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CONTENTS

Articles

Globalization and New Communication Technologies : Strategies for the Future <i>Yogesh Atal</i>	1
Communication Revolution and its Socio-Cultural Implications <i>J. K. Doshi</i>	7
Role of ICT in Transformation of Rural Communication System <i>Virendra P. Singh and Snehil Singh</i>	9
Culture and Sexuality: A Study through Films <i>Sudipta Garai</i>	21
Rethinking the Study of Music: An interpretative Reflection of Bhupen hazarika's Songs of Assam Movement (1979-85) <i>Sabiha Mazid</i>	32
Dimensions of Educational Inequality in Rural India: A Study of Two Villages of Unnao District in Uttar Pradesh <i>Supriya Singh and D. R. Sahu</i>	45
Dichotomy of Music Listening Practices and Taste in Urban & Rural India <i>Sarvesh Dutt Tripathi</i>	51

EMERGING TRENDS IN DEVELOPMENT RESEARCH

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Globalization and New Communication Technologies : Strategies for the Future

Yogesh Atal

I regard this as a great honour to have been invited to deliver the Keynote Address to this august gathering. I join the organizers to extend a warm welcome to those participants who have come from abroad. My greetings also to my compatriots.

For one who has transgressed disciplinary territories and preferred to be known as a social scientist, this is indeed a very special occasion. I began my career as a social anthropologist, but then moved to rural sociology, and further on to the study of political behavior. As a teacher also I made departures from being a lecturer in social anthropology to assistant professorship in sociology, and finally to teach social sciences to engineering graduates at the Indian Institute of Technology. My assignment as the first Research Director of the newly found Indian Council for Social Science Research, and then as UNESCO's Regional Adviser for Social and Human Sciences in the Asia and the Pacific region, demanded of me to be transdisciplinary in my orientation.

My sociology has developed in response to various challenges, taking me away from the limited precincts of specialization to the exploration of new territories. In this long journey, I have followed the trio of my mentors –Professors Brij Raj Chauhan, S.C. Dube, and Robert K. Merton. I take this opportunity to pay my tribute to them.

My exposure to the social science milieu in the vast Asia-Pacific Region also taught me to be transdisciplinary.

In this long journey, communication has been the prime mover. I employed the Communication framework for the analysis of social structure, following the footsteps of Levi-Strauss. For him, it is the communication of Men, Materials, and Messages that defined the social structure of a given society. Later, I tried to carry on empirical research in the broad area of communication, particularly in the terrain of political behaviour. For this venture, I derived inspiration from Harold Lasswell and Karl Deusch – both were leading political scientists and were explorer of new frontiers.

There were few of us in India who started work in the area of communication – Professor Dube did his study of directed culture change in the villages of Uttar Pradesh; I introduced the

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communication variable in my study of the electoral behavior also in Uttar Pradesh way back in 1967. I participated in the beginning of 1970s in a group convened by the Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO) to develop the research design for the study of impact of Satellite Television in 600 villages, spread in several states of this country. I was offered the job of directing this Team Research, but I could not join it because of another offer from UNESCO. One of my students joined the ISRO Research Team; upon completion of the Project, he was hired by the All India Radio's Evaluation Unit. Finally, he became Professor of Mass Communication in an agricultural University.

Although what I have said appears like my biodata, my journey somehow coincides with the growth of sociological research in India. With humble beginnings, the discipline has grown in India over the years. With the growing specializations, more and more secondary relationships are developing. The primary relationships that linked the teacher and the taught are gradually disappearing. I had hinted at the professionalization of sociology when I did an essay for the *Economic and Political Weekly* soon after the Hyderabad Conference of the Indian Sociological Society in 1970. Today, alongside of professionalization there is in evidence politicization of the profession. This trend is dual in character: within the profession, politics prevents people from acknowledging contribution of the peers; in the societal context, individual scholars are quite often sandwiched between objective analysis and political commitment. One clear example is evident in the gimmicks of poll predictions at the cost of objective analysis of the emerging political process.

What worries me now, when I am on the verge of retirement is the point that while social science manpower is growing, and our international connections are rising, very little of good sociology is coming out of our writings. Disciplinary politics has overwhelmed substantive work in the area of our growing specializations. I know making such attributions does not make the inaugural address a good copy, but now at age 80, I can afford to take this risk in the hope that my remarks will be understood in the spirit in which they are being made.

With these preliminaries, let us return to the theme of the conference.

Upon joining UNESCO, I discovered that while in India we were struggling to gain acceptance for Mass Communication as a social science specialty, the universities in the ASEAN region were already teaching Mass Communication as social science specialization. It was heartening to note that my book titled *Local Communities and National Politics*, that employed the Communication framework, was used as a textbook in Bangladesh and in the Philippines, although not in India. That book earned me the invitation to deliver the Prestigious Mahatma Gandhi Memorial Lecture in 1972. I used that opportunity to develop, within the Communication model, the concepts of *Insulators* and *Apertures* as part of the strategy for National Integration. These concepts also helped me evolve the theory of *Sandwich Cultures* in which Professor Robert Merton's formulation of *Insiders* and *Outsiders* provided the needed incentive. Incidentally, Professor Merton first proposed that paradigm in his Lecture in India at the Golden Jubilee celebrations of the Department of Sociology of the Bombay University.

Let me remind this audience that the time when we entered the profession, Sociology was focusing on the developed societies of the West, and Anthropology developed as the descriptive account of societies that belonged to the non-West. The West was the supplier of theory, and the non-West provided the base for empirical research particularly to study *Other Cultures*. It is in this

process that the Western scholarship discovered in India the primitive societies, i.e. the tribes, and the societies that were part of the indigenous civilization, as rich material for empirical research. The interface between the various tribes and the villages of their neighbourhood provided a new terrain for research. Thus, India became a site for empirical research for anthropologists. Initially, they studied the tribes as primitive and preliterate societies, and later they found a good ground to study at the micro level the new processes of directed culture change. However, Indology continued to provide the basic material for understanding Indian Society. This was the reason that Indian Society became a synonym for Hindu society. That characterization still affects all our efforts at national integration, and divides our politics in communal terms. Inter-communications between the various religious communities and an evolving Indian culture through the various means of mass media have still not been able to erase old stereotypes.

This is not to deny the role that empirical research has played to change this perception. The Village became the meeting ground for anthropology and sociology, and both began to study directed culture change introduced via the strategy of Community Development Programme. The researchers then moved to study the process of urbanization and the wider processes of Westernization and Modernization which began affecting not only the urban metropolises but the entire rural hinterland, including tribal India. India became a venue for the study of the processes of cultural change and the role of communication in a multicultural milieu. Evolving technologies of mass communication are certainly erasing the evils of caste system and opening out the doors for inter-communal dialogue.

The post Second World War era is marked not only by the independence from the yoke of colonialism, but also by the eagerness to usher in modernity, treating the West as the positive reference group. The countries of the Third World showed eagerness to shed off tradition and tread on the road to modernity. Like other developing countries, India also wanted to adieu tradition and welcome modernity.

Modernization meant literacy, urbanism, empathy, improved means of transportation and communication and political participation. The Rapid changes that societies like India were undergoing, following attainment of independence, highlighted the urgency to record the already existing structures before they get vanished or drastically changed. Alongside of it, there was also a need to portray the process of directed culture change initiated by the new governments. In this regard, the communication model focused on the interface between tradition and modernity; it also helped in understanding the existing social structures. In the mid-1950s, the vocabulary of culture and communication overwhelmed the previous paradigms of the so-called 'Traditional Societies'. The societal structures adapted to the onslaughts of change and did not oblige those who began writing obituaries of Tradition. Communication channels tied tradition and modernity in a new web of the existing social structures.

In this era, the countries that were under the influence of communism treated the Second World as the model for change. These societies had a dictatorial model for governance which functioned as a strong gatekeeper to disallow outside influences, and which simultaneously attacked the contours of abiding tradition.

Both sets of societies – of the Third World, and the Communist Second World — were undergoing change and both alleged Tradition as true culprit toppling down any efforts to bring about change. In both of them, however, tradition survived alongside of modernity; and in this process, communication played a crucial role. Quite interestingly, advances towards modernity also helped revive tradition. Thanks to the modern means of communication, people got linked not only to their compatriots settled in different parts of the globe, but also to their past history and tradition. With the permeation of TV, and introduction of TV serials, Indians were exposed to the great epics of *Mahabharata* and *Ramayana* so much so that many picked up the Sanskrit lexicon, and began preferring dresses of the yore. The Western attire of Jeans and Jumpers made company with *Dhoti* and *Salwars*. Modernization did not mean adoption of dresses and cultural patterns of the Developed world but also revival of tradition. Adoption of foreign traits no longer remained part of the process of Westernization. Each developing country began borrowing from a variety of countries of different continents. This made the concept of Westernization redundant. All change from abroad was subsumed under Modernization. It is this process that has been engulfed by the newer process of Globalization.

I submit that the new idiom of change has been heavily influenced by the paradigm of communication. The process of modernization that was ushered in the countries of the “Third World” precisely focused on the three movements—of Men, Messages, and Material. Communication became the window to the outside world. It helped break the insulation of societies and opened new apertures for exposure. People were encouraged not only to be physically mobile but also helped in developing skills of empathy; they got an impetus to climb the ladder of social hierarchy. Developing societies began extending their outreach to have access to materials produced abroad and parcel out local products to the world market. Mass media began crossing the physical boundaries of countries and continents to let the people of the developing world share the world culture and familiarize with the goings-on in the various corners of the globe. An era was ushered in that was rightfully designated as the era of one world with multiplicity of cultures.

The organization of this meet in India is acknowledgment of a new trend where Indian sociologists are forging links with their counterparts abroad. This exposure should help Indian sociologists to return to their own society to empirically investigate the new processes of change. I say this to express my concern over the relative neglect of empirical research in India in recent years. We are overwhelmed by the developments in sociology elsewhere and, as good copy masters, we have also set up various research committees as acknowledgment of emerging trends and as expression of our desire to explore new frontiers. This has promoted international tourism, facilitated friendships across countries, and widened our horizons.

However, a review of trends of sociological research in India is not very encouraging. Our social science manpower is rising in numbers but our contribution to empirical research is rather dwindling. It is my hope that a gathering such as this will develop a research agenda that will encourage young researchers to carry out intensive field research to improve our understanding of the manner in which India is responding to the new challenges caused by the onslaught of technology. Hopefully, the new trend will reflect a trend of comparative research with international participation.

Let me elaborate this point. After the collapse of the so-called Second World in the last decade of the last century, there emerged a new concept of “countries-in-transition” to describe the

former communist countries of Eastern Europe. These countries have acknowledged presence of certain ailments that existed but were forcefully denied the prevalence of — for example— Poverty. Incidentally, soon after the conclusion of the first World Summit for Social Development in 1995, I had directed for UNESCO a research project, seeking academic collaboration of the former countries of the so-called Second World, and came out with the publication – the very first under the UN auspices—with the title *Poverty in Transition and Transition in Poverty*. The book raised the pertinent question: Is there no need to compare the prevalent strategies for poverty removal in the developing countries in the light of new data from the collapsed Second World?

For example, one of the recipes for poverty removal that has continually been offered is removal of illiteracy. The countries of the East Europe had high literacy rate and yet poverty existed there. In fact, all countries of the world acknowledged the existence of poverty in their societies. In India, too, literacy rate has jumped from around 16 per cent in the 1950s to around 70 per cent, and yet we prescribe this remedy. Is there no need to re-examine this strategy? Are we sure that after the attainment of the goal of total literacy, poverty would disappear? Take the case of the ubiquitous mobile. Today, it is an in-thing. And literacy is not the condition for its adoption. This gadget has put question marks on the need for literacy understood as basic knowledge of letters, and a person's ability to sign his/ her name. Today one finds the mobile phone being used by those who were illiterate by previous standards. Without being literate they are able to use the credit card to withdraw money from the ATMs. In many ways, people have become *computerate* without being truly literate. *Computeracy* is the new proficiency. Strangely, a non-computerate has become a neo non-literate; and a non-literate is becoming computerate without being proficient in writing letters.

Is it not the time when we refashion our strategies relative to poverty? The need is clearly felt to distinguish between absolute poverty and relative poverty. What is desirable is abolition of absolute poverty, and there is need to think of country-specific remedies for this ailment. Poverty hurts people now, literacy prepares our young for tomorrow. How do we remove the curse of poverty that hurts the people now? Can communication strategies help in this regard?

Delivering the Keynote Address to the International Conference on Media and Politics, in Brussels on 27 February 1997, I remarked: Standing on the threshold of the twenty-first century, we have the feeling that Marshall McLuhan's dream of a global village has been realized. We are in the midst of an all-encompassing process of globalization.

In my Brussels speech I had remarked: "There has been so much interchange of genes, and of cultural traits, that the heterogeneity of the Planet Earth has increased manifold". I had argued then, and I maintain my position, that humanity's future will that be of one world with many cultures. The winds of change will not be able to westernize the whole world and erase tradition. The new assemblage will be a unique combination of tradition and modernity.

Unlike the discoverer of the Americas – Columbus of 500 years ago—we will not be discovering the Americas by serendipity. The advances in modern technology have made us mentally mobile; we have become part of the globe without stirring out of our drawing rooms. We do not have to fly all the way to New York, or London, or to Tokyo, or to any other destination to witness the welcome offered to India's Prime Minister, or to listen to him simultaneously while addressing audiences abroad.

I feel happy that the new coinage of “Globalization” has replaced the concepts of modernization and westernization that were in vogue in the 1950s and 1960s. The new term that gained universal currency in the last decade of the last century, is used not only by the sociologists and anthropologists but also by the economists, political scientists, journalists, politicians, and social workers. What is, however, intriguing is the fact that there is no commonly agreed definition of the term *Globalization*. And the criticism of this supposedly novel phenomenon offered in various writings is virtual photocopy of the criticism of the processes of modernization of the last century.

Worried about this definitional crisis, I proposed in my extempore lecture at the Meerut University in the early years of this century the distinctive character of this new phenomenon. I had argued that societies and cultures have been characterized by the dependency syndrome. Before the period of culture contact, accelerated by the process of industrial revolution, most societies enjoyed virtual non-dependence by being self-sufficient and generally remain cut-off from other societies of the geographical terrain of their abode. Colonization, followed by industrial revolution, exposed the societies of the world to a whole host of cultures, which they regarded as “inferior” to them, and were, thus, put on a lower pedestal as if to represent the past of the Western societies. The colonization of these cultures introduced the phenomenon of dependence with a single aperture opening out to the society of the colonial masters. The end of colonial era ushered in the process of “independence” meaning the relocation of the power of decision-making with the newly independent countries. This meant the relocation of the choice making with the newly found independent state and changing the pattern of dependence to freedom to choose partners from various societies, although underdevelopment had hurdled full freedom – this was the era of modernization of past colonies with multiplicity of “givers”. The era of Globalization is an era of mutual give-and take. Developing societies are no longer only on the receiving end. There is reciprocity- - all societies are becoming givers and takers in a new milieu of interdependence. Today you find the Globe in India, and India in all parts of the Globe. This is a new pattern of relationships, and of mutual give and take. However, I find little evidence of the study of this process in India. And yet there are several who have written on the consequences of this process. If you are familiar with the criticism of modernization, you will find that the criticism offered for Globalization is virtually the same – a Xerox copy of the criticism of modernization.

Globalization is a new phenomenon; it is slowly penetrating the Indian social and economic system. Without carefully investigating the process of globalization in a particular setting, the essays written on the new process do not earn adulation from the academe. Well-written articles are like newspaper essays, but not dependable portrayals of the on-going process. There is now the trend of jumping on the bandwagon, rather than soiling hands with raw data. While it is OK to dig deeper or dig wider, digging needs a surface. It is a challenge for the young scholarship to engage in research on these new trends as these would require new tools and new research protocol to be able to contribute to the newly emerging specialties.

Editorial Note: The present paper is Key Note Address delivered by Prof. Yogesh Atal on 26th February 2017 on the occasion of ISA-RC 14 Interim Conference held at VIPS, New Delhi, February 26-28, 2017.

Communication Revolution and Its Socio-Cultural Implications

J. K. Doshi

Cultures change but mostly gradually and when changes are rapid, drastic and with far reaching implications we often term as revolution. No society is completely static but pace of change varies from society to society and so are the factors leading to change. Looking back in retrospective two major changes in society world over, industrial revolution and communication revolution have had far reaching implications. To some extent these have run side by side. In the present paper my focus will be mostly on communication technology and its impact on society.

Printing press has been with us in the form of books, journals, magazines and last but not least news papers. Not that the print media have disappeared but in last hundred years or so electronic media in different forms as radio, TV, transistor have ruled the communication scenario. Social scientists and those dealing with media as radio and TV have experimented with the support of government how far media can be used for education, agricultural development, health hygiene and family planning. Our past experience tells us media are effective in creating awareness but able to achieve the final goal of adoption when awareness is supported by a system of supply.

Current communication scenario is vastly different from the past. While in the first quarter of the past century only rich and elite had access to telephone. Today even in the remote rural and tribal areas and slum dwellers have access to telephone which unlike past are more versatile, combine the feature of radio and TV. Today's mobile phones combine the virtues of radio, telephone, TV, cinema and what not. Only a few years back people had to travel hundreds of miles to participate in a conference or seminar. Today video conferencing has become a routine affair in most organizations. Even your mobile phone allows you to have face to face communication as one calling and the called can really see each other. Parents can talk with their children far removed physically from each other, and so can lovers engage in intimate dialogues at a nominal cost of a phone call. WhatsApp has enabled friends, cousins, childhood friends to be in close contact and share, exchange views any time and place of their choice. Rapid breakthroughs in technology have nullified distance barriers.

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Media Penetration and Its implications

Because of media penetration we need to understand how different sections of society - young, old, men and women and most importantly children are being affected. Today it is not uncommon to come across children, as young as three-four year old not only hobnobbing but seriously engaged in playing, watching cartoons and other programs. Because of reduced family size - husband, wife and one or two children or husband and wife working from two different locations can still have a feeling of togetherness. Today's information and communication technology comes very handy, may be a little superficially to allow young couples to sustain their relationship. I have no hesitation in admitting many of the children and youngsters are more apt in handling new communication technologies than people of my age group. While one may feel heartened with the skills of these youngsters, there is also anxiety how new communication technology is affecting these kids and others. Recently Govt. of India demonetized five hundred and one thousand rupee currency to flush out black money. While it upset and continues to bother a section of the society it did help the economy . The new IT and communication technology came handy in reorienting masses to use IT. In rural and urban areas, tribals and non-tribals, literate and semi literate. One can argue this has happened at a price. Only time will tell whether the step of demonetization was its worth.

Information Technology V/S Print Media

While Internet provides access to information, knowledge it is happening at the cost of print media. Fewer scholars and students now refer to journals and books but rely more and more on Google app where they have easy access to all kinds of information. The books and journals now collect dust in want of users. There was a time when scholars and academics used to be proud of their collection of books and journals now researchers and scholars get all information just with a touch of their finger on their laptop. While books cost a fortune a laptop delivers desired information virtually free.

New Communication Technology and Crime

General impression is crime rate is increasing. Since we do not have data from past comparison is not possible. Analyzing and reporting crime rate now and in the past has some problem. The general impression is crime rate, particularly crime against women has increased. Just a possibility certain types of programs containing sexually explicit material might be doing that. Frankly more researches need be under taken to arrive at some conclusion .

