work deadlines in a highly pressured and bureaucratic environment?

Quinn's work entitled "Building the Bridge as you Walk on It" from years past, speaks with great eloquence about the dichotomy that still exists between leading and managing. While "building a bridge" could be relegated to the bricks and mortar people (managers), the act of "building a bridge and walking on it" at the same time, requires a different kind of mental acuity and prowess that could be very challenging for managers to summon. Uncertainty can be frightening for managers because it often challenges them to think outside the box; something that they are not used to doing on a regular basis. Wexler writes:

Leaders possess a higher tolerance for ambiguity than managers. In the midst of rising uncertainty they attempt to remain open to a search behaviour, which accepts the possibility of increasing, rather than decreasing options. With the emergence of complexity—whether it be dealt with using the tropes of globalization, the Internet revolution, post-industrialization or new organizational forms—leadership increasingly must embrace more than the routine of the status-quo (Wexler, 2005: P-7)"

We only have to look around us at the leading organizations, to see how they have over time morphed into "learning organizations" that are led by individuals who are busy enabling a culture of learning by deploying technology and VCoPs. It is simply not possible to impose structure and boundaries on an amorphous medium such as the Internet, which is rife with so much complexity. For polyglotism to be grounded in such an environment certainly makes sense. And if we view learning organizations through that lens, it is easy to see why a management approach will not work in such a setting where leaders must always be ready and willing to not only make a departure from previously held paradigms, but have the capacity to engage with and entertain other worldviews as well. With the high rate of knowledge obsolescence on the information

highway, what was relevant and feasible yesterday, may not work today.

In order to understand Wexler’s four faces (worldviews) of capitalism, let us think of worldviews as lenses or sense-making devices that help move us toward action in the face of change and uncertainty. Pepper’s (2010) three major worldviews, “mechanistic”, “contextual”, and “organismic” have influenced developmental psychology for decades. For the purpose of our inquiry, the contextual worldview is worth examining a bit closely. Its root metaphor is the historic event and it defines reality as changing and dynamic; the event is both active and reactive and occurs within the context of other events. They share a reciprocal relationship where each event influences and is influenced by other events (Pepper, 1942). Said another way, one cannot understand an organism in isolation; all of its parts must be examined, as belonging to the entire system, of which it is a part. From the standpoint of developmental psychology, an individual would then be understood from a biological, psychological, historical, and sociological perspective, each of which influences this individual’s development; within the gestalt of the context/culture in which the development occurs.

Wexler’s study is focused on “instrumental” worldviews where leaders are engaged in getting things down in the material world. He is not discussing the non-instrumental worldviews that may be situated in the context of spirituality, aesthetics etc. Also, he discusses “local” leaders first; those that stay as far as possible within the confines of their own worldview, followed by “cosmopolitan” leaders who have the ability to reinvent themselves in order to adapt and work in other worldviews. This is not to suggest that they do not have a preferred worldview, but seem open to hearing the themes of other worldviews. Wexler also sets the stage for the four faces of capitalism, by conceptualizing them as operative within four quadrants, each lying north/south and east/west along functional areas such as “system maintenance” (“inward” horizontal pull), competition (“outward” horizontal pull), control (“upward” vertical pull by a few), and flexibility (“downward” vertical input from many).

**The four quadrants each represent a worldview (see Table 1.1)**

**Entrepreneurial:** (upper right quadrant): drive for profit maximization within a high risk/high control environment; outward pull toward competition and individual freedom

**Regulatory:** (upper left quadrant): drive for uncertainty reduction within a risk-averse, rigid/stable environment; inward pull toward system maintenance and loyalty

**Communitarian:** (lower left quadrant): drive for meaningful existence within an inclusive, dialogic, collaborative environment focused on growth and learning; downward pull toward flexibility, with the desire for the communitarian good and safety

**Network:** (lower right quadrant): drive for innovation, novelty, and adventure within an amorphous environment of risk, change, and intellectual stimulation; downward pull toward flexibility, yet a desire to stay engaged with competition

Wexler’s approach situates the worldviews along functional requisites, without making it about functional leadership per se. He also steers clear of politicizing the worldviews in traditionally economic terms. An important distinction between local and cosmopolitan leaders also lends a great deal of realism to the debate, while recognizing that even cosmopolitan leaders do have a preference for their own worldview, but the prudence to cross over into a different worldview as the situation might warrant. It is this willingness to remain open to other perspectives that makes the cosmopolitan a true contextualist. Let’s examine Wexler’s four faces of capitalism below:

**CONTROL**

<u>REGULATORY</u> <b>Uncertainty reduction</b> <b>High control/risk averse and rigid/system maintenance</b>	<u>ENTREPRENEURIAL</u> <b>Profit maximization</b> <b>High control/thrives on risk/reward/favors competition</b>
<u>COMMUNITARIAN</u> <b>Meaningful existence</b> <b>High flexibility/desire for system maintenance</b>	<u>NETWORK</u> <b>Novelty and adventure</b> <b>High flexibility/desire for competition</b>

Table 1.1

**FREEDOM**



It is beyond the scope of this paper to discuss in detail, each of the four worldviews. What I would like to do instead, is engage in an in-depth exploration of the “communitarian” and “network” worldviews because I think they are most relevant to VCoPs.

The communitarian worldview is about flexibility, inclusion, system maintenance, and learning and growth, all of which are important determinants of a VCoP’s success. Its neighbouring worldview in Figure 1.1 is the “network” setting. Novelty, adventure, risk taking, and challenge characterize these networks. Their driving motivation is to build intellectual capital in a setting with diffuse boundaries and low structure. Whilst the communitarian worldview is about flexibility and a pull inward toward system maintenance and safety, the network worldview is about flexibility, but a pull outward toward competition. On the face of it, the two worldviews appear to be mutually exclusive, in so far as their stated positions, leadership styles, and focus; however, a closer examination will reveal how they share more commonalities than differences, especially when we overlay them on VCoPs. Both worldviews satisfy some of the more important contemporary applications of VCoPs, such as:

- Long-term learning communities that are more the domain of the communitarian worldview. The emphasis is on deliberate thinking, taking care of community members, and long-term learning.

- Short-term temporary teams that fit in better with the network worldview where there is a drive for innovation and quick results. The emphasis here is on innovating, creating deliverables, and competing.

A contrast of the two worldviews, and how each intersects with virtuality, may provide us with a unique framework that propagates a new way of looking at VCoPs. Such an exploration of virtuality from a contextual perspective has not been previously attempted. The focus in the current literature seems to be on what happens when people congregate in virtual settings, not on how leaders and members are affected by the dominant worldview in that setting. As we have previously discussed, nascent leaders with no prior experience of leading VCoPs, often approach the new environment as though they were leading individuals face-to-face. Those that do have some prior experience leading VCoPs

may be quite oblivious of the context in which they do their work.

A highly flexible leader with a communitarian mindset may feel very lost and inadequate if she were entrusted with leading a temporary virtual team that thrives on innovation and creativity. By the same token, a highly flexible leader used to operating in a network worldview, may find that leading a group of learners with a communitarian mindset, is not her cup of tea. The setting may be experienced as too slow and emergent. There is no immediate gratification for the leader.

If the leader is of a local mindset, i.e. someone who is steeped in a preferred worldview, she may find it very difficult to adapt to a new context that calls for a great deal of resilience. “Cosmopolitan” leaders, on the other hand, seem to have a “chameleon” leader-like mentality to reinvent and adapt to a new way of working in a different, but complementary context. Depending on the goodness of fit or the flexibility and openness that we are seeking in a VCoP leader, it may be prudent to hire someone who is either very well versed in a particular worldview (local leader) or an individual that has the capacity to cross-over into a different worldview. A preference would be to have someone with a cosmopolitan mindset, who can negotiate boundaries as the situation warrants. VCoPs do not exist in a watertight compartment. There is always the potential for overlapping worldviews, so it would be nice for a leader to have resilience.

Given the amorphous nature of virtuality and the challenges encountered by leaders because of the absence of paralinguistic cues and socio-spatial indicators, we can fully expect the environment to be rather uncertain and changing. Wexler contrasts how this uncertainty is overcome in the communitarian and network worldviews (Wexler, 2005, pp. 19-20), both of which are given to flexibility and cooperation between members.

It is important to understand that the complexity of each of these worldviews may also be compounded by the fact they do not exist in a vacuum and may therefore be subjected to the pressures that are brought to bear by the other two worldviews, namely “regulatory” and “entrepreneurial.” An example will help illuminate this point. A VCoP leader working in a predominately communitarian context may be subjected to the rules laid down by the firm’s regulatory affairs office. Some of these rules may be seen at odds with the culture of the VCoP,

which is more about inclusion, collaboration, and flexibility. The members of the community may resent the rules, and have no choice but to see them as an unnecessary irritant. The learning and sharing culture of the community may encourage and prompt the members to discuss and interpret the rules, but not obey them necessarily. There is no desire to push the envelope with any urgency, so to speak, as in the network worldview.

The communitarian members would rather live with the uncertainty, than do anything radical about it. If we take the same scenario, but in the context of the network worldview, the manner in which the leader and members may deal with the ambiguity and uncertainty, may in fact be quite different. They may choose to dialog and confront (push the envelope). They may even have a case for defiance, based on the fact that technology becomes obsolete every so often and must be replaced by something more robust. If temporary virtual teams, such as in the network worldview, have to survive and produce deliverables, the bureaucratic leaders in the regulatory worldview will have to get out the way and possibly think of relaxing some rules. In contemporary organizations where there is a great deal of emphasis today on innovation and breakthroughs, in the face of increasing competition and market pressures, the "knowledge leader" in the network worldview is here to stay.

Today, most VCoPs seem to fall somewhere between the communitarian and network worldviews, as the dominant faces of capitalism. Given the interdependent nature of work, it is conceivable that pioneers in the network worldview will seek the help of buccaneers in the entrepreneurial worldview to get the new product out to the market; or for that matter, the communitarian leaders reaching out to bureaucrats in the regulatory worldview when the need for stability and system maintenance is paramount.

#### **Communitarian worldview:**

The circle gives the community of learners a sense of belonging to something that is bigger than the sum of its parts. The "we" feeling replaces the "I" feeling, so characteristic of controlling buccaneers and bureaucrats. Although the system seeks a great deal of flexibility, it experiences an inward pull toward preservation and sustenance. The community therefore allows freedom of expression, while emphasizing shared values, good of the whole,

and caution. The participative leader in the communitarian worldview leads from the centre. Community members through common consensus often democratically select the leader. These communities typically talk of "servant leaders" who have earned the right to lead, as opposed to pushing their way through, as self-styled leaders. Hierarchies and status differential are reduced or completely eliminated. Members of the community tend to be "generalists" who have a penchant for casual discourse, rather than time-bound projects or heated debates, so characteristic of the network worldview. Because of the focus on system maintenance rather than growth and competition, these communities tend to be ideally suited for long-term organizational learning. The leader is a steward, mentor, or facilitator, whose primary goal is the smooth functioning of the community.

The ideal leader in a communitarian worldview tends to be compassionate, touchy feely, and sensitive to the group's needs. The emphasis seems to be on values and ethics; therefore, a quietly assertive individual without a sense of great urgency will possibly work better than a highly charged individual with a high need for achievement. It has been my experience, working with and leading a number of VCoPs worldwide, that as a new community forms virtually, it is perhaps ideal to have at its helm, a rather selfless servant of the community who is a mentor, teacher, and educator; someone who can keep her own interests behind the interests of community members. Such a leader will not have a great propensity to be highly visible, directive, and/or at the front of the pack. She is comfortable leading from the center, a stance that is often viewed by the community as empathic and respectful. This may also help alleviate the naturally occurring anxiety of community members working virtually, and may in some ways be an adjustment or reorganization that are often called for in leaders, in order to compensate for the absence of non-verbal cues such as intonation, body language, facial expressions etc.

Also, because there is a diminution of socio-spatial indicators in VCoPs, such as seating, physical distance from the leader etc., so common in physical settings, the flatter structure of the community lends itself to more trust, freedom of expression, and richer interactions in an atmosphere of safety. Conflict is neither avoided nor invited, but rather channelled into creative discussion. Paraphrasing Wexler, the communitarians do not see their leader as a

“touchy feely flake”, but rather, a wise and courageous sage who aspires for the good of the collective and catalyzes the development of a shared culture and values. She reduces anxiety on the one hand by providing the followers with an inclusive and safe setting, but on the other hand, generates anxiety because of no clear direction, vague outcomes, and a great deal of complacency when it comes to solving problems.

Bureaucrats in the regulatory worldview see them as too lax and casual, with no definitive outcomes in mind. They feel that there is a lack of depth, structure, and rigor that seem to be the operating mantras of bureaucrats. The buccaneers in the entrepreneurial worldview see the communitarian leader as risk-averse, afraid of competition, and lacking a general sense of urgency. The network worldview and its knowledge leader see the communitarian leader as competition averse and therefore, unprepared for future catastrophes and changes. They believe that flexibility alone does not make a community effective and productive. It must be able to stand up to competition, be open to innovation and creativity, and act in the short-term horizon. It is interesting to note that our anxieties seem to be at their lowest when we operate within the confines of our own worldviews, but certainly get stirred when we engage with other worldviews.

**This is how the communitarian leader sees herself: (self-portrait) (Wexler, 2005: p-107)**

Compassionate, appreciative, and open; fosters organizational culture that facilitates learning; challenges members to self-actualize; open dialog and builds trust, all of which are useful in situations that require adaptation.

**This is how the bureaucrats view the communitarian leader:**

New age; touchy-feely; too inclusive; too informal

Focus on personal relationships, not data; too team or group oriented; unable to separate work from private affairs

**This is how the buccaneers see the communitarian leader:**

Idealistic; indecisive; politically correct

All talk, no action; unable to act independently; uncomfortable with conflict

**This is how the network leader sees the communitarian leader:**

Collaborative, hesitant; normative

Fails to disrupt uncreative teams; uncomfortable with globalization; change must bolster community

**Network worldview:**

The focus of this worldview is on radical motivation and creativity, suggests Wexler (p-121). Knowledge leaders mine the gold, create innovative opportunities, and scout for opportunities. In the process, they attend to the past, critically evaluate the present and claim to create a better future. As we previously discussed, this worldview is most suited for short-term projects and teams that are out to make a serious difference. They could be seen as “green berets”...courageous, adventurous, fearless, innovative, and determined to make things happen.

The resolute focus of this knowledge leader is to pave the way for a new world story. They inspire others to act for a better future. They are visionaries who will stop at nothing in order to win. They think outside the box, challenge the status quo and push the envelope. It is not uncommon for creative individuals such as the knowledge leader to improvise and think generatively of the big picture. Their ability to work in the face of competition and deadlines makes them particularly suited as VCoP leaders of short-term teams charged with producing deliverables within a certain timeframe.

When assigned to working with a communitarian worldview, they can often ignite great interest and passion in others who may find the pace too slow. In the entrepreneurial worldview they are able to spot early trends, patterns, and opportunities that may be otherwise overlooked by the over-zealous buccaneer who is totally profit driven. Given their propensity to work with a great deal of ambiguity and uncertainty, they may serve in particularly valuable roles within the bureaucratic worldview, where they are seen by other members within that face of capitalism as creative thinkers who are able to work with and solve hard problems, debate important issues, and work at specialists on short-term projects.

**This is how network leaders see themselves: (self-portrait) (Wexler, 2005, p-138)**

On the cutting-edge of innovation; vibrant, informed, and eloquent; well connected

Good change agents; see the big picture and identify/forecast important trends; are most able

to work with other worldviews, given their flexibility, resilience, and eye for creativity. Unlike their communitarian cousins who prefer to be long-term learners with a low sense of urgency, network workers thrive on deadlines and are often considered to be trailblazers.

**How the buccaneer leader sees the network leader:**

Dreamers; blowing in the wind; all smoke and mirrors; no clear tactics or game plan;

**How communitarian leaders see the knowledge leader:**

All head, no heart; puts ideas before people; compromises principles; views on globalization threaten local communities; lacks humanist vision

**How the bureaucratic leader sees the network leader:**

Reckless; big talker; pro-innovation; promises the sky; rarely delivers on time or as promised; low accountability.

This paper would not be complete without a brief discussion of "reflective leaders."

"Leadership is both active and reflective. One has to alternate between participating and observing. Walt Whitman described it as 'being in and out of the game.' For example, Magic Johnson's greatness in leading his basketball team comes in part from his ability to play hard while keeping in mind the whole game situation, as if he stood in the stands."

--Ronald A. Heifitz

In psychodynamic parlance, we refer to this unique reflective capacity of being "in and out of the game" as the "observing ego" i.e., the self-awareness of a leader to be both entrenched in the work and reflect on her own actions as though she was observing herself from the audience. Cosmopolitan leaders, we have seen have the capacity to move in and out of worldviews. Wexler uses the acronym "ACTs" (anchor cross-story transitions) to portray how contextual leaders develop the capacity to become reflective practitioners (pp-183-84). This skill, he argues does not lie with local leaders though, who seem to be steeped in their own worldviews and quite uncomfortable stepping out of their preferred paradigm. They become mirrors for their followers within a particular worldview and seem to not have a desire to reinvent.

Anchor cross-story transitions (ACTs) are for those leaders that are interested in increasing their reach and working across different worldviews, as the situation warrants. It requires a great deal of skill and intestinal fortitude to master one's preferred worldview, reinvent oneself, and develop one other transitional skill-set within the same story before an attempt can be made to transition to a different worldview. It is important to note here that leaders come in many different types, speak a variety of languages, and have mastery over different worldviews. We may be thrilled with a leader in a particular worldview but disgusted with another who does not have an understanding of our preferred worldview.

Wexler's four faces of capitalism (entrepreneurial, regulatory, communitarian, and network) provide an important framework for reflective practice. It is a perfectly comfortable setting for the local leader who is content to work within her own worldview and also the cosmopolitan leader who wants to extend reach beyond her own worldview.

**References**

- Baudrillard, J. (1994). *Simulations*. New York: Semiotext (e)
- Bennis, W. (1989). *On Becoming a Leader Addison*. , NY : Wesley
- Civin, M. (2000). *Male Female Email: The Struggle for Relatedness in a Paranoid Society*. NY : Other Press
- Coppola, N.W., Hiltz, S.R. & Rotter, N.G. (2002). Becoming a Virtual Professor: Pedagogic Roles and Asynchronous Learning Networks. *Journal of Management Information Systems*. Issue. 18 Vol. 4. Pp. 169-89
- Fineman, S. (2003). *Understanding Emotion and Work*. London: Sage
- Gilmore, S. & Warren, S. Emotion Online (2007). *Experiences of Teaching in a Virtual Learning Environment: Human Relations*, UK : The Tavistock Institut
- Glaser, B. (1978). *Theoretical Sensitivity: Advances in the Methodology of Grounded Theory*. Mill Valley, CA: Sociology Press
- Gurak, L. (2004). Internet Studies in the Twenty-first Century. In D. Gauntlett & R. Horley (eds). *Web Studies*. London: Arnold

- Heifetz, R. (1994) *Leadership without Easy Answers*. Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University
- Jarvenpaa, S.L. & Leidner, D.E. (1998). *Communication and Trust in Global Virtual Teams: Journal of Computer Mediated Communication*. NY (accessed May, 2005)
- Mayo, T. & Nohria, N. (2007). *Context-based Leadership*. Harvard Business Review
- Oxford English Dictionary (1989). [electronic version] available online at [www.oed.com](http://www.oed.com)
- Pepper, S. (2010). Wikipedia (Free Encyclopedia). Accessed August 2010
- Suler, J. (2004). *Cyberpsychology & Behavior*. NJ : Rider University
- Wenger, E. (1998). *Communities of Practice: Learning as a Social System*. Journal of Systems Thinking (accessed 2009)
- Wexler, M. (2005). *Leadership in Context: The Four Faces of Capitalism*. UK : Edward Elgar
- Willis, P. (2000). *The Ethnographic Information*. London: Polity Press
- Winnicott, D.W. (1971). *Play and Reality*. London: Tavistock

\*\*\*

# MEASURING PROMINENCE THROUGH CUMULATIVE PROMINENCE SCORE: An Analysis of Media Coverage of Assam Serial Blasts

Dr. Syed Murtaza Alfarid Hussain<sup>1</sup>

## ABSTRACT

*The prominence of a news event is normally measured in terms of the number of news stories published on the front-page of a newspaper over a period of time and the size of the story. For the purpose of empirically calculating the prominence of front-page coverage of a news event in a more comprehensive manner, the researcher has developed the 'Cumulative Prominence Score'. This score is a measure of the overall prominence of the coverage of an event based on the size and placement of the news stories within the four quadrants of the front page of a newspaper. This paper is a comparative analysis of the news prominence accorded to the October 30, 2008 serial blasts in Assam by The Assam Tribune, The Telegraph, The Times of India and The Hindu. In the context of a conflict-ridden state like Assam, the role of the media, both regional and national, in the way they represent and interpret the different conflicts, have not yet been adequately studied. It is important to understand how the national media and the regional media have covered the different types of conflicts in Assam, so that it helps one to understand how the media construct social reality, the differences in the ways the national media and the regional media frame conflicts, and also contribute to knowledge about news coverage of medium and low-intensity conflicts, particularly about a region of the country that has not been of much interest to the mainstream media.*

**Keywords:** Cumulative prominence score, intensity of coverage, news quadrant, serial blasts

### Introduction

Ever since Independence, India's northeast region has witnessed large-scale insurgent violence against the Indian State. Besides, it has also witnessed frequent fighting between different ethnic rebel groups. With over 100 armed rebel groups of varying intensity present in the region, northeast India clearly has the distinction of being one of the most volatile areas of the world. Violence has held development to ransom. Socio-political instability and economic backwardness, isolation and inaccessibility compound the problem further. Assam, which is the most populous state in northeast India, has been facing a number of movements aiming to achieve a variety of objectives having both ethnic and territorial focus. While some of these issues were partially resolved through the intervention of the Central government, several others remain unresolved. The unresolved conflicts have resulted in a series of violent flashpoints

In the context of a conflict-ridden state like Assam, the role of the media, both regional and national, in the way they represent and interpret the different conflicts, have not yet

been adequately studied. There is a feeling among the people here that the national media tends to ignore the north-east region in terms of its coverage of news, and the little coverage that it gives, is mainly limited to negative issues like bombing, killings, extortion, insurgent violence etc. There is also a feeling that the national media confine their reporting of conflicts to mere statistics of the number of people killed and the number of arms and ammunition recovered without really going much into the backgrounds of the issues that culminated into violent events. Therefore the media coverage of the region by the national media is often sporadic in nature, limiting itself to provide coverage only to violent events, which has unfortunately helped 'stereotype' the entire region as a trouble-torn frontier.

It is important to understand how the national media and the regional media have covered the different types of conflicts in Assam, so that it helps one to understand how the media construct social reality, the differences in the ways the national media and the regional media frame conflicts, and also contribute to knowledge about news coverage of medium and low-intensity conflicts by the national print media, particularly about an area of the country that has not been of much interest to the mainstream media.

---

1. Assistant Professor, Department of Mass Communication, Assam University, Silchar

It is in this context that the role of the national media needs to be analysed when it reports about the different conflicts taking place in the periphery of the country. In order to do so, the researcher proposes to examine the serial bomb explosions that rocked different parts of Assam on October 30, 2008 killing over 80 people besides injuring more than 300 and causing large-scale destruction of private and public properties. The objective of the present study is to empirically analyze how two major national newspapers of the country, i.e The Hindu and The Times of India, presented this violent incident and compare them with the coverage given to the same event by two frontline regional newspapers of the state, The Assam Tribune and The Telegraph. This study particularly looks into the prominence accorded to this conflict-induced violent incident by the sampled newspapers by applying an experimental news prominence measurement score, called the Cumulative Prominence Score (CPS).

### Serial Blasts in Assam, October 30, 2008

On October 30, 2008, a series of bomb explosions went off at four different districts in Assam, including its capital city Guwahati, within a time span of an hour. In this well-coordinated strike, over 80 civilians lost their lives and hundreds of others were injured. It was described as the worst terror attack in Assam, a state that has witnessed a multitude of conflicts of varying degrees for decades now, including insurgency, militancy, ethnic riots, communal violence, terrorism and mass social, political movements. But who were the perpetrators of this attack? Who was/were behind this well-coordinated strike executed with such clinical precision to inflict huge civilian casualties? Was it home-grown terror of the sundry insurgent outfits operating in the state, or was it cross-border terrorism carried out by 'jihadis' operating out of Bangladesh with active support from Pakistan's ISI to destabilize the region?

This research investigates the press coverage of this violent incident by the four English newspapers under study for a one-month period since the attack, based on the intensity and extent of coverage, as well as arriving at the comparative prominence accorded by each of the sampled newspapers to the coverage of the blasts in Assam, to draw distinct trends that highlight how each newspaper interpreted, constructed and presented the violent incident, and its aftermath, to its readers.

### Extent of Coverage:

The extent of coverage given to the Serial Blasts in Assam in the four sampled newspapers was measured in terms of the total number of news stories that appeared during the time frame selected for the study (that is, October 31, 2008-November 29, 2008). All news stories that appeared to be related to the event were identified and counted.

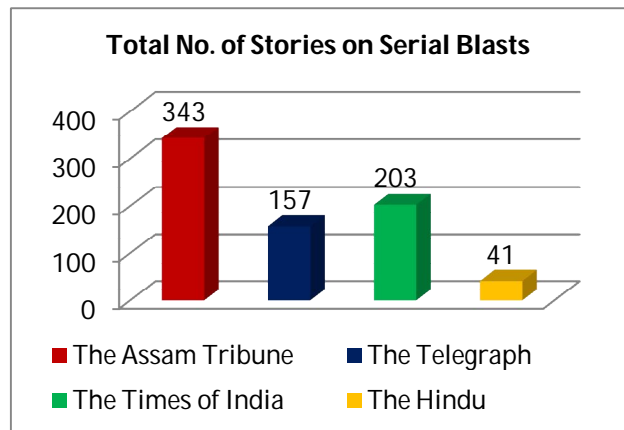


Figure 6a: Comparative Press Coverage of Serial Blasts

Figure 6a shows the comparative coverage given to the Serial Blasts event in the four sampled newspapers.

