



A study of effectiveness of mass media practices of Hmar youth of Dima Hasao district of Assam, India

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Abstract

Mass media with its various types have the tremendous potential as the means of communication with the people, it is concerned with all the elements and include strong dimension of communication of message. The mass media either electronic or print media is very positively understood by the people of the society, old and young, literate and illiterate. It is easy for the people to grab the message when it is given to them not only by verbal but by view of its features like radio, television etc. The research paper is an attempt to find out the use and effects of mass media in this new media age among the Hmar youth of Harangajao with population of 160, Buolmol with population of 87 and Hmunthajao with population of 78 (Dima Hasao) from two rural areas and one urban area. The study is an attempt to know the differences of the youth in now days, why the people of urban areas are so advanced either technologically or psychologically and why the rural people still lack behind in every field or why the rural people still needs to go urban areas for their higher education and establishment. The paper also highlights the importance of mass media and its impact in a student life among the Hmar youth. This study is based on primary data with selected villages from Dima Hasao district. Primary data were collected by questionnaire, schedules and personal interview. Purposive sampling method was applied to collect data.

Keywords: Mass media, Effects on youth, Impact on education.

Introduction

Meaning of Mass media: Mass media means technology that is intended to reach a mass audience. It is the primary means of communication used to reach the vast majority of the general public. The mass media is a diversified collection of media technologies that reach a large audience via mass communication. The technologies through which this communication takes place include a variety of outlets¹.

The Mass medium which is a part of our culture and life are used for transmitting tradition and information from one generation to another generation. Mass media is handing down of beliefs, experiences, and customs from generation to generation especially in oral form or by a process of vision and hearing performance and communication. Mass media is found expressing in the daily social life of the people. They are the personal forms of communication and entertainment².

Mass media has a very strong position in the rural and urban peoples mind, as it serves there various needs and purposes and entertain them. Trough entertainment, Mass media motives the rural illiterate folks as they present the messages in their own dialect and way of life, which make the messages easily understandable even to the uneducated peoples of the region.

Types of media: Mass media refers to communication devices, which can be used to communicate and interact with a large number of audiences in different languages. Entertainment and media always go hand in hand, but in addition to the

entertainment, mass media are an effective medium for communication, dissemination of information, advertising, marketing, and in general, for expressing and sharing views, opinions, and ideas. Mass media is a double-edged sword - there are positive as well as negative influences of media³.

Different types of mass media that are used for social communication and entertainment includes:

Broadcast media: Broadcast media is the most expedient means to transmit information immediately to the widest possible audience. The term 'broadcast media' covers a wide spectrum of different communication methods such as television, radio, newspapers, magazines and any other materials supplied by the media and press. The broadcasting media provides valuable information, for example speeches, documentaries, interviews, advertisements, daily news, financial markets and much more³.

Internet Media: Internet media comprise such services as email, social media sites, websites, and Internet-based radio and television. On the other hand they are those media which can be accessed and used with the help of some digital media and new based internet. These types of media are very effective as they are very fast and people can used it and utilized it in number of ways in our day to day life.

Outdoor media: Outdoor media is defined as any type of communication that reaches an individual while they are out of

the home. In particular, billboards, posters, and mass trans The effectiveness of outdoor media, especially of mass transit media has been demonstrated for disseminating knowledge of a social problem and promoting healthy behavioral change it placards represent a promising avenue for science learning. Outdoor media combines the strengths of audio-visual communication with the visibility of outdoor and make them understanding in a better way with its different industries⁴.

Literature Review: Literature is the integral part of the research process. The existing literature helps to acquaint the researcher with the available body of knowledge in the research area. It is comprehensive and broadens the knowledge base in the research area and helped the investigator the deep insight into the research problem.

Wilbur Schramm emphasized on the role of communication in the process of social change by saying that the development of mass media is one of the requisites form and signs of modernizing society. Communication is not something that has life of its own, it is something people do. It is the fundamental process of society, the way that people relate to each other⁵.

Alfonso Gumucio Dagon and Thomas Tufte examines that in the communication process that involves the traditional channels of communication are invariably all purpose, general audience oriented, information – dissemination process, while secondary channels are often feedback channels that are mostly purpose audience specific Communication for Social Change⁶.