New Communication Technology and Space Sciences

New communication technology is an essential part of space sciences. Man landed on the moon is an old story. Not only the super powers have successfully landed on the moon even India has successfully sent a satellite to Mars. Information technology has contributed in different sectors of science. Communication technology has contributed to various areas of sciences. I would like to conclude with a note that technology is as good as we make use of it. it largely depends on our wisdom and concern for humanity. Technology is a double edged sword. If it can kill humanity it can also save and serve humanity. Finally I like to add virtually almost everyday innovations take place and the trend is those who can afford, have inclination throw away or pass over to ' kabadi' the junk.

Role of New Communication Technology in Transformation of Rural Communication System

Virendra P. Singh
Snehil Singh

Abstract

The Communication system in India is passing through a process of transformation. In last few decades, the changes in communication technologies have revolutionized the system of communication at the global level. The rural communication system which was segmented and fractured in first three decades after independence, has geared with new communication technologies and transformed the information services in the rural areas of the country. The present paper analyses the growth, development and transformation of the rural communication system in India looking back to the colonial period and also makes observations in a rural setting near Allahabad.

Key Words: Globalization, modern communication system, new media, social media.

Lucian W. Pye (1963: 24-29) classified communications system into three types, namely, traditional communications system, modern communications system and transitional communications System. Transitional Communications system was developed to understand the reality in context of developing society having elements of both the traditional (face to face and interpersonal communication) and modern communications systems (specialized communicators and two-step flow of information and well integrated system). But in contrast to modern societies these transitional societies had a fractured and highly segmented structure of communications system. However, today we are living in the age of information and communication revolution which has deeply penetrated the boundaries of rural communities in a country like India. There is a rapid transformation in rural communications system in past two decades especially in post-globalization era. This Information Revolution has helped in bridging the gap between the villages and towns at least in the field of communication which may facilitate not only smooth flow of information within rural but also between rural to rural and rural to urban areas. Farmers can get access to knowledge to improve their production and even get better price for their produce using variety of ICT (Information Communication Technology) applications. Rural women are specially benefited by this change in communications system. In this transformation process the dichotomy of interpersonal and mass media communication has been blurred and people are now have access to any part of the globe

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through 'New Media', based on interactive information and communication technologies (McQuail 2006) such as social media, print media, digital media and so on. *The present paper explores the role of new communication technologies in transformation of rural communication system in a rural setting of Uttar Pradesh. The paper is divided into three sections: the first section deals with the phases of transformation of communications systems in India; the second section presents the status of mass media in Uda village. In the third section, the role of new communication technologies in transformation of rural communications system is empirically analysed.*

1. The Phases of Transformation of Communication Systems in India

During the pre-independence period in India, the rural communication system was primarily traditional in nature consists of mainly traditional forms of face to face communication and folk media. The process of communication was part of day to day activities and did not have any specialised institution and communicators. The communication process was intermingled with other activities taking place in the basic institutions of the society such as Bazar (market), temple, chaupal (place of sitting and chatting in a rural neighbourhood), festival and fairs. The transformation of rural communication system (which was mainly based on face-to-face communication and traditional media and folklores) started during the British period with the advent of modern mass media. Print media was the first to penetrate in the urban areas. As a letter form, different kind of newspapers and magazines were launched. However, their penetration and access in villages was not a common phenomenon. Cinema was another important form of mass media began in early part of 20th century. In 1912, first silent feature film *Pundalik*, was made and it was half-British in its making. The first fully indigenous silent film, made in 1913, was *Raja Harishchandra*. Ardeshir Irani's '*Alam Ara*' was first Hindi talkie came out in 1931. However, cinema's influence in this period was mainly confined to urban areas only. It was only after independence that Hindi Cinema as well as regional language film-making became popular in India. However, exposure of the rural population to this popular media was very limited as most of the 'talkies' (theatres) were located in urban areas. Rural people used to see movies in these talkies mainly on the occasion of their visit to nearby town/city. In local and regional fairs temporary cinema theatres were also installed. These temporary cinema theatres were major attraction points in the fairs for the rural folk.

The print media – books, newspaper, magazines, also had very limited scope in rural areas in pre-independence period. Two important book depots were popular in rural areas of northern India, Dehati Pustak Bhandar (Delhi) and Geeta Press (Gorakhpur). Dehati Pustak Bhandar was established in 1937 by Lala Dhonimal Agarwal in Delhi and it published folk tales like – *Singhasan Battisi*, *Baital Pachchisi*, *Alha Khand*, *Bhagat Puran Mal*, *Narsi Bhagat*, *Gopi Chand Bhrathari* and so many other entertainment material targeted mainly the rural population. *AlhaKhands* became very popular not only in rural areas but were also being used to motivate the soldiers of Indian army during the war period. The exposure to modern media like newspapers, books, magazines and other literary works as part of their education process, however, was confined to those who had some sort of education in rural areas. However, the exposure was also very limited to print media in rural areas as the level of education was very low (24.24% in 1961 and 29.92% in 1971) in first two decades after independence.

Radio was one among the various broadcast media that attained a great importance during the World War II and thereafter. The Indian State Broadcasting Service (ISBS) was started on 1st

April 1930, on an experimental basis for two years and then permanently in May 1932. On 8 June 1936, the ISBS was renamed officially as All India Radio. Since 1956 as it was renamed as "Akashvani", the national public radio broadcaster of India. The commercial service of All India Radio 'Vividh Bharti' became most popular for entertainment both in the rural and the urban areas of the country. Thus, radio started to gain more popularity in rural areas. During India's engagement in 1962 Chinese War and with Pakistan in 1965 and 1971, Radio became major form of mass media throughout the country to counter attack the propaganda of the enemy country. The transformation from electricity operated radio set to battery operated transistor radios, based on transistor technology facilitated the deep penetration of radio in rural areas as most of the villages were not electrified at that time. Gradually, it became major source of information, entertainment and education in rural areas. However, because of less purchasing power of the large section of rural population and requisition of license it took a longer period for its expansion.

During the 1967-73, Satellite Instructional Television Experiment (SITE) was initiated in order to launch television services in India. After the successful experimentation of this project, telecasting of Television's programmes started which was named 'Doordarshan' by the Government of India. However, it was also confined to urban areas due to its limited telecast period and lack of electric supply and high cost in rural areas. In 1982, Asian games were organized in New Delhi. On this occasion, colour television sets were launched in India in order to popularise it as Asian games were to be telecasted Live. The duration of telecast also extended thrice a day. However, it still remained urban oriented in its access and contents. 'Hum Log' (1984) was the first soap opera on Doordarshan which attracted the urban middle class towards TV. It is the story of an Indian middle-class family of the 1980s and their daily struggles and aspirations. It was created on the lines of a Mexican television series, *Ven Conmigo* (1975), using the education-entertainment methodology. The idea of the TV series came to then Information and Broadcasting Minister, Vasant Sathe, after a Mexican trip in 1982. Soon the idea for Hum Log was developed in collaboration with writer Manohar Shyam Joshi, who scripted the series, and filmmaker, P. Kumar Vasudev, who went on direct the series. The title score was composed by music director Anil Biswas. The episodes were for thirty-minute timeslots. At the end of every episode, veteran Hindi film actor Ashok Kumar discussed the ongoing story and situations with the audience using Hindi couplets and limericks. During its 17-month run, Ashok Kumar received over 400,000 letters from young viewers, asking him to convince their parents in marriage of their choice. It was followed by another mega serial 'Buniyad' (1986) directed by Ramesh Sippy and Jyoti The series was written by Kamal Saigal and dealt with the Partition of India in 1947 and its aftermath.

In 1987-88, famous film director Ramanand Sagar's serial 'Ramayan' was aired on Doordarshan on every Sunday morning at 10 am. It was a first ever serial aired on television, which captured record viewership throughout the country. It was a television adaptation of the ancient Indian Hindu religious epic of the same name, primarily based on Valmiki's Ramayana and Tulsidas' Ramcharitmanas. Many families both in the urban and the rural areas purchased portable T.V. sets only to watch Ramayan serial on television. The drawing room of every house in the villages became a mini theatre for mass watching of this serial. People had adjusted their routine activities for watching the serial. In fact people all over the country having T.V. sets used to open their doors to neighbours for watching this great mythological serial. Thereafter, Television sets started to penetrate the rural areas at a faster rate. It also became the most important item of dowry (gift) in marriages. It was followed by another Mega serial 'Mahabharat'. The 94-episode Hindi series originally ran from 2 October 1988 to 24 June 1990 on DD National. It was produced by B. R. Chopra and directed

by his son Ravi Chopra. The music was composed by Rajkamal. The script was written by the Urdu poet Rahi Masoom Raza, based on the original story by Vyasa. Each episode ran for approximately 45 minutes and began with a title song that consisted of lyrical content and two verses from the Bhagavad Gita. The title song was sung and the verses rendered by singer Mahendra Kapoor. The title song was followed by a narration by Indian voice artist Harish Bhimani of a personification of 'Time', detailing the current circumstances and highlighting the spiritual significance of the content of the episode. It was shown in the United Kingdom by the BBC, where it achieved audience figures of 5 million. Thus, by the end of the decade television penetration both in the rural and the urban areas reached at a significant point covering the major population of the country. The steady growth of the TV continued and today the coverage of TV is almost cent percent in both the rural and the urban areas.

In 1980s Cable T.V. made efforts to provide alternative resource of leisure but could not gain popularity and remained confined to upper and middle class localities of metropolitan cities. The decade of 1990s brought a big challenge for Doordarshan. The CNN covered Gulf War through satellite and telecast it on National channels of most of Western and Asian countries. It has creative potentiality among the viewers to receive and watch foreign broadcast via satellite particularly in developing countries. In 1992, a Hong Kong based group of companies launched STAR (Satellite Television Asian Region) Television. The programmes of STAR TV were beamed by Asiasat Satellite. Its channels Star Plus, Prime Sports, BBC and MTV beamed their signals round the clock. The Hindi channel Zee TV also started to beam its programme by hiding a transponder from Star TV. The advent of satellite television was a boon for cable operators. It motivated them to receive programmes of Star TV, CNN, ATN, Pakistan TV, etc. through Dish antennas and linking neighbourhood homes on rental basis. They also added their own programmes on one channel (mainly film, popular serials and film based programmes). This provided an alternative of Doordarshan to Indian middle class families (Singh, V. P. 1995; 2002). The popularity of satellite television was not only confined to metropolitan centres but also started to cover the small towns and villages of India. Gradually popularity of cable based satellite T.V. increased with a variety of channels (global, regional and local) and by the end of the millennium the number of channels crossed hundred mark on Cable T.V. and posed a challenge to state owned Doordarshan. However, Cable T.V. networking had its own limitations because it uses wire and signal boosters to extend their network in a given locality. Therefore, it could not be very successful in rural areas because of technological limitations and limited capacity of its expansion. Doordarshan remained most popular network in rural areas as its telecasting is free of cost. However, from 2003 onwards a significant technological change took place in the field of communication technology with the advent of DTH (an acronym for 'Direct to Home' service). It is path-breaking in terms of broadcasting of satellite channels on televisions. This service launched for the first time by Dish T.V. (a company owned by Zee T.V.) followed by TATA SKY (2006) and many others. As a result, the expansion of television in rural areas could be facilitated as the the signals are directly received from the sattelite through a dish placed on the roof of the house. At present, television has more than 90% coverage in rural areas, and constitute today a major component of rural communication system.

In the beginning of the second millennium satellite based Digital communication technology penetrated in India, although the first public available Internet service in India was launched by state owned Videsh Sanchar Nigam Limited (VSNL) on 14th August 1995. At the time VSNL had a monopoly over international communication over the country and private enterprise was not permitted in the sector. However the internet service was very limited in speed and scope. In 2004, the

government formulated its broadband policy and which defined broadband as an 'always-on' internet connection with download speed of 256kbs or above. From 2005 onward, the growth of broadband sector in the country accelerated, but remained below the growth estimated by the government. This bottleneck was removed in 2010, when government auctioned 3G spectrum.

Telecommunications in India began with the introduction of the telegraph. The Indian postal and telecom sectors are one of the worlds oldest. In 1850, the first experimental electric telegraph line was started between Calcutta and Diamond Harbour. In 1851, it was opened for the use of the British East India Company. The Posts and Telegraphs department occupied a small corner of the Public Works Department at that time. The construction of 4,000 miles (6,400 km) of telegraph lines was started in November 1853. These connected Kolkata (then Calcutta) and Peshawar in the north; Agra, Mumbai (then Bombay) through Sindwa Ghats, and Chennai (then Madras) in the south; Ootacamund and Bangalore. William O'Shaughnessy, who pioneered the telegraph and telephone in India, belonged to the Public Works Department, and worked towards the development of telecom throughout this period. A separate department was opened in 1854 when telegraph facilities were opened to the public (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Telecommunications_in_India). In 1881, the Government decided to grant a licence to the Oriental Telephone Company Limited of England for opening telephone exchanges at Calcutta, Bombay, Madras and Ahmedabad and the first formal telephone service was established in the country. The telephone services were merged with the postal system in the year 1883. In the beginning, Rajdhani of East India Company was situated at Kolkata; but in the year 1911, the capital got shifted to Delhi and continued to be capital of India. At that time, Public Works Department (PWD) was running the functions of telecom operations with head office at New Delhi. Gradually the control of telecom operations transferred to Director General Postal and Telegraph (DGP&T) from PWD, from DGP&T to Department of Telecommunication (DoT), from DoT to Department of Telecom Service (DTS), and finally landed in Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL). All these years, New Delhi continued to be the head office of Telecom Sector. In the year 1923, Indian Radio Telegraph Company (IRT) was formed. In the year 1947, just after the independence, all the foreign telecommunication companies were nationalized to form Telephone, Telegraph and Post (PTT), which was run by the Government of India, under Ministry of Communications in a monopoly manner. To get better performance, Government decided to bring the Indian Telecom Sector under the roof of state's control. In 1980, private sector was allowed in manufacturing telecom equipment's, which initiated reforming the telecommunication sector (Baruah and Baruah 2014).

Indian Telecom Industry underwent a high pace of market liberalization and growth since the 1990's and now has become the world's most competitive and one of the fastest growing telemarkets. The concept of 'telecommunication for all', and its vision was to expand the telecommunication facilities to all the villages in India. Liberalization in the basic telecom sector was also envisaged in this policy. They were also successful in establishing joint ventures between the state owned telecom companies and international players. The multinational were just involved in technology transfer, and not policy making. In 1997, the government set up TRAI (Telecom Regulatory Authority of India) which reduced the interference of government in deciding tariffs and policy making. After March 2000, the government became more liberal in making policies and issuing licences to private operators, and reduces licence fees for cellular service providers and increase the allowable stake of 74% of foreign companies. As a result the service fees reduced significantly and call cost were cut greatly, enabling, every common middle class family in India to afford a Cell Phone. Many private operators such as Reliance communications, TATA Indicom,

Vodafone, Airtel, Idea, etc. entered the high potential Indian telecom market. India is all set to become the fourth largest smart-phone market by 2020. India is currently the second-largest telecommunication market and has the third highest number of internet users in the world. Between FY 07-16 India's telephone subscriber base expanded at a Compound Annual Growth Rate (CAGR) of 19.5 per cent to 1,022.61 million and tele-density to 80.98. It resulted into a rapid penetration of mobile phone, in rural areas with its feature phone as well as smart phone variants. In this way rural communication system now is composed of traditional forms of communication, print media with its own limitations, radio and amplifiers covering the entire rural population, television covering the entire rural population along with new information and communication technologies (Digital) in the form of mobile phone covering entire rural population and limited direct access to internet through Desktop/laptop/notebook/tablets/i-pad.

Communication System in Ulda Village

This section focuses on the analysis of the primary data collected from a village, namely, Ulda near Allahabad.

Ulda is a village, located in Soraon Tehsil of Kaurihar Block of Allahabad district in Uttar Pradesh, India. It is situated 15kms. away from sub-district headquarter Soraon and 28 kms. away from district headquarter Allahabad. Ulda is surrounded by Soraon Tehsil towards East, Bihar Tehsil towards North, Mooratganj Tehsil towards West, Chail Tehsil of Kaushambi District is towards South. LalGopalganj, Nindaura, Allahabad, Phulpur, Jais are the nearby towns to Ulda. Atrampur Rail Way Station, Ram Chaura Road Rail Way Station are the nearby railway stations to Ulda. However Allahabad Jn. railway station is 20 kms. away from Ulda. Ulda has a post office named Atrampur. Its time zone is IST (UTC+5:30) and elevation is 99 meters above the sea level.

The total geographical area of the village is 377.42 hectares. It has a total population of 4,681 persons, of which 2,494 are male and 2,187 are female. In Ulda village population of children with age 0-6 is 692 which is 14.78% of total population of village. Average Sex Ratio of village is 877 females against 1000 males which are lower than Uttar Pradesh state average of 912. Child Sex Ratio for Ulda as per 2011 census is 734 i.e. lower than Uttar Pradesh average of 902. There are about 824 houses in Ulda village. Hindi and Urdu are local language while Awadhi and Bagheli are also used by local people for interpersonal communication. BSP (Bahujan Samaj Party), SP (Samajwadi Party) have significant influence in this area. Ulda falls in Phaphamau assembly constituency represented by Ansar Ahmad, MLA elected in 2012 on SP ticket. However, at the national level it is represented by ShriKeshav Prasad Maurya sitting MP of Phulpur parliamentary constituency. As per Constitution of India and Panchayati Raj Act, Ulda village also has a gram panchayat and is administrated by a Sarpanch (Head of Village panchayat), namely, Ram Chan Morya who is an elected representative of village. There are about 4 small scale industries like, Incense sticks (Agarbathi), Dairy and Brick units.

As far as education is concerned, Ulda has lower literacy rate compared to Uttar Pradesh. In 2011, literacy rate of Ulda village was 67.06 % compared to 67.68 % of Uttar Pradesh. In Ulda, male literacy stands at 79.14 % while female literacy rate was 53.70 %. On the basis of an exploratory study by conversation with the villagers in Nov, 2016, the literacy among the youth population of the village is more than 75 %. There are 4 primary schools (1 govt., and 3 private), 2

high schools (privately owned), 1 higher secondary school (privately owned) and 1 inter college (state govt school).

