

Role of Media in Promoting Environment Awareness

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ABSTRACT

The environment is the basic need of all living beings because all their needs depend on it. If the environment is not protected, the existence of life on planet Earth would be impossible. That is why environmental issues have gained global significance. All people must contribute to improving the environment. In recent decades, sustainable development and environmental awareness have gained attention in the media. Due to increasing media coverage, our society is more aware of the impact of our actions on the health of the environment. In this regard, the media play an important role in making people aware of environmental problems and environmental protection measures. Global media channels reach nearly 1.5 billion people worldwide. Based on this information, it can be concluded that most people become environmentally conscious through the media. Global warming, depletion of the ozone layer and climate change are the current global environmental problems currently being faced by the world. How do people from different cultures see these problems? How do they react to them? The purpose of this study is to find out which factors are the most important to explain different levels of awareness of environmental problems and to compare the level of environmental awareness and actual behaviour of people in developing and industrialized countries. In this article, I have tried my best to shed light on the topic 'Role of Media in Promoting Environment Awareness'.

Keywords: *Media, Environmental awareness, Global warming, Nature, Resources, Sustainable development, Government Protection.*

Introduction

The media has played an important role in raising awareness about environmental issues. Government officials, scientists and journalists have shaped government policy for over thirty years. When the world saw the image of the earth taken from space in the 1960s, the awareness of the earth as a whole, delicate and finite system became the paradigm of our

time (Dryzek, 1997). With this awareness, understanding of our planet's environmental problems began to grow. Geographers argue that environmental problems have attracted the attention of the common man today because environmental deviations and pollution have reached global proportions and even threaten the survival of humanity (Singh, 2000). Therefore, environmental problems and the consequences of human activities, such as economic development, population explosion and soil degradation, were given an increasingly political character.

One of the most important problems of the countries is the environmental crisis, which threatens to deepen and aggravate the fragile economic and social situation of the countries. Everyone must understand that this environmental crisis is the result of, among other things, over exploitation of natural resources and poorly planned development projects fuelled by rapid population growth (EPA, 1997). As a result, many countries have faced severe degradation of nature's gifts and damage to the environment and human health in recent decades. Environmental awareness studies use newspapers, radio and television programs, which are widely and frequently used media today. There are several ideas about the functions of mass media in society, such as disseminating information about events and conditions in society and the world, which facilitates innovation, adaptation and progress (Mc Quail, 1994). Awareness raising missions by the media and various environmental clubs and organizations have not achieved much success. It should be noted that urban and rural populations have not been properly trained in extermination and environmental protection.

One of the reasons for the country's deep-rooted environmental problems is the need for awareness centred on the bad management and use of environmental resources (EPA, 2003a). The specific focus of this research is the role of media in creating

environmental awareness, and the concept behind media is very broad.

Main article:

Each generation inherits the scientific knowledge, wealth and natural resources inherited from the previous generation. But today we use too much natural resources. This trend poses a serious threat to future generations for drinking water, food and fresh air to breathe. As the population burden on the earth increases, the availability of air, water and land decreases. The world is struggling with a crisis. The mountains are constantly melting. Forests are cut down. The water in the rivers has decreased. Every year thousands of people suffer from lack of water, which we should be aware of. By creating awareness among people, we will have a beautiful world.

Human existence and development depend on natural resources. Most resources are scarce and take a long time to replenish naturally. In such a scenario, a development model where economic growth and development is based on hyper consumption is a sure recipe for disaster. A throwaway culture puts extreme pressure on precious natural resources. Let's take the case of cars. A generation ago, those who owned a car (there were few) lived with that car for the rest of their lives. Today, car owners change their cars on average every 3-5 years.

Role of Media in Environmental Awareness:

The role of mass media is very important in forming public awareness about environmental awareness, i.e., global climate change and related activities. When discussing the role of the media, we focus on three main things: to inform, to educate and to entertain.

The considered media can be classified as follows:

- A. Institutional media (school, government officials or village leaders, etc.) and,
- B. Mass media (radio, television, newspapers, magazines, etc.)

Environmental Awareness Created by Mass Media:

One of the most effective ways to get the message across to the largest possible audience in a large and diverse country like India is through the mass media, including television, English and vernacular press. Media plays a central role in creating creative awareness or questions. Both media can be very effective environmental communication tools, but until now they have not been used enough. Most environmental documentaries on television today

attract few viewers because of their academic or pedantic presentation. Similarly, although many English-language newspapers now report more and more information on environmental issues, they tend to be superficially researched and poorly written. There is still very little or no environmental news in mainstream newspapers. Newspaper, radio and television are the most widely and regularly used modern media in India.

