

Chapter 7

Indian Television and the Ideologies of Social Development in India

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ABSTRACT

In India, the purpose of television broadcasting is to clearly depict an ideology that reflects social development. In the chapter, the analysis of various case studies shows that the main objective of television broadcasting in India focuses on the social development of the youth and the society at large. From the initial days, television is mainly used to disseminate information. Along with this, it performs several other roles that are related to social development such as propagation of education, support in the development of knowledge society and in the progress of cultural promotion, creation of health awareness, etc. In contrast to the essential roles of television, the chapter also highlights the media contents that signify cultural imperialism and the growth of Indianisation in the media content. The chapter overall signifies how television is playing a significant role in the social development of the nation.

INTRODUCTION

The term ‘ideology’ is a complex word used to describe a particular set of principles, beliefs, ideas, concepts or doctrines. It was used by various scholars, groups and organisations in different ways to describe numerous set of principle, concepts, basic beliefs or guiding principles of a person or a group. Michael Freeden in the opening chapter of his book - ‘*IDEOLOGY: A Very Short Introduction*’- define the term ideology as “*Ideology is a word that evokes strong emotion*”- (Freeden. M, 2003). In Merriam-Webster, it’s defined as “*a manner or the content of thinking characteristic of an individual, group, or culture*” “*the integrated assertions, theories and aims that constitute a socio-political program*”. In contrast, Stanley J. Baran and Dennis K. Devis in their book - ‘*Mass Communication Theory: Foundations, Ferment and Future*’- define the term ‘Ideology’ while discussing the Marxist theory as “*In*

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Marxist theory, idea present in a culture that mislead average people and encourage them to act against their own interest” (Baran and Davis, 2010). The term varies and signifies different meanings in distinct contexts. However, in the context of television broadcasting the term ideology tries to explain or depict a set of principles, ideas or doctrines which a television broadcasting system uses or follows. Television is a gift of technology which is serving mankind from the very beginning of its arrival and helping to bring a new era of modernity. Television from its early days is acting as a vital tool that helps to disseminate information related to various news, education, health awareness, cultural promotion, rural developments along with entertainment.

In India, television arrived in the middle of the twentieth century with a clear objective of social development. The broadcasting system of India depicts that Indian television is not only associated with entertainment, rather it has shown a wider purpose in the field of social development. The ideology that reflects from the content of Indian television broadcasting is nothing but an ideology of social development of the youth and the development of the entire society at large. The sentiments of Indian television broadcasting are highly nationalistic and developmental in nature. The propagation of the positive ideological content that is related to social development through various programmes is at high priority from the initial days of Indian television. Prasar Bharati, the autonomous body that controlled television broadcast in India gave high priority to social development and especially to the development of the children and youth. Prasar Bharati appealed to Doordarshan the autonomous public service broadcaster of India and to the several other private satellite channels of India to broadcast programmes on information, education, health awareness, rural development and cultural promotion which are highly valued and socially relevant. While focusing on the appeal of Prasar Bharati and the recommendation of various committees, Doordarshan and various satellite channels of India focus on the programme based on information, education, knowledge development, health awareness creation and cultural promotions. The programmes are highly necessary for the development of the younger generation and the society at large. The programmes motivate society and the younger generation to move on the right path. They reflect that the ideology of Indian television broadcasting is mainly based on the social development and the development of the youth.

THE ARRIVAL OF TELEVISION AND SATELLITE TELEVISION IN INDIA

In India, television has shown a significant contribution in the field of social development and the development of the youth since its arrival in 1959. During the early days, Philips (India) demonstrates the use of television and transmitter in an exhibition in New Delhi and made an offer to the Government of India to provide transmitter and television at a low cost. In the meantime, UNESCO provides a grant of \$20,000 for the purchase of community receiver sets and the United States offer some equipment all these offers boost the rise of a television system in India. On 15 September 1959, Delhi Television Centre came into existence. The range of the transmitter was forty kilometres around Delhi, and it was beamed twice a week, each of twenty minutes duration. In Delhi, in 1961, school educational programmes were introduced through television for the development of the youth. In 1965, the duration of the television programme was increased and informational, cultural, developmental, and entertainment based programmes were introduced. In 1967, a renowned developmental programme based on agricultural “Krishi Darshan” started to be broadcasted. The programme was developed with the help of the Department of Atomic Energy, the Indian Agricultural Research Institute, the Delhi Administration, the State

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