

SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY OF MEDIA IN THE CONTEXT OF ECONOMIC ISSUES: A CASE STUDY OF SELECTED MEDIA GROUPS

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ABSTRACT

The role of media and its social responsibility in a democratic system has been far debated. Media has a powerful presence in the Indian country. Nowadays Indian media has been subject to a lot of unfavorable judgment for the manner in which they have unvalued their duty to social responsibility. Unsafe business practices in the field of media have impressed the framework of Indian democracy. The way media is covering economic events is also in my opinion hindering good public policy and reducing the probability of structural reform taking place rather than increasing the chances of it happening. Perhaps the media should reflect on whether their coverage of economic events is serving the public interest. This has happened at the cost of an Indian media which was initially thought to be an agent of ushering in social change through developmental programs directed at the non privileged and marginalised sections of the society. Although media has at times auspicious played the role of a guard dog of the government functionaries and has also aided in participatory communication, a lot still needs to be done.

KEYWORDS: *Media, Social Responsibility, Economic Issues, Media Groups, Society.*

Introduction

India is one of the intense increasingly nations in the world. India, a land of 1.252 billion people and huge opportunities has a rare individuality. The personality of this country is describe through its art, culture, industries, etc. and here dialects, culture, even cuisine changes every 10-15 miles as one goes by. Media is suggested to be stimulation toward economic impact. Studies validate that media information has someone a negative and positive impress, which in turn can influence individual's attitude. Consumer behavior research supports the idea that negative media content on the Few issues can cause the economy to oscillate.

This study discovers how media functions and how media concepts are related to economic impact. Relating media and its impact on the economy is challenging but a necessary factor to study while in target of understanding other factors in economic impact and media effects. The behavior of the economy can be impacted by how the media presents information towards the public.

For Intelligible completion of any project the most important requirement is to create a meaningful Introductory with solid theoretical stack. In this chapter a meek effort has been made to explain media and social responsibility in the context of economic issues theory and its different tools. Basic theory of media and social responsibility in the context of economic issues, its objectives, different Medias and factors affecting issues effectiveness are discussed in this chapter. The whole theoretical structure is required to understand the research project media and social responsibility in the context of economic issues.

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Meida and its Social Responsibility

Media authorization is a sign of real democracy, a medium to communicate with the people and the entire world. Media definitely has a responsibility on its shoulders, which is to guide the people. Public have blind trust in the media and they are convinced that what they hear or what the media has declared is correct. But have we ever deliberated over the fact that media can also be selfish? The truth is that in this competitive world the media is also a victim.

This study focuses on the role of media to sensitize economy issues as part of social responsibility. It is designed to establish a relationship between the media and sensitivity economy issues. Accordingly, the study is set to test the hypothesis that the role of media in sensitivity economy issues as part of social responsibility is dependent upon their independence, freedom, and the ability to effectively communicate objective, emotions, and balanced, fair and professional information to both government and the general public.

Media Groups

The study area is limited to the state of Rajasthan and further in to two sub category namely:

- Urban Rajasthan
- Rural Rajasthan

In addition to above, in the present study media groups are limited to the audience. The audience is classified in four categories to which economic issues are widely important in term of social responsibility of media. These socio-economic classes, in term of media groups are divided into four categories, namely:

- Farmers
- Retail traders
- Small scale industry
- Other Occupancies

In further, the presence of media in research area is further sub classified in to three categories:

- Print media
- Electronic media
- Social media

It is also limitation of this study that following mediums are studied for the reference:

- Print media
 - Rajasthan Patrika
 - Dainikbhaskar
- Electronic media
 - Etv Rajasthan
 - Jan TV
- Social media

Media and Social Responsibility in the Context of Economic Issues

The way media is covering economic events is also in my opinion hindering good public policy and reducing the probability of structural reform taking place rather than increasing the chances of it happening. Perhaps the media should reflect on whether their coverage of economic events is serving the public interest. The most insidious manner in which the media's coverage is resulting in poor public policy choices is what I call the upper middle-class urban bias of the media (declaration of conflict of interest. I belong to this economic segment myself!). Any difficult decision taken by the government to deal with structural issues of the country is met by shrill voices in the media supposedly on behalf of the 'aamaadmi'.

Take the example of the hundreds of billions in subsidy being doled out to the electricity sector. There is no doubt that a large part of this subsidy is caused by the corruption and incompetence of the decision-makers in the shape of non-collection of bills, theft of electricity, severely degraded generation, transmission and distribution system, wrong fuel choice etc.

There is also no doubt that a big part of the problem is the run up in global energy prices and our unwillingness to recognize that reality and pass on the cost to the consumer. The whole media discourse is about the 'awaam par bojh' of the increase in tariffs and hardly any discussion about the fact that the poorest half of the population barely consumes any electricity and the vast majority of them do not even have an electricity connection.

