

CLIMATE CHANGE- MYTH OR REALITY: A CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF MAINSTREAM ENGLISH DAILIES OF INDIA

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ABSTRACT

Climate Change is one of the 17 Global Goals or Sustainable Development Goals officially known as Transforming our world: The 2030 agenda for Sustainable Development set by the United Nations. One of the objectives of the United Nations system is for protect people. UN said that people are experiencing the significant impacts of Climate Change and it is now affecting all the nations throughout the world. The greenhouse gas emissions from human activities are driving Climate Change and continue to rise. They further added that it is the single biggest threat to development.

In a country like India, mass communication plays an important role in creating peoples awareness about national policies and issues. Contemporary society is driven by Hard media determinism.

More than three years have gone when this vision was launched by the UN. The researchers made use of Content Analysis of mainstream English dailies of India to see whether this art gave this important issue coverage or not. If yes, what type of coverage it gets. Whether it is Reality or Myth. Because newspapers are considered as the schoolmasters of the common man. This art can prove a very important contributor to Climate Change communication and awareness.

The researchers after objectively analyzed sample came to know that insufficient space is given to Climate Change and Climate Change as a Reality gets more space than Climate Change as a Myth.

Researchers suggest here a theory Savior theory of Fourth Estate. There is no denying the fact that a number of theories proved that media has the power to do miracles. Now the researchers propound this theory to request media to take charge of saving the planet earth.

KEYWORDS: *Submit Paper Online: <https://www.impactjournals.us/login> Research Submission: Editor@impactjournals.us, Climate Change, Myth, Reality, Media*

INTRODUCTION

Whoever controls the media controls the mind. Jim Morrison.

Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts by regulating emissions and promoting developments in renewable energy is the 13th Sustainable Development Goal.

The Sustainable Development Goals, officially known as transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development is a set of seventeen aspirational Global Goals. Spearheaded by the United Nations, through a deliberative process on 25 September 2015. Combating climate change is on the 13th position of goals.

As per the United Nations is concerned, all the countries are suffering because of Climate Change. It not only affects the lives but also the national economies. Changing weather patterns, rising of sea level, more than the normal weather events were experienced by the people. United Nations overtly said that it is the greenhouse gas emissions caused by human activities, which is driving it. Now the people take these emissions at its peak. Climate change is an international challenge, it is not going to leave any country unaffected. It now requires global cooperation to help the whole world moves towards a minimum carbon economy.

Climate change is discussed at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development popularly known as Earth Summit 1992, Kyoto Protocol 2008, Durban Climate Change Conference 2011, Paris UN Climate Change Conference 2015 et al. Their objective was to reduce atmospheric concentrations of greenhouse gases with the goal of preventing dangerous anthropogenic (human-caused) interference with Earth's climate system.

It is proved that human-made CO₂ emissions have caused global warming, so we need to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. (UN Treaty Database, 2014).

Biello (2007) suggest ten solutions for climate change- forego fossil fuels, infrastructure upgrade, move closer to work, consume less, be efficient, eat smart, stop cutting down trees, unplug, one child and future fuels-low-emission energy generation.

Green peace (2016) suggests the solution to climate change as follows- 100 percent renewable energy, an efficient smart energy future, sustainable renewable transport to cut out oil, renewably powered internet. According to green peace, we have to avoid everything that comes in the way of a clean, safe and secure future. They slammed the fossil fuel and nuclear projects. They added fluorine gases are a serious threat to our climate. These are extremely powerful greenhouse gases. We use them to cool our drinks, the offices where we work, foodstuffs. Green peace is doing its best to wipe them out fully. They gave the solution for this is political action. Every year more scientists, engineers, and activists agree 100 percent renewable energy is not only achievable, it is essential. The barriers holding this back are purely political- not technical or economic.

What is integral to the successful implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals is to take urgent action to combat and minimizing the disruptions of Climate Change. Because it is the single biggest threat to development. It has the capacity to affect us all. It often exacerbates disasters. (United Nations Report, 2016).

Experts predict that one-fourth of Earth's species will be headed for extinction by 2050 if the warming trend continues at its current rate. (Handwerk, 2006).

Scientists found and report last year that the planet in which we live reach its highest temperature. 2016 beats the record set by the year 2015, which in turn beats the record set in 2014. This means that the temperature is rising at an alarming level. (Gillis and Schwartz, 2017).

According to the World Meteorological Organization, the past four years are the four warmest years since records began in 1850. The warming has been largely driven by greenhouse gases caused by human activities. (Rice, 2018).

