

Sustainable Poverty Alleviation: The Third World Perspective.

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Abstract:

In this research paper, an attempt has been made to identify and delineate the role of participatory communication in general and specific roles of various communication channels in meeting the goals of sustainable development in particular. In case of specificity, the manner in which science communication plays its role for sustainable development is discussed in detail. Sustainable development is an integrated and holistic approach that calls for the participation of individuals, groups, organizations (particularly the NGO's), public and governments at local, regional, national and global levels. The goal of sustainable development is not confined to one locality or region or nation but embraces the entire globe. It extends not for a few years, but for the distant future too. Thus spatially or temporally its scope is very wide. It requires people to think globally and act locally for the development and growth of rural sectors.

Informed and conscious citizens can utilize poverty alleviation programmes effectively and successfully. Informed and conscious citizens can also play a responsible role in promoting environmental protection in various walks of their lives.. In fact to fulfill the goals of sustainable development there is an indispensable need to mould a lifestyle that is environment friendly and equitable all over the world. Communication in general and various communication channels in particular have a potential role to play in moulding such a lifestyle. Poverty eradication, protecting the environment, reducing the consumption of non-renewable resources and increasing the use of renewable resources, conservation of biological diversity, land degradation and deforestation, waste management, using appropriate technologies, land reforms, population control and stabilization, upholding basic human rights, social welfare and women's upliftment, promoting intra-generational and inter-generational equity, and participation of people from individual, local levels to global levels, being the various important objectives of sustainable development, different communication channels have a potential role to play in fulfilling these objectives. Though communication alone is not sufficient to meet these objectives, it is a crucial element in facilitating

the fulfillment of these objectives.

Key words: Biodiversity, Sustainable Development, Environment, Poverty alleviation.

Introduction:

The concept of sustainable development has occupied a central place in every aspect of human life today. It is a multidimensional and multidisciplinary concept covering almost all spheres of human activity. Sustainable development has become the concern of economists, ecologists, administrators, lawyers, communication experts, environmentalists, human right activists, feminists, scientists and NGO's. In other words, it has become everybody's cup of tea. Since the present study aims at studying the role of communication in sustainable development without identifying the various implications of the concept, therefore, an attempt has been made in this research paper to discuss the various implications of sustainable development.

The world commission on environment and Development (WCED, 1987) defined sustainable development as the 'development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.'

It is observed that sustainable development is a coin which consists of two obligations on its two sides. One side is the alleviation of poverty and the other, the protection of environment. Sustainable development is very much linked with the involvement and active participation of people. It is a holistic concept that can be on the global, national, local and individual scale. Communication is an intervening variable without which the materialization of different goals of sustainable development is not possible. Therefore. Communication has the key role in facilitating the participation of people relating to sustainable development.

Conceptual Framework:

The present study has been taken up with the following theoretical framework. There are a myriad of theories and models of communication, but there are only a few theories and models which deal with the questions

of development. Therefore it is useful to discuss the relevant models and theories in the context of the present study as follows.

Development media theory deals with the task of media in developing countries. It emphasizes the positive uses of the media in national development and for the autonomy and society. To a certain extent elements of this theory favour democratic and grassroots involvement, thus promoting participative communication models.(Mcquail,1987). The one thing of the media is the acceptance of economic development itself and often the correlated nation building, as an overriding objective. To this end, certain freedom of the media and of journalists is subordinated to their responsibility of helping in this purpose. Collective ends rather than individual freedoms are emphasized. With the failure of the Dominant Paradigm of development , and its communication approach in bringing about the expected change, there took place a thinking about the alternative paradigm of development which led to the emergence of the concept of another development and subsequently a more specific one, sustainable development. With regard to communication also, a major shifts has taken place from top-down authoritative model of communication to a two way horizontal and participatory model of communication.

Significance of this research Study:

There have been many studies carried out on development and communication, media and development, environment and media, environment and communication and communication, rural development and communication media, traditional folk media and development and participatory development communication. But, though sustainable development is the latest and present trend of development, so far, proper attention has not been paid to this area from communication point of view. Therefore, it has been felt worthwhile to study the role of communication for sustainable rural development.

Objectives of this study:

- To identify the implications of sustainable development.
- To find out the policies and programs of Indian Government towards sustainable development.
- To study and analyze the role of communication science in sustainable development.