Print Media (Newspapers):

Print media, which is still dominant and most influential compared to electronic media, can play an important role in environmental protection. Environmental reporting can do a lot to raise awareness. The concept of environmental protection is a reality related to coping and subsistence. A number of print and broadcast magazines offered environmental columns and programs. However, the overall coverage is quite rudimentary and limited. Now the focus is on environmental reporting. Mass media can provide general information about waste related to the environment.

After the independence of India, the number of newspapers in India increased. In the 1950s, 214 newspapers were published on a daily basis in the country. Of these, 44 were English-language newspapers and the rest appeared in several regional and national languages. In 1990, that number increased to 2,856 dailies with 209 English dailies. By 1993, 35,595 newspapers (3,805 newspapers) were published in the country.

Today Indian newspapers are published in more than 93 languages and dialects. On an average, about 50 minutes a day are spent reading a newspaper, which is the backbone of news in India, which is significant. No Indian daily has a regular environmental news column after the Times of India's weekly column dropped. The focus is mainly on local and national issues such as air, water and noise pollution and deforestation. In contrast, global environmental issues are rarely mentioned. In regional language newspapers, e.g., while educating farmers about the negative consequences of using pesticides.

Broadly speaking, major Indian newspapers such as The Times of India, The Hindu, Hindustan Times and The Indian Express publish articles on environment at least every other day, with Times of India doing the best job frequently. Many environmental journalists have chosen their subject out of genuine commitment. The environmental issue competes with all the other

issues covered by newspapers, so the strictest selection criterion is the news value of the issue. According to the editors, the reader's interest in environmental news is still quite low. However, all interviewed reporters and editors believed that the number of environmental articles had increased, both due to the increase in awareness and interest of their readers (especially among the younger generation) and due to the visible deterioration of the nature.

Awareness campaign by Newspapers:

Dainik Bhaskar Campaign - India's leading Hindi newspaper Dainik Bhaskar started 'Jal Bachao Abhiyan' among its readers in various states and it made a big impact on the readers. Dainik Bhaskar organizes 'Jal Satyagrah' initiative for a decade in April and May to organize a special drive during summers. The aim of the campaign is to raise awareness and encourage people to save water. The campaign encourages people to take the pledge; so that they save 15% of water in daily use.

The initiative received an 'award of Honour' from Union Parliamentary Affairs and Water Resources Minister Pawan Kumar Bansal. To promote this goal, the group carried out various activities and organized a conference with experts from UNICEF, UNESCO and the International Commission on Irrigation and Drainage. The initiative reaches out to individuals with advertisements and full-page editorial content on ways to conserve water. The next phase of the 'Jal Satyagraha' campaign detailed a centralized plan across all publications that included awareness of water scarcity and its solution. This included covering water demand and supply at the city level, the need for long-term planning to meet water demand, maintaining the health of city water networks, and cleaning and maintaining ponds, wells and boreholes. According to Neha Mawani, who joined this campaign, Water is precious and nature was more than abundant in India. But today the conditions are different. Most of the lakes, rivers, wells and old rocks are drying up. We have used this most precious gift of nature carelessly, without thinking about recharging and maintaining water resources.

Television:

There are more than 150 million television households in India, of which 25% use direct-to-home satellite television and 51% receive cable television. Digitization of television is happening. There are almost 800 licensed satellite television stations. About half of them are news-based outlets, and the producers

of news programs are often better than entertainment. Public broadcaster Doordarshan offers several services, including the flagship DD1, which reaches approximately 400 million viewers. Multi-channel direct-to-home (DTH) satellite television is a huge success. Major platforms Dish TV, Tata-Sky, Sun Direct, Big TV and Airtel Digital TV have millions of subscribers. State-owned Doordarshan Direct operates the free DTH service.

The above information shows that the media sentiment is widespread and spreading rapidly. Even in villages located in remote part of the country television is a status symbol. Another advantage of television as an educational medium is that it helps in teaching practical work. A televised presentation can be just as clear as a face-to-face presentation. With an average of 138 minutes a day to watch television, more than 50% of the interviewees watched television two to three hours a day. Not only more amount of time is spent on television than newspaper and radio but frequency of usage is also higher for television. Discovery Channel, National Geographic Channel and Animal Planet channel present wild animals and make people aware of the environment. A clear obstacle for the environment to play an even more visible role in the media is commercialization, because many journalists believe that since 'money cannot be made from the environment', the environment is not on the agenda.