However, they are paying a steep and highly regressive tax in the shape of double-digit inflation which is being caused in large measure by the massive fiscal deficits. The jobs lost due to electricity shortages are also those of the poorest and most vulnerable, the daily contract labour.

Hence, by opposing measures which reduce the subsidy and lower fiscal deficits, the media is helping prop up the status quo which is decidedly anti-poor. The story of gas is the same. We are giving away this precious resource at one third the value at which we are meeting the incremental energy needs of the economy through costly imports. As a result, on the demand side, everyone is rushing to grab hold of this underpriced energy source.

On the supply side, this has resulted in drilling activity way below what the country needs and way below the hydrocarbon potential of the country. If you had to invest your money for gas discoveries in a country where you would get full value versus less than half that value, where would you invest? As a consequence, the economy is bleeding with some sectors seeing steep price increases caused by shortages and others seeing thousands of units shutting down and millions of jobs being lost.

However, when the petroleum ministry proposed the first fairly modest move towards pricing gas close to its real value to the economy, there was virtually no one in the media who stood up to support the courageous decision to do what is a dire need of the economy. As a result of resistance from directly affected interest groups and no popular backing of the media or the public, the initiative got stalled, which leads us to the second aspect of media reporting which is resulting in poor public policy choices. The media plays a very positive role of criticizing what is wrong. However, it is far less keen to stand up and vigorously support the difficult public policy choices required desperately for dealing with the structural problems facing Pakistan's economy.

This is not just restricted to the media's own opinion or editorial pieces but also the reaction from the public that they report. In a situation where opinion is divided by and large the media reports more of the negative opinions expressed rather than the supportive ones.

The third aspect is the media's focusing on individuals and corruption as opposed to the institutional and structural. The unintended consequence is that it forms an opinion amongst the citizens that there are easy and pain-free options available for reforming the economy. As a result, the constituency for reform stays limited and powerless. In a democratic environment where public policy is, and should be, influenced by public opinion, this media behaviour creates an anti-action bias on the one hand.

Since if you take a difficult decision and the media does not like it, you will be castigated for it and if the media likes it there will be, at best, muted support, the rational response is not to do anything. On the other hand, it strengthens the hands of those who oppose reform in government and weakens pro-reform elements within the government.

In conclusion, I would state that if the media made changes to the way it deals with economic issues, it would become a formidable agent of reform that is badly needed. Firstly, it needs to be more aware of the impact of different policy choices on the different economic classes and champion the cause of the most vulnerable and poorest segments of society.

Secondly, a balanced editorial policy and reporting, which uses both the carrot (support and praise) and stick (criticism) to encourage difficult but necessary public policy choices and discourages poor policies and flawed implementation, must be developed.

Thirdly, by placing more emphasis on structural issues it can help strengthen the pro-reform constituency in the country.

Review of Literature

While preparing the project proposal it was necessary to search some literature and collect the data and reviews it whether sufficient literature is available on the study. Selected review of the related literature is done with the help of various research papers, reports of national and international reports, past research studies, internet etc.

Dutta soumya (2011) The role of media in a democratic system has been widely debated. India has the largest democracy in the world and media has a powerful presence in the country. In recent times Indian media has been subject to a lot of criticism for the manner in which they have disregarded their obligation to social responsibility. Dangerous business practices in the field of media have affected the fabric of Indian democracy. Big industrial conglomerates in the business of media have threatened the existence of pluralistic viewpoints.

Robert G. Picard,(2010) In this updated and expanded edition of the acclaimed Economics and Financing of Media Companies, leading economist and media specialist Robert G. Picard employs business concepts and analyses to explore the operations and activities of media firms and the forces and issues affecting them. Picard has added new examples and new data, and he covers such emerging areas as the economics of digital media. Using contemporary examples from American and global media companies, the book contains a wealth of information, including useful charts and tables, important for both those who work in and study media industries. It goes beyond simplistic explanations to show how various internal and external forces direct and constrain decisions in media firms and the implications of the forces on the type of media and content offered today.

McQuail Denis (2010) The book gives an extensive overview of theories within communication theory and I therefore recommend the book as supplementary reading for students following "Principles of Communication" which is an introductory communication course. However, I find that students at all levels can benefit from reading this book and use it as supplement to communication related courses.

Kumar Kelvin J.(2012) The traditional discipline of media now stands challenged by the rapid integration of print media and electronic media. An entirely new section on media, intellectual property rights and the public domain has been introduced in this revised and updated edition. The book is compact with each section and sub-section having a list of suggested readings, and most of the books suggested are that of Indian authors, Comprehensive and critical account of recent developments in the media industries, which focuses on media analysis and critique, to reflect contemporary trends in communication theory and research. An entirely new section on 'media' has been introduced.

