



Role of Doordarshan in Development Communication

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Abstract: Doordarshan is public service broadcaster of India. At present more than 90 percent of the Indian population can receive Doordarshan Programmes (DD National) through a network of more than 1416 terrestrial transmitters. There are 67 DD studios producing TV Programme. From the beginning Doordarshan has earmarked a sizable chunk of its-time for telecasting various programmes to provide media support to socio-economic development activities of the country. Keeping in view the communication needs of the government departments and ministries in a developing country, Doordarshan started the Development Communication Division of Doordarshan in 2001. This division designs the developmental messages of government and broadcast on various television channels. This study is about the Role of Doordarshan in Development Communication.

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Doordarshan is a public service broadcaster of India and a division of Prasar Bharati. It is one of the largest broadcasting organizations in the world. Doordarshan has a three tier programme services:

- ❖ National,
- ❖ Regional Local.
- ❖ Local

The National programmes emphasizes on events and issues of interest to the entire nation. These programmes includes news, current affairs, magazine programmes and documentaries on science, art, culture, environment, social issues, serials, music, dance, drama and feature films. The regional programmes are focused on DD National at specific time and also on the Regional Language Satellite Channels, which caters programmes for interests of a particular state in the language and idiom of that region. The local programmes are area specific and cover local issues featuring local viewers.

The Story of Doordarshan

In 1959, Philips (India) gave an offer to the Government of India of a transmitter at a reduced cost. Before this offer Philips demonstrated its use at an exhibition in New Delhi. The Government accepted that offer with the aim of employing it on an experimental basis to train personnel and partially to discover what TV could achieve in community development and formal education.¹ UNESCO gave grant of \$20,000 for the purchase of community receiver and United States offer of some equipment proved much too tempting to resist, and on September 15, 1959, the Delhi Television Centre went on air. The range of transmitter was 40 kilometers. Later, programmes began to telecast twice in a week, duration of each programme was 20 minutes. UNESCO provided TV sets for tele-clubs and after two years in 1961 UNESCO conducted a survey for the knowing of impact of these programmes on audiences. Result of this survey was which was conducted by UNESCO there was some impact on audiences.



The regular daily transmission started in 1965 as a part of All India Radio. Doordarshan began a five-minute news bulletin in the same year in 1965. Krishi Darshan was the first program telecast on Doordarshan. It commenced on 26 January 1967 and is one of the longest running programs on Indian television.

The television service was extended to Bombay and Amritsar in 1972 and in 1975 respectively, only seven Indian cities had a television service and Doordarshan remained the sole provider of television in India. Television services were separated from radio on 1 April 1976. Doordarshan as a National Broadcaster came into existence in the year of 1982.

Nationwide Transmission

National telecasts were introduced in 1982. In the same year, colour TV was introduced in India with the live telecast of the Independence Day programme on 15 August 1982, followed by the IX Asian Games which were held in Delhi in 1982. Now more than 90 percent of the Indian population can receive Doordarshan (DD National) programmes through a network of more than 1416 terrestrial transmitters. There are about 67 Doordarshan studios producing TV programmes today.

DD Free Dish

Doordarshan's DD Free Dish is a multi-channel Free-To-Air Direct to Home (DTH) service. This service was launched in December 2004 with the modest beginning of 33 channels. DD Free Dish has been upgraded time to time and at present Doordarshan's DTH platform has the capacity of 80 SDTV channels along with 32 Radio channels. DD Free Dish is available in Ku-Band on GSAT-15 (at 93.5°E) having MPEG-2 DVB-S, 5 streams of channels with Downlink Frequencies -11090, 11170, 11470, 11510 and 11550 MHz. This Ku-Band DTH service provides the TV coverage throughout the Indian territory (except Andaman & Nicobar Islands). DTH signals can be received through a small sized dish receive system (i.e. Set Top Box and Dish of size 60 to 90 cm in diameter) for which no monthly subscription fee is payable by the viewers.

A separate DTH service in C-Band with a bouquet of 10 channels has also been provided by Doordarshan exclusively for Andaman & Nicobar Islands, which is also Free-To-Air. This C-Band DTH service is available on INSAT-4B (at 93.5°E) with downlink frequency of 3925 MHz, 27500 Ksps, FEC-3/4, Pol-H, L.O.-5150MHz. This service can be received through a STB and small sized Dish Antenna (approximately 120 cm diameter) for which also no monthly subscription fee is payable by viewers.