The communication system of the village can be analyzed in terms of the institutions which facilitate the process of communication at the personal level as well as through a medium. It is composed of both the traditional as well as modern mass media communication along with new forms of computer and internet based devices made their entry in recent past.

a. Traditional Media

In traditional Indian society, communication system was mainly based on face to face interpersonal communication through different institutions of society. However, some forms of mass media communication were also in practice. These practices are conceptualized as traditional or folk forms of media by the scholars. The traditional media however, exists in various forms as seen and practised in different parts of India. Some of the forms still exists in some places but may not be in its original form and content. They have been reinvented according to the modern environment. There are many such forms which play a vital role in our daily lives. In Ulda following forms of traditional media are observed: **(i) Bazar or Haath (Weekly Market):** 'Bazar' is traditional form of media which facilitate communication between the persons who come there either as a customer or seller and engaged in economic transactions. However, this is also a place where people share information at interpersonal level and it is disseminated by the people among other members of their community in the process of day to day communication. In the study village, weekly market is organized twice a week (on Tuesday and Saturday). The sellers come to the village from nearby villages and towns to sell their products. Generally all items of household need are available in this local market. It is through interaction among the various persons come to this place, that the information flows in different directions i.e. from the village to other villages and towns and vis a vis. **(ii.) Temple:** There are 8 temples in the village. Out of 8 temples, 2 of them are very old as they were built during British period (Shiv Mandir and Ram-Sita Mandir). They have regular programs for bhajan and Keertan, both the men and women participate in the religious activities organized in the temples on the daily basis as well as at the occasion of different festivals. During these activities information flows between the persons who come there to participate in these religious activities, especially among women. **(iii) Katha (Story Telling):** Katha is an ancient form media which represents the oral tradition of communication of knowledge in Indian society. This format was introduced for the first time with the composition of the "Bhagwat" katha and "Puranas" in order to communicate messages and preaching through stories in addition to poetic format of communication through "Shlokas" and "mantras" during ancient period. These kathas and shlokas were used to preserved knowledge in the ancient Indian society by the 'rishis' and 'munis' to transfer the societal knowledge to their students. Later on these were collected in the form of 'shastras' and formed an important method of mass media communication in Indian society. 'Ramayana' and 'Mahabharata' are most popular mythological traditions used this format even today. These kathas are performed by traditional katha-vachaks at special occasions and are part of religious life of Hindu social system. In addition, there is also tradition of story-telling at individual level by people of elder generation to the younger generation to inculcate social and moral values among them. In Ulda village, Katha plays a very important role among the Hindu. 'Ramayana', 'Bhagwata', 'Satyanarayan katha', 'sunder kand path' some of the kathas are organized and performed by the villagers. **(iv) Mela (Fair):** It is kind of big "haat" where you can find everything whether it's a food item, clothes, gadgets, books, small and big swings for kids, etc. The only difference is the change or one can

say advancement in the technology, because it is very much traditional in its root and is modernized in its assets. for Dushera mela is one of the very famous mela in the village. **(v) Natak (Theatre):** Natak is a performance medium drawing its techniques from traditional drama forms in India. They are performed in an open place in the community or at the corner of a street or market place during the night. In such a situation, the audience and the performers are on the same level, emphasizing the fact that the performers are not different from the audience themselves. This also leads to the establishment of a rapport between the performers and the audience. This form is also very popular in Ulda. This 'Ramlila' of Ulda is one of the such traditions performed every year by Ramlila Committee of the village. **(vi) Masjid (Mosque) and Madarsa:** Ulda has a mosque in the village. The male members of Muslim community perform 'Namaz' in the Masjid where a Moulvi teaches Arabic and Persian language as a part of religious education to the younger generation. Other major places for women's conversation within the village is near tube wells.

b. Modern Mass Media Communication

Radio, newspaper, magazines, television and cinema are modern means of mass communication in Ulda village.

i. Radio

In early 1960's Radio became very popular in India, be it rural or urban area. It has been a popular medium covering around 50-60 % of the country's population, as it was easily portable and did not need literacy. Radio listening has been reduced. The people of Ulda have very less exposure to radio in terms of their habit of radio listening, as one can find old radio sets in the house, but very less people tune it now. Only 15% of the total population still use radio as a source of communication and entertainment. It is more popular among the labours working in the brick industry and people of older generation for listening news, cricket commentary, music and other programs. FM radio is more popular among the members of young generation. They use their mobile phone for this purpose.

ii. Television (TV)

More than 90 percent of the households in the village have Television sets and out of them 60 percent have a cable connection from a local cable operator who provide its services on a monthly rental basis. About 10 percent of the households have DTH connection. TATA Sky is most popular DTH service provider in the village. Rest of the households enjoy free service of Doordarshan through a dish and set top box (One time investment of Rs. 1000).

iii. Newspaper and Magazines

In the field of print media, Ulda has access to all the newspapers that are available in Allahabad, be it local or national newspapers, both in English and Hindi. But the exposure of English newspaper is relatively very less in comparison to that of Hindi newspaper (Dainik Jagran, Navbhart Times, Amar Ujala, Dainik Bhaskar, Hindustan, etc.) because the major occupation of the people in Ulda is farming (90 % population), as people there have very less exposure of English language. People only from four households regularly read English newspaper (The Hindu and

Times of India). Print media is not affected as it is still fulfilling local needs, as newspapers have been localized, publishing localized news like, crime reports, job advertisement, etc.

iv. Cinema and VCR

Ulda has no cinema halls, so for watching cinema people prefer T.V. only, and in the present time cinema is not that popular anymore among the villagers, as cable TV itself fulfills the needs for which people used to watch cinema. People of Ulda visit Cities' cinema hall, to watch cinema as a part of their trip to city area. VCR (Videocassette Recorder) is still in trend, as people either have it or bring it on rent. The village has three CD's and Amplifier shops, where VCR and VCD's are also available on rent.

v. Bioscope:

A Bioscope is a decorative hand-driven projector that has a low watt bulb attached behind the reel. As the handle turns, the reel moves. The person viewing the reel from a fixed lens gets to watch images moving by, often accompanied with music. You can see full-fledged films, or posters of stars stuck together in one long roll to make for entertaining viewing. The Bioscope was like a 'Travelling Cinema Trailer' or 'Cinema Gallery on Wheels' - a perfect object of affection for a cinema loving traveller! Bioscopes are almost a thing of the past and Bioscope-wallahs are now far and few. But one can still find some at places like India Gate in New Delhi - and in many of the smaller towns and villages of the country. There are two bioscopes in Ulda village. In the evening time between 5-7 pm, two Bioscope-wallahs come carrying bioscope and children follow them in group. They charge Rs.5 per head allowing five kids at a time. Children have lots of craze for this medium.

vi. Landline Phone

There are only 10 landline telephone connections in the village as most of the people now have mobile phones.

C. New Media

New media refers to "those digital media that are interactive, incorporate two-way communication and involve some form of computing" (Logan 2010: 4). New media are "very easily processed, stored, transformed, retrieved, hyperlinked and, perhaps most radical of all, easily searched for and accessed" (Logan 2010: 5). Mobile phone and computer and internet based devices and applications come under this type of media.

i. Mobile Phones

Almost every household has at least one mobile phone in the village. Mobile phones have brought about revolutionary change in communication system within a decade. The village has three mobile shops who sell mobile phones and also repair minor problems in the phones. The advent of mobile phone has made the village communication system more efficient in contacting the people beyond the boundaries of the village. Prior to mobile phone most of the communications

were between rural and urban areas but today rural to rural communication has also been facilitated. Now villagers can contact their kinsmen in other villages as well, This has added a new opportunity to the married women who have their personal mobile phone and have frequent communication with the members of their parental family and kinsmen whenever they want to.

ii. Internet

The internet facility in the village is largely provided by three cyber cafés. One out of three cafes has Broadband connection, whereas rest two access internet through Net setters. Around 30% of the households have Desktops and Laptops, out of which only 10% use internet. Most of the laptops were provided by the state government three-four years back to the students who have passed intermediate examination (12 years of schooling). All the three cyber cafés also have properly installed Xerox machine as well.

Role of Information and Communication Technology in Transformation of Rural Communications System in Uda Village

In the Pre-independence period rural communication system in the study village and elsewhere was largely a traditional communication system. It was based on face-to-face communication and there were no specialized communicators. The communications took place along with other activities organized within the framework of different institutions of society, like temple/mosque, bazar and traditional and folk media.. Although cinema, newspapers has been started during the British period, but they were confined to urban areas. After independence Radio services started in the country but due to lack of literacy newspapers could not penetrate the rural areas. Most of the cinema halls were also located in nearby town, namely Allahabad. Therefore the villagers were used to go cinema occasionally. In the first two decades after independence, radio sets were operated by electricity and due to lack of electrification, radio service also could not penetrate the village. By the end of 1960's battery operated "portable radio transistor sets" came into the market and radio became a popular medium of mass communication in the village. Many villagers purchased transistor radio sets. However, it also became customary to give radio sets as a gift item to the couple at the occasion of the marriage in the village. India's engagement in three wars (1962, 1965 & 1971) at a very short interval made it an important medium of communication in rural areas to stop the propaganda of the enemy country. Government has taken a number of measures to open local radio station in different parts of country in order to fulfil the objectives of information, knowledge and entertainment. In next one decade, radio became most popular medium in the village and a number of development oriented programme mainly related to advanced technology of agriculture, family planning programme etc., were also started to broadcast.

With the advent of Television, audio-visual media was further strengthening the country. However in initial years it attracted only the middle class in urban areas. It was in 1987-88, with the telecasting of "Ramayana" by famous film producer Ramanand Sagar, which popularised television in Uda village as well. However, there were very limited T.V. sets owned by rich families of the village but as village society has group life and a culture of sharing, one T.V. set covered a good number of families in its neighbourhood particularly at time of telecasting of the *Ramayana*, the first mega serial on T.V. Moreover with the availability of battery operated T.V. sets, penetration of T.V. in the village increased at a faster rate and within next three decades the coverage of T.V. in the

village reached 60%. The Cable T.V. could not penetrate the village in the beginning; however in later stage mainly after 2005 it has partially covered the rural areas. The D.T.H services of Dish T.V. owned by Zee T.V., TATA Sky by TATA Telecommunication also started to penetrate the village since 2006. It exposed the villagers to various types of channels covering news/music/serials/sports and so on. Although this has been confined to few rich families of the village as the services were based on monthly subscription. With the turn of the century, TV became most important element of rural communication system in the village and its further growth in next 15 years enabled this medium to cover the entire population of the village. However, with the growth of TV the radio lost its importance. Although most of the villagers have an old radio set but they rarely tuned it. As a result in rural communication system, apart from elements of traditional media, modern mass media communication became an important component. In last one decade, Internet and Mobile technologies attracted the Uda village three cyber cafe's emerged in the village market located on the road which connects Allahabad to the state capital Lucknow. This road divides the village into two parts. These cyber cafe;s are used mainly by youth for various purposes. In last decades, few villagers also purchased laptops. However, number of laptops increased with a popular programme of the state government to provide the 12th pass youth an hp brand laptop in order to bridge the digital gap in rural areas. Today every household of the village has one or more mobile set. The mobile phone opened new opportunities and patterns of communications not only between rural and urban areas but also between rural to rural.

Conclusion

The rural communication system which was initially traditional and had to maintain a boundary within the village, gradually transformed by modern mass media into a system in which flow of information was from urban to rural areas at mass level, and there was a two-step flow of information. However flow of information was uni-directional. The new information and communication technologies particularly mobile phones (Smart phones as well as Feature phones) revolutionized the communications system and interactive features of these phones, not only enhanced the volume of information flow throughout the society but also exposed the rural people to the innovative media formats like Facebook and Whatsapp. This could have also been possible due to a significant increase in the literacy rate and level of education in younger generation particularly in rural areas. Thus, almost cent per cent coverage of T.V. and mobile phone has transformed the rural communication systems from a traditional communications system to a modern global communication system. As the elements of traditional/modern/global communication system have been integrated with each other, it resulted into the smooth flow of information within and outside the village. In what ways this transformation of this communications system in rural areas influencing the other institution of the rural society is a problem for further research.

Note: The present paper is based on the field data collected during the project work by the second author and a revised version of the paper entitled "Role of Information Revolution in Transformation of Rural Communication System" presented at 42nd All India Sociological Conference, Tezpur in December 2016 presented by the second author.

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Culture and Sexuality: A Study Through Films

Sudipta Garai

Abstract

Films' being one of the powerful modes of narration remains quite an important Held to explore through its melodrama, realism and the idiosyncratic articulation of thoughts. It has expanded its gaze from the search for meanings in the text towards the sociological play between images and between different cultural forms and institutions. The study of culture has transformed its nature with the changing questions of modernity, post-modernity, the concept of "ideology" and hegemony which from the mid-1970s until the mid 1980s anchored the field of cultural studies within the field of Neo-Marxism mapped out by Althusser and Gramsci, In the present Indian context where same-sex relationships are still not a norm in our society and heterosexuality remains in the fore-front and the homosexuals remain in the marginal group, I wish to study three Bengali films which could also be mentioned as the 'queer trilogy' (Arekti Premer Golpo, Memories in March and Chitrangada: A Crowning Wish) to explore its symbolic meanings and representations, also in reference to the reactions and observations of its audiences. It would also be relevant in understanding whether movies at all play any role in changing the "thoughts and perspectives" of its audience in themes of this kind. It would also be interesting to look at how these representations are being conceived by those who are in the so called group of "sexual-minority". Does it at all give them a 'say' in a public forum and acts as a platform which gives 'them' a space to speak out their inhibitions about their own "selves"? These movies which don't "conform" to the hegemonic societal norms and bring up these issues which are among the "deviant" does speak of a language of protest to some extent and how the silent protests of these kinds have enhanced the societal positioning of the people concerned are also an arena that I would like to enquire into.

Media through its portrayal has always constructed, reconstructed and deconstructed our ideas and images of identities, values, lifestyles and the world-view going beyond certain boundaries mediating easily into our inner thoughts and consciousness. It holds the power to generate new thoughts constructing new images altering the existing book of knowledge which might also lead to a change in the way of looking at things, whereas it can also be a deliberate attempt to reinforce certain hierarchical and hegemonic norms of the society through its representation. Cinema however has always been a powerful and popular mode of narration in relation to the questions of melodrama, realism and the idiosyncratic articulation of thoughts. This research aims to look at critically the questions and notions that are taken for granted in reference to gender and sexuality that needs questioning at every level of its existence and normalization. It is an attempt to understand and examine the complex dynamics between culture, gender and its representations in some chosen Bengali films in the context of the current socio-political situation of India. Reading of cinema in

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reference to how it is being influenced by the changing social trends and the “popular” art culture remains an important field to explore with the influence of cinema on the society and its people and their imagination.

The three chosen films have a strong Rituparno Ghosh influence. ‘Memories in March’ (2010) had him as the script writer, ‘Arekti Premer Golpo’ (2010) was directed by Kaushik Ganguly but the presence of Rituparno in the leading role had its own influence and lastly ‘Chitrangada’ (2012) was a directed and acted film of this wellknown director. Ghosh as a filmmaker has a special place in the hearts and minds of the Bengali middle class household. His films *Unish April*, *Dalian*, *Subho Mohorot*, *Abohoman*, to name a few had already made him a celebrated filmmaker who with his creativity, understanding of subtle emotions and his keenness for Tagore in his imagination made the stories loved by the audience. This audience however has always been the Bengali middle class as most of the stories dealt with the culture and ethos of this particular educated class who could very well associate themselves with the representations of either the stories or the characters.

It is interesting to note that Rituparno as an individual or a film maker in his initial films never really talked or ‘reflected’ “queer” characters in his representations. With his acceptance and fame gradually he came out with his so called queer identity. It is only in the later phase that he started ‘dressing differently’ as he wished, wearing kajal, jewellery or attires so to mention a few. These films however were also a production of his later phase which could also have a probable reason of the emerging context of IPC 377 when it became highly debatable as to whether homosexuality has to be legalized in India and became a hugely discussed controversial issue in the socio legal arena of this time. The films of these kinds could also be said as the call of the time to some extent. The other reason and most importantly must have been his personal choice and interest in making these movies through which he could also affirm his own identity in media and otherwise.

Though *Arekti Premer Golpo* was released a year ahead of ‘*Memories in March*’ but if we try to understand these films in a sequence of a trilogy, it could also be seen as a personal journey of an individual. In ‘*Memories in March*’, the character Arnob was a gay lover of Siddharth who passed away in an accident and it is the story of a mother coming in terms with the identity of her dead son in presence and interaction with his partner and colleagues. It is a simple story of love of two men. ‘*Arekti Premer Golpo*’ was a story of a documentary film- maker making a film on the veteran jatra performer of the then Bengal when male performers use to play the female roles on the stage. The story unfolds with the character of Chapal Bhaduri and his crisis and dilemmas, a man who feels to have been born in a wrong physical body and thus feels trapped to have performed the given roles. The filmmaker as well could associate with this character with the move of the camera and emotional crisis. It is a story of a crisis where one feels trapped in the gender he/she is born with and feels an immense discomfort and struggle in living their lives. Lastly, ‘*Chitrangada*’, is a story of transformation and a hope to change the given sex to that of one wished to be. It is indeed a bold representation when Rudra decides to change his sex but ultimately calls off the operation till the end of the film. If we see these films in this sequence it does reflect a journey of a so called queer identity when one through their realizations feel immense pressure within to live their lives in terms of the norms of society and then decides to transform themselves to the gender they wish to live in and the dilemma one faces in that transformation as to really change what one is born with and often ends in a bitter remorse when the partner happens to be bisexual and thus chooses to settle for a “family” life as per the heterosexual norm.

These are three pictures from the three films, the first is of “*Chitrangada: A Crowning Wish*” (as advertised in one of the supplementary of ‘*The Telegraph*’), the second is from “*Arekti Premer Golpo*” and the third is from “*Memories in March*”.

The cultural sites are very much a constructions of our own manipulations of meanings and constructions and thus in no way a predetermined cultural space which is “given”. The word “cultural” remains a space of contestations and negotiations of specific interventions, inputs and collaboration) Arjun Appadurai would point it as “the conscious mobilization of cultural differences in the service of a larger national or transnational politics”; culturalism is invariably ‘hitched’ to certain ‘prefixes’. (Appadurai 1997:15) “Cultural” in reference to “culturalism” becomes even more complicated and therefore it’s a challenging task not just to find and interpret meanings of cultural terms, rather how meanings mutate and metabolize in the course of their transportation,, translation and specific uses in other cultures. Though the term “multiculturalism” was not much popular in the early 20th C, and left out the representation of many marginalized groups, but now the assertion of different alternative gender groups, caste and classes has made us aware of the space we are in which expects us to be more politically and socially aware and sensitive. Rustom Barucha would however pose some questions to himself and his readers to reflect on more critically as to what extent have times changed? Is it a self deception, a politically correct reflex on our part that is not substantiated by any significant alteration in our respect for others? For whom have they changed? In which constituencies ? Certainly there is more “cultural differences” than before, but is it really making a difference to the shaping of a multicultural society? Has the largely academic production of new alterities succeeded in the crossing of borders across class and race, or is it reinforcing new insularities embedded in the rhetoric of cultural difference? Do we cross some borders only to close others? It is sometime very important to extend beyond the art form into the actual vulnerabilities of engaging with the “other” not as a tokenistic presence or as a nice foreigner, but as a person with whom one can dialogically redefine the world. These questions are something very intriguing to be dealt with while to deal with any cultural form and its influence over the people.

Thus when we are studying culture or its forms, the location of the researcher becomes quite relevant. It is never possible to do an all encompassing study on culture, thus the area chosen in this study is the representation of culture in media, specifically in three chosen films which has been significant because of its content as it represents ‘alternative’ culture and thus poses a challenge against the existing hegemonic norms and is among the first in Bengali popular cinema.

The study of culture has transformed its nature with the changing questions of modernity, post-modernity, the concept of “ideology” and hegemony which from the mid-1970s until the mid 1980s anchored the field of cultural studies within the field of Neo-Marxism mapped out by Althusser and Gramsci. Thus to study sociology as an art form remains an expanding field of study in recent times, both to understand the ideological representations and reinforcement and also as a creative way of protesting. It has expanded its gaze from the search for meanings in the text towards the sociological play between images and between different cultural forms and institutions. Along with ancient architecture, literature, poetry, cinema thus remains an important agency of expression and thus cannot avoid the hegemonic ideological frame of reference in its existence. Althusser (1977) did a detailed study on the functions, practices and processes of culture. ‘Culture’ came to be redefined as the processes which construct a society’s way of life producing meanings and consciousness through the representation of media and other systems which give images their cultural significance. Culture thus is a system of interconnected meanings and films holds a specific importance in producing and reproducing cultural significance. Among the various forms of cultural representations, films hold a popular reflection of the society and culture. It has always been a powerful mode of narration in relation to the questions of melodrama, realism and the idiosyncratic articulation of thoughts. Ritwik Ghatak, one of the pioneers of “art” movies suggests that it’s the most versatile medium of exchange in comparison to any other art forms where language might not

act as an hurdle and thus reaches the masses easily and have the capacity to bring a change in the mindset of the people or communicate thoughts and ideas more than through texts and novels. It remains a strong medium of expression which also in many cases used as means to protest/ change or at least to put forward certain issues that we don't talk and discuss much in our everyday life. It's a two way process between the 'spectator' and the 'spectacle', and thus the study of the films in a particular context becomes important when we try to critically look through it from the audience's reactions and also the specific ways of representations and the ideas of the "represented".

