



From Gemeinschaft To Gesellschaft- Theoretical Approaches To Examine The Inclination Of India Towards West

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Abstract- Culture, tradition and moral practices are an integral part of human society. People will adopt different cultures in diverse nations. India also has an ancient culture, and its citizens have adapted to it. The earliest culture that humanity have ever practiced is thought to be that of India. Since India "defined the culture to the world," the entire world will revere Indian culture. But the in proportionate power differences and the rapid use of mass media tools have resulted in diffusion of culture within the nations. The paper tries to associate some theories of mass media and contemporary world and connect with the phenomenon of culturally inclination. The paper finds suitable of some theories which relates to this phenomenon.

Key words- cultural imperialism, media hegemony, western dominance

Introduction

Western culture is regarded as the most developed in the world, whereas Indian culture is one among the oldest and richest. Both are distinct cultural traditions that are practiced in various parts of the world. The conventional ways of the two cultures diverge. But in the modern world, the two civilizations are blending. However, the most prevalent and real concern among traditional Indians (especially the elders) is the development of westernization among Indians. They believe that Western culture is spreading and having a negative impact on the general public through the expansion of Western items, clothing, meals, festivals, styles, and languages.

The evident cultural and traditional shift of India can be seen, which is a result of hegemonistic behavior of media playing a role to diffuse these cultures into us. Thus, the paper tries to understand these cultural and traditional shift and associate different theories to understand the phenomenon in a better way. A lot of literature supports that there are both positive and negative way in which the Westernization has affected Indian values and tradition but less with theoretical approaches.

Culture and tradition are typically thought to consist of the following: the commemoration of holidays and religious rituals, as well as the arts, meals, traditional sciences, language, and way of life. One of the oldest and most diverse civilizations in the world, Indian culture includes a wide variety of languages, customs, beliefs, concepts, taboos, codes, directions, masterpieces of art, construction, rituals, and ceremonies. India's cultural history spans several millennia and exhibits continuity, delicate change, and a strong thread of continuity. It is distinguished by the assimilative strength of culture and singular manifestation of "unity in diversity." These are not simply empty platitudes; they speak volumes about a nation with India's incredible cultural and historical diversity. (Prakesh,2018).

India's oldest and most distinctive culture demonstrates the incredible cultural diversity present in the nation.

Nearly every state has established an own cultural identity, with the South, North, and Northeast having the most varied cultures in terms of food, dance, literature, songs, prayers, farming techniques, religious beliefs, dress, architecture, language and daily routine. India is a sizable nation, and its culture is unmatched elsewhere. The diversity of India's physical features and climatic circumstances also contribute to its distinctive culture.

India is one of the nations in the world with a diverse population of religions. In India, there are many different religions, including Hinduism, Jainism, Islam, Sikhism, Buddhism, and Christianity. India is a nation that emphasizes the Vedas and the Epics. In India, weddings are also very important. People all across the world like Indian wedding traditions. They do visit India, and they enjoy seeing and attending our weddings.

Finally, but certainly not least, Indian festivals play a significant role in society. The cuisine is the subsequent item. There are several differences in the way food is made in India. India is indeed referred to as the "motherland of foods."(Reddy, 2017).

No other nation has as many different types of food. Dress patterns are also important, because the world's most diverse apparel comes from India. Since British domination, India's apparel has taken on a significant role. The performing arts had a significant role in Indian literature. The bulk of other nations people were amazed by and developed an interest in the really cool and magnificent arts that were produced solely in the nation. The music played during those times was enjoyable and energizing for the body, mind, and heart. In India, dramas are essential to daily life. People once studied the Mahabharata and performed scenes from it on stage as well as using their only original thought processes. When taking a look back at history, we can see that Indians used to create beautiful sculptures on rocks and in temples, which helped advance our culture a little.

Industrialization has given birth to larger social institution and a rise in usage of media technology due to the expansion of media literacy and the beginning of modernism. The West grew up as a large institution on the lap of capitalism with the motive of profit. The Eastern countries in comparison are still less developed than the West particularly countries like US which started to disseminate its values, culture and tradition using mass media tools.

The rapid technological development after industrialization has given birth to advanced media tools which allows people to connect worldwide. The world is a global village -the famous phrase by Marshal McLuhan describes the world scenario now. The development of mass communication tools helped people to connect with each other. Another major development in the field of internet gave birth to new media which reached to individuals in mere time. All the digital media platforms which compromised largely of social media is now an arena for people to exchange their thoughts, culture, tradition across the globe in no time. Due to this pattern of usage in media it can be seen that there is a diverse exchange of values, culture and tradition within the countries.

