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EDITOR'S NOTE

Studies related to Communication have the potential to amalgamate different subjects, streams, and thoughts. Communication Studies thus integrate various perspectives and imaginations. Looking upon the subject with such a vision, encompassed by multiple disciplines enhances a researcher's stance more comprehensive and evocative. Thus the topics of interest in Social Science are widely debated by virtue of their plurality. Gopal Guru remarks in the essay, *Egalitarianism and the Social Sciences in India* that Social Sciences are divided into empirically inferiorised and critically privileged domain of knowledge (2012). So the question is to make it more familiar in every aspect. To circumvent the issue, enhancing practice-based inquiries would be a fitting choice. The project of familiarisation and demystification of theory can be achieved more easily in the domain of Communication research.

Attempts to fit in with the above idea can be seen in many of the recent attempts in Media and Communication studies. Not to validate it just as methodologically compact; but to identify the areas of common practices in the field. Articles which discuss the linguistic turns, practices, and communicative actions are humble attempts to illuminate the ways of such inquiries. Facebook mediations and patterns of interventions are also looked into the details. The participatory governance system and communication plans are also analysed, citing various practices. There are also initiatives to study the "Free Labour" quotient with the Social Media practice.

The general theme, once one reads would get may be is that, these articles try to expand the Communication studies to the domain of everyday activities rather than searching enigmatic odds. This is one way to make researches more grounded on Social realities and contemporaneity.

Lalmohan P., PhD
Chief Editor

Communicative Competence of Doctor-Patient Interaction: A Linguistic Study

■ DARWIN L.*

Abstract

Communicative competence is a very important factor when we start talking with anyone; without knowing the communicative and linguistic competency level of the person, it may not be proper in the context. Especially among the Doctor-Patient communication, it is a very important factor, because the communication between doctor-patient should be proper, otherwise it will mislead the doctor as well as the patient. This article is looking at the various level of communicative and linguistic competence of doctors and patients. As well as this article is analyzing the communication of Malayali patients and Malayali doctors as well as Non-Malayali doctors in Kerala. It shows that; most of the time Doctors are struggling to find an appropriate word for some technical terminologies as well as some English words. Communicative competence is measured based on how the language is used for communication, the level of competency, linguistic level, grammatical usage, strategical approach to use the language for communication, etc. These are the factors used for finding the communicative competence. In Doctor-Patient communication, a strategical approach is important. According to the patients' levels of communicative and linguistic competence, a strategic approach is important in Doctor-Patient communication, a lack of which would lead to disappointment and irritation among doctors and patients.

Keywords: communicative competence, linguistic competence, grammatical competence, doctor-patient communication, prescriptive communication

Introduction

This article tries to study the oral medical interactions in doctor-patient communication, which some scientists consider to be a linguistic model. The relationship between the doctor and the patient has developed and has become essential to inform and obtain the patients' consent. The doctor has the duty to decide which

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information is medical secrecy and which is open for the patient. One of the main duties of the medical interaction is to form the right discussion between the doctor and the patient to identify the cause of the disease, select a method of treatment, and explain actions using the available vocabulary. During the conversation with a patient, the medical expert uses unusual terms and chooses the right strategies of behaviour, considering it is possible to cause not only positive emotion and reaction but also a mental upset. The methodology used for the study draws its fundamentals from discourse analysis.

Review of Literature

Most complaints about medical experiences are related to issues of communication, and not clinical competency. The communication of healthcare providers that included proper listening and empathy was found to be associated with higher levels of satisfaction among patients (Skär & Söderberg, 2018).

Despite global acknowledgment, little theoretical consideration is given for this in the Indian context. Due to urbanization, high internal migration, and central level institutions and hospitals, medical students and practitioners study and work in areas that do not speak their mother tongue. Since the language used for medical education is English, meaning-making concerning regional language is often difficult. The absence of an adequate vocabulary for technical terms in most Indian languages and the fact that health workers are often not completely fluent in languages that are not their mother-tongue results in non-English speaking patients receiving very simplistic messages or crude translations (Narayan, 2013). An example of this is the multiple reported cases of miscommunication between patients and doctors in Gandhi Hospital, Hyderabad, where patients were unable to make sense of prescription or directions to scanning because the doctor did not speak or write in a language of their understanding (Mithun, 2018). This dependence on English by non-native doctors is both a local and global issue. The use of medical terminology foreign to Xhosa language-speaking patients by English doctors in South Africa leads to difficulty in communication similar to the Gandhi Hospital scenario (Levin, 2006). From these and many other studies, (Margaret Mathews & Jacqueline Van Wyk, 2018), we can infer that, globally, the use of English vocabulary as a common denominator for medical communication is inefficient in providing inclusive healthcare.

A study conducted among dental practitioners in Kerala found that 100% of them used medical jargon for taking a case history and 60% used jargon for recording patient information. A lack of

uniformity was also found in the use of jargon across institutions (Subramaniam, et al., 2017). This use of non-uniform registers and technical terminology alien to patients in medical practice further points to a gap in biomedical communication that has to be filled, since, unlike other fields, communication by doctors is prescriptive in nature and a small misunderstanding may lead to dangerous consequences. This further stresses the immediate need to analyze biomedical communication critically, to assess its limitations both theoretically and practically to find solutions to fill the gap.

Between doctor and patient, communicative competence plays a major role in the quality of communication. It is suggested that medical education should give training in conversational competence along with a knowledge of emotions (Wodak R, 2006). Bourdieu while talking about the strategies to be adopted to attain communicative competence says that it is a compromise that depends on what the speaker has to say, his capacity to produce language, assess the situation and euphemize his expression, and on his position in the field in which he expresses himself (Bourdieu, 1977). So, it can be said that language varies according to the speaker and according to the linguistic production relation, and when that relationship is between doctor and patient, the inability of the doctor to account for the communicative competence of the patient leads to asymmetrical communicative patterns. Studies have shown that patients comprehend as little as half of what physicians communicate during medical consultation in the outpatient situation (Schillinger et al., 2003).

To bridge this gap, both language and content area knowledge specific to the particular local context have been integrated into foreign countries to develop Language for Specific Purposes (LSP) in the medical context, that is, Language for Medical Purposes (LMP)–English for Medical Purposes (EMP)–being the most researched among them (Trace J et al., 2015). LMP refers to teaching a particular language to medical practitioners for a utilitarian purpose, typically to attain successful performance of medical training (Maher J, 1986). Substantial research in this field has been carried out in foreign languages—even in ones with a small number of speakers, like the Dutch language which has only 23mn. speakers, while no research has been done in Malayalam with 37mn. speakers. So, in the context of Kerala, there exists a theoretical void in the field of biomedical communication, which is the absence of a Special Purpose Malayalam for Medical Communication (MMP), which may help in bridging the barriers in communication discussed above.

Importance of Doctor-Patient Relationship

The doctor-patient relationship involves weakness and belief. It is one of the most moving and meaningful experiences shared by human beings. However, this relationship and the meetings that flow from it are not always perfect.

The doctor-patient relationship has been defined as “an excited relationship in which the patient significantly seeks the doctor’s assistance and in which the doctor perceptively accepts the person as a patient.” At its essential, the doctor-patient relationship represents a legal relationship in which, by incoming into the relationship, the doctor agrees to respect the patient’s self-sufficiency, maintain secrecy, explain treatment options, find informed consent, provide the highest standard of care, and oblige not to license the patient without giving him or her suitable time to find a new doctor. However, such a contractual definition fails to portray the immense and profound nature of the doctor-patient relationship. Patients sometimes reveal secrets, worries, and fears to doctors that they have not yet disclosed to friends or family members. Placing trust in a doctor helps them maintain or recover their health and well-being.

This unique relationship includes six key elements: mutual knowledge, trust, loyalty, regard, mutual intelligibility, and communicative competence. Knowledge denotes to the doctor’s understanding of the patient and vice versa. Trust contains the patient’s faith in the doctor’s ability and caring, as well as the doctor’s conviction in the patient and their beliefs and report of symptoms. Loyalty discusses to the patient’s willingness to forgive a doctor for any inconvenience or slip-up and the doctor’s commitment not to license a patient. Regard suggests that the patients feel as though the doctor likes them as individuals and is “on their side.” Mutual intelligibility implies that the doctor and the patients’ verbal communication has to be understood by each other at all levels, communicative competence refers to that the doctor and patient should appropriately use the communicative skills as per each patient’s levels of linguistic, grammatical, and communicative competence. These six elements constitute the foundation of the doctor-patient relationship.

Structure of Doctor-Patient Relationship

Active-Passive Model

The active-passive model is the oldest of the 4 models. It is based on the doctor acting *upon* the patient, who is treated as an inanimate object. This model may be suitable during an emergency when the patient may be unconscious or when a interruption in treatment

may cause permanent harm. In such situations, agreement (and complicated conversations) is relinquished.

Guidance-Cooperation Model

In the guidance-cooperation model, a doctor is placed in a position of authority due to having medical knowledge that the patient lacks. The doctor is likely to adopt what is in the patient's best interest and to make references accordingly. The patient is then expected to obey with these recommendations or references.

Mutual Participation Model

The mutual participation model is based on an equal corporation between the doctor and the patient. The patient is observed as an expert in his or her life experiences and aims, making patient involvement crucial for designing treatment. The doctor's role is to elicit a patient's aims and to help attain these aims. This model needs that both parties have equal control, are mutually interdependent, and involve in activities that are equally satisfying to both parties.

Communicative Competence Model

The communicative competence model is based on the interaction, which should be made based on the patients' level of communication skills. The doctor should be aware of the strategical approach of the communicative competence, as per each patient and their linguistic level, grammatical level, and communicative competence level; accordingly has to interact with them.

While each of these models may be appropriate in specific situations, over the last several decades there has been increasing support for the mutual participation and communicative competence models.

Factors Influences the Doctor-Patient Relationship

Accurate and competent communication is a key factor of providing high-quality care to patients. When there isn't effective communication between doctors and patients, care standards fall. Unfortunately, poor communication between doctors and patient is common in hospitals but some approaches and technologies can be adopted to improve communication between these two groups of healthcare professionals.

Problems of Defective Communication

Effective communication is a key requirement to collective workflow in all industries, but more so in healthcare where there needs to be continuous collaboration. Healthcare is now brought

by multidisciplinary teams that can include dozens of healthcare professionals across a week-long hospital stay. When there is poor communication between these healthcare professionals, patients finally suffer. That could mean a longer stay in the hospital, a slower recovery, or a miscommunication that could have far more serious consequences for the patient and the healthcare provider.

Effective communication is considered to be essential for medical doctors in the western world for decades. Its consequence is now being acknowledged in our country and some authors have expressed the view that it is “the need of the hour” to train medical professionals in this important yet ignored part in clinical medicine. Recently, the medical system has observed an increase in the incidences of struggle between doctors and patients or their attendants. There has been an increase in both the number of proceedings against doctors as well as mass agitations by them. Such incidents are not only appalling but also humiliating for the noble medical profession. There is enough evidence in literature to suggest that poor communication between doctors and patients is an important attributing factor. Good practices like detailed explanations by doctors along with permanent listening to the patients or their families have been found to decrease such incidences.

Assistances of Good Communication Skills

The practice of better communication skills in the medical profession is essential for the development of a meaningful and trustworthy relationship between the doctors and patients and, thus, is valuable to both of them. The diagnostic capability of the doctor is greatly enhanced because of a better understanding of the patient’s problems. Furthermore, it is also useful in managing difficult medical encounters and thus decreases the hindrance of both the doctor and the patient or bystander in situations of emotional explosions. It has also been shown to decrease work stress and increase job fulfilment.

Patients’ level of satisfaction is improved by better gratitude and understanding of their illness and the treatment available. This further increases their compliance with the advice given by the doctor. Besides, it has a positive impact on a patient’s psychology, mental health, tolerance, and quality of life.

Components of Communication

Effective communication has three basic components-Verbal, Non-verbal, and Paraverbal. The verbal component deals with the content of the message including the choice of words. The non-verbal component includes body language such as posture, gesture, facial

expression, and spatial distance. Paraverbal component includes suprasegmental features like tone, pitch, pacing, and volume of the voice. While communicating, most of us focus on the verbal component that contains only ten percent of the message delivered whereas non-verbal and paraverbal components contribute ninety percent.

The verbal component (content) is important and it includes information about the nature, course, and prognosis of the disease; various treatment options available; nature, cost, and yield of the investigations; and hazards/profits of offensive procedures. Although the nonverbal component of the communication is normally considered less important, literature suggests that it meaningfully influences important outcomes like patient satisfaction, loyalty to advice, and clinical outcome.

Barriers to Good Communication

There are several barriers to effective communication between patients and doctors. The most important one is a lack of awareness due to insufficient knowledge and training in communication skills. Many times, doctors do not give enough attention to the importance of keeping patients effectively informed. Non-verbal components of communications are frequently neglected. The language barrier is also important. It is not unusual for patients to speak in their local languages and give a hard time to doctors. Another important barrier is a lack of suitable knowledge about the disease or treatment options. Finally, human failings like stress, tiredness, or lack of time are major contributing factors in an overburdened setting.

Listen to the Patients Patiently

The importance of listening extends far beyond the academic and professional settings and is very important in creating a trustworthy doctor-patient relationship which is a requirement for healing success. It is an active process that involves absorbing all the information expressed verbally or nonverbally by the patient. It is a major part of the communication process. It helps in better understanding the patient's problem and finding better decisions. Studies exploring the reasons for filing proceedings against doctors found that a significant quantity of the patients were dissatisfied because the doctor had not listened to or understood their problem completely.

Listening not only involves understanding the verbal component but also eliciting the patient's attitudes, needs, and motives behind the words. The aim of listening is, also, to investigate into the physical,

social, and emotional impact of these glitches on the patient's quality of life to provide complete care and satisfaction. Some of the communication approaches that may help the doctor to improve listening skills are listed below:

1. Make the patient and the relatives comfortable. Never have deliberations while walking in the corridors.
2. Show attention in what the patient is saying with mannerism, body language, and active involvement like inclination towards the patient.
3. Be careful not to interrupt them when they are expressing something.
4. The patients' level of communicative competence also has to be considered. The doctor should also be aware of the communicative competence and interact accordingly.
5. While concluding, one must ask the patient if they would like to add something more.