While studying culture, media plays a dominant role in understanding the creation and destruction of many cultural ideologies and practices where films have its own importance. Though previously film studies were dominated with the perspective of aesthetic analysis where the art form was studied through its reproduction and arrangements of sounds and images particularly. But gradually during 1980s and 1990s, came the interpretation of films as narrative, as a cultural event, to study the social practice through its production and consumption, the reading of its meanings with the factor of entertainment and understanding. In sociological research, one dominant aspect of enquiry was of the 'field', the physical space of doing ethnography, of collection of data visiting the ground etc. The other aspect which also remains equally intriguing is the literary and the creative world of the 'social'. The art and architecture, the paintings and graffiti, the novels and writings, the films and media which makes the so called 'cultural' world of the society also attracts the attention of the sociologists to look the society through these means with a critical and analytical outlook. Sociological research has always been open in its approach from various perspectives which has actually enriched it as a discipline or a school of thought.

Nisbet which discussing on "*Sociology as an Art Form*" mentions that though science since the 19 Century grew up with the idea of rationality and science and thus concerning more on reality unlike the arts which is thought to be eye-pleasing and mostly aimless and abstract, it is also to be noted that no creative endeavour can actually be very far from reality, rather any serious form of art be it paintings, poems or novels are first and foremost grounded on the 'reality'. It not only throws light on the reality but also communicate it with others. He mentions that both the scientists and the artists are actually driven with the desire to understand, interpret and communicate their understanding to the rest of the world. Sir Herbert E Read in "*Art and Society*" mentions that

"The essential nature of art, will be found neither in the production of objects to satisfy practical needs, nor in the expression of religious or philosophical ideas, but in its capacity to create a synthetic and self-consistent world: a world which is neither the world of practical needs and desires, nor the world of dreams and fantasy, but a world compounded of these contradictions: a convincing representation of the totality of experience: a mode therefore of envisaging the individual's perception of some aspect of universal truth. In all its essential activities art is trying to tell us something: something about the universe, something about nature, about man, or about the artist himself... It is only when we have clearly recognized the Junction of art as a mode of knowledge parallel to the other modes by which man arrives at an understanding of his environment that we can begin to appreciate its significance in the history of mankind " (1937: x-xii)

Eugene Rabinowitch, distinguished chemist and science editor mentions in his "*Integral Science and Atomized Art*" (1959) that

"The voice of the artist is often the first to respond. The artist is the most sensitive individual in society. His feeling for change, his apprehension of new things to come, is likely to be more acute than of the slower moving, rational, scientific thinker. It is in (he artistic production of a period, rather than in its thinking, that one should search for shadows

cast in advance by coming events, for prophetic anticipation. I do not mean the forecast of future events, but rather the revelation, in the frame-work of artistic production, of the mental attitudes which only later will become apparent in other fields of human endeavour. Thus the impending breakdown of the existing order of things, of the generally accepted system of values, should be—and often is—first recognizable in a revolt against the values and canons that had dominated artistic creation; a revolution in art precedes the revolution in society. “(pp-64)

The basis of ‘art’ is thus not a creation in vacuum rather something which strongly is based on the times and space on which it is created or develops. Thus if sociologists study the human relations, the complexities of the social values and norms, the organizations and institutions in studying the society, the monuments, the literature, poems, stones, folklores, mythology, pictures, films that talks so much about the society also remains an enriched ‘field’ of enquiry in understanding its culture and symbols. Pierre Bourdieu in his writings on *‘The Field of Cultural Production’* claims that literature, paintings, text can no way make sense in isolation rather can only be interpreted and understood from the social context of their production and the position of their producers within their specific universe. He views the world of art as the ‘field’. *“The space of literary or artistic positions is defined by possession of a determinate quantity of specific capital (recognition) and, at the same time, by occupation of a determinate position in the structure of the distribution of this specific capital. The literary or artistic field is a field offerees, but it is also a field of struggles tending to transform or conserve this field of forces.”* The meaning of the work be it philosophical, literary or artistic changes even when the ‘position’ remain identical but there is a change in the ‘field’ within which it is based for the reader or the spectator. His idea on cultural production is that no cultural production is a simple formation rather needs to be understood in reference to the position of the creator, the logics of the production and reception, and the ‘field’ of the art and its relation to the other structures of power and class relations. The cultural field thus remains a space of double hierarchy and power where the ‘art’ itself remains a site of struggle with the one who is creating it. Bourdieu was both critical about just focusing on the ‘charismatic ideology of creation’ which puts the limelight on the internal structure and form alone and on the other hand he was also skeptical about the deterministic view of the Marxist who viewed a piece of art in terms of ideology and as a reflection of the bourgeoisie interest and power. He would rather focus the creation of art in the social conditions concerning with his ideas of ‘habitus’, ‘field’ and capital, leading to the theory of ‘practice’. An individual who is creating the work has his/her own dispositions and position and a social context of understanding and socialization. The position is actually determined by the ‘habitus’ in which they grow up and understands the reality and the ‘capital’ they hold in lieu of their own position. This in turn actually creates the competing subfields of large scale production and restricted production, one in which economy becomes the dominant criteria with the profit motive of its creation and leading to the ‘culture industry’ and popular culture as Adorno mentions, whereas the restricted field depends more on its symbolic capital where the creation is more about the appreciation and importance from a audience of like-minded people. The example which comes in mind in this respect is the commercial Hollywood films creating a havoc in the box office success vis a vis the so called ‘art’ films which remains in film festivals and among its small territory of thinkers, intellectuals or people who holds the power of appreciation. The ‘success’ here is seen to be free from the logic of the market. However, this is why the whole process of the cultural production and its field is seen by Bourdieu as the ‘economic field reversed’ where art is created in the logic of the economy and its distribution.

Adorno (1991) suggests that the commercial nature of art actually starts to blur the reality that it projects. *‘The borderline between culture and empirical reality becomes more and more*

indistinct'. (pp 53) He says that even war has its own poetry but the mass culture seems to have replaced a 'new world' (Neue Universum). *"In cinema this misalliance between photography and the novel, such pseudo-poetry becomes complete, it is now so present in every detail that it no longer even needs to express itself as such. It is solely the power which stands behind this everyday poetry today and impresses us with its colour and lavish presentation that can still deceive adult human beings about the extended childhood that is only prepared for them so that they might function in all the more 'adult' a fashion "*. Reality becomes its own ideology through the spell cast by its faithful duplication.

In anthropology, the use of photographs of 'visuals' started with 'fieldwork' where the anthropological 'body' extended through photographs or artifacts filling this gap of an invisible object of study in the fieldwork. Though the preliminary pictures gave a distinction of cultures between the "civilized" researcher and the 'native' researched, but gradually this differentiation diminished with time when the visuals were being read as filled with cultural meanings and symbols. The same pictures started giving a new perspective where it was seen as the people being close to nature and their self sufficient way of living lives. With time, photographs itself became a major source and medium of doing sociological and anthropological research. Gradually, with the advent of moving pictures and then the concept of sound in it gave a new perspective in the sphere of studying pictures and visuals. However, Thomas Edison, who was one of the pioneers of moving films emphasized on its domestic information, based usage rather than the mass culture of entertainment. He believes that when something is introduced in the society its use and consumption no longer remain in the hands of its creator and takes its own shape through the interest of its time and space. Films always speaks about something even if apparently it speaks about nothing, the films are an experience in itself. For Metz, all films are texts which have a finite, organized discourse intended to realize communication and sometimes a more programmatic avant-garde deconstructionist perspective of the text. Textual analysis has a great sense of hermeneutics and philology, a close reading of the text and a new critical analysis. The matter of cinema can be divided into images, dialogues, noise, music and written materials which were essentially 'seen' by the 'spectators'. As most of the earlier films in India and the West were narrowly circumscribed by the preference for modernistic, abstract films which bore more similarities with the literary works than the present commercial feature film entertainment, as it was seen to be analogous to literature. With time it was however realized that the audience also wanted the dreamlike separation of everyday life from films and this creation of the luminous images on screen. It thus becomes evident that films in our culture go well beyond that of being simply an exhibited aesthetic object or phenomenon. It provides us with the pleasure of its spectacular show of representations onscreen in recognition of the stars, styles and genres and also with the event of going to watch a film.

Films thus becomes a social practice for its makers as well as its audience, in which the narratives are meaningfully interpreted through the shared knowledge of the society, as the culture makes sense of it. Though there has been a debate that films are no longer the product of a self-contained industry, rather now has become a range of cultural commodities, where the 'spectacle' exceeds over the 'narratives', but yet reading the films as a set of texts representing our social practice is a quite vibrant field of study as it still talks about a reality, probably a imaginative reality but not something beyond the social world that we live in. However, as Walter Benjamin would say that films with its system of repeated production has become an easy commodity of consumption losing the 'aura' of the previous sense of art. There has been a magical effect of the previous forms or art with its sense of 'authenticity' which made them distinctive whereas photographs or films lack that sense of 'uniqueness' and the 'authority' that the so called 'art' previously had. Films

seem to contemplate more on its audience rather than being contemplated and the camera seen to give a reality which mostly is fragmented unlike a holistic picture of a painting or a novel.

Though films always has a market orientation so to say but now it has become a cultural commodity reflecting the hard industrial fact that films no longer are the product of self-contained industry rather a range of cultural commodities produced for business rather than the magical narratives for audience to think and reflect. Cinema has always been tried to be oppressed by the vested interested of the people either funding it or in the power in order to justify their position in the society. The 'ideology' that seem to operate within the space of making cinema can no way be avoided and also as Bourdieu mentions the 'habitus' of the creator in creating the piece of art, and also the power that holds control in its viewing and distribution. For instance during the British rule, the capitalist classes however supported the film industry in promoting nationalistic thoughts but as soon as the working class issues came up in movies like "*Mazdoor*" by Munshi Premchand they started banning them and ultimately movies of these kinds were erased from the film archives and the memories of the popular masses. Though compared to the colonial times, after 1947 the journey of Indian cinema was smoother but yet the fractured Indian society remained shackled to its colonial past.

"... ..Amader bongsheprobhonjon naam e ek raja chilen. Tinipulrer jonnyo toposshya korle mohadeb take hor dilen, tomar bongshe proti purusher ektimatro shontan hobe, amar purbo-purushder putro-e hoyechilo, kintu amar konya hoyeche, takei aami putro gonyo korl Tar gorbhojato putro amar bongshodhor hobe.... " (Chitrangada's father Chitrabahon to Arjun in Mahabharat: Rajshekhar Basu aha Paroshuram)

[...the king named Probhonjon in our family pleased Lord Shiva to be blessed with son and was told that they will always have a son as an heir. In spite of that I had a daughter but I treat her like a son. Her son will be the successor of Manipur.]

".... nari hoye emone purushpran mor. Nahi jam kemone elem ghore phire duhswopnobiubwolsomo.....grihe giye bhangiya. phelinu dhonushswor jaha kichu chilo; kinankito e kothin bahu- chilo jaa gorber dhon eto kal mor- lanchona korinu tare nisfol akroshbhore. Etodin pore bujhilam, nari hoye purusher mon naa jodi chinite pan hritha bidyajoto... ." (Chitrangada to Modon in "*Chitrangada*" by Rabindranath Tagore, 1892)

[...even after being a woman, I have such a male-heart. Don't know how heartbroken I came back home. I broke all the armours that I had and which made me proud. After so long I understood if I am unable to read a man's heart being a woman, my birth is of no value.]

"Dosh toh amadero chilo. Sarajibon jene eshechi, mante chaini. Amader jed chhele chheler motoi hobe.....Jarjeta swobhab setai toh swabhabik naa ! Svobhabero toh ekta icche ache. Oor jeta swabhabik setai jodi amra mene nitam, tahole oor eei nijer sorrier opor kantachera kore benche thaka...seta korte hoto naa!" (Conversation of Rudra's, ihe protagonist's mother with his father in '*Chiirangada: The Crowing Wish*'- the movie by Rituparno Ghosh, 2012)

[...even we are to be blamed. We always knew but denied to accept. We were adamant that a man will behave like a man. But what comes normally is normal, isn't it? There is also a normality of ones own self and that normality has a wish of its own. If we would accept him as he is, he wouldn't have been forced to do the operation.]

"...ekdom choto boyoshta ketechilo aami chhele naa meye, chhele naa meye, chhele naa meye...aami toh meye, aami toh meye eei kore. Tarpur bojhanu hoyeche naa lumi chhele kintu tumi meyer moto bhan korcho, keno hocche, keno hocche, keno hocche! Tarpur holo maar maar kaat kaat dhor dhor dhor, tarpur treatment treatment..... 2011 ei Sananda' te ekta article beriyechilo 'rupantor', seta dekhe amar mone hoyechilo, aami ioh change hote pari, aami ihik hote part, amar chances ache I" (Interview with a Male to Female trans-sexual)

[...my childhood went with the constant questioning of whether I am a boy or a girl, boy or a girl, I am a girl, I am a girl. Then I was made to believe that I am a boy, but I act like a girl. But why is it happening so? ..Then the phase of physical torture following the treatment. In 2011, I saw an article on “sex-change” in Sananda, a monthly magazine which made me decide that even I can be alright, even I have chances.]

Though it is still a concern whether mythological stories and characters could be treated as ‘history’ but yet it gives us a variety of information and probable relationships that could have imagined to have existed in a certain society or culture. Tagore would say that Mahabharat in the context of India was not a story written by a certain individual rather it is the collective history of a clan. (*“Eha kono byektibisheshher itihasa nohe, eha ekta jatir sworochito swabhabik itihasa”*. Tagore: *Bharatborsher itihasa dhara*) (Basu: 1954) The folklores, the beliefs, the imaginations of the Aryans gave rise to this as a text. However, once these orally passed stories and ideas are written down in the form of words and structures, it gives more accessibility of re-reading them as text in different time and space. There lies an immense possibility thus to make sense of the ‘social’ through the mythological. Sociology in its present context has actually spread out its arena of study expanding its gaze from the search for meanings in the text towards the sociological play between images and between different cultural forms and institutions. The cultural sites are very much a space of our own manipulations and constructions and thus in no way predetermined and ‘given’, rather, a space of contestations and negotiations of specific interventions, inputs and collaboration.

Chitrangada—the dance drama written by Tagore in 1892, takes us to a different world from the perspective of Chitrangada who was the princess of Manipur and was conditioned to be a man because their family was blessed by Lord Shiva to always have a son as the heir in spite of which Chitrangada was born a girl. Meeting Arjun made her realize that she wants to become a woman. Thus started her journey from “ku-rupa” to “su-rupa” and her wish to be transformed to become feminine, which in contrary to the actual text of Mahabharata was very different where Chitrangada was just a small phase in Arjun’s life while his exile for twelve years. However, when Arjun wished to marry her, he was given the condition that their son will be the successor of Manipur and later Babruvahana became the king of Manipur. It basically shows a matrilineal lineage which remains quite relevant in the progress of events in Mahabharata. What Tagore does is to look at Chitrangada in the mirror view where she has a self realization of her femininity her journey to achieve her wish. Rituparno relooked Tagore’s text and redefines it in his own terms and imaginations. It shows simultaneously the life of Rudro, the protagonist played by Ghosh himself with the parallel performance of Chitrangada, on stage which ends with the idea that no transition is ever complete and rather an ongoing process. *“It raises the question whether the choice of an identity by the child is self-willed or imposed by society: It had to be an heir, that’s all the father knew, to carry on the name and the family pride. And so, the training began. But the child, to be a girl or a boy, did anyone ask or even want to know? Children have dreams beyond their parents’ expectations and they wish on stars and fallen eyelashes. Sometimes wishes come true unexpectedly to crown our life and turn the everyday, inside out.”* (02:14-03:14) It is a story of wish, her father’s wishes versus her own. Chitrangada is a story of desire, that you can choose your gender. Rudro chooses to be a dancer even after being forced to study engineering by his father. In a conversation with Partho, his partner in love, Rudro says that *“I don’t dance with my body Partho. It comes from within. Fortunately, my art form is not gender bound. My dance is not limited to my gender Partho- And neither is my identity.”* (01:0:39-01:07:18)

A cultural analysis reveals the way a dominant ideology is structured into the text and into the reading subject and those textual features that enable negotiation, resistance and oppositional reading of the same. It becomes interesting when the ethnographic study of the historically and

socially located meaning that are made are related to the study of the predominant system of culture in the present context. Texts are produced within a political economy and thus the constructions of representations and the discursively constructed textual social world however require an engagement with the social structuring of practices in order to get a broader perspective of structured social differentiation and their historical transformations in respect to class, status, gender, nationality, ethnicity etc.

The character of Chitrangada as well is seen to have evolved in these different texts in time and space and also a construction, deconstruction and reconstruction of a character in these three different art-forms in the lines of sexuality. The mysterious and mystical ambiguity of androgyny in Tagore's text has always been a treasure in the Bengali literature and this has been a constant source of inspiration to Rituparno which got reflected in his own imagination and ways of expression in his art forms. It is in a way autobiographical where his wishes to become a woman is portrayed with the parallel representation of Chitrangada being transformed. In this respect which remains questionable is one's wish to change one's identity and to be able to live with the new identity forgetting all the socializations and ways of life of the previous. It's a struggle in itself other than the stigmatization and marginalization caused. However in this paper I will try and relate the text of the film with two narratives that faced a similar situation in their lives as well.

Our body is expected to behave in terms of the 'sex' that we belong to, but the major disconnect creates a conflict in the realms of desires and wishes for a person who cannot associate between the body and the soul and thus keeps struggling for the fulfillment of their penetrated desires in spite of the constant resistance and being treated as the 'perennial embarrassment' from home and outside.

Niloja (name changed) is now working in an NGO in Kolkata who would say that "*amar chotobela ta konodin e moshrin chilo naa. Ekdome chotobelata keteche aar panchta bacchar motol kintu amar jokhon panch bochor boyish, tokhon theke aami njeke meyei bhaktam, keno janina, amar mone ache. Julian day school e portam, red house e chilam, kintu chheleder games amar bhalo lagto naa, football cricket e amar konodin e bhalolaga chhilo naa, aami mistam a meyeder sathe beshi. Ota coed school chilo. Tiffin period e Sharmistha, Tanushree eder sathe boshe boshe kheltam, golpo kortam, tiffin share kortam. Nijer moton thaktam, ghur ghur kortam baganer ashpashe. Aami barite eshe nijermoto ranna bati kheltam, ekhono sajano ache kichu kichu...onek chhoto chhoto purono kichu lohar, finer, aluminum er khelnabati. Eguloi amar bhalo lagto. Amar dui didir aami chhoto bhai chhiam, kintu nijeke konodin bhai bole bhabe partam naa. Chhotdi amake sajiye dilo, kajol pencil, chhuri, putul ta hole niye maa hotam, gamchapontla kore mathai tagatam...*"

[...my childhood was never smooth, though my early childhood was spent like other children but, since five years of my age I started thinking myself as a girl. I don't know why, but I remember. I went to Julian Day- a co-ed school, was in Red house but I never liked boys games. Was never interested in Football or Cricket, rather I was friends with girls. During the tiffin period, I use to sit with Sharmistha, Tanushree and others, chat and shared my tiffin with them. I was mostly by myself, sometimes walked alone around the garden. I use to play "ranna-bati" (kitchen games) after coming back home. I was the brother of two of my elder sisters but I could never think myself as so. Chotdi gave me bangles to wear, applied kajal. I use to play a mother with the doll on my lap.]

