

CHAPTER II
RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

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The Problem:

After having selected the optional paper III. 'Sociology of Mass Communication', I was planning to take up a topic related to the mass media. After several discussions with colleagues and the concerned guide, I decided to study the media behavior and the changing life of the peasants.

1. Methodology

Selection of the topic:

India is predominantly a developing country and even after more than fifty years of planned development agriculture remains one of the major economic activities.

The mass media nowadays is playing an important role in rural modernization in India. Exposure to the mass media is an important variable in bringing about change in rural society. TV, radio and newspaper are now covering a wide range in rural areas especially for dissemination of agricultural and allied information.

In the rural area peasants life style has total changed through the use of mass media.

Thus the main problem before the researcher was to understand the role and impact of mass media on the peasants of a village in promoting agricultural development.

2. Hypothesis

1. Changes among the peasants are proportional to one's socio-economic status, landholding, caste and education.
2. Agricultural changes among peasants are proportional to their media exposure.

3. Specific Objectives

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

4. Selection of the village for micro level study:

After considering several villagers in the area where the researcher has his residence, the village Madyal in Gadhinglaj taluka of Kolhapur district was selected because of following reasons:

- 1 The village is native place of the researcher.
- 2 The village is sufficiently large with a population of over 1800.
- 3 The caste - composition of the population is quite mixed consisting of eight castes.

4 There are several media such as TV, radio, newspaper which give more information regarding agricultural development and new technology.

5. In the village many peasants use new technology such as seeds, pesticides, and new irrigation system through the mass media.

For all these reasons and, also for convenience the village Madyal was selected for in depth study. This is a representative village in this part of the district.

5. Data collection

In order to make the study as exhaustive as possible all the necessary data have been collected. These are two types of data used in this study: primary and secondary data. Techniques of data collection are, interview-schedule, observation and case study.

1. Primary Data

Was collected through interview-schedule from heads of the families of the selected sample households.

2. Secondary Data

Is the statistical information from the census report of the village information about village from talathi, gramsevak and B.D.O. (Block Development Officer) and grampanchayat office records.

6. Interview Schedule and Pilot study

Initially a draft of Interview schedule consisting of questions on all relevant aspects of study was prepared in consultation with the guide, in order to make the schedule sufficiently fruitful, sample interviews were conducted. Thereafter, immediately the drawbacks, faults and inadequacies were realized and noted down. These shortcomings in the schedule were consequently modified and restructured. It was noted that the respondents were bound to be mostly illiterate and ignored and hence many questions had to be deleted or reformulated. Thus the schedule was finally ready for use. A pilot study is a small- scale replica and a rehearsal of the main study.

7. 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.

8. Case Study

In this study 09 respondent farmers of different socio-economic categories were selected. The researcher has used case study as one of the descriptive techniques of data collection. It is a qualitative technique of data collection. The researcher got detailed information about the changing life of the peasants. The personal interview was useful in data collection. The case studies give full knowledge about the particular problem. Its other advantage is as follows:

1. Conclusion can be reached after comparing the various aspects of life of the peasants and their families from various socio-economic levels.
2. Unity of study: The whole families can be taken as a unit for study.
3. Use of several techniques: In this method several techniques can be combined, such as interviews and observation.
4. Study of process : A technique can be used to study things but to deal with dynamic and documentary data intensive approach through case study method is helpful. Data on the peasant's family background, use of mass media, attitudes and agricultural development through mass media were included.

Concept of Peasant

In academics the term 'peasants' has been confused among social scientists. From the beginning social anthropologists have defined peasants by their cultural attachment to tradition. Robert Redfield identified his ideal type concept of 'folk society' with the primitive tribal and contrasted it with the peasant society on the one side and the urban society on the other side. Following A. L. Kroeber he defined peasants as "part society and part culture" to distinguish peasants from farmers who produce for the market and identified their characteristics:

1. Peasants as agriculture producers
2. Retain effective control over the land.
3. Aim at substantive farming and not at profit with investment motive. (Wolf,1953:p453-455).This concept of profit making is increasing among the Peasants after the green revolution.

While Raymond Firth defined, 'peasants' exclusively in terms of 'mode of livelihood' characteristics i.e. subsistence farming and simple agricultural technology. Firth incorporates other social categories such as artisans also as the peasants.

On the contrary, the Marxists like V. Lenin, Karl Chastely, and Mates- Tong following Karl Marx and F. Engel's as well as Neo-Marxist like A.V. Kasyanov have identified peasants with social groups as diverse as feudal tenants, independent farmers and rural wage laborers and they have defined 'Peasantry' in terms of :

1. Peasant's family as the unit of production consumption.
2. The relationship of capitalist to non capitalist agriculture
3. They use family labor.
4. There is exploitation of poor and relatively poor agricultural producers.

However, no precise and clear-cut definition of peasantry has been produced yet. Thus the term, 'peasants' best be regarded as descriptive rather than its heuristic usefulness. However, Theodore Shanin attempted to define peasantry by integrating different categories of small agriculture producers with commercial type of peasants. In the present study the term peasants includes subsistence as well as commercial farmer with their distinctive local socio-cultural characteristics.

9. Case Studies

In order to understand the difference in the influence of income and landholding, the sample peasants were selected from 5 different landholding groups. These groups are as follows:

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

Nine Case studies of peasants from the first three group have been selected:

1. First Group :

The first group of case studies consists of three respondents families having landholding between 1 to 2 acres.

2. Second Group:

The second group consists of three respondents whose landholding is between 3 to 5 acres.

3. Third Group:

The third groups consist of three respondents whose landholding is between 6 to 8 acres.

All those above economic (landholding) have got a distinctive way of life. Care was also taken to include peasant's families from different age, educational and occupational background, literate and illiterate. The selection of the peasants in each landholding category was purposive, in the sense that

known families who could tell things in detail only were selected. In all 15 case studies were completed.

10. Experience during Data Collection:

The respondents gave good response. Whenever researcher visited the family of respondents they all gave the responses to researcher's questions. Many enquired what the purpose of the interview was. What was the nature of the M.Phil course? What is the benefit of this course? Some peasants did not co-operate but, when researcher convinced then they gave me all information. Some peasants are illiterate, sometimes they were confused but, when researcher discussed with them about the study, then they co-operated and all the respondents agreed to give information without any hesitation.

11. Analysis of Data

The analysis is the ordering of data, constituent parts in order to obtain answer to research questions. The notes and observations made during personal interviews, of the peasant's families were edited, interpreted and described in a logical order in the form of a case study.

The researcher visited the informants homes during evenings because he wanted to meet all family members and observe their activities and their attitudes, habits and norms and their media use pattern.

Dissertation Writing:

The dissertation has been divided into the following chapters:

Chapter No- I Introduction : Mass Communication and Mass Media

Chapter No. II Research Methodology

Chapter No. III : Setting of the Study : Madyal village

Chapter No. IV : Role of Mass Media in Changing life of Peasants.

Chapter No. V : Summary, Conclusion and Suggestions.