Conclusion

This article reaching to challenge basic principles of communication skills with some practical suggestions which may be helpful in the routine practice of doctors. Better communication skills among the doctors are vital in building a trustworthy doctor-patient relationship that not only helps in successful treatment by providing full care to the patient but also leads to job satisfaction among the doctors. Not many doctors are naturally blessed to have good communication skills and there is the necessity of formal training in this.

Communication between the doctor and the patient is a crucial problem of medicine at all times. The complexity of communication between the doctor and the patient has a huge influence on the quality of provided medical care. Over the years, due to growing social demand, as the doctor-patient relationship has changed to a model of joint medical decision. Today, patients want to be informed about their illness and suitable care during the treatment. This signifies the importance of doctor-patient conversation. The patient wants to obtain correct and exact information about the disease and its course of action. The doctor must be able to use proper and precise medical terminologies.

In the present environment a doctor is expected to explain the method of diagnosis, medical terms to the patient to avoid ambiguity and strangeness; or else it may elicit fear anxiety and pain.

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Facebook as a Medium of Free and Self-Expression among Women in Kerala: A Case Study

■ K . S. RAGINI*

Abstract

Free and self-expression among individuals play a crucial role in the formation of society. Informed citizenry is an inevitable component to mould healthy democracy. New media especially social media acts as an empowering communication platform among people offering them a space to express them freely and easily. In the last two decades, Information and Communication Technologies have been employed in the development communication discipline aiming the overall development of society. ICTs have also been acting as active tools of gender empowerment across the globe. New media tools like Facebook contributes to social, economic, and political empowerment of people providing innovative platforms to interact and engage in society. Facebook acts as one of the most popular socialization tool among people. The study is an effort to understand the Facebook usage among women as a tool to express them, voice their opinions and also tries to examine the motives behind the usage of particular social media in expressing themselves. The study also tries to explore the Facebook usage patterns, needs and gratifications among women in using this particular medium. The study examines the various challenges faced by them in using the platform and the difficulties they face in expressing themselves online. The study adopts uses and gratifications approach and the findings lead to the conclusion that the Facebook acts as a powerful medium of communication for self-expression among women encouraging civic participation.

Keywords: information communication technologies, social media, face book, self expression, women empowerment

Introduction

Internet has become an active tool that offers communication platforms where people can showcase to the world involving themselves in various facets of society including health, education, and other social sectors. It has become an active platform for women to express themselves contributing to empowerment. Informational technology and its free and fair access to all without barriers is one of the preconditions to achieve gender equality.

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Information and Communication Technology (ICT) refers to communication technologies and platforms which includes internet, wireless networks, cellphones, computers, software, video-conferencing, social networking, and other media applications and services enabling users to access, retrieve, store, and transmit information in a digital form. ICT as an enabler has broken all bounds of cost, distance and time. The fusion of computing and communications, especially through the internet has reduced the world indeed into a global village creating new actors and new environments.

ICT plays an important role in addressing challenges and uplifting the livelihood of masses in society. ICT provides opportunities introducing new activities, services, and applications or to enhance existing services. New Information Technology platforms such as social media have encouraged civic participation, self-discovery, social enhancement, and interpersonal connectivity. Women empowerment is the way towards equipping women to think, choose, and work independently. New media has an active role to play in the empowerment of women including political, social, and economic emancipation of women.

New media involves different technologies and has a significant role in the cultural formation of a society. New media affects people in their behavioural formation, behavioural change, lifestyle, communication patterns and personality. In a developing country like India, new media and technologies can contribute to various developmental initiatives and offer solutions to the challenges existing in developmental process. The features of new media technologies such as multimedia, interactivity etc. makes it more people friendly, and encourage active participation. Social media, thus, has a crucial role to play in empowering women and encouraging the civic participation among women in developing countries.

Review of Literature

The literature pertaining to the chosen research topic helped to gain significant insights and helped in fulfilling the research gap. Research papers, research articles on ICTs and Development, ICTs and empowerment of women, ICTs and development of society, women and empowerment in developing nations were analyzed. Studies reiterated the importance and role of ICTs and new media technologies in development, especially women empowerment. The studies point that there are gender-specific usage patterns and

perceptions of ICTs.

David *et al* (2005) in their study identified that the Information and Communication Technologies and new media tools are widely believed to have a critical part in advancing social and economic development, including individual livelihoods, community prosperity, empowerment of women in particular, and achievement of national development objectives related to the UN Millennium Development Goals.

Most of the studies reiterate in creating awareness on gender equality and eradicate gender discrimination in society. Notably, the studies reveal that there are gender-specific usage patterns and perceptions of ICTs, manifestations of gender awareness correlates with perception of obstacles in ICT utility. Judy Wajcman (2011) discussed the role and participation of women in ICTs, in the wider context of feminist debates on gender and technology.

New media and social networking technologies have been increasingly promoted as a key answer for comprehensive development and the empowerment of verifiably disadvantaged gatherings, for example, women and minorities. The studies points to the fact that effect of ICTs on development largely depend on the existing economic, social and social texture into which they are introduced.

Social media tools like Facebook acts as an active interaction tool among people. Social networking sites have a major role in civic participation and the platform has encouraged cyber and social media activism for humanitarian causes, human rights issues, public protests and other societal issues.

Methodology

Many studies have been conducted on information communication technologies and gender development, especially on empowerment of women. The present study adopted qualitative method as it focuses on communication, communication psychology, social psychology of users and thus, adopts a semi-structured interview method with open-ended questions to understand the purpose of Facebook usage among women, patterns of usage, and to understand how women use Facebook to engage themselves and voice their views and rights, making them emotionally sound and independent. Uses and gratification approach is leveraged to understand the gratifications that attract women to use this particular medium. Interview was conducted among post-graduate students and researchers of five

colleges belonging to the age group 20 to 35 years in Tirur taluk in Malappuram district. Purposive sampling method was used to select 100 respondents who were subjected to a semi-structured interview involving a series of open-ended questions.

Theoretical Base

I. Uses and Gratification Theory

Uses and gratifications theory put forward by Katz, Blumler & Gurevitch, in 1973 says that popularity of a mass media can be understood by analyzing or identifying the factors underlying its usage. Social network is playing a key role in consumption of news as large numbers of users were sharing news and information on their social network page (Pew Research, 2014). The study analyses the Facebook usage of women, their preferences, the gratifications and their purpose of Facebook usage in engaging themselves to satisfy their needs.

II. Social Cognitive Theory

Social cognitive theory is a social theory proposed by Miller and Dollard in 1941 with relation to Social learning theory put forward by Albert Bandura. The theory states a person will learn a particular behaviour if they are motivated to learn or understand that particular behaviour through clear observations. The theory clearly states that people learn a particular behaviour by observing others, by observing the environment they live in and this clearly has a direct impact or influence on their personality development. People form their behaviours and opinions through observation from their social environment. The theory is relevant in the study, as nowadays, technology plays vital role in communication especially, in social involvement among masses with the help of new media communication tools and technologies.

Analysis and Findings

The study examined the gratifications that encouraged women in using Facebook as a medium of communication and to what extent it satisfied their needs socially, politically, and psychologically. The study reveals that high proportions or the majority used Facebook as a platform to interact and voice their opinions. Facebook has become their favourite medium to express their views. Interviews reveal that women try to engage themselves through different live

communication platforms to balance their emotional health or psychological well being. Women chose Facebook as their favourite choice due to the features and characteristics of the medium that made the platform easy to use. They use Facebook to keep in touch with friends, maintain relationship, and to socialize themselves. Facebook gained popularity among them and opened new doors to interact with the outside world. The study identified Facebook as a powerful medium of women empowerment that contributed a free space to express and communicate with confidence and fearlessly.

Women and New Media

New media communication technologies play an important role in communication processes among women. They have acquired various skills with the usage of new media communication platforms that involve:

- Informational access
- Production of information
- Power to communicate
- Exposure to new communication platforms
- Public opinion formation
- Content generation
- Engagement in community issues and other social issues
- Active involvement in activities of NGOs and other social organizations
- Enhanced political participation
- Encouraged involvement in gender justice cases and women's rights issues
- Peer support
- Solidarity
- Acquired power to challenge mainstream discourse through new media platforms

The study identified certain motives for Facebook usage among women which includes:

- Social interaction.
- Passing time.
- Entertainment.
- Companionship.
- Communication.
- To ease stress (emotional stress).

Facebook Usage among Women: Gratifications and Challenges

Majority of the respondents used Facebook as a tool for relationship maintenance, sharing photographs and videos with friends, family and to update current affairs, news, and events. Facebook allows recognition, social support, and self-presentation among its users and has encouraged women to participate in leadership activities, enhanced decision making skills contributing to self-empowerment. Mobile phones with internet applications have further encouraged users participation in social networking sites especially Facebook. However patriarchal norms, familial set-up, lack of leisure time, and heavy work-load at home still exist as a barrier among women in accessing and using online technologies though they are tech-savvy.

Experience and Self-Presentation

The study has also observed that the experience of the online user plays a crucial role in their level of participation in online activities. Users with increased experience are more confident in using social media platforms and they share details and information with greater confidence than a novice. At the same time the findings reveal that there exist cultural differences that have an intense impact on the users and their new media usage. Facebook is an online medium that further helps its users in self-presentation, revealing personal information. Majority use Facebook to create a positive image on themselves and among others. However, cultural taboos exist as a barrier among some in revealing their personal information on a public platform.

As Social Cognitive theory suggests, the study reveals that people learn by observing others. Novice Facebook users observe the experienced users and get motivated to use further applications offered by the particular medium. Experienced users and their profiles have an impact on fresh users and influence them and their online activities. Respondents also viewed Facebook as a medium to overcome loneliness, stress, and mental tension by engaging themselves.

Gender stereotypes and the patriarchal norms existing in society has put a lot of pressure on women and hence experience constraints in exposing themselves resulting in hopelessness and dejection. The way we communicate women's issues have changed. New media acts a powerful tool in addressing gender biased differences providing users an equal chance for communication and interaction without any discrimination. At the same time, women using Facebook experience

online abuses, cyber attacks, and violence which further built insecurity among them in using the medium. Abusive comments on photographs and posts have created a fear among them. Body shaming and abusive sexual comments has further aggravated the issue. Cyber attacks on social media platforms are preventing a minority in using online technologies and platforms as they face security issues.

New Media Communication Platforms and Empowerment

Designing information technologies and communication platforms requires a lot of care and application. The diffusion of technology should be based on the contexts of communication, the situation, and the needs of women. Cultural aspects of the women should be considered in designing ICTs and must rest on participatory approach of communication offering spaces to all without any bias. New media acts as a powerful tool of communication through dissemination of information by involving active participation of its users. The advent of innovative new media platforms have helped the information to reach to the grassroot level and the marginalized sections.

The access and utility of ICTs make women competitive, knowledgeable and stronger in making decisions and empower them in articulating effectively and confidently among others. The government-funded endeavors to promote technological progress among women plays a pivotal role in transferring the required information to women and boost their confidence leading to social, political and economic empowerment. The accessibility of ICT brings global developments to the rural women which help them develop larger insights on political, social, and economic developments resulting in empowered and independent women.

Discussion and Conclusion

Social media has encouraged women's participation in online and social activities in recent years and has promoted women's rights, exposing women's issues to the forefront contributing to women empowerment. The active participation of women in societal activities is the need of the hour to promote a gender friendly society. It has become very important to ensure their participation in technological advancements and other ICT initiatives to overcome the gender digital divide existing in the society. Researches and studies have to be promoted in addressing the ICT access issues among women, gender bias confronting their participation and usage of ICT applications there by providing solutions and measures to

overcome the hurdles. Gender-based violence and online abuse on social platforms has to be dealt seriously and stringent measures have to be taken against cybersecurity issues confronting women from using online communication tools. In order to overcome the digital gender divide, ICT applications and policies must be designed and implemented in such a way that it addresses the needs, requirements, and necessities of women. Active participation of women in ICT projects and other ICT communication initiatives can be ensured only through the proper and effective implementation of a gender-friendly ICT society. Assessments and reviews have to be conducted periodically on ICT policies to ensure better participation of women in national development process.

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Challenging the Mainstream with Free Labour: A Study on Independent News Websites in Kerala

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Abstract

Drawing on Terranova's concept of free labour, this paper primarily examines how three independent language news websites in Kerala, India, namely SouthLive, Dool News, and Azhimukham, utilise user-generated content. Further, the study explores the perceptions of social media users and website followers who give away their content for free and trace their motive in doing so. The study emerged from a mixed methodology, including quantitative content analysis and in-depth interviews. The website's content analysis reveals that these three news websites considerably cull out news and articles from social networking sites, mainly from Facebook. The content acquisition is found to be twofold. On one side, the text/photos/videos posted on social networking sites are directly used as it is by giving a byline credit to the original publisher of the content. On the other hand, the discourses and contents evolving on SNS are converted as news stories or articles by the news websites' employees. The in-depth interviews with the editorial employees and management representatives disclose that the user-generated content is vital in increasing the website traffic. Meanwhile, the website readers and social media users feel happy when their articles get published on the website as it helps them acquire the social capital that they aspire for. However, the free labour appropriated in the guise of user-generated content significantly contributes to the websites' financial stability as it helps in cost-cutting by reducing the number of waged labourers to a minimal.

Keywords: news websites, free labour, journalistic practice, user-generated content, social networking sites

Introduction

As a profession that bears a long-standing history in society, the field of journalism has come across significant changes over the years. The way the news is produced and consumed has undergone a remarkable shift in line with the varying socio-economic conditions and new technologies' inventions (Levy & Radcliffe, 2016).

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By the beginning of the 21st century, with the invention of web 2.0 technologies, journalism has entered a new arena where the spatial barriers and time constraints in news delivery have become irrelevant. News consumption in the present day scenario can never be equated with the pre-satellite or pre-internet era. Nowadays, rather than television and newspapers, people prefer going online for the news (Alejandro, 2010). Momentary updating of the information and events, incorporation of multiple media, active interaction of the consumers etc., are considered the norm of online journalism (Lee, 2012). The ramifications of these changes can also be traced to the structural reorganisation of the news industry, the distribution of labour-power, and the performative roles of the news workers (Compton & Banedetti, 2010).