Different studies show that there has been a diffusion of tradition and cultural values from a dominant to recessive country. The growing impact of western traditions on Indian culture in the twenty-first century damages Indian youths. Because the modern youth do not understand the importance of true love and because the foundation of romance is not at all defined, the quality for love is continuously declining clearly. That is what gives romantic relationships a poor reputation. The current generation also doesn't understand why people break up in love since they do it to pass the time. according to theoretical analysis Measurements of the quality of love include loyalty, truthfulness, ego, fulfilment, and other factors. (Chuchra, Kaur,2016). People in our nation are adapting to cultures from abroad. They should remember their own culture, as India is known for its rich culture around the world, and people there are ruining it by assimilating foreign cultures while neglecting the fundamental cultures of their mother countries. (Reddy, 2017). Gupta and Bajpai (2016) Indian society and culture underwent profound and long-lasting transformations as a result of the influence of the West. Indians were greatly buried by westernization, which brought sophisticated food, clothing, and etiquette. The British immigrants greatly altered Indian society and culture by bringing new institutions, technology, knowledge, values, and attitudes. India has a more modern

outlook and attitude as a result of the influence of the West. The development of information technology has significantly altered India, according to Kaur (2015). The global sharing of knowledge via the internet, Skype, Twitter, and Facebook has facilitated the blending of various cultures. Indian and Western cultures have adopted a kind of cross-cultural interchange in which both have assimilated facets of the other. Taking advantage of others' generosity is admirable, but it doesn't mean we should lose sight of our moral principles. The current state of Indian society indicates that it is becoming more Westernized and less religious. Bhoje (2015) says Indian culture is quite distinct and has many different customs. However, as a result of westernization, India's youth do not value its traditions, believing instead that they would change with time and cease to be traditional. India is becoming a really global nation in terms of business, cuisine, and culture, but it is seriously debatable what it will take to ensure that our youth do not lose sight of how rich being Indian is.

Theoretical approaches to understand the diffusion of culture

Theories are the best way to understand any phenomenon. The use of theories is being in practice by scholars, where any phenomenon or study is backed by a theory which substantiates it.

The evident penetration of Western cultural and values into the Indian culture can be backed with certain theories.

According to Ferdinand Tonnies, there are two types of societal organization. First *gemeinschaft* which is also known as folk community where people are bound together by strong morals, family relationships and roles of the society. In this type of a society the personal relationships are very strong and more interpersonal communication. On other hand *gesellschaft* which is also modern industrial society where people are bound together in a relatively weak social institution rather than strong holds in morals and relationship. The *gesellschaft* society is highly characterized by urbanization and industrialization dominated by the elites of the society who do not depend on one another much in comparison to *gemeinschaft* society. (Baran, Davis, 2016) Thus similar in view with India, according to this theory, where the high morals, cultures and traditions earlier made India a *gemeinschaft* society where people were connected to each other via their tradition and culture is now shifting towards *gesellschaft* society where people are self-dependent due to rapid industrialization and urbanization.

The theory of media hegemony and Althusser's argument

"Media hegemony" is supposed to occur when certain beliefs and ideals spread by the media come to rule society. It is specifically perceived as supporting the capitalist system.

Antonio Gramsci was the first to propose the idea of hegemony, which describes the moral, intellectual, and political authority of a social group that is not acquired forcefully but rather through the willful consent of other social classes acquired through appropriation of culture and ideas. Throughout this process, the dominant social group primarily uses social institutions including school, church, family, and the media to make an influence and establish its legitimacy. Media hegemony, according to the term, is the dominance of particular facets of life and ideas through the infiltration of a dominating culture and its tenets into social life. In other words, according to Altheide (1984), media hegemony plays a critical role in shaping society's culture, values, and ideology. According to Althusser, institutions can advance and propagate their purpose through mass media without using any physical force on the organization. These organizations typically cater to the bourgeoisie. The rapid use of media platform particularly social media has resulted in the infiltration of such dominant ideologies and cultural trends among.

Diffusion of innovation- On one hand when we talk about media hegemony through which dominant ideologies gets transferred to a recessive nation, its important to understand that due to the advancement of technology and acceptance of these technology has only resulted this phenomenon to happen. This is known as diffusion of innovation, created by E.M. Rogers in 1962. It first appeared in communication to describe how an idea or product gathers velocity and diffuses (or distributes) within a particular population or social structure over time. People eventually accept a new idea, behaviour, or product as an element of a social system as a result of this dissemination. Adoption is the act of changing one's behavior from what it was previously (e.g., using a new

product, learning a new behavior, etc.). Adoption depends on a person's ability to see an idea, behavior, or product as novel or inventive. This allows for the possibility of dissemination. Thus, the acceptance of wide range of media tools and technologies exposed India to a vast source of different ideas which people according to their social standard and individual capability started to adopt and pass, which on a larger scale changed the mass mindset.

