

CHAPTER VI

Summary and Conclusions

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MASS MEDIA AND CHANGING LIFE OF PEASANTS

The Research Problem : Was to understand how did the mass media affect rural areas and farmers? How did they get the information about new agricultural technologies and how did they make use of them, thus, a small village, Madyal in Gadhinglaj taluka was selected for this purpose.

The objectives of this M.Phil study were :

- 1 To understand the socio - economic and political status of the peasants.
2. To understand the viewing and listening behavior of the peasants in Madyal village.
3. To understand the level of exposure of peasants and its interrelationship to agricultural development and changing life of the peasants.
4. To evaluate the role of mass media in changing life of peasants.

Research Method-Case study of Madyal village has been the main method of study.

Techniques of Data Collection: Interview Schedule has been one of the main techniques of data collection from the sampled respondents. Case studies of different categories of peasants have been also done in this study.

Sampling:

55 respondents were selected randomly but overall they were from the following landholding categories:

1. First Group (1 to 2 acres) - 11 respondents
2. Second group (3 to 5 acres) --11 respondents
3. Third group (6 to 8 acres) --11 respondents
4. Fourth group (9 to 10 acres) --11 respondents
5. Fifth group (More than 10 acres) --11 respondents

In order to understand the relationship between the socio-economic category of Peasants and their differential use of media and adoption of agricultural technologies, we have divided and reduced the above 5 categories into 3 categories:

- 1) Marginal Peasants
- 2) Medium Peasants and
- 3) Large /Rich Peasants

Media and Agricultural Change: (Marginal Peasant) (0 to 3 acre)

Agricultural situation before 20 years was totally different than at present. If we see it in the context of crops, before 20 years there were crops like Jowar (main food) maize and pulses and today there is increase in the crops such as chilly, tobacco, sugarcane (commercial crop) vegetable, etc.

Before 20 years ago they were using animal power as well as man power but today they are using mainly new machine technology. Again there is change in the use of seeds, before 20 years they were using traditional varieties of seeds

but today they are using new kind of seeds, also there is change in use of irrigation, initially they were using well water but today Peasants are using river water, and if we see the outcome of production initially the production was low and subsistence based agricultural production but at present agricultural production is mainly commercial based.

There is also change in the use of mass media, initially the use of newspaper and radio was very less, television was not in use and at present to some extent there is use of newspaper and radio, but television is the major mass media.

Media and Agricultural Change: (Medium Peasant) (4 to 8 acre)

Agricultural situation is totally different than at present in medium Peasants, it was totally different before 20 years, if we see the crops before 20 year such as Jowar, Maize, Rice (main food) etc. but today there is change in crop pattern such as sugarcane (commercial crop), tobacco, chilly, wheat and groundnut etc.

Again change occurred in cultivation practices, initially these Peasants were using manpower as well animal power but today they are using technology such as tractor, harvesting machines, sprayer, etc.

In the context of seeds initially they were using traditional seeds and to some extent new kind of seeds, but today they are using totally improved seeds.

Today these Peasants are using water from river, drip irrigation and sprinklers, etc. but initially they were using traditional water sources such as well. If we see the outcome of agricultural production initially the production was very low, because of traditional cultivation method and lack of agricultural knowledge, but today the agricultural production is high, because these peasants have adopted new cultivation

practices new kind of seeds, new kind of agricultural tools, irrigation facilities therefore the change has occurred in production system.

Mass media is also playing an important role in present medium peasant class, today these peasants are using different kind of newspaper for agricultural purpose, apart from that they are using radio, television, but initially this situation was very poor they were using mass media such as newspapers, into some extent also radio and television.

Media and Agricultural Change: (Large/Rich Peasant) (9 acre and above)

Media plays an important role for every group of peasants. If we see it in the context of rich Peasants, whatever the situation was before 20 years that has changed at present. Initially the types of crops were such as Jowar (main food) maize, sunflower and pulses, but today there is increase in crops such as sugarcane (main commercial crop) vegetable, flower cultivation in green house, banana, watermelon and mango. There is also change in use of fertilizers, initially these Peasants were using small amount of chemical fertilizers along with cowdung manure, today there is outstanding change in using different kind of chemical fertilizers such as (UREA, D.A.P., SUPHALA, 10:26:26, 12:32:16)

Again there is change in cultivation practices animal as well as manpower to high use of modern technology e.g. tractor, trailer, power trailer, sprayer, etc. also the traditional varieties of seeds have been left, today they are using HYV, as especially of Mahabeez brand.

For agricultural purpose these peasants are using water from well but today these peasants are using river pipeline, sprinklers and drip irrigation systems. Initially the agricultural production was subsistence based but today the agricultural production has become commercial based. In the context of using mass media initially these Peasants were using few newspapers, radio was the major mass media and

there was only one television, therefore there was lack of mass media, but today in the context of mass media the situation has changed, these Peasants are using newspapers, television for agricultural propose, (Annadata) apart from that these Peasants are using television for entertainment such as songs, reality shows.

Media and Change

Conclusion

Thus from the study of a single village Madyal, Gadhinglaj taluka of Kolhapur district (a village on the political and cultural border of Maharashtra & Karnataka), we can easily observe the changing use of mass media such as TV & Newspaper for:

- 1) Recreation, Entertainment & Comfortful life.
- 2) Adoption of new varieties of crops for increased agricultural production.

Further change in agricultural production has brought changes in their family relations and life.

Overall, there is increased urban contact making them more exposed to market and agricultural technologies. As a result they are less dependent on the government and extension officials.

The respect given to village level officials has decreased. Use of Mobiles, STD has increased the overall flow of information in the rural areas. As a result we see the rural - urban communication divide is decreasing.

But a real question that emerges today is that the new agricultural technologies are become costlier and uneconomic. What is the way out of these difficult crises? The answer today to this crisis is 'Organic Farming': use of green manure, compost manure, local seeds, wormiculture manure, cowdung manure, biological control of diseases and other organic use in agriculture.