CV Narasimha Reddy says that tradition is a custom handed down from one generation to another. Traditional Media by nature are those indigenous forms of communication, which have their roots in the cultural tradition of the country. According to him traditional medium is defined as a folk art form by which a message is communicated in the form of spoken words, song and body language and facial expression. Folk media are personal, appear in the form human style and the message is direct from artiste to the audience.

This media are still alive in villages and continue to provide both information and entertainment to the people in remote areas who are not exposed to the modern media of communication⁷.

Arvind Kumar in his study pointed out that folk media reflect the ethos of the people, which are characterized by the spontaneity that spring from the emotions of common people in their natural surroundings. It reflects the tradition and customs of a community, which are linked to ceremonies and activities in various regions, and every region has its own folk art that is immensely popular and relevant in that area.

Having being exposed to this art form for centuries and the familiarity of the language, gestures, music and rhythm makes the traditional media more acceptable among the rural people⁸.

Sachindra Narayan defines tradition as a social situation process in which elements of the cultural heritage are transmitted from generation to generation by contracts of continuity or the non-material cultural context so transmitted, having transmitted, having the prestige sanction of antiquity⁹.

Research problem: Mass media is very important organ of the communication in tribal societies. Its vibration, ability to connect people, indignity, simplicity, aliveness, and participatory nature makes it unique and effective. In today's life, as everything is moving fast with the newly media and ICT advancing so somewhere those who are not aware of it are left very far behind.

Many Hmar people staying in the poverty line and backward area of Assam, Dima Hasao district did not know to utilize the new mass media and as a result they stay silent, so without the effectiveness of mass media they will not be able to get in touch with the newly world¹⁰.

But with the study of these many of them will be able to connect themselves with the advanced technology world and stay connected with it. As a result a connection of love, integrity, development and standardisation will be developed among them with the use of different mass media. The research will highlight the uses of mass media in rural and urban areas among the Hmar community people and they will be able to utilize the most widely and common used mass media in every field especially in the field of education etc.

Such studies will bring a development, quick and easy ways of education to the youth people of the rural area, especially the tribal people who have got the platform but has been left far by the ICT They will be able to understand the effective of mass media in the rural area and they will be able to used it in their daily life.

Methodology

Primary source of data were used to collect for the study. Primary data are collected by questionnaire schedules, Purposive sampling method is applied to collect the data from the respondents. i.e. the hmar people residing from two selected villages and one selected town of Dima Hasao district, name, Hmunthajao, Buolmuol and Harangajao with a population of Harangajao 160, Hmunthajao 87, and Buolmuol 78. Selected people like leader of Hmar student association, elder scholars, and village elders were also interviewed as they were well acquainted with the topics and which were very helpful for the formation of the study. Both male and female were chosen at the sample of the study.

Keeping in mind less number of respondent simple random sampling was used to determine the samples. Total 160 samples were collected from total 325 Hmar people residing in the selected villages and towns¹¹.

Results and discussion

Table-1: Age of the respondents.

		Frequency	Percentage	Total
15 to 20 yrs	Male	16	16.84%	23.75%
	Female	22	33.84%	
20 to 25 yrs	Male	36	37.89%	32.50%
	Female	16	24.61%	
25 to 30 yrs	Male	12	12.63%	18.125%
	Female	17	26.15%	
Above 30 yrs	Male	31	32.63%	25.62%
	Female	10	15.38%	
Grand total	Male	Female		160
	95	65		

The above data shows that age within 20-25 years are interested in taking part of the new media as 32% of them take interest in the data work where as 25% are above age of 30 years. 23.75% of them take part in the age of 15-20 years and only 18% of them take part in the age of 25-30 years. Therefore it can be added that most of the respondents are in the age of teen ager.

Table-2: Education of the respondents.

		Frequency	Percentage	Total
Below 10	Male	27	28.42%	26.25%
	Female	15	23.07%	
12 pass	Male	32	33.68%	30%
	Female	16	24.68%	
Graduate	Male	12	12.63%	12.5%
	Female	8	12.30%	
P. Graduate	Male	4	4.21%	6.25%
	Female	6	9.23%	
Illiterate	Male	20	21.05	25%
	Female	20	30.76	
Grand Total	Male	Female		160
	95	65		

Education being important parts to study for knowing the understanding of the people and also their social background, the Hmar people mostly still settle in the rural areas with their clans so the above data shows that most of the people are 12 pass with 30%, below 10 26% and 25% illiterate and 12% graduate with just 6.2% post graduate.