She says, "*ektu boro hoye aami chhotdi ke bole dilam. 13-14 years e nanarokom problem holo, amake niye gelo dactarkhanai Treatment koralo. Marlo-dhorlo...Osudh dilo, khelam naa, shee onek kahini. Osudh comod e fele ditam, flush kore dilam. Tarpur SSKM e counselor er hathe thappod o kheyechilam. Ekhon shuni counselor ra naki marte pare naa, kintu amake onek bojhanor por o jokhon aami bujhini aamake merechilo. Bole, drawing koro nijer mukh, ekta meyer mukh*

enkechilam, tip-tup diye, ek thathiye chad merechilo. Tarpur likhechilo prescribed for electric shock therapy. ECT. Amar teente kore session hoyechilo, amar haathpaa sob nyabnyabe hoye gechilo..."

[...when I grew a little older, I told my chotdi. During 13-14 years of my age, there started a lot of problems and I was taken to the doctor. The treatment started. The counselor gave me medicines but I use to throw them. I was even slapped by my counselor in SSKM, though now I hear that counselors are not suppose to slap, but when my counselors tried to make me understand that I am a boy but I refuse to understand, he told me to draw myself and I drew myself as a girl with the bindi when he slapped me and recommended for ECT, electric shock therapy. There were three sessions that happened and I lost all my strength.]

As one grows up from a child to an adult, they try and concretize their wishes that have crowned their lives since forever with their available sources and power at that point of life. Niloja decided to go for the sex change operation when she was around 25 years old and her family was not with her. She also adds that since childhood she always wore different kinds of clothes as in not the usual shirt and pants for boys. "*Chheler jama juto konodin e bhalo lagto naa*", she mentions. When her father took her to the tailor she use to give different designs to make and one day she remembers, "*dorji najehaal hoye giye baba ke bole apnar chheleta naa ektu onnyo dhoroner, oje sob nokshaola jamakapod pore, shee sob aarni banate parbo naa. Baba bolechilo lor jonnyo maan ijot sob chhole gelo.*" She says that her fight was fought alone where her family was never with her, though she mentions some names of her friends whom she wishes to thank to support her to become what she is today. "*Aami nije nije til til kore jogar korechi Sathi te kaaj korechi, Manosh Bangla te kaaj korechi, aami onekdin dhore kaaj korechi, infact eei karonei. Amar haathkhoraj er somoshya konodin e chilo naa, baba amake roj 20-30 taka dito, aami okhan thekeo jomiyechi. Tarpur ektu boro hoye aamijor kore onnyo rokom sajte shuru korlam, chul kata hondho kore dilam, kaan fontalam, naak fontalam. Sheet somoi e amar kono chhobi chilo naa amar barite. Aami thik korechilam, aami hobo aamijaa chai, jai hok naa keno. Roj sokal bikel oshanti hoto. 8-10 years roj maramari hoto, oshanti hoto kintu aami thik korechialam jodi aami more naa jai, tahole sex-change aami koraboi. 2012 sale, aamar breast augmentation holo. Nijei bhorti hoyechi, nijei bag e kore taka niye gechi, nijei operation theatre e teen din kaliyechi. Tarpur ekjon bondhu chhariye anlo. Aamar nari swotta prokash pelo. 2013, Feb 23rd e finally amar genital reassignment surgery ta holo. Khub kostokor.*"

[I have managed the money bit by bit all by myself. I worked in Sathi, Manosh Bangla, infact worked since long to get the money for the sex change operation. I always use to get pocket money from my baba, rupees 20-30 each day, I even saved that money. When I grew up, I pierced my ear and nose, stopped cutting my hair. At that time there were no pictures of mine in my home. I decided then that I will be what I wish to be, whatever happens. The trouble in my home went on for 8-10 years, but I was adamant that if I am alive I will get the operation done. In 2012, I did the breast augmentation. I took the money, admitted myself, stayed in the operation theatre for three days, then a friend released me. My female self came into being. 2013rd February 23rd, finally I did the genital reassignment surgery. It was a very painful process.]

Rituparno had a deep bond with his mother in real life which got reflected in this film as well. Though Rudro's father continuously tried to resist his behavior, the mother however negotiated between both of them, but the film closes with the positive note of the parents accepting them as their own blood, where the father asks, "*amra lawyer er sathe kotha bollam, tomake ekta affidavit korate hobe, tumi ki tomar naam change korte chao.....tumi jeta korecho, seta is a change in entity, seta legally register naa korale, aamake will-twil kicchu change korte debe na.....sekhane my only son and heir lekha ache I Seta modify' naa korle tumi mushkil e porte*"

One's association with name and identity is a pertinent aspect of one's life. We are all known by our names which gives us the first impression of whether we are a boy or a girl.

Thus it's actually a dilemma where one faces when their sex is changed. Niloja says that '*I changed my name, yet there are people who would call me with my previous name in spite of my protests sometimes to humiliate me and this happens even in my community where one does this intentionally just to tease me*'. Thus this process of change and adapting the new identity continuously is in progress where though they hold a certificate to be a woman, there is always a constant comparison between the "real" woman who could bear children and be a mother. And thus their continual urge of settling down in a marriage which though again is a conformation to the normative institutionalization, they are unable to fulfill their wish. Thus the perennial conflict remains. In one of the dialogues Partho says to Rudra that "*the man I loved was not this... not this half thing. If I have to have a woman, I would rather have a real woman. Not this synthetic one.*"

Culture is to be understood in relation to the existing ideology to which laws remains an important construct to be looked at. Though laws at large gives a space of empowerment for them whom the mainstream looks at as marginalized but laws always does not work the same way in the individual level as the ideas and perception of people does not seem to change very easily and needs a lot of time to gradually think otherwise than their taken for granted book of knowledge. Rudra decided to ultimately go for a sex reassignment surgery because he wanted to have a child with Partho and the Indian law does not allow two males to adopt. Rudra says to the doctor that "*to me, it's a technical necessity. All I need from you is a certificate that I'm a woman. No other changes. I am not going wear a sari. So to me, it's more of a cosmetic surgery.*" (01:10:03- 1:10:22) However, Rudra's change could not be graciously taken by Partho and they part their ways, when again Rudra realizes his urge to be what he was rather than welcoming his wish to become a woman in certificate. In the contrary, Niloja would say that the gender reassignment surgery is a complex decision and thus there are phases of counseling that one's goes through before confirming the decision to change the sex because coming back is not something very easy as shown in the film. One cannot go for the operation before they are absolutely sure themselves in going through the process. They are shown the videos of the operations before they are executed to them and are asked if they are ready for such a painful process. And most importantly, one cannot avoid a counselor's grant of permission before the process of change begins and decide to change their sex just to adopt a child. One is only taken to the operation theatre when he/she is absolutely firm in their wish to change their sex through operative terms and not in a state of constant dilemma as a new struggle of accepting the 'new-identity' awaits outside the operation theatre both from the world within and outside. However, there might be a wish to be back to the earlier 'body' as Rana (name changed) would say who changed from a female to male and is not in a good health presently. He spends a lot on medicines and would say that the struggle for a female to male is even harder as he remains incapable of any sexual activities and thus stays all alone in a flat in New Alipore.

The body is said to be the primal identity of a human. For people like Rudra, Niloja or Rana, it is this body that has become a battleground, Rudra while talking to her mother after her breast reassignment surgery would say, "*our own body that we take so much as permanent is not even so*" and thus the whole notion of permanence remains in question and there lies the fluidity of one's sexual expression and their wish of 'doing' and 'undoing' gender. Chitrangada is thus not only the story of one's wish versus their parents wish; rather it's also a journey of one's wish versus the change of that wish in time and space. It's a struggle within and without. It is the journey and the search of identity which never stops rather is a lifelong partner in existence.

Rethinking the Study of Music: An Interpretative Reflection of Bhupen Hazarika's Songs of the Assam Movement (1979-85)

Sabiha Mazid

Abstract

Sociology has accorded Music/ Songs the status of being 'social'. It has usually been seen as a reflection of a specific social group, organisation, tradition or cultural expression. However, the person who composes the music usually gets subsumed under the vast category of the 'social'. The question to be asked is- does every person in a society think similarly? Even within the same society, no two people would have the exact same biography/social context. The fact that those differences would influence the manner in which both the individuals would view a similar situation seems to be ignored- The same applies in terms of music/art. The composers (the factors affecting them) cannot and should not be taken for granted. What I propose in this paper entailing to the larger topic of 'Rethinking Sociological Traditions' is a unique approach of understanding music- at the convergence of Sociology of Music and Biographical Sociology. The main approach is directed towards the artiste/musician who composes the music as a social individual with all his/her social, political and ideological influences and how the same affect his/her compositions. To elucidate this point, I would be taking the example of Dr. Bhupen Hazarika's compositions, mainly from (the Assam Movement time period (1979-85) and attempt to interpret them in light of his individual social location.

Keywords: Music, Social, Sociology of Music, Biographical Sociology

Introduction- Locating Music in the 'Social':

William G. Roy and Timothy J. Dowd in their article: "What is sociological about music?" (2010), write how music is a mode of interaction that expresses and constitutes social relations and that embodies cultural assumptions regarding those relations. Music is not a singular phenomenon. A noteworthy point is the emphasis on the distinction between 'music' and 'non-music', which, scholars in social sciences and humanities have deemed to be a social construct-one that is shaped by and shapes social arrangements and assumptions. As Line Grenier (1990)

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writes, in approaching the field of musical studies, one can refer to Zygmunt Bauman's analysis of the notion of 'culture' in the modern social sciences: "in each case the term, though keeping its form intact, connotes a different concept" (Bauman 1973:6). The same situation, Grenier believes, seems to be prevailing in the study of music: even while researchers seem to be focusing upon what they term as 'music', they might be addressing different issues. The notion of music, much like culture, is related to heterogeneous semantic fields; it designates distinct observable phenomena and stands for diverse if not irreconcilable objects of research (Grenier 1990: 28).

The construction of the meaning of music, as emphasised upon by Roy and Dowd, can be understood by following the conceptualisations of musicologist Phillip Bohlman (1999) who asserted that music can be seen both as an 'object' and an 'activity'. In terms of the former, music is considered as a 'thing' that has a moment of creation, a stability of characteristics across time and space and potential for use and effects (Roy and Dowd 2010: 185). Scholars assuming this position would focus on either the institutionalised system of tonality (as evident in Weber's work) or commodification of music (as lamented by Adorno). On the other hand, when music is seen as an activity, it is seen as something that is always in 'becoming', something that is unbounded and open. The focus on this aspect leads to the emphasis on what musicologist Christopher Small (1998) termed as 'Musicking'.

However, approaching music as merely an object or activity seems to portray it as set apart from social life, rather than being a part of it. Many scholars thus focus on how music is embedded in social life. The embeddedness of music complicates the construction of meaning, as meaning is not solely located in either a music object or activity.

What is of significance here is the realisation that music is not merely an aesthetic inner experience but also a social experience; in fact both the aesthetic and social aspects continuously influence each other. Music, then, is a language or a medium of expressing feelings, ideas, while at the same time it becomes a source of status marker, a mediator in the process of identity negotiation. While the musical experience may be ubiquitous, it is influenced by social relationships. Be it the act of composing music, singing or listening, it is placed in a social context. In fact, the act of performance of music is a two-way social interaction between the performer and the audience; thereby providing it the status of a 'social act'. Both the artist/musician and the audience are guided by the different social situations which surround and bound them. They become reflections of their social groups: caste, class, families and communities which influence their choice and taste (Seth 1996: 7-10).

Swami Prajnananda, an eminent musical historian and musicologist, conceives that the art of music bears a social value and significance to the human beings by dint of being a part of the human society. It is man himself, driven by his own intrinsic necessity of feeling, who creates music on the basis of one's refined sense of intrinsic creativity (SenGupta 1991: 51). Hence, society and music influence each other in an interdependent fashion. The social structure of music is created by the artists/musicians, audience etc. who are located in a social context and this in turn affects their work and also influences music. In fact, a musical performance is a process where a continuous interaction takes place between the artist/performer and the audience/listener. The artist/musician recreates and interprets a composition when he/she performs while the audience/

listener responds to the performance on the basis of his/her creative sense or ability. Thus, a two way interaction takes place and the absence of even a single 'contributor' to this process may lead to a broken communication.

Lisa McCormick (2006) argues that music should be taken as a performing art because when one does so, music begins to be seen as "an irreducibly social phenomenon, even when only a single individual is involved", quotes Lisa from Cook. 'Social performance', McCormick writes, is nothing but the social process by which actors/artists, display the meaning of their social situation to others.

Music (and songs), therefore, is a social phenomenon and a potent area of investigation for sociological research. Essentially, the study of the relationship between music and society has been the concern of one specific branch within Sociology- Sociology of Music. It focuses upon various aspects of the music-society relationship: the function of music in society; the societal influence on the growth and development of music; and the ways in which music reflects as well as influences society. There are quite a few philosophers, and researchers from various disciplines who have delved into the relationship between music and society. But, significantly, most of them have been limited to the social history of music, which presumably is viewed in the light of larger sociological concepts and trends (Seth 1996: 18).

Focusing on the composer/artist in understanding compositions;

Sociology, as a narrative, is founded on the basis of 'realisms': the realism of race, gender, caste, etc. as prominent variants. But in the preoccupation with realism, there has hardly been an emphasis on what C.W. Mills deemed significant- the intersection between biography and history. In studying art, there has been very little effort, either by innovation or insight into the beliefs, rites, practices or life of the artist. The real test for sociology of art, therefore, should not be on how much it can fit into the dimensions of realisms, rather on how it can bear what effective understandings of the artist required (Sherwood 2006: 100).

Until now, this paper has dealt with the theoretical orientations regarding song/music and how it is a sociological phenomenon that needs to be looked at in a way similar to any other aspect of the 'social'- both as a product of it and as an entity that exists in relation to it. But, the purpose of this research is not fulfilled in merely acknowledging the fact that music/song is sociological. The main focus here is the composer/artist who creates, composes and shapes an art (songs, in this case) form. It would be wrong to assume that any theoretical stand that talks about the sociological significance of music as a phenomenon equally represents the dynamics of the artist/composer of that composition as a social individual. In fact, more often than not, the composer seems to be an unattended shadow, whose presence is taken-for-granted as an extension of the larger 'social character' of music. But is a composer/artist a tangible entity with no dynamism or individual will? Can a piece of music, a song or any work of art merely be seen in terms of the reflection of the 'social' without analysing how that 'social' interacts with the artist's/composer's interaction with it? Most significantly, the question is, has the academic discipline of Sociology given that significance to composers/artists in understanding their work?

Pradip Kumar SenGupta (1991) states music as a representation of "the inexhaustible magnificence of our creative spirit which spontaneously manifests itself in the style of composition

or improvisation which is unique in its manner and universal in its appeal" (SenGupta 1991: 62). Further, he adds, music is the 'spontaneous artistic creativity of man'. A musician is essentially free to innovate and music:

"is a sort of projection of the musician's own image, his vision upon a canvas which does not exist as such, but exists in his own imaginative feeling according to his own impulsive inspiration (which is almost an imperative) with the help of an orderly and comprehensive sequence of notes" (Ibid: 52).

Music as a genuine art form becomes meaningful by communication and the highest form of communication takes place when a piece of music communicates a musician's spiritual attitude, deeply rooted in the basic experience of his own life and realization. Then, it does become imperative to take into consideration the musician's/ composer's understanding of the social reality, shaped by his/her social and biographical conditions, which, again in turn moulds his/her music. Only then would a study of music be complete.

The only thinker whose ideas on music and art seem to stand close to the approach adopted in this paper is Wilhelm Dilthey. Ironically, Dilthey was never considered as a sociologist.

Nevertheless, for a research work of this kind, his ideas on the social study of music stand more significant than any other noted sociologist. In what he terms 'the Musical Understanding', Dilthey argues that of all arts, music is bound by technical rules the most, yet it is the freest in calling forth emotional responses. And in looking at a musical composition as a means of communicating multiple meanings, the role of the composer or the performing artist should not be overlooked. In fact, for Dilthey, "experiences in life are expressed through musical forms, and consequently, a link between theory of music and the biography of composers need to be established" (Etzkorn 1989:5).

Dilthey's study of music (based on his focus upon German music) can be outlined in a three-fold model of analysis: first, the concern with the technical rules governing the musical expressions and forms of a people's music; second, the concern with the cultural and psychological values (emotions) that are expressed in a given social setting through appropriate (musical) communication; and third, the concern with the mutual interaction among music elements, musicians and social setting. Dilthey's program places equal emphasis to all the three dimensions (Ibid: 5).

For Dilthey, therefore, the formal aspects of music manifest the composer's conception of content or meaning, which inspired his/her composition. Again, the performer's emotional disposition is responsible for the manner in which he/she articulates or succeeds/fails to grasp the composition's total emotive content. It would appear then, that for Dilthey, a proper performance can come about if a performer and creator share their emotive attitudes or better, are united in one person (Ibid: 6).

What requires a clarification here is the point that Dilthey does not eulogise any notion of unrealistic creation of art; he does not believe that artistic imagination invents something that does not exist, or could not happen in reality. Rather, he considers the roots of any artistic process (especially poetry) to be based on the artist's own experiences. It is the artistic talent of the artist, thereafter, that allows him/her to transform those experiences into art. He/she might intensify those experiences, fill them with emotional content, re-arrange them, even choose to omit certain non-essential features or add a few others, and ultimately go beyond the actual experiences.

Nevertheless, the main technique would be centred on the transformation of the artist's experiences into an integral entity, which only kindles the imagination of the listeners/audience (Frank 1957: 477).

Paul Frank (1957) writes how there seems to be two extreme positions adopted by thinkers like Eduard Hanslick and Edmund Gurney on the one hand, representing the point of view that music need not have any references to anything else apart from itself while Richard Wagner, on the other hand, contends that "music as an isolated art had run its course and, from this time on, could be worthwhile only in connection with other arts" (Ibid :479). Dilthey adopts a position between these two extremes. For him, art could not exist in a psychological vacuum; the artist's life experiences influences his/her work which, then, produces significant experiences with the audience. Art, for Dilthey, is an expression of life and that expression, for him, had to be examined in a concrete psychohistorical context (Ibid). This point of view is not very different from what J. W. N. Sullivan attempted to present in his well-known book, "Beethoven-His Spirirual Development"" (1927). Sullivan focused upon the composer in understanding his compositions; he investigated Beethoven's life (based on documentary sources), analysed his experiences and showed how spiritual values in Beethoven's music, based on Beethoven's life experiences, are expressed (Frank 1957:479).

Dilthey's approach to poetic imagination, however, is not psychic/ psychological in the common subjective understanding of the term. He, in fact, constantly links the psychological of the artist with his/her historical context. An artist's experiences of reality are accumulated and ordered in terms of a gradually developing acquired psychic nexus. Past experiences are structured by this psychohistorical nexus which consists not only of contents but also the connections that are established between these contents. The self of the artist, then, relates to the world in terms of this acquired psychohistorical nexus, selects what it chooses to be of significance and establishes purpose. In fact, it shapes an artist's overall response or attitude to reality; carving what Dilthey termed as 'world-view'. This psychohistorical nexus, again, provides the framework for explaining how images are transformed by an artist (Dilthey 1985: 8). Every lived experience preserves the past as a 'presence' in the present; it becomes part of a system of contextually related experiences explicated from it through a process of reflection on its meaning.