Role of Communication for Sustainable Development: Communication is a basic instinct of man. It is the fact of life of not only human beings, but also of animals, birds and other living beings. Communication maintains

And animates life. It is also the expression of social activity and civilization. It leads people from instincts to inspiration through various processes and systems of enquiry, command and control. Communication integrates knowledge, organizations and power and runs a thread linking the earliest memory of man to his noblest aspiration through constant thriving for a better life. As the world has advanced, the task of communication has become ever more complex and subtle to liberate mankind from want, oppression and fear and to write it in community and communion, solidarity and understanding. Mass communication comprise the institutions and technology by which specialized groups employ technological devices (press, radio, films etc.) to disseminate symbolic content to large, heterogeneous and widely dispersed audiences. Poverty eradication, protecting the environment, reducing the consumption of non-renewable resources and increasing the use of renewable resources, conservation of biological diversity, controlling various types of pollution, land degradation and deforestation , waste management using appropriate technologies land reforms, population control and stabilization, upholding basic human rights, social welfare and woman's upliftment, promoting intra-generational and intergenerational equity and participation of people from individual, local levels to global level, being the various important objectives of sustainable development , different communication channels have a potential role to play in fulfilling these objectives. Though communication alone is not sufficient to meet these objectives. It is a crucial element in facilitating the fulfillment of these objectives.

Communication policy and Strategy for sustainable Development:

Strategies that include communication for sustainable rural development as a significant aspect of agricultural and rural development are sorely needed. Efforts in this direction are being made, but governments have yet to recognize fully the potential of this factor in promoting public awareness and information on agricultural innovations, as well as on the planning and development of small business, not to mention

employment opportunities and basic news about health, education and other factors of concern to rural populations, particularly those seeking to improve their livelihoods and thereby enhance the quality of their lives.

Rural development is often discussed together with agricultural development and agricultural extension. In fact “agricultural extension” is often termed “rural extension” in the literature. In contrast, rural development includes but nonetheless expands beyond the confines of agriculture, and furthermore requires and also involves developments other than agriculture. Accordingly, government should consider the establishment of a communication policy that while supporting agricultural extension for rural development also assumes the role of a “rural extension” service aimed as well at diffusing non-agricultural information and advice to people in rural areas.

A communication policy would aim to systematically promote rural communication activities, especially interactive radio but also other successful media such as tape recorder and video instructional programs. Computers and the Internet may not yet be accessible to rural communities but they serve the communication intermediaries and agricultural extension agents who provide information to rural populations. Other devices such as cell phones hold considerable promise for the transfer and exchange of practical information.

For reaching the final agricultural and basic needs information users in rural areas today, radio is the most powerful and cost-effective medium.

However, other traditional and modern communication methods are equally valuable, depending on the situation and availability, like face-to-face exchanges (via demonstration and village meetings); one-way print media (such as, newspapers, newsletters, magazines, journals, posters); one-way telecommunication media (including non-interactive radio, television, satellite, computer, cassette, video and loud-speakers mounted on cars); and two-way media: (telephone, including teleconferencing, and interactive (Internet) computer). Information and communication technologies (ICTs) have proved to be important for Internet users and for the intermediate users who work with the poor. Pilot experiences show that various media are valuable for assisting agricultural producers with information and

advice as to agricultural innovations, market prices, pest infestations and weather alerts.

ICTs also serve non-farming rural people with information and advice regarding business opportunities relating to food processing, wholesale outlets and other income-generating opportunities. In the case of non-agricultural rural development interests, a communication for rural development policy would aim to promote diffusion of information about non-agricultural micro-enterprise development, small business planning, nutrition, health and generally serve to provide useful, other than agriculture information.

By its very nature as mass media, communication for rural development can provide information useful to all segments of rural populations. However, it would serve as a first effort toward advancement of “rural extension” services and activities aimed at rural development concerns beyond those of agriculture. Thus, extension and communication activities would be expected to work in tandem, allied in the common cause of supporting income-generating activities, both agricultural and non-agricultural.

Concluding Remarks:

The discussion mentioned above shows that though there are many definitions and multiple dimensions to sustainable development, these definitions and dimensions are not contradictory to each other but they corroborate each other. Broadly, the sustainable development can be described as the poverty alleviation i.e. to enable the present generations to meet their needs and environmental protection to enable the future generations to meet their needs. In relation to communication, it implies that communication in general and various communication channels in particular have a vital role to play in creating awareness about the various poverty alleviation programs initiated by the government; in the problem articulated by poor, and thus, in bridging the gap between the planner and the beneficiary. Environmental protection and promotion and population control being the other broad dimensions of sustainable development, various communication channels have a responsible role to play in informing, educating and conscientizing the people about various environmental issues and promotional program and sustainable use of natural resources, using renewable sources of energy, conservation of biological diversity, waste management, prevention