Table-3: Distribution of respondents on the basis of reading newspaper regularly.

		Frequency	Percentage	Total
Yes	Male	42	45%	45%
	Female	29	44.61	
No	Male	52	54.73%	55%
	Female	36	55.38%	
Grand total	Male	Female		160
	95	65		

The above data shows that the people are less reader of newspaper as most of them do not get newspaper due to various facts and reasons, 55% of them do not read newspaper daily and where as only 45% of them are reading newspaper daily.

Table-4: Distribution of respondents on the basis of owning a radio.

		Frequency	Percentage	Total
Yes	Male	56	58.94%	58.75%
	Female	38	58.46%	
No	Male	39	41.05%	41.25%
	Female	27	41.53%	
Grand total	Male	Female		160
	95	65		

Radio is one of the main source of communication even where there is no reach of television etc and it is very important to know that the people still have the habit of listening or not. The above data shows that the radio means of communication is widely till today used among the people of Hmar community of Dima Hasao, as more than 58% of the people agrees that they have radio and 41% of them do not own it.

Table-5: Distribution of respondents on the basis of knowing their preferred source of information.

		Frequency	%	Total
News paper	Male	17	17.89%	18.125%
	Female	12	18.46%	
Radio	Male	6	6.31%	5.625%
	Female	3	4.61%	
T.V.	Male	23	24.21%	24.37%
	Female	16	24.61%	
Internet	Male	37	38.94%	39.37%
	Female	26	40%	
Neighbour & friends	Male	12	12.63%	12.5%
	Female	8	12.30%	
Grand total	Male	Female		160
	95	65		

As the new media like internet is evolving, the people of the Hmar community are also using different types of media for their source of information. 39% of the people accept internet as their main source and 24 of them select TV. With lack of communication newspaper is very less used and only 18% of them accept it, radio is used by 5.625% and 12.5% of them take news from their friends and neighbor.

Table-6: Distribution of respondents on the basis of knowing why they mostly listen radio.

		Frequency	Percentage	Total
For information	Male	24	25.26%	25%
	Female	16	24.61%	
For music	Male	3	3.15%	5.62%
	Female	6	9.23%	
Own dialect news	Male	30	31.57%	30%
	Female	18	27.69%	
About Local news	Male	20	21.05%	25.62%
	Female	21	32.30%	
Got habit	Male	18	18.94%	13.75%
	Female	4	6.15%	
Grand total	Male	Female		160
	95	65		

Listening radio is one of the most important facts for the student development, 25% of them listen because they wanted to hear their local news, 30% of them listen because they wanted to listen their own dialect and 25% of them listen to hear about all the news. This shows that the people are mostly interest in hearing about their own local dialect news and around the world that shows that they have the potential to grasp all the news of mass media.

Table-7: Distribution of respondents on the basis of knowing how often they watch TV.

		Frequency	Percentage	Total
Daily	Male	22	23.15%	20.62%
	Female	9	18.38%	
1 or 2 Times a week	Male	19	20%	22.5%
	Female	16	24.61%	
3 or 4 times week	Male	38	37.89%	45.625%
	Female	30	46.15%	
More than 5 time week	Male	8	8.42%	8.12%
	Female	5	7.69%	
Less than once a week	Male	2	2.10%	3.125%
	Female	3	4.61%	
Do not watch	Male	6	2.10%	5%
	Female	2	3.07%	
Grand total	Male	Female		160
	95	65		

Television is very important source in order to get information and knowledge, it has been taken as an information source in order to know how the people think about the new electronic media as their guide and source of knowledge. The above data shows that 45.625% of people watch daily television where as 5% of them does not watch totally.

As internet is taken main factor of the research study, the above data shows that, 44.375% of the people use internet daily accessing various news and websites, 23.75% of them used once in a week, 21.875% of the access once in a month and only 10% of them access 24 hours a day. This shows that the Hmar people are also accessing internet although few of them have access 24 hours a day, may be all are students or having job.

Table-8: Distribution of correspondence on the basis of knowing how often they access internet.