Dilthey's claim on psychology, in fact, has to be seen as a break-away from traditional understandings of the discipline. According to him, what traditional psychology does is claim to provide knowledge of the 'psychic' on the basis of a certain fixed elements like sensations, feelings, etc. This portrays life as a mechanical combination of these 'ultimate' units; thus drawing an analogy with natural sciences. Psychology in cultural sciences, for him, must begin with an understanding that knowledge of 'ourselves' in relation to a structural whole ("*Strukturzusammenhang*" as he called it) which is the "articulated totality of the psychic life" (Dilthey 1922, Quoted in Horkheimer 2010: 272). Structural totalities, in fact, exist everywhere; not just in human life but in all forms of life. Life, then, adjusts itself to the different forms of structural totalities, which differ in terms of their natural and social environments. In the process of negotiating with one's environment, an individual too acquires a rigid form (structure); i.e. he/she acquires stable habits, values, perceptions and so on. He, however, failed to see that psychology is not sufficient in reconstructing individual or social life. At most, his notion of the psychic in relation to the 'structural'¹ only seems

to reproduce the positivistic constriction of the “given”; the concreteness of a man’s being in terms of objective “data” of his inner life. As Horkheimer notes, Dilthey seemed to preserve the insights of Greek idealism, particularly abandoning the doctrine of the supra-individual and replacing it with a notion of the empirical. But an individual, Horkheimer continues, can “never be built out of the individual himself” (2010: 274). Although Dilthey’s stand seems to be a promising approach to study art/ music/ poetry and the likes with significant emphasis on the artist/ musician/ composer, the loopholes in it lies too intrinsically imbedded in its understanding of human life in itself. It is important to realise that individuals are not either psychological or social entities in entirety; they are an integration and interaction of both. Also, neither the psychological aspects of an individual nor his/her social aspects remain static and concrete. When I refer to the biographical influences on an artist’s compositions, there are no ‘fixed’ numbers of measurable social relations that can be outlined. A person evolves over time; he/she acquires new perspectives and replaces certain older ones. At most, the recurrently occurring patterns of experiences or the major life events can be taken as primary focal points in terms of drawing certain generalisations. Nevertheless, this is not to say that a person’s entire life, his/her social interactions or influences can be outlined in terms of objective pointers or, in turn, used for a causal analysis of his compositions. The dynamics involved in the life of a person as well as the social situation that surrounds him, both need equal emphasis. It is this dynamism of both the ‘personal’ of the artist in concern and his ‘social’ that provides a real hermeneutical challenge of research, which undoubtedly is its purpose to fulfil.

The singer and his songs- An Analysis:

What has been famously referred to as the ‘Assam Movement’ is a series of events that marked the years 1979-85. It started under the leadership of the All Assam Students’ Union (AASU) and All Assam Gana Sangram Parishad (AAGSP) as an agitation based on four significant points- a) Against illegal immigration of ‘foreigners’-mainly from Bangladesh and Nepal- into Assam/India, b) Against participation of these ‘foreigners’ in the electoral process of Assam/India, c) Demand for deportation of all the illegal foreigners and d) as an effort to protect the distinct identity of the people of Assam against the threat posed by the ‘foreign’ nationals (Hussain 1993: 7).

Needless to say, the Assam Movement has been the most politically significant event of post-independent Assam and its questions remain relevant even to this date. An added aspect which is significant in choosing the theme for this paper was provided by the factual complement that Bhupen Hazarika was the only artiste who vocally and visibly participated in the Movement along with the students who staged rallies.

Bhupen Hazarika falls within the category of the very few artists/artistes from the North-Eastern region of India who received nation-wide (even world-wide) acclaim for his works in musical compositions and film-making. He was a singer, lyricist, music composer, poet, film-maker, all combined into one. In Assam (and other North-Eastern states), he was, however, much more than just a singer or music composer; he was a cultural icon, often termed as “the singer of the masses.”

As an artiste, Hazarika was deeply moved by the massive upsurge brought about by the Assam Movement. And the most significant aspect of it was that it was not a movement of the political leaders but a demand of justice and recognition by students and the youth. It was initiated by the student leaders as a movement towards defending the ‘Axamiya’ identity- be it politically,

culturally or economically. In this context, there were two observations/reactions that Hazarika deemed significant. First was the need to go back to the roots of what constituted the Axamiya identity, lest the youth get misled and misguided in terms of what exactly they are fighting for or against. Second, as the involvement of the youth seemed like a possible revival of the revolutionary spirit and a hope for a 'change' in the long asleep Axamiya consciousness, it was a matter of great joy and celebration. In line with these observations, two songs need to be invoked here- ***Mohabahu Brahmaputra*** (The Mighty Brahmaputra) **and** ***Aami Axomiya nohou dukhiya*** (*We Axamiya, we're not poor*).

These songs can be placed within the larger debates of 'Who is an Axamiya?' that ensued during the Assam Movement; conflicts emerged amongst the Axamiya people itself as many began seeing Assamese language as its basis, some even attempting to bring a communal angle to it. At this juncture, Hazarika sought to remind the people of Assam as to how, historically, the banks of the Brahmaputra have assimilated various groups and communities. And how these various communities, though technically from 'outside', form an integral part of the assimilated and heterogeneous Axamiya society; hence the need to distinguish them from the concept of 'foreigners'. The tactic that he adopts in arousing the emotion of 'oneness' amongst the various groups that forms a part of the larger Axamiya society is by citing names of icons- beginning with Srimanta Shankardev to Jyotiprasad Agarwala- that are considered to be the cultural 'forefathers' by the people of Assam.

Hazarika stresses in these songs how Assam has never been a land of homogeneity. It is through the union of various tribes, languages, religions and cultures that the Axamiya society had come into being. That historical significance of accepting the differences has to be remembered. And this he emphasises upon very strongly when he sings:

"Myriad races and faces
colourful, many cultures
Embracing them all
was my land born"

Again, he seeks to present an answer to the age-long question of 'Who is an Axamiya?' in a very blatant way by singing:

"... traversing through distances,
Resting on the Luit's banks
Every Indian, we embrace
in a new garb, as a new Axamiya.
Acceptance, a virtue to favour"

As Kamal Katakai says', Hazarika always lived in the memory of an undivided Assam where all the tribes co-existed. That was the essence of Assam for him. If the differences culminate into conflicts then the hearts of the people that have co-existed for centuries would collapse. And unity being the prime force of Assam, if it is broken then the negative forces would further invade the

minds and lives of the people. Assam would not be saved. Whatever cultural heritage Assam has carved out for centuries would be destroyed. Axamiya in Assam itself would be impoverished and robbed.

Bhupen Hazarika used the language of his songs to draw the landscape of Assam's situation during the agitations of the Assam Movement. And he was happy that the previous situations of neglect, poverty, unemployment were taken up by the youth as an attempt to bring about a positive change to the society. He praised them and sang songs of their glory. But then the Movement took a violent turn. A number of youth lost their lives while the communal angle of it became apparent with the intrusion of forces like the RSS and the distinction drawn between the 'Hindu Refugee' and 'Muslim Immigrant'. This put Hazarika in a dilemma. What he always glorified to be a youth-led-non-political agitation began showing its latent political colours. Moreover, it became a reflection of only a specific section of the Assamese-speaking caste Hindus. Following 1982, therefore, the nature of his compositions began to change. He got closer to the people who were not represented anywhere in the movement- the peasants, the lowest sections of the society and the poor. While doing so, he did not look at them through the lens of any language or religion, rather classified them all under the category of the 'oppressed' and 'neglected'. The remarkable shift in Hazarika's emphasis, as Loknath Goswami expressed, is clearly reflected in the song *Meghe gir gir kore* (The clouds, they mumble!). Influenced by Hemaga Biswas' song *Kashte Taare sangui jure bhai* that was written for the Gana Sanskriti Movement of 1941, this song draws in the concerns and longings of the peasant class that largely remained unrepresented in the Movement for the so-called safeguarding of the Axamiya identity.

The Movement began with a real cause following the Gandhian principle of non-violence but as time progressed it became more and more coloured with narrow political interests and violence. The aspirations of the Axamiya people were no longer given primacy. In the battle of power equations, the Axamiya society was left in pieces. And for any artist/artiste, who is deeply embedded in the realms of the society, such developments would be nothing less than thought-pro Yoking and disturbing. Bhupen Hazarika was no exception to this. His song *Shohid pronaamu tumaak* (Salute to you, O Martyr) is a clear reflection of the thoughtful ness that surrounded him as an artiste and a social individual in that scenario. What is noteworthy is that when he uses the term *Shohid* (martyr), he refers to people from all the sections regardless of language and religion who laid down their lives in the course of the conflict and not to any one section of the Assamese society. In similar lines to his other songs mentioned in this chapter, this song too, therefore, adopts a very subtle stand on who constitutes the Axamiya for him.

Almost like *Mohabahu Brahmaputra* and *Aami Axomiya nohou dukhiya*, he resorts to reminding the youth of their original stand of carrying out a non-violent, non-political movement for the constitutional right of having a foreigner-free state. The *Notun Punish* or the youth, he believed, had the future in their hands and they alone could save the Axamiya society from disintegrating. What is noteworthy is the meaning of *Notun Purush* that Hazarika had in his mind. It was not gender specific, nor class/language/religion specific, it symbolically entailed 'a person of significance'. But a striking aspect that comes forth in the lines of the fifth stanza is the subtle manner in which he indicates that the death that were caused by the violence were highly unwanted and unnecessary.

A sociological study of Bhupen Hazarika's songs is significantly based on an understanding that he was not merely an imaginative artist attempting to portray the world around him in poetic verses. Rather, he was a socially conscious individual whose every composition was deeply rooted in a thorough study and observation of the society/social. For the purpose of reading and understanding the songs that Hazarika composed during the Assam Movement, I interacted with a few people who were closely connected to him in terms of his musical compositions- be it as co-musicians, a discussant, journalist or a critic. And, significantly, the common point that came out from all of them was the richness of Hazarika's songs in terms of the latent meanings in them. Hazarika was a keen observer, a socially conscious artist/artiste, whose compositions came out from his deep engagements with people from all walks of life. For Hazarika, the society and its problems had to be catered to through music. And following what Paul Robeson's revolutionary ideals instilled in him, he sought to use -music as a tool of social change. He believed in raising his voice against injustice but with a firm stand on peace. Though the world knows Hazarika as a musician, singer, lyricist and film-maker, he was in reality what we term as a 'scholar'. He was a man of knowledge and that reflected in the subtle meanings his songs conveyed. Those were derived from the social realities around him and the ones that were underneath the surface. And not just the social dilemmas, problems and inconsistencies, Hazarika's songs also played an active role in making the people aware of the various facets of one's own society. Words, for him, played a very significant role and he emphasised on their proper usage. Perhaps this was also due to his belief that every song was a historical entity/ material. He wrote most of his songs in the manner of history writing and as Samar Hazarika (Bhupen Hazarika's brother) pointed out, his songs were almost like historical pieces, written with an intention to record something in the memory of a society/ nation while at the same time bringing in the scope of re-assessing or introspecting upon it. The songs of the Assam Movement period follow the same thread. Being deeply rooted in the dictum of 'An artiste has no religion'. Hazarika's songs have to be read in the light of poignant re-thinking, questioning and even celebrating 'youth determination' that, according to him, seemed to be the need of the on-going hour of chaos and conflict.

But the main question to be addressed here, after a thorough reading and interpretation of his songs is: how does Bhupen Hazarika's biography assume significance in a sociological study of his compositions? Let me attempt to answer these questions by taking this process of analysis step-by-step.

To begin with, having read Hazarika's songs in direct relation to the context in concern, a significant number of standpoints seem to become visible. First, for Hazarika, the definition of 'Axamiya' is not that of a community formed on the basis of language or religion; rather on the grounds of a common cultural ethos. The question of 'who is an Axamiya' that the Movement brought forth was a constitutional one and had to be looked at in terms of constitutional rights. It wasn't an issue of drawing clear-cut demarcations amongst people cohabitating in Assam for centuries. Second, he was against any political interest attempting to define the 'Axamiya' identity on the basis of a single dominant language (or religion or tribe). The Movement was not about Assamese vs. Bengalis or Hindus vs. Muslims and he refused to support any strand of thought that sought to portray the Movement in those lines. Hazarika believed in the unity of all the sections that formed the larger 'Axamiya' community and always attempted to safeguard that. Third, the Movement

was a reflection of the needs of the common Axamiya society; the common Axamiya people were to be the prime focus of its developments. And any deviation from this core cause into narrow political interests was hugely abhorred by Hazarika. Fourth, he was strongly against the use of violence in any form. The youth, for Hazarika, were the future stake-holders of the Axamiya society and he expected them to be more sensitive in terms of leading a revolutionary movement. Non-violence, he believed, was the best possible way of making a voice heard with respect. . .

Now, a revelation of these points leads to another question- are these standpoints an immediate outcome of the upheaval that marked the Movement or are they reflections of something deeper in Hazarika's world-view? Though there are no theoretical references that I could cite here supporting my statement, it is undoubtedly clear that these songs cannot be seen as merely coloured by the Movement's developments. His life-long perceptions, his ideologies shaped by his 'social network' have a role to play in the way he perceived the Movement, which ultimately got reflected in the manner in which he composed songs about its various factors at its various stages. These 'influences' are usually relegated to the domain of the 'social' context of the artist/artiste in terms of reading any work of art and taken-for-granted. But in my belief, this attains a prime focus.

For instance, if the artistic imagination and endeavours of Hazarika were to be looked at in terms of his association with his close mentor, Jyotiprasad Agarwala, a number of Hazarika's songs become clearer; particularly his emphasis on perceiving his music as a tool of his social responsibility. Agarwala was one of the musical mentors in Hazarika's journey as an artiste. A close reading of his songs, nevertheless, reflects how at most places Agarwala assumes a latent influential force, going much beyond a mere 'mentor figure'. Particularly in terms of perceiving his role as an artiste, Hazarika seems to be very strongly guided by Agarwala's definition of the same. Why would he, otherwise, go down to the actual rallies and demonstrations and fearlessly become a part of the mass upsurge while the other artists chose to safeguard their individual careers. Indeed, it was a Movement against the State and it could have hampered Hazarika's music career permanently. Yet, believing in the revolutionary prowess of the youth, he contributed for its cause, first-hand. Perhaps, Agarwala's dictum that artists should shun fear, weakness and be midst the people to champion their rights appeared like an internalized 'necessity' for Hazarika.

Agarwala asserted that an artiste had the responsibility to build a new social order; he/she had to awaken the strength that lies dormant in the minds of the common people by becoming their voice and at the same time act as the 'conscience-keepers' of the masses. If closely examined, Hazarika's songs seem to carry these ideals in more or less a constant fashion; Agarwala's ideals become like some invisible mould lurking in the background. They echo the voice of the common people, not the ones who led the Movement or passed laws and orders relating to it. Rather, it is a voice of the citizens who were a witness to the changes that the Movement brought about as well a part of its huge tide. This persists even as he changes his tone from praise to scepticism post 1982. Had Hazarika been guided by narrow interests of being in the good books of the power-holders or Movement leaders, he would not assume this shift and end up inviting criticisms. It can be inferred that his support and participation in the Movement was probably a direct outcome of his belief in the 'power' of the youth to bring about positive changes in Assam. He only attempted to spread their message across the length and breadth of the state through the medium of songs.

It wasn't a persona) prerogative anymore; his songs were directed towards the 'Axamiya' to get united and realise the 'revolution' that was underway. He acted as a strong 'Conscience-keeper', reminding the people of what was 'just' as against the temptations of being led by the otherwise.

If one reads Hazarika's autobiography, it becomes clearly established how he continuously sought to learn, introspect as well as critically analyse Agarwala's ideologies throughout his lifetime. At places, he also subtly draws similarities between Agarwala and other influential figures he met all across the world; mainly in terms of their artistic determination and meaningful usage of the language of art. But what cannot be denied is Agarwala's constant presence throughout the narrative. But, to repeat, it is not possible to point out specific words or expressions and label them under the title of Myotiprasad Agarwala's influence'. There can be no cause-and-effect kind of relation established; it is only to be inferred.

At one level, even the latent connections between Hazarika's songs and Agarwala's constant presence in spirit might seem an overs implication of analysis. But the realisation that these influence(s) (no matter how latent or manifest) might remain unknown or unacknowledged if Hazarika's biographical trajectory is not examined is significant. Possibly, ignoring Hazarika's biography and Agarwala's strong presence in it might lead anyone believe that the songs Hazarika wrote were his reactions to the immediate dynamic social reality. Indeed, the immediate context did influence him; he was fascinated, encouraged, amazed and at the same time disturbed and disillusioned by what was happening around him. But he was not the only one witnessing the events in that objective lens. The fact that he chose to represent those emotions in a specific manner, assume the voluntary 'responsibility' of recording it in history through poetic compositions, reach out to people and remind them of their historical unity; all of these are his unique biography's disposition. It is a result of certain level of internalisation of ideals and a culture of resistance- Bishnu Rabha and Jyotiprasad Agarwala in terms of the Independence Movement and Paul Robeson at the heights of the Black Agitation in America-that set the basic infrastructure of Hazarika's life as a social individual which he then modified and used according to his own understanding and subjectivity. And it is in reading his biography with special emphasis to these factors that his songs become sociologically more meaningful.

Conclusion

'Songs', therefore, are not isolated, creative compositions meant solely for purposes of entertainment rather they are to be read as a social phenomenon. And the usage of the term 'social' for songs is not merely in reference to the contextual framework in which they are composed, rather to the subjective experiences of the one who composed them as well. Indeed, in that 'social', the socio-historical factors that influence the one who writes, composes and sings those songs form an important aspect and cannot be side-lined as irrelevant, The 'context' of the songs involves the contextual of the composer as well. Reading songs/music, or any form of art, in that light makes it sociologically much more contextualized and meaningful.

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Dimensions of Educational Inequality in Rural India: A Study of Two Villages of Unnao District in Uttar Pradesh

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Abstract

The paper is an outcome of the wider study of social inequality in the two villages in Bighapur block of Unnao district in U.P. One of the important features of Indian education system is its inherent unequal nature. The most negative point about government schools have been lack of teaching atmosphere in the schools as teachers are not interested in teaching. Not only this, unequal treatment met with some lower castes students is another serious issue. The structural conditions (mainly class and caste) of lower castes are such that they are unable to send their children in private schools and in government schools because of lackadaisical attitude of teachers they are deprived from quality education. Serving mid day meal in schools on one hand have included children in education by attracting them on the other hand it has also excluded them from quality education as well by treating them on unequal grounds. The present paper on the basis of intensive fieldwork and interviews tries to locate the factors which are reproducing educational inequality at village level.

Key Words: Educational Inequality, self-fulfilling prophecy, Mid-day Meal, Exclusion

One of the important features of Indian education system is its inherent inequalitarian nature. Over the decades some progress has been made in improving the literacy rate. However there remains a substantial gap, in the literacy rate, between the various population groups. The figure for SC/ST was lower than the national averages for men and women. The STs were the most deprived in terms of literacy; in 2011, not even 50% of ST women were literate. Another dimension of disparity is between rural and urban areas. The literacy rate of rural women is 62%, while the rate is much higher among urban women at 81%. The corresponding rates for men are 83 percent and 91 percent respectively. Except for primary education, the dropout rates were far higher for ST children in all levels of school education (India Inequality Report 2018:52). Educational facilities are unequally distributed among the socio-economic, sex, regional, caste and occupational groups of the population (Tilak 1978). One of the major concerns of studied done regarding educational inequality have been inequality in educational opportunities. Educational planning in India after so many years of independence suffers from countless loopholes. In spite of several endeavours to provide quality education, all the educational facilities are unequally distributed among the socio-economic, sex, regional, caste, and occupational groups of the population.