In recent years, news websites and online journalism have taken a giant leap in the news industry to pose a tough competition for traditional news media like newspapers and television. News websites-a remediated form of prevailing traditional media-provide a comprehensive platform for consumers to simultaneously consume the news and actively contribute their content (Lee, 2012; Bolter & Grusin, 2003). It is argued that “openness, organisation and community” take centre stage in web 2.0 ecology (Alejandro, J, 2010, p.3). The publishers of web 2.0 platforms are just the facilitators, while the users play a vital role in shaping the platform by creating the content.

Unlike traditional news media, online news websites employ novel strategies in gathering news to run the platform. They have a commingling relationship with other networking platforms such as social media. Social Networking Sites are a self-reflecting platform for users to share their pleasure, sorrows, sufferings, anger, and profound insights and opinions on different socio-cultural issues (Bakardjieva & Grden, 2012). Thus, these networking platforms’ newsfeeds became a significant news source and an essential beat for the news industry (Broersma & Graham, 2015).

Against the backdrop of increased appropriation of social networking activities and user-generated content by news websites, this paper seeks to explore the labour contribution of social networking users in fostering news websites in Kerala, India using Terranova’s concept of free labour. This paper mainly unfolds 1) The strategies of news websites to appropriate user-generated content from social networking sites; 2) The motive and perceptions of social media users in giving away their contents to the websites, and the changes that emerged in journalism and news work with the growing lenience towards user-generated contents.

Literature Review

News Websites and Online Journalism

With the emergence of the internet as a popular communication platform, journalism is compelled to think beyond conventional media forms. To ensure the existence in tough competition, the media organisations are forced to embrace the new technologies (Stassen, 2011). Thus, inlining with technological advancement, news websites and online journalism has emerged as a significant area in the news industry (Mitchelstein & Boczkowski, 2009).

Scholarship about the emerging trends surrounding online journalism has been diverse. While several researchers lay their focus on the attendant effects on the managerial and organisational restructuring of the traditional media (Boczkowski, 2004; Newman et al, 2011, Hermida & Thurman, 2008; Alejandro, 2010; Singer, 2004; Singer, 2005) some others focus on news websites as a unique stream in journalism paying attention towards performative changes in journalistic practices. (Himmelboim and McCreery, 2012; Lasorsa et al., 2012; Steensen & Ahva, 2014; Richardson & Stanyer, 2011). However, a critical lens has also been visible in the theorisation of the booming of online journalism, its commingling relationship with the social networking platforms, and how it changes the concepts of production and labour (Jonsson & Ornerbring, 2011; Hosemondhalgh, 2010).

Stassen (2010) argues that having a mere news website on the internet space has changed dramatically. The new trend is perceivably channelling the news published on the websites through many other internet-working pathways, mainly Social Networking Sites. Even though SNS is premised on the concept of networking and community building, in recent years, it has become a powerful platform for news consumption and production, too (Stassen, 2010; Howe, 2011). Shearer and Gottfried (2017) claim that almost 67% of Americans get news on social networking platforms every day. Quoting a report of The Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism Research, Wakefield (2016) notes that the young people aged 18- 24 in Europe and US prefer social media as a primary news source outplaying television. With the emergence of social media, individuals also get notable roles in observing media developments, interpreting media messages, filtering them for appropriate content, and distributing the news among peers (Hermida et al., 2012). Stassen (2010) points to five advantages for social media integration with news websites: audience research, story generation, content promotion, community

building, and customer service.

Apart from being a significant news consumption plot, social networking sites play a vital role as a news source. Himmelboim & McCreery (2012) explains that social networking platforms can be effectively used to generate stories. Citing Coyle, Himmelboim & McCreery explains,

Social networking features are a recent addition to news media's choices that can be fully integrated into their sites. The Huffington Post is one such success story for such integration, approaching the top five newspapers in terms of readership. According to the Associated Press, the online newspaper has integrated itself with social networks, partnering with Facebook and Twitter, and using content from about 6000 bloggers, who are writing for free (Himmelboim & McCreery, 2012, p.429)

Though there is consent over the commingling relationship between the emerging online journalism nurtured by news websites, A comprehensive enquiry to the strategies and execution of news websites in the different geographical areas becomes relevant. Premised on the investigations of Stassen (2010), Hermida et al. (2012) and Himmelboim & McCreery, (2012), this study seeks to explore how the independent news websites in Kerala manage to garner and incorporate user-generated content from social networking sites and website users. The aforementioned literature brings out two research questions of this study such as,

- 1) What are the strategies of Malayalam news websites for culling out user-generated content?
- 2) What are the motive and perceptions of social media users in contributing content free of cost to the websites?

Journalists in Web 2.0 Era

Deuze (2003) opines that the internet has affected journalism mainly in two ways. On one side, it takes a vital role in the newsrooms and reporters' desktops to bring up a new computer-assisted reporting culture. On the other hand, the internet has brought up a unique stream called online journalism, a newly emerged professional news

work. News websites are found to be the heart of online journalism.

According to Lee (2012), people are more attracted to news websites because of their easy accessibility and interactivity. He says that news websites treat readers not as passive receivers but as active contributors to platform development.

Web 2.0 platforms drastically changed the ability of the average user to generate online content by including interfaces that require little or no technical knowledge. The result was an immediate shift from professional writers, editors and other gatekeepers as the sole producers of mediated content toward the empowerment of non-professionals to use sophisticated media for the promulgation of messages (Skalski et al., 2017, p.4)

The news websites have successfully integrated non-professional content on different web 2.0 platforms to a single outlet. Social Networking Sites are a significant source of user-generated content for news websites. Users of SNS, in the process of engagement with news production and distribution, weigh in their agency and perspectives through the interactive web 2.0 affordances (Bakardjieva & Grden, 2011).

Deuze (2003) opined that the user-generated content had triggered a fundamental shift in the traditional approach of journalism by systematically hushing up “we write, you read” dogma (p. 220). Since user-generated content takes a remarkable space in online websites, a distinction between professional and amateur content has become difficult. The traditional boundary between reporter and reader has mostly vanished with the more significant inflow of news from users (Lee, 2012).

The new technological inventions have always created concerns and panics about their future among the news workers. When the internet was in its first stage-web 1.0, its pervasiveness was a concern. Singer (2004) says that the reporters were disturbed by the internet’s omnipresence and the increased technical invasion to the reporting job. In present days, with web 2.0, the reporters and gatekeepers’ journalistic privileges in news organisations come under a question of existence. Hermida & Thurman (2008) say that editors and chief executives in the UK fear being marginalised due to the increased popularity of user-generated content.

As online journalism takes centre stage in media industries, academic interventions to explore how the user-generated content-driven websites reorganise the journalistic practices and management model. These concerns bring up the third research question of this study,

- 3) How do professional journalists deal with user-generated content?

Theoretical Framework

Terranova's Free Labour

Grounding on on Terranova's (2000) concept of free labour, this study explores how the free labour of social networking users and website consumers contribute to nurturing independent news websites in Kerala.

Based on the Italian autonomist Marxist conception of the *social factory*, Terranova (2000) explains that the labour in a late capitalist society, especially in a digital economy has to be understood beyond the factory confinements and managerial plans. Free labour was found to be a significant yet less noticed trait in this regard. With a particular focus on the user involved activities on internet space, Terranova (2000) explains free labour as "simultaneously voluntarily given and unwaged, enjoyed and exploited". (p. 33). Since someone willingly gives it as part of their "outburst of creative energy and self-actualisation", free labour can be explained as a freely given activity (Bakardjieva, p. 407). It has no connection with the factory logic of production, managerial insinuation and wage distribution. Even though it is unpaid labour, it is eventually utilised to valorise organisations' profit. According to Terranova (2000), free labour is vital in ensuring an undeterred production of value, which is very important for network society's ceaseless flow.

Based on the concept of free labour, this paper locates journalism as a profession that has undergone structural and material changes with news websites, social networking sites and their users occupying a central place in the production.

Methods

This study chooses three leading independent news websites from the southernmost state of India- Kerala, namely SouthLive (<https://southlive.in/>), Dool News (<http://www.doolnews.com/>),

and Azhimukham (<https://www.azhimukham.com/>) for seeking answers to the research questions. The state's leading newspapers and television news channels manage to run their news websites, integrating their news networks into the webstream. However, these three independent news websites have successfully attracted sizeable Malayali readers with limited infrastructural facilities and workforce.

This study incorporates both quantitative and qualitative methods as tools to collect data. Quantitative content analysis and several in-depth interviews are employed to inquire about the news websites' free labour exploitation and understand the changes reflected in journalistic practices.

Initially, to understand the degree of user-generated content and social media stories published on these websites, a quantitative content analysis was carried out for one month, from July 10, 2018, to August 10, 2018. The units of analysis for the content analysis were 1) the stories that are generated by the employees of the news organisation based on social networking discourses and contents 2) the stories/images/videos that are directly appropriated from social networking sites by giving byline credit to the writer. Content analysis is an effective method to analyse a myriad of news texts (Bennoit, 2012). Explaining the content analysis of online news portal, Ahmed and Buyong, (2017) has said that online news analysis using content analysis needs to have a different approach from the traditional media. Since news websites incorporate other formats such as texts, photos, videos, and hyperlinks in a single platform, a comprehensive analysis should focus on all these contents. In this study, the researcher has taken account of the different formats, including text, photos and videos.

Based on the data gathered through the content analysis, In-depth interviews were conducted with content contributors, editors, and management representatives. Över (2018) explained in-depth interviews as a technique to evoke comprehensive information through intensive interviews with selected respondents. In this study, to understand the news websites' strategies in content generation and to grasp the level of free labour exploitation, interviews were carried out with two editorial level employees and one management representative. The interviewees were selected conveniently subjected to their willingness in sharing information. Similarly, two freelance content contributors of the websites and popular social networking users whose articles were previously appropriated by these websites were also selected for the interview.

The collected data from the in-depth interviews were transcribed

and then thematically coded to understand the role of free labour in nurturing the independent news websites in Kerala and to identify the attendant changes in journalistic practices.

Analysis and Interpretations

Social Media Dependency and User-Generated Contents

To trace the selected websites' social media dependency to produce news items and the usage of user-generated content, the researcher analysed the content of the chosen websites falling into three units of analysis such as 1) the stories generated by the websites from Social Media discourses 2) publishing social media posts as it is and 3) the article or opinion pieces contributed by the website readers.

South Live publishes a separate section called Social Stream, where they create stories and news out of the day's major social media discourses. The majority of these contents are the compilation of social media posts and memes modified with a slight interpretation of the website and a headline. Occasionally, they publish the individual social media post with a byline credit to the original author.

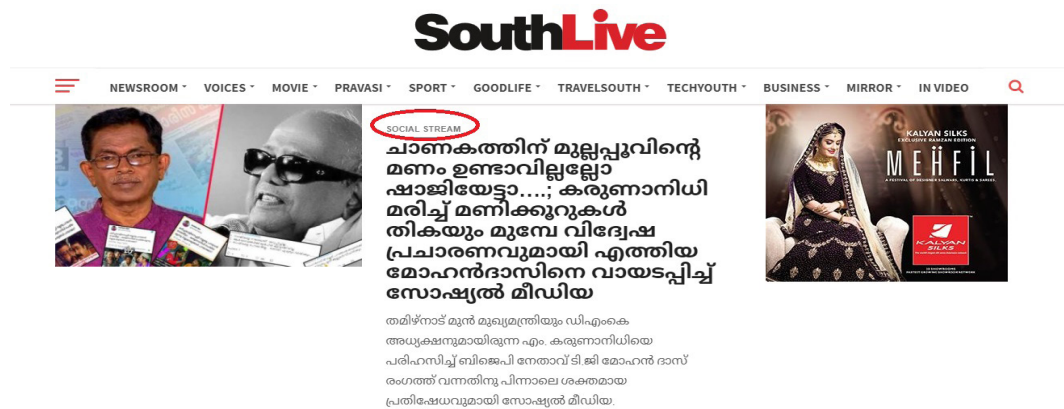


Figure 1: South Live's submenu titled Social Stream

Dool News has a particular sub-menu titled FB notification, where they publish much discussed and well written Facebook posts almost regularly. While publishing the Facebook posts, the website gives the byline credit to the original author. In this category, the website has published 36 items in the month that are taken for the study.

Azhimukam gives primary focus to Facebook as they publish engaging and viral Facebook posts under their sub-menu titled Facebook Diary. Instead of making any modifications on the original

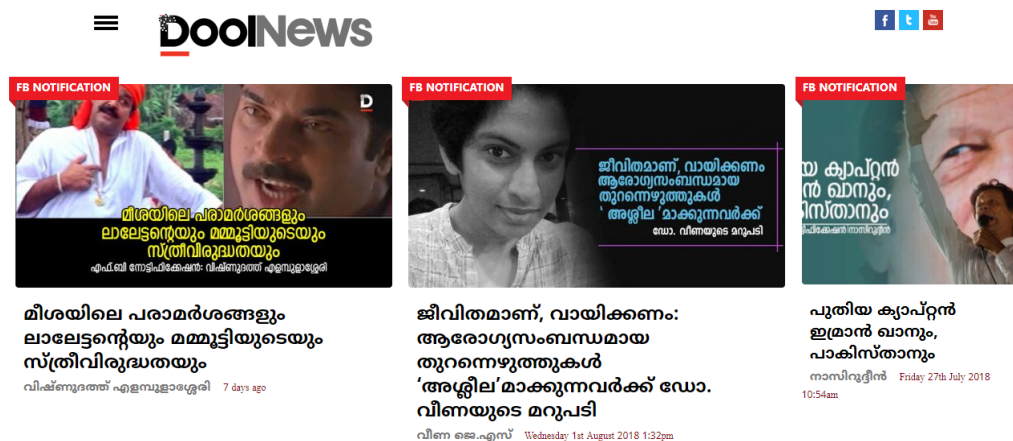


Figure 2: Dool News' sub-menu titled FB Notification

posts, the website publishes the articles as they appear on the Facebook wall with byline credit to the Facebook ID. While assuring the publication of at least an article daily, they used to publish multiple items when they found trending Facebook posts.