Doyle Gillian (2013) explains the fundamental concepts relevant to the study of media economics; considers the key industrial questions facing the media industries today; relates economic theory to business practice; covers a wide range of media activity - advertising, television, film, print media, and new media; and looks at the impact of economics on public policy.

Methodology

- **Research Objectives:**
 - Examine the media in socio-economic responsibility.
 - Determine the extent to which the media impact on socio-economic responsibility.
 - Examine the functions of the media in nation-building and its influence on issues events in society.
 - Examine the factors mainly economic issues which influence media in social responsibility.
 - To understand issues through non-standard materials in media.
 - To reinforce the purposefulness of issues as a social science in media.
 - To explore issues and their effect on individuals and society.
 - To develop critical thinking in real-life instances.
- **Research Hypothesis**
 - H_{o1}: Media access to public information and their ability to accurately transmit such information for the benefit of the public is not a pre-requisite for issues as part of social responsibility.
 - H_{a1}: Media access to public information and their ability to accurately transmit such information for the benefit of the public is a pre-requisite for issues as part of social responsibility.
 - H_{o2}: To no understand social responsibility through non-standard materials.
 - H_{a2}: To understand social responsibility through non-standard materials.
 - H_{o3}: To no reinforce the purposefulness of social responsibility as a social science.
 - H_{a3}: To reinforce the purposefulness of social responsibility as a social science.
 - H_{o4}: To no explore social responsibility and their effect on individuals and society.

- H_{a4}: To explore social responsibility and their effect on individuals and society.
- H_{o5}: To no develop critical thinking in real-life instances.
- H_{a5}: To develop critical thinking in real-life instances.

• **Sampling Procedure for Survey**

The seven cities; namely, Ajmer, Bharatpur, Bikaner, Jaipur, Jodhpur, Kota, Udaipur represent the seven division of the state of Rajasthan, so, these cities from the universe for the sample survey and sample size is 700.

Research Methods

- Sample survey:
- Focus Group Discussion:
- Qualitative Content Analysis:

Method of Data Analysis

Hypotheses were tested on the basis of questioner and its interpretation of mainly on the law of statistical averages.

• **Framework of Study**

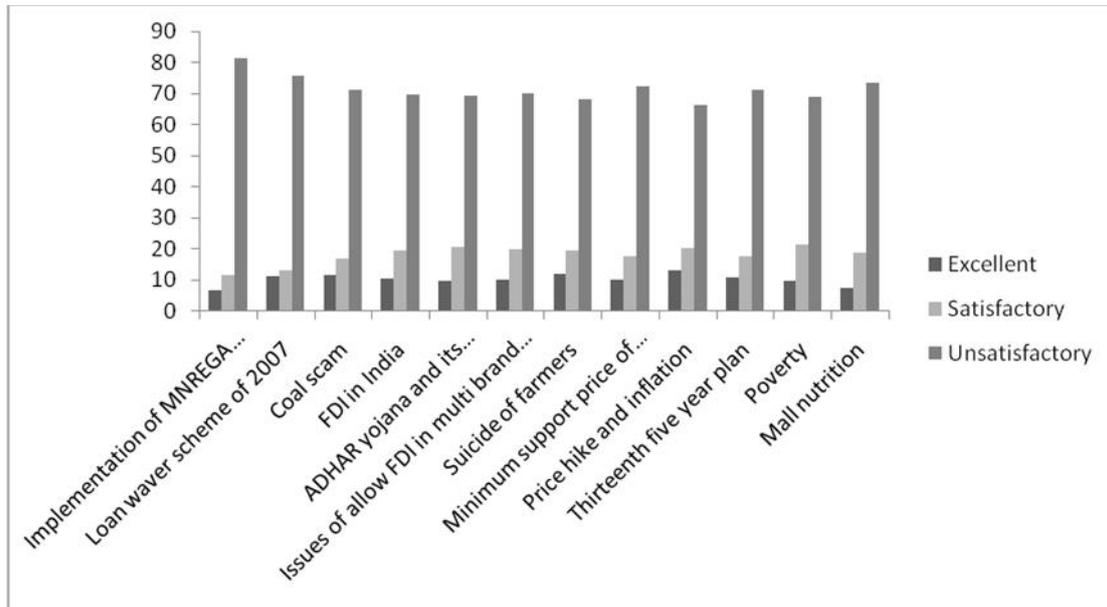
The framework of study focused on Defining media groups in present study, Media in modern India prior to independence, Media in post-independence era, Indian media in private hands after impact of globalization, The media under the hands of global / Multinational giants, Media as a transformer of public information, Society, Indian society and its culture, Social responsibility, Social responsibility is the soul of Indian society, Socio legal framework of social responsibility in India, Media as a tool of social service provider, Social responsibility is soul of media, Socio responsibility of media and socio serviced, Social responsibility in the context of economic issues The division of study, Economic issues of society, Reporting of economic issues in the context of social responsibility, Ethics involved in reporting economic issues.