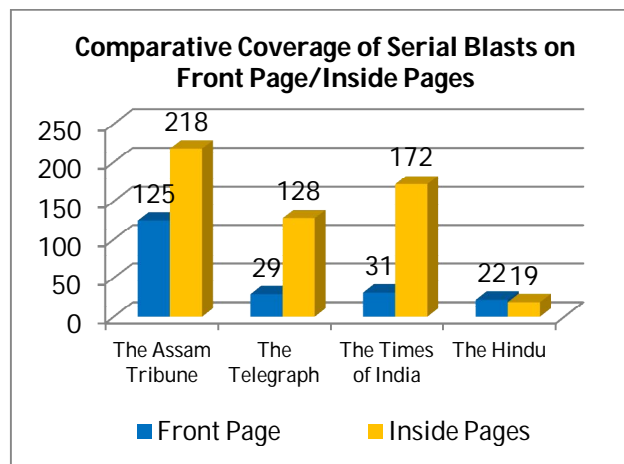


Figure 6b: Comparative Front Page-Inside Pages Coverage of Serial Blasts

As shown in Figure 6b, The Assam Tribune carried the highest number of news stories on the incident during the study period. A total of 343 news stories appeared in The Assam Tribune of which 125 news stories were on the front-page and the remaining 218 were on the inside pages of the newspaper.

Interestingly, The Times of India, which is a national newspaper, gave the second highest number of news stories on the event. The Times of India carried a total of 203 news stories of

which 15 per cent stories appeared on the front-page during the study period. This is an interesting finding, considering that The Telegraph positions itself as a regional newspaper. The Telegraph carried 157 news stories and only 29 were on the front-page.

### Front Page-Inside Pages

The researcher wanted to see if there was any significant difference in the way regional and national newspapers carried stories on the Serial Blasts on their front-page and inside pages during the study period. For this purpose, The Assam Tribune and The Telegraph were grouped together as regional press and The Times of India and The Hindu as national media.

The distribution of news stories on the front and inside pages of the four newspapers did not meet the requirements for a parametric test. (i.e. the data were not normally distributed; the variances were markedly different). Therefore, a Kruskal Wallis Test was conducted on the data set for both front page and inside page news stories' distribution. Following is the result of the test:

### Front page (Kruskal-Wallis Test)

#### Ranks

	Type of news paper in front page	N	Mean Rank
Number of news in front page	Regional Newspaper	31	38.72
	National Newspaper	31	22.28
	Total	62	

### Test Statistics(a,b)

	Number of news in front page
Chi-Square	13.559
df	1
Asymp. Sig.	.0000027

a Kruskal Wallis Test

b Grouping Variable: Type of newspaper in front page

The above tables show that with p value less than 0.05, there is a significant difference in the way regional and national newspapers carried reports on the Serial Blasts on their Front pages.

### Inside page (Kruskal-Wallis Test)

#### Ranks

	Type of newspaper in inside page	N	Mean Rank
Number of news in inside page	Regional Newspaper	31	34.68
	National Newspaper	31	26.32
	Total	62	

### Test Statistics(a,b)

	Number of news in inside page
Chi-Square	3.462
df	1
Asymp. Sig.	.063

a Kruskal Wallis Test

b Grouping Variable: Type of newspaper in inside page

However, for the inside pages, the non-parametric Kruskal Wallis test revealed that there is no significant difference in the distribution of news items on the inside pages by the regional and national newspapers ( $p > 0.05$ )

The Table 6.2 shows the column space allocation of news stories on the Serial Blasts in the four newspapers under study. One-third of the stories (32.6 per cent) in The Assam Tribune were one-column news stories. Another 60.9 per cent of the news stories were 2, 3 and 4 column stories. There was only one 7-column story and no 8-column stories were carried.

Living up to its characteristic style of big-size stories for emphasis, the other regional newspaper, The Telegraph however carried a few big stories. There were twelve 7-column news stories on the event and also eight 8-column stories.

**Table 6.2: Column space allocation of news stories on Serial Blasts.**

Comparative Table on column space allocation of news stories on Serial Blasts.								
	8 col.	7 col.	6 col.	5 col.	4 col.	3 col.	2 col.	1 col.
<b>Assam Tribune</b>	0	1	13	8	54	81	74	112
<b>Telegraph</b>	8	12	16	20	20	25	24	31
<b>Times of India</b>	5	6	10	35	28	28	49	42
<b>Hindu</b>	0	0	0	1	4	11	13	12



Between the two national newspapers, The Times of India gave better coverage to the Serial Blasts. While The Hindu did not have any 6, 7 or 8 column story and most of the stories were small and medium-sized stories of 1, 2 and 3 columns; The Times of India carried as many as 11 stories that were big-that is of 7 and 8 columns.

Overall, it can be seen that The Telegraph published the highest number of big-sized stories for emphasis and attention on the Serial Blasts than the other three newspapers.

### Intensity of coverage

The accessibility of certain information in the individual's long-term memory depends on the frequency of its processing. As one of the critical determinants of what is more or less accessible in human memory, scholars discuss the intensity of media news coverage. When we evaluate a news story in terms of intensity, we, as a matter of fact, make an attempt to gauge its

The intensity of coverage of the Serial Blasts in the four newspapers under study as shown in Figure 6c was measured in terms of how the coverage changes during the study period. It is seen that across all the four newspapers, the intensity of coverage drastically decreases after the second week of the occurrence of the event. In the national newspapers it is seen that the coverage of the event after the first 14 days drastically goes down. The Assam Tribune carried 83.9 per cent of the total news stories in the first week after the event. The Telegraph also showed a similar trend. 76.4 per cent of the total number of news stories carried in The Telegraph appeared in the first two weeks after the occurrence of the incident. Similarly, The Times of India was done with 82.7 per cent of its coverage on the Serial Blasts in the first two weeks. The intensity of coverage also declined in The Hindu. There were only 4 news stories after Week 2 (November 7-November 13, 2008).

As can be seen in Figure 6c, the regional

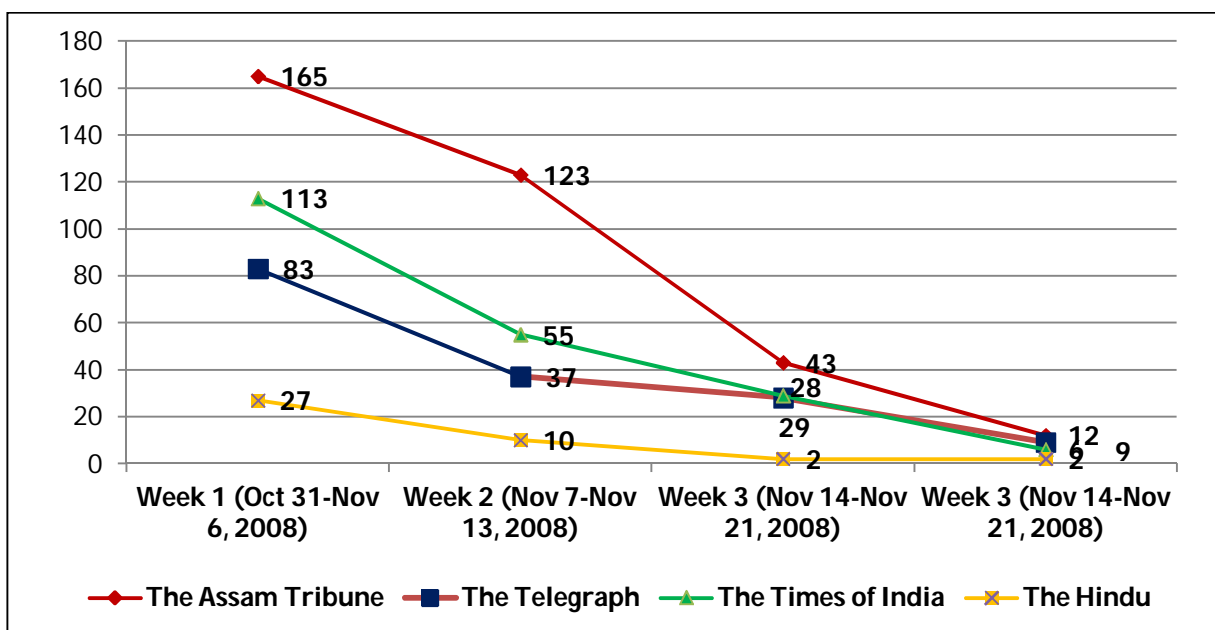


Figure 6c: Intensity of Coverage of Serial Blasts

importance in terms of its strength and consequently its effect on the society. Intensity of news coverage is an ingredient to measure the relative importance of a news event in a particular socio-political context. It is assumed that a frequent reporting of, for example, terrorist activity makes people think about the issue more often and therefore facilitates the accessibility of information concerning terrorism.

newspapers and the national newspapers showed similar trends in their coverage of the serial Blasts during the period of study, that is, October 31-November 29, 2008. As the days progress after the event, gradually the news stories move from the front page to the inside pages. As shown in Figures 6d, 6e, 6f and 6g, the quantum of news on the front-pages slowly decreases after the first week of coverage.

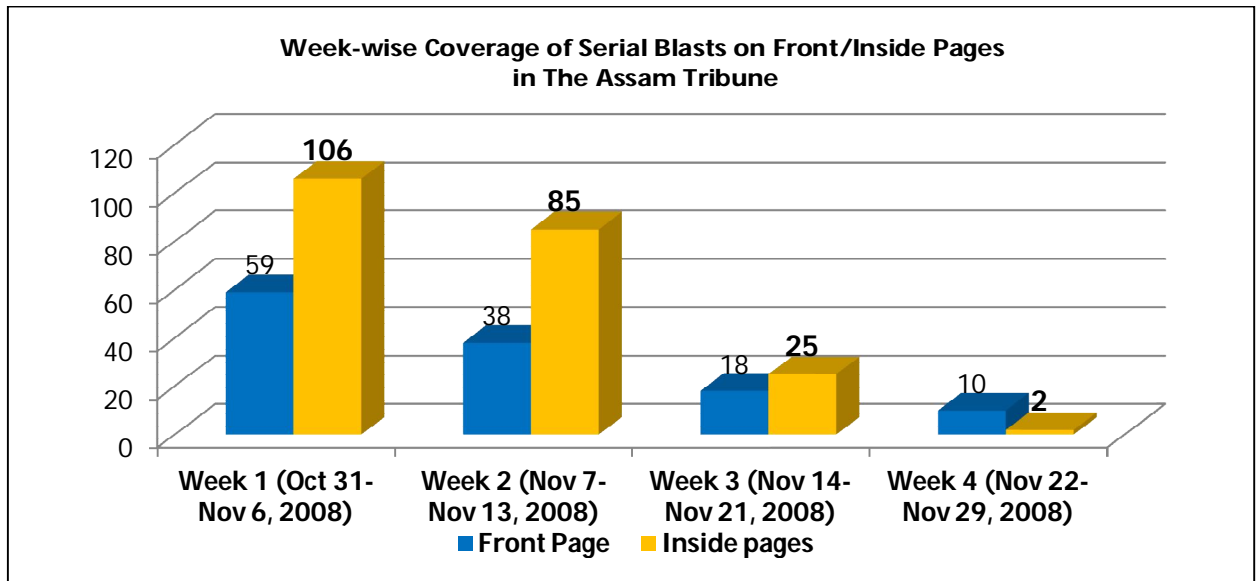


Figure 6d: Week-wise Coverage of Serial Blasts on Front/Inside Pages in The Assam Tribune

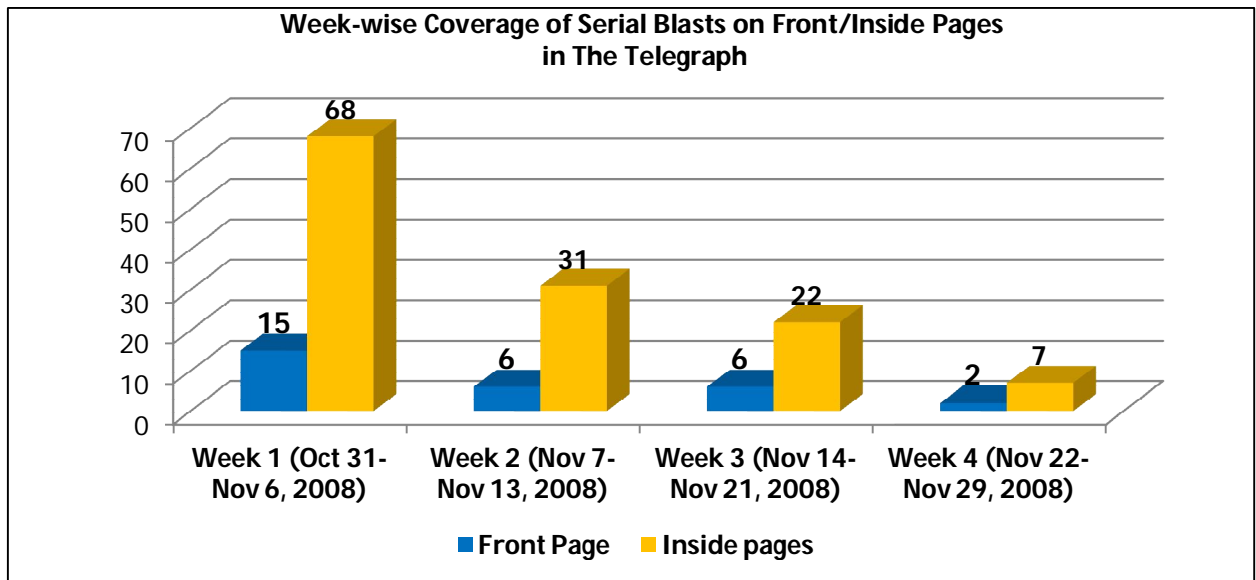


Figure 6e: Week-wise Coverage of Serial Blasts on Front/Inside Pages in The Telegraph

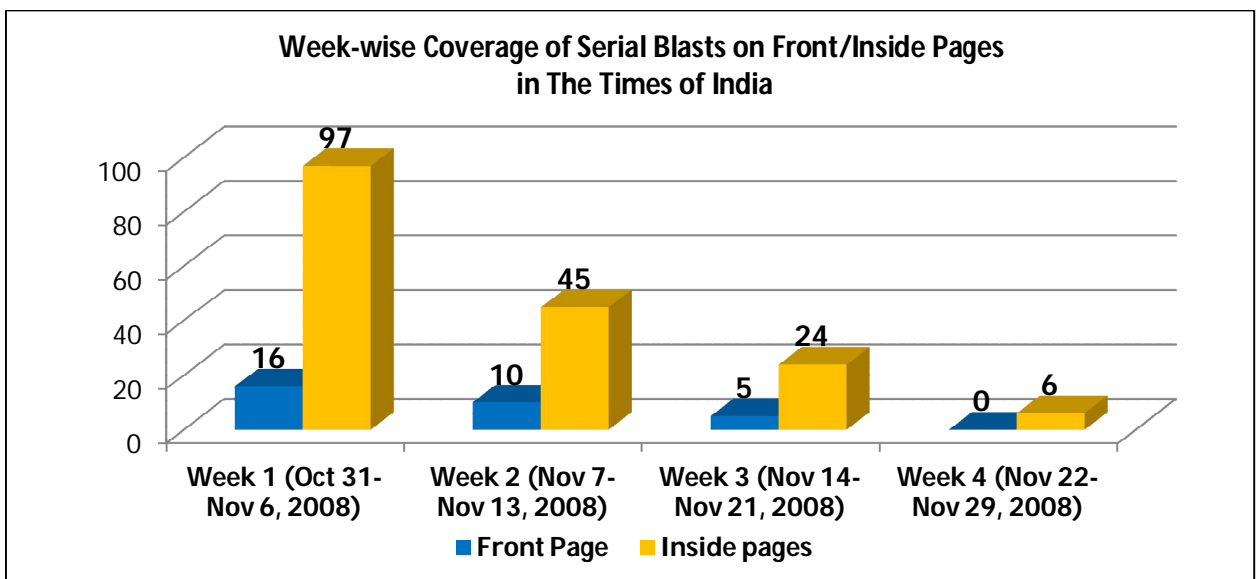


Figure 6f: Week-wise Coverage of Serial Blasts on Front/Inside Pages in The Times of India

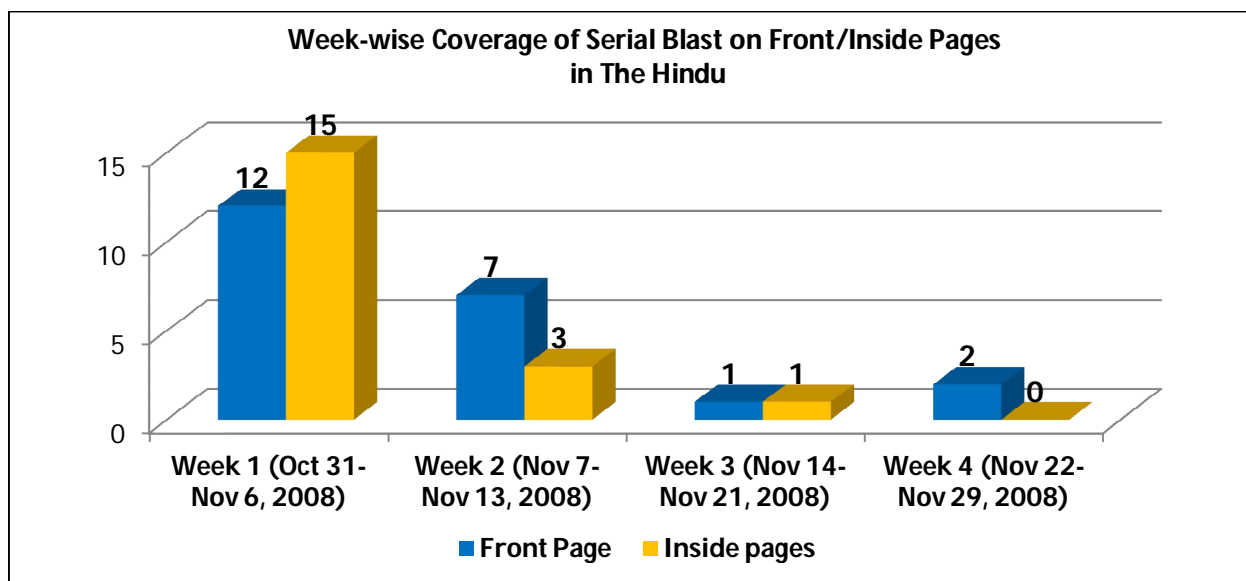


Figure 6g: Week-wise Coverage of Serial Blasts on Front/Inside Pages in The Hindu

### Content Categories

Table 6.3: Distribution of editorial content on Serial Blasts

	Hard News	Soft News/ Feature	Opinion/ Article/ Column	Editorial	Photos	Letters to the Editor	Total
Assam Tribune	329	14	12	14	114	42	525
Telegraph	127	30	8	2	155	10	332
Times of India	161	42	4	2	173	0	382
Hindu	39	2	0	1	22	17	81
<b>Total</b>	<b>656</b> (49.6%)	<b>88</b> (6.6%)	<b>24</b> (1.8%)	<b>19</b> (1.4%)	<b>464</b> (35.5%)	<b>69</b> (5.2%)	<b>1320</b>

Table 6.3 shows the overall distribution of editorial content in the four newspapers. A grand total of 1320 pieces of editorial content appeared during the study period in all the four newspapers. Of these, 49.6 per cent was hard news, 35.5 per cent photographs and the rest belonged to other editorial content categories like opinion/column/articles, soft news stories, letters to the editor etc. As shown in Figure 6h, 6i, 6j and 6k, soft news on the event was surprisingly very low. Only 2 soft news stories appeared in The Hindu during the study period. The Assam Tribune carried 14 editorials on the event during the month-long study period. The Telegraph and The Times of India carried 2 each while The Hindu carried one.

### Prominence of news stories

At first, the prominence of the news stories related to the event that appeared in the four sampled newspapers was measured in terms of its placement in the newspaper. The study measured how many news stories appeared on

the front-pages and inside-pages. It was found that The Assam Tribune carried a high number of news items on its front-pages, although its inside pages also had double the number of stories published in the front-page. The Telegraph and The Times of India had similar patterns of news distribution, with a substantial quantum of coverage devoted to the inside pages. The distribution of news stories in The Hindu was evenly poised.

Table 6.4: Placement of News Stories on Serial Blasts

Newspaper	Front Page	Inside Pages
Assam Tribune	125	218
Telegraph	29	128
Times of India	31	172
Hindu	22	19

The prominence of the front-page news stories that were carried in the four newspapers was also

measured in terms of the placement within the quadrant.

**Quadrant:**

The location where the story starts on the front page is marked. As shown in the following diagram 4m, a story is considered to have highest prominence if it is placed in Quadrant 1. Quadrant 2, Quadrant 3 and Quadrant 4 are considered to be the 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> most prominent positions on the front page of a newspaper. If the story extends across two quadrants, the position where the majority of the headline appears is marked.

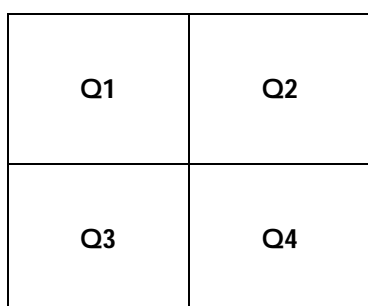


Figure 6l: Four Quadrants of the Front Page of a Newspaper

It was found that the front-page news stories were placed in quadrants as shown in Table 6.5.

**Table 6.5: Placement of Front Page News Stories on Serial Blasts in the Quadrant**

Newspaper	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	TOTAL
<b>Assam Tribune</b>	43	29	31	22	<b>125</b>
<b>Telegraph</b>	8	6	10	5	<b>29</b>
<b>Times of India</b>	13	5	11	2	<b>31</b>
<b>The Hindu</b>	10	2	10	0	<b>22</b>

Most of the front-page stories in The Assam Tribune were placed very prominently in Quadrant 1 and Quadrant 2. Around two-third of the front-page news (57.6 per cent) in The Assam Tribune was on the top fold of the newspaper in these two quadrants.

**Table 6.6: Size of News Stories on Serial Blasts**

Newspaper	Front Page			Inside Pages		
	Small	Medium	Big	Small	Medium	Big
<b>Assam Tribune</b>	50	65	10	62	144	12
<b>Telegraph</b>	4	12	13	27	57	28
<b>Times of India</b>	9	15	7	33	90	49
<b>Hindu</b>	8	11	3	4	15	1

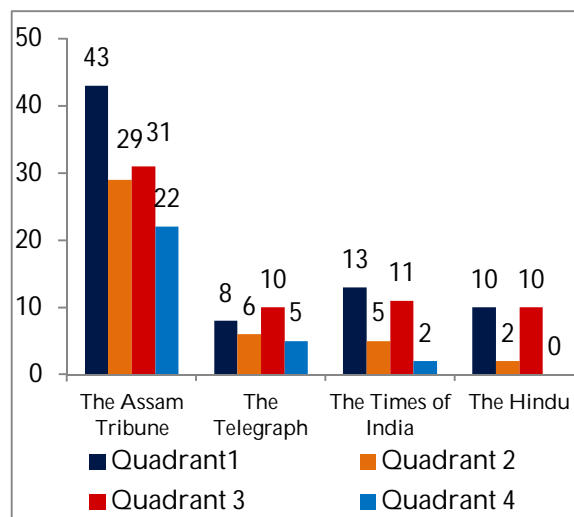


Figure 6m: Placement of News Stories in the Quadrant

As shown in Table 6.5 and Figure 6m, The Hindu carried around half of the stories in Quadrants 1 and 3 of the front-page. However, The Times of India carried 50 per cent news on the top fold and 50 per cent news on the bottom fold of the newspaper. Overall, it can be seen that The Assam Tribune gave considerable prominence to the Serial Blasts in terms of not only number of stories but also in terms of its placement.

**Size of News Stories:**

Prominence given to the news stories was also measured in terms of the size of the individual news stories. For the purpose of the study, the researcher divided all news stories into three categories:

Category	Size (in col.cm)
<b>Small</b>	<b>Up to 10 col cm</b>
<b>Medium</b>	<b>11-40 col cm</b>
<b>Big</b>	<b>More than 40 col cm.</b>

Figure 6n: Categorization of size of news story

Accordingly, all the news stories that appeared on the front pages and inside pages of the four newspapers were divided in the three above-mentioned categories.

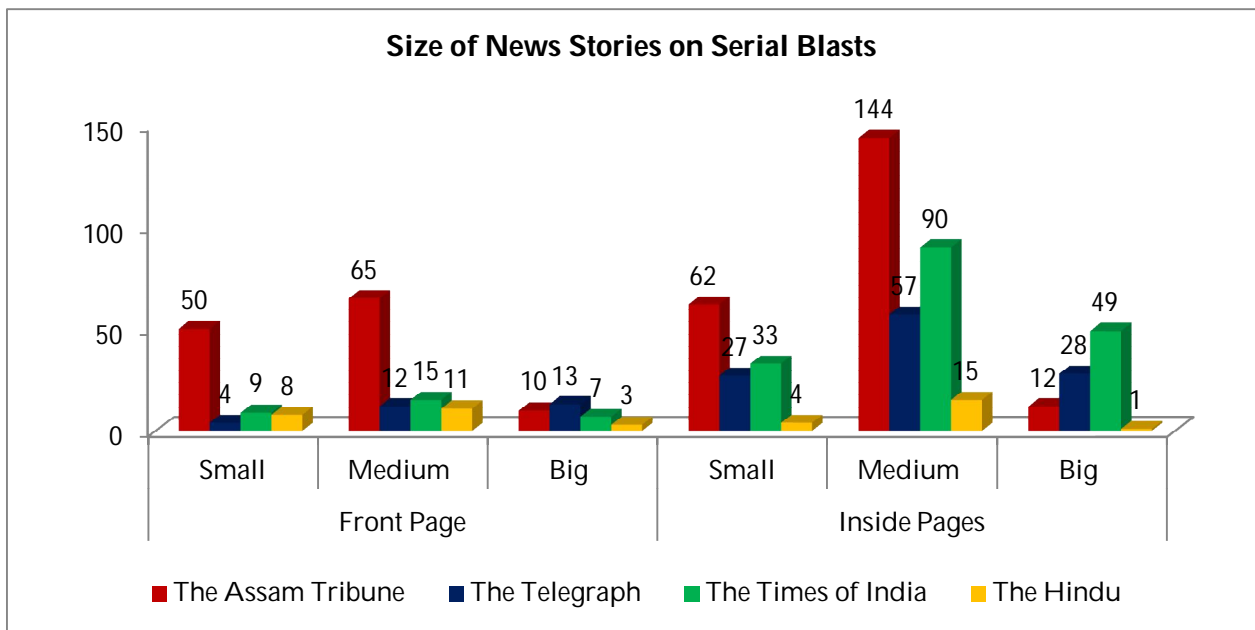


Figure 6o: Size of News Stories on Serial Blasts

### Cumulative Prominence Score

Normally the prominence of a news event is measured in terms of the number of news stories published on the front-page of a newspaper over a period of time and the size of the story. For the purpose of empirically calculating the prominence of front-page coverage of a news event in a more comprehensive manner, the researcher has developed the 'cumulative prominence score'. This score is a measure of the overall prominence of the coverage of an event based on the size and placement of the news stories within the four quadrants of the front page of the paper. In this study, the news stories on the front page were given scores in terms of its placement within the quadrant. A story placed in Quadrant 1 earned the highest score of 4. News stories placed in Quadrant 2, 3, and 4 were allocated 3, 2 and 1 points respectively. For the purpose of this study, it will be called 'Quadrant Score'.

