

CHAPTER-VI

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SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

The study was undertaken to assess the impact and role of Bangladesh Television in the identity crisis of Bangladeshi culture. Bangladesh is in the Third World and is planning to modernise in its own way keeping its culture intact. Religion has a dominant role to play as the country is predominantly Muslim.

It has been observed in the present study that an identity crisis exists among the people of Bangladesh as a result of contradictory situations and cross-currents. Evidently, both the people and the BTV officials are caught in the web. One must remember the reason for the emergence of Bangladesh that had roots in the agitation for the preservation of Bengali language and culture.

The study has found out that the youth, mainly consisting of students, are highly receptive to western programmes and appreciated if not all, at least many of the western values. They are equally assertive that the western programmes would not affect their culture. Age and income, on the upper level, are the decisive factors among the people who expressed doubts in this regard.

The rejection of the idea by the audience and the officials of telecasting more and more religious programmes as well as western programmes is a positive trend in mitigating the identity crisis, though it reflects the existence of an identity crisis.

The effort should be to strike a synthesis between culture and religion besides accepting positive values out of the western programmes. The telecasting, as BTV officials expressed, will strengthen the international communication system as well as help develop international understanding. Likewise, it will also provide the Bangladeshis an insight into other cultures.

The remedial measure, as suggested by the officials, to mitigate the negative effects of western programme is by telecasting more and more programmes on Bengali culture to make the people aware of and appreciate their tradition and the value system. Telecasting of more religious or stoppage of western or other cultural

programmes may not be found reasonable. And everyone agreed that in the global media context, the performance of BTV should improve.

The general respondents ranked film as a cultural programme. While films mirror partly the culture of a nation, one cannot call them totally cultural. The preference is an indicator of the identity crisis among the people. By universal standards, literature, drama, dance, music and folklore should have got higher priority as identified by the youngsters.

The study has also found that the people are apprehensive of some of the values as the western programmes. In fact, beliefs, mores and customs, but for better. If the cultural foundation is strong, there is no need to panic about the influence of other cultures.

The younger generation in Bangladesh seems to have a better perception of what they want and how to go about it. They prefer modernisation-economic and technological, and at the same time, want to preserve and protect the social fabric of Bangladesh - its cultural institutions and language.

The mass media have an important role to play in the task of creating a distinct cultural identity of Bangladesh. This can be possible by judicious mixture of programmes, not hurting the religious sentiments of the vast majority comprising the poor and illiterate. While it is easy to convince the educated, dealing with the traditional masses is a tough task.

All that BTV has to do is to help modernise the Bangladesh society without disturbing the cultural sensibilities of its people that give them a distinct identity.

Demerits of the Research effort

The major areas of deficiency of the present work are:

1. Limited sample size.
2. Difficulty in collecting back the questionnaire copies distributed.
3. Inadequate source materials for research in the context of Bangladesh.

4. High rate of illiteracy, due to which uneducated and illiterate masses could not be contacted.
5. 'Culture' as a difficult concept and so also the issue of 'identity crisis.'
6. As usual, logistics, time and financial resources.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The capacity of Bangladesh Television to produce programmes of high quality is limited. As television is a great consumer material, it is now universally known that television is the most effective and most graphic means of reaching the target number of people in any country.

Therefore, the researcher recommends that:

1. Government should adopt a liberal policy instead of imposed policy towards BTV programmes as well as administration and should provide full autonomy in lieu of present administrative structure. This will ensure creativity in programme planning and design and encourage media workers.
2. A sound recruitment policy should be enunciated to tap the best talent available both locally and nationally.
3. As it is very important that this media of communication should be democratized, there is a need to formulate a national cultural policy so that it would make television easily available to Bangladeshi masses as well as foster cultural identity. Democratization of BTV and domestic cultural institutions are needed for a meaningful promotion of Bangla culture through reciprocal interactive programmes and communication.
4. Regular training of BTV personnel at all the levels i. e., lower level, mid level and higher level are to be ensured for raising their service efficiency to meet the standards of modern day TV. It should be for both technical and programme personnel not only in Bangladesh but also abroad.