Radio:

Radio is a cheap and easily accessible medium. Its signals cover almost the entire country. However, on average we have only 4.4 radios/transistors per 100 people. Of these, 80% are in urban homes. Only about six million devices remain for 525 million rural residents. In addition, the frequency of radio listening is relatively low: only 35% of those surveyed stated that they regularly listen to the radio, mostly for half an hour to two hours a day. Apart from the relatively small number of radio listeners, the role of radio in forming environmental awareness cannot be considered important also because there are few regular environmental broadcasts, although there is a directive from the Supreme Court. All environmental media should be aired regularly. There is very little environmental news at the national level. When environmental news is broadcast, it is mostly on a regional level. In short, radio is moving away from its potential to raise environmental awareness, and there has been no increase in the number of environmental programs in recent years.

Awareness campaign:

The country's leading television channel group NDTV launched a unique campaign in April 2008 called 'NDTV Toyota Green Campaign'. This continuous 24-hour program features stars and celebrities. It was an attempt to raise people's awareness of environmental issues. The campaign started with Nobel laureate Dr. R.K. Pachauri, Jairam Ramesh (Honorable former Minister of Forest and Environment of India) and many film stars.

India's first award of its kind, the 'Green Awards' seek to recognize excellence in all sectors of society - rural, urban, corporate, domestic, educational and resident welfare associations. Godrej Group recently launched the first of its kind environmental reality show - 'The Green Champion' in association with NDTV. Godrej Green Champion focuses on creating awareness about issues that plague our environment. This reality show emphasizes that the future of our nation is in the hands of the youth. It highlights key environmental issues and emphasizes the positive impact of even the smallest 'green' changes.

Zee Media Corporation Ltd launched the fourth edition of 'My Earth My Duty', India's largest environmental awareness initiative. 'My Earth My Duty' has proved to be an important platform for the Indian media to bring about a change in the behavior of Indian citizens, especially the youth. The initiative was able to raise awareness and motivate people to take appropriate measures to protect the earth and especially children and grandchildren.

Zee Media partnered with Ministry of Youth Affairs - National Service Scheme (NSS) and Nehru Yuva Kendra Sangathan, Paramilitary Border Guard, Indo-Tibetan Border Police, Central Reserve Police Force, ETF, Brahm Kumari Samaj, Centre for Media Studies and others to maximize the reach and impact of the initiative.

From pollution to climate change, the media has played a key role in raising awareness and raising the issue of the environment. The media contributed to national coverage of India, raising awareness of environmental issues such as drought in Gujarat, air pollution in Delhi, groundwater depletion in Chennai and pollution from coal mines in Jharia, West Bengal. It must be confirmed that the role of the mass media is one of the most important factors in raising awareness of environmental problems: this can only be true if, first, the mass media are accessible to a large part of the population. Secondly, they spend time on

environmental issues, and thirdly they are interested in environmental issues offered by the media, so they can watch or listen to similar programs and read newspaper articles or other written publications about the environment.

New Media (Social Media and Internet):

An increasing number of young people are enthusiastic users of new media platforms. Today's youth are very connected to each other and other global/local issues through the internet with the help of Facebook or Twitter. Industry and government agencies also use social media platforms as their primary means of communicating with the public.

The number of Internet users in India increased to 354 million by the end of June 2015. According to the latest data, India has more Internet users than the population of the United States, and India has become the second largest country in terms of Internet users after China. According to a report published by the Internet and Mobile Association of India (IAMAI), the number of Internet users in India grew by 17% in six months of this year (2015), adding 52 million new users.

India Water Portal is a website that shares information and builds communities around water and related topics in India. Managed by Arghyam, the portal has become a valuable repository of water resources, working papers, reports, information, articles, news, events, opportunities and discussions. India's water portal is a platform that gives youth an opportunity to share and discuss experiences and solutions. For experts, participate in discussions and learn about the work of others to save rapidly depleting water resources.

Institutional Media

Currently, environmental education has become an integral part of the national education policy for the first time since gaining independence. Now environmental science has become a compulsory subject in school and university education. The policy states that "there is a need to create consciousness of the environment which must permeate all ages and all sections of the society beginning with the child. Environmental consciousness should inform teaching in schools and colleges and should be integrated in the entire education process". Although there was no separate environmental education policy and action plan at the union or state level, environmental education was influenced by policies and plans of

other sectors, and environmental education strategies were outlined by stages and subjects.