Change of even one degree Fahrenheit sounds small can upset the delicate balance of ecosystems, and affect plants and animals that inhabit them. Polar ice shields are melting and the sea is rising. In the US alone, half of its residents live within 50 miles of the coast. Worldwide, approximately 100 million people live within three feet of sea level. Rising of sea level driven by climate change could displace millions of people in low-lying areas, especially in third world nations. History witnesses the worlds first climate change refugees. People living on some small island nations have already abandon their islands. In fact, in May 2016, the residents of Isle de Jean Charles were given 48 million dollars to move-the first US-based climate refugees. (Davenport and Robertson, 2016).

HARD MEDIA DETERMINISM

In a country like India, mass communication plays an important role in creating people's awareness of national policies and issues. In contemporary times, no discussion on the public sphere is complete unless it takes into account the role of media in representing concerns of the citizens.

Nothing in society can happen without the media's involvement. (Chomsky and Herman, 1988).

According to George Gerbner, Those govern human behavior, who tells the stories of culture. In the past, they used to be our parents, the church, school or community. But now in the contemporary global village, it is few international conglomerates who have a great deal to sell sans to tell. (Weldon, 2011).

What appeared in any media, whether print or visual, it is undoubtedly accepted by people as true. Fourth Estate has now become an extremely vital institution. It enjoyed beyond limit power in contemporary society. It is behind initiating debates, facilitating dialogues and shaping the consciousness of people. (Kumar, 2011).

In media studies, there is a famous quote from Oracle of the electronic age Marshal McLuhan that we become what we behold. We shape the media and then media shapes us. He assumes the centrality of communication technology. He never underestimates its chief effect on the sensory organization and thought. He zeroes in on his focus on medias impact on thought and perception. (Carey, 1969).

Marshal McLuhan proposed the idea that the dominant medium of communication shapes a society more than the content of its communications. All media are so potent in their psychological, moral, ethical, economic, political, aesthetic, personal and social impacts, that we cannot remain isolated from them. (McLuhan and Fiore, 1967).

In contemporary times, the use of big data analytics to identify user preferences and to send tailor-made messages to individuals led back to the idea of a "one-step flow of communication", which is in principle similar to the hypodermic needle model. (Bennett and Manheim, 2006).

Magic Bullet theory, which is interchangeable with Hypodermic Needle theory, is based on the belief that media has a straight, instant and potent impact on audiences. It is perceived as a powerful influence on behavior change. The war of the worlds, a fiction based episode of Columbia Broadcasting System once causes mass panic. Historical studies done by PayneFund reinforced the Magic Bullet Theories belief. (Lamb, 2013).

Ruesch and Bateson (1987) found that following World War 2, mass communication have become so pervasive that no individual or group can escape their influences for long.

Postman (2000) addressed the fundamental principle of media ecology as a “medium is a technology within which a culture grows; it gives form to a cultures politics, social organization and habitual way of thinking”.

The first assumption of media ecology is “media are infused in every act and action in society”. In other words, media are everywhere all the time. And the second assumption is “media determine what to know and how we feel about what we know”. In other words, the media fix our perceptions and organize our experiences. (West and Turner, 2010).

Communication is supreme. It is behind the building and construction of human cultures as well as human minds. This is the foundation and basis of Toronto School. (Logan, 1986).

Postman (1992) coined the term technopoly. He defines it as a world where technology is worshiped. A culture of any society takes its soul from technology. He defines technopoly as a totalitarian technocracy, which demands the submission of all forms of cultural life to the sovereignty of technique and technology.

This makes the present study important as a research topic. The media has the power to mold public opinion that is why it is called the fourth pillar of democracy.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The media is a very important contributor to climate change communication because most people do not read scientific reports, specialist websites/ blogs or the reports of the intergovernmental panel on climate change.

Gelbspan (2004) said the lobby of the fossil-fuel industry has launched a very potent campaign of false information. They get succeeded in persuading people that climate change is still a myth. It is not yet authorized by science. He pounds on political corruption, journalistic laziness and activists incrementalism for reinforcing the cycle of denial that prevents an appropriately scaled response to climate disruption. Gelbspan further added that science is very clear on one point that climate stabilization requires that humanity cut its consumption of carbon fuels by about 70 percent. He further added that the US press has basically played the role of an unwitting accomplice by consistently minimizing this story.

Antilla (2010) found that media coverage of climate change has had effects on public opinion on climate change.