QUADRANT	SCORE
Quadrant 1	4
Quadrant 2	3
Quadrant 3	2
Quadrant 4	1

Figure 6 p: Quadrant Score

Similarly, scores were assigned to different story sizes. A big story earned 3 points, while a

medium and small story were given 2 points and 1 point respectively. This will be called the 'Size Score'.

STORY SIZE	SCORE
Small Size (up to 10 col cm)	1
Medium Size (11-40 col cm)	2
Big Size (more than 40 col cm)	3

Figure 6q: Size Score

The 'Prominence Score' was measured by multiplying the Quadrant Score and Size Score, that is, the score for the placement of the story multiplied by the score for the size of the story.

$$\text{(Quadrant Score)} \times \text{(Size Score)} = \text{Prominence Score (PS)}$$

For example, the 'prominence score' of a medium-sized news story in Quadrant 1 would be (2x4=8 points). The cumulative prominence score is the sum of all the prominence scores of the individual news stories on the front page of the newspapers.

$$\text{Cumulative Prominence Score (CPS)} = \text{PS}_1 + \text{PS}_2 + \text{PS}_3 + \dots + \text{PS}_n$$

(where, n= no of news stories on the front page)

Accordingly, the cumulative prominence score of the four sampled newspapers was measured.

**Table 6.7: Size of Front Page News Story and Quadrant Placement on the Serial Blasts**

Newspaper	Small				Medium				Big			
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Assam Tribune	15	20	10	5	20	8	20	17	8	1	1	0
Telegraph	1	1	0	2	0	2	7	3	7	3	3	0
Times of India	5	1	3	0	1	4	8	2	7	0	0	0
Hindu	7	0	1	0	2	1	8	0	1	1	1	0

**Table 6.8: Cumulative Prominence Score (CPS)**

Newspaper	Small (1x)				Medium (2x)				Big(3x)				CPS
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	
Assam Tribune	60	60	20	5	160	48	80	34	96	9	6	0	<b>578</b>
Telegraph	4	3	0	2	0	12	28	6	84	27	18	0	<b>184</b>
Times of India	20	3	6	0	8	24	32	4	84	0	0	0	<b>181</b>
Hindu	28	0	2	0	16	6	32	0	12	9	6	0	<b>111</b>

Table 6.7 shows the categorization of the front page news stories on the basis of size and placement in the quadrant. Accordingly, the CPS of the four newspapers was measured.

The Cumulative Prominence Score, (CPS) as shown in Table 6.8 is the highest in The Assam Tribune. It is way higher than the other newspapers analysed in this study. The CPS for the Serial Blasts in The Assam Tribune was three times more than The Telegraph and The Times of India and five times more than The Hindu. Being a frontline English daily of the state, it is evident that The Assam Tribune did focus extensively on this major terror attack in Assam that created a sense of fear, despondency and insecurity among the citizens of the state. A major portion of the news items over the one-month study period found their way to the front-page reflecting the editorial gravity of the incident as a major news point for its readers.

### Conclusion

For the purpose of empirically calculating the prominence of front-page coverage of a news event in a more comprehensive manner, the researcher has developed the 'Cumulative Prominence Score.' This score is a measure of the overall prominence of the coverage of an event based on the size and placement of the news stories within the four quadrants of the front-page of the newspaper. The study found that the overall prominence given by the print media to the Serial Blasts in Assam was much higher compared to previous conflict-induced violent events of the past, particularly the Dhemaji bomb blast of 2004. The total prominence given to the Serial Blasts of 2008 was seen to be more than three times higher than what was given to the Dhemaji blast of 2004. This is true in case of both

regional and national newspapers. Cumulatively, it is established through this study that the regional press gave four times more prominence to the conflict events, compared to their national counterparts. Within the regional press too, the prominence accorded to conflict events has been progressively increasing since 2004. The reasons may be either improvement in news dissemination technology or a 'metropolitan bias,' since major portion of the serial blasts coverage focused on the aftermath of the blasts that occurred in the capital city Guwahati while the coverage of the blasts from the other parts of the state was relatively less in number. Another development that has happened in the intervening period between the Dhemaji blast of 2004 and the serial blasts of 2008 is that events from the region has began to attract greater attention in the national media landscape, even if only by a modest level. There is clear evidence that conflict events of the region has seen manifold increase in coverage and prominence within a short span of time, particularly in the national media, as the coverage of the Serial Blasts of Assam has revealed.

Overall, the findings substantiate claims in previous communication research that national media coverage of conflict issues from the northeast region of India is skewed and problematic. In conclusion, it can be said that national and regional media have very different roles to play. While national media has the most important potential influence in conflicts in the violent phase, and at a decision-making level, regional initiatives are most effective for long-term, sustainable conflict management in pre- and post conflict phases. National media can have an effect on elite decision-making, but these cases are marginal and only under particular circumstances and for short time periods. Regional media and

media initiatives that aim to operate within a country have more potential in terms of sustainable conflict management, particularly in the pre-violent and the post-violent phases of a conflict. Unlike national media, regional media is part of a society and, therefore, has the means and potential to play an active and sustainable role. It can either act as a catalyst in escalation to violence or to long-term sustainable conflict management and societal development, meaning that caution and insight is needed. More importantly, media has the potential to play a constructive role in conflict management and prevention, by encouraging democratic principles, supplying credible information, and acting as a guardian of transparent politics.

#### References:

- Alali, A.O. & Eke, K.K. (Eds.) (1991). *Media Coverage of Terrorism: Methods of Diffusion*. USA: Sage Publications.
- Asa Berger, A. (2000). *Media and Communication Research Methods*. California: Sage Publications.
- Baruah, S. (2006). *Durable Disorder: Understanding the Politics of Northeast India*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press.
- Bednarek, M. (2006). *Evaluation in Media Discourse: Analysis of a Newspaper Corpus*. New York and London: Continuum.
- Bhaumik, S. (1996). *Insurgent Crossfire: Northeast India*. New Delhi: Lancer.
- Bhaumik, S. (2007). *Insurgencies in India's North East: Conflict, Co-option and Change*. East West Center, Washington Working Papers, Washington D.C.
- Chadha, V. (2005). *Low Intensity Conflicts in India: An Analysis*. New Delhi: Sage Publications.
- Galtung, J. & Ruge, M. (1965). The Structure of Foreign News - The Presentation of the Congo, Cuba and Cyprus Crises in Four Norwegian Newspapers. *Journal of Peace Research*. Vol. 2(1). Pp.65-91.
- Goswami, N. (2013). *India's Internal Security Situation: Present Realities and Future Pathways*. New Delhi: Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses.
- Misra, U. (2000). *The Periphery Strikes Back: Challenges to Nation State in Assam and Nagaland*. Shimla: Indian Institute of Advanced Study.
- Ninan, S. (2009). *Reporting Assam's Ethnic Cauldron*. Retrieved from <http://www.thehoot.org/web/home/story.php?storyid=4118&mod=1&pg=1&sectionId=22&valid=true>
- Nitz, M., & H. West. (2004). Framing of news stories during a presidential campaign cycle: The case of Bush-Gore in election 2000. In *The Environmental Communication Yearbook*, by S. L. Senecah. pp. 99-134. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Richards, T. (2001). Media and Conflict Portrayal. *Conflict Resolution Notes*, 18(4): 122-131.
- Vergheese, B. G. (1996). *India's Northeast Resurgent: Ethnicity, Insurgency, Governance, Development*. New Delhi: Konark.

\*\*\*

# MEDIA AND ENVIRONMENTAL DEGRADATION (A STUDY TO UNDERSTAND AND EVALUATE THE ROLE OF MEDIA FOR DEVELOPING AWARENESS ON THE ENVIRONMENTAL DEGRADATION OF AMARKANTAK)

Dr. Manash Pratim Goswami<sup>1</sup>

## ABSTRACT

*Environmental degradation is the deterioration of the environment through depletion of natural resources and gradual changes in the environment and climatic conditions. The degradation of environment occurs due to consolidation of an effectively substantial and expanding human population and the depletion of natural resources. It occurs when the environment is compromised in the form of extinction of species, pollution in air, water and soil and the gradual change in the climatic conditions.*

*Amarkantak, a small pilgrim town known for the origin of the holy river Narmada, attracts thousands of tourists for its religious importance, scenic beauty, rustic locations, rich forestry and pleasant weather around the year.*

*In compared with other pilgrim places, away from high degree of commercialization and large flow of tourists, Amarkantak is still a quiet and beautiful location to spend time and enjoy the heavenly bliss. Over the years, the better road and railway transportation facility, improvement in communication system, government's efforts to highlight the place and several other factors facilitate in the growth of the flow of tourists to Amarkantak. The rapid pace of commercialization, growth of population mainly due to migration, construction of roads, shops, houses, deforestation and other factors have been causing serious damage to the environment of the place. The rising temperature, shrinking of the period of winter, shortage of ground water, increase in the quantity of garbage, frequent landslides and several other events resulting from environmental degradation are causing an alarming situation for this beautiful pilgrim town and their inhabitants.*

*This paper mainly attempts to assess the level of awareness and concern among the people of Amarkantak for the changing environment of the place. It is also intended to understand the role of different media vehicles to develop awareness and perceptual changes among the locals of the place to mitigate the effects of the changes.*

**Key words:** Environmental degradation, media, awareness, perceptual change, environmental impact

## Introduction

Environmental degradation is the deterioration of the environment through depletion of natural resources and gradual changes in the environment and climatic conditions. It is the process of depletion of the environment arising from severe consumption or pollution of natural resources. The act of environmental degradation is characterized as any change or aggravation to nature's turf seen to be pernicious or undesirable.

The degradation of environment occurs due to consolidation of an effectively substantial and expanding human population and the depletion of natural resources. It occurs when the environment is compromised in the form of extinction of species, pollution in air, water

and soil and the gradual change in the climatic conditions. Population dynamics is an important component for urban sustainable development. An increase in total population leads to an increase in the demand for goods and services and in turn an increase in demand for environmental resources. (Voyant, 2011) Amarkantak, originally a rural settlement converted to a town, also known as Tirthraj or 'king of pilgrimages' is a Nagar Panchayat of Anuppur district of Madhya Pradesh. In the meeting point of the Vindhya and the Satpura mountain ranges, at an altitude of 1065 meters, the pilgrim town of Amarkantak is located. The origin of the rivers Narmada and Sone, both flow to the opposite direction- Narmada towards the West and Sone to the East, Amarkantak finds significant place in the pilgrim places of the Hindus. Indeed, the place blessed by the scenic beauty of nature, consisting of the origin of holy

---

1. Assistant Professor, Department of Journalism, Media and Mass Communication, Indira Gandhi National Tribal University, Amarkantak (MP)



rivers, lush green surrounding, beautiful waterfalls, precious herbs and the sun playing hide and seek with clouds make Amarkantak a much preferred destination for both pilgrimage and nature-lovers.

Amarkantak, consisting of two words 'Amar' and 'Kantak', which means 'immortal' and 'obstruction' respectively. According to Hindu mythology, this place was an abode of the Gods but was disturbed by the hindrance of Rudraganas and hence known as Amarkantak. The poet Kalidas named it Amrakoot, since the place had full of dense forest of 'Amra' means mango trees, later Amrakoot became Amarkoot. (Bhattacharya, 1977).

According to a mythological story, when Lord Shiva destroyed Tripura by fire, one of the three ashes fell on Amarkantak, which turned into thousands of Shivalingas. Jwaleshwar is one such linga is still visited and worshipped devotees from different parts of the country. The religious significance of the place can be understood from its references in the Puranas, Ramayana, Mahabharata, Vashishtha Samhita and Shatapatha Brahmana. It is said that Pandavas spent times in Amarkantak during their exile.

Surrounded by a number of villages dominated with tribal population, the Nagar Panchayat of Amarkantak is surrounded by agricultural and forested areas. The town has developed along the Narmada Kund with major population of the town settled along the Kund area in an informal and disorganised way. With number of Ashrams and newly constructed temples within the vicinity of Narmada Kund are some of the key reasons for changing natural environment of the place.

#### Population Growth of Amarkantak

Year	Population	Growth Percentage
1961	1,095	
1971	2,465	125.11
1981	4,465	81.14
1991	4,936	10.55
2001	7,082	43.48
2011	8,416	18.84

With times, the growth of population and rapid urbanization characterized by the sprawl, mushrooming of temporary and permanent concrete and semi concrete structures of shops and living places and flow of larger size of devotees have been bringing

sea changes to the environment of Amarkantak.

As per the census, Amarkantak reflects a highly erratic decadal growth with average decadal growth at 125% during 1961-71 and 18.84% during 2001-2011. But the population had an exponential growth of nearly 70% in the last 20 years in Amarkantak Nagar Panchayat, covering 15 wards of total area of 46.59 square kilometers. As per the census 2001, Amarkantak has an Average Literacy Rate of 68%, higher than the National Average of 64.84%. In 2011, the average literacy of the place rose to 80.20%, with male and literacy of place are 88.06% and 71.02% respectively.

As per projected estimation, the population of Amarkantak is expected to rise 21,648 in the year 2025 and 29,486 in year 2035. The estimated population may turn out to be a reality as the migration of rural-urban population from Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh and other states of India to Amarkantak to earn livelihood from the growing population of tourist and potential in it rise due to religious sacredness of the river Narmada.

Unlike the other pilgrim places of the country, away from high degree of commercialization and large flow of tourists, Amarkantak used to be known for heavenly beauty and peaceful environment. But over the years, the better road and railway transportation facility, improvement in communication system, the government's efforts to highlight the place and several other factors facilitate in the growth of the flow of tourists to Amarkantak. As flip side of development, the environmental condition of this small pilgrim town has been slowly affected awful environmental degradation.

The emergence of Amarkantak as potential educational centre is another reason for the growth of population in the region. Besides *Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalaya (JNV)*, the place has both state run and private schools for primary to higher education. Indira Gandhi National Tribal University, a central university, situated at 20 kms away from Amarkantak, has been offering undergraduate and post graduate courses in different disciplines. The growth of several centers of state and private institutions has been also playing an important part in spreading education in the place.

With an average of 7000 floating population, has been a key reason for several problems environmental problems and climate change. The poor infrastructure and haphazard growth permanent and temporary residential structures, poor civic services and urban planning and several other reasons have been damaging and causing serious environmental threats to this abode of God.

The unsustainable utilization of natural resources, environmental degradation through solid waste accumulation, wetland encroachment and destruction, water pollution and land use have been the serious concerns for the environment of Amarkantak. The poor sanitation, inadequate drainage system, poorly managed solid and human wastes, increased water and air pollution are some of the basic reasons for the deplorable environmental conditions and erratic climatic changes of the place.

With the growth in population, literacy rate and income in the holy place of Amarkantak, the consumption of media in the form of print, electronic and internet has been experiencing a steady growth. The availability major Hindi language dailies, the growth of cable TV network, Direct to Home Services (DTH), mobile and internet networks of all leading service providers, the place is neither untouched by national, state and local media nor deprived of from basic information and entertainments needs of average citizen of a country.

Undoubtedly, the rise in literacy, better education facilities and reach and penetration of media have increased in the level of awareness on the depletion of natural resources and degradation of the environment of Amarkantak. But the big question, whether the reach and penetration of different media vehicles could develop awareness and perceptual changes among the locals to that extent which makes them to be proactive to mitigate the effects of the environmental changes or not?

### **Conceptual Framework**

The environmental and climatic conditions of a place are largely dependent on the demographic characteristics, status of infrastructure, land use, forestation, civic facilities like sanitation, drainage system, waste management, solid waste disposal, etc. Media plays a vital role in the development of

awareness, monitoring of government policies and impletions of plans and disseminating the views of the people, both commoners and experts.

This paper examines the role and relationship between media and development of awareness on environmental and climatic change. It also makes an attempt to assess the eagerness and level participation of the residents of Amarkantak to protect the environment and minimize the climatic change. The study consists of collection of primary data through reconnaissance survey and secondary data of government agencies available in public domain.

This conceptual framework offers a basis for the assessment of the linkage between environmental and climatic changes with rise in literacy and the role of media for development of basic environmental awareness. This assessment may play a useful role to envisage a significant contribution to policy formation on the awareness of environmental degradation and climatic changes and role of media to enhance knowledge and participation of people.

### **Objectives**

The aim of the study is to understand the present status between media and development of awareness on environmental and climatic change among the residents of the holy place of Amarkantak. The objective of the study includes:

1. To understand the awareness and perceptual changes of the residents of Amarkantak for environmental and climatic change of the place.
2. To appraise the role of the media in developing awareness and perceptual changes on environmental degradation and climatic changes among the people of Amarkantak.
3. To know the participation of the residents on the campaigns run by government and non government organisations to the consequences of environmental and climatic changes.
4. To assess the views of the residents on implementation policy and plans of the local and state authority to control environmental degradation and climatic change.

## Hypothesis

The pre survey assumptions made on the basis of the personal experience, observation, informal interaction with the target group and review of literature include:

1. With increase in level of education, the awareness and perceptual changes of the residents of Amarkantak for environmental and climatic change are growing.
2. With proliferation and easy access, media has been meeting the information and entertainment needs of the people. As result of it, the gradual growth in awareness and perceptual changes on environmental degradation and climatic changes are reflected on the people of Amarkantak.
3. Although media has been one of the key sources to develop awareness on environment and climatic changes, but the media coverage of the prevailing situations of Amarkantak on this issue is very minimal.
4. The participations of the residents of Amarkantak on the campaigns run by government and non government organisations to the ill effects of environmental and climatic changes are not very encouraging.
5. Although people of this holy place are not satisfied with the implementation of policies and plans of the local and state authority to control environmental degradation and climatic change, but they are not voicing much their grievances public and media platforms.

## Methodology

For the current study, collection of primary data, observation of the existing situation, discussions with localities and experts were carried out. The secondary data collected from reliable sources like census of India and other government agencies, academic research papers and reports, newspaper news, reports and analysis were included to understand, compare and assess the situation.

In total, 160 questionnaires, with 20 relevant questions related to the subject of the research, were filled from the respondents of Amarkantak, irrespective of their social and economic family background. A simple

random sampling method was adopted to make the collected data unbiased and paving equal opportunity for all to be picked up for filling of questionnaire.

The collected primary data were coded, tabulated and analyzed statistically to draw interpretations of the study. The standardized statistical tests were carried out to draw interpretation for the study.

## Finding of the Study

When structured and pre-tested questionnaire were filled by the randomly picked residents of the holy place of Amarkantak, several interesting facts came to light. Although, it was not deliberate but a total 110 and 50 respondents, who filled the questionnaires were male and female respectively.

While analysing the demographic profile, it has been observed that 15 respondents were farmers, 47 businessmen, 32 servicemen, 42 students, 15 unemployed and the rest 9 were occupied in other activities. On analysis, it has been found that 60 respondents each were in the age between 15-25 years and 26-35 years, 37 respondents in the age group of 36-50 years and 3 of them above 50 years. In terms of education level, 6 respondents were illiterate, 23 under 10<sup>th</sup>, 30 and 40 passed only 10<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> respectively. There were 42 graduates and 19 post graduates among the respondents.

In terms of duration of residing in Amarkantak, 38 respondents were in this holy place for 1-5 years, 34 of them for 6-10 years, whereas 37 for 11-20, 38 and 13 respondents for 21-30 and 30+ years respectively. The figures of the duration of residing in Amarkantak reflect that most of them migrated to Amarkantak from for education, service and business purposes. The findings of the collected data with inferences made have been furnished underneath-

- As reply to the question on whether the respondents know about the meaning of environmental degradation and climate changes, 88% of them knew about it whereas 12% did not have any idea.
- Whether the residents of Amarkantak have observed any significant change in the environment and climate of Amarkantak in the recent past, 89% observed changes while 21% did not experience any changes in both.

- Regarding the nature of changes in the climate of Amarkantak, 19% has been experiencing lesser duration of winter, 23% feels rising temperature in summer, 6% senses less dip in winter temperatures, none complained about less rain fall and less fog. 11% of the respondents had the observation of abrupt changes in weather and 41% of them opinioned that all changes mentioned in the probable options have been observed in the changing climate of Amarkantak.
- 24% of the respondents believe that locals are responsible for the environmental deterioration of Amarkantak, 6% blamed the flow of tourists, 5% held the vendors and shopkeepers responsible for the environmental degradation of Amarkantak. 16% of them held local administration, 3% considered the vehicles pollution, 4% indicated illegal constructions responsible for environmental and climatic changes of Amarkantak. 38% believed all the factors responsible for deplorable environmental and climatic changes of this holy place, whereas 4% held other reasons responsible for the same.
- Regarding the environmental and climatic changes, 48% of the respondents are aware of the consequences, whereas 14% of them have no idea and 38% with limited knowledge about it.
- On the sources of their knowledge on the environmental deterioration and climatic changes, majority of them (45%) indicate their own experience, education informs 18% of the respondents, 14% gives credit to media for developing awareness, 4% for publicity of administration and rest of them (19%) believe that all sources contribute for knowledge gain on environmental deterioration and climatic changes.
- 56% of the respondents take information on deteriorating conditions of environmental and climatic changes seriously, 11% of them do not pay much attention to such information, whereas 33% of the respondents do take note of such information to a certain extent.
- 36% of the respondents take effective measures to control the environmental degradation and climatic changes in his/her personal capacity, 33% did not make any attempt for it whereas 31% put efforts to a certain extent.
- Out of the those concerned and taking measures to control to a large and up to a certain extent, 46% of them concentrated on cleanliness, 20% educated others on reasons of erratic climate changes, 9% stopped polluting the surrounding, 7% stopped destroying natural resources, 18% have been doing all for positive impact.
- Regarding the support from local administration for the cause, 37% of the respondents indicate on having support from local administrations for their efforts to control environment degradations and climatic changes, 37% of them have completely opposite answer, whereas 29% gets such support to a particular extent.
- On the steps taken by local administration and government to control climate change, 24% of the respondents are satisfied, 42% replied no and 34% of them to a certain extent.
- On the awareness of different campaigns run by government & non government organization on environmental pollution and climate changes, 39% of the respondents are aware of it, 30% of them are not, whereas 31% of them have no interest in such campaigns.
- Out of those, who are aware of such government and non-government agencies involved in awareness campaigns on environment and climatic changes, 33% actively participates, 41% do not and 26% of them sometimes participate.
- On the question of whether media keep updating on the environmental pollution and climatic changes of Amarkantak, 29% replied that media do update, 38% of them replied opposite to it, whereas 33% indicated updating role of media to the issue to a particular extent.
- Regarding the effectiveness of media information on the environmental pollution and climate change on Amarkantak, 34% of the respondents believe those information to be effective, 32% of them do not think so, whereas 34%

considers them effective up to a certain extent.

- 39% of the residents of Amarkantak believe the efforts of media to create awareness on the climate change of Amarkantak are successful, 27% replied contrary to them and 34% feel the efforts of media are successful to a certain extent.
- Regarding the perceptual changes and actions of the residents of Amarkantak to control environmental and climatic changes, the dissemination of information by media on climate change of Amarkantak have been changing the thinking and actions of the 32% of the respondents, on 29% of them such efforts have not brought any changes, whereas for 32% changes are felt up to certain extent and 7% of them do not know the effects.
- On the potential of folk media to educate the illiterate and semi-literate on environmental pollution and climate change, 55% of the residents believe that folk media can play important role in it, 11% of them do not think so, whereas 34% of the respondents feel folk media can educate illiterate and semi-literate on environmental pollution and climate change to a certain extent.
- On the role of media, if participate in the annual Shiv Ratri mela, organised on the bank of Narmada in Amarkantak, to develop awareness on environmental deterioration and climate change, 61% believes that media's efforts can bring productive results, 10% of them do not think so, whereas 29% feels such efforts can bring result to a certain extent.
- When respondents were requested to rank the different vehicles of media in order of their importance and effectiveness for developing mass awareness on environmental degradation and climate change, with maximum 59% responses TV was suggested as the best media, Print at second position with maximum 56% responses, with maximum 42% responses Radio at third position, Internet (41%) and outdoor media (61%) were ranked at fourth and fifth position respectively.

### Testing of Hypotheses

With the census of India literacy rate for 2001 and 2011 suggesting the rise in literacy rate from to 80.20%, the growth of number of government and private English medium schools and establishment of a central university at 20 kms distance from Amarkantak, the education of high standard is no more a distance dream for the residents of Amarkantak. The rising levels of literacy and quality education have been producing awareness and perceptual changes among the residents of Amarkantak for environmental degradation and climatic changes. The analysis of the data collected from the area also reflects the same. Consequently, it suggests the pre study assumption, *"with increase in level of education, the awareness and perceptual changes of the residents of Amarkantak for environmental and climatic change are growing"* to be valid.

The ranking of media in order of their role and effectiveness and other relevant questions of the current study replied by the respondents in the questionnaire clearly suggest that reach and effectiveness of media to inform and entertain people of the area are gradually changing. The collected data also support that media have been playing a vital role in the growth of awareness and perceptual changes on environmental degradation and climatic changes of the place. It proves that *"with proliferation and easy access, media has been meeting the information and entertainment needs of the people. As result of it, the gradual growth in awareness and perceptual changes on environmental degradation and climatic changes are reflected on the people of Amarkantak."* to be true.

From the responses of the residents of Amarkantak, it is evident that media has been one of the key sources to develop awareness on environment and climatic changes in the area, but when it comes to the media coverage of the prevailing situations of environmental and climatic changes of Amarkantak is very negligible. It confirms the hypothesis on the poor coverage of the prevailing situations of environmental and climatic changes of Amarkantak to be true.

The hypothesis *"the participations of the residents of Amarkantak on the campaigns run by government and non government organisations to the ill effects of environmental and climatic changes are not very encouraging."* is proved to be valid by the data collected from the area.

Regarding the voicing of the grievances of the people of this holy place on the implementation of policies and plans of the local and state authority to control environmental degradation and climatic change in Amarkantak, the residents were found to be less active on different media platforms. This proves the hypothesis *“although people of this holy place are not satisfied with the implementation of policies and plans of the local and state authority to control environmental degradation and climatic change, but they are not voicing much their grievances public and media platforms.”* to be true.