		Frequency	Percentage	Total
Once a week	Male	21	22.105%	23.75%
	Female	17	26.15%	
Once a month	Male	26	27.36%	21.87%
	Female	9	13.84%	
Everyday	Male	40	42.105%	44.375%
	Female	31	47.69%	
24 hours a day	Male	8	8.42%	10%
	Female	8	12.30%	
Grand total	Male	Female		160
	95	65		

Table-9: Distribution of correspondence on the basis of knowing whether they own mobile phone.

		Frequency	Percentage	Total
Yes	Male	87	91.57%	91.25%
	Female	59	90.76%	
No	Male	8	8.42%	8.75%
	Female	6	9.23%	
Grand total	Male	Female		160
	95	65		

Having mobile is taken as a factor in the research. If the respondents have a mobile than he can also access internet and be able to link with the whole world. Exposure of this can be able to link him with their different areas of development.

Modern mass media creates lots of impact among the students thoughts and ideas, so this above data clearly shows that modern source of media is working as demotivational among the student of rural areas in order to compete them with the urban students. More than half of the people agree with this reason and where as only 28% people are against of it.

Table-10: Coming of modern mass media system is working as demotivational factor for the rural students

		Frequency	Percentage	Total
Yes	Male	55	57.89%	56.88%
	Female	36	55.38%	
No	Male	30	31.58%	28.13%
	Female	15	23.08%	
Can't say	Male	10	10.53%	15%
	Female	14	21.54%	
Grand total	Male	Female		160
	95	65		

Table-11: Distribution of respondents in order to know the education system got changes due to the highly influence of the new mass media in the urban areas of the students.

		Frequency	Percentage	Total
Strongly agreed	Male	18	18.95%	18.75%
	Female	12	18.46%	
Agree	Male	34	35.79%	46.25%
	Female	40	61.54%	
Can't say	Male	20	21.05%	17.50%
	Female	8	12.31%	
Disagree	Male	15	15.79%	11.25%
	Female	3	4.62%	
Strongly disagree	Male	8	8.42%	6.25%
	Female	2	3.08%	
Grand total	Male	Female		160
	95	65		

The Table above shows that the education system in the rural areas has got changes in the newly introduced media and among this highly influence cinema in TV is also one of the factor, as 46 person people agree with this. And 17% people are not so much concern of this about and only 11% of the people disagree with this.

From this Table it is clear that the highly influence mass media among the urban areas creates lots of impact in the education field of the rural areas students.

Summary of findings: The demographic profile of the respondents can be summarized as follows -

The data has been gathered from three villages and one urban settlement namely Harangjao. Out of total 160 responses 70 have been collected from urban area and 90 from rural area. The names of the villages included into study are Harangjao with population around 160, Boulmuol with around 87 populations, and Hmunthajao with around 78 populations.

Total 160-questionnaire schedule was used to gather the first hand information. Here, attempt has been made to analyze the profile of the respondents in Dima Hasao district of Assam. The variables used to analyze the data are sex, age, educational qualification, uses of mass media etc.

The data reveals that more than half of the respondents' i.e. 59.37 % are male and 40.63% are female. The study represents that the male are more open than female. It also shows the male dominance over female in Hmar community in Dima Hasao District, Assam.

Majority of the respondents fall in the age group of 20-25 years with 32.52 percent followed by 31-40 years of 25.62 percent. Lowest percent of 18.125% falls under the age group between 25 to 30 years.

The data shows that majority of the respondents' attained education 12 pass with 30 percent followed by illiterate people with 25 percent. Respondents who have the higher qualification of PG and more got the lowest percentage of 6.24. The data also represents that among the Hmar community of Dima Hasao District, the literacy rate, in term of higher education is very low.

In the media profile an attempt has been made to find out the media exposure of the respondents among the Hmar community of Dima Hasao district of Assam.

The Table indicates that the reading habit of Newspaper is low with 45 percent while majority with 55 percent did not read regularly. The data indicates that the students of the rural areas are getting very low access to news paper comparing to the students of the urban areas.

The data shows that majority of the respondents (45.625 percent) watch television only 3 or 4 times a week while only 20.62 percent of respondents watch daily. 3.125 watch less than once a week. The table indicates the poor audio-visual media exposure among the rural areas of the Hmar dominating places.