In a survey of 636 articles from four top United States newspapers between 1988 and 2002, Boykoff and Boykoff (2004) found that most articles gave as much time to the small group of climate change doubters as to the scientific consensus view.

Mc Combs and Shaw (1972) study of the political function of Mass Media showed that media coverage of an issue can play an important part in shaping political reality.

Research into media coverage of Climate Change has demonstrated the significant role of the media in determining climate policy formation. (Boykoff, 2007).

The British study concluded that media practitioners failed to see the issue of Global Warming. (Tarr, 2010). Hamilton (2007) contends that major countries of the world are the major stumbling block to a more effective Kyoto Protocol. They have been actively working to destroy this protocol. His criticism of the media's failure, until recently, to cover climate change seriously is well-founded.

Hamilton (2010) stresses on ideology, lobbying of fossil fuel industry, thinking full of wishes and consumer culture as the reasons which are behind the denial of the reality of Climate Change by the politicians, corporate and public.

Oreskes and Conway (2010) have a strong doubt about the ability of the media to differentiate between false truth and the actual science in question. They added that the journalistic norm of balanced reporting has helped to amplify the misleading messages of the contrarians. They mentioned in the tagline of this piece of art that how a handful of scientists obscured the truth on issues from tobacco smoking to global warming. They use a number of tactics such as discredit the science, disseminate false information, spread confusion and promote doubt. These tactics intentionally create confusion and influence the opinion of the public. This piece of art claims that this handful of scientists has diluted the existence of anthropogenic climate change. The authors state that small numbers of people can have large, negative impacts, especially if they are organized, determined and have access to power.

Klein (2014) said that Climate Change is a battle between capitalism and the planet. She added that oligopolistic elites, who have complete control over our economy, as well as their hold on political processes and media never give us the chance to act in preventing this disaster. A vast majority would undoubtedly get the benefit from that act. On the contrary, oligopolistic elites will find it very threatening.

Monbiot (2006) examined that the fourth estate underestimates Climate Change reality.

Bernays (1928) was of that a vital constituent in a democratic society is the aware and wise manipulation of the organized opinions and habits of the masses. Ellul (1973) viewed that the aim of modern propaganda is to provoke action.

Chomsky and Herman (1988) gave a propaganda model. The model seeks to explain how people are manipulated by media and how consent is manufactured in the public mind. They gave 5 filters which decide the media content: ownership, advertising, sourcing, flak, and war on terror.

The fourth Estate which is driven by 5 filters always performs the duties of Government and corporate, which are both intertwined. Media only cover those reports and analyze the events in a way to please them. Powerful state distorts the news and distracts people from major issues through propaganda. (Chomsky, 1989).

One of the outcomes of Toronto School is the phrase "monopolies of knowledge". It arises when ruling classes maintain their political power through the control of key communication technologies. (Watson, 2006).

Innis (1980) suggests that monopolies of knowledge gradually suppress new ways of thinking.

Debord (1994) develops and presents the concept of the Spectacle. He traces the development of a modern society in which authentic social life has been replaced with its representation. He encouraged the use of detournement, which involves using spectacular images and language to disrupt the flow of the spectacle. Debord's piece of art is a critique of contemporary consumer culture and commodity fetishism.

Postman (1985) was of the view that the global village is a reflection of Aldous Huxley's Brave New World, where the public is addicted to the amusement.

Packard (1957) aware us by throwing light on the techniques used by advertisers to create the desire for products. He recognizes 8 powerful and convincing needs that advertising world promise products will fulfill. He added that these needs are so potent that people lost their conscious and they buy those products.

Dichter (1960) coined the phrase The Strategy of Desire, means how the unconscious motives of potential consumers can be unmasked by thorough analysis and then exploited by advertisers.

Bernays (1955) coined the phrase The Engineering of Consent means the art of manipulating people. When applying scientific principles to the task of getting people to support ideas and programs.

Marcuse (1991) criticizes contemporary capitalism. He slammed advanced industrial society's capacity to create false needs via mass media. Klein (1999) zeroed in on the negative effects of brand-oriented corporate activity and discusses methods in order to fight back. Most popular among the methods is culture jamming. Culture Jamming is a tactic used by many anti-consumerism social movements to disrupt or subvert media culture and its corporate advertising.

Hoggan and Littlemore (2009) revealed that media sans wit is one of the few who has produced the public conversation which is rhetoric-driven, that resists reason and logic. He also added that how propaganda created by self-oriented people has deliberately produced confusion over climate change.