### Conclusion

The extent of environmental degradation and climatic changes in the holy and beautiful place of Amarkantak may not be as high as some of the holy places of India. This may be attributed to the comparatively low flow of pilgrims, less commercialisation, inadequate promotion of the place by state tourism department, situated geographically in the interiors of central India and several other reasons. Nevertheless, the place has experiencing some gradual changes in terms of the environmental and climatic changes owing to an exponential growth of population from the neighbouring districts and states for greener pasture. The connectivity of transport, communication and information system have contributed to the growth of tourists both as pilgrims and nature lovers in the recent times.

Although the consequence of population growth in Amarkantak and flow of tourists to the place may have increased the extent of commercialisation and flow of revenue, but it resulted in the environmental pollution and climatic changes to the abode of Gods. As far as the concern of the residents for such changes, they are well aware of the prevailing conditions but not bothered much for voicing their grievances against the ineffective measures taken by local and state authorities

to prevent the natural changes by proper planning and effective policy implementations. Although, the literacy and the awareness of the people may have made some perceptual changes among the local residents but when it comes to participations of people to control the inconsistent natural phenomena, they are found less active for result driven efforts. The reach and penetration of media do not suggest any discriminating state of the situation, but when it comes to the coverage of the prevailing natural degradation of Amarkantak, the place hardly finds any space in local, regional and national print and electronic media.

### References

- Voyant. (2011). Urban Growth and It's Implications on Environment : A Case of Amarkantak. Development Plans. Delhi.
- Population. (2001). Census of India. Retrieved 26 October 2012, from <http://www.census2011.co.in/data/town/802421-amarkantak-madhya-pradesh.html>
- Bhattacharyya, P.K. (1977), Historical Geography of Madhya Pradesh from Earlier Records, Motilal Banarsidass, p. 76
- Ganguly, Rageshri. Campaign to free Narmada from pollution to begin from Amarkantak. Retrieved 24 August 2014, from <http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/bhopal/Campaign-to-free-Narmada-from-pollution-to-begin-from-Amarkantak>.
- Mishra, Neeraj. Border on Edge. Retrieved 12 September 2012, <http://indiatoday.intoday.in/story/madhya-pradesh-chhattisgarh-tussle-over-amarkantak-likely-to-add-to-narmada-dam-tangle>

\*\*\*

## ENGAGING SOCIAL MEDIA IN HEALTH COMMUNICATION- SCOPE AND CHALLENGES OF THE 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY

Dr. Mausumi Bhattacharyya<sup>1</sup> & Ms. Priyanka Roy<sup>2</sup>

### ABSTRACT

The contemporary world is witnessing a growth in the number of internet users. What has made this phenomenon more interesting is the appearance of the various forms of social media and their use by different people and organizations for different purposes. Several studies have reflected the utility of social media in marketing, image building, Public Relation etc. This paper is an attempt to evaluate the role of social media in health communication. Various health organizations are making their presence in social media to extend benefit to the patients. They are combining social media with other traditional media for their health campaigns. Social media is ensuring 24/7 interactivity with those who are in need for information.

**Keywords:** Health Communication, Health Literacy, Social Media.

### Introduction

There has been a tremendous rise in the number of internet and social media users worldwide. In 2014 there were 2.94 billion internet users which rose to 3.17 billion in 2015. With nearly 2.04 billion social media users all across the globe in 2015 it is projected to rise to 2.72 billion by 2019 (Statista, 2016). With such a promising figure of social media usage all around the globe this paper tries to evaluate its role in health communication and improving health literacy among people.

Ratzan (2001) said that the 20<sup>th</sup> century has witnessed progress in the field of health care in terms of hygiene, vaccine and antibiotics have resulted in a longer lifespan but there is an uneven distribution of the progress across the world. Recognizing the power of communication in recent times he said there is a scope for disseminating messages at a faster rate to bring about behavioural changes thus preventing diseases. Even many diseases can be prevented through medicines and surgeries but the hindrance lies to the fact that still the general mass depend more on health care system than on themselves when it comes to the question of managing health. Here lies the challenge of health communication, which should aim at rerouting individuals' behaviour in a positive direction that will help him/her combat health problems.

Health as defined by World Health Organization as "a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity". It is affected

mostly by these three factors- 'environment behavior and health service'. Behaviour in an individual, family, as well as community level has an important role to play in determining health. Healthy behaviour if practiced at all these levels can prevent diseases. Here lies the importance of health education which is defined by Lawrence W Green as –"Health education is any combination of learning opportunities designed to facilitate voluntary adoption of behaviour which will improve or maintain health". (Lal ,Adarsh & Pankaj, 2011)

Health communication and health education is often used interchangeably as synonymous terms but the later is mostly by health professionals. The core of health communication lies to the outward and downward communication of knowledge. It is the key factor of a preventive health care system. Some of the major functions of health communication are-

1. *Information*- Refers to providing proper information and knowledge about health problems and thus enabling them fight against diseases.
2. *Education* – Health education can bring changes in lifestyle and lower the risk factors associated with a disease. The basic of education is communication.
3. *Motivation* – Motivation starts with a felt need within oneself. It is an impulse of a person to act voluntarily.
4. *Persuasion* - Health communication may consciously attempt to influence an individual resulting in change in lifestyle.
5. *Counselling* – Helps in dealing with problems in better way and also encourage sharing with people having similar experiences.

1. Associate Professor, Centre for Journalism and Mass Communication, Visva Bharati Shantiniketan University, West Bengal
2. Research Scholar, Centre for Journalism and Mass Communication, Visva Bharati Shantiniketan University, West Bengal

6. *Raising Morals* – Communication in any form should attempt in raising morale of a health team or group of people.
7. *Health Development* – Health communication can help in ‘diffusion of innovation’ (concept by Everett M. Rogers) in terms of knowledge which in turn will prepare people to act in the desired way.
8. *Organization* – Organization or more specifically referred to as health organization must ensure free flow of information in all levels or direction, both horizontal and vertical (Park, 2013).

The concept of health communication and health literacy needs to be analyzed before going further into the objectives, research methodology and findings of the study is analyzed.

### **Health Communication Defined**

Schiavo (2007) defined Health communication as *“a multifaceted and multidisciplinary approach to reach different audiences and share health – related information with the goal of influencing, engaging, and supporting individuals, communities, health professionals, specific groups, policymakers and the public to champion, introduce, adopt, or sustain a behavior, practice, or policy that will ultimately improve health outcomes.”* The ‘Centre for Disease Control and Prevention’ and the ‘Healthy People 2010’ while defining health communication laid stress on the importance of ‘influence’ in health communication. The ultimate goal of every health communication is to bring both behaviour and social change and so the message needs to have an influence on an individual to attain its desired result (Schiavo, 2007).

### **Health Literacy- An urgent need**

The concept of health literacy made its appearance way back in 1974 in a literature which was related to health education and developing health literacy in schools. It was not until 1997 in the works of Kickbusch and then in the works of Nutbeam this concept was nurtured (Kanj & Mitic, 2009). Developing health literacy is the need of the hour. The European Health Literacy Consortium in 2012 defined health literacy as – *“it is linked to literacy and entails people’s knowledge, motivation and competences to access, understand, appraise and apply health information in order to make judgements and take decisions in everyday life concerning healthcare, disease prevention and health promotion to maintain or improve quality of life*

*during the life course.”* (Kickbusch et al.(ed.), 2013)

Three levels of health literacy were explained in the writings of Don Nutbeam. Level 1 is called the *‘functional health literacy’*, Level 2 is *‘interactive health literacy’* and finally *‘critical health literacy’* which the Level 3 of health literacy. ‘Functional health literacy’ is the ability to apply basic literacy skills to health related information and is not extended to interactive communication. ‘The interactive health literacy’ calls for personal skill development. It will help develop self confidence and act independently to the health advice. This level is mostly restricted towards personal skill development and benefit and is not extended to greater population. Unlike the previous two levels of health literacy the ‘critical health literacy’ is characterized by both social and individual benefit. This type of literacy will support effective social, political as well as individual action. Employing social media for health communication should be based on this concept (Nutbeam, 2000). It will help the communicators tailor their messages according to the level of literacy they want to achieve and also help them evaluate the literacy of an individual and the society in which they are operating. This will surely empower people in terms of health related decision-making and overcome barriers in the path of achieving sound health.

Information about health should be evenly distributed among people so that it can empower them to take proper action for better health. The importance of health communication is realized all over the world now and different organizations and practitioners are in action to distribute knowledge about health through various channels of communication. Social networks combined with other forms of social networks have been used for several campaigns. Glimpses of some are listed below-

- a. *VERB Campaign*- Centers for Diseases Control and Prevention with an aim to increase physical activity among teens launched this campaign. Facebook, MySpace, Flickr and YouTube were used in addition to print advertising, television/cable program and advertising etc.
- b. *5<sup>th</sup> Guy* – in order to increase hand washing in adults was an initiative by Florida Department of Health extensively used blogs, videos, Facebook, MySpace and



YouTube. Traditional media like print advertising, television/cable program and advertising etc. were also used.

- c. *Sustainable Table* – This campaign aimed at the increased sustainable food practice among adults. This campaign was launched by Grace used traditional forms as well as social media like blogs, videos, Facebook, MySpace, Flickr and YouTube (Abroms et al., 2008).

### **Objectives of the study-**

1. To analyze the scope of social media in health communication.
2. To find the preference of social media use for health information.

### **Research Methodology**

A survey method was adopted and conclusion was drawn according to the findings of the survey. A purposive sampling technique was adopted. Only social media users were included in the survey. A total of 100 samples were included in the study.

The universe of the study was Kolkata (metropolitan area only)

The survey tool employed was a set of close-ended questions.

### **Theoretical framework**

Theoretical framework is essential for a study to interpret the utility of social media and how its wide reach can be utilized properly in the field of health communication. It can also help in developing health literacy among people if properly used and campaigns strategically launched.

Uses and Gratification Theory is applied in the study when it comes to the use of social media for health-info seeking tendency of its users. The Uses and Gratification theory tries to understand why people prefer using one media over another. What is their expectation behind choosing a particular medium. The central idea of this theory is people are free to decide how they will use a particular media to satisfy (which is particularly referred as 'gratification') their needs or purposes for which they are using it (Ghosh.2009). The number of internet and social media users is on rise all across the globe. People are using social media for various purposes and this will be analyzed on the context of health communication. The findings of the study which is discussed later will show that there is a strong inclination towards social media usage for health information and people

follow advices they read on social media. This in turn indicates there is a scope of behavioural or lifestyle related changes social media can bring. This is also a tendency towards health literacy. In the context of the Uses and Gratification Theory the study reflects social media is meeting the demands of its users in the context of health communication.

### **Findings**

The survey findings are summarized below for getting an idea about the prospects of social media in health communication and developing health literacy among its users.

- When asked about which is their most preferred media for health information 65% of the study population said that they prefer social media. 20% prefers newspaper/ magazines etc. 12% prefers TV and 3% radio.
- 80% are of the opinion that social media can be useful in spreading health-related awareness.
- When asked about their inclination towards recommending their friends/relatives about using social media to get health-related information 55% of them said that they recommend. 45% of the population said that they do not do so.
- 55% of the population said that they think social media can improve doctor patient interaction. 25% said they do not think so and 15% are undecided.
- Although a major portion of the population thinks that doctor-patient interaction can be improved by social media, when it comes to their own usage of social media to interact with their doctor the percentage is strikingly low. 80% of them do not prefer using social media to communicate with doctor.
- Another important aspect was highlighted when asked about whether they have ever accessed social media during any health emergency. 55% said they did. This is really very important data when the scope and user preference of social media in health communication is under study.
- As the goal of any health campaign is to bring about behavioural changes among its target audience so the survey tried to find an answer about whether they follow the health advices they read on social media. 25% said they always follow, another 25% said they occasionally follow. 50% said they never follow health advices they read on social media.

The findings reflect that social media can be utilized for health campaigns and its user prefers it over other media for health information. In this context some of the tools of social media which is already in use for spreading health-related information is discussed.

There were certain limitations of the study. The study was conducted only on the population of Kolkata metropolitan area and only 100 samples were included.

### Social Media Tools in Health Communication

With the growing popularity of social media all around the globe its impact on the study of health behaviour needs to be analyzed. It provides social support and brings about a feeling of connectedness among its users. The most striking feature of social media is it makes communication possible across different socio-demographic groups. What makes it suitable in health communication is the anonymity of this medium. It also has a great power to modify behaviour which is the major target of health campaigns. Below is discussed some of the major social media tools which are of importance for health communication.

Tool	Definition/Use	Examples
Weblogs(blogs)	Online discussion/information site where the author can write his/her opinion and can get feedback on it.	www2.mdanderson.org/cancerwise/
e-Games	Interactive games played via internet and mobile phones	CDC.gov, health gamesresearch.org and many other such organizations have developed a number of e-games
Social Networking Sites: General	Vehicle to create and communicate via online communities and friends. Also helps in sending message and sharing contents.	Facebook, MySpace, LinkedIn
Social Networking Sites: health specific	These allow its user to share their health related experiences online	dLife.com, stick.com
Video file sharing	Video files can be created and uploaded for the purpose of sharing and commenting	YouTube.com

(Korda & Itani, 2013)

Deloitte Centre for Health Solutions, Washington has identified the potential of social media in healthcare. The percentage of

Americans using internet for information about a therapy or a specific health condition is fifty-five. Sixty percent doctors and sixty-five percent nurses have shown their inclination towards social media usage for their professional purpose. This figure is very encouraging for healthcare organizations that are widely employing social media in the course of their work together with other traditional forms of media. Deloitte Centre for Health Solutions in a report have mentioned about organizations that have used social media for spreading health messages. The Centre for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) is using social media about health issues to help public and during the 2009 H1N1 flu outbreak CDC Facebook page had over 50,000 followers. MD Anderson Cancer Center has their own social networks- "The Cancer Survivor's Network, "Ask the Expert", and "The Anderson Network". The Cancer Center scheduled its process according to the experiences shared by the patients through these networks (Keckley & Hoffman, 2010).

### 4 Es of Social Media Engagement

Social Media is changing the way people interact when it comes to issues concerning their health and harnessing public health systems. It is giving a platform for self-expression for patients or more appropriately can be called as "e-patients". The difference between social media and other traditional forms of media is that the former is making the 4 Es – *Equipped, Enabled, Empowered and Engaged* come into play when it comes to audiences' participation in health campaigns. Chris Boyer from Inova Health System in northern Virginia said- "*a lot of people out in the community are not really interested in health-related messages, but if their friends are commenting about something, then they may participate in the conversation*". (eHealth Initiative, 2013).

The key benefits of social media use for health communication can be summarized as follows-

- Helps in reaching diverse audiences.
- Breaks the barrier between patient-provider communication
- Allows sharing public health information in new spaces and also helps in peer-to-peer communication.
- Helps in collecting instant feedback.
- Increase direct engagement and empowers people.
- Establishing online communities (eHealth Initiative, 2013) & (Heldman et al. 2013).

The number of doctors using digital platforms is on rise. In countries like US Japan and China doctors are using digital platforms like WeChat blogs etc. to interact with their patients. The percentage doctors in India who prefer digital interaction is 60%. Globally 60% doctors are of the opinion that drug companies should combine the use of iPads and tablets while briefing about medicines apart from face-to-face interaction with medical representatives (Mukherjee, 2016). A group of doctors at Abott Hospital launched an online portal called 'Knowledge Genie'. It is very useful healthcare professionals. Dr. MS Dhillon Head of Orthopedics PGI, Chandigarh admitted that technologies like emails and different apps now enabled patients to send their reports. Doctors too can gain knowledge about new medicines and new treatment procedures y using digital technologies (Mohan, 2016). A similar experience was shared by Dr. Hal C. Lawrence, Executive Vice President, The American Congress of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (ACOG) said that with the spread of social media ob-gyns now have the opportunity to interact with their female patients at any point of time they want. 24/7 education is made possible through the various forms of social media available. But certain precautions should be taken while using social media for health communication. Privacy of patients must be maintained and care should be taken while uploading a video or posting in blogs or tweets. ACOG have their presence in Facebook ([facebook.com/acognational](https://www.facebook.com/acognational)), twitter ([twitter.com/acognews](https://twitter.com/acognews)) and YouTube ([youtube.com/acognews](https://www.youtube.com/acognews)). The followers including its members, other clinicians, reporters, government agencies etc are on rise (The American Congress of Obstetricians and Gynecologists, 2012).

Despite of a good scope of social media in health communication employing it in health promotion needs to have a strategic planning. People and organizations can use the 'POST' method for health campaigns via social media. The method is elaborated as

- P- *People* (identify the target audience)
- O- *Objectives* (set your goal)
- S- *Strategy* (formulate strategies that can help attain the goal)
- T- *Technology* (effective tools) (Parachute)

Health communication aims to change behaviour of its target population and often referred to as Behaviour Change

Communication (BCC). The 'POST' method discussed above clearly states that it is essential for the communicators to identify their target, conventionally on the basis of the similarity of their needs or problems or both. Setting objectives or goals will help health communicators formulate a proper and powerful strategy which will help in giving the process of communication a proper shape. The final step is to choose the appropriate social media tools among many available. These steps if followed can make health communication a success.

## Conclusion

The findings of the survey clearly indicate that there is immense scope of social media in health communication. A large portion of the study population prefers social media for health information and thinks it can spread health awareness. More than half of the population also recommends their friends and relatives to use social media for health information. Percentage of people using social media during health emergency is also very promising. Before going into the conclusion of the study some social media tools for health communication are discussed.

Social media use in health communication should be made under continuous surveillance. Social media in healthcare can be classified into five categories based on the mode of interaction. It can be 'patient-patient', 'clinician-patient', public health-health consumer', 'researcher-patient', and 'corporate/hospital-patient' (Hussain & Subramonium, 2014). In all the above mode of interactions both the parties should act with responsibility and maintain credibility. Only then the potential of social media in healthcare can e fully utilized. Maintaining ethical standards is important especially when it comes to health. Despite of a set of laws and ethical standards given by different bodies self-regulation is the most important factor. Every person whether acting voluntarily or for an organization must take precursory measures so that misleading or wrong information is not uploaded. Social media has the power to reach millions within a short time span. This is both overwhelming as well as alarming. Proper training of the resource persons is also required and they need to keep themselves updated by keeping a regular contact with medical practitioners, doctors and also researchers in this field.

## References

- Abroms, L.C., Schiavo, R. & Lefebure, R.C. (2008). *New Media Cases in Cases in Public Health Communication & Marketing: The Promise and Potential* (vol II). Retrieved May 29, 2016 from- [http://publichealth.gwu.edu/departments/pch/phcm/casesjournal/volume2/editorial/cases\\_2\\_02.pdf](http://publichealth.gwu.edu/departments/pch/phcm/casesjournal/volume2/editorial/cases_2_02.pdf)
- Constitution of The World Health Organization (45<sup>th</sup> ed.). (2006). Retrieved May 29, 2016 from- [http://www.who.int/governance/eb/who\\_constitution\\_en.pdf](http://www.who.int/governance/eb/who_constitution_en.pdf)
- eHealth Initiative. (2013). *A Report On The Use Of Social Media To Prevent Behavioral Risk Factors Associated With Chronic Diseases*. eHealth Initiative. Retrieved May 29, 2016 from- [https://agetechenews.files.wordpress.com/2014/02/social\\_media\\_chronic\\_disease.pdf](https://agetechenews.files.wordpress.com/2014/02/social_media_chronic_disease.pdf)
- Ghosh, S. (2009). *Mass Communication: An Indian Perspective*. Kolkata: Sishu Sahitya Samsad Pvt. Ltd.
- Keckley, P.H. & Hoffman, M. (2010). *Social Networks in Health Care: Communication, collaboration and insights*. Washington: Deloitte Development LLC. Retrieved May 29, 2016 from- [https://www.ucsf.edu/sites/default/files/legacy\\_files/US\\_CHS\\_2010SocialNetworks\\_070710.pdf](https://www.ucsf.edu/sites/default/files/legacy_files/US_CHS_2010SocialNetworks_070710.pdf)
- Heldman, A.B, Schindelar J, & Weaver JB III. *Social media engagement and public health communication: implications for public health organizations being truly "social"*. *Public Health Reviews*. 2013;35: epub ahead of print. Retrieved March 29, 2016 from- [http://www.publichealthreviews.eu/upload/pdf\\_files/13/00\\_Heldman.pdf](http://www.publichealthreviews.eu/upload/pdf_files/13/00_Heldman.pdf)
- Hussain, N. & Subramoniam, S. (2014). *Role of Social Media in Modern Healthcare*. Infosys.
- Park, K. (2013). *Park's Textbook of Preventive and Social Medicine*(22<sup>nd</sup> ed). Jabalpur: M/S Banarsidas Bhanot Publishers.
- Kanj, M. & Mitic, W. (2009). *Promoting Health and Development: Closing the Implementation Gap*. Nairobi. Retrieved June 20, 2016 from- [http://www.who.int/healthpromotion/conferences/7gchp/Track1\\_Inner.pdf](http://www.who.int/healthpromotion/conferences/7gchp/Track1_Inner.pdf)
- Kickbusch, I., Pelikan, J.M., Apfel, F., & Tsouros, A.D.(ed.) (2013). *Health Literacy: The solid facts*. Copenhagen, Denmark. Retrieved June 20, 2016 from- [http://www.euro.who.int/\\_\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0008/190655/e96854.pdf](http://www.euro.who.int/__data/assets/pdf_file/0008/190655/e96854.pdf)
- Korda, H. & Itani, Z. (2013). *Harnessing Social Media for Health Promotion and Behavior Change*. *SagePub* , 15-23. Retrieved May 29, 2016 from- [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/51113567\\_Harnessing\\_Social\\_Media\\_for\\_Health\\_Promotion\\_and\\_Behavior\\_Change](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/51113567_Harnessing_Social_Media_for_Health_Promotion_and_Behavior_Change)
- Lal, S., Adarsh. & Pankaj. (2011). *Textbook of Community Medicine: Preventive and Social Medicine*. New Delhi: CBS.
- Mohan, V. (2016, February 15). *Doctors using digital technology to reach out to patients: Survey*. Chandigarh, India. Retrieved June 20, 2016 from- <http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/chandigarh/Doctors-using-digital-technology-to-reach-out-to-patients-Survey/articleshow/50998552.cms>
- Mukherjee, R. (2016, January 30). *'Most doctors now prefer digital interaction'*. Mumbai, Maharashtra, India. Retrieved June 20, 2016 from- <http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/Most-doctors-now-prefer-digital-interaction/articleshow/50779708.cms>
- Nutbeam, D. (2000). *Health literacy as a public health goal: a challenge for contemporary health education and communication strategies into the 21st century*. *Health Promotion International* , 259-267. Retrieved February 20, 2016 from- [http://www.allianzgesundheitskompetenz.ch/logicio/client/allianz/file/Literatur/Health\\_Promot.\\_Int.2000Nutbeam25967.pdf](http://www.allianzgesundheitskompetenz.ch/logicio/client/allianz/file/Literatur/Health_Promot._Int.2000Nutbeam25967.pdf)
- Parachute. *Using Social Media in Health Promotion*. Toronto: Parachute. Retrieved June 20, 2016 from- <http://www.parachutecanada.org/downloads/resources/SocialMedia-Tools.pdf>
- Ratzan, S. C. (2001). *Health literacy: communication for the public good*. *Health Promotion International*. Retrieved February 20, 2016 from- <http://heapro.oxfordjournals.org/content/16/2/207.full>
- Schiavo, R. (2007). *Health Communication: From Theory to Practice*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass(A Wiley Imprint).
- Statista. (2016). *Number of social network users worldwide from 2010 to 2019 (in billions)*. Retrieved June 20, 2016 from- <http://www.statista.com/statistics/273018/number-of-internet-users-worldwide/>
- Statista. (2016). *Number of social network users worldwide from 2010 to 2019 (in billions)*. Retrieved June 20, 2016 from- <http://www.statista.com/statistics/278414/number-of-worldwide-social-network-users/>
- The American Congress of Obstetricians and Gynecologists. (2012). *Social Media Guide: How to connect with patients and spread women's health messages*. Washington: The American Congress of Obstetricians and Gynecologists. Retrieved February 2, 2016 from- <https://www.acog.org/-/media/ACOG-Today/acogToday201211.pdf>

\*\*\*

## DIGITAL CULTURE: A PARADIGM SHIFT IN COMMUNICATION PERSPECTIVE IN POST- GLOBALIZED WORLD

Soumik Chatterjee<sup>1</sup>

### ABSTRACT

*The paper discusses the rapid advancement in the field of communication during the last few decades and highlights the implication of media convergence in the new millennium. In the era of dazzling media technologies, the conditions and nature of world's communication infrastructure is modified with threshold alternations. The processes of globalization, accompanied by the uninterrupted transformation of the communication landscape around the globe are revolutionizing our daily life, how we communicate and entertain ourselves. The culture of traditional media services are rapidly shifting to knowledge management, E-democracy, e-learning, e-Business, social networking and so on. In the coming decades the internet can be visualised as part of a digital cultural shift in the delineations and meanings of public and private communication. The use of online resources and also the features of Web 2.0 (participation and collaboration) have introduced shifts (Web 3.0, Web 4.0) even within these digital media. New forms of communication are only determined by their technology and are formed from cultural and social conditions and the respective manners in which cultural purpose and expressions are conveyed. With every modification in the mode we communicate in our culture there is a new conflict over meaning, implication, knowledge and power. The changing communication technology has simultaneously heralded a new age of narcissism and exhibitionism. All within its several form and various modes of communication are reshaping the media consumers into new categories of identity and media use.*

**Key words:** Communication, Globalization, Media convergence, Digital culture.

### Introduction

From the commencement of human civilization, mankind has expressed its feelings and aspirations by using a variety of physical and symbolic devices and the thirty five thousand years old cave painting at Maros on the island of Sulawesi in Indonesia remain to this day as indelible proof that communication is an age old phenomenon. Over the ages, communication has acquired multiple dimensions. From being limited to only a social function, it has emerged as a tool of multiple dimensions (B.L.C & K.K.B, 2010). Communication is derived from the Latin words 'communis' (noun) and 'communicare' (verb) which etymologically means sharing information in the forms of messages, might it be knowledge or something else. Earlier communication has been seen as a linear process which provides the transmission of information by a sender to appropriate receiver in a way that will ensure understanding and promotion of desired behaviour and action.

But in communication process, the older approach was replaced by a focus on the development of telecommunication technologies that would facilitate 'two-way' communication. It was assumed that if 'one way' communication promoted cultural, political, and economic imperialism or dependency, then a different technological configuration could promote a redefined participatory development process (Mansell, 1982). The modification in definition gave it a great theoretical meaning and significance. The role of communication, which was essentially to inform and influence people, was being revised and then proposed as a process of social interaction, through a balanced exchange of information and experience (O'Sullivan-Ryan, 1981).