Re-Launch of Doordarshan National

Doordarshan was re-launched with new theme of pink and purple and accompanied by a new punch line "Desh Ka Apna Channel" (country's own channel). It was announced by Ms. Vijayalaxmi Chhabra, Former Director General Doordarshan.

DD Kisan

The Only Channel for Farmers On 26th May 2015 Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi launched a television channel DD Kisan dedicated to farmers, which would provide information about best agricultural practices related content, farming techniques, water conservation and organic farming etc.

Development Communication and Doordarshan:

Development Communication efforts have changed the belief-behavior, attitudes of people. Distribution of information among developed and developing societies contributes substantially towards creating



public opinion for positive change and nation building. Media system as an agent of change, as indices of development and the correlation of their presence with economic growth were the bane of their contentions.

Communication media prepare grounds for transfer of knowledge, technology and experience; and sustain change and development. According to Harish Khanna, former Director General, Doordarshan, “By observing and recording development, Development Communication media stimulate further development”.³

Development Communication Division (DCD)

From the very beginning Doordarshan has earmarked a sizable chunk of its—time for telecasting various programmes to provide media support to socio-economic development activities of the country. Keeping in view the communication needs of the government departments— and ministries in a developing country, Doordarshan started the Development Communication Division of Doordarshan in 2001.

The concept was born out of a need to offer government partners including ministries, departments and public sector undertakings, turnkey solutions to their information dissemination needs, while covering all aspects of media planning, software production, scheduling and impact evaluation. With a near 100% audience reach in India, Doordarshan is in a unique position to provide multilingual production from 64 production centers in 20 Languages and 3 Dialects. DCD offers its clients campaigns that specialize in understanding.

DCD offers its clients campaigns that specialize in understanding ground level realities of audiences and strive to inculcate the same in our programming. Till date DCD has worked with the Government to produce programmes on—a wide range of subjects, including our flagship programmes under the banner of:

- ❖ Health & Family Welfare
- ❖ Drinking Water and Sanitation
- ❖ HRD, Rural Development
- ❖ HUPA
- ❖ Power etc.
- ❖ Some of prominent projects of DCD highlight investor’s protection, tribal-affairs,
- ❖ adult education,
- ❖ rural development,
- ❖ petroleum conservation,
- ❖ consumer affairs,
- ❖ corporate affairs,
- ❖ postal life insurance,
- ❖ environment and forest etc.
- ❖ *Collaborative ventures such as the HIV/AIDS → campaign with NACO, campaigns with UNICEF and BBC World Trust Service.*

Apart from customized programme campaigns, Doordarshan being a public service broadcaster becomes the obvious choice of various ministries to disseminate information on a wide array of public interest issues and matters: Health campaigns pertaining to health issues like cardio vascular— diseases, RCH,



Blindness, Deafness, HIV/AIDS, H1N1, Avian Flu and other seasonal fevers and epidemics are run through DCD. One of our very successful campaigns titled, '*Do Boond Zindagi Ki*' is the very popular polio campaign led by Shri. Amitabh Bachchan as the brand ambassador. Other social awareness campaigns like *Swasth Bharat Campaign* (cleanliness), *Jago Grahak Jago* (consumer awareness), *Beti Bachao – Beti Padhao* (save girl child & promoting education for girl child), *Bell Bajao* (against domestic violence) and so forth have been telecast through the DD Network. Not only this, rural development campaigns on MNREGA, prominent rural Welfare schemes, Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana and Indira Awas Yojana have also been promoted on DD platform. The finance ministry campaigns on Income Tax, Advance Tax, Customs Tax and many more have been given a platform on DD Network. The Ministry of Women and Child Development's campaign on nutrition and Road safety campaigns have also been promoted through the DD platform. Being the favored channel in rural areas, the agriculture campaigns like Kisan Call Centre, Kisan Vikas Patra, Usage of fertilizers, Usage of Pesticides and Kisan Credit Card, have formed a part of our campaigns. Minority Welfare Campaigns like Pre and Post Matric Scholarship, Sabka Sath- Sabka Vikas and Disabled Welfare campaigns fall under DCD campaigns. Major DCD's in-house Public Service Camp

Rural Development Campaign on behalf of Ministry of Rural Development: Development Communication Division made a promising start with the Rural Development Campaign in 2002. It aimed at creating awareness about various developmental schemes 32 Kendras of Doordarshan in various languages and dialects.

