

Cultural Representation on Television (In Special Context to Soap Operas)

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Abstract- In view of the changing pattern of the media in society, great attention has been paid to globalization. The Indians are very enthusiastic about the beginnings of globalization and its impact on local cultural transformation. Television is also performing in the race of introducing the localization of culture and promoting the value of regional significance as an application of glocalisation. Specific Television programs such as Soap Operas have shown a deep signs of perfect glocalization by combining the idea of globalization with the idea of local consideration. The Indian soap operas have cultural presentation with its social significance as supportive elements that actually define the socio-cultural statistics of the plot of serials.

In the study, the daily soaps that will be analysed, includes Ballika Vadhu (Colors Channel), Saath Nibhana Sathiya (Star Plus), Yeh Hai Mohabbatein (Star Plus) and Badho bahu (&TV) and Ganga (&TV). The study majorly focuses on whether the Indian soap operas are representing various cultures in their content or this is leading towards 'Cultural Marketing'. The aim is to also know about the role of Indian Soap Operas in cultural exchange. The methodology adopted in the present research is mainly secondary.

Key words- Television, Soap Operas, Culture, Social Transformation.

I. INTRODUCTION

Television is a very effective audio-visual mode of mass communication. Commonly, television is one of the most prominent modes of communication the Indian society. People are really addicted to the television. Programs on the television have a great influence on the life and life style of social capitals. Since year 2000 television undergoes a severe change in the taste of program. There is major transformation of peoples demand and regional influence on the soap operas of television[1].

Television is a great socialization agent in the society which influences people's culture in the society. Television is a living room medium and has become an inseparable part of our daily life. It performs a major role in development of country by creating awareness. Television is a credible & a believable medium. Generally people believe what they see. People assume whatever TV is showing is true. Its believability factor makes it more powerful medium. Because of media, it has become possible for world to come on a common platform for mass production and mass consumption of content.

Television uses various formats of programmes like reality shows, interview, chat shows, news bulletins, sports programmes, soap operas to serve a wide variety of audience

with different tastes, likes & dislikes, attitudes & those belonging to different cultures. When we talk about media, apart from news channels and agencies, the major role is played by television serials popularly known as 'Soap Operas'. While news gives us the factual information of the current happenings, the operas helps us to connect with diversified cultural value system of incredible India. Depending on the social tone, awareness and other requirements, we select and control the televisions channels. Different programs have different motives and objectives. Some programs are used for social awareness, some entertain and other used to inform and educate the community. It has been repeatedly proved that has a deep impact on the social sentiments.

People need a change in their life. Similarly, Television regularly influences the social style of people. It can be said that Television influence diversity. Television is offered in different forms in each part of its audience, with different cultural, economic and geographical distribution[2]

News bulletin, Reality shows, Cookery shows, Panel discussions, Cartoons, Music, Movies, Documentaries, Soap operas are some of commonly used formats in television. All the formats shown on television are either fiction or nonfiction. Fiction is those formats which are based on

writer's imagination and creativity whereas nonfiction is those which deal with facts and figures and reality.

Television delivers various formats for every category of its target audience. The global influence has helped the television industry to experience a complete new transformation. There was a major shift not only in its content and style but also in its purpose and presentation. Western entertainment genres like soap operas and reality shows have entered our home because of the revolution in satellite television.

In India, the soap opera is the most famous category among the women of the country. The concept of soap operas began with Hum Log, one of the most popular Hindi serials, which was quickly followed by Buniyaad, a historical soap opera about the partition of British India into India and Pakistan. In 1987, Ramayana, a Hindu religious epic, attracted huge ratings. Since then the format soap opera is growing. Besides, there are also races of TRP; soaps on television are also having a TRP race for raking. This is one of the most prominent point which gives a new angle to the television producer to introduce new way a action on television scene[3].

Form all these evidences, it can be pointed out that as of now, and social elements cannot even imagine the life without television.

II. RATIONALE OF THE STUDY

India is a country of diverse culture and representations with wide variety of various values, believes, languages & communities. The present television programs are very much depends on the regional touch and related values. It seems that the television programs are used to show the cultural representation of particular regions and their cultures. This present study mainly focuses on those soap operas which represents culture of a particular area or community in their contents. In this study, the researchers have analysed cultural impact on soap operas in present scenario.