National curriculum framework

A scan of the curriculum found evidence that environmental education concepts in terms of awareness and knowledge seem to be adequately covered, while the development of skills related to environmental and environmental ethics, attitudes and actions needs strengthening (Bandhu, 1999).

The latest developments are the introduction of environmental science as a compulsory subject for all undergraduate students after the direction of the Supreme Court and the introduction of environmental education as a curriculum at primary level. Environmental science combines science with social studies and the environment and emphasizes the connection between teaching and the child's immediate environment. Although the introduction of environmental education at an early stage is certainly welcomed, because it encourages children to deal with the problems of environmental pollution from an early age, it is still too early to judge how successful such a subject as environmental education can be in raising ecological awareness in children and making children's behavior more environmentally friendly. The problem of environmental education is the lack of qualified teachers to teach environmental subjects. At higher levels, environmental concepts are covered extensively in other subjects, such as natural sciences, geography, economics and sociology, but there is no special subject focused on the environment and therefore no special degree for environmental knowledge. Local or national environmental problems should be emphasized at all levels. Recent developments in school education in India, such as the introduction of environmental education, show convincingly that there is an understanding of the importance of promoting environmental issues in educational policy. The introduction of environmental education as an independent subject is an example of raising environmental issues and gives teachers the opportunity to deal with ecological issues more broadly and more effectively.

Level of Environmental Awareness:

As the main drivers of environmental awareness, their potential and weaknesses and looking at their special presence in India has been discussed above, the next section focuses on the resulting actual level of environmental awareness. Although more than the thirds of those interviewed said they consider

environmental pollution to be an extremely urgent problem, their belief in this is weakened when the ranking of environmental pollution was compared to other problems in Indian society. It is amazing that people see the above issues as related but fail to see the connection between environmental destruction and the many pressing problems faced by India. This is probably one of the reasons why the environment is usually not prioritized. In the educational policy launched to raise ecological awareness, on the one hand, emphasis must be placed on addressing the causal relationship between environmental destruction and social and health problems, and attention must be paid to the fact that poorer, less educated people are particularly affected by environmental pollution. Awareness of the convergence of environmental and social problems could raise the environmental problem further up the agenda.

If we talk about the latest event in India, the 'Swachhha Bharat Abhiyan' of the Government of India is a great example, the credit for its success goes to decent media and this attention has spread awareness among citizens across the country. The same phenomenon applies to Hindustan Zinc's 'Maryda Abhiyan' programme, which is an integral part of the 'Swachhha Bharat Abhiyan' to build toilets in the country and rid the country of open latrines.

Internet as a source of environmental information

The wide reach and accessibility of the Internet make it the best source of information for people around the world about climate change, environmental issues and greenness. The Internet is more convenient for receiving news.

Pointing your browser to one of the many online news sites will show you all the latest news headlines, organized by topic, and more. The Internet is not limited to computers. With a 3G or 4G connection, you can access the Internet anytime, anywhere at high speed. Video sites like YouTube, Vimeo, etc. are a rich source of information. Just one tap on your smartphone and the world is on your phone. Thus, these advanced technologies have enhanced environmental awareness.

Conclusion:

As we all know, the environment is the basic need of life like food and water. But our actions made it significantly worse. After realizing our mistake, we have taken commendable steps to reform it, and proper media attention can improve the success of any

environmental mission. The latest efforts of the Government of India to promote sanitation 'Swachhha Bharat Abhiyan' have been successful with the joint efforts of the government and the media. Mass media has always dealt with social and environmental issues, so it is the most revolutionary tool to spread environmental awareness.

The role of the media in raising community concerns and commitment to social and environmental issues is very critical. Raising awareness of environmental protection and the sustainable use of limited resources are issues that directly affect every citizen. The media can be a tool to break the silence around environmental issues and create an environment that encourages discussion about how the community can participate and change their behavior. It is very important to raise public awareness of environmental issues. The efforts of the press to raise public awareness of environmental problems and its continuing central role in combating the causes of environmental problems are important. However, the participation of the state media in environmental challenges is only event-based. Environmental issues have not yet reached the stage where they are the primary agenda of the media. The media do not approach creatively when they create stories about environmental protection and do not pay enough attention to the deterioration of the environment and its consequences. The media seems unable to raise public environmental awareness in a specific geographic area. Even now, the biggest media focus is on things happening around big cities, there is no versatile community media at the grassroots level. The media also do not give fair and optimal space and time to environmental issues. Unlike other development and policy issues, there is no detailed research on the role of the media in environmental awareness issues. Although some of the activities to date have been positive, the work done so far in the research field is very insufficient compared to the consequences of environmental challenges.

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