A 'paradigm shift' is a phrase that was popularized by Thomas Khun in his influential book *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* (1962), and used to describe a change or "revolution" in the basic concepts of a scientific discipline (Wikipedia, 2015). But 'Convergence' is an ambiguous term used by various disciplines to describe and analyse processes of change toward uniformity or union. Its application in the communication

---

1. Head & Assistant Professor, Department of Journalism and Mass Communication, Tara Devi Harakh Chand Kankaria Jain College. Kolkata

sector, often referred to as media convergence, also encompasses valuable approaches and insights to describe, characterize and understand the digital creative economy.

The world of socialized media is maturing and along with it, our knowledge, expertise, reach; personal and represented brands are also flourishing. It will continue as long as we realize that these new social tools and networks require an entirely new commitment and embodiment of what we personify and how we can be a genuine resource to the people who define the communities that are important to us (Solis,2010).Now in the time of technological revolution we may argue that traditional (mass) media is passé and constituted it as personal media. But in communication the arrival of new media does not put back the old, it engross aspects of its previous one and causes them to become altered.

This article is an attempt to analyse the remoulding of communication by 'Paradigm Shift' in 21<sup>st</sup> century and focuses on how users access new technologies and media opportunities that permit participation and interactivity through digital platforms.

### **Historical perspective of communication**

Through the emergence of new sights in communication from respective cultures it is extending from the ancient oral communication, to inter-personal methods of communication to online communication.

"Cave drawing was an established paradigm until language developed enough to pass on complete thoughts with tense and gender. The historic context was maintained by those with adequate oral skills and memory to expand on what the cave drawings meant. Eventually, cave drawing became an anachronism because the oral tradition was much more vibrant and could be made current. Historic consideration gave way to what is happening now and what could happen in the future (conjecture and superstition). Art still had it's place in mass communication, but those with vocal skills now surpassed the visual artist as the foundation of communication" (Lucovey, 2009).

In ancient Indian civilization, the philosophical, cultural and religious discourse was characterised by oral communication. India from the thousands of years flourished

with rich repository of traditional forms of communication engulfed with wandering monks, saints, scholars, priests who propagate their philosophical thoughts and ideas on various facets of life and religion from one place to another. Even where modern media have penetrated isolated areas, the older forms maintain their validity, particularly when used to influence attitudes, instigate action and promote change. Extensive experience shows that traditional forms of communication can be affective in dispelling the superstitions, archaic perceptions and unscientific attitudes that people have inherited as part of tradition, and which are difficult to modify if the benefits of change are hard to demonstrate. Practitioners of the traditional media use a subtle form of persuasion by presenting the required message in locally popular artistic forms. This cannot be rivalled by any other means of communication (Many Voices, One World).

From the ancient civilisation speech is the most significant vehicle of communication and throughout the world there has a broad range of communication media, extending from oral communication to inter-personal method of communication to satellite broadcasting. This pattern of communication-a communication journey from the oral to inter-personal communication aided by the gadgets of information technology encompasses the elements from the ancient to the 21<sup>st</sup> century online communication.

### **Convergence of Media Technology**

The last decade rendered mankind with immense technical options that could virtually assure creation of any type of communication systems. The advent of the Internet has given rise to many forms of online sociality, including e-mail, Usenet, instant messaging, blogging, and online dating services. Among these, the technological phenomenon that has acquired the greatest popularity in this 21<sup>st</sup> century is the Online Social Networks or Social Networking Sites (SNSs) (Hasib, 2008).Though a question occur, regarding paradigm shift in communication:

Does these changes in communication systems are fruitful for mankind or development of society? And, all this information's which we are consuming or sharing are relevant?

According to (Choudhury, 2011), "Communication should have a development value. In every development program, communicating the program through participants should be one motto...to eliminate information poverty, communication process has the responsibility of absorbing relevant up-to-date information to produce and share proper message...Communication process must make communities realize their relevance, interdependence and interaction with the macro society and country to ensure that isolated isles of prosperity, which are mutually exclusive are not created. He also argues that information is the element that offers power in all connotations yet it is abstract as its possession as a physical property is almost impossible. The capitalist trend of physical possession can't limit and harm it. The point of critical importance is whether we would handle it as a capitalist's asset for money spinning or as an asset of communal character.

With Gutenberg's invention, printing of books started and that opened up a new world of information for all people. Later, that led to the Renaissance, Scientific Revolution and the Protestant Reformation. Now the advent of www on internet has opened floodgates of information for all at a negligible cost with great speed through the click of a mouse (Tewari, 2009).

Between the late nineteenth century and the 1970s the mass media that developed are now referred as traditional media or mainstream media and the 1970s technological revolution and the socio-economic contexts rendered the emergence of "new media", the Web 2.0 model in communication. By the year 2000 the expansion of infrastructure illustrated the social uses of the Web 2.0 environment.

Convergence is the new buzz in new media technology that made it possible to communicate at a very faster pace. There are three basic technologies which are held responsible for the convergence and emergence of new media. Firstly, communication Satellites made global broadcasting possible. Secondly, Digitization ensured unified platform for data storage, data retrieval and data processing and lastly, through optical fiber we could send and receive huge quantity of data in never-before speed and ease (Singh, 2010). 'A historically

open-ended migration of communicative practices across diverse material technologies and social institutions' (Jensen, 2010).

The birth of new media promises a change in this communication and power imbalance between media owners and consumers by bringing about a paradigm shift in the process of communication that liberates all the inhabitants of public sphere from the vice-like grip of capital to produce and consume media products as per individual choice and discretion (Dhar, 2010).

By the late nineteenth century, important inventions had already been made public: the telegraph, the telephone, the motion picture camera, and the motion picture projector were among the most prominent and media technologies to emerge. Perhaps more important was the invention of electricity, which would become the bloodline of the information revolution. These early inventions created the conditions that made the process of mass communication possible; equally important is the fact that these inventions established the early foundations for the current global communication system (Kraidy, 2013).

### **Expanding functions of Communication**

Marshall McLuhan, a Canadian literary scholar in the 1960s depicted about the creation of a "global village" in his eminent book *Understanding Media: The Extension of Man*. He was not cognizant about the fact that his concept will turn in reality within few decades. When the media landscape changes so rapidly and so dramatically, it not only enriched us with information but the new media innovation offered consumers new choices to consume and share information.

According to Benkler (2006), all mediated communication involves three layers, which he calls the physical, logical and content layers. The physical layer refers both to the devices we use to communicate- phones, computers, televisions, games consoles – and to the physical infrastructure and channels that connect those devices and their users – the phone system, broadcast networks, broadband, cable, wireless links. The logical layer describes the software protocols, algorithms and communications standards that enable connectivity between devices and

users- these would include the TCP/IP protocols that enable computers to connect across different networks, 3G phone standards, 802.11 wireless communication standards, and the HTTP and HTML protocols that underpin the web. The content layer refers to the messages and ideas, the information and entertainment, the stories, songs and imagines that we share. In the era of convergent communication these layers has seen developments that could evolve greater openness and creative opportunities for audiences.

Meikle and Young (2012) argue that there is no obvious single endpoint of development in any arena of convergent communication. Rather, there are on-going contests and negotiations, legal crackdowns and user subversions, commercial expansion and altruistic innovation. Developments and possibilities are not only adopted but also adapted. Old media like publishing used to require a printing press. Circulation was limited to a fraction of a geographical location. Broadcasting via radio and television rely on expensive equipment to transmit signals around a country, regionally or globally. Now, once a user connects to the internet, he has access to a platform that is at once global and free. The new model assumes that the devices themselves are smart. This means that one may propose or explore new models of communication and coordinate without needing to get anyone's permission. An individual with a camera or a keyboard is now a non-profit of one and self-publishing is the norm (Shirky, 2008).

Social media networks such as Facebook and Twitter as well as Web 2.0 applications like blogs and Google have changed the news industry and the journalism practice inside out. They present awesome possibilities and at the same time a high risk for errors. The challenges social media and Web 2.0 have thrown to news managements and journalists have been like nothing seen before. Barriers to entry have been lowered since anyone with a PC, iPhone or Blackberry can be their own publisher. They can blog, tweet or Facebook it- anytime, anywhere (Alejandro, 2010).

Howard Rheingold (2002) explained that the computer and the internet were deigned, but the ways people used them were not designed into either technology, nor were the most

world-shifting uses of these tools anticipated by their designers or vendors. Word processing and virtual communities, eBay and e-commerce, Google and weblogs and reputation systems emerged. One more illustration is the extraordinary growth of SMS text messaging. SMS was originally viewed as a one-way provision for phone companies to alert subscribers that they had voicemail waiting (Jensen, 2010).

Communication systems are shifting their modes from a mere means of getting information to a platform for marketing. Over the past few years, it is observed that an interesting transformation has occurred in the business world where startup companies are utilizing its maximum sources to be derived in social media platforms with less budget and efforts compared to traditional marketing. Social media for startups has become good marketing opportunity and increasing more priority day by day. In fact, platforms like Facebook and Twitter have become integral parts of content distribution, lead generation and brand awareness with customer acquisition strategies for business (Akula, 2015)

The digital communications are also evolving new characteristics for the media consumers. In the web culture, the Web 1.0 model or the read only Web allows the publisher whether it will be a news site or a personal site to upload content to a particular Web site to read and the communication transmission finished there. In comparison the Web 2.0, the read-write web not only conveys the content of the publisher but also got the feedback from the audience side. The Web 3.0 model the extension of Web 2.0 model, where the publisher and audience (the media consumer) directly share their ideas and concepts. Now the rapid changes in social media platform introduced Web 4.0 model which may be considered as the symbiotic Web. The evolution of Web trends transmitting us from the static, mono directional phase (Web 1.0 model) of communication to digitised communities (Web 4.0model) and hence forth towards new Web model.

### **Communication in New Millennium**

The paradigm shift in communication with its optimism to radically transform our day-to-day lives has introduced a trend across the globe where citizens are making their bondage



with each other through social platforms of new media. "Users are key producers of the technology, by adapting it to their uses and values, and ultimately transforming the technology itself"(Castells, 2001). Today the mode of news consumptions are not same as of pre-satellite or pre-internet times when people waited for their morning papers or sat down for the news on television set. Now after the emergence of online media a vast number of readers and listeners are moving towards online news usage.

The digital age has arrived with a set of big communication challenges for traditional mainstream media: new relations with audience (Interactivity), new languages (Multimedia) and a new grammar (Hypertext). But this media revolution not only changes the communication landscape for the usual players, most importantly, it opens the mass communication system to a wide range of new players (Kaul, 2012).A comprehensive process of digitization is generally considered crucial, as it is a revolutionizing the means of communication from the "old", analog, and technologically separated industries of print, radio, and television into a converging world of "new", digital , and Internet-based media. The potential of digitization surfaced as early as the 1980s a buzzword in the 1990s when it started to make real waves in the media and ICT sector (Humphreys,1996; McQuail&Siune, 1998)

The wide-eyed, internetphiliac approach is deeply flawed. The net has changed out of all recognition from its pioneering days when the vision of the net as the redeemer of social ills was first promulgated. The civic discourse and subcultural experiment that so excited early net commentators, has given way to an increased emphasis on entertainment, business and electronic mail. The second defect of this approach is more fundamental than merely being out of date. It failed to grasp that inequalities in the real world distort cyberspace, and limit its potential for improving society (Curran, Seaton, 1981).

Newspapers have been under pressure to develop online outlets and new revenue streams because readerships have declined (particularly younger age groups) as readers access news and information elsewhere (television, the internet). The threat of losing classified advertising compelled many

newspapers to develop their own online environment, with the most successful using online news delivery to add value to their traditional product. Such sites provide opportunities for interactivity, continuous updating, easy access via electronic archives to related stories and customization or targeted news delivery (Gorman &McLean, 2009)

Through the interactive features and usability of the communication process of new millennium is changing. We can defined the internet communication as the techno-social system as the interaction between human being and technological networks. These developments were captured by Jenkins' (2004) suggestion that digitization is a continuing process, and that the end is not in sight.

### **Conclusion**

As communication shifted to new paradigm there is a new view point over meaning, significance, power and practicesof media. The internetcommunication systems now constitute all these media forms. Old characteristics cannot be implemented perfectly under the new regime of communication and it evolved new forms of expression by the consumers. Though they are partially determined by their technology and are regulated from social and cultural conditions and by which they are conveyed.

To sum up, the digital revolution is creating an information and communication renaissance which is more vibrant than ever, offering faster and cheaper communication access, fewer barriers to entry and more information to consume. Media are departing through a time of great shift and the recent years have witnessed exponential development in media industry, particularly in electronic and satellite communication. The rapid advancement in communication technology impacting the communication scenario, it has brought sea changes in intrapersonal, interpersonal, group and mass communication procedure in the new millennium. The information explosion has transferred the presentation of every communication media. Open information flows are modifying ideas and cultures in common mass which became uncontrolled by government watch dogs and corporate houses.

## References

- Akula, SC. (2015). The Influence of Social Media Platforms for Startups. *J Mass Communicate Journalism* 5:264. Doi:10.417/2165-7912.1000264
- Alejandro, Jennifer. (2010). Journalism in The Age of Social Media. Reuters Institute Fellowship Paper. University Of Oxford.
- Benkler, Yochai. (2006). *The Wealth of Networks*, New Heaven: Yale University Press.
- Loho Choudhury, Biplab & K.K.B (2010). Communication from Indian Perspective with Special Reference to Natyashastra. *DEV SANSKRITI : Interdisciplinary International Journal* , Vol. 04. Pp.62-72.
- Loha Choudhury, Biplab. (2011). *Indian Paradigm of Development: Man Standard and Communication*. Kolkata: Sampark
- Castells, Manuel (2001) *The Internet Galaxy*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Jensen, Klaus Bruhn (2010) *Media Convergence*, London: Routledge.
- DeFleur, M. L., Kearney, P., & Plax, T. G. (1993). *Fundamentals of human communication*. Mountain View, CA: Mayfield Publishing Company.
- Gorman, Lyn & McLean, David. (2009). *Media and Society into the 21st Century: A Historical Introduction*. UK: Wiley-Blackwell.
- Humphreys, P. (1996). *Mass Media and Media Policy in Western Europe*. Manchester, UK: Manchester University Press.
- Hasib, Abdullah (2008). Threats of Online Social Networks. Helsinki University of Technology. Seminar on Internetworking (28/29-08-2008).
- J.Curran & J. Seaton. (1981). *Power Without Responsibility*. Newyork: Routledge
- Jenkins, H. (2004). The Cultural Logic of Media Convergence. *International Journal of Cultural Studies*. Vol:7. pp.33-43. Doi:10.1177/1367877904040603
- Kaul, V (2012). Changing Paradigms of Media Landscape in the Digital Age. *J Mass Communicat Journalism* 2:110. Doi:10.4172/2165-7912.1000110.
- Kraidy, M. M. (2013.) *THE INTERNET AS A MASS COMMUNICATION MEDIUM*. Retrieved October 19, 2015 from [www.eolss.net/sample-chapters/c04/e6-33-03.pdf](http://www.eolss.net/sample-chapters/c04/e6-33-03.pdf)
- Lucovey. (2009). *Communications Basics. Paradigm shifts in mass communication: Nothing New*. Retrieved October 20, 2015 from [http://commbasics.typepad.com/my\\_weblog/2009/05/paradigm-shifts-in-mass-communication-nothing-new.html](http://commbasics.typepad.com/my_weblog/2009/05/paradigm-shifts-in-mass-communication-nothing-new.html)
- Mansell, Robin. (1982). *The "new dominant paradigm" in communication: transformation vs adaption*. Retrieved October 20, 2015 from [www.cjconline.ca/index.php/journal/article/download/278/184](http://www.cjconline.ca/index.php/journal/article/download/278/184).
- MacQuail, D., Siune, K. (Eds). (1998). *Media Policy: Convergence, Concentration and Commerce*. London, UK: SAGE Publications.
- Meikle, Graham. Young, Sherman. (2012). *Media convergence: Networked Digital Media in Everyday Life*. Palgrave Macmillan: New York
- O'Sullivan-Ryan, J. and Kaplum, M. (1981). "Communication Methods to Promote Grass Roots Participation". *UNESCO, Communication and Society*, No.6
- Rheingold, Howard. (2002) *Smart Mobs: The Next Social Revolution*. Cambridge. MA: Perseus.
- Shirky, C. (2008). *Here Comes Everybody: the Power of Organizing without Organizations*. New York : The Penguin Press.
- Solis, Brain. (2010). *Engage: The Complete Guide for Brands and Business to Build, Cultivate, and Measure Success in New Web*. UK: John Wiley & Sons.
- Sing, DevVrat. (2010). Researching New Media: Complications, Illusions and Challenges, *Media Mimansa*. Vol-4. No.1
- Wikipedia, Paradigm shift Retrieved October 22, 2015 from [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Paradigm\\_shift](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Paradigm_shift).

\*\*\*

## POLITICAL ECONOMY OF AIR POLLUTION IN INDIA: A CONCEPTUAL ANALYSIS OF THE ROLE OF MEDIA

Kiran Vinod Bhatia<sup>1</sup> & Santosh Patra<sup>2</sup>

### ABSTRACT

*Air pollution is not only a concomitant to environmental degradation but also indicates the unsustainable progression of poverty and economic deprivation. The networks of air pollution governance rest on the premise of a hegemonic play of power and politics related to the "social relations which make environmental degradation possible" (Kanie & Haas, 2004). This paper examines and in turn questions the various theoretical traditions which initiate an enquiry into the power structures only to give rise to policies that reify the traditions of a liberal, capitalist state in which the government has a very limited role to play. Most of the studies in India have confined themselves to identifying health damages caused by air pollution and failed to address the structural issues which lie at the heart of policy making and governance. The limitations of these theoretical approaches encouraged us to look for alternatives to study this phenomenon within a larger social matrix. In this paper, we have made an attempt to explore the governance mechanism which manages the relationship between capitalism's (in) compatibility with the achievement of sustainability. We wish to illustrate how exploring the political economy of air pollution in India will help us identify the ways in which policies are designed to strengthen the existing power relations in an economy and how the existing power structure is reinforced through mechanisms that are formulated by the state in association with the private actors. The aim of this paper is to examine how the discussions about the environmental problem of air pollution can be rearticulated to include a deliberation about the rights of the urban poor who are being trampled in the process of building on the modern dream of an urbane India. Media, we think, can play a very effective role in bringing to light the disproportionate burden of costs that some social groups are forced to bear due to the process of industrialization and development which benefit other, more powerful groups (Keller, 2011). Whereas the political economy approach discusses about the power relationships which perpetuates inequalities in a society it also offer alternatives to resolve the issues. Treating the problem of air pollution as an 'environmental justice' issue where each member of the society is made to carry the burden of environmental violation has been identified as a solution as it will guarantee the weak their rights as citizens who have equal stake in claiming protection against environmental hazards.*

**Key words:** Political economy, air pollution in India, issues network theory, regime approach, the role of media and environmental justice.

### Air pollution in India

The Government of India was alerted to the problem of growing air pollution in the country by the WHO report which indicated that 13 of the world's 20 most polluted cities in terms of air pollution are in India (World Health Organization, 2015). Thus, starting this financial year, the government will spend Rs. 553 crore across five years to bring down pollution. While only Rs.70 crore is allocated for the abatement of pollution in 2016-17, it is anticipated to more than double to Rs.150 crore in 2020-21 (Agarwal, 2016). According to the Central Pollution Control Board that monitors the status of the National Air Quality Monitoring Program that has 612 stations and is located in 2500 places across India, the main sources of air pollution have been identified as emission from automobiles, suspended dust, construction activities and industrial emissions. Over the years, the CPCB has observed that air pollution has become one of the biggest environmental health risks ever. An analysis of

the data collected through this program show that 41 cities exceed the ambient air quality standard. The table given below indicates the top ten cities in India with the highest annual average of particulate matter according to the National Ambient Air Quality Status and Trends- 2012 report.

Table 1

Rank	Name of the City	Particulate Matter 10
1	Jharia (Jharkhand)	231
2	Gajraula Uttar Pradesh)	177
3	Talcher (Odisha)	169
4	Lote (Maharashtra)	163
5	Saraikela-Kharsawan (Kerala)	142
6	Tezpur (Assam)	134
7	Gobindghar (Punjab)	130
8	Nalbari (Assam)	128
9	Golaghat (Assam)	126
10	Ri-Bhol (Meghalay)	122

Millions of people in India die each year due to ailments where the cause of death has been linked to constant exposure to polluted air. Of the 6-7 million premature deaths each year due to air pollution, more than 50% of those occur in China

1. Doctoral Scholar, MICA, Ahmedabad
2. Assistant Professor, MICA, Ahmedabad

and India alone. Air pollution in India can be categorized under two broad classes. First, the outdoor air pollution includes two major reasons i.e. vehicular emission and industrialization. According to a study, while India's gross domestic product has increased 2.5 times over the past two decades; vehicular pollution has increased eight times, while pollution from industries has quadrupled. On the other hand, the indoor air pollution is caused by the use of stove that use smoke producing fuels and account for high child and women mortality.

Air pollution has a considerable influence on the economy of the nation and the health of the citizens. The politics of environmental regulation in India need to accommodate the growth aspiration of a booming economy and so it sets into motion a discussion on how the industry and financial actors can be encouraged to respond to environmental concerns in India where environmental regulations are less developed or poorly enforced (Newell, 2008). Let us look at the case of mercury contamination due to Unilever's lack of concern for environmental protection in Kadiakanal in India. Hindustan Unilever had to shut down its factory in Kadiakanal because in the process of producing mercury based thermometers for export purposes, leaving behind a high level of mercury in the soil that contaminated the land, water and air in that area (Agnihotri, 2016). This tragedy affected the health of many workers and nearly 591 workers are still to receive compensation from Unilever.

In order to better understand the interaction between air pollution, the people and governing agencies, it is crucial to look at both the politics and economics of air pollution regulation. Thus, a political economy approach would best serve this object of inquiry.

### **Air pollution as an object of inquiry**

*"Air pollution is a poor man's issue."*

-Ahmad Safrudein

Air pollution is not only a concomitant to environmental degradation but also indicates the unsustainable progression of poverty and economic deprivation. The networks of air pollution governance rest on the premise of a hegemonic play of power and politics related to the "social relations which make environmental degradation possible" (Kanie & Haas, 2004). This enquiry into the power structures that give rise to policies to reify the traditions of a liberal, capitalist state in which the government has a very limited role to play can be contested based on some key arguments. First, the theoretical tradition of issues network model discusses the

importance of public interest groups that are one of the key stakeholders in the process of policy making for environment regulation. These groups offer perspectives and most importantly political resources (electoral votes) to the government. Thus, the phenomenon no longer belongs to the elite politics of policy formulation but also initiates a discussion about the idea of 'policymaking for votes'. However, Gonzalez (2005) argues that the key players in the field of decision making i.e. the 'local growth coalitions' composed of banks, real state agencies and others fail to address the repercussions of stalling economic growth for preserving the environment as the focus is never on ecological modernization. He explains how the pressure public interest groups have "been symbolically included in the clean air making policy process," and in turn have only led to the reinforcement of the existing power hierarchy in the society.

The second thread of theoretical rendering of this issue deals with the idea of the regime theory of environmental governance according to which air pollution as an environmental hazard must be studied in the context of the role of the state in international politics to maintain stability in the international system (Young, 1980; Volger, 2000). Krasner (1983) defines regimes as "sets of implicit or explicit principles, norms, rules and decision making procedures around which actors' expectation converge in a given issue area of international relations." In this, the state acquires a central role as it negotiates regarding environmental governance either with the international actors or with the national allies. In either case, the role of the private actors who assume public functions in areas of regulations due to ownership of resources and capital is neglected (Biermann, 2005; Paterson, 1996). The regime approach focuses on the monopoly of the state within which all the sub-national political actors operate and puts on the state the onus of identifying the environmental problems and addressing them through policy making. It is 'more about the government than the governance' (Betsill & Bulkeley, 2004), clearly demarcates the nation from the private actors and holds that the state has the absolute authority to mobilize efforts of all persons and groups within their domain.

As a result of the limitation of these approaches in understanding the environmental governance of air pollution there is a growing body of scholars in the area of political economy; they have tried to understand the governance as is designed to strengthen the existing power

relations in an economy and study how these political ideas are reified through policies that are formulated by the state in association with the private actors.

### **Towards a political economy approach**

Air pollution is one of the major environmental problems in most of the countries of the world. According to an estimate by the World Resource Institute, nearly 1.4 billion urban residents in the world breathe air which contains harmful particles (Central Pollution Control Board, 2001). The Prime Minister of India, launched an air quality index in order to raise awareness about the increasing levels of air pollutions in the country and provide scope for collective actions (DNA Web Team, 2015). Despite the various initiatives such as launch of the new index, shift from petroleum to natural gas and policy changes at the legislative level with regard to the functioning of factories producing toxic gases as a byproduct of the industrial processes, why is it that the air pollution levels seem to be constantly rising? Most of the studies in India have confined themselves to identifying health damages caused by air pollution and failed to address the structural issues which lie at the heart of policy making and governance. In this paper, I have made an attempt to explore the governance mechanism which manages the relationship between capitalism's (in) compatibility with the achievement of sustainability.

When there was a massive uproar about the rising levels of air pollution in Delhi, the National Green Tribunal "carried out a special drive for major construction projects towards the end of November and fined 39 of them Rs 50,000 each for dust pollution. NGT has issued specific guidelines to check rising dust pollution in the city, though the norms are not being met across the board. Dust is a major contributor to smog and has emerged as a major concern for environmentalists and doctors alike" (Lalchandani, 2015). The question then is, what about the safety of the construction laborers who work on the construction sites? Has the National Green Tribunal issued any guidelines to ensure safe working conditions for the labor class of the society? Studying both the systems of accumulation-exploitation and systems of domination will help understand the relationship between the economic structures and the agents responsible for the production of environmental harm (Sandler, 1994). The question is about the rights of the urban poor which are trampled in the process of developing the urban economy. The privilege to fresh clean air is an elite

aspiration provided for by the builders who choose the suburban areas to construct residential properties for the middle and rich classes of the society. Chandola (2013) tries to explain the politics of exclusion through a discussion about one such government initiative, the Bhagidaari system in Delhi, which called the citizens to form groups to clean Delhi and make it pollution free. When we look closely and try to analyze the politics of this system of governance what we see is the manifestation of the urban middle class aspiration of an organized, planned and pollution free living through the exclusion of the slum dwellers in Delhi. "By insisting that only registered citizen organizations could participate in the program, the state systematically ensured that the urban poor, including the slum dwellers, who lack the social and infrastructural capacity to form such collectives were strategically absented in this process" (Chandola, 2013). The Govindpuri slum in Delhi, for instance, is one of the mostly heavily populated places in Delhi, has heavy flow of traffic and is inhabited by the urban poor who are subject to the pollution generated by the vehicular emission of the cars, scooters and other modes of transportations which the middle class owns. On a similar note, the residents of a town in West Bokaro, Ghatotand, complained that the Tata steel plant was guilty of environmental violation as it didn't have efficient waste disposal system and the untreated dump heaps created a lot of air pollution resulting in health concerns (Mukesh, 2013). There are many such instances of industrial units that contribute to the GDP of the country by marginalizing the economically weak classes of the society. The benefits of development are appropriated by the privileged classes of the society whereas the working poor classes have been for ever now engaged in the backhand production processes in shady working conditions and are made to bear the brunt of development.