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study is basically the Doctrinal study based on the secondary source of data. This paper is basically the conceptual presentation. This can also stated as the Limitation of the television.

IV. REPRESENTATION OF VARIOUS CULTURES IN TELEVISION

India is a country of vast diversified culture. It has a wide variety of culture, rituals, food and attire, dance etc which changes from place to place, within the country. Television plays a powerful role in exchange of cultures, customs and traditions from one corner to another. Television is a medium of mass communication. Whatever it broadcasts,

affects a large number of audience. As it is said that seeing believes, Television is a best medium to shape and represent our social believes, cultures and traditions.

Further, television makes you gain knowledge about various topics that you might not know in any other way. Television makes you believe in what it is telecasting with the help of visuals and therefore the viewers are able to believe that whatever is happening in the television series is true[4]

If we relate the television to the research topic, India has a variety of many cultures and different traditions are followed here. The television, in our country, makes you get to know about the various cultures that are followed in different parts of our country. We can know about the same with the help of literature as well, but it human tendency that we believe more in what we see.

In Indian television history, mythological shows like Ramayana and Mahabharata were regarded as soap operas. But in 90s, US scholars redefined the meaning of Soap operas. And with that, India copied the US formats until one of the famous production house of India, Balaji Productions, came up with its soap operas which proved to be the longest running television series of that time.

V. WHAT ARE SOAP OPERAS?

The defining feature that makes a television program a soap opera, according to Albert Moran, is "the form of television that works with a continuous open narrative. Each episode ends with a promise that the story line is to be continued in another episode".

The soap themes underwent a huge shift from the year 2008 onwards with lots of programmes on social problems like dowry, child marriage, child labour, female foeticide, gender equality etc. Target audience of soap opera is mainly womens. Womens are more declined towards culture, emotions, melodrama, and daily soaps have all these elements. That is why women are the main target of this format.

Some basic elements of soap opera are:

- Conflict
- Climax
- Character
- Action
- Plot

Soap operas are mixture of genres of melodrama, myth, realism, and entertainment. It plays an important role in television industry. Nowadays, popularity of these programmes is increasing as compared to other formats. Characters of these programmes have become virtual members of our daily life[5]

To sustain the viewership for longer duration, the shows are made in a series. People watch the soap opera to unfold the climax which has been created in the earlier episodes. Usually, the soap operas are made for entertainment, cultural exchange or some time to aware or to inform.

These are serial drama on television which features relates story lines about the lifes of multiple characters. The stories typically focus on emotional relationship. Soap operas are a serialised drama usually dealing with domestic themes and characters [6]. But there are some demerits of soap operas as well. They are the exploitation of the emotions of humans, creation of false image, creation of stereotype and sometimes giving a wrong social message.

VI. IMPACT OF CULTURE ON SOAP OPERAS

BALIKA VADHU: Serial named 'Balika Vadhu' broadcasts on color television. It is based on Rajasthani culture and tradition. The costume, language, set, food & ritual of this serial is all based on Rajasthani culture. The story of this show is about the old practices of child marriage in rural Rajasthan. The serial had addressed issues like child marriage, gender bias, morality, sexuality, widow remarriage, caste, class, rural and urban education etc. Because of this serial, the audience came to know about many local slangs of Rajasthan as well, like "Ghadi Khamba" and many others[7].

Balika Vadhu is one of those series which started the soap operas on rural and village areas and their traditions and cultures.

SAATH NIBHANA SAATHIYA: This serial broadcasts on Star Plus. This serial is based on Gujarati culture and is full of melo drama, emotions, conflict and clash, planning and plotting. In this serial, the location of Gujarat's Rajkot is shown. This serial shows family values and culture of a typical Gujarati joint family. Some terms like "kem cho" which means how you and "shu che" which means what are happened are used in this serial on a regular base. This serial makes us aware about some basic slang, rituals, tradition of Gujarati culture.