Kalyani on behalf of Ministry of Health and Family Welfare: In the field of health and Family welfare, DCD has contributed largely through the Kalyani initiative was launched in 2002. Kalyani, the Health and Family welfare campaign of Doordarshan was telecast in 21 Doordarshan Kendras till 2010 (8 years) in over 9009 episodes. Kalyani Clubs were the foot soldiers for mobilizing the communities to make a difference on the ground. 3262 clubs were set up taking the membership of Kalyani Health Clubs to 82250 (as on 31st October, 2011). Plenty of projects like Health Melas, Awareness Camps and Workshops were undertaken to promote health awareness.

Swasth Bharat Campaign on behalf of Ministry of Health and Family Welfare: DCD has run the world's biggest health communication campaign, which was launched on Doordarshan Network to reach its target audience in all the corners of the country. Due to the campaign's welcomed acceptance, the Ministry has entrusted Doordarshan as its major media partner to reach out to its target audience. The campaign was telecast with the title "*Swasth Bharat/Healthy India/Arogya Bharatam*". The campaign was telecast from 30 Kendras in 20 languages and 3 dialects. Also, Development Communication Division takes pride in completing more than 13,000 episodes of Swasth Bharat and thus making it the World's biggest health communication campaign ever run by any broadcaster.

Nirmal Bharat Campaign on behalf of Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation: The Nirmal Bharat campaign, launched on 20th September, 2013 targeted to educate and inform citizens on the necessity of hygienic sanitation with a special focus on proper waste management, significance of hand wash and alleviating the unhealthy practice of open defecation. Produced and telecast in 12 Kendras including national network, this campaign successfully completed 80 episodes on the National Network and 77 Episodes on Doordarshan's Regional Network in various languages and dialects.



Swachh Bharat Abhiyan on behalf of Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation: Doordarshan was again entrusted to contribute in recreating Mahatma Gandhi's vision of Clean India through the biweekly half-an-hour programme, which was launched on 20th August, 2014. This campaign was renamed as the 'Swachh Bharat' campaign on 2nd October, 2014. The Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation earmarked 160 episodes on Doordarshan's National Network. This programme incorporates success stories from all Doordarshan Kendras pan India. The programme is telecast on the national network on a biweekly basis; on Mondays at 11.00 am and on Fridays at 08.30 am. **Akshay Urja on behalf of Ministry of New and Renewable Energy:** Doordarshan realised the significance of Hon'ble Prime Minister's vision of 'Saffron Revolution' and envisaged an Energy Campaign in collaboration with Ministry of New and Renewable Energy for spreading across the awareness on new and renewable sources of energy. This campaign titled 'AkshayUrja' was launched on 21st February, 2015 and airs on a weekly basis on Saturdays from 08.30 am to 09.00 am. The year-long campaign runs as a half-an-hour programme being telecast by Doordarshan's National Network. The programme is a platform for innovative and progressive discussion on how new and renewable energy sought to be promoted. The programme comprises inputs and success stories from all Doordarshan kendras spread across the country.

Ayushman Bharat on behalf of Ministry of AYUSH (Ayurveda, Yoga & Naturopathy, Unani, Siddha and Homeopathy): Doordarshan has collaborated with the Ministry of AYUSH in achieving their goal of educating and creating a Healthy India through revival of traditional systems of medicine. For creating an environment of health consciousness all through the nation, Doordarshan is producing a half-an-hour programme from 9 different kendras with telecast of the various language versions on 27 Doordarshan regional channels. The repeat telecast of the Hindi language version on the National Network is scheduled at 09:30 a.m. every Monday. From panel discussions on prevention of diseases to promotion of healthy habits to yoga to healthy diet practices, this holistic programme covers it all.

Conclusion

There is a vast possibility of involving community people in the development process. With the help of Doordarshan Government and other organization can approach various sector of society for their progress and betterment. According the P.C.Joshi, "Doordarshan in this manner can help utilizing scare resources and skills in the most cost effective,, economical way. It turns into great asset for India if it is utilized imaginatively in the fight against the forces of ignorance, superstition and backwardness. It may turn into a colossal libality, aggravating tensions between regions and classes if it is expanded unimaginatively for the more entertainment of the privileged in this country."⁴

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