"As against this, the commodity-form, and the value-relation of the products of labour within which it appears, have absolutely no connection with the physical nature of the commodity and the material relations arising out of this. It is nothing but the definite social relation between men themselves which assumes here, for them, the fantastic form of a relation between things... I call this the fetishism which attaches itself to the products of labor as soon as they are produced as commodities, and is therefore inseparable from the production of commodities" (Marx, 1867).

According to a study conducted by Vanish Kathuria and Nisar Khan (Kathuria & Khan, 2007), human exposure to air pollution is dependent on the location of the residence and the socio-economic status of the people. The main reason for the existence of this relationship is that the poor neither have access to resources to protect themselves from the air pollution nor are there any government policies to take into consideration their living conditions and provide them with protection accordingly. For instance, most of the slum areas develop in and around the industrial pockets in the city due to the low land cost in such areas. Laws are made and the powerful are given clearances to continue violating the environment as long as it doesn't affect the elite classes of the society. As Cutler says, "the possibility for law to exhibit bias or to serve unrepresentative interests or undemocratic ends is ruled out by presumptions of the law as natural, neutral and consensual order" (Cutler, 2002). This relates to the Foucauldian concept of civic governmentality which studies the systematic institutionalization of participatory citizenship (recall the Bhagidaari system for 'Clean, Green in Delhi') within the frontiers of urban development through the politics of exclusion (Foucault, 1997). An important dimension of this civic governmentality in the area of political economy of air pollution are the technologies of governing, especially media which can either help reinforcing the power structures existing in the society and construct a reality which aligns well with the vested interests of the powerful elites in the society or challenge the dominant power structures by creating a collective against the inequalities prevalent in the country through its discourse, rhetoric and depiction.

### **Political Economy of Truth**

According to Foucault, power is not limited to the institutional politics in a society. Power is everywhere and is granted to and exercised by individuals through their everyday interactions. Power is largely embedded in those everyday instances in which individuals participate and thus power makes us who we are. Foucault's conceptualization of power is not associated with the domination of the state only; it runs deeper and questions the people at large who use and often misuse the power they derive, but of course from the social structures. According to him, "power is diffused rather than concentrated, embodied and enacted rather than possessed, discursive rather than purely coercive, and

constitutes agents rather than being deployed by them" (Gaventa, 2003).

These everyday interactions are initiated by the media discourses as the media systems come to shape the collective conscience. In media, the environmental account is more often than not depicted in a way in which fundamental economic interests and privileges are protected through strategies which support policy decisions that are in the interests of the elite class in the society; however there are exceptions. At the international level, for instance, studies have been able to explain the flow of waste and environment degrading materials from the West to the East. In 2000, the Taiwanese government approved the renewal of a contract between Taiwan power companies and North Korea which allowed for the dumping of 200000 barrels of nuclear waste in exchange of \$300 millions (Stern, 2003). However, media played a very important role in that some media channels portrayed this occurrence as an act of greed on the part of the Asian country (the headline in New York Times reads, "North Korea Agrees to Take Taiwan Atom Waste for Cash") whereas on the other hand, media channels helped in raising the question of how the developed countries are transferring the onus of reducing the carbon footprints on the developing world despite the fact that carbon emission by the developed countries have been very significant. The multiplicities of media channels available in the contemporary times have initiated a discussion about validity of the multilateral rules that are aimed at protecting the global common conflicts yet privilege private control, ownership and access to the limited resources in the world. The developed countries have forgotten, it seems, that they can afford to stall development because they have reached a stage where they can comfortably sustain their citizens. However, the other nations are still crippled with the problems faced by a developing economy in the efforts to stabilize itself.

### **An alternative understanding of the reality**

Media in India played a very important role in initiating a discussion about high levels of air pollution in Delhi. Political parties have come out to discuss the steps that can be taken to tackle the problem and the 'Odd Even Scheme' has been launched by the Delhi government (PTI, 2016). One of the themes related to the debates about the implementation of this scheme had to do with the 'aspirational values of the middle class' who wish to have a car of their own. Here I think media played a very important role by

emphasizing that each member of the society has an equal responsibility to uphold the rules for environmental protection. Media positioned the issues of air pollution under the umbrella of 'environmental justice'. The idea of environmental justice beings with acknowledging that disparities exists in cost and benefits distribution and thus it is very important to identify the disproportionate burden of costs that some social groups are forced to bear due to the process of industrialization and development which benefit other, more powerful groups (Keller, 2011). Thus it relates not only to the cost-benefit distribution but also helps examine the social relationships which either enable or disable individuals to participate in the decision making process.

Whereas the political economy approach discusses about the power relationships which perpetuates inequalities in a society it also offer alternatives to resolve the issues. I see treating the problem of air pollution as an environment justice issue as a solution where each member of the society is made to carry the burden of environmental violation. This will be helpful in two ways. First, it will guarantee the weak in the society their rights as citizens who have equal stake in claiming protection against environmental hazards. Second, as more people will be involved in the process through the assigning of responsibility, the market-state-capitalist bloc will have to become more responsive to the demands of the population for a clean and safe environment.

Understanding the politics and economics of air pollution in India helps look beyond the immediate and tangible benefits offered by capitalistic endeavors. As Engels (1934) explains, "In relation to nature...[capital] is predominately concerned only about the immediate, the most tangible result; and then surprise is expressed that the more remote effects of actions directed to this end turn out to be quite different, are mostly opposite in character". The theory of political economy can be seen as a point of departure from the classic economic age as the focus shifted on identifying ways in which production of commodities could take into consideration environmental sustainability. The problem with the model of development which India borrowed from the neo-liberal economies after the economic reforms of 1991 was that environment ceased to be a point of consideration in discussions on growth and progress. Even today, the development discourse initiated by the 'Modi' government seldom takes into account the

environmental impact of the economic and industrial policies being formulated. A political economy approach to air pollution initiates a dialogue between the stakeholders and the comers at larger about rights of property, ownership and wealth. It takes within the purview of its study the long term profitability that politico-economic policies promise; as majority of humanity faces a deprivation that promises to only intensify under the challenges of air pollution and environmental degradation, the logic of an economy that has the private appropriation of socially-produced wealth as its central principal seems deeply flawed. Streiger suggests that as the natural resources such as the air belong to everyone, and thus to no one, they are freely exploited (Steiguer, 1995). The need of the hour, thus, is to use the available platforms of expression to create public awareness about environmental protection and regulation. Besides the mainstream media channels, the alternative media platforms are playing a crucial role in this. The campaign against Unilever continued for more than 15 years and found increased coverage in the mainstream when a young girl from Kodaikanal decided to create a rap song condemning the company for the unlawful and inhuman activities it had indulged it (Agnihotri, 2016). She used social media to spread the word about this campaign and encouraged people to sign a petition against the company accused of exploiting the natural resources. Thus, the public were made responsible for protecting their environment only when they were introduced to the political and economic dimensions of the problem. This approach, thus, helps in understand how macro institutional malpractices translate into everyday problems that citizens face in a country. Identifying way in which the public can relate with the problem of air pollution at an individual level now only garners massive support for the cause but also compels the authorities, the financial actors and other stakeholders to feel responsible towards public health and sentiments. Thus, the study of political economy of air pollution aims at not only identifying the problem but also recognizing the solution embedded in the questioning of the structures of power and governance.

## References

Agarwal, M. (2016, April 28). *High air and water pollution in India's 41 tier-II cities*. Retrieved April 29, 2016, from Live mint: <http://www.livemint.com/Politics/r8blEXdbvNDhWmoylH7b5K/High-air-and-water-pollution-in-Indias-41-tierII-cities.html>

- Agnihotri, S. (2016, March 9). *Kodaikanal mercury contamination: Why Unilever is paying settlement to its 591 workers*. Retrieved April 29, 2016, from India Today: <http://indiatoday.intoday.in/story/kodaikanal-mercury-contamination-unilever-pays-settlement-workers/1/615992.html>
- Betsill, M., & Bulkeley, H. (2004). Transnational networks and global environmental governance: The cities for climate protection program. *International Studies Quarterly*, 48, 471-493.
- Biermann, F. (2005). Between USA and the South: Strategic choices for European climate policy. *Climate Policy*, 5, 273-290.
- Central Pollution Control Board. (2001). *Air pollution and health problems*. Delhi: Ministry of Environment and Forest.
- Chandola, T. (2013). Dumped through technology. *Journal of Creative Communication*, 265-275.
- Cutler, C. (2002). Historical materialism, globalization and law. In M. Rupert, & H. Smiths (Eds.), *Historical materialism and globalization* (pp. 230-256). London: Routledge.
- DNA Web Team. (2015, April 6). *Launch of India's first air quality index: PM Modi says country's contribution least in world pollution*. Retrieved January 23, 2016, from DNA: <http://www.dnaindia.com/india/report-launch-of-india-s-first-air-quality-index-pm-modi-says-country-s-contribution-least-in-world-pollution-2075059>
- Engels, F. (1934). *The part played by labour in transition from ape to man*. Moscow: Progress Publishers.
- Foucault, M. (1997). *The birth of biopolitics: Lectures at the Collège de France*. New York: Picador.
- Gaventa, J. (2003). *Power after Lukes: A review of the literature*. Brighton: Institute of Development Studies.
- Gonzalez, G. (2005). *The politics of air pollution: Urban growth, ecological modernization and symbolic inclusion*. Albany: State University of New York Press.
- Heclo, H. (2013). Issues network and the executive establishment. In S. Theodoulou, & M. Cahn (Eds.), *Public policy analysis: Essential readings*. London: Pearson.
- Kanie, N., & Haas, P. (Eds.). (2004). *Emerging forces in environmental governance*. Hong Kong: United Nations University Press.
- Kathuria, V., & Khan, N. (2007). Vulnerability to air pollution: Is there an inequity in exposure. *Economic and Political Weekly*, 42, 3158-3165.
- Keller, D. (2011). Environmental Justice. In D. Chatterjee (Ed.), *Encyclopedia of global justice* (pp. 298-302). Berlin: Springer-Verlag.
- Krasner, S. (1983). *International regimes*. New York: Cornell University Press.
- Lalchandani, N. (2015, December 4). *Government intensifies action against air pollution*. Retrieved January 23, 2016, from The Times of India: [timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/delhi/Government-intensifies-action-against-air-pollution/articleshow/50035673.cms](http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/delhi/Government-intensifies-action-against-air-pollution/articleshow/50035673.cms)
- Marx, K. (1867). *Capital: Critique of political economy*. London: Penguin.
- Mukesh, A. (2013, July 17). *Steel firms under pollution scanner*. Retrieved January 23, 2016, from The Telegraph: [http://www.telegraphindia.com/1130717/jsp/jharkhand/story\\_17125282.jsp#.VqeOJE9DQq0](http://www.telegraphindia.com/1130717/jsp/jharkhand/story_17125282.jsp#.VqeOJE9DQq0)
- Newell, P. (2008). The political economy of global environmental governance. *Review of International Studies*, 34 (3), 507-529.
- Paterson, M. (1996). *Global warming and global politics*. London: Routledge.
- PTI. (2016, January 1). *Odd-even scheme: Delhi has shown the way, says AAP government*. Retrieved January 23, 2016, from The Times of India: <http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/delhi/Odd-even-scheme-Delhi-has-shown-the-way-says-AAP-government/articleshow/50408304.cms>
- Sandler, B. (1994). Grow or die: Marxist theories of capitalism and environment. *Rethinking Marxism*, 38-57.
- Steiguer, J. E. (1995). Three theories from the economics about the environment. *BioScience*, 45 (8), 552-557.
- Stern, R. (2003). Hong Kong Haze: Air pollution as a social cause issue. *Asian Survey*, XLIII (5), 15-45.
- Volger, J. (2000). *The global commons environmental and technological governance*. Chichester: John Wiley Press.
- World Health Organization. (2015). *Ambient (outdoor) air pollution in cities database 2014*. Retrieved April 29, 2016, from World Health Organization: [http://www.who.int/phe/health\\_topics/outdoorair/databases/cities/en/](http://www.who.int/phe/health_topics/outdoorair/databases/cities/en/)
- Young, O. (1980). International regimes: Problems of concept formation. *World Politics*, 32, 331-356.

\*\*\*



## STUDY ON THE INFLUENCE OF MUSIC IN TELEVISION COMMERCIALS THAT ENDORSE FOOD AND BEVERAGE PRODUCTS

Disha Ramesh<sup>1</sup> & Dr. C. Velayutham<sup>2</sup>

### ABSTRACT

*Food products are a crucial segment of marketing as their advertisements need lots of visual and audio cues to attract the audience; hence music bridges the gap in these situations. This research aims at finding how much of an influence music has in commercial that endorse food and beverage products among youngsters of the age 18-25. It also aims at analysing the various aspects of the commercials that use music as a main ingredient to reach the audience. To understand the effect of music in commercial, two methodologies were employed. The survey of 50 respondents was undertaken to find out the consumers' attitude towards music in commercials and how much of a recall value they have. To support these results, three commercials - each of the top three food and beverage commercials that use music in their commercials, were chosen and their various strands were deeply studied.*

### Introduction

Music has been a universal language that connects people across the globe. It has, from times that one can't trace back, been an integral part of every human's life and has always been used as an effective tool for communication. Historically, advertising was first brought into notice in print media. In print media, advertisements did not contain any form of sound, but nowadays music is used in all major electronic media. This research's main focus is to study the influence of music in television commercials that particularly endorse food and beverage products as they use music as one of their important tools to reach the audience.

Music in advertising which is used in electronic media like television commercials, radio commercials, in film advertisements and so forth are differentiated into two different types which is background music and jingles. Background music is defined as live or recorded music played behind the dialogue or voice over to establish mood or to influence the emotional impact of a scene. This music comes without and with lyrics sometimes. But jingles are music that have lyrics written for specified product or brand that are telecasted on television & radio and the music is generally original.

This research mainly has three main objectives, they are : to analyse different food and beverage products or brands that incorporate music in their commercials to send across their message ;

to analyse the various types of music used in these advertisements and which one has better impact in brand recall ; To understand about how an important role music plays to develop an attitude towards the brand.

Television commercials are an important tool of marketing communications that is broadcasted for a short time and is bound to deliver the message in this short duration. In this case, music does provide the platform to get across the brand's message to the people and also allows the consumers develop an attitude towards the brand on watching the commercial that has music. Television commercials use lyrics majorly in their advertisements as these lyrics have found to play a vital role in brand recall when the brand's slogan is incorporated in the lyrics. Usually commercials that don't have music in them are boring and unattractive. Advertisers put in extra efforts to make sure it stands out among other brands and get the attention on their target audience. It is important to choose the right music or jingles that are easily understood to catch the viewers' attention. To deliver the message in a better way, suitable music can be used and so this can be used to persuade the audience to buy the product or use the service. This in turn helps in brand recall and brand recognition. But when music is used in an inappropriate way, the brand message could be misinterpreted. So today, each and every advertisement uses the right music that are decided by the advertisers & producers and they are also ready to spend lots of money to deliver the right message to the audience

- 
1. Research Student, Department of Media Sciences, Anna University, Chennai
  2. Assistant Professor, Department of Media Sciences, Anna University, Chennai

The viewpoints of scholars Jantzen and Graakjaerv (2009) are almost similar with Stewart and Furse's (1988) findings. These researchers say that, music is a very important factor in commercials and are used vivaciously in advertising the product. Jingles and background music are used in mass media so is served as a tool to influence the audience. It also differentiates the brand with its competitor brands. Besides that, using of music in television and radio advertisements had already become usual and hence say that people will feel bored if there were no music in an advertisement. Also, based on the findings of The Secret Weapon of Advertising, (n.d.), lyrics that are incorporated in music are **ninety** times more recognizable than the dialogues; which proves why a jingle is used as an effective tool in marketing a product. This also helps when a consumer is not paying attention to the advertisement and doing other works while it is telecasted, it gets stuck in the consumers' mind and so they are able to remember the slogan. While most of them think background music is very distracting in an advertisement, the research by Olsen and Johnson (2002) states that music in the background and lyrics can increase awareness and attention to the commercial and immediately makes the consumers to remember the advertisement's message better. Also, Yeoh and North (2010) also affirm that minds of consumers are "comprised of densely interconnected cognitive units, such that a specific piece of music can activate related knowledge structures". To this end, some researchers have demonstrated that an individual's preference or liking for a piece of music relates directly to the extent to which she perceives the music to be of natural fit to the environment.

### Research Design

This research is conducted in order to measure the effectiveness of music in television advertisements that endorse food & beverage products and how music could affect consumers' buying behaviour. Food and beverage products has been given importance in this study as the products and services of brands in this category uses peripheral route, according to the Elaborative likelihood Model, to influence its consumers to change their attitude towards the advertisement and their attitude towards the brand using music as the key element. This states that even when a consumer is not actively involved in buying the product or service,

elements such as music plays an important role in grabbing the attention of the viewers and influencing them to create an identity for the brand, which in turn develops brand recognition.

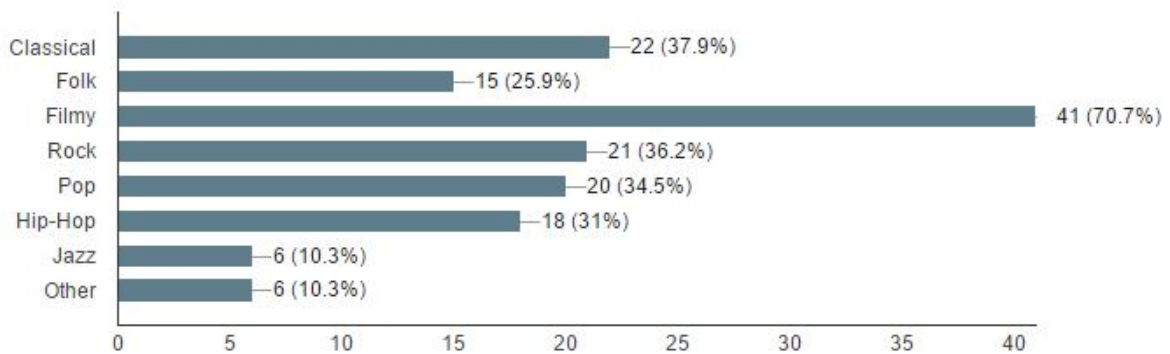
In order to answer the research goals, quantitative and qualitative methods were fully utilized in the research to test various viewpoints of the respondents on the use of music in advertisement and its influences towards their buying behaviour. Along with primary data, secondary sources in form of published articles, literatures and journals were used to support the survey result as well. These research methods that will be used in this study include: Survey- Questionnaire and Content Analysis. Three of top selling food product brands in India namely- Britannia, Cadbury and Coca Cola, were chosen as they are each from a confectionary industry, chocolate industry and beverage industry. Also three television commercials were chosen for each brand based on their usage of music in the commercial. This research also included a quantitative research method that involves survey results from 50 respondents. The data collected are analysed and interpreted to understand the outcome of this research.

In a food and beverage advertisement, the consumers are not able to taste or feel the product directly and so visuals & audio cues are required to reach the audience. In this case, the brand focuses on the product's usage in situations, the mood of the brand and how the brand represents itself to its target audience. To convey these emotions, music plays the right role to communicate the exact feeling of the commercial. It is also used as in continuity when a scene in the advertisement changes to another. Also the music not only conveys the message but also enhances what we see on screen.

Some interesting facts collected are that when the respondents were questioned about their favourite food or beverage product, about **20%** of the respondents said they like the beverage brand **Coca-Cola** and also **18%** of them said they liked their advertisements but only **14%** of them were able to identify their jingle. Also only **10%** of the respondents said they liked the chocolate brand **Cadbury** and **24%** of them said they liked their television commercials, but about **94%** of them were able to identify the brand's jingle easily. This shows that music has aided the brand to deliver the brand message in the

television commercials. It was also found that Britannia predominantly uses melody as genre to cover their target audience. Their target audience include all age groups so their commercials have a family setup or multiple characters. Cadbury's target audience are also all age groups but they reach the youngsters in their television commercials so they use varied genre of music like melody, pop, disco and so on. Coca Cola reach their audience by

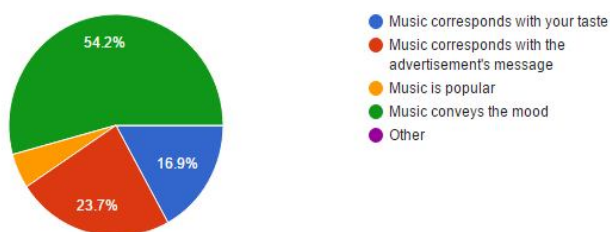
conducting campaigns and interactive events which build their brand image. They concentrate on developing commercials that have a strong message like a PSA or run campaigns to establish their brands more than incorporating music in these commercials which is reflected in the survey results. So it is found that though Coca Cola is one of the well established soft drink brands, it doesn't use music as a tool to reach its audience.



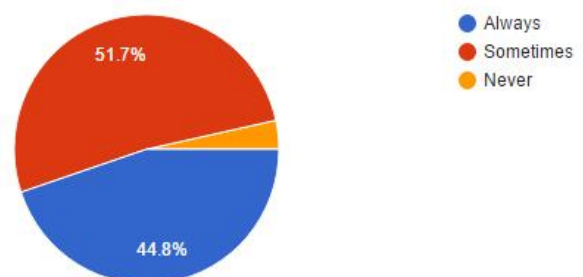
Bar Chart showing the genre of music preferred by the participants - Survey

Also the followings results were found:

- When music plays a major role in the commercial, mostly famous personalities or celebrities are not casted as it distracts the viewers from the music. If a commercial casts any popular personalities, the commercial focuses on the personality more than any other aspects of the advertisement.
- Lyrics play a major role in brand recall, so almost all the commercials that use music have lyrics with the brand's message incorporated in it.
- Though filmy songs are the most preferred genre by the youngsters, they prefer music that suits the mood of the commercial rather than incorporating the filmy songs in the advertisement.
- Cadbury is the most recollected brand for its music according to this research study with over 94% of the respondents recalling the brand's jingle.
- Most of the youngsters do pay attention to music in the commercials and also feels it serves as an entertainment factor in the commercial.
- From the analysis it was found that though Coca Cola brand is famous for their advertisements, their recall value based on their jingle is surprisingly less.
- The youngsters of age 18-25 feel music does play an important role in advertisements that endorse and beverage products.

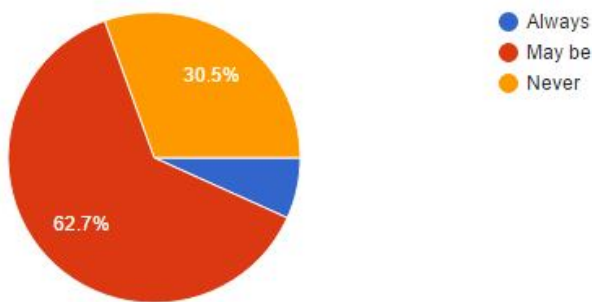


Pie Chart showing the participants' reasons for liking of the music in the advertisement - Survey



Pie Chart showing the recall attribute of the brand with music in its advertisement - Survey

- Each brand according to their target audience and brand message choose the genre of music that best suits their advertisement. Most of the commercials use the “Melody” genre, as the tune easily can be grabbed by the viewers or consumers.
- More than **80%** of the participants accepted that music is a very crucial element in the advertisements that endorse food and beverage products and the rest responded that music doesn’t play a key role in delivering the brand message. Most of them accepted that a good music in the television commercial would make them turn their heads towards the advertisement and watch the commercial.
- Though the music in the commercials helps to deliver the brand message, it doesn’t influence the purchase intent of the consumers.



Pie Chart showing the influence of music in the purchase intent of the participants - Survey

- About 75% of the respondents felt no use in watching a television commercial if there were no music in it.

### Conclusion

Music in television commercials are used in order to bring an entertainment element in the commercial, but this slowly has reached a point where it serves as the medium that delivers the brand message. Almost all of India’s top food and beverage brands use music in their commercials frequently and effectively use it as one of their type of advertisement to reach the audience. Though varied genres are used in these commercials based on the situation in it, melody is predominantly used as genre as the lyrics, which carries the brand message in this genre, is easily recollected or recalled by the audience. With the growing reach of various genres of music, most of the consumers feel that music does play a key role in carrying the message of the brand and also used as one of the important factors in endorsing food and beverage products in television commercials.

### References

1. Graakjær, N. and Jantzen, C. (2009). *Music in Advertising: commercial sounds in media communication and other settings*. Aalborg: Aalborg Universitetsforlag.
2. Stewart, D.W., and Furse, D.H. (1986). *Effective Television Advertising: A Study of 1000 Commercials*. Lexington: Lexington Books.
3. Olsen, G. D. (1995). Creating the contrast: the influence of silence and background music on recall and attribute importance. *Journal of Advertising*. Vol.24 (4). Pp. 30-44.
4. Yeoh, J.P.S. and North, A.C. (2009). The effects of musical fit on choice between competing pairs of cultural products. *Empirical Musicology Review*, Issue. 4(4).pp.130-133

\*\*\*

## THOUGHT FOR FOOD: USING PARTICIPATORY THEATRE WITH INDIAN YOUTH TO CURB FOOD WASTAGE

Karman Khanna<sup>1</sup>

### ABSTRACT

*Going by the idea that food saved somewhere is food available for someone somewhere else; this paper chalks out a strategic plan in order to curb the wastage of food that takes place at the consumption level by raising consciousness in Indian youth using a participatory theatre approach. Participatory theatre is considered a flexible audience engagement tool which gives importance to the voices of the otherwise passive viewers. The fact that the solutions for food wastage will be coming from the audiences themselves increases the chances of being manifested in their behaviour as well. With 15 percent of India's population malnourished, curbing food wastage becomes an important task for people at large demanding innovative solutions.*

**Keywords:** Food wastage, Participatory theatre, Social change, Youth

### Introduction

Food, as per Maslow's hierarchy of needs (1943), falls under the first order or what we call the physiological needs. The third order talks of love needs and with George Bernard Shaw's famous quote, 'there is no sincerer love than the love for food', we have reached a stage where food is romanticized. Food is no longer just a medium to satiate hunger but an expression of varied emotions. People cook as a mark of love and a gesture to pamper their loved ones whereas reluctance to eat food is a way to express anger. For the affluent class, food is such a taken for granted entity that at times its value is unrecognized. For the middle class, it is only with sudden and immense fluctuation in prices that food becomes a topic of discussion. It is the poverty stricken that need to be assured of the availability of two meals a day and who work only so they can afford it. Going by the idea that food saved somewhere is food available for someone somewhere else, this conceptual paper chalks out a strategic plan in order to curb the wastage of food that takes place at the consumption level by raising consciousness in Indian youth using a participatory theatre approach.

