



Role of alternative media as participatory media

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Abstract:

The term alternative media may apply to a wide range of distinct forms of communication channels as well as ways of behaving. The phrases radical critical media, independent media, grassroots autonomous media, community media, “citizen media, and participatory media are all examples of alternative forms of the media. Performing a critical analysis of the political content and organisational practises of different forms of alternative media in order to unearth the ideologies and concepts of power that are ingrained in certain ideas of alternative media. When a number of conflicting ideas of alternative media theory are taken into consideration, such as subculture studies, community media for social change critical communication studies, and radical media, four main categories become apparent: Critical media, which is inspired by the Frankfurt School of critical theory and focuses on global indifference; radical media, which is influenced by the Frankfurt School of critical theory; and DIY media, which is influenced by individualist ideals and subcultural belonging. This synthesised taxonomy provides a valuable mapping of significant similarities and distinctions across the many alternative media political initiatives, ideas, practises, and ideologies. This makes it possible for a more comprehensive and nuanced understanding of the limitations and political challenges to media power afforded by specific types of alternative media. This makes it possible for a more comprehensive and nuanced understanding of the limitations and political challenges to media power.

Keywords: alternative media; autonomous media; critical media; DIY; subculture; participatory media; citizens media; Marxism; anarchism; individualism

INTRODUCTION

This, the last lesson of the Media and Society course, will be devoted to discussing alternate forms of media as the subject of discussion. In this lesson, we will investigate the ways in



which conventional types of media are different from alternative kinds of media. We are going to investigate a wide variety of alternative forms of media, such as folk media, small scale newspapers, community radio, community video, and citizen journalism. In addition, we are going to investigate the significance of these alternative forms of media in the context in which we find ourselves right now. In addition to this, we are going to study other possible venues, such as new media and social media, as well as problems about the dependability of the content that can be accessed on social media. The discussion of the future of alternative media sheds light on the use of technical advances that have the potential to transform the discourse of alternative media and lead to appropriate action by the relevant authorities. This information is presented in the section that is titled The Future of Alternative Media.

Alternate Media:

The term alternative media refers to any media outlet that, in comparison to the mainstream media of a given setting, presents information that is different from that presented by the mainstream media, regardless of whether the mainstream media are privately owned and operated or receive public funding. Alternative media are distinguished from mainstream media in at least one of the following areas: their subject matter; their aesthetic; their methods of production; their forms of dissemination; and their relationships with audiences. Alternative media often have the goals of challenging the forces that are already in place, representing underrepresented groups, and fostering horizontal links amongst communities of interest. The selection of news stories and the way information is framed in the mainstream media is said to be subject to bias by supporters of alternative forms of media. Despite the fact that sources of alternative media may also be prejudiced, proponents of alternative media argue that the bias is considerably different from that of mainstream media due to the fact that alternative media have a distinct set of values, purposes, and frameworks. Because of this, various forms of media provide a perspective that is referred to as alternative, as well as facts and interpretations of the world that cannot be obtained in conventional outlets. Some news organisations now choose the word independent over alternative as a marketing strategy. This is due to the fact that the term alternative is associated with feelings of self-marginalization.

There are several instances of alternative forms of media, however the term alternative media does not have a single, agreed-upon meaning. There are a number of names that have been used to refer to the many information sources and publications that are not considered to be part of



the mainstream. Many other labels have been used to them, including alternative, anarchist, small, activist, grassroots, progressive, non-corporate, subversive underground, radical, dissident, and independent.

The majority of definitions of alternative media and the alternative press are focused more on explaining what the alternative media is not than on defining what it is. This is because defining what the alternative media is not is easier than defining what it is. For instance, it is not part of the mainstream, and neither is it controlled by a corporation. However, anybody with even a modicum of intelligence can understand that this definition does nothing more than shift the responsibility of defining alternative media onto conventional media. The majority of the criteria that are used to determine whether a news source may be considered alternative media or not are based on a number of questions: Is it owned by a corporation? What is its substance, which consists of news that is either not published at all by the mainstream media or is represented inaccurately? The internet is the most popular venue for alternative media, but how is it generated and distributed? Does it work toward bringing about some form of political or social shift? Is the objective to make a monetary gain from it? One of the most significant distinctions between mainstream media and alternative media is that all mainstream media outlets are focused on making a profit, whereas a number of alternative media outlets do not prioritise making a profit in order to maintain their objectivity in the face of potential conflicts of interest.