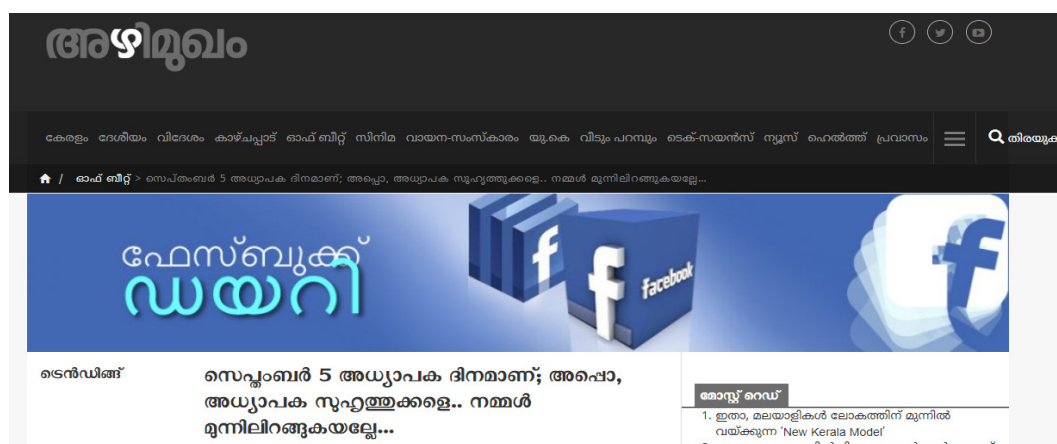


Figure 3: Azhimukham's sub-menu titled Facebook Diary

The content analysis of these news websites shows that they have different strategies to garner user-generated content and generate stories from social networking sites. Though they employ various ways to cull out user-generated content, all of them are found to be filled with a significant number of user-generated stories.

Stories Generated from Social Media Discourses		
SouthLive	Dool News	Azhimukham
34	36	37
Articles/Videos/photos directly appropriated from Social Networking Sites		
SouthLive	Dool News	Azhimukham
24	38	29
User Generated Articles/ opinion pieces contributed by website readers		
SouthLive	Dool News	Azhimukham
23	31	33

Table 1: Social media content distribution on selected websites

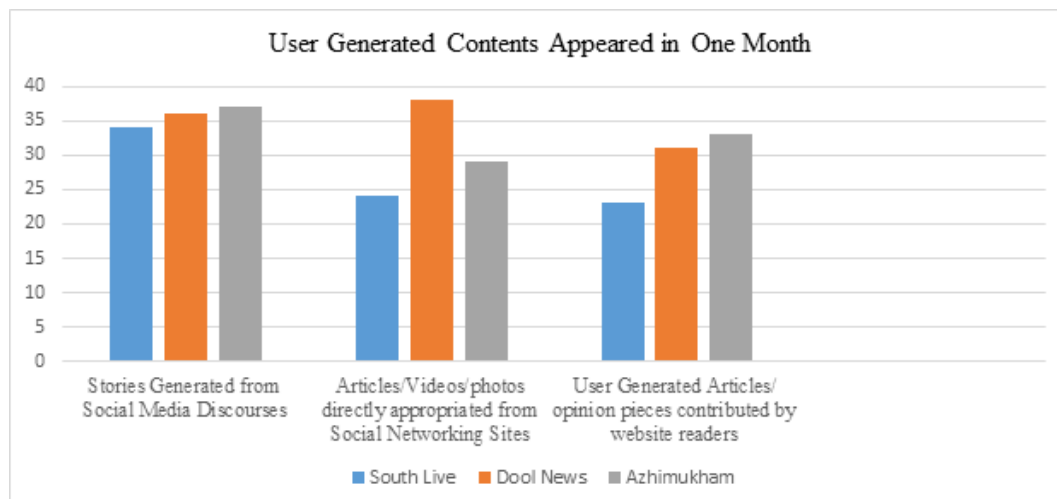


Chart 1: Social media content distribution on three websites

Aspiration for Social Capital and Dependency on Free Labour

The content analysis of the websites reveals the gravity of user-generated contents used by the news websites. Grounded on the inputs gathered from this analysis, the researcher carried out in-depth interviews with the content contributors, editorial staff and managerial representatives to reflect the comprehensive perceptions of the people involved in this scenario.

Both the website owners and the content contributors feel

commingling benefits for publishing user-generated content on news websites. As the website owners explain that they are giving the aspiring young writers an opportunity, the content contributors equally express satisfaction for giving away the content for free of cost. Pointing to the motive behind contributing articles for the website, an interviewee explains,

I have the habit of writing articles or making commentaries on social issues. I always wanted my items to be widely read as I look to gather more readers and friends on and off cyberspace. Unfortunately, earlier I used to get only a few readers or little satisfaction with the feedbacks. But when I got an opportunity to publish the article on Azhimukham that gave me exactly what I was craving for. (Respondent 1; Content contributor to Azhimukham).

Supplementing these opinions, another content producer who frequently publish his articles on Dool News says,

I don't bother much about the monetary benefits whenever I write something. All I want is to write and make it read by the people. Independent news websites have created content publication much more comfortable and accessible. (Respondent 2: Content contributor to Dool News)

Rather than concerning the monetary part, the content contributors are aspirational in acquiring social recognition and networks. The social media users, whose content is published on the websites, also express a similar opinion.

On average, I used to get 200 to 300 likes for my Facebook posts. But if any news websites publish the same, it gets more shares and likes than I usually get. Whenever the websites take my posts, I have gotten several new friend requests and congratulatory messages on Facebook, which satisfies what I have been doing. (Respondent 3; Social media user)

The content contributors' 'work for free' approach primarily lies in their attitude towards social networking platforms. This study's

respondents perceive the content contributed to the websites as an extension of their engagements on social networking sites.

When we post articles and photos on Facebook, no one pays for it, and apparently, we do not expect any monetary benefits from those activities. When we write for the websites or when they use our content, there is nothing offensive in it, and instead, they help us reach out to a broader reading population. (Respondent 4, Social media user)

The reason for the dependency on user-generated content remains the same for all the websites chosen for this study. They simultaneously aim for cost-cutting by reducing in-house workforce and broader coverage by leveraging the content contributors' popularity and language proficiency. Explaining the rationale for the leaning on social media and user-generated content, the managing editor of Dool News says,

Dool News is a small media organisation competing with the large media conglomerates of the state. We don't have a significant budget allocation to employ reporters in all districts and provide a house full of Newsroom employees. Hence we don't have many options other than depending on the social media users and freelance writers. (Respondent 5, Managing Editor, Dool News)

Supplementing these opinions, the managing editor of South Live explains,

Social media is a space where we can get immense information from worldwide. With the rise of social media, many unnoticed writers have grabbed public attention. We are utilising such writers to fill the voids on our website. The benefit is twofold. On the one hand, usually, they don't expect remuneration towards writing an article, and on the other, we get more traffic on our website through social media platforms. (Respondent 6, Managing Editor, South Live)

The interviews with the editorial employees underline the importance of social media users and content contributors in executing the works hassle-free and populating the websites with good content.

A sub-editor of Dool News says,

We are 14 employees who simultaneously manage reporting, editing and publishing. It's not easy to always be on the beats to collect information as we might be assigned other works. Hence, we usually manage it over the phone or through social networks such as instant messaging applications. Social media friends who are willing to contribute the content has been of more generous help to touch upon all the happenings of a day (Respondent 7, Sub-editor, Dool News)

The editorial employees raise severe quality and accuracy concerns when the websites depend on social media users and user-generated content. When the social media users feed the local stories, the editorial employees find it difficult to trace the authenticity of information and data.

We are given the task to edit the articles contributed by the readers and freelance writers. Usually, we publish the items without much censoring as it may hurt the soul of the content. Often, it is just a matter of uploading the articles to the platform. However, the integrity of information concerns us a lot. In several cases, we have difficulties cross-checking the information as we do not have enough field reporters in remote places. (Respondent 8, Senior sub-editor, South Live)

Conclusion

Though the networking activities are self-reflecting in nature, in a sense, the social networking users are playing out the roles of reporters from varied geographical areas and socio-cultural sectors. Often, their photos, videos, and writings are being appropriated by the news websites giving a byline credit to its creators. Some social networking users happily give away their creative content to news websites to enhance their social connections. In contrast, some others engage in these activities as a tool to modify their self. Indeed, social networking users' effort and labour are somehow appropriated/ utilised by the news websites for profit-making. However, as Terranova perceived, these activities never make them feel like labour that put toil on them; rather, they are voluntarily and happily given.

The free labour of social media users and website readers plays a significant role in nurturing the independent websites in Kerala, which gives heterogeneity to the news industry and healthy competition to the corporate media conglomerates that are touted as the mainstream.

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Humour appeal in Television Commercials: A Content Study

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Abstract

Advertising is an effective method of reaching people with product information. Advertisers are very careful in using different techniques to catch attention and persuade people to develop a positive approach towards their products or services.

‘Humour’ is one of the most commonly used appeals in advertisements irrespective of the medium. Humour is enjoyed by everyone regardless of gender and age. It drops our anger and stress and enlightens our minds to create a positive and pleasant environment around us.

This paper examines various elements of humour used in selected television commercials. The researcher observes that advertisements with humour elements often exaggerate facts and the usage of personification is also on the rise.

Keywords: advertising, humour, personification, exaggeration

Introduction

“Advertising is legalized lying”- H. G. Wells

American Marketing Association (AMA) has defined “Advertising as any paid form of non-personal presentation of ideas, goods and services by an identified sponsor.”

Advertisement is a type of non-personal communication intended to persuade consumers to buy certain products services or ideas. There are four primary sequential functions for advertising: precipitation, persuasion, reinforcement, and reminder.

The ad performs precipitation function by stimulating needs and wants and creates general awareness. The aim of some ads, such as comparative advertising, is persuasion. Persuasive advertising may

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often lead consumers to purchase. The purchase may be the outcome of emotional or rational appeals. Some ads are designed to reassure consumers that they have made the wise decision by buying a product or service. This makes consumers feel good and serves the function of reinforcement. The aim of reminder ads is to keep the company or brand name always fresh in the target audience's memory. Ads of Pepsi and Maggie are some such examples. If the advertisement of a particular product, service or idea does not persuade the consumers, then that advertisement will be termed worthless. Music, visuals, graphics and cartoons are all employed in advertising to boost their effectiveness.

Television as the Advertising Medium

From an advertising perspective, each of the media has its own strengths and weaknesses. If one could reach every consumer, talk to each individual, it would maximize personal sales effectiveness. With a capacity to being life-like visual and auditory communication into consumer's own home, television is the most personalized of the mass media. It is limited by the need for belief, clear messages and its transitory nature. So it must rely on other media to provide information intensive and later reference functions.

When television became more popular in India and people started crowding before the mini-screen, advertisements slightly changed their track from print and radio to television. The visual impact the medium possessed was utilized by the advertisers, to the maximum. Thus Television become a powerful advertising medium flashing number of advertisements every minute. In a short time, television proved it worthy of advertising in it, as advertisers found their products moving fast in the market.

Use of Humour in Television Advertisements

Advertisers use various techniques to increase the effectiveness of their advertising campaigns. Humour is one of the most used appeals in advertisements to gain viewers. Humour, the unique language everyone can understand destroys all the barriers in the complex and continuous process of communication. Thus, it can be said that humour is a powerful tool to make the communication process more effective. However, it is difficult to define the term humour accurately. Over the last century humour theories have been developed and researchers are getting more insight in the basics of humour. However, no final theory has been developed so far and researchers are still trying to figure out the best way to explain humour. Although there is no final understanding of

humour yet, it has been observed that humour is a way to communicate and persuade and therefore a good tool to use in advertisements.

In humour, 'timing' is critical. Critchely (2002) states that humorous timing consists of two temporal dimensions: "duration" and "instant." He uses the analogy of the rubber band to illustrate these dimensions. Duration-the stretching of the band-is the setup of the joke. Instant refers to the snapping of the band, in other words, the punch line.

There are many theories of humour that attempt to explain what humour is what social function it serves and what would be considered humorous. Relief theory, Superiority theory and Incongruous Juxtaposition theory are the major theories on humour. Relief theory maintains that laughter is a homeostatic mechanism by which psychological tension is reduced. Humour may serve to facilitate relief of the tension caused by ones' fear. Laughter and mirth, according to relief theory, result from this release of nervous energy. The superiority theory of humour traces back to Plato and Aristotle, and Thomas Hobbes' Leviathan. The general idea is that a person laughs about the misfortunes of others because these misfortunes assert the person's superiority on the background of shortcomings of others. The incongruity theory states that humour is perceived at the moment of realization of incongruity between a concept involved in a certain situation and the real objects thought to be in some relation to the concept.

Today many products are being marketed using humour. Most advertisers choose this technique because people will pay more attention to humorous commercials and it is easy to get them influenced. The best products to sell using humour tend to be those that consumers have to think the least about. Products that are relatively inexpensive, often consumable that can be represented without providing a lot of facts, and this is where humour can be used. Candy, food, alcohol, tobacco and entertainment related products have proven to benefit the most from humour in their campaigns. One of the most important things to keep in mind is relevance to the product while using elements of humour. The nature of the target audience also should be considered. Different things are funny to different people. A commercial that may leave one person gripping their sides from laughter may leave a bad taste in another's mouth. Also, the use of humour in advertising is very helpful in creating a brand strategy so advertisers must be very careful in creating humorous elements. There are seven different types of humour usually used in television advertisements.

- a. Personification
- b. Exaggeration

- c. Sarcasm
- d. Silliness
- e. Pun
- f. Surprise
- g. Comparison

Humour in advertising is a delicate method of attracting viewers' attention to the client's product. Doing it right means not only engaging the prospect but getting them to remember the product. Humour makes consumers to watch, laugh and remember.

The Humour Elements: Exaggeration and Personification

The word exaggeration can be simply defined as a technique that represents something as better or worse than what it really is. The technique is both fun and effective in advertising and it is easy to work with and to brainstorm. Exaggeration is a facet of advertising in every medium, from print ads and radio spots to TV commercials and promotional websites. Advertisements that promise to bestow upon the user super strength, blinding-white teeth and an uncanny ability to attract the opposite sex, have been around for decades. Marketers use such hyperbolic statements to attract customers, not with the facts about their products but with wild exaggerations not intended to reflect the truth. Some exaggerated visuals in advertisements show how users can gain tremendous, super-human benefits from a product. The ad campaign for the Red Bull energy drink promises to give the consumer wings to fly above his lethargy. Exaggeration may be either visual, audio, verbal and negative (exaggerating the negative effects, if the product is not used).