The data reveals that only few respondents have access to internet with only 18.125 percent while 81.87 percent have no

access to it. The data indicates that the Hmar students of the rural places have a very low access to internet in comparing to the rural areas students.

The study shows a surprising result in this area. Data reveals that despite the poor network more than half of the total respondents use mobile phone with 91.25 percent. 8.75 did not use it. It is seen that even illiterate people are using it and It has become an important means of communication among the peoples. They have even found out the place where the network is available and made it like a waiting shed. Thus the table indicates that among the Hmar people of the Dima Hasao district Assam, mobile phone using is high.

The data shows that mass media is more effective among the Hmar society than other 63% of the people are in support, whereas only 3.7% disagree with this. This data clearly shows that in this advance world, media is widely used and is effective in bringing change among Hmar people and in the field of education for the student.

Most of the Hmar people are habited in the remote areas and they settled in the hilly areas, so they have less education and as a result other languages are less understood¹². The village peoples easily understand with its local languages, oral, sign etc. The data shows that 17% of the people agree and 35% strongly agree that information given by electronic media like radio is reliable for them and only 11% of them disagree and 6.4% strongly disagree with this and 28.24% are not able to say anything. This clearly shows that Mass media is still playing an important role in the medium of education and other information sector to the Hmar people.

The Hmar people are quite hard working people and very aggressive in order to learn something especially in the field of their education and society development, they worked in a group and formed an organization if required for their education. They use all the traditional media of communication in order to let the message know by the village elderly people and younger children Dena Lal 2008¹³. Majority of the people agrees that mass media is still playing effective and strong role among the Hmar community. They still today use its various media like the electronic and print media with its various ways; in their socio-cultural life and social bonding in order for their development.

Conclusion

Mass media comprise all forms of communication, which may be in the form of oral, view, reading, writing, hearing etc. An attempt has been made to analyze the status of mass media practices, transformation, changes, effectiveness etc. The study reveals that the mass communication and its features is very important in the Hmar community youth.

The choice of modern media has become more common in modern society. Researcher observed that there are many

changes among the urban youth due to the influence of new media etc as they acquire much knowledge and are getting much scope in every field.

Today the practice of mass media is gaining its standards through its various parts. It is because of high standard of modern and new media system. Changes in the education among the Hmar youth can be seen due to many factors like modern education; coming in contact with other culture, settling down from rural to urban etc.

Mass media is effective in social communication because of its genuineness and dependability. But many people do not know the use of it and they could not developed people, but mass media with its easy and oral way can be used to educate this uneducated people.

Since the rural youth are very much lack behind in this new media age, it would be good if a refresher course or conferences were organized from time to time so that the Rural youth would also have much access and understanding to the modern world.

Although we are marching to the modern society, role of mass media plays important in the formation of a society and forming it. Level of understanding will be high if all the youth in these days are communicated through the newly parts of mass media because it exists with them. In the present days, realizing the importance of the mass media, people started giving more importance to it than before.

Appendix I Questionnaire schedule

Name : _____
 Today's date : _____
 Address: _____
 City, state, zip: _____
 Mobile: home : - _____
 Date of birth: _____
 work: (_____)
 Sex (circle): male female

- 1) Age?
 a) 15-20 yrs b) 20-25 yrs c) 25-30 yrs d) above 30
- 2) Education of the respondent?
 a) Below 10 b) 12 pass c) graduate d) post graduate and more e) illiterate
- 3) Do you read newspaper regularly?
 a) Yes b) No
- 4) Do you own a radio?
 a) Yes b) No
- 5) What is your preferred source of information?

- a) News paper b) radio c) television d) internet e) Neighbor & friends
- 6) Why do you listen mostly to radio?
 a) For information b) for listening music's
 c) for listening own dialect news
 d) Information about local news etc e) just got habit
- 7) How often do you watch TV?
 a) Daily b) once or twice a week c) 3 or 4 time a week
- 8) How often do you access the internet?
 a) Once a week b) once a month c) everyday
 e) 24 hours a day
- 9) Do you own mobile phone?
 a) Yes b) No
- 10) Coming of modern mass media system is working as demotivational factor?
 Yes No can't say

11) Influence of the new mass media changes the education system in the urban areas of the students?

Strongly agreed	agreed	Can't say	disagree	Strongly disagree

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