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There have been mainly two broad streams regarding educational research. One has focused on how schools reproduce inequalities and social injustices through misdistribution (Bourdieu and Passeron 1997, Bowles and Gintis 2002) and the second considers how conditions in school or other learning sites offer resources or conditions through which learners can contest or change inequalities (Stromquist 1998, Mcleod 2005 Lynch and Baker 2005). The first group of writers, who see school as contributing to injustice and inequalities, tend to pay attention to outcomes and functioning. For the first group of authors, large structures or systems, associated with class or race or gender, will always form the condition of justice. For the second group, there is a space of human action in which these structures are contested and where equalities in education can be formed and how schools might contribute to developing equalities and conditions for social justice, analyze aspects of the transformative space of schooling even if it is imperfectly realized. In the capability approach, education is assumed (and expected) to be empowering and transformative (Walker, Melanie and Elaine Unterhalter 2007:7).

Critical perspectives see education as reproducing social inequality and according to them the main function of schooling is reproduction of dominant ideologies and their forms of knowledge and the distribution of knowledge and skills in a manner that will reproduce the structure of inequality. This perspective opines that education system has functioned as a mediator of caste, class and gender inequalities (Velaska 1990). Velaskar (1990) in his paper effort towards understanding how and to what extent schooling has functioned to reproduce and consolidate caste, class and gender inequalities in India. The main functions of schooling, according to him are the reproduction of dominant ideologies and their forms of knowledge, and the distribution of knowledge and skills in a manner that will reproduce the structure of social inequality. In both the studied villages' schools are reflections of the prevailing inequalities in education system in rural areas.

The present paper is aimed to identify inequality in terms of Mid-day meal served in village primary schools; to examine the relationship between inequality and educational opportunity and to analyse gender inequality in educational system at micro level. Two representative villages of Bighapur block of Unnao district in Uttar Pradesh have been selected purposively taking into account various operating factors. One village is developed and other selected village is underdeveloped in many criteria of development. Total 150 respondents from both the villages have been selected for study through stratified sampling. The qualitative method of research was adopted in the research mainly for two reasons – being a village study in-depth analysis was needed and secondly the topic of research was inequality and for understanding its nuances at village level it was necessary. For the sake of validity of data, it was needed. The descriptive research design has been used to describe the different dimensions of educational inequality. Observation and interview guide have been employed to collect primary data of the selected villages. Secondary data has been collected from block office, the statistical publication, the village school and the Aaganbadi centre.

Social Inequality and Education

Both the villages have government schools but Bharthipur because of being bigger both in size and population in comparison to Lalman Kheda has two government schools one primary

school and another junior high school. The interaction with village people revealed that they are not much satisfied with the level of education their children are provided in the schools. In both the villages the disgruntlement about careless attitude of teachers was obvious. Velaskar (1990:136) broadly classified all existing schools into a four-tiered system. The top tier constitutes the elite schools which include the exclusive public schools and the unaided private schools. The fees are high, rendering them an exclusive preserve of the upper classes. The next layer comprises government central schools and 'good' quality private aided schools. The third tier includes private schools, aided or unaided, of average or indifferent quality. Both types cater largely to the upper middle, middle, and increasingly the lower middle strata of society. Finally, there is a stratum of provincial or regional government/local body schools that is meant to cater to the poorer segments. With exceptions, the schools in this last category are considered to be 'inferior' in quality to the private schools.

Table 1: Problems of Government School

Caste	Undisciplined Atmosphere	Students and Teacher both Remain Absent	No Study	Biases and Differentiation with students
Upper Caste	0	6	36	0
Middle Caste	0	0	18	0
Lower Caste	1	2	41	14
Muslims	0	0	2	0

Note: Data represents only those respondents where this was applicable

The above data shows that what has been the most negative point about government schools is that there is no teaching atmosphere in the schools as teachers are not interested in teaching. Not only this some lower castes complained that their children were not treated on equal grounds in the schools and teachers avoided their children. Some complained that lower caste children were given less food in comparison to other castes. It was observed that teachers of the school maintain distance from lower caste students and those teachers who himself belong to lower castes treated the children in better way in comparison to upper caste teachers. Seventeen lower caste respondents told that they do not send their children in privately run schools as firstly they are unable to afford the high fees required by these schools and secondly they require more time and regular attendance in case of which their children will not be able to help in earning money by assisting them in their work. This reflects that the structural conditions (mainly class and caste) of lower castes are such that they are unable to send their children in private schools and in government schools because of lackadaisical attitude of teachers they are deprived from quality education.

Mid-Day Meal and Unequal Behavior

The offer of social services has emerged as a motivation and has contributed to a certain extent in increasing the number of attendance in schools. This is applicable to certain extent in other countries of the world as well. But on the other hand these social services have also contributed in increasing inequality born out of these social services. While analyzing the educational inequality

in the schools of Brazil, De Castrol and Menezes (2008:90) mention that for some children, school meals are the only regular meals they receive in a given day offering school meals is a factor that fosters inclusion because students come to school to eat. But at the very same time the administrative effort to offer meals at school reduces the time and resources that would otherwise be invested in educational services. The same thing is happening in India with wide range of mid day meal programmes focusing more on serving food to school children rather than providing quality education at the same time.

Except this even in serving mid day meal students are treated on unequal grounds. In Bharthipur village there are two cook in both primary and junior high schools. Krishan Kumari belongs to middle caste and another cook Shanti belongs to lower caste. As the first cook is from middle caste (*Kaharin*) she has been entrusted the cooking work and the woman who belongs to lower caste (*Pas*) is employed to clean the utensils. This adjustment was done as the teachers of the schools denied to eat the food cooked by a lower caste even the parents of upper caste did not like that their children should eat the food cooked by a lower caste woman. The school provides plates to students and a person to clean them but most of the students clean their respective plates after eating mid day meals and every caste student have separate places to put their plates. This is done to avoid mixing of plates of different caste students as majority of children belong to lower castes. Boys and girls are made to sit at different places not only during their classes but also while taking mid-day-meal. Serving mid day meal in schools on one hand have included children in education by attracting them on the other hand it has also excluded them from quality education as well by treating them on unequal grounds. De Castrol and Menezes (2008:123) highlight educational inequality in Brazilian schools. According to him the policies of providing school meals and transport for children made access to education possible to a large number of poor children, but offering the services had a negative effect on the quality of education offered by the system. These two underfunded policies functioned as a palliative to the real problem of poverty and exclusion.

Inequality in Educational Opportunity

Lack of trained and professional faculty in government run village schools is another problem. The schools located in a single village can contribute in unequal education if one school is run by trained teachers and another by single teacher. In Lalmankheda which is underdeveloped village there are only three teachers to handle five classes and most of the time all students are made to sit together and taught jointly without keeping in mind the level of imparting knowledge in different sections. On the other hand in Bharthipur the school is in a bit better position.

In most modern countries there is a high direct relationship between educational attainments and occupational attainments. But in India this direct relationship does not hold good. We find in India a direct relationship between caste and educational attainments on the one hand, and caste and occupational attainments on the other, resulting in no direct relationship between education and occupation (Tilak 1978:424). In the primary school there were 105 children enrolled which was reduced to 57 in 2018. In the last few years the number of private schools has increased, in one kilometre area there are at least three schools. Every parent who is able to afford private education prefers to send their children in those rather than government schools. Because of these reasons the number of students has decreased in government schools.

The poor performance of the schools is not because of infrastructural lacunas rather people's conception about government schools and their subsequent behaviour is also the main cause behind it. Men respond not only to the objective features of a situation, but also, and at times primarily, to the meaning this situation has for them and once they have assigned some meaning to

the situation their consequent behaviour and some of the consequences of that behaviour are determined by the ascribed meaning (Merton 1948:194). The school teachers opined that we cannot compete with private schools as majority of children is from lower castes and one cannot make them bright like upper caste children even if one does his best. What is subjectively thought by the teachers is objectively reproduced by them by putting lesser efforts on their parts resulting in low performance of lower caste students. This meaning which the school teachers are providing to the low performance of the students becomes real in consequence as they put less efforts to teach them and consider that their efforts will go in squander even if they do their best to teach them. Not only this village people have a clear cut view that private schools are much better than government run schools and if their children perform poor it is not their fault rather it just a consequence of school. In the same family son is enrolled in the private school and daughter is in government school, though intellectually daughter may be better but just because of their preconceived notion of school she is destined to opt arts stream on the other hand her brother opts science as girls are not supposed to understand science well .

When asked about the reason of opting different streams the most common answer the researcher got was that arts is better for girls and they cannot handle science while boys are not meant to study arts as it's a subject for those who are poor in study. Those boys who had opted arts was just because their parents' thought they are not good in study so they cannot study science.

Even lower castes are excluded from school management. In the villages the government schools have a management committee which consists of parents of the children. The committee has one president, vice-president and other members. The selection of these is done by the parents itself in the presence of village Panchayat members, ANM, Lekhpal, village head and all teachers of the school. After every two years this committee is changed and new members are elected. Though most of the children belong to lower castes but the president is always from upper caste reflecting a dominance of upper caste people in school management and lower castes hold an unequal position in rural society.

Gender Inequality in Education

Gender inequality in education is an unrelenting problem in Indian society, especially for girls from rural areas and lower socioeconomic backgrounds. Gender inequality in education is a persistent problem in Indian society, especially for girls from rural areas and lower socioeconomic backgrounds. In India, despite improvements in educational access over the past several decades, social background is still found to be associated with learning outcomes. Girls' under-enrolment in private schools is of special concern given that private schools and government schools may differ in educational quality and outcomes. The number of girls is always higher in government school because parents do not want to invest much on girls education on the other hand they afford high expenses for their boys by sending them in private schools. Desai et al. (2010) considers that Gender differences in educational outcomes are also related to community and family attitudes regarding the education of girls. These attitudes are embedded in cultural norms and are influenced

by marriage and kinship patterns which may lead parents to invest more emotional and financial resources in educating sons rather than daughters (White et al. 2015).

Issues of gender inequality in schools within developing countries have been gaining increased attention globally over the last three decades, especially since the 1990 World Conference on Education for All in Jomtien, Thailand. Janigan (2008:125) mentions that school factors also act as barriers to girls' education. Quoting Kelly (1984) he says, making schools available to women needs to be distinguished from making them accessible to women. Barriers within school range from curricular issues such as gender stereotyping in textbooks, and the effects of the "hidden curriculum" in the form of teachers' negative attitudes towards female students, to issues of personal security and comfort in the classroom and on the journey to and from school. Rural India is still facing these problems when it comes to educate girls.

Table 2: Number of Girls and Boys Enrolled in Government Primary School in Bharthipur

Class	Boy's Caste					Girl's Caste				
	Upper	Middle	Lower	Minorities	Total	Upper	Middle	Lower	Minorities	Total
1	-	-	01	-	01	-	-	-	-	01
2	-	02	03	-	05	-	-	10	-	15
3	01	01	02	-	04	-	01	06	-	11
4	-	01	07	-	08	-	01	06	-	15
5	-	-	05	-	05	-	01	01	-	07
Total	01	04	18	-	23	-	03	23	-	49

The number of students in both the government schools is very less in comparison to the village population of school going children. Mostly village people who can afford private schooling do not send their children in government schools. In both the schools majority of children enrolled are from poor family background. Interestingly from Muslim community only one girl is enrolled in the schools. The number of boys is less than the number of girls enrolled in schools. This fact is common in both the villages irrespective of their caste. In Lalman Kheda there is only one government primary school but in the matter of enrolment ratio of boys and girls of Lalman Kheda village in no more different. The number of students enrolled in school is higher mainly because of poor economic condition of their parents as they are not capable to afford private education of their children. Not a single middle caste child is enrolled in the village school and only two girls from upper caste study in the village school. Which reflects both caste and gender inequality in education.

Table 3: Number of Girls and Boys Enrolled in Government Schools in Lalman Kheda

Class	Enrolled Students			Upper Caste			Middle Caste			Lower Caste		
	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total
1	10	12	22	-	-	-	-	-	-	10	12	22
2	6	9	15	-	-	-	-	-	-	6	9	15
3	8	6	14	-	-	-	-	-	-	8	6	14
4	3	7	10	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	7	10
5	7	4	21	-	2	-	-	-	-	7	12	19
Total	34	48	82	-	2	2	-	-	-	34	46	80

Source: Village Primary School

The above tables show that the number of girls who study in government school is higher in comparison to boys. The school data from both the villages reveal that the awareness to educate girls is still limited in the villages. Most of the students studying in these schools are those who hail from poor economic backgrounds and are unable to afford costly education outside village. It reveals that even people with the lower economic background try to afford the expenses of education of their sons by sending them in good schools located outside the village, but they are least bothered to send their girls outside. They may not prefer to send them to schools, even if they wish to send them, they select the village schools because of the lesser fee and expenses in these schools. This is a clear indication of the gender differentiation prevailing among the rural folk.

The village people prefer to provide their boys better education and are ready to spend more on them than girls in spite of their good economic status. There are three teachers in Lalman kheda village school one from upper caste and two from lower caste. There are two cook in the school from lower caste of the village itself. Contrary to Bhartipur where teachers do not eat the food cooked by lower caste in this village no one has objection over that. The main reason is that out of three only one teacher is from upper caste and that too from nearby city not from the village. In Bharthipur out of six teachers from both the schools three are from village itself which is the main reason of not having a cook of lower caste as it may question their social distance and food restrictions from lower castes followed at village level. They are more prone to face caste restrictions in comparison to those coming from nearby cities. The dropout rate and skipping of school for months is higher in this village school in comparison to the first one. As most of the children are from deprived section and from labour class who keep moving for different cities in search of work. The children are also forced to move away from village with their parents for months which ultimately lead to discontinuity in their study. There were total seventy four students who had left their school in between. When asked about the reason for leaving the school different factors were told. Maximum drop out were because they find the present education system incapable to provide them any job guarantee and many left just because it was not affordable for them. The reasons provided for girls drop out were mainly their parent's unwillingness to educate them further. Thirteen respondents told that they do not want to educate their girls further as there is no use of educating them because ultimately they have to get married. On the other hands they were quite enthusiastic about educating their boys. Seventeen respondents told that they would provide their son some technical and professional course so that they could get a good jobs on the other hand they had no such inclination for their daughters.

The school which apparently treats all students equally in reality is reproducing caste inequality silently. In the whole system state works as ideological repressive apparatus and through socialization and education it reproduces caste and class inequalities. Education is the main source through which inequalities are reproduced not only in terms of educational opportunity and educational achievements but it is also visible in maintaining class and caste inequalities. Velaskar (1990:142) analyses that education received by the lower strata and women does not necessarily bring rewards in terms of economic returns. On the contrary, they experience long periods of unemployment in the 'reserve army of labour' and become vulnerable to discrimination in terms of work and wages. Under these circumstances, educational opportunity, even if truly equalized, will not fetch 'equal' results.

As per data it is clear that there is inequality both in terms of educational opportunity and educational achievement as well. In spite of so many government planes to educate children they are not working properly at ground level. It can be said that villagers have negative freedom to educate their children as in reality their freedom to education is constrained by class and caste disparities. There are two different ways of viewing freedom each of which has been fairly extensively explored over a long time. One approach sees freedom in "positive" terms, concentrating on what a person can choose to do or achieve, rather than on the absence of any particular type of restraint that prevents him or her from doing one thing or another. In contrast, the "negative" view of freedom focuses precisely on the absence of a class of restraints that one person may exercise over another, or indeed the state may exercise over individuals. This contrast, which has been discussed particularly by Isaiah Berlin, is quite important since the two ways of characterizing freedom may yield very different assessments. So far as freedom comes in at all, it is the negative perspective of freedom that tends to be the dominant one (Sen 1987:6).

It is important to see positive freedom in the right space not commodities and incomes, but functioning and capabilities. It can be concluded that making villagers capable of getting better education may help rather than just provide them negative freedom to get education. Though critical perspectives, which analyze education as reproducing social inequality, help us in the understanding of inequality being reproduced through education but capability approach may provide a fresh perspective to overcome these inequalities by bringing in focusing on making people capable of good education.

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Dichotomy in Music Listening Practice and Taste in Urban & Rural India

Sarvesh Dutt Tripathi

Abstract

The man that hath no music in himself, Nor is not moved with concord of sweet sounds, Is fit for treasons, stratagems and spoils; The motions of his spirit are dull as night. And his affections dark as Erebus: Let no such man be trusted. (5.1.83-88)

It is evident from Shakespeare's sonnet that ever an elevated status was bestowed to music in olden days. Even amidst the fret and fever of industrialisation and urbanisation, music in transformed form and content continues to affect human life. But down the ages, with the technological innovations, the pattern of listening also changed. India is a country known for her dichotomy, diversity and divide. Rich-poor divide and urban-rural divide are very much conspicuous in the country. Definitely a new geography of listening habits and musical taste is being configured here also, yet there is a deep divide in taste and practices in rural and urban India. The present paper makes an effort to know the music listening practice and taste of urban India, where internet penetration is deeper and thus scope of globalised patterns are strong and rural India, where web is scarce and traditional streams of music are still prevalent. Though mobile phone is an all pervasive device that provides multiple facilities to the consumer, the pattern of its use differs in rural areas from that of urban. The study intends to find out music listening pattern, digital tools used for listening, content of music, method of acquiring desired music, money spent (or not spent) for acquiring music and primary objectives for being exposed to music in rural as well as urban India. The study is based on the data collected through observation and survey methods of research by drawing samples of respondents taken from one of the most globalised urban habitat- New Delhi and from one of the most backward areas – Sonbhadra district of Uttar Pradesh state that is adjacent to Chhattisgarh and Jharkhand states. Music consumers objective behind listening is scanned by using 'Uses and Gratification Theory' perspective. The study reveals the tastes and practices of urban users, homogenised with rest of the world and that of rural users, gradually getting homogenised in listening technology still isolated and heterogeneous in content.

Key words: Dichotomy, Divide, Music, Listening habit, Diversity, Sonbhadra, Uttar Pradesh

India is a land of cultural diversity where various ethnic groups dwell in varied geographical and environmental habitat. They are identified with considerably diverse cultural characteristics as food habits, clothing, housing, language, dialect and ways of self actualization. Since long, music and art has remained a vital feature to identify the peculiarity of culture. In post independence era, western development model of urbanization-industrialization-modernization lead to the establishment and expansion of urban centers with relatively higher economic growth potential (Derne, 2005). West oriented economic growth pattern of urban centers, better known as metro cities, resulted into drastic transformation in the cultural pattern of original inhabitants as well as of the people shifted from villages to avail better livelihood opportunities.

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In this period of transition modernity was defined as relinquishing the indigenous culture and adopting the metro culture which certainly had proximity with western world. (Parande, 2012). On the other hand indigenous culture remained conserved in villages as the hinterland of India had little transport, communication and mass media exposure with the rest of the world. Thus, urban culture turned to something tantamount to 'Mass Culture', heralded and critically proclaimed by Max Horkheimer and Theodore Adorno (1947).