Personification is another technique used by advertisers to catch the attention of the consumers. Personification is the depiction of a personal nature or human characteristics to something non-human, or the representation of an abstract quality in human form. It has also been defined as a figure of speech in which inanimate objects are characterized in terms of human attributes, thus representing the object as a living and feeling person (Ricoeur 1977). These human attributes can include any aspect or element of "intelligent, animated beings, like beliefs, desires, intentions, goals, plans, psychological states, powers, and will" (Turner 1987, p. 175).

The general objective of the study was to examine the humour elements used in selected Indian Television commercials.

Specific Objectives

1. To examine the characteristics of humour elements used in Indian television commercials
2. To outline the use of exaggeration and personification in advertisements, where humour appeal were used

Past Studies

The researcher could not find many studies in the Indian context related to the topic selected for the current study. A couple of effects studies on advertising where humour was used as an appeal are given here. A study conducted on the topic “Effectiveness of Humour Advertising on Advertising Success” by S. Veketesh (2015) found that humour advertisements were effective in brand creation when compared to non-humour ads. Humour elements have also increased the effectiveness of an advertisement by increasing the viewership.

“The impact of humour in advertisements”, a study conducted by Marc G. Weinberger and Charles S. Gulas (1992) states that humour helps to grab more attention towards an ad campaign. Also, humour increases liking towards the message. The study also found out that related humour is always better than unrelated humour.

Methodology

The methodology employed for the study was qualitative content analysis. Television commercials of four non-durable consumer products were subjected to detailed content analysis. The advertisements for Fevicol, Cello butterflow pen, Domex Toilet Cleaner, and Sunlight Detergent Cake were selected.

Content Analysis

The selected television commercials of four products (Fevicol, Cello butterflow pen, Domex toilet cleaner, and Sunlight detergent cake) were critically analysed on some parameters to find out the use of humour elements in it.

1. Fevicol

Fevicol has become a household name that is today synonymous with adhesives. The creative ad campaigns of Fevicol help in its brand creation. The study analysed one of Fevicol’s advertisement where humour as an appeal was used.

In the beginning of the advertisement close up shots of a carpenter at work and a hen was shown. Following it the scene of a small tea shop near to the carpenter was displayed. In the shop a man was breaking eggs one by one from a basket to cook by simply hitting it at the edge of a pan. After breaking two eggs he cannot break the third one. He tried to break it by hitting it with a vessel but it fails. The egg slips from his hand when trying to break it using a hammer and hits a copper pot, the pot breaks but the egg is safe. With wonder he looks at the hen which laid the egg. He saw the hen was eating grains placed in an empty fevicol bottle. The duration of the ad is 0.31 seconds.

The concept of the advertising is very pleasing which prompts to enjoy the advertisement. The humour element used in the advertisement exaggerates the real fact and make the ad more effective. The aspect of exaggeration is well made use of in this advertisement.

2. Cello Butterflow Pen

Cello is one of the world's leading stationery companies . Many innovative concepts were used in the television commercials of cello products. The present study analysed the television commercial of cello butter flow pen, to examine the humour element used in it.

The advertisement starts with a tired postman standing in front of a house and giving a letter to the house owner. In the next scene we can see the post man was giving bundles of letter to him. A flash back scene appears then. The scene portrayed a girl with a pen and paper in her hand. After writing the first word she looks at the cello butterflow pen in her hand and starts non-stop writing. An attracting music is also included in the advertising to make it more interesting. The duration of the ad is 0.41 sec.

Here also the humorous concept exaggerates the real situation thereby making the advertisement more popular.

3. Domex Toilet Cleaner

Most of the advertisements of Domex focus on the germ destruction power of it while cleaning the stains. The researcher examined one of the most popular ads of the company.

The advertisement begins with the scene of a group of germs emerging out from the toilet seat of a bathroom. They are talking about the types of diseases(fever, diarrhea) they are going to spread to the

family members. Suddenly the door of the bathroom opens and enters a lady with domex toilet cleaner in her hand. Seeing the bottle of domex all the germs were frightened. The next scene displays how to use domex in toilet bowls and the effect of it in killing germs. The duration of the commercial is 0.37 seconds.

The germ destruction power of the product is clearly depicted in the advertisement. Personification (the attribution of a personal nature or human characteristics to something non-human, or the representation of an abstract quality in human form) is the main humour element used in this advertisement.

4. Sunlight Detergent Cake

Here the researcher has examined the famous advertisement campaign portraying sunlight as 'Orange man'.

The ad tells the story of an imaginary village. The king and the people of the village were sad because of the absence of sunrise. At the end of the ad all are happy, because with the help of orange peel rays of sun falls in the village. The duration of the ad is 0.27 sec.

The advertisement has a highly imaginary concept. The ability of orange peel to increase the brightness of clothes is intelligently used in the advertisement. Both personification and exaggeration were used in the copy.

Conclusion

The study shows that humour appeal has been used by many advertisers to increase the effectiveness of their advertisements. Exaggeration of facts is the most commonly used narrative element of humour in television commercials. Humour often exaggerate facts to persuade people to take positive action. The use of personification is also seen on the rise. It gives a different feel to see non-human things do human activities. This will help in the effective recall of advertisement and thereby improves brand positioning.

The uniqueness of humour is that it is a universal language. It is able to transcend cultural boundaries. No matter what language is spoken, it is funny and appealing. The success of humour advertisements lies in the relation between the theme and the product. Humour narrative idea must come from the very characteristics of a product itself and posit it in the right way in the minds of viewers. If not done properly the recall ability of the brand could not be assured.

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Tracing the Communicative Actions of Media Usage in Velamkonam Ayal Sabha[#] – A Case Study

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Abstract

This study is an attempt to trace various types of media usage and its communication pattern in the rural area. For this purpose, strategies used during the organization of a campaign in an Ayal Sabha namely, Velamkonam in Dhaivappura ward, Peringammala Grama Panchayat, Thiruvananthapuram district, Kerala have been observed. Ayal Sabha is the basic and micro level body in the structure of local governance in Kerala. This is a case study which used participatory observation method for the data collection. The concepts of participation, metacommunication and development communication have been identified as significant elements in the rural communication pattern and media usage. Comparatively informal and traditional media have greater importance in the rural space.

Keywords: rural, media usage, ayal sabha, participation, development communication, meta communication

Introduction

Observing and exploring the diversity in communication patterns in rural areas have been a critical concern in most development communication inquiries. In India about 70% of the population lives in the rural area. The rural space is mainly different from others in economic, sociologic and geographic terms. Usually the term rural is placed against the urban. While it is a fact that the duality of rural-urban or village-city is changing. The transformation of the exchanges between the rural and urban world and their social and economic integration leads to the redefinition of the village-city opposition. Generally, a rural space is identified by its Homogeneity. That means geographically a rural

[#]*Ayal Sabha is a micro level body in a Grama Panchayat. Ayal Sabha has to be constituted for every cluster of 50-100 families in a Ward. Velamkonam, Ayal Sabha is in Dhaivappura ward, Peringammala Gram Panchayat, Thiruvananthapuram district, Kerala.*

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space shares something in common within its premises. For example, if a particular area is coast land, forest or a hill station the area near to or surrounded to it is suggested to be similar to it. The National Sample Survey Organization (NSSO) defines rural as an area with a population density of up to 400 per square kilometer, in which a minimum of 75% of male working population involved in agriculture and allied activities. However, these definitions are not always sufficient to accommodate the characteristics of “rural space”. It is not only the men but the women are also engaged in various activities.

The study focuses on a particular *Ayal Sabha* namely, Velankonam in Dhaivappura ward, Peringammala Gram Panchayat, Thiruvananthapuram district, Kerala. *Ayal Sabha* is the micro level body in a Gram Panchayat. It is the most important participatory space provided in the context of local governance of Kerala. All voters of the area will be members and there will be an executive committee consisting of 11 members, out of which 6 should be women.

While observing certain communication practices within the *Velamkonam Ayal Sabha*, an attempt to the reduction and control of plastic usage has been traced. Along with having environmental and social concerns this process also have dimensions of communication. Neither the *Ayal Sabha* nor the Gram Panchayat identified this practice as a campaign. Work in an organized way towards a particular goal can be defined as a campaign. More specifically, activities or the practices that are intentionally created to shift or alter the existing realities of the people can be named as a campaign. Here with the support of the people in the village, organised through the *Ayal Sabha* and motivated by the Ward Member, Velamkonam is trying to reduce, reuse and recycle plastic materials for protecting their soil and environment. This process is being held in an organized way and it is set in a specific time, space and expects to alter the existing realities. Hence this project identifies this practice as a campaign and tries to analyse different communication pattern and media usage that have been involved throughout this move. Procession, community participation (participatory communication), and distribution of notice are the various communication medium used during this process. The detailed observations of the pattern of this practice and to elaborate the concept of participation in rural development are the main concern of this study.

Theoretical Approach

The researcher tried to understand the communication pattern in the rural area through the theoretical framework of development

communication, metacommunication, and the concept of participation.

‘Development’ and ‘Communication’ both these words are heavily loaded with various concepts and approaches. The terminology, development communication originated in Asia and was first used in a symposium held in the University of Philippines in Los Banos (UPLB) on 10th December 1971. Development Communication is communication with a social conscience. It takes humans into account. This concept aims that the organised efforts to use both communication process and media can bring social and economic improvements in the society, especially in developing countries. The concept of development has differences according to the region or contexts within a particular region. Hence the definition of development and development communication varies according to the regional differences. Nora Quebral often called as the ‘mother of development communication’, defined it as the art and science of human communication applied to the speedy transformation of a country from poverty to a dynamic state of economic growth and makes possible greater economic and social equality and the larger fulfilment of human potential. Development Communication playing a transforming role seeks social change in the direction of higher quality of values of society. In playing its roles, it seeks to create an atmosphere for change, as well as providing innovations through which society may change.

Nowadays, the term ‘participation’ has become an integral part of development projects. However, the level of participation, its intensity, frequency, and its extent are different depending on the varying context.

The genuine participation is happening when the bureaucracy, local elite, and people are working together cooperatively throughout the decision-making process and people become empowered to control the action to be taken. Paulo Freire gave importance to this concept of ‘empowerment’. Empowerment suggests that power itself would be spread across a greater number of persons in a community and that every enlightened individual would hold some measure of power, if not for shaping community decisions, for shaping their own decisions about the community environment which affect their own life. However, it is also important to note that participatory communication is not suitable in all situations, time frames, or for resolving all the problems. Power and control, liberation, conscientization, self-reliance, and knowledge sharing are the various concepts included within the perspective of participation.

Another concept analysed in this study is metacommunication. Paul Watzlawick, Janet Beavin and Don Jackson in *Pragmatics of Human Communication: A Study of Interaction Patterns, Pathologies and*

Paradoxes explains metacommunication. It is observed that irrespective of the volume or length, every conversation involves two messages, a content message and a relationship message. When two people are interacting, each is relating information to other and simultaneously each is also 'commenting' on the information at a higher level. This simultaneous relationship talks, which is often non-verbal, is called as metacommunication.

Objective and Methodology

The general objective of this study is to analyse the communication pattern of media usage in rural space. And more specifically to understand the usage of various media in rural space and to examine that how the context of *Ayal Sabha* is being a communication strategy for the rural development.

This study considers communication as a multi-dimensional process and the terms, behaviors or the practices within this study could not be measured quantitatively. Thus, qualitative methodology is adopted. A case study using participatory observation has been conducted for dwelling into the purpose of the study. There are around 90 households in Velamkonam. The researcher engaged with the daily practices of this area in three days. These include taking part in informal conversations with villagers, participating in Gram Sabha once, and meeting with members of *Ayal Sabha*. Various contexts opened the door to meet people and know their experiences about communication practices.

Analysis and Findings

Peringammala, the largest Gram Panchayat in Thiruvananthapuram district and second largest in Kerala, has nineteen Wards. Among them the researcher deliberately selected the tenth Ward, namely Dhaivappura, and, more specifically, the largest *Ayal Sabha* in the Ward, Velamkonam, for understanding the general objective of study. Velamkonam is located in the southern part of Kerala, and geographically this village is in the valley of Ponmudy hills. There were many attempts to study and protect the bio-diversity of the Panchayat and many initiatives are still continuing. While analysing the communication practices within the *Ayal Sabha*, a campaign has been traced. This campaign is an attempt to reduce and control of plastic usage in that area. This drive has been continuing in Dhaivappura ward, including Velamkonam, since 1st November 2016. Planning, design, and communication strategies of the campaign are discussed and implemented through the platforms provided by local governance in Kerala. Due to that reason an *Ayal Sabha* is chosen instead

of randomly selecting any other rural area. Here Velamkonam is both an *Ayal Sabha* and a rural space. Thus, the communication pattern of media usage in the rural space can be understood through the analysis of the communication practices of this campaign.

Communication Practice

Velamkonam, Mathayikonam, Dhaivappura, Parankimamvila, and Panangod are the five *Ayal Sabha* that belong to Dhaivappura ward. Discussions and awareness about the threats of plastic usage and an effort for the preservation of environment was started in Dhaivappura ward by mid of 2016. The meetings of *Ayal Sabha* and Gram Sabha were the platforms of these discussions. As an active participant in these forums Ward Member of Dhaivappura worked as a key motivator.

Later on, 2nd October 2016, a meeting of the *Ayal Sabha* executive committee held at Parankimamvila Cultural Center (a public space where villagers used to gather for Grama Sabha and other discussions in Dhaivappura ward) suggested a program for the reduction and controlled use of plastic. The immediate reason behind this suggestion was the pollution of Vamanapuram river which flows through the ward. Dumping of plastic wastes on the river and its banks was observed that led to further discussions and awareness which resulted in the planning of a campaign. This meeting designed an overall picture of the practice. The plan was not only to reduce the use of plastic, but also to think about the possibilities of reuse and recycling. The Ward Member, influenced by the working of plastic-shredding unit in Manickal Gram Panchayat, in Santhigiri, suggested an attempt to collect the plastic waste in the ward and then sent it to the recycling unit in Manickal Panchayat. As per the plan two sacks were given to each house and instructions were given to store reusable and non-reusable plastic waste materials separately. Ward Member and other members of *Ayal Sabha* together arranged some hawkers to collect plastic materials from each house once in a month.