### Eating Habits

'Eating habits' of people encompasses not just what people include in their daily diet but goes further on to incorporate how people eat, with whom do they eat, how they procure the food, as well as storage and disposal methods

adopted. Apart from individual preferences for the food items purchased, a person's socio-cultural and economic background, religious beliefs, political and geographical landscape of the place he or she comes from, play a crucial role in deciding the food habits (Rodriguez, 2011). However, according to etiquette consultant, Jill Kryston (2009), leaving behind some food that has been served in the plate to an individual is a tricky habit/act to understand. Terming it as the 'clean plate debate', she says there is a divide in the people based on their perception of food consumption, where the ones who had experienced the Great Depression and their children brought up with the notion of being fortunate to have food on their plates stand against the ones who believe forcing someone to finish food against their will and eating to stuff and not just satisfy hunger is wrong. Culture too plays a vital role in deciding whether or not one should leave some food in the plate at the end of the meal (Mindess, 2010). In countries like India, Japan and China finishing each and every grain of food in the plate indicates that the food was well made and thereby indirectly complimenting the host. However, in the same countries at times a common cause of wastage surfaces when food is overstocked so as to not lose face by running out of it in presence of guests or when excess food is made or ordered to please guests or others. On the other hand, in countries like Egypt, Jordan, Cambodia and Philippines, finishing all the food on the plate could indicate to the host that they did not serve enough and can be taken as an insult. Similar is the case in some European cultures where leaving behind nothing on the

---

1. Research Scholar, MICA, Ahmedabad

plate is an indication of hunger and an expectation of another serving (Kryston, 2009). Depending on which part of the world an individual is in, leaving behind food in the plate hence can take up different meanings. With no binding rule as to whether or not some food should be left in the plate when one is done having a meal, consensus amongst etiquette consultants is that people should use common sense and not waste food intentionally. At the same time they say, it is practical and tolerable to leave food which one is unable to finish. Although, intention to waste and leaving food for practical reasons is subjective, in no case can we deny that there is food wastage happening.

### **Food Wastage and Food loss**

Food wastage and food losses combined together constitute the issue at hand resulting in food shortage across the world besides other negative implications (Lipinski, Hanson, Lomax, Kitinoja, Waite, & Searchinger, 2013) further discussed in this paper. Food losses include food that gets spoilt and hence is lost due to spillage or manhandling, rots due to improper and/or insufficient storage capacities and other losses before reaching the intended consumer. Food wastage primarily takes place at the consumption level where good food which is fit for human intake is not consumed either because it gets spoilt or as a conscious decision on part of the consumer to throw it away. Together food loss and food wastage can be defined as the edible parts of food, including both plants and animals which are harvested or grown for human consumption but are ultimately not consumed by them. It is clear hence that food loss is a result of infrastructural incapacities, primitive technology, absence of refrigeration facilities, lack of space and other logistic issues (Tokareva, 2014). These limitations can be overcome by investments in building storage spaces which are conducive, having necessary conditions to preserve the food better. Food wastage, unlike food loss, does not have very definite and straightforward solutions. It involves affecting people on a more individual level bringing about a change in their attitude towards food habits.

Food wastage as a concept is seen to vary from one research to another and can be considered as a culturally and regionally subjective action (Tokareva, 2014). Since researchers come from different backgrounds, they operationalize wastage according to their own cultural context.

This gives rise to classification of the wasted food as avoidable waste, unavoidable waste and now a category known as 'possibly avoidable food waste'. Avoidable waste is the uncontested wastage of food considered fit for consumption like half used packets of bread, unused potatoes and so on whereas unavoidable food waste includes things like tea bags, bones, seeds of fruits and other non-consumable items (Ventour, 2008). Possibly avoidable food waste is essentially edible food that some people choose to not eat while some do, like the dry rim crust of pizza bread. It also includes food that is thrown but otherwise could be used if cooked in a different way like potato skin which are usually peeled off but retained for certain food preparations (Tokareva, 2014).

For the Indian context under consideration, we restrict our definition of food wastage to avoidable food waste which includes food that is cooked and taken as a serving to be consumed, but ultimately wasted.

### **Sites of Food Wastage**

It is seen that food wastage at the consumption level has a direct positive correlation with the economic status of a country. Although the share of food wastage in developing countries is low as compared to the developed countries, with increasing affluence, this share is on the rise with India not being an exception (Biswas, Kastner, & Tortajada, 2015). The major sites of food wastage include weddings, restaurants, canteens and messes, hotels and the household (CSR Journal, 2015). Professor PK Mandanna of agricultural marketing at the University of Agricultural Science (UAS), Bangalore, points out that food wastage is more at sites where buffets are served as compared to where meals are served by professional stewards (Vyas, 2012). Accordingly, the communication approach used in this paper primarily targets to curb food wastage that takes place at sites serving food by the buffet system like hostel messes, luxury hotel restaurants, office canteens, weddings and so on.

### **Statistics on Food Wastage**

Across the world one third of all the food produced is wasted which amounts to a staggering \$400 billion annually (Nixon, 2015). In India too, as identified by Union Food Processing Minister, Harsimrat Kaur Badal, food loss and wastage is a pressing issue. As identified in the 2013 Emerson report, India

faces a loss of approximately INR 440 billion annually combining the food loss and food wastage of fruits, vegetables and grains. There is no denying the major share of this loss is due to improper storage and transport facilities, but the share of wastage is also significantly high (Malik, 2015). A lot of this waste comes from hotels, leftovers at social gatherings, canteens and households.

The MICA campus which is home to approximately 350 students at a time when the courses are in full swing generates on an average nearly 26 kgs of food waste every day (Fig I).

Day	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
<b>Food Wastage (Kgs / Day)</b>	27	32	28	23	24	22	24

Fig (I) Source: MICA mess committee

In 2011, the Bombay campus of Indian Institute of Technology (IITB) had a total of 14 hostels with each hostel having a separate mess except for hostels 12, 13 and 14 which had a combined mess. A study done by the students of IITB in May, 2011 yielded the following results for the food wastage taking place at the hostel messes (Fig II).

Hostel No.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12, 13 & 14
<b>Food Wastage (Kgs / Day)</b>	60	65	53	57	70	80	75	63	87	55	62	225

Fig (II) Source (Kambale, Rao, Rao, & Kumar, 2011): **Review of Food Wastage in All Hostel Messes at IITB Campus**

Food wastage figures (Fig III) obtained from Symbiosis Infotech Campus, Pune, also highlight the huge quantities of food that ends up not being eaten by the students who serve themselves in the messes.

Month	Jul	Aug	Sep.	Oct.	Nov	Dec.
<b>Food Wastage (Kg/ month)</b>	3968	2852	2944	3168	2910	4185

Fig (III) Source (Choudhary, Lakhotia, Dey, & Gupta, 2015): **Food consumption pattern of SIC mess**

The wastage is even greater at weddings. In Bangalore, nearly 84,960 marriages take place

annually. As per a study conducted by UAS Vice-Chancellor Narayana Gowda with a team of 10 professors, the combined food wastage in these weddings is estimated to be around 943 tonnes (Vyas, 2012). In monetary terms this wastage converts to around INR 330 crores. Luxury hotels and restaurants have a divided stand where some have tie-ups with NGOs to distribute the leftovers while some don't. In a study conducted by the Worldwide Responsible Accredited Production (WRAP) in Delhi (sample size for the study unavailable), 42% of the customers were apprehensive to ask the restaurant staff to doggy parcel their leftover food (Malik, 2015). However, as a result of this embarrassment, the food is left on the plate and is ultimately wasted since the restaurants throw away 'jutha' food.

### Implications of Food Wastage

With 15 percent of India's population malnourished, curbing food wastage becomes an important task for people at large (International Food Policy Research Institute, 2015). Food wastage does not limit its scope of consequences to the food leftover in the plate at the end of the meal only. From the stage of food production to its consumption, use of various resources are involved, having direct effects leading to change in the climate, water and soil

pollution, scarcity of water and loss in terms of biodiversity and habitats (Reisch, Eberle, & Lorek, 2013). Food production is responsible for one fifth of the world's greenhouse-gas release. When food is wasted on a large scale as discussed in the previous section, these production efforts are rendered wasted with the additional and unnecessary negative impact on the environment. 25 percent of the water used for agricultural purposes is rendered of no use given the volume of waste that is generated (Lipinski, Hanson, Lomax, Kitinoja, Waite, & Searchinger, 2013). This at a time when drinking water is not available to all the people in the country is an alarming concern. Ultimately that is wasted is estimated to consume 300 million barrels of crude oil through the course of its

production (CSR Journal, 2015). Land in India is downgraded to a great extent because of excessive usage of ground water, deforestation and agricultural practices that are obsolete and unsustainable. The direct economic repercussions of food loss and food wastage translate into inflation (NDTV, 2014).

One can also look at the implications of food wastage by looking at the positives that can be derived if food wastage is controlled. The average household expenditure benefits from reduction in the wastage of food purchased (Lipinski, Hanson, Lomax, Kitinoja, Waite, & Searchinger, 2013). Consumption of gas and other resources is reduced if leftovers which can be consumed are not thrown away but reused in some way. Emission of methane which is produced as a result of decomposing food waste can be controlled. On a more personal level, efforts put in by the individual who cooks are appreciated if the food is consumed with minimal or no wastage.

The following section explains the theoretical framework of participatory theatre that the researcher proposes to address the problem of food wastage at the consumption level.

### **Participatory Theatre**

Also known as participatory drama, participatory theatre involves a performance where the story at certain situations is deliberately interrupted in order to engage the audiences in a conversation or a game or also to tweak the story form that moment onwards in order to change the outcome of the play (Zaleski, 2014). At the core, the essence of participatory theatre is the active audience and the performers play the role of facilitators and improvise the course of the story with ideation help from the audience. Participatory theatre is thus considered a flexible audience engagement tool which gives importance to the voices of the otherwise passive viewers. These voices, unlike in a traditional play have importance during the course of the play and not when the act is done with.

Popularized by Brazilian theatre person, Augusto Boal during the early 1960s as a part of 'Theatre of the Oppressed', the objective of this participatory approach is to not let the audience feel isolated. Boal suggested that the approach is not revolutionary but is a 'rehearsal of revolution'. Tagging the audience as 'spectators' of a show renders them less human as they lose

their capacity to act and be the subjects like the performers of the show. Like the performers there should be an equal opportunity for them as well to go ahead and keep their story forward (Mayoux, 2012). Boal urged the audience members to think and participate.

Boal's was highly influenced by the works of Paulo Freire, Antonio Gramsci and Bertolt Brecht (Burlison, 2003). Participatory theatre as we know of today draws heavily from the critical pedagogical theories of Paulo Freire. Freire proposed the problem-posing concept of educating the masses (Freire, 1968) where instead of being fed with information considering the recipient is passive; he or she is urged to participate in the knowledge generation process. On similar lines, the researcher aims to make the selected demographic conscious about the problem of food wastage and elicit solutions from them in a hope that the solutions sought this way would be sustainable in the long run.

### **Demographics**

The researcher intends to target college youth and primarily youth enrolled in courses which involves staying on campus through the course period. The food served at such colleges is at a common mess where students have to self-serve and can decide on the quantity of food they want to take. Incidentally, food wastage is seen as a phenomenon prevalent in the age group of 20 to 59 (Schneider, 2008). Hence, targeting this population proves to be a best fit for the study. The proposition as to why the youth is more ignorant about wastage and food wastage is an invisible practice for them becomes clear when we see the food wastage being maximum in the age group specified and when the same cohort which is the youth, also known as the millennials, is said to be very aware of the global environment and issues of social interest, with a strong sense of community (Wright, 2006). Banking on the characteristic of a strong sense of community amongst the youth, participatory theatre framework is used. As Zaleski (2014) points out, participatory theatre evokes individual change which is based on a collective change of a group.

### **Proposed Methodology**

Using the participatory theatre framework, where the solutions arise from voices of the audience (Zaleski, 2014) the researcher plans to initiate a dialogue with the identified



demographics as previously discussed. For the same, participatory theatre plays will be held in the college campuses on three alternate nights post dinner. In order to warm up the students to the idea of an activity being held in the night regarding food wastage, on the day of the play, it is proposed to install a waste-bin on a weighing scale at the mess in order to weigh the amount of wastage that takes place throughout the day. The amount of wastage will be displayed on a board easily visible to the students. In the night, the students will be made to gather in an open space where the plays will be conducted. The first play will be completely staged with the help of volunteering actors and will explain the importance to recognize food wastage as not just mere wastage of food but as a monetary wastage too. The story for the same play is mentioned below;

### **Staged Play Story**

The play narrates the tale of a father and his 10 year old son who belong to an affluent urban family. Given the upper middle class culture in some families, the father is shown to disseminate messages to his son which speak of a culture laden tradition circling around the idea of how one must symbolically represent his or her affluence through behaviour. It all starts from a dinner table conversation when the father 'contextually' advises his son not to finish the entire portion of the meal served to him. When the son raises the very valid question, 'Why?', the father rattles a grand and prepared answer which he seems to have had inherited from his ancestors. In his explanation the father justifies this elaborate act of leaving behind a few morsels on the plate by saying that since their family belongs to an urban rich class they can not only afford to waste food but they must do so to symbolically establish their socio-economic status.

In the second scene the father and son are shown attending a wedding. The wedding ceremony is over and the grand buffet is opened up for the esteemed guests. As they eat the father and son are shown in conversation with each other. The curious boy notices how nicely one of the guests has cleaned up her plate and he decides to point out this peculiar behaviour to his father. The father simply explains how she must not be sharing the same class background as theirs. Thus she doesn't know the ways of the rich in which one must leave behind a little bit of everything that he or she gets.

The final scene depicts the father and son inside an ATM vestibule. The very busy father in a rushed manner inserts his card in the slot, punches a series of numbers in quick succession and instructs his son to collect the cash. The machine spews out 10 notes of 100 and the son picks up only 9. The father stepping out of the ATM asks his son for the money and quizzically wrinkles his eyebrows interrogating his son as to why there are only 9 notes of 100. The son gives his father a very wise look and with immense pride he exclaims, "Why father! We are rich. We are supposed to leave behind some."

This play will be followed by a small discussion explaining the audience how food wastage is equivalent to economic wastage. One would never leave behind some part of the money they get but more often than not the same thought will not be extended to food. The participatory plays will hence proceed, scripts for which are given below. The performers will initially act out the play without any interruptions followed by a reenactment in which the audience will be invited over to interrupt and tweak the story at moments where they feel they can help change the course of the play in a way as to avoid food wastage. The audience members will be urged to clap and shout '*bacha liya*' or 'he/she has saved it' for the participant who provides a viable solution for the food wastage. If they feel that the solution is not viable or too impractical, they will shout '*bachao*' or 'save' and another audience member will be given the chance to go on and provide another solution.

### **Participatory Play Story 1**

The scene opens at a hostel mess and is marked by the entry of a group of three friends. The trio is heard discussing with each other the fact that the menu for dinner claims to be serving *chole bhature*. One of the three friends, the boy with the widest smile on his face cannot stop gushing about how he misses *chole bhature* cooked by his mother and how he is going to be gluttonous over dinner in order to compensate. He fills his plate graciously and with excited footsteps proceeds towards the table to sit down to eat. With just the first bite, the sad realization of how the mess food fails miserably in comparison to his mother's recipe hits him. With a dramatic clang of the metal spoon on the plate, he utters a few curses and promises not to touch the food. Picking up the plate still full with food he makes his way to the disposal bin.

## **Participatory Play Story 2**

The story begins with a scene showing the interiors of a busy restaurant and we see a group of five friends entering. It's a Saturday evening and one can sense the excitement in their voices. They find a table and comfortably seat themselves down. The common discussion is how the long and tedious process of exams has ended and how they wish to celebrate over food and drinks. There is a redundant expression echoed through each one of them of how much they are going to eat tonight in the name of merriment. As a waiter walks up to them, each one of them orders for a minimum of two things naming one delicacy after another. The food arrives, the festivities begin and the conversations carry on. Very soon the weakest gives up first, realizing his incapacity to finish his share. One after the other all strike out but with no regret and conscious knowledge of how they had over-ordered and wasted an ample amount of food. The scene ends with them paying the bill and leaving merrily, casting no glance back at the food which ultimately met the dustbin.

The plays will end with a vote of thanks to all the attendees and a reminder to keep a watch around in the mess in the subsequent days. Simple posters reading 'Remember last night's play' will be put up in the mess right at the entrance the next morning. This would be to reinforce the learning of the students from the play held previous night.

### **Expected Outcome**

Zaleski (2014) attributes 'four Ps' to the participatory theatre approach. She says 'pleasure' that is provided by interacting with an issue in a completely new way is exciting and refreshing for individuals. The participants feel a sense of freedom to play and go by their intuition to explore possibilities and solutions for the issue at hand. She highlights the importance of humor as a key factor in order to keep the youth gripped. In her study on using participatory theatre to promote community health, she found that the approach provides immense pleasure and there prevails a 'culture of enjoyment' which leads to inquiry ultimately resulting in the growth of the individual. On similar lines, the content for the plays is kept primarily humorous and sarcastic to engage the youth. She recognizes diverse 'perspectives' as the second P, where the performers keep changing from the audience members, bringing

along their learning to the play. This introduces others to different ways of thinking and making decisions. Simple ways of curbing food wastage exist and are expected as solutions from the young audience members. The third P noted is opportunities to 'practice'. Participatory theatre provides a platform to the participants to rehearse for the real life situations without the fear of the consequences of failure. By practicing in these plays they act and indirectly do the intended action; the expectation being the act will extend in real life situations when it comes to avoiding food wastage. The fourth P as identified by Zaleski is 'power' dynamics. Participatory theatre gives an opportunity to the audience to be the subjects whereas the actors are mere facilitators. The approach will help develop solutions which are, if not completely, largely thought of by the demographic which is the youth.

The research project would require a week's time from training the actors to the installation of the posters in the mess for every college. As mentioned earlier the play will be held for three alternate nights in order to ensure maximum reach given the schedule of the students. Food wastage will be monitored on a regular basis during this period with a hope to see a drop in the quantity wasted. The unused food which is not *jutha* can be consumed by the mess workers and other staff and if there is further leftover, it can be distributed to the ones in need, independently or with an NGO tie-up.

### **References**

- Biswas, A. K., Kastner, M. J., & Tortajada, C. (2015, October 16). *Reducing food wastage: Not just food for thought*. Retrieved December 11, 2015, from The Diplomat: <http://thediplomat.com/2015/10/reducing-food-wastage-not-just-food-for-thought/>
- Burleson, J. D. (2003). *Augusto Boal's Theatre of the Oppressed in the Public Speaking and Interpersonal Communication Classrooms*. *Dissertation*. Baton Rouge, Louisiana, United States of America: Jacqueline D. Burleson.
- Choudhary, P., Lakhotia, M., Dey, K., & Gupta, V. (2015). Assessing the potential of renewable energy as a primary source for residential college campuses – Evidences from SIC. *TERRE Yu Con E-Journal*, 2 (1).

- CSR Journal. (2015, August 29). *Food wastage in India: A serious concern*. Retrieved December 12, 2015, from The CSR Journal: <http://thecsrjournal.in/food-wastage-in-india-a-serious-concern/>
- Freire, P. (1968). *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. Penguin Books.
- International Food Policy Research Institute. (2015). *2015 Global Hunger Index*. IFPRI.
- Kambale, K. R., Rao, R. T., Rao, E. V., & Kumar, R. (2011, May 9). *Review of Food Wastage in All Hostel Messes at IITB Campus and Possible Solution to Utilize Waste Food*. Retrieved December 12, 2015, from hs699.wordpress: <https://hs699.wordpress.com/2011/05/09/review-of-food-wastage-in-all-hostel-messes-at-iitb-campus-and-possible-solution-to-utilize-waste-food/>
- Kryston, J. E. (2009). *Leaving Food on Your Plate*. Retrieved December 7, 2015, from definingmanners: <http://www.definingmanners.com/Leaving%20Food%20on%20Your%20Plate,%20Oct.%202009.pdf>
- Lipinski, B., Hanson, C., Lomax, J., Kitinoja, L., Waite, R., & Searchinger, T. (2013, May). Reducing food loss and waste. *Working Paper, Installment 2 of Creating a Sustainable Food Future*. Washington DC, United States of America: World Resources Institute.
- Malik, K. (2015, June 8). *World Environment Day 2015: What Restaurants are Doing with Their Leftover Food*. Retrieved December 13, 2015, from NDTV Food: <http://food.ndtv.com/opinions/world-environment-day-2015-what-restaurants-are-doing-with-their-leftover-food-768936>
- Maslow, A. (1943). A theory of human motivation. *Psychological Review*, 50 (4), 370-396.
- Mayoux, L. (2012). *Participatory drama for gender transformation*. Retrieved December 15, 2015, from Gender Action Learning for Sustainability at Scale: [http://www.galsatscale.net/\\_documents/GALSatScale0FacilDrama.pdf](http://www.galsatscale.net/_documents/GALSatScale0FacilDrama.pdf)
- Mindess, A. (2010, January 2010). *To slurp or not to slurp: How table manners vary around the globe*. Retrieved December 7, 2015, from cultureandfood.wordpress: <https://cultureandfood.wordpress.com/category/politeness/>
- NDTV. (2014, July 5). *Wastage of food items among factors leading to inflation: Harsimrat Kaur Badal*. Retrieved December 11, 2015, from NDTV: <http://www.ndtv.com/india-news/wastage-of-food-items-among-factors-leading-to-inflation-harsimrat-kaur-badal-584070>
- Nixon, R. (2015, February 26). Food Waste Is Becoming A Serious Economic and Environmental Issue. *The New York Times*.
- Reisch, L., Eberle, U., & Lorek, S. (2013). Sustainable food consumption: An overview of contemporary issues and policies. *Sustainability: Science, Practice, & Policy*, 9 (2), 7-25.
- Rodriguez, J. C. (2011). *Eating Habits*. Retrieved December 7, 2015, from faqs.org: <http://www.faqs.org/nutrition/Diabetes/Eating-Habits.html>
- Schneider, F. (2008, May 11). Wasting food – An insistent behaviour. *Edmonton waste management center: Urban issues and solutions*. Edmonton, Alberta, Canada.
- Tokareva, T. (2014). Food wasting on consumption level: Analysis of the situation in Latvia compared to global tendencies. *Economics and Business*, 113-118.
- Ventour, L. (2008). *The food we waste: Food waste report V2*. Banbury: Material change for a better environment.
- Vyas, H. (2012, October 12). *Wedding food worth Rs 339 crore goes waste*. Retrieved December 12, 2015, from Times of India: <http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/bengaluru/Wedding-food-worth-Rs-339-crore-goes-waste/articleshow/16774949.cms>
- Wright, M. R. (2006, June). *Psychographic characteristics of the millennial generation: Developing a market segmentation for use in the wine industry*. Retrieved December 14, 2015, from University of Oregon.
- Zaleski, N. (2014). Participatory theater in community health. *College of Liberal Arts & Social Sciences Theses and Dissertations*.

\*\*\*

## WOMAN'S IDENTITY IN HINDI CINEMA - A CONTENT ANALYSIS OF 'MOTHER INDIA'

Aarti Kapur Singh<sup>1</sup>

### ABSTRACT

*Women function within a social context that controls and determines their lives. Over the years women's roles in films have evolved and many blockbuster films have featured women in important roles. These roles give women ample screen time and performance time. But the important question is what these roles imply. The negotiations done by the heroine in an average Hindi commercial film happen at many levels – Cultural, Political, Social Roles, Familial Roles, Professional roles and how these have a bearing on her sense of individuality, her self-realization and self-actualization.*

*This paper attempts to explain the way a Bollywood heroine is presented, citing the case of Mother India. The idea is to determine how a woman character in a commercial Hindi film perceives herself in terms of her sense of self and how much this sense of self is affected by multiple roles played by the woman character (daughter, sister, wife, mother etc) as well as extraneous circumstances - place, situation and event - that cause a character to make a decision.*

Keywords: Hindi cinema, Content analysis, *Mother India*, Identity, representation.

### Introduction:

Over the years women's roles in films have evolved and many blockbuster films have featured women in important roles. These roles give women ample screen time and performance time. But the important question is what these roles imply. As **Butalia (1984)** says, "...However a starting point may be that in spite of increased visibility, Indian women are not in general autonomous and self-defined in the films. This is not surprising given that 90 percent of the directors and producers are men. It is not an oversimplification to say that in popular Indian cinema women are seen very much in bad or good roles.

**Mulvey (1975)**, in her appropriation of the psychoanalytic theory says, "...the way film reflects, reveals and even plays on the straight, socially established interpretation of sexual difference which controls images, erotic ways of looking and spectacle... Psychoanalytic theory is thus appropriated here as a political weapon, demonstrating the way the unconscious of patriarchal society has structured film form. Woman then stands in patriarchal culture as signifier for the male other, bound by a symbolic order in which man can live out his fantasies and obsessions through linguistic command by imposing them on the silent image of woman still tied to her place as bearer of meaning, not maker

of meaning... psychoanalytic theory as it now stands can at least advance our understanding of the status quo, of the patriarchal order in which we are caught... (p. 7) Mulvey's essay first delves into Althusserian analysis by using terminology of 'consumable commodity' and women in film being just that – consumable commodities in terms of body and character within the plot of the film. In his essay, **Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses (1971)**, **Althusser** argues that humans perceive existence as being a network of systems of representation called Institutional State Apparatuses (ISA's). Cinema falls under this category which offers humans a visual sense of self through 'recognition' of the image of the self on screen. Embedded in this is the construction of individuals as subjects which are constructed by the lens and the director. In this framework lies Hollywood as well as Bollywood cinema. Mulvey states "However self-conscious and ironic Hollywood managed to be, it always restricted itself to a formal mise-en-scene reflecting the dominant ideological concept of the cinema" (Mulvey, 1975; pp 58).