5. BTV officials should be trained in understanding intercultural communication. They should be deputed to attend such workshops both inside the country and abroad.
6. In order to inculcate professional excellence the BTV software personnel should be periodically trained to update their knowledge and technique to keep pace with the mind-boggling changes and progress brought about in the international arena of Mass Communication.
7. Wherever TV viewing facilities are inadequate, the gap should be filled by providing TV sets for community viewing by the Government.
8. Bangladesh Television Library should be equipped with modern books, journals and magazines of international repute and standard relating to culture, programmes and technological development in order to broaden the mental horizon of TV officials, who in turn, will render better service to the nation.
9. Efforts should be directed towards strengthening the production capacity of television establishments in Bangladesh to the end that they can produce high quality Bangladeshi materials amounting to not less than 85 per cent of their total programmes. Attempts should also be made to identify such programmes that are cultural as well as to frame well-defined criteria and guidelines for the purpose.
10. Television should be used for the dissemination of cultural and artistic products for the purpose of preserving Bangladesh cultural heritage.
11. Arrangements for motivational interaction with international agencies like UNESCO, East-West Centre and others to understand, preserve and promote national culture in the global context that could not come in the way of international co-operation and understanding.
12. In Bangladesh, primary importance should be given to Bangladesh culture in the quality production and transmission of television programmes for maintaining national identity.

13. The state should exercise some measures of control to ensure selectivity in the number of both Bangladesh and non-Bangladesh broadcast materials available to Bangladeshis.
14. Decision making should be decentralized. Programme production should also be decentralized in order to give more time and preference to local variation of Bengali culture. At the same time, care should be exercised to see that majority culture does not bulldoze the cultures of ethnic minorities.
15. The precepts of Islamic religion should properly be enlightened by religious as well as prominent public leaders so as to keep fundamentalist elements away from influencing cultural programmes of BTV and also to arrogate secular and truly cultural character to the programmes.
16. To boost up the programme quality private production units must be encouraged as followed by Doordarshan (Indian Television) and other foreign countries in addition to the present system of Bangladesh Television.
17. To create public awareness, Government should ensure ministry-wise projection of activities on BTV such as, programmes on education, literacy-drive, health and family planning, dowry prevention and social crime, communications, agriculture, animal husbandry and fisheries, environment, forest and tree plantation, water resources and electricity management. Telecast of such programmes, in the public interest, will enhance the image and credibility of the Government.
18. Creation of a separate mechanism is required to assess the audience responses which can be independent of the control of Bangladesh Television. In other words, BTV authority can employ the services of an outside agency for the purpose.

Research, analysis and planning cells for audience research should be set up to evaluate the feedback on the programmes. A timely evaluation of the programmes should be done to formulate guidelines for the subsequent programmes.

19. Regular monitoring of the BTV programmes should be improved by appointing an expert panel to rectify the defects in the programme formats.

It is suggested that further research on the subject may be fruitful for future scholars in this field in addition to the information, facts and figures produced by this thesis.

An important direction for further research should be to explore more directly how local, national and international programmes combine to influence what is produced by the Bangladesh Television in terms of cultural software.

SAVE (SAARC Audio-Visual Exchange) programme should effectively used to transit the finer aspects of Bangladesh culture. This step will definitely boost the identity of Bangladesh in the unity of nations.

SUPPORT TO IDENTITY

Since the independence of Bangladesh, its cultural contacts with the outside world have increased. New horizons have thereby expanded. Cultural currents from far and near are lapping against the shore, much more strongly and widely now than they did before. It is very important to know who controls the media and with what perspective. These are highly centralized agencies and can be used for all kinds of permutations and combinations. As the nature of power changed, so has the identity, leadership and out look of those who wield it. Sean MacBride (1980)¹ has rightly pointed out that "it is in the field of television, more than any other, that anxieties arise about cultural domination and threats to cultural identity".