The meeting suggested that these activities and awareness is only possible through the forums of *Ayal Sabha*, since these are the most active and effective space in a rural village like Dhaivappura. They decided to organise a procession to spread the message across the ward with the involvement of villagers in the locality. They prepared a notice that was to be distributed among the people and scheduled a timeline for each activity related to it. The meeting of each *Ayal Sabha* was held before 10th October 2016. Live discussions and awareness about the campaign were held.

Velamkonam *Ayal Sabha*

Ayal Sabha is the basic body in the structure of local governance. Eleven members from different sections of rural space have been chosen into the executive body by the members/people of that area for its smooth functioning. Velamkonam is the largest forum in Dhaivappura ward. There are 90 families around the village. 60% of the families reside in houses provided by the Panchayat and Government through various schemes. A number of people are still waiting for land and house allocation. Majority of the villagers are daily wage labourers and engage with agriculture and allied activities. A few people also work abroad. There are only two Government employees in the entire village. Among the total population in Velamkonam 3% is illiterate and 6% are neo-literate.

Communication Pattern

The executive meeting of Velamkonam *Ayal Sabha* held on 12th August 2016 discussed about the environmental problems, pollution, climate changes, and so on. This gathering considered the reduction of plastic use in the village as well as in the ward as one of its main aims in the agenda. The Ward Member participated in the *Ayal Sabha* and through his conversations he reinforced the necessity to create a consciousness in each and everyone's mind about the present condition of environment, crisis of pollution, and waste management. Later, the same discussions were repeated in the next *Ayal Sabha* and the executive body decided to directly went to the house of each member. They believed that the door-to-door conversations would make them aware of plastic usage to preserve the environment.

Velamkonam also adopted a communication strategy to conduct the campaign in line with the decisions taken in the meeting of *Ayal Sabha* executive members. These members grouped into three and covered all the households in the village in between 10th October to 25th October 2016. They distributed notices and conveyed the message of the campaign. The message communicated to the villagers was suggested a new model of waste management. The term 'waste' suggests something useless and avoidable in life for ensuring the concept of hygiene. Hence, the villagers were uncomfortable in storing plastic waste materials for a long time in their own home. There were misunderstandings and confusions regarding this. Therefore, it was necessary to make them understand the threats of plastic waste. It had been done through the informal and friendly communication.

Rather than the sender and receiver, this communication process

has communicators. Both the sender and receiver interchange their roles and there is not the presence of any outsider. Everyone engaged in this practice belong to the same geographical area and share some values in common. Thus, the interactions between them are quite understandable. Absence of an ultimate power hierarchy is the quality of these interactions. The familiarities between the communicators often help to realize the differences among them. It contributes to the flow of communication in a positive direction.

After the stage of interaction, on 1st November 2016, on the day of *Kerala Piravi* (marks the birth of the state of Kerala) a procession had been arranged in order to convey the message in a catchier way. It was arranged by the executive members of all the five *Ayal Sabha* in Dhaivappura Ward, in the leadership of Ward Member. Around 300 people including villagers and students from the nearby Iqbal Higher Secondary School participated in three hours long march (Ward Member informed Iqbal Higher Secondary School about the procession and campaign since the school had a culture to be part of such social events. Encouraged by the procession and the initiative of ward, National Service Scheme volunteers from Iqbal Higher Secondary School showed the interest to works on the next stage of this campaign. Thus, an institution or an external agency became a part of this drive.) Peringammala Panchayat president inaugurated the march and it attracted the attention of villagers through drum beats and folk songs. Irrespective of the age and gender, the villagers from Velamkonam actively participated in the procession. It created a kind of festive mode. Around one hundred participators were from Velamkonam.

In the next stage of the communication process, *Ayal Sabha* executive members and the student volunteers of NSS from Iqbal Higher Secondary School visited all the houses and provided two sacks to store plastic waste. Proper guidelines were shared in the first stage of communication, the same was repeated again and doubts were clarified. They explained how to store plastic covers, bottles, and other waste materials in two different sacks after making it clear from other degradable waste materials like food, drinks, etc. *Ayal Sabha* also arranged hawkers to collect plastic bottles and others which could be sold on a monthly basis. This gave an opportunity to gain money from the waste, even its a small amount. *Ayal Sabha* members promised to shift the sack, in which plastic covers are collecting, once it is filled and packed well. The plan was to collect the sacks from all the households and sent it to the plastic shredding unit in Manickal Panchayat, Santhigiri. However, the study observed that *Ayal Sabha* and the Ward Member failed to transfer the collected sacks of plastic covers to the recycling unit, due to some communication gap

and political friction. But the hawkers residing in the premises of same rural area is still collecting waste materials. 50% of villagers are still storing plastic covers in sacks on their home and 99% of the population in Velamkonam still have a positive attitude towards the motives of campaign.

Continuation of Communication Process

The study observed a communication gap in the later stages of the process. The *Ayal Sabha* members promised the villagers to collect the sacks once it is fully packed. But due to some external factors and political pressure first plan was forced to drop. The Ward Member belongs to one political party and the Panchayat administration body to another. Thus, some misunderstandings occurred, which were not identified in the initial stage of campaign. The Panchayat body started to think about a plastic shredding unit within its premises. Hence the plan to send the plastic waste to another Panchayat (Manickal Panchayat, Santhigiri) was dropped. But it was not communicated among the villagers. This caused to create disagreements among them.

50% of the villagers are still continuing to store the plastic covers on sacks the expectation that someone will collect it soon. While some of the villagers dumped the packed sacks in a nearby unused well, a few have burned it. However, the villagers cannot be blamed for their actions. Their living experience and contexts are different. Most the villagers are living in the house given by the Panchayat and government. Their facilities are limited. On the occasions of marriage, funeral, family functions, and other gatherings these waste sacks become a hazard for them. Thus, they tried to remove it from their living space. It is related to the concept of hygiene also. A majority of the villagers have an inner connection with the campaign and desire to change, but a minority (1%) are prejudiced on the basis of political ideologies.

The communication processes were enacted through the platform of local governance. Although, *Ayal Sabha* members are not selected on the basis of any political party, the Ward Member, who was involved throughout the campaign, was representing a political party. Political ideology or any personal motives of the ward member is not identified as a factor in this campaign.

Communicative Actions as a Process

Five stages were identified during the analysis of communication process. In the first stage, the need and necessity of a campaign was discussed through the discussions between Ward Member and *Ayal Sabha* executive members. Later in the second stage, it was

communicated through the forum of each *Ayal Sabha*. A strong relation among the *Ayal Sabha* executive members towards the campaign strengthened the communication process. Then *Ayal Sabha* executive members communicated it with the villagers in the third stage. Interpersonal communication boosted the process of campaign in this stage. In the fourth stage, a procession was arranged to reinforce the communicated message and to gain attention of villagers regarding their own involvement. Action was the fifth stage. Here, *Ayal Sabha* members and students again visited each house and distributed the sacks.

Two levels of awareness had occurred in between the communication process. First was among the *Ayal Sabha* executive members and later among the villagers. Ward Member, provided awareness to the executive members to design the campaign. Later, *Ayal Sabha* executive members give awareness to the villagers. It helped both of them understand the necessity of the campaign. Impact of awareness stage reflects in the attitude creation. *Ayal Sabha* members and villagers are equally involved in this practice. An attitude towards development, waste management, and environment preservation have been created among them. That attitude still exists in their minds. It was molded through sharing their life experiences and interactions. Thus, this has the potential to break the limitations constructed by the communication gaps in the process and could possibly contribute to the upcoming initiatives.

Media Usage

One of the objectives of this study is to understand the usage of various media in rural space. Three kinds of medium are used to communicate the message of campaign to the rural audience. Both the sender and receiver belong to same rural space. Their roles are interchanging according to the contexts.

Interpersonal Communication as a Medium

Interpersonal communication was the backbone of this campaign. From the first stage to the fifth stage of communication process, the interactions between Ward Member, *Ayal Sabha* executive members, and villagers supported the campaign. More than interpersonal communication, the concept of metacommunication works here. Here the relationships between the communicators are crucial. Relationships are created through interaction and it is an important element in interpersonal communication. People in a relationship are always creating a set of expectations, reinforcing old ones and or changing an existing pattern of interaction.

It is observed that irrespective of the volume or length, every conversation involves two messages—content and relationship. When two people are interacting, each is relaying information to other and simultaneously each is also ‘commenting’ on the information at a higher level. This simultaneous relationship talks, which is often non-verbal, is called as metacommunication. Four behaviors seem important in metacommunication, proximity, smiling, touching, and eye contact. Proximity can be significant in transmitting the emotions like intimacy, attraction, trust, caring, etc.

When communication process is strongly bonded with relationship, the exchange of the content or message is accompanied by the exchange of emotional bonds between the communicators. This is often interchangeable. Both the *Ayal Sabha* executive members and villagers share the same rural space. Often, the villagers can look into the life of designers of the campaign before they adopt the message in to their own life. There is no outsider from the rural space to communicate the message of campaign. The proximity helps the planners of the campaign to gain the trust of the villagers. Their emotional attachments, intimacy, smiling, eye contact, etc. contribute to the proper flow of communication. This kind of interaction that might not work in any other geographical space, works in this setting.

However, the executive members of the *Ayal Sabha* or the planners of the campaign cannot forcefully impose anything on the villagers since the villagers does not consider them as a superior authority over them. The *Ayal Sabha* members also do not have any intentions to exercise control or power over them. They are connected to each other through their daily life engagements and can identify and relate their situations. Hence, the factors like religion, caste, class, income, etc. do not hold any kind of superiority in the communication flow. Therefore, the power relationship does not work here. Absence of power relation does not mean that there is no power. A power exists in every relation, but here it is interchangeable. There is no ultimate hierarchy.

Procession

In order to attract the attention of the villagers a procession was arranged through the initiative of five *Ayal Sabha* executive members in Dhaivappura ward. A procession is not a suitable medium for all contexts. But here in a rural space, organization of procession created a festive mode. The presence of drumbeats and folk songs throughout the three-hour long march attracted more people into it. Microphones and speakers are deliberately avoided with the concern of sound pollution.

The involvement of villagers strengthened the campaign. This also reflects the effective use of traditional media in rural space. Around three hundred villagers and students from the nearby Iqbal Higher Secondary School became part of the procession. Every medium has its own way of communication. Selection of a medium should depend upon its acceptance among the audience. Rather than print or electronic media the nature of Velamkonam demands a medium like procession. It creates a sense of togetherness and provides opportunity for the involvement of more villagers into the process. More than participation, this involvement develops an attitude among the villagers. Procession was held in the beginning of communication process. Later, it contributed the functioning of the rest of the campaign. It was not just three hundred, but all the villagers were involved in it. It is not the physical presence that determines the involvement. Some of them were inside the premises of procession and others were witnessing it from outside. In a sense both were participating. That is one of the characteristics of traditional media.

Notice

The only printed material used during the entire campaign was a notice. It was created during the second stage of communication, in which *Ayal Sabha* members visited villagers. They distributed notices in each and every home. During the procession, the same notice was distributed among the locality. The content of the notice reinforced the message of campaign. Compared to the door-to-door communication, the influence of notice or its contents were less. More than a printed message they were interested in the interactions. The direct conversations without any formalities made them more comfortable.

Ayal Sabha as a Communication Strategy for Rural Development

Rural development is an important concept in a developing country like India, where 70% of the total population resides in rural areas. This study explores the possibilities of rural development through the local governing system, specifically *Ayal Sabha*. The entire communication process of campaign was practiced through the structure of *Ayal Sabha*. The meeting of *Ayal Sabha* executive members occurs once a month and the general meeting once in three months. All the voters who belong to a village are members of that *Ayal Sabha*.

The planning of the campaign and its design were developed by the executive body of the *Ayal Sabha*. Later, the executive members directly interacted with the villagers. The decision of conducting a campaign was taken by the executive members along with the support of Ward

Member. In a sense, not all the villagers have the power to take the decision but if the decisions are not acceptable by the majority of villagers, they have the power to alter it. *Ayal Sabha* invited the participation of all the villagers from the beginning onwards. The door-to-door interactions helped to overcome the concept of pseudo-participation. Participation is pseudo when people are just witnessing a development process without having control over it or without a chance for any suggestion. The concept of participation believes that people compatible with their own human potentials, inner life forces, and cultural identity can generate their own source of power. The external agency that tries to lead or motivate people in the development activity should also understand that people who belong to that area is also intellectually capable to set an order for their lives in a more liberated manner themselves.

The only external agency that influenced this campaign was the Ward Member, who belongs to another *Ayal Sabha*. The Ward Member contributed the idea of waste management. This suggestion can be considered as a motivator and this element did not underestimate the capacity of any individual in the *Ayal Sabha*. The villagers engaged in the rest of the activities in order to liberate themselves from the threats of pollution and the need to preserve natural resources. However, the Ward Member was influenced by another external agency, the functioning of Plastic shredding unit in the Manickal Panchayat. The structure of Manickal Panchayat and its resources are different from Velamkonam. While trying to adopt a development model it is necessary to understand the nature and characteristics of that space. The *Ayal Sabha* implemented two strategies for the purpose of campaign. One was to shift the packed plastic waste into a recycling unit which is located around 40 km away from Velamkonam. The second was the arrangement of hawkers to collect reusable plastic bottles and other waste materials from each house once in a month. The first strategy of waste management was to come outside the context of Velamkonam which however failed. The second was generated within the space of Velamkonam and this is still ongoing.

An *Ayal Sabha* has the potential to contribute to the growth of rural development. Its engagements are within the rural space. Thus, the need of development, its implementation, etc. can be easily identified. In rural development, the concept of 'model' itself is questionable. The blind adoption of any development model in a rural space will invite controversies and confusions. If the idea of participation works well, the villagers themselves can identify and suggest their developmental strategies. Here, *Ayal Sabha* can be a communication strategy for the rural development.