**Urvashi Butalia's** 1984 article *Women in Indian Cinema* still has prevalence today as it is a general discussion of women and how they are embodied in Indian cinema. She discusses topics such as culture, religion and traditions, which should be examined when thinking and theorising about Bollywood. She affirms that although women are becoming increasingly visible in cinema, we have to question what kind

---

1. Research Scholar, School of Communication Studies, Panjab University, Chandigarh

of visibility it is and who the image of the visible woman is serving. She says that "in spite of increased visibility, Indian women are not, in general, autonomous and self defined in films" (Butalia, 1984: pp 109). They are seen as either good or bad and not in between and they seldom question that role or the men who control the representation of that role. The good ones are: "more often than not (self sacrificing) mothers, (dutiful) daughters, (loyal) sisters or (obedient and respectful) wives... Bad women, other than being modern, are often single, sometimes widowed...westernised (synonymous with being fast and 'loose'), independent (a male preserve), aggressive (a male quality) and they may even smoke or drink" (Butalia, 1984: pp 109).

In her article Globalisation and Representations of Women in Indian Cinema (2000) **Sangeeta Datta** looks at generic depictions of women in Indian cinema and Bollywood in particular. She talks about globalisation and the impact that has had on Indian cinema's representation of women which I will not delve into here. I focus on her discussion of the broad-spectrum representation of women in Bollywood film. First she discusses "the village belle" (Datta, 2000; pp 72) and how women are portrayed as simple, traditional, motherly and dutiful. Women in Bollywood, according to Datta "serve to maintain male domination. In Indian mainstream cinema we continue to see a patriarchal version of female sexuality" (2000:74). Even strong female characters in modern films are turned into "dreamy eyed lovelorn girl[s]" (Datta, 2000:74). In Datta's (2000) view, the majority of Bollywood films represent the female protagonist as being soft, beautiful and traditional.

Datta's (2000) grouse is that this recycling of old stereotypes of the valiant male and the conservative sari-clad female and with the recycling of these stereotypes there is little room for women to make their mark as strong individuals.

Datta also looks at what it means to be feminine in Bollywood terms. The female characters "do not articulate a new subjectivity but remain limited as the filmmaker's imaginary feminine... The subjects of these stories are deprived of any agency as their voices are manipulated to fit in the designed narratives"

Kenneth Burke developed a critical technique called dramatism in 1945. Burke created a method for applying his theory toward an understanding of symbolic activities. He called

his method the pentad because it consists of five points for analyzing a symbolic text like a speech. The five points that make up the pentad include the act, the scene, the agent, agency, and purpose. Burke added a sixth point, attitude, to the pentad, making it a hexad, although most people still refer to it as the pentad. Of dramatism, Burke said: "If action, then drama; if drama, then conflict; if conflict, then victimage. The foundation of dramatism is the concept of motive: the reasons why people do the things they do. Burke believed that all of life was drama (in the sense of fiction), and we may discover the motives of actors (people) by looking for their particular type of motivation in action and discourse. He set up a "pentad," which are five questions to ask of any discourse to begin teasing out the motive. You may recognize these questions as similar to the six news reporter's questions: who, what, when, where, why, and how.

While analyzing 'agency' from the point of view of women characters in Hindi films, it may be pertinent to observe that the reactions could be also accounted for due to experiences or situations. Thus the question of whether a choice was volunteered or determined arises. Therefore, the need to study the action-structure relationship, bearing in mind the Indian socio-cultural set up. Burke based this theory around Christian society and worldviews, so it does not take the differences in cultures, societies, and other religions into consideration when expressing motives for communication. It becomes interesting to replicate this theory according to the negotiations made by the heroine in *Mother India* - who happens to be accorded centrality. She is, as the paper discovers, an entity that represents all aspects of Kenneth Burke's Pentad. *Mother India* starting the way it does may make it seem like another feel-good melodrama about invincible motherhood with its inevitably reductive reading of women. As the film proceeds with scenes of Radha and Shamoo's marriage we are put in the familiar position of identifying the rhetoric of patriarchy. There is a song accompanying the bridal procession which proclaims that the woman's fate is to leave home. There is the scene in the bridal chamber where Radha coyly awaits her groom. As he approaches her the voice singing in the background tells us how Radha is not special in any way and her fulfillment lies in gaining the acceptance of her husband. She falls to his feet and he picks her up and admires her. These scenes and her

subsequent submissive behaviour towards her husband and her mother-in-law serve an important function in Mehboob's scheme of things. Radha is portrayed as everywoman. Radha may be an observer or an **agency** of the depiction of feudal exploitation early in the film, but then she grows to be an **agent** of change and survival and finally the torchbearer of righteousness.

Growth-fostering relationships are a central human necessity and that disconnections are the sources of problems. This emphasizes the existence of multiple social and cultural realities, developed in changing configurations of persons and environments. Human behaviour is learned as individuals interact with their environments. This learning is through association, reinforcement and imitation of environmental stimuli and because human behaviour is influenced by personal expectations and meanings, similar learning processes taking place in different environments produce differences in human behaviour. By applying this Relational Cultural Theory to the objective of a woman character's interactions with significant others she shares her environment with, the study seeks to analyze what kind of disconnect does a woman character face while asserting or negotiating her identity. How do individuals perceive social reality and how are they constrained by the pre-existing social and cultural structures and by those around them. This aspect will also explain the process in which 'conflicts' arise and the critical turn of events that lead to a woman character making certain choices that lead to her interactions with herself as well as those she shares the physical places and emotional spaces with.

What has been spoken of at length is its thematic portrayal of the nation as 'mother', the issue of 'honour' in terms of female identity, the 'mother-son' relationship, and so on. What these issues mean in feminist terms — within the larger iconic universe of Mother India — is a question that is central to an understanding of the film's extraordinarily layered meaning.

Crucially, the film is about 'Mother India', not 'Woman' India — carrying with it suggestions of patriarchy and male domination via a hitherto unseen route — the cloaking of patriarchy in maternal power. It is this sugar-coated pill, that makes Mother India an interesting case study.

**Discussion:**

That the film is called Mother India is proof enough of the responsibility that the woman in the lead titular role must play. Radha's (Nargis) first apparent choice is between being an ideal wife (honouring her *suhaag* and refusing moneylender Sukhilal's advances) and being an ideal mother (feeding her starving children). Later, the choice put to her is between being an ideal mother (unconditionally loving and protecting her son) and being an ideal woman of the village community (protecting its *izzat*, which has been tainted by Birjoo's abduction of one of its daughters).

There is a vast cinematic space accorded to the female protagonist by allowing her the titular role as well as the power of carrying the film on her shoulders. There is a responsive relationship between the agent (Radha), the scene (the prevailing exploitative feudal attitude in the village), within which the act of the struggle to survive takes place. It is significant to note that Radha is not just *agent*, but also *agency* of struggle and survival.

According to the Russian/marxist model of revolution, women like men can take part in the overthrow of the feudal society; their motherhood doesn't come into play. The Indian model seemingly favours another role: a woman cannot change everything, a woman is praised first and foremost as a mother and defendant of social values, and only then can she, as a worker and element of economic and social change, improve society and the individual.

The first allusion towards how significant the woman will be in Mother India is through its posters (Image 1).



**Image 1**

As the tiller of land, with a plough, and as cradling a baby, the character is a worker, a mother, and only perhaps then, a woman.

**In terms of Primacy of Character:**

Initially, when Radha comes to Shamu's village and home as a newly-wed bride, her beauty is the talk of the town. As a wife, she is completely devoted to her husband. As a woman, she fulfills her social role by giving birth to sons. As a mother she fiercely protects her offspring and as a peasant, she battles the elements to produce a rich harvest. (Picture collage in Image 2). It is through these multiple roles that her identity as primary agent is established. She is also the agency of social change, all the scenes and acts either are due to her or lead to her and she, in being compared with Bharat Mata, is also the purpose of the film.



**Image Collage 2**

**In terms of Complexity of Character:**

The notion of the 'wife' — the romantic partner — and the image of the 'mother', the unconditional maternal figure of endurance and support, becomes at once a shared, composite role. This effects a fundamental effacement of the 'woman' from the very narrative of the film. The construction of 'masculine' and 'feminine' is set out in gendered stereotypes. Radha works alongside her husband in the fields, not shying away from physical labour. After Shamu loses his hands, Radha takes on the role of father figure as well - not just to her children, but even for the husband - feeding him and even making him smoke a 'bidi'. Radha is then androgynous (Image 3).



**Image 3**

Radha's identity changes with each role she takes on in as the narrative progresses with newer twists. This is underlined by the changes in her physical appearance and presentation throughout MI. As a young carefree bride, she is shown wearing bright yellow or red flowing garments. Her hair is plaited. (Image 4)



**Image 4**

Once her responsibilities or burdens increase, the saree pallus are tucked in and not flowing, the hair is tied up in a no-fuss bun. This particular change in her identity is also verbalised in the song - "*Umariya ghatati jaye re - Chundhariya katati jaye re, Umariya ghatati jaye re, Kaam karha jivan thoda, Kaam karha hai re.. Pagla man ghabaraye, Chundhariya katati jaye re, Umariya ghatati jaye re...*" - meaning literally that the 'chunari' is being reduced to rags. (Image 5)



**Image 5 - Umariya Ghatati Jaye Re**

From the bright red attire, Radha is shown wearing earthy colours such as browns, rusts and dull maroons. She puts on the garb sexual 'utility' when she acquiesces to Sukhilala's advances only so that her children do not starve to death. Even then, she literally changes her physical appearance and identity by smearing mud over herself. This act is symbolic in more ways than one. Firstly, it reiterates, Radha's comparison with Mother Earth. Secondly and more importantly, it is the negation of her identity as a woman, and she is only what she is actually made of- earth and mud. (Image 6)



**Image 6**

After her sons become adults, she seems a tad tidier than during her days of struggle, but once Birju, her son becomes rebellious, she appears almost like a woman crazed with love for her son as well as possessed with preserving the societal norms. (Image 7)



**Image 7**

***In terms of Establishment of Character:***

In charting out identity development through a series of predetermined stages Erikson delineated the differences between the sexes arising along specific social roles. According to him, the achievement of masculinity or femininity signified identity and was grounded in the different social roles of production and reproduction. Based on the play patterns of children he noted that boys and girls used space differently, and girls consistently configured scenes of interior harmony consonant with their future reproductive roles. They preferred closed spaces and domestic settings, whereas, boys anticipated their activities in the competitive market, built high towers and imagined scenes of peril and danger. From the first frame of Mother India, Radha, Nargis, has been projected mostly as working in the fields. A lot of emphasis is laid in terms of cinematic time when she crosses her parental threshold in the song 'Pee Ke ghar aaj pyari dulhaniya chali..' It is in retrospect that one realises the importance of this visual in the film - it lies in the fact that even though socially Radha belongs within the confines of the house, her role in bringing financial stability to her family will make her step out more often than not. (Image 8)



**Image 8**

From the newly-wed bride who is gets her husband's constant attention, to the gradual removal (and pawning or selling) of her



ornaments and her final projection as a 'desexed' mother - the establishment of the changes in her character are gradual. (Image 9)



Image 9

From beginning to end, Nargis is the mother figure – making her a ‘mother’ even in her role as wife and daughter-in-law. The ‘mother’ element of Radha extends to not only her natural born sons, but to her husband, to her oppressors, to her village, to the very soil or earth of her land — and thus, a new conception is born, which implies that ‘motherhood’ must necessarily extend to all aspects of a woman’s identity, and leads ultimately, to the overall denial of womanhood.

Radha’s self-worth is to be measured in terms of her enormous power for endurance. The establishment of her role as ‘mother’ - that sacrosanct figure steeped in myth, religion and culture - is reinforced time and again throughout the narrative. She is even a mother as she feeds her husband after he loses his hands. She protects the interests of her young children when the husband tries to throw away food borrowed from Sukhilala by saying '*Mere bachche bhooke hain*'. She assumes the role of Annapurna in feeding the last of the petty morsels to the children and satiates herself simply with a sip of water. When the flood threatens to wash away the platform the mother has built (she has already lost two children in the floods), Radha props up the platform on her own shoulders.

The *photogénie* which exceeds language is more than evident in the kind of shots and frames used and hence points to the very essence of cinematic

specificity of the kind of negotiation Radha does to establish her identity as a mother and consequently, negate her identity as a woman. For instance, “Mother India” abounds in close-ups.

The ‘magnification’ process that theorist Mary Anne Doane talks of in relation to the close-up becomes increasingly pertinent to this film: the ‘mother’ must be represented as ‘larger’ than she actually is. Her ‘larger-than-life’ representation contributes greatly to her iconicity. As she represents the nation itself, she simply must be presented in ‘magnified’ states. Radha’s face is transformed into a symbol. The face becomes the ‘mask’ of collective representational meaning, and “Mother India” utilizes this large-scale myth making in constructing an abstract, iconic topography of India, represented by Nargis’ face. Her emotions are always expressed in close ups. (Image Montage 10)



Image Montage 10

Nargis’ face appears abstracted almost — the representation is so dramatic and bold, pitted against the blue of the sky, that she functions herself as a component of this ‘earthy’ landscape,

consistent with the inescapably hyperbolic nature of the close-up. The most intense emotions are conveyed through such processes of 'enlargement', universalization and abstraction. Nargis becomes much more than just an 'actress' playing a role, and much more than just the character of 'Radha'.

And when Mehboob Khan frames her face so that it's partly outside the screen, he does it with a precise purpose: the symbolism of the character is thus shown to exceed the narrowness of the movie itself (Radha carrying her Cross) - Image 11



Image 11

***In terms of Climactic Importance of the Character:***

Radha becomes the agency of establishing order in the violent and tragic climax. She rises from the status of long-suffering mother to a saviour and hero for the society. The female protagonist sacrifices her child for the good of the society - in complete reversal of the way she was willing to sacrifice her own self for that child - an absolutely idealistic take on a woman. The Mother begins as a beautiful benign bride, but the realities of a hard life transform her into the Fearsome Mother.

She negated her womanhood for the sake of the children, and now she negates her motherhood for the sake of society. The woman defies odds of being a biological mother to fit the framework of leadership becoming the mother of the nation. She shoots her own son in the process of saving the honour of an Indian woman.

Birju's so-called need to "avenge" his mother's affronted "chastity" is again a subscription to patriarchal discourse at its most de-humanizing of women. Birju's clear lack of respect for Radha at this instance is made evident with his utter disbelief that she can shoot him. "Tu mujhe nahi

maar sakti, tu meri maa hai" he exclaims. To which, ironically, Radha, the mother replies, "Main ek aurat hoon!" (Images 12)



Image 12

This kind of reading of the Birju/ Radha equation and in a larger sense, of portrayals of masculinity within the film, is entrenched in patriarchal norms. Firstly, the entire conception of the 'izzat' code or of the 'honour/chastity' motif underlying the film serves to entrap or limit women to the high 'pedestal' of such rigid moral enclosure that they cease to be allowed space for existing as human beings, while the men in the film are still allowed 'weaknesses' and departures from norms and duties assigned to them in society (the husband deserts his wife, the son disobeys his mother).

Her actual shooting of her son is not quite the crucial feminist breakthrough it might be read as. If we were to read it as "feminist", then it is a form of feminism which protects the very terminology that encloses and oppresses women — the terminology of 'honour' and 'izzat' (Radha will not allow for any woman's honour to be attacked), preserving the essential status quo set up for women. Furthermore, her immediate remorse and tears as she rushes towards her son, who hands her the blood soaked kangan, allows for Birju to have a final say before he dies. The entire moment comes full circle (Image 13).



**Image 13**

A search for national identity exploits but precludes the real Indian in *Mother India*.

**Conclusion:**

When it comes to presenting a woman who asserts her individuality, *Mother India* contains many paradoxes in it. The story of a peasant woman whose husband leaves her because he loses the use of his arms and is therefore unable to farm; it shows how Radha, the woman, takes on the responsibility of earning a living and bringing up her family in the face of constant hardship. The film projects Radha as, on the one hand, an extraordinarily powerful woman and on the other, as the archetypal mother whose life is made up of self-denial and sacrifice for the sake of her two sons and who, till the end, remains fiercely loyal to her absent husband. As object of guilty love and subject of imperial appropriations, *Mother India* is a contested metaphor.

From beginning to end, Radha is the mother figure – making her a ‘mother’ even in her role as wife. The ‘mother’ element of Radha extends to not only her natural born sons, but to her husband, to her oppressors, to her village, to the very soil or earth of her land.

*Mother India* is a strong political statement on a woman who can do anything to establish that justice has been done even while remaining within the framework of marriage and motherhood. She defies the micro state of being a biological mother in order to fit into the framework of becoming the mother of the nation when she shoots down her own son to save the

honour of a woman of the village. As Birju dies in his mother's arms, her bangles fall out of his hands - symbolic of not just a sacrifice made at the altar of the 'mother' - but also reinforcing how the film is about Radha. Radha's act of solidarity with the girl being abducted is not because of any particular attachment with that particular girl (in fact the girl is the daughter of her old enemy, Sukhilala.) It is an act of solidarity with the whole of womanhood. And by putting this above Radha's love for her son, her deification is complete.

In enhancing the glorification of the mother - *Mother India* appeals to the most emotional core of the society - while also establishing the strength of a woman as being stronger in comparison to the male characters.

Despite some serious assertions made by Radha, in the titular role, the film does not ruffle feathers because whatever negotiations Radha does are within the purview of societal norms.

**BIBLIOGRAPHY**

1. Althusser, L. (1971). Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses. In L. Althusser (Ed.), *Lenin and Philosophy and other Essays*. New York: Monthly Review Press.
2. Burke, K. (1969). *A grammar of motives*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
3. Butalia, U. (1984). Women in Indian Cinema. *Feminist Review*. Vol.17. pp. 108-110.
4. Datta, S. (2000). Globalisation and Representations of Women in Indian Cinema. *Social Scientist*. Vol. 28, No. 3/4. pp. 71-82
5. Doane, M. A. (1987). *The desire to desire: The woman's film of the 1940s*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.
6. Mulvey, L. (1975). Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema. *Screen*. Vol. 16. Issue. 3. pp. 6-18.

\*\*\*

## GUIDELINES FOR THE CONTRIBUTORS

### GENERAL

- Language: Contributions can be submitted in English.
- Preferred Length of paper: 3000 – 5000 words.

### TITLE PAGE

Title page is a separate page before the text begins. The title page must include:

- Title: Concise and informative. Avoid abbreviations and formulae where possible.
- Author names and affiliations: Please indicate the given name and family name clearly. Present the authors' affiliation addresses (where the actual work was done) below the names. Indicate all affiliations with a lower-case superscript immediately after the author's name and in front of the appropriate address. Provide the full postal address of each affiliation, including the country name, and, if available, the e-mail address, and telephone number of each author.
- Corresponding author: Clearly indicate who is willing to handle correspondence at all stages of refereeing and publication, also post-publication. Ensure that telephone numbers (with country and area code) are provided in addition to the e-mail address and the complete postal address.
- Sponsoring information: If the research is sponsored or supported by an organization, please indicate it.

### GENERAL RULES FOR TEXT

Use the following rules for the text, including abstract, keywords, heading and references.

- Font: Times New Roman; Font Size: 12 (English)
- Paragraph Spacing: Above paragraph – 0 pt; Below paragraph – 6 pt
- Line Spacing: fixed – 12 pt (or double-spaced)
- Page Margins & Size: One-inch margins on single-sided A 4 or 8.5 x 11-inch paper.
- Heading 1: Times New Roman; Size- 12; Non Italic & Bold; for example,

### INTRODUCTION

- Heading 2: Times New Roman; Size- 12; Italic; for example, *1.1 Research Methods*
- Heading 3: Times New Roman; Size- 12; Non

Italic; for example, 1.1.1 Analysis Result

- Subdivision of the article: Divide your article into clearly defined and numbered sections. Subsections should be numbered 1., 2., (then 1.1, 1.1.1, 1.1.2), 1.2, etc. (the abstract is not included in section numbering). Use this numbering also for internal cross- referencing: do not just refer to 'the text.' Any subsection, ideally, should not be more than 600 words. Authors are urged to write as concisely as possible, but not at the expense of clarity.

### MANUSCRIPT PREPARATION

All manuscripts should be prepared in Microsoft Word format, in Times New Roman, font size 12 for English, typed in double space and one-inch margins on single-sided A 4 paper. In case of quantitative/ experimental work, the author(s) must specify the purpose of the study. The text of observational and experimental articles should usually be divided into the following sections with the headings, such as Introduction, Methods, Results, and Discussion to clarify their content. All pages of the manuscript should be numbered consecutively at the right corner of the page.

The Title page (page-1 must contain title of the article, name(s) of the corresponding author(s) telephone, and email address of the author responsible for correspondence. It must also contain the source(s) of support if any received in the form of grants, equipment, drugs. The word count should include text of the article only (excluding abstract, acknowledgements, figure legends, and references). This page should also indicate the number of figures used in the article. Page-2, must contain only title of the article, abstract and keywords. Page-3 onwards must contain the actual article beginning with the Title and ending with References.

**Abstract**: An abstract is a succinct (one paragraph) summary of the entire paper. A concise and factual abstract is required (maximum length of 250 words). The abstract should state briefly the aims, methods, results and major conclusion of the research. From the abstract, a reader should be able to make out the content of the article. Hence, it requires special attention of the author. An abstract is often presented as separate from the article, so it must be able to stand alone. References should be avoided.

**Keywords**: Immediately after the abstract, provide a maximum of 8 keywords, avoiding general and plural terms and multiple concepts (avoid, for

example, 'and', 'of').

**Introduction:** The main purpose of the introduction is to provide the necessary background or context of the study (i.e the nature of the problem and its significance). State the specific purpose or objective of the study. Provide a brief but appropriate historical backdrop and the contemporary context in which the proposed research question occupies the central stage.

**Methods:** Methods section must succinctly describe what was actually done. Describe the source population and the selection criteria for study participants. Identify the methods, apparatus, and procedures in sufficient detail to allow other workers to reproduce the results. Authors submitting review manuscripts should describe the methods used for locating, selecting, extracting and synthesizing data. Describe statistical methods with enough detail to enable a knowledgeable reader with access to the original data to verify the reported results.

**Results:** Authors must avoid repeating in the text, all the data provided in the tables or illustrations and graphs as an alternative to tables with many entries or duplicate data in graphs and tables. This section must focus on scientifically appropriate analyses of the salient data.

**Discussion:** This section must emphasize the new and important aspects of the study and the conclusions that follow from them. For experimental studies it is useful to begin the discussion by summarizing briefly the main findings, and then explore possible mechanisms or explanations for these findings. Compare and contrast the results with other relevant studies, state the limitations of the study, and explore the implications of the findings for future research and clinical practice.

**References:** References must be written according to the guidelines of Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (6th edition). Responsibility for the accuracy of bibliographic citations lies entirely with the authors.

- **Citations in the text:** Please ensure that every reference cited in the text is also present in the reference list (and vice versa). Avoid citation in the abstract. Unpublished results and personal communications should not be in the reference list, but may be mentioned in the text. Citation of a reference as 'in press' implies that the item has been accepted for publication.
- **Citing and listing of web references:** As a minimum, the full URL should be given. Any

further information, if known (author names, dates, reference to a source publication, etc.), should also be given. Web references can be listed separately (e.g., after the reference list) under a different heading if desired, or can be included in the reference list.

- **Text:** Citations in the text must follow the referencing style used by the American Psychological Association. You can refer to the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (Sixth Edition).
- **List:** References must be arranged first alphabetically and then further sorted chronologically if necessary. More than one reference from the same author(s) in the same year must be identified by the letters " a" , " b" , " c" , etc., placed after the year of publication.

Use the author/ date system of reference in the text (e.g., Chomsky, 1997). Gather the references alphabetically after the text, using last names and first initials.

**Original Articles:** Original articles must report research work which has not been published and is not under consideration for publication elsewhere.

**Ethical Standards:** Any experimental research that is reported in JCCC has been performed with the approval of an appropriate ethics committee or the author should make a statement that he or she has maintained necessary ethical standards while conducting research. A statement to this effect must appear in the methods section of the manuscript.

**Copyright Transfer Agreement:** Authors will be required to sign a Copyright Transfer Agreement (CTA) for all papers accepted for publication. Signature of the CTA is a condition of publication, and papers will NOT be passed to the publisher for production unless a signed form has been received.

**Rights:** All research articles will be copy-righted by JCCC, but authors are granted the right to reprint an article in whole or in part in any work written (or co-authored) or edited (or co-edited) by them. Others must obtain written permission from JCCC to reprint or electronically distribute an article.

Note

- Please avoid using footnotes.
- Please do not use any colour other than white and black in paper. The layout of paper is only in white and black.
- Research work must be related to Indigenous Knowledge (specially related to ancient Indian knowledge).
- Quality work will be preferred.
- No fee for publication.

## SUBMISSION PROCEDURE

The final version of the manuscript must meet the JCCC Guidelines as noted. The manuscripts must be typed clearly in Microsoft Word format. Soft copy of the research article will be submitted by mail. Each article will be considered for review only after receiving, the soft and hard copies of the same. Upon completion of the review process, the first author will be informed of acceptance or rejection of the article within three months of the submission date. After review, the accepted articles will be sent back to the concerned authors for final revision and submission and the first author will be sent a formal letter of acceptance along with the registration form for publication of papers in the JCCC.

### Note

1. Submitted manuscript does not constitute prior publication. In addition, by submitting material to, the author is stipulating that the material is not currently under review at another journal (electronic or print) and that he or she will not submit the material to another journal (electronic or print) until the completion of the editorial decision process.
2. Research work must be related to all subjects related to social sciences.

**All manuscripts are to be submitted to:**

### The Editor

Journal of Content, Community & Communication  
Amity University Madhya Pradesh,  
Gwalior-474005, India  
Email: [jccc0615@gmail.com](mailto:jccc0615@gmail.com)

\* \* \*



# JOURNAL OF CONTENT, COMMUNITY & COMMUNICATION

## Subscription Form

I wish to subscribe to Journal of Content, Community & Communication for Rs. 500/- (Annual Subscription Fee).

A draft no.....dated.....

for Rs.500/- drawn in favour of Amity University Madhya Pradesh, Gwalior is enclosed.

Name : .....

Address : .....

: .....

: .....

City : ..... Pin : .....

Country : .....

Email Address: .....

Signature : .....

Mail to: [jccc0615@gmail.com](mailto:jccc0615@gmail.com)





**AMITY**  
**UNIVERSITY**  
— MADHYA PRADESH —

---

Amity University Madhya Pradesh, Maharajpura (Opposite Airport) Gwalior (MP)– 474 005  
Email: [info@gwa.amity.edu](mailto:info@gwa.amity.edu). Website: [www.amity.edu/gwalior](http://www.amity.edu/gwalior)