In his highly influential book in media studies, 'Understanding Media'² by the social theorist and critic Marshall McLuhan offered some provocative thoughts. He said that the media themselves were far more important than any content they carried. Indeed, he said, each medium, such as print or broadcast, physically affects the human nervous system in a certain way. Media influence the way the brain works, and how it processes information. They create new patterns of thought and behavior.

Looking back over time McLuhan found that people and societies were shaped by the dominant media of their time.

For example, McLuhan argued, people and societies of the printing press era were shaped by that medium. And, he said, people and societies were being shaped in new ways by electronic media. Summing up, in one of his well-known phrases, he said, "The medium is the message." In the 1960s and 1970s, during the height of television's popularity and the emergence of computers and in the midst of the 20th century and the rise of television as a mass medium, Marshall McLuhan foresaw how profoundly media would shape human lives. His work on media spanned four decades, from 1950s to his death 1980.

Traditionally the "power elite" was a relatively static group whose leadership was determined by birth and whose outlook was schooled in elaborate, traditional and scholastic patterns of the religious establishment or moulded by self-perpetuating bureaucracy. Today, as real power grows outside their traditional establishment, the identity of the power elite is composed of those men who have mastered the technical skills demanded by modern society.

In this connection it may be mentioned here that studies on Bangladesh Television undertaken by the different researchers recommended as follows:

1. Screening of serials and mini-serials of foreign origin should gradually be brought down to a minimum. Such a step would call for increasing the production of serials and mini-serials locally reflecting the national culture and tradition. This measure will go a long way in meeting the threat from emergence of cultural violence in the society (Nuruddin, 1989)³.
2. For the proper comprehension of the imported programmes by majority of the viewers who are unable to follow the language of such programmes, it is essential to dub these programmes into Bangla, the language spoken by the people of this country. Needless to mention that more than three-fourths of the total population of Bangladesh cannot still read and write even their own tongue (Nuruddin, 1989)².

3. Ascertainment research should be undertaken by Bangladesh Television to identify the community needs and aspirations as perceived by the members of the public, and at the same time care must be taken to ensure that this does not become another license application/renewal ritual bureaucratic monopolisation. While undertaking such research the services of social scientists and media researchers should be gainfully utilised (Heller, 1981)⁴

Preservation of Culture

Preservation of cultural identity for promoting conditions of every society is necessary to enable it to enjoy a harmonious and creative inter-relationship with other cultures. In many developed and developing countries which suffer from cultural dominance it is equally necessary to modify the situations.

MacBride Commission (1980) report recommends:

"Establishment of national cultural policies, which should foster cultural identity and creativity, and involve the media in these tasks. Such policies should also contain guidelines for safeguarding national cultural development while promoting knowledge of other cultures. It is in relation to others that each culture enhances its own identity".

Commenting on this Sean MacBride further adds that owing to the cultural importance of spiritual and religious values and also in order to restore moral values, policy guidelines should take into account religious beliefs and traditions.

Communication and cultural policies should ensure that creative artistes and various grass root groups can make their voices heard through them. the innovative uses of film, television or radio by people of different cultures should be studied. Such experiment constitutes a basis for continuing cultural dialogue, which could be furthered by agreements between countries and through international support (Ahuja and Chabra, 1989)⁵.

In accordance with national standard practices, introduction of guidelines with respect to advertising content and the values and attitudes are needed which people of Bangladesh foster by establishing high powered review committees. Such guidelines

should be consistent with national development policies and efforts should be made to preserve cultural identity. In fact, cultural influences are an inherent aspect of all communicative business.

Ultimately all culture change is man-made (Honigman, 1967)⁶. With the increase of population more minds and hands become available to create new ideas and translate them into actions and objects. However, no culture is a closed system of rigid moulds which the behaviour of all numbers of a society must conform.

The Bangla society is still groping in dark and searching to establish its identity. It must put an end to the crisis it is facing. And BTV's task is more challenging in this behalf. The BTV has to perform a meaningful role in creating a wonderful identity of Bangladesh, both internally and externally and thus mitigate the inane influences of foreign media, especially the western.

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