Conclusion

The study is conducted to identify the communication pattern of media usage in rural area. Through the case study of Velamkonam *Ayal Sabha*, Dhaivappura ward, Peringammala Panchayat in Thiruvananthapuram district a campaign is selected for the analysis. The importance of interactions in the daily life practices is one of the key patterns of communication in rural space. Door-to-door communication, folk songs, drumbeats, processions, etc. are crucial to the rural context. The pattern of media usage is developing from the rural premises itself. It is strongly built on the life experiences of the villagers. A sense of togetherness and trust is reflected through the informal interactions. Along with conveying a message, a relationship is established through the traditional, informal media. This relationship goes beyond any hierarchical constructions and power dominance. There is a hierarchy and power relation in every practice of communication. Here, the difference is the interchange of this power or dominance. The sender and receiver change the roles according to the contexts. The concept of participation is more important than a mere representation in rural development. From the imagination of a development practice to the stage of implementation and continuation, a genuine participation is necessary. Pseudo-participation cannot realize the underlying potential of the rural space. Communication for the continuation of a practice need much care as in the planning and implementation stage. The causes of the communication gap should be identified on time through proper analysis and should be resolved.

Ayal Sabha, the micro-level body in the local governance system in Kerala can contribute a lot to the rural development. These local bodies can enjoy the power of decision making if the decentralisation works properly. The well-functioning *Ayal Sabha* can be used as a platform of liberating that rural space through empowerment. Acquisition of self-reliance and knowledge sharing through these forums will help the villagers develop their own communication patterns and media as per their needs. However, the media usage in rural space shows its potential to accept both the similarities and differences within it. This is not usually observable in any other geographical spaces.

The study is relevant in the context of increasing number of developmental crisis and protests. It is expected that this study will help the upcoming researches in the field of development communication, and the planners of rural development to analyze how communication process influence the development practice in the rural area.

The study identified the concept of Metacommunication within

the communication practice of *Ayal Sabha*. This concept can be elaborated with respect to the various development plans and strategies of Gram Panchayat. The building of relationships and interactions along with conveying the message could contribute to the cooperation and participation of villagers in rural development. Since the socio-cultural context of each rural space is different, there is a possibility of comparative analysis of media usage and patterns in between different rural space within a Gram Panchayat or Ward. The concept of participation moulded through this study and the potential of traditional media or informal media could be studied. Also, the concept of genuine participation and liberation might be applicable to strengthening human resources in rural space.

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Participatory Communication: A Case Study of Waste Management Strategies in Pappinisseri Panchayat

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Abstract

India operates a federal system of government and the responsibility of solid waste management is vested with local self-governments. Pappinisseri panchayat located in Kannur district won the National Panchayat Development Plan Award in 2018-19 for its impressive achievements in decentralized solid waste management. Solid waste management was successfully carried out by the active participation of panchayat officials, gramasabhas, waste collection centers, green volunteers, recyclers, vendors, and general public including NRIs. To bring these stakeholders under one umbrella, Pappinisseri panchayat applied participatory communication strategies and achieved goals of waste management.

Keywords: Solid waste management, participatory communication, Pappinisseri panchayat, local self-government

Introduction

India is home to 1.21 billion people which comprises 17.86% of the world's population (Census, 2011). As population grows the volume of waste generated also increases. But waste collection and management are badly executed in India (Kumar and Cheeseman, 2017). Rural India alone generates 0.3 to 0.4 million metric tonnes of solid waste per day as reported by the Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation, Government of India (Ramesh and Sivaram, 2018). However, the authorities do little towards solid waste management in rural areas.

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Solid waste generated in rural areas are predominantly organic and biodegradable. Accumulation of inorganic and non-biodegradable solid waste pose challenges hitherto not experienced by the authorities. Functional waste collection and disposal system with public participation and involvement can effectively address the waste problems at the macro and micro level.

Local self-governments are the bodies that administer a small community such as village, town or city. They work at the grassroots touching people's everyday life. Nevertheless, they often face many problems beyond their ability to handle solid waste due to lack of financial resources, infrastructure, and technical expertise.

Modern problems have modern solutions. Traditional methods of collection, open burning, dumping, and land filling method of waste management are no longer sustainable (Abdel-Shafy and Mansour, 2018). It is better to reduce the generation of waste rather than circulating the process of collecting, dumping and recycling. However, we cannot completely do away with the latter. Regular communication with public and households can create awareness about waste management and recycling. Many local self-governments either do not have appropriate communication channels or participatory mode of operations to tackle waste management, one of the most pertinent problems of modern times. But there are exemptions.

Pappinisseri panchayat is located in Kannur district along the national highway 17. It won National Panchayat Development Plan Award in 2018-19 instituted for promoting and executing centre-state projects, public participation, coalition of different sections of society and uplift of weaker section. The award committee evaluated the working of gramasabhas, working groups, planning committees, monitoring committees, participation of staff and Kudumbasree. As national highway passes through the panchayat, waste dumping on road sides was a crucial problem faced by people and authorities. Hence, waste disposal was a priority and several programmes were organised to raise awareness on the issue. Along with these, Panchayat provided Material Collection Facility (MCF) whereby a team of green volunteers would collect solid waste directly from each house.

Panchayat operated 3-ton solid waste treatment centre. Organic waste was converted into manure at a bio-gas plant managed by the panchayat. A public park and garden named APJ Abdul Kalam was maintained along the national highway which was previously a common site for dumping of solid waste. Littering waste along

the national highway substantially came down after these people friendly initiatives. The waste management activities were not only cost effective but also revenue generating for the Panchayat. The park and garden were sponsored by merchants. Bio-gas plant and waste treatment centre were maintained by a private venture which brought additional income for the panchayat. Slaughter waste plant was run by a consortium of NRIs from the panchayat. Central government, state government and non-governmental organisations frequently promote several waste management programmes and projects for the local governments. Many of these initiatives and projects generally fail to achieve their goals as they are planned and executed without the active participation of the stakeholders (Nayak, 2019). On the other hand, Pappinisseri panchayat succeeded in managing the waste collection and disposal with involvement and participation of all stakeholders. This article will explore the ways and means with which participatory communication strategies effected the critical difference.

Participatory Communication in Solid Waste Management

Modernisation theories promote a top-down, ethnocentric and paternalistic views of development (Gwynne, 2009). In participatory communication, the key responsibilities of development communication include encouraging involvement, inspiring critical thinking, and emphasising the process rather than the specific outcomes associated with modernization and progress. Participation is required at all phases of the development. Thus, communities are encouraged to get involved in project planning, execution, and evaluation. This will provide individuals a sense of ownership as well as a sense of involvement. Communication should occur among all the constituents of the community to ensure that they all have equal opportunities to influence the initiative's outcomes. Thus, participatory communication is ideally a component of the entire project process from start to finish (Anyagbunam et al, 2004). Manyozo (2012) rightly points out that participatory communication is a major community engagement method that is built on conversation, respect for local knowledge, and communal decision-making. Participatory communication is a dialogue-based technique that allows various stakeholders to share information, perceptions, and opinions, so facilitating their empowerment. It entails not only the exchange of information and experience, but also the discovery and development of new knowledge targets to improve situations (Tufte and Mafalopulos, 2009).

As waste management is a modern concept of development, the theories of modernisation paradigm can hardly deal with the issue. Local elites, with help and direction from foreign specialists, formulate and implement modernisation theories and concepts. The ultimate beneficiaries at the local level are excluded from planning and implementation of the development projects. They remain passive recipients of vital decisions that concern their lives and survival. Waste management can be effectively tackled with public participation and support. Instead of imposing the centrally designed policies on people as in the top-down approach, communication strategies are to be designed with involvement and participation of the all stakeholders.

Waste is generated from houses, streets, flats, institutions, industries and so on. Government interventions alone can do little in reducing the dumping habits of the people. In fact, the lack of sensitivity accounts for the problems and failures of many ambitious waste management projects. Participatory communication with clear cut objectives and strategies are better equipped to achieve the goals of waste management.

Gray Coldevin (1987) describes participatory communication as the systematic utilization of communication channels and techniques to increase people's participation in development and to inform, motivate, and train rural population mainly at the grassroots. People should not be forced to embrace new practises, no matter how helpful they appear to be in the eyes of the authorities. Rather than adopting new habits based on knowledge, people should be encouraged to participate. Educating people about the importance of waste management and waste reduction is not a solution. On the other hand, people should be encouraged to keep their surroundings clean and healthy. Thus, everyone is persuaded to be part of the waste management process.

Lack of local participation is considered the primary reason for the failure of many developmental programmes including waste management projects. Pappinisseri panchayat addressed waste management activities seriously by ensuring local involvement through participatory communication strategies. It engaged every stakeholder in the waste management through regular and effective communication. Major issues faced by the Panchayat were mindless waste dumping in public places and national highway, illegal dumping of septic waste, littering of wastes from slaughter houses and paucity of facilities to manage bio waste and solid waste from residents, markets, shops and offices.

Narayanan K, former president of Pappinisseri Panchayat, unravelled the communication strategy. Panchayat initiated awareness campaigns on waste management and conducted several meetings to develop a strategy for waste management. Panchayat officials and elected representatives organised many gramasabha meetings to interact with public to create awareness and arrive at solutions to waste dumping and disposing. Discussions in gramasabhas did not generate the desired impact. Hence, community-wise meetings were held at the second stage. Convincing people about waste reduction and management were not easy. People hailed from different categories such as educated, uneducated, rich, poor, devotees and non-devotees. Bringing all these groups together and giving the same message did not generate the expected result. Thus, Panchayat organised meetings with representatives (opinion leaders) who have the potential to convince people at the micro level. Later, a larger meeting was held with under the leadership of the opinion leader/s. Gradually, the initial lukewarm responses began to change and serious action plans emerged in managing the waste. Haritha Karma Sena was designated to collect solid waste regularly from residential areas. A smart caller application was developed which informed residents the date and time of waste collection.

Soon after reaching out to the residents, attention was shifted to address the merchants and shop owners in the panchayat. Regular meetings with merchants and shop owners brought in the desired effect. They cooperated with Panchayat authorities in the collection and management of waste from the markets and small shops. In addition, the merchants constructed a children's park beside the national highway. A garden along with children's park was also set up with the financial assistance of well-wishers. To prevent dumping waste into the river from Valapattanam bridge, Panchayat installed street lights with sponsorship from the business community.

While many local bodies consider waste to be perennial menace, Pappinisseri Panchayat was taking several steps ahead in generating profit from managing the waste. Narayanan K, the then president of the local body approached the NRI society of Pappinisseri to invest in a plant to process the waste from slaughter houses. Soon, a company was registered. Clean Ventures Kannur run by a consortium of Bahrain NRIs of Pappinisseri collected meat and chicken waste from slaughter houses and chicken shops. The 10.5 ton plant converted waste into bags of fertilizers. Biodegradable waste from shops, markets, shopping complexes and offices are collected and treated at bio-gas plant built by the Panchayat. Green protocol was implemented

throughout the Panchayat with support of the public. To successfully achieve the goals of waste disposal and management, Panchayat convened regular meetings with institutional heads, religious leaders and others to ensure their cooperation and participation. A system was eventually set in to run the projects at different levels. Grassroots planning, participation and effective communication were the key to the waste management in the Panchayat.

Conclusion

The participatory communication strategies were instrumental in achieving the goal of green and clean Panchayat. More than 10 tons of waste were dumped on both sides of national highway 17 in a month prior to 2017 (Pappinisseri Panchayat Annual Report, 2019). APJ Abdul Kalam park built by Panchayat with financial support from merchant association substantially reduced waste dumping habit on the road sides. The beautification project along the national highway resulted in zero waste dumping. Similarly, the street light project of Valapattanam bridge not only reduced waste dumping but also generated additional income by way of placing advertisement billboards on the street light pillars. Chicken and meat waste rendering plant ushered in revolutionary change in Panchayat's waste management. Before the plant was installed, slaughter waste was carelessly dumped along the national highway and into mangrove forests. The entire area was made to stink posing health issues and stray dog menace. The 10 ton capacity plant with freezer facility process the waste without any hassles. Panchayat earns Rs. 25000 per month as rent from the plant.

Solid waste from households is collected by Haritha Karma Sena directly. Panchayat gives proper and timely information regarding collection of waste through smart caller app. Panchayat's regular visits and communication with pre-school centres, schools and offices ensured that the premises were kept clean. Ward members, Asha workers and volunteers led the cleaning activities in public places at regular intervals. People learned to deposit plastic bottles and pens into earmarked booths installed in public places.

The major factors behind these achievements were effective communication strategies and active involvement of all stakeholders. But leadership also matters in spearheading such ambitious projects. Coordinating the stakeholders at different levels is a Herculean task and strategies require constant revision. Pappinisseri Panchayat

places an imitable model of participatory communication to effectively tackle a challenging waste management problem.

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Pseudonymity and Feminism Practice in Facebook: A Critical Discourse Analysis

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Abstract

The on-going trend of pseudonymization observed in social media spaces enables individuals to articulate and communicate freely. A pseudonym is a false name adopted by an individual instead of their real name and pseudonymity is the identity possessed with this disguise. Pseudonymity contributes to agency and preferred subjective position in social media. While pseudonymity and anonymity appear to deindividuate women, a critical examination of the same would reveal that the absence or lack of subjectivity tagged to 'naming' is not delimiting but rather empowers women. Pseudonymity, divested of popular self-referential address, lets women to become a nomad, in Braidotian sense, and is endowed with unprecedented agency. Like any other public spaces, internet produces gendered unequal power relations. When women become politically active and talk feminism in cyberspace, they get surveilled, labelled, controlled and attacked by the male dominant cyber society. It's difficult to trigger feminist discourses in social media space with the factor of identifiability. Women are thus migrating to pseudonymity in cyberspaces which help in articulating a self sans referentiality. This paper will seek to understand how women use pseudonymized profiles to actively engage in feminist discourses in Facebook.

Keywords: pseudonymity, anonymity, gender, internet, cyberspace, agency, feminism, feminist discourse

Introduction

Emergence of Social Networking sites has been a revolution in social interaction. Facebook is an important public space in today's world where people react, interact and express their thoughts and ideologies reaching a mass audience.

Michel Foucault's heterotopia is a space that disrupts the continuity and normality of common everyday places. Facebook, being a social medium, is a heterotopian space where more layers of relations,

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communications and meanings lie. It's a virtual world within many worlds facilitating social interactions and a moldable 'other space' that can be furnished in specific ways, but is always different from regular spaces (Rymarczuk and Derksen, 2014). People, having created an account in Facebook lets out every continuance, feelings and rebellion in forms of posts and comments. People tend to be more courageous in a Facebook space than physical space. It has become a space for self-presentation and performing identities. Initially there was scope and factor of anonymity in using social media. But today, it's a 'nonymous' space as they compel users to perform identity in new ways (Cirucci A. M, 2015). As anonymity becomes a blurred-out possibility, pseudonymity is the new digital identity on role in social media platforms.