Dependency theory- According to dependency theory, resources move from the "periphery" of underdeveloped and poorer nations to the "core" of wealthier states, benefiting the last group at the cost of the former. According to dependence theory, the way in which poor states are included into the "global system" causes rich states to become richer while poor states become poorer. After World War II, this idea was formally formulated in the latter part of the 1960s as researchers looked for the underlying cause of Latin America's lack of progress. The nations are categorized according to their status in ascending order of Centre of the Centre, periphery of the Centre, Centre of periphery and at last periphery of periphery.

Though this theory was established to understand the root cause of underdevelopment between nations it has some connections to media as well. As per the theory the resources flow from lower order to the higher order in a global system which is in contrast to the theory of media hegemony where the resources in media goes from a higher order to a lower order. (From dominant to recessive)

The structure of the flow of resources is same but reversed when it comes to media and its influence. The stronger cultural values, tradition and moral values travel from the nations of Centre of Centre till nations within periphery of periphery.

Cultural imperialism- In anthropology, sociology, and ethics, cultural imperialism is the imposing of certain parts of one group's culture on another community that is not politically or economically powerful. It's cultural in that the standards of the imposing community's social and moral behavior are unique from those of the other community, even though they are frequently intertwined with it in important ways. It is a sort of imperialism whereby the dominant society subjugates the underpopulated society by either eradicating or substituting elements of the underpopulated community's culture. Thus, when it comes to media similar phenomenon is seen where the powerful culture tends to dominate the relatively less powerful culture where India stands as a prime example in front of the west particularly US.

Glocalization- The term "glocalization" is a mix of "globalization" and "localization." Anything that is created, offered, and sold on a global scale but also modified to meet the needs of customers in local markets is referred to by this phrase. Glocalization is the key to modern development, where big MNCs fit to the local market accordingly and win the arena. The concept of glocalization in media, in the book "In The World Is Flat" by Thomas Friedman discusses how the Internet fosters glocalization by encouraging people to create webpages in their original mother tongue. The process shows that how media contents are localized according to the local need and then propagated. The cultural and traditional values of West are given local taste and served to the people which emotionally attaches the users and forces the users to follow with ample examples of films and advertisement that has fled the local market.

Cultivation theory- Founded by George Gerbner it's a sociological and telecommunications framework called "cultivation theory" is used to investigate the long-term consequences of media, particularly television. The main premise of cultivation analysis is that, despite sharing most major demographic characteristics with people who watch less television, people who watch a greater amount of television are prone to experience the real world in a way that is more frequently depicted in television messages. India is growing in its number of media consumption in a rapid pace, where prolonged exposure to media contents have resulted in the change in perspective of the users who tends to believe that whatever is shown is true and that compromises actual world and follow the same. Over exposure to violence shown in mass media have resulted in violent tendencies among youths, similarly the exaggeration of relationship and love affairs have resulted in a false assumption of relationships in reality.

Conclusion and discussion

Indian culture is being directly impacted by westernization in terms of caste, joint families, marriage, and other social systems. Indian value systems now include modern ideals like humanism, egalitarianism, and secularism. Our penal code has been updated. Evil traditions like sati were banned, as well as untouchability. Since the introduction of the welfare state concept, government initiatives to improve welfare have increased. The political system that emerged during British rule gave Indians, especially those with western education, more opportunities to express their political views. Additionally, the usage of English words like "Daddy," "Mom," and "cutting the cake" became widespread, in contrast to Indian custom. (Prakesh,2018)

The shift of India in context of its culture, tradition and values is evident enough from the literature from different scholar. India is a developing nation and media plays a pivotal role in shaping the country, thus it becomes important to understand the way media performs and the way it effects the people in changing their perspective. The paper tried to associate some of the important theories with the process of superimposition of dominant culture and morals over India. These theories will help us to understand the phenomenon in a more critical way.

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[*The World is Flat* \(1st ed.\). Farrar, Straus and Giroux. 2005. ISBN 0-374-29288-4.](#) [The original jacket illustration, reproducing the painting *I Told You So* by [Ed Miracle](#), depicting a sailing ship falling off the edge of the world, was changed during the print run due to copyright issues.^[11] These issues were settled in March 2006.^[12]