When it comes to determining whether or not a media outlet belongs to the alternative media category, these factors are the most useful criteria to apply. As a consequence of this, you will notice that alternative media tends to be very partisan and caters to a relatively tiny segment of the overall population. These outlets are also less concerned with what the vast majority of people find entertaining or informative. Some newspapers that are part of the alternative media are sensationalist in character and are referred to as tabloids. Other alternative media publications are said to be full of conspiracy theories. However, as a result of the proliferation of the internet, a lot of alternative media houses are gaining more and more popularity and are gradually transforming into mainstream media houses themselves.

Throughout the course of American history, alternative media have consistently served as an essential resource for social movements and underrepresented communities in the United States. Pamphleteers of the revolutionary movement were instrumental in helping to spread the



word against the British. During the decades leading up to the American Civil War, the anti-slavery campaign was kept alive by a thriving abolitionist press. A popular working class press was also essential to the development of the labour movement throughout the first half of the twentieth century. In the early 1900s, the socialist journal *The Appeal to Reason*, which was sponsored by advertising, amassed almost a million readers and contributed to the advancement of the presidential aspirations of the socialist candidate Eugene Debs. An ethnic press served as a source of nutrition for a variety of cultural groups who were on the margins of society throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. In a similar vein, throughout the 1960s an underground press assisted in maintaining the momentum of the civil rights movement and other activist organisations.

ALTERNATIVE MEDIA IN INDIA

The idea of alternative media is still in its formative stages in India, where it is primarily understood in the context of being radical and anti-establishment media. However, Sainath contends that the origin of alternative media in India can be traced back to our pre-independence days when Indian media served as the alternative media to the British media that was ruling at the time. Sainath contends that the existence of alternative media in India can be traced back to our pre-independence days. During that time period, a large number of clandestine newspapers and radio stations were in operation. Additionally, a number of local language newspapers in favour of the nationalist struggle to overthrow the British raj were produced on a consistent basis. The states with high literacy rates, like as Kerala, were able to develop regional newspapers and presses, which contributed to the gradual awakening of the country as a whole.

Folk Media

In rural India, traditional or folk media is often regarded as the most significant form of alternative media. In this country, it has a longer history than any other kind of entertainment or dissemination of information. The customs and traditions of a particular area heavily influenced the development of folk media in that area. For example, the state of Uttar Pradesh is known for its Nautanki, Gujarat for its Bhavai, Maharashtra for its Tamasha, West Bengal for its Jatra, and Rajasthan for its Ramleela and Rasleela puppet shows, all of which are performed in other states. In contemporary India, Nukkad Natak, also known as Street Play, has emerged as an important folk media used in a variety of towns and institutions to



communicate social themes to the general public. In the last three decades, street plays have undergone significant change and have become the voice of many different radical organisations. The Communist party of India established the Indian People's Theatre Association (IPTA), an alternative medium that is still in operation today, in the 1940s. IPTA is the only one of its type. IPTA's principal purpose was to bring about social changes and to fight against the repression that was being carried out by the British government. They educated people about their rights and obligations by using the stage as a vehicle to spread their messages and spread awareness of those rights and responsibilities. In the aftermath of the independence movement, IPTA brought attention to concerns that were mostly disregarded by the national media. Members of IPTA included several well-known figures, such as KA Abbas, Dr. Homi Bhabha, Ismat Chughtai, Sahir Ludhianvi, and many more; these individuals collaborated closely with average citizens to bring about social transformation. After India attained its independence, the government acknowledged the significance of folk and traditional forms of media and formed the Song and Drama Division. This unit works at the grassroots level to promote government programmes and policies via folk performances that are live and direct to the audience. Urvashi, a feminist author, wrote a case study titled Women and Alternative Media (India) in which she analysed the different alternative venues that are accessible to women in India. She noted how the Kerala Shastra Sahitya Parishad (KSSP) had employed Yatra as a vehicle for outreach in order to engage the audience via the use of a variety of techniques including public speaking, puppetry, songs, plays, posters, and so on. A movement opposing the construction of the Narmada and Saradar Sarova Dams in Central India was called Save Narmada Yatra. The campaign followed a similar line of reasoning. The play Om Swahs, which was performed against dowry by the Delhi-based women's organisation Stree Shakti, brought attention to the issue of women who were unable to provide an adequate amount of dowry. Another medium was street theatre.