Pseudonymity is disguised identity possessed with a pseudonym, false name. Persons with pseudonyms don't reveal their legal identities or any identifiable details in a social media space, such as photographs, address, family members' names. Sometimes the pseudonym doesn't even represent a gender. Pseudonymised profiles have varied intentions also. Some use pseudonyms to possess an identity which is not socially accepted or mainstream. Some hold it just to remain unknown behind the veil and enjoy the virtual life being a perceiver.

Anonymity cannot really be understood as a binary, as in a shift from completely identifiable to completely anonymous. It's a continuum that represents various shades of identification. Before the popularization of contemporary social media, Judith Donath identified full anonymity as one extreme of a continuum that moves from the completely anonymous to the thoroughly named.

Every social media is different in their policies of user identities. Handling and controlling the creation of pseudonymized profiles is difficult for many reasons, though Facebook clearly mentions in their policies that the users are expected to have only one identity. They also urge the users to use their original pictures as profile pictures. But there are sites and apps like OkCupid, Reddit and Yik Yak that allows only pseudonyms or anonymous identities. Their policies urge users only to interact anonymously and engage in discourses only with pseudonyms (Nagel & Frith, 2015).

People even have identified pseudonymity as part of the internet culture where it triggers straight and to the point discourses without negotiations. People tend to act brave in spaces where they are unknown. When it comes to women, it's something beyond courageousness, but to do with fear; fear of being misjudged, abused and attacked. According to Hua Qian and Craig R. Scott, people who refrain from giving identification information are more likely to self-disclose. The degree of

anonymity a blogger possesses online is dependent upon the nature of target audience. A pseudonym is more about appearing cool than being anonymous.

The presentation of self-offline is more territorially confined. Every person has got different audiences in different contexts. These audiences vary across different physical settings, ranging from family to friends in a pub. This bounding of social situations could be identified as an identity practice similar to the act of creating pseudonymous identities online. People are interested in exploring different identities in different parts of their social life (Hogan, 2013). People are like diamonds who look different depending on the angle (Poole, 2013).

Anonymous internet users appear in news stories in the context of different protests, abuse, extreme speech or political activism. Their pseudonyms even attain popularity because of the discourses they trigger or opinions they put forward. In a patriarchal country like India, it's observed that women to perform activism and feminism in social media spaces with their legal identity is difficult. Feminist and anti-racist arguments for protecting pseudonymity emphasize that it is especially important for women and other marginalized groups, especially since using a real name may expose them to harassment, discrimination, or social consequences. Women who discuss feminism, for example, are sometimes subject to death and rape threats (Smith, 2011). Thus, pseudonyms and pseudonymised self in social media spaces help women escape such threats and practice feminism unaffectedly. There are ample reasons to split one's identity online that have nothing to do with harassing people or acting uncivilly in comment sections (Boyd, 2011).

Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA)

The researcher used Norman Fairclough's critical discourse analysis to do the study. CDA is an analytical framework for unravelling opaque relationships between discourse and society as factors in securing power (Fairclough, 1995). CDA examines the discursive participants' choices of words and metaphors in relation to their relational, experiential, and expressive values, with these choices encoding assumption about power (Orellana, 1996).

There are three levels of relational discourses in Fairclough's model:

1. Social conditions of production and interpretation – The societal factors that lead to the production of texts there by affecting interpretation.

2. The process of production and interpretation - how texts and interpretations are produced
3. The text.

Fairclough introduced three stages of CDA based on these

- Description stage, which deals with the formal properties of text.
- Interpretation, which deals with the relationship between text and interaction.
- Explanation, which deals with the relationship between interaction and social context.

The researcher has chosen the pseudonymous profile '*Inji pennu*' to do the study, who claim to be a woman. The profile was created in 2008 and currently it has more than 21000 followers. The profile is very active on Facebook and comment on all the contemporary issues that pop up. *Inji* doesn't much reveal about her whereabouts but tends to have more concern towards her profile's activities online being surveilled or audited, as she has deleted many of her Facebook posts days after, on which she felt that enough discussion took place. Her posts carry tones of sarcasm, rage and aggression. She opens up largely on issues concerning women and despite the pseudonymity, she has got large number of friends and followers. *Inji*'s posts are harsher and aggressive in nature and she is considered a feminist activist in the popular Facebook circle.

Analytical Framework

The researcher analysed the texts of the posts and comments posted in Facebook by the pseudonymous profile *Inji Pennu* identifying text genres and discursive types (Roode et al.,2004). There was subjective judgement on identifying genres and types (Table 1) and applying them to text (Roode et al.,2004).

Text Genre (TG)	Discursive Type (DT)
Confidence	Neutrality
Factual Information	Corporatism
Humour	T e c h n o l o g i c a l optimism
Persuasion	Pragmatism
Uncertainty	Technocracy
	Legitimacy

Table 1

Text 1

The cover photo of Inji Pennu has a text saying “Against all authority, except my mom” which shows her social, political and feminist stand being in her pseudonymous self.

Text: *Against all authority, except my mom*

Description (TG): *Confidence.* The text is showing a statement of confidence as it used the word ‘*against*’, to begin with and ‘*except*’ to substantiate it further.

Interpretation (DT): *Ideology (New).* The text expresses the subject’s ideological stand, that the subject stands against all the authorities, with the second part of the sentence indicating the subject’s feminist side.

Explanation: The statement is a strong political statement where the subject rejects all the authorities, for the subject is either unhappy with the way authorities function, or with the system.

Text 2

Actress Parvathy Thiruvoth, in a recent talk show of Film Companion, had expressed her opinion on toxic masculinity portrayed in the film ‘Arjun Reddy’. She said that actors shouldn’t do films that celebrate misogyny, comparing ‘Arjun Reddy’ and ‘Joker’.

Text: *“Hello patriarchy, you do not have to dismiss other women’s substance or merit to lift a woman you choose. This exactly is called keeping a woman on a pedestal, which is what feminists have been trying to fight out. Women wear lipstick and they will groom their nails. If you, Mr. Patriarchy were focused on those, it’s your problem.”*

Description: *Persuasion.* The text puts forward an argument in response to another text, by completely rejecting it.

Interpretation: *Denial (New) and Pragmatism.* The subject denies the content of the text to which the subject is responding, bringing in the feminist arguments.

Explanation: The text calls out that the post content is patriarchal and has come from a patriarchal mind-set. The text demands that to appreciate one woman’s act, one doesn’t have to downplay other women, which turns out to be a strong political statement of feminism.

Text 3

Another post addressed female members and members of Communist Party of India Marxist, showing the subject's disappointment on their political stand, which the subject felt as acting upon the instructions of senior male members of the party.

Text: *"This is actually sad. Many women comrades swallow their gender pride for the welfare of the party. Same with all marginalised groups in the mainstream left."*

Description: *Emotive* (New TG). The subject expresses disappointment on her understanding that some women comrades give up their gender pride for the welfare of the party. The use of the word 'sad' indicates the emotional aspect. The latter part of the text says this is also applicable to members from marginalized groups in the mainstream left.

Interpretation: *Pragmatism*. The text suggests female members and members from marginalized communities of CPM to retrieve from unopposed support to the party politics.

Explanation: The act of women members blindly supporting the party to which they belong is not feminist. The members also have to lift gender pride along with their political stand. The marginalized groups also don't have to be uncritical about the party leaving their identity behind.

Text 4

In response to the troll memes that appeared after Jolly, a housewife was found guilty of 6 murders happened in her husband's family during a period of 17 years. Jolly has supposedly killed all the six family members including her husband by poisoning food with cyanide. This triggered meme creators, to create funny memes saying men should be cautious enough to feed their wives first with the food they are served for safety purpose. People celebrated those memes where there happened a parallel discourse arguing that those memes are anti-feminist. Some feminists argued that when a man commits a crime, that doesn't necessarily get generalized, but men identify Jolly in every woman around, which is unacceptable. *Inji's* response to this trend was in a different way, where she said she enjoyed the memes a lot and stated that feminism shouldn't be this boring to an extent of not taking jokes in its right sense.

Text: (translation) *It is interesting to see that the society, apart from women's roles as mothers, wives and devotees (reference to Sabarimala issue), has amusingly accepted the pain, fear and shock produced by a female cold-blooded murderer. Otherwise, many people should've needed to undergo medication for the psychological impact this issue created.... Feminism is not a boring thing. Feminists should be able to enjoy jokes. This anyways need not be treated with this stubborn an attitude.*

Description: *Persuasion.* The text persuades feminists to take trolls in the right sense and states that the practice of feminism doesn't have to be always stubborn in nature.

Interpretation: *Denial and Pragmatism.* The text is in denial of the parallel discourse led by feminists saying that the trolls created in light of Jolly's issue are anti-feministic. Inji has taken it in a different aspect that people instead of getting negatively affected, are celebrating a woman becoming a cold-blooded serial killer.

Explanation: Feminism works in different ways; when people celebrate a female serial killer, which is a whole different role from the popular roles of women, using trolls, leaving aside the terror this kind of incidents normally produce, it is not something to be tagged anti-feministic.

Text 5

In response to Kerala State Women's Commission president M.C Josephine's take on Walayar murders, where two minor girls were sexually abused and hanged to death, to not intervene in the issue, Inji put up a post.

Text: (Translation) *It is better to appoint men, who can very much understand the purpose of women's or minority's commissions, as the heads of such commissions than women who are good for nothing for that role. Think about it, can someone tell me at least for instances where women got benefited of having women in the key positions of women's commission? Why do people have to bear with this ridicule considering their identity of women?*

Description: *Persuasion.* The text argues that men can also be appointed as women's or minority's commissions heads if they know why these

commissions stand for. Women didn't get any benefits of having women in the key positions of women's commission so far.

Interpretation: *Pragmatism.* The women's commission heads appointed so far were mere white elephants and didn't serve justice to the position they bore. The idea is to understand the purpose of the position irrespective of the gender. Being a woman shouldn't be the only criteria to appoint someone in that position.

Explanation: Women's commission should be primarily standing for women's welfare and the one who sits in the head's chair should be responsible towards considering the issues seriously. Walayar murder case is something which should be taken under the consideration of State Women's Commission. The commission president's remarks are highly disappointing for the cause.

Text 6

In light of the issue where a Hindu girl Akhila converted to Islam and changed her name to Hadiya to marry her Muslim boyfriend and the ruckus followed by, Inji wrote a post in support of her. Some of the Hindus had shown their islamophobia by labelling Hadiya as someone who married a terrorist.

Text: *Indian Constitution gives rights to every woman to marry, love or mate Naxalites, terrorists, Maoists, Sri Lankan leopards, Che Gueras, Kashmiris, Pakistanis, members of CPM, poets, anarchists and whoever else upon their will.... Women are not mere a uterus, to receive only those sperms which you think are the 'best' or of 'high quality', and raise those children. This itself is the foundation of patriarchy. So, if she is loving those men whom you have labelled as anti-nationals and terrorists, marrying them and raising their children it's her political act of pointing a knife at patriarchy.*

Description: *Confidence and aggression (new TG).* The text engages tones of confidence and aggression throughout proclaiming that women are free to marry anybody of their choice and when a woman marries someone against all the oppositions it becomes her strong continuance against patriarchy.

Interpretation: *Corporatism and denial.* The text is a strong political statement of feminism, rejecting the patriarchal gestures of society.

Women, including her will continue fighting patriarchy by use of constitutional rights.

Explanation: The patriarchal society has its tendency to get women what they consider better or best blurring out the possibility for women to make their own choices. The text is a political statement of support to Hadiya's choices of religion and life partner, by rejecting all the arguments of the people of a patriarchal society.

Text 7

Inji wrote a sarcastic post harshly criticizing a Malayalam web series written, filmed and performed by a couple, which she felt as stereotyping housewives to be ignorant about politics and other global discourses.

Text: *I love it when the new Malayalam web series by the new generation all have a nice calm feminist man explaining to his non feminist dumb wife, politics, economy and human relations! Way to go Mallus! The light at the end of the tunnel is indeed an express train headlight!*

Description: *Sarcasm* (New TG). The text mocks the new age trend of web published videos that portray feminist men and their ignorant wives where the wives have to depend on husbands to know global issues and contemporary events.

Interpretation: *Denial*. We as a society are not going to progress in the feminist way as people still believe that women need feminist men to teach them everything including feminism.

Explanation: Such web series are disappointing and anti-feministic. People need to change their way of thinking in order to incorporate feminism in their art.

Discussion and Conclusions

CDA was used to analyse a set of pseudonymous posts, exclusively written to put up feminist arguments, to understand the practice of feminism of an active pseudonymous profile in Facebook. Apart from the Text Genres and Discursive Types Roode, Speight, Pollock and Webber proposed, the research demanded to introduce a few more genres and types considering the tone of the study. The selection of genres and types were subjective and they helped understanding the feminist agency pseudonymity provides to the account holders.

The mostly identified Text Genres were *confidence*, *persuasion*, *emotive*, *aggression* and *sarcasm* out of which *emotive*, *aggression* and *sarcasm* were newly introduced owing to the situations. The respective texts couldn't fit into any of the adapted TGs. The posts mostly appeared confident and persuasive. The identified Discursive Types were *ideology*, *denial*, *pragmatism* and *corporatism* out of which *ideology* and *denial* were newly introduced. The text appeared to be in denial of and pragmatic to patriarchy, people's continuances on different issues and some of the liberal feminist arguments on certain issues.

The aggression, sarcasm and corporatism exercised in the posts and the challenges the user put forward implied the agency attained through pseudonymity. The posts written to exercise feminist discourses were mostly critiquing the society, the system, fellow women and fellow feminists.

If we connect this to Bourdieu's concepts of structure and agency, it can be assumed that pseudonymity is actually dismantling the structures and limitations of agency in online spaces. The agency is free flowing behind the mask, having no dependence or submission to the structures. Pseudonymity, divested of popular self-referential address, lets women to become a nomad, in Braidotian sense, and is endowed with unprecedented agency.

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