• **Data Analysis**

This question shows that the satisfaction of respondent on media coverage based on following real life economic issues selected of last ten years. In Implementation of MNREGA scheme 6.86 percent respondents said excellent, 11.86 percent said satisfactory and 81.29 percent said unsatisfactory, in Loan waver scheme of 200711.14 percent said Excellent, 13 percent said Satisfactory and 75.86 percent said Unsatisfactory, in Coal scam 11.86 percent said Excellent, 16.86 percent said Satisfactory and 71.29 percent said Unsatisfactory.

Content	Yes (Avg.) %	No (Avg.) %	Sometimes/ can't say (Avg.) %	
• Informatory information published by the media is used by the respondent in his domestic and professional life	43.83	39.41	16.76	
• Correct and purposeful information is produce by the media groups	29.05	70.83	-	
• Respondent feel that media information benefited them	42.25	57.95	-	
• Respondents regarding scope of improvement in media reporting for better information and its transmission	38.86	61.14	-	
• The view on an issue of concerned community is properly matched with the view of media, featured by the media groups.	23.15	32.42	44.43	
• Ownership pattern of media houses influenced the reporting the economic news.	63.58	36.42	-	
• Government and its authorities are properly respond the economic issues raised by the media	21.12	35.07	43.81	
• Media is consistently raised issues of society and plays an objective role	38.81	61.19	-	
• Sufficient economic issues / news published or broadcast	Innovation	22.55	65.58	11.86
	Government policy	55.31	27.68	17.02
	Marketing based news and utility news	48.29	34.36	17.35

In FDI in India 10.57 percent said Excellent, 19.71 percent said Satisfactory and 69.71 percent Unsatisfactory, in AADHAR Yojana and its implementation 9.86 percent said Excellent, 19.71 percent said Satisfactory and 69.43 percent said Unsatisfactory, in Issues of allow FDI in multi brand retail trade 10.29 percent said Excellent, 19.86 percent said Satisfactory and 69.86 percent said Unsatisfactory, in Suicide of farmers 12.14 percent said Excellent, 19.71 percent said Satisfactory and 68.14 percent said Unsatisfactory, in Minimum support price of agriculture crops 10.14 percent said Excellent, 17.57 percent said Satisfactory and 72.29 percent said Unsatisfactory, in Price hike and inflation 13.29 percent said Excellent, 20.29 percent said Satisfactory and 66.43 percent said Unsatisfactory, in Thirteenth five year plan 11 percent said Excellent, 17.71 percent said Satisfactory, and 71.29 percent said Unsatisfactory, in Poverty 9.86 percent said Excellent, 21.29 percent said Satisfactory and 68.86 percent said Unsatisfactory, last in Mall nutrition 7.57 percent said Excellent, 19.86 percent said Satisfactory and 73.57 percent said Unsatisfactory.



Conclusion

In this final we as a team of researcher conclude the study with satisfaction and observed as following:

- The media access to public information is found unsatisfactory in rural areas and averagely available in urban areas.
- The ability of media for transformation of public information to the media groups/users is below average available.
- The media users / groups are quite vocal on economic issues and social responsibility of media. It is quite clear that the expectation of media users from media is quite high in our wide and diversified democracy.
- It is also emphasized by us to understand the purposefulness of social responsibility and its relation with social science. During the study defined that media doe's impact on social indicators where media have to play a vital role which is found quite dissatisfactory during the study.
- It is also our hypothesis to understand the exploration of social responsibility and its effect on individual and society. At this juncture we find that if media explore its responsibility then individual and society highly effected.
- The high degree of critical thinking is already developed in our society. The respondents were quite vocal and critically examine the economic issues put in front of them though questionnaire.

- We also examine the situation through nonstandard material and subsequently found that social responsibility of media does not match the standards.
- As we divided the media users/ groups on economic issues in five different categories namely:
 - Farmers
 - Retail and Other
 - Small scale industry
 - Medium scale industry
 - Employed / Self Employed profession

The opinion of different classes of media groups / users found on an average similar on different economic issues. It shows that different occupational status has not made any impact on the economic issues raised during the study. It is observed that media has to play a vital role in our democratic society though several shortcomings were also found during the study.

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