Folk media is one of a kind because it mimics the routine daily activities of the people who live in rural areas, making it impossible to replicate. In addition to delivering education and information to the members of the community, audiences in rural regions benefit from this kind of media as a source of ubiquitous amusement in their everyday lives. Countries such as Pakistan, India, and Bangladesh have a significant legacy of folk art, folk stories, folk dance, classics, songs, and plays that may be used for the purpose of societal development work. Folk art is a kind of art that is created on purpose but without any outside inspiration. The use of basic media may be very helpful when dealing with topics that are delicate for society, such as health, and where face-to-face contact may not be acceptable. During the course of the country's transition and growth, the folk media is used in order to communicate with the population. Due to the fact that they include appropriate idioms, have meaningful value, and also contain an element of amusement, folk media have a significant impact on the society of the country. Folk media is able to overcome the exertion of language, dialogue, words, and other communication barriers such as understanding, clarification, curiosity, attitude, and perception in places like Pakistan and India, which have a higher percentage of rural areas compared to urban areas, have a low rate of literacy, and have a rich cultural heritage. Folk media is also prevalent in places like these. In India, where 35% of the population is illiterate and where the reach of the media is mostly limited to metropolitan regions, information, education, and entertainment do not reach a large majority of the people that make up the society.



It is generally agreed that Indian civilization is characterised by a complex social hierarchy that includes a variety of groups, dogmas, and castes. The prevalence of illiteracy and poverty in Indian society is supplementary to the scantiness of the mainstream media, which stretches out to roughly 700 million people who inhabit in rural settings. When compared to the conversant recital of traditional artists, which the people of that particular area

were able to not only understand and hear, but even touch passionately, the mass media is shown to those people to be glitzy, objective, and implausible”. This is demonstrated to those people by the contrast between the two. In the earlier stages of India's fight for independence, various forms of execution art played an important part in spreading the message that freedom is possible for everyone. The revolution was aided forward in part by the many plays and performances of street theatre that took place.

Conclusion

The term alternative media may refer to a wide variety of different types of media as well as behaviours, ranging from radical critical media to independent media and grassroots autonomous media. the ideologies and ideas about power that are ingrained in certain alternative media concepts may be uncovered by analysing the political content and organisational practises of the various varieties of alternative media. The selection of news stories and the way that information is framed in the mainstream media is criticised as being tainted by bias by proponents of alternative forms of media. Those who support alternative media argue that it upholds a distinct set of values, purposes, and conceptual frameworks. Because they don't want to be labelled as alternative, some news organisations choose to refer to themselves as independent. Within the United States, social movements and other oppressed



groups have relied heavily on alternative media as an essential resource. The idea of alternative media is still in its formative stages in India, where it is mostly understood in the context of anti-establishment and radical media. In rural India, traditional or folk media is often regarded as the most significant form of alternative media. IPTA was established in order to bring about social changes and to struggle against the persecution of the British government. Theatrical performances were used as a vehicle for them to spread their messages. Due to the fact that they employ appropriate idioms and serve a variety of purposes, folk media have a significant effect on the society of rural areas. After India attained its independence, the newly formed government quickly recognised the significance of folk and traditional media. In India, 35 percent of the population is illiterate, and the reach of the media is mostly limited to metropolitan regions. As a result, information, education, and entertainment do not reach a significant number of people in the community. In the earlier stages of India's fight for independence, various forms of execution art played an important part in spreading the message that freedom is possible for everyone.

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