BADHO BAHU: This serial is presently broadcasting on & Television. It is a Haryana based serial. This serial tells the story of a overweight girl and her dreams. How her weight becomes a sin for her in fulfilling her dreams, is the storyline of this show. In this serial, they show locations of Haryana's villages, costumes, languages, mind sets, cultures and values of a typical Haryana family. Even the accent of their pronunciation is copied by Haryanvi accent.

GANGA: Ganga is a 2015 soap opera &TV. The show is based in Uttar Pradesh's Varanasi. Its storyline is of a girl who turns widow at her early teenage, following which her in-laws rejects her. The serial showcase how the role Ganga, despite being orphan and widow, still follows her heart and never bows down to injustice. Even in the year 2015, the show bagged an award for Best Programme with Social Message at the Indian Telly Awards.

YEH HAI MOHABBATEIN: The show Yeh Hai Mohabbatein airs on Star Plus and is based in Delhi. The show telecast the cultures and traditions of a typical Punjabi family and a Tamilian family. The often uses the common words used in both the culture. The show allows its target audience to know the cultures and traditions of South as well as North India.

VII. OBSERVATIONS AND FINDINGS

In the present research work, it seems that the soap operas are becoming an important part of our daily life style. The popularity has been increasing daily and people are getting influenced by these television programs. The program format of Soap Opera not only used for the entertainment purpose but it also have a great impact on the life of audiences by promoting specific culture in the society. Infact many people use it as a platform to learn regional specifications. In the present study, we did observe the responses from many female audiences such as ladies and housewife's (Feminine-oriented) about the words used in the soap operas that are influenced by Rajasthan - their first reply will be Ghani Khamba - which is influenced by none other than Balika Vadhu[8]

In some of the program, women play the heroic role and the entire soap operas roams around them. Therefore, this genre conveys 'female connotations' - which not only helps to dissemination of the culture among the individuals but also helps to point out many social issues which are prevailing in the society.

One of the leading examples that can be lifted to boost up this work is the Zindagi channel which is run by none other than Zee group - a horizontal and vertical integrated Media firm from India.

If we talk about other nations like Pakistan, Ukraine or South Korea, it reveals that many soaps operas of that nation are popular among the Indian Nation and they promote their culture too. A few examples can be Zindagi Gulzar Hai, Ferriha, Aun Zara etc.

These of observations and analysis leads to the finding that the Television program format of Soap Operas are very much influencing and have regional presentation of specific culture and lifestyle [9]. Television soap operas adopt many features and regional natures that vary from culture to culture, as like attire, the adaptation of the food and beverages, the use of words and slangs. All these regional natures are influenced by the different cultures of the society and they become one important reason for the cultural change in the society. Off-course, the source of this cultural change is Television.

VIII. CONCLUSION & SUGGESTIONS

In the present research paper, it seems very clear that the Television soap operas are really influenced by the regional culture. India is a diverse country in terms of culture, rituals,

language etc. The analysis of information used in the present research depicts that there are many soap operas which have a deep impact of regional cultures. These region based programs and the mentioned specific culture have a great impact on the audience. Thus, the new pattern of these soap operas is greatly accepted by the target audience. As for the content shown on television are concern, a variety of culture and traditions are shown and represented[10]. Certainly these programs have a good TRP and social acceptance which further means that the audience (male and female) have priority of watching these types of programs. This research also pointed out that with the advent of more and new cultural content on television, our country and its people will be able to have a wider knowledge of cultures of our own country as the it is remarkable that the terminologies with regional touch have been frequently used by people.

The information based analysis in this research reveals that, in many of the ongoing television series, most of the soap operas showcase the culture of the rural India which shows the valuable Indian heritage and its significance. The study pointed out that it is also very important to introduce our prestigious Indian traditional culture to the people of urban areas.

Finally it is observed from the present study that certainly the Television soap operas are influenced by culture of Indian regional societies.

LIMITATIONS

In India, this is the mindset of the people that women are responsible for the entire household work, which further is supported by the television soap operas. The stories of the soap operas roam around the female characters of the show and the female character is shown as the main person who leads the entire family.

There is need for change in this mindset. And therefore more of soap operas telecasting household responsibilities being shared equally by both the male and female members are required to be produced.

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