Ushering Change

However, a remarkable change in the trait is conspicuously visible in post globalization India. With better transport and communication connectivity, inhabitants of villages are vying to keep pace with the cultural pattern of globalized and homogenized big city centers. Although changes started occurring gradually in 1980s when the then government launched a plan to expand the network and geographical, demographical coverage of Doordarshan, Public Service TV broadcaster of India and the lone player in the field of TV broadcasting during that period, a big push in communication and culture perspective of India was visible in the first decade of 21st century when mobile phones and DTH started penetrating the hinterland (Ghosh 2012: 242-256). At present India has 168 million TV households which includes Cable & Satellite subscribers and users of terrestrial Public Service Broadcasting. (FICCI - KPMG Report, 2015). Likewise while Public Service Broadcaster All India Radio claims to have a reach of more than 99% population, after ongoing Phase –III auctions of FM radio channels, Indian listeners would have more and more options to enjoy Digital radio and FM transmission.

Urban- Rural Divide

Today's music listening trend and practice in India highly depend on availability of mobile device, connectivity and in the next step, internet. Therefore, it will be relevant to appreciate the reach and access of mobile and internet in urban and rural areas of India as the study focuses on urban-rural dichotomy. At present India has second largest number of Internet users in the world with estimated 250 million users. (IAMAI – IMRB Internet in India Report, 2014). This phenomenal growth of the number of internet users may be attributed to rising number of mobile phone subscribers. By the end of year 2014, there were 173 million mobile internet users in India. This figure had grown by 33% as compared to year 2013 and it is projected that by the end of year 2019, India will have 457 million internet enabled mobile phone users (FICCI- KPMG India Media and Entertainment Industry Report, 2014).

Basic and smartphones are widely used in urban and rural India for the purpose of listening music. According to data provided by Telecom Regulatory Authority of India, as on November 30, 2014, there were 937.06 million wireless telephone subscribers in India which constitutes 546.99 million urban and 390.06 million rural subscribers. Yet the teledensity of wireless phones stood 141.75 in urban India while rural India trailed behind with a wide gap with mere 45.13 teledensity. (Data is based on the population projects of Census data published by Registrar General and Census Commissioner of India). TRAI data further reveals that at the end of November 2014, while urban Wireless teledensity declined from 142.44 to 141.75, rural wireless teledensity increased from 44.76 to 45.13. (Telecom Regulatory Authority of India, New Delhi, 7th January, 2015, Press Release no. 04/215). Thus the nation may cherish a hope to plug the gap of urban–rural communication divide in future. According to IAMAI and KPMG report, rural India is steadily moving towards a more internet friendly and exploratory mind-set.

As of 2014, the active internet user (AIU) base in rural India was 6.7 per cent of the overall rural population of 905 million and accounted for 61 million users and only 4.4 per cent of the total rural population used a mobile device to access the internet. This figure stood at a meager 0.4 percent in the year 2012, the report said (*Economic Times*, July 20, 2015).

Music of India

Down the ages music listening practice took a sharp turn in India. Classical genres of music were patronized by heads of the states and empires in pre British Era. Learning of music was transferred from generation to generation in 'Gharanas', who developed their own stylistics of oral or instrumental recital. Yet, classical forms remained confined to affluent class or taste elites (Mehta, 2008). On the other hand, 'Folk Music' (Lok Sangeet) was an all pervasive popular form recited and heard by common man. Various ethnic cultural communities of India are identified by their own 'Traditional folk music'. Some folk forms are season, festival and occasion specific also (Malik, 1983). Indian semi classical or light music includes Thumri, Dadra, Ghazal, Chaiti, Kajri, Tappa, Khayal and Qawwali (www.swaraganga.org Chaitanya Thatte).

After the inception of mass media in Indian music milieu, new forms of music became popular yet older ones – classical or folk, survived. From the mid of the 20th century, Indian Film Music started dominating the arena. Along with adoption of western tune, style and instruments, film musicians experimented with innovative fusion and often used old Indian Classical and folk too (Michael Lawrence, 2012). With the change in the technology, listeners also changed their tools of listening music. Modern India, Urban or Rural, highly depends upon basic or smart phone for recreation.

E. Bellman (2009) finds that 'In the furthest reaches of India's rural heartland, the cellphone is bringing something that television, radio and even newspapers couldn't deliver: Instant access to music, information, entertainment, news and even worship'. Kumar, Singh and Parikh (2011) reach over an inference that new media technologies are enhancing the reach of folk music. During their study they observed that pilgrims walking down 200 kms. to participate a local religious festival listen devotional folk songs on their mobile phone while they walk, with earphones attached. In another India based study, Kumar and Parikh (2010) observe the advent of small business opportunities in villages selling recorded music in the form of CDs, DVDs and digital audio, video clips which can be downloaded directly on mobile phone. These shopkeepers procure already recorded content and also attend musical events to record the music to be sold later. The study of Smyth et al. (2010) examines the entertainment motivation of urban migrant laborers for possessing mobile phones. Phone is the only source of entertainment for them as they reside in small makeshift accommodations on construction sites. It gives them the privilege of privacy and small instrument can provide them multiple audio visual entertainment without disturbing other mates. The study of James D. Belcher and Paul Haridakis (2013) employs Uses and Gratification theoretical approach to analyze music listening motives and music genre preferences. The study identifies set of reasons people have for listening to music. Further it identifies and examines the way in which different variables work together to explain music related discussion. Kraus et al. (2014) observe that selection method was related to liking for and emotional response to music, attention paid to the music and perceived consequences of hearing the music. Individual listener characteristics were associated with selection behavior. They indicate that control is an important aspect of one's everyday music experience.

Above mentioned studies focus on sharing, digitization of folk music, interrelation between New Media and Folk Music, use of mobile in agricultural development, music selection behavior and motives, discussions about music. The present paper intends to explore the listening pattern, taste, changing traits in music listening and methods of acquiring music in urban and rural India. The comprehension of these aspects is expected to determine the future, and subsequently the market of music in fast growing economy of India.

Field Sites

The study is empirically located on two field sites, namely, New Delhi and Sonbhadra of Uttar Pradesh.

New Delhi

Delhi will be the fastest growing city in Asia over the next five years with the economy growing at an average annual rate of 8.5% (*Bloomberg.com/news/articles/2015-05-22*). Keeping in view the high growth rate and global tanguency, National capital of India, Delhi has been selected as one of the two geographical areas to vividly present the dichotomy. The present per capita income of Delhi stands at Rs 230000 against the national average of Rs 61564. According to NSSO survey report released on June 15, 2015, Average national literacy rate in India is 71% while that of Delhi is 86%. Indian census data (*www.census 2011.co.in*) revealed that the population of Delhi was 1.68 crore. (16.8 Million) with 11320 per square kilometer density and population growth rate of 21.21% from 2001. Due to the availability of better infrastructure, civic amenities business and Industry has been growing fast in and around Delhi, consequently, there is better employment opportunity and greater migration of job seeking youth from all over the nation. According to a discussion paper of UNESCO (2013), "...with over 350 million of Indian youth employment opportunities are insufficient. This poses additional pressure on young people to migrate in search of jobs. The push of poverty in rural area results in overcrowding in cities and towns.....According to NSSO 64th round, 81 percent of migrants originate from rural areas..."

Youth getting settled in Delhi for employment and education or those whose parents shifted and they are born here, are conspicuously visible group in transport and offices as well as educational institutions. Cultural conflict prevailing in them is well explained by S Varalakshmi, a scholar at the sociology department of AU. She terms the social schism is a result of a society suffering from colonial hangover. "It is our tendency to accept anything foreign as better than ours (music, products, language and culture) and that leads to this problem. Post-independence, the language of the upper classes continued to remain English. Even the politically powerful, if they are not polished and not English educated, are usually referred to as leaders from the grassroots" (*http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/visakhapatnam*).

Sonebhadra

District Sonebhadra of Uttar Pradesh is surrounded in south by Rewa, Sidhi districts of Madhya Pradesh, Sarguja of Chhattisgarh and Palamu of Jharkhand states. The district itself and surrounding areas are home of over 16 indigenous communities who speak their own dialects. Entire territory of the district is located on the plateau of Vindhya and Kaimoor series of hills and almost 37% land is covered with dense forest. While the total area of the district is 7388.80 kms and population is 18826132, the population density is mere 270 per square kilometer. Literacy rate of the district is 66.18 percent. The landscape of the district exhibits a contrast of two civilizations – modern and primitive. For centuries the district remained isolated from rest of the world due to uneven terrain, dense forest cover and wild animals but the scene started changing in post independence era when abundant quantity of coal and other minerals were discovered buried below thick forest. Though in some areas, heavy industrialization took place yet it could not bring a change in the living of tribal. While tribal communities independently lead their livelihood from forest products in non industrial area, in industrial areas, they were destabilized and coerced to lead more miserable life in which on the one hand their centuries old source of livelihood was plundered and snatched (forest, water and land) and on the other the benefits of industrialization were taken by outsider migrants who later further exploited and victimized these indigenous people.

The district is also inhabited by farmers who are more aware and are in better touch with rest of the world. Their awareness and connection also depends upon the extent of landownership.

This paper presents informal semi structured interviews and sessions of participants. Field observation with audio and/or visual recording, field notes taken by the researcher on the field sites. Questions were asked in Hindi or local dialect, simultaneously recorded and later transcribed into English. Two widely varying field sites have been selected to examine the dichotomy of music listening practice, having a distance of over 750 kilometers- rural area of Sonbhadra, a remote district of Uttar Pradesh state and the national capital- New Delhi. The sites selected for the study and the methods used to carry on research work have been given in detail. These widely different sites were selected to project the diversity prevailing between 'developed' and 'underdeveloped' parts of India. This is also explored in the study that how fast the 'trailing' population of India is striving to adopt technical and content 'modernity' in music listening. In the present study, qualitative method of research was used to achieve objectives of study. As Wimmer and Dominick (2011) have discussed, qualitative method is appropriate to view behavior in natural setting. It also helps achieve the depth of understanding about the phenomenon under the study. In the design, this research is flexible in nature to discover, if any, the facts about the subject that were not under consideration before the inception of the study. Small sample of respondents have been taken in the study as data collected from each is not quantitative yet enormous. Further, it is not being claimed that essentially entire population of geographical locations under study have the same behavior, so to collect the exploratory data, Non probability sampling methods were used.

Since the present study aims at the study of behavior, researcher could only invite respondents to participate in the process of research. There was no qualification or restriction for being sample. All music listeners of selected geographical area were treated as universe. There is only one screener question in the schedule; hence, it was Unqualified Volunteer Sampling.

The study is concerned to understand the patterns of music listening and taste in urban and rural India. In the present study, pattern would be determined by the time spent on music listening by the subject, he/she prefers to listen alone or collectively and the preference of device for listening music. Taste would be examined by knowing the type of music heard by the subject – Classical, Folk, Religious, Indian Film, Western or other. Moreover, research would also explore the preference of subject for lyric, singer, instrument or musical composition. Further, the study would also aim to find out how many similarities/ dissimilarities exist between rural and urban pattern and taste, what are the changing traits of listening in rural and urban India and how much homogeneity/heterogeneity prevails. Next target of the research is the understanding of music market in urban and rural India. The big question is about way of acquiring music and the average money spent by people exclusively for music listening. Accordingly, following Research Questions have been set for the study : How much difference prevails in Music Listening pattern and taste between people of urban and rural India?; What are the methods of acquiring musical content and how much is the expenditure for listening music in urban and rural India?; and How the new technology is being used for listening and acquiring music?

Patterns of Listening

In order to understand the pattern of listening music, the researcher observed and talked to the respondents of Delhi (Urban) and Sonbhadra (rural) about their listening patterns. The first question was about internet access. While all the respondents had an access to internet through their mobile phone or laptop, in Sonbhadra, people did not have an access to internet on their mobile phone. Average time spent for listening music by Delhi people was half an hour to One and half hours, it was observed that they keep the ear phone of their mobile plugged into their ears while travelling in metro or bus. Thus they use music as their time filler. The time of listening highly

depends on the occupation. While listening time span of students was one to one and two hours, working people could manage lesser duration ranging from half an hour to one hour. Majority of listeners of Delhi used mobile phone and lap top, tablet as their device for listening pre downloaded songs or even FM radio. With multiple private entertainment channels like Radio Mirchi, Red FM, Radio Fever, Big FM, Radio City, and public service broadcasting channels like Fm Gold and FM Rainbow, Delhi has a wider reach and choice of listening music through radio and all the mobile phone sets provide facility to connect radio channels. Yet, listeners preferred enjoying the music downloaded in their phones through internet PCs or mobile music apps. According to the website of Delhi Government, over 2.6 million personal four wheelers are registered in transport department. Automobile manufacturers sell all the vehicle pre installed with music system along with FM Radio receiving facility. Car commuters listen music/radio while driving on the roads of Delhi. MrShankaran, who drives average 60 kilometers everyday to reach his office said, "During peak office hours in the morning and evening the roads of the city remain clogged with traffic. In the slow moving traffic, listening music keeps me stress free." Most of the listeners of Delhi prefer to listen music alone. Occasionally they enjoy music with family or friends while in wedding ceremony or festive celebrations. While travelling in public transport, they keep alienated from the surrounding crowd as ear phone of their mobile phone remains plugged in to their ears.

Rural listeners responded in a very different way. Their listening span was observed to be longer as their occupation did not require mental involvement rather it was physical. They said that whenever they are at leisure and working in the fields for agriculture or mining, they keep listening. The prime occupation of the people of Dadhiram and Gopalpur villages of Sonbhadra is allied. The topography of these villages includes farming plains and rocky hill plateau. People residing in the village either work in farms or do the mining in stone quarries. While working in quarries or plough, they put their mobile on listening songs. While at home, they also switch on their traditional radio sets. In hinterlands, people do not have an access to radio through mobiles as all the mobile sets available in the market are compatible for only FM channels and interior rural areas only receive AM stations of All India Radio, public service broadcaster of India which is accessible through traditional radio sets only. Small shops located on link road or market area of the village facilitate the downloading of songs in the mobile sets. Even these shops do not have internet facility, hence, the shopkeepers get all kind of songs as per taste of villagers from district headquarters and then procure it for residents of the village in retail. Rural listening habit was observed to be very divergent from that of urban. Here people mostly don't use earphones, rather, listen on inbuilt speaker of mobile. A scholar of culture of villages, DrRamashankarShukla revealed that while laborers work in group in fields, males play folk music aloud on their mobile to make it heard by their female co workers. Sometimes this practice may also be explained as an effort to woo their female colleagues. Even while working alone in farms or stone quarries, they use inbuilt speaker of mobile instead of ear phone. Most of the households possess radio sets also. Folk and film music broadcast on radio AM channels from time to time is enjoyed by the entire family.

Across rural, urban population, people shifted listening practice from other traditional devices to mobile 4-5 years back when shift in technology was actually introduced in their respective areas. Portability, convenience, tuning ease, quality of voice was attributed to the preference of mobile over other devices. Amritlal of Gopalpur village has been listening music for last 22 years. He stated, "Our village lacks regular electric supply, so cost of batteries consumed by radio is approximately 39 rupees per month. Fine tuning the radio station was also not so easy on traditional radio sets. In music cassette players, the sound of the cassette degenerated after repeated listening. It is quite easy to on a mobile phone for listening songs. The quality of music remains the same until you delete it."

Kumkum Bano of Delhi also found it quite inconvenient to tune in radio stations on old radio sets. "Frequency setting is not so difficult when you listen radio on mobile or when listen downloaded songs", she said.

What Do They Listen

The content of Music enjoyed by people in villages ranges from Indian Film music to a variety of folk music. Upper strata of village society which constitutes land owners and members employed in cities have different taste from that of lower strata which is made of farm labors, Quarry workers and other artisans. Mobile downloads of lower strata contains a mix of old and new popular film songs as well as folk songs sung by popular and local singers. Shop owners selling music manage the digital recordings and provide to the buyers as per their taste. People still like Kishor Kumar, Lata Mangeshkar, Muhammad Rafi, Ash Bhonsle and Mukesh, singers of Indian Film Music who dominated Film Music for over four decades in 20th Century. (Ganesh Anantharaman, *Bollywood Melodies : A History of the Hindi Film Song*, Penguin Books India, 2008).

It was observed that even people of villages have greater inclination to Hindi film music. Despite deep penetration of film music in the routine taste of people, folk songs. Kajari, Biraha, Lachari, Sohar etc are traditional folk song genres of eastern UP. Some contemporary singers like ManojTiwari, MaliniAwasthi, UrmilaSrivastava, Mantu Mishra, Nirahuaetc are very popular among village community. Villagers of the area under study, as responded by them, selected songs on the basis of music and lyric. They did not express their liking for a particular singer.

Though Hindi Film music song is liked by the listeners of Delhi too, there taste and selection of song is widely diverse from that of village listeners. In the playlist and downloaded songs of younger lot of Delhi, Mika, SunidhiChauhan, Arijit, ShreyaGhoshal and Darshan are some common names. Hindi songs included in their taste are either contemporary or hardly two decade old. As villagers possess a mix of Hindi film songs and folk songs in their store, listeners of Delhi mostly possess western rock, pop and bands in their mobile. Common among them are Justin Beiber, Zack Knight, Linkin Park, Akon, Metallica and Green Day. Respondents of Delhi select songs on the basis of lyric and singer is also a significant factor for them.

How do they acquire

For music streaming, GAANA, SAAVN, WYNK and HUNGAMA are the apps that allow users listen music free and also offer paid subscription which allows user download the song and listen music offline. (*Gadget 360, gadgets.ndtv.com*). For PC users, songs can be downloaded from numerous sites including *pagalworld.com, song.pk, gaana.com and saavn.com*. These apps and websites are popular among users of Delhi. They also use youtube for streaming and downloading music and song. Exchange of songs among friends, too, is a common practice. For music listening, dependence on internet is very high in Delhi. Yet hardly the listeners of Delhi spend money to acquire songs. Very few users informed they pay subscription amount to mobile app providers. Usually the listeners of Delhi download one song at a time and thus keep adding their collection of songs.

Users of village certainly pay for the music they listen on mobile but they pay the facilitators, not actual providers of music. Middlemen shopkeepers of the village arrange music from city headquarters in bulk and get it to village to be sold in retail. Here transfer of data on mobile is not calculated in MBs or GBs rather it is according to songs of average three minutes duration. Villagers pay around 15 to 20 rupees for 50 songs to the shopkeepers. Even these shopkeepers don't earn their bread solely by selling music. Their main business is electronic device repairing, call recharge, sim card or anything like grocery store.

Conclusion

This study primarily focused on the dichotomy in music listening pattern and taste, use of digital technology, and pattern of acquiring music, prevailing between globalized urban settlement like Delhi and backward rural area, Sonebhadra. A combination of qualitative research methods were used on both sites to find the answer of research questions mentioned earlier in this paper.

Findings of the research reveal that a deep divergence exists between urban and rural population of India regarding their use of technology and music listening practice. Average rural user has relatively much lower income than that of urban counterparts. Even if they acquire a smartphone, they can not exploit its technology due to the lack of internet connectivity. Traditional AM radio is still visible in rural area while it is considered to be an obsolete kind of device in Delhi, unavailable even in market. Notwithstanding, villagers spend more time for listening music and they prefer to enjoy collectively. Adhering to the tradition, villagers still get their self actualization in folk songs and old Hindi film songs while in contrast Delhi listeners appear more inclined for western along with new Hindi film songs. Downloading the song from free websites and apps is a common phenomenon in Delhi while rural people of Sonebhadra still use radio sets and buy songs in bulk from local shopkeepers.

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