Gore (2017) said that pretty powerful and wealthy interest of carbon polluters that have spent billions of dollars over the past three decades putting out false information.

Curtis (2002) cites the history of one hundred years back when people have become confused by Edward Bernays about the difference between needs and wants. Bernays was dame sure that link products to the feelings of consumers and rule them. Bernays has reallytransform the USA from needs to desires society.

Chomsky (1991) highlights the question of who is going to manage the masses? It was Walter Lippmann's Specialized class and Edward Bernays intelligent minority.

Dewey (1927) hoped that society can someday use its technology to improve communication. He added that communication can alone create a great community.

What Great Community is to John Dewey is Ideal Society is to George Mead. (Mead, 1934).

Postmodern media theory focuses on the deliberate distortion of reality to create hyperreality. When we are unable to distinguish reality from a simulation of reality, it is hyperreality. It happens in the technologically advancedglobal village. (Tiffin and Terashima, 2005).

Eco (1986) called it the authentic fake and explores it further by telling that the act of hyperreality is to desire a reality, and in achieving this desire, they fabricate a fake reality, that is to be believed as true. In the production of hyperreality, Consumerism could be seen as a contributing factor.

Borgmann (1984) coined the phrase Device Paradigm, in which he focuses on the hidden nature and power of technological devices operating in the world. Culture -driven by technological devices is so immersed in it, that we are unable to perceive how badly our life is affected by it. He believes that people are unable to live a good life. To counter this,

Borgmann recommended developing focal things and practices as a way to minimize the dangerous effects of this hidden technological paradigm.

He further added that the Postmodern divide involves a shift from involvement with focal things and practices to immersion in media fantasies or the thrills of virtual reality.

Boorstin (1992) said that contemporary culture use simulations and false appearances. He added that the USA falls into the age of contrivance, where illusions and fabrications became superior force in society. Superficial images take over real ideals. Lives of the public are filled with pseudo-events.

Baudrillard (1988) said that Simulacra is a representation that is not real. It is a symbol of a copy without an original. He further added that the copy world takes over everywhere

Baudrillard claims that masses seek spectacle and not meaning. They implode into a silent majority. (Baudrillard, 1993).

One more definition of simulacrum is given by Deleuze (1990) as an image without resemblance.

Media technology has created that type of atmosphere in the global village, where distinctions between object and image have collapsed. (Virilio, 1991).

Derrida and Stiegler (2002) argue that it is an artifactuality that is produced and made rather than a record. Artifactuality is determined by market forces.

We are very helpless. We have to rely on the media. Because our immediate and direct experiences are limited. Media take advantage of our helplessness, it creates pseudo-environment. (Lippmann, 1922).

Fourth Estate is the main vehicle for delivering propaganda. How it succeeded within months in turning a pacifist population into a hysterical, war-mongering population. Chomsky further touches on how the modern public relations industry has been influenced by Walter Lippmann's theory of "spectator democracy" in which public is seen as a "bewildered herd" that needs to be directed, not empowered; and how the same industry focuses on "controlling the public mind" and not on informing it. (Chomsky, 2002).

Marshall McLuhan, who is universally regarded as the father of Communications and media studies and the prophet of the information age, call print a Hot Medium because it engages one sense completely. Hot medium is high in definition.

Srivastava (1991) cites the Henry Ward Beecher's famous statement on newspapers that "newspapers are the school-masters of the common man".

Keeping the above two statements in mind, the researchers study the newspaper coverage of climate change. The Researchers have already work on Coverage of Climate Change in Expressionism Art of India.

OBJECTIVES

- To measure Climate Change coverage in four mainstream English dailies of India in proportion to the overall space of the sample newspapers.
- To study the tone of content related to Climate change. How much space is given to Climate Change as a Myth and

Climate Change as a Reality.

HYPOTHESES

H1: Insufficient space is given to Climate Change by mainstream English dailies of India.

H2: Climate Change as a Myth gets more coverage than Climate Change as a Reality.

In drafting these hypotheses, the Literature Review is an inspiration.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY: Keeping in mind the nature of the topic, the researchers have applied the methodology of content analysis in order to track down the coverage of Climate Change in mainstream English dailies of India.

English daily newspapers were taken, because of the fact that English newspapers in India were growing in influence and popularity. The distinguishing feature of the leading newspapers is their serious aspect. They are well established and produced both in technical competence and editorial performance and they stand comparison with the best newspapers in the world. (Murthy, 2000).

UNIT OF ANALYSIS: News, Editorials, Articles, Features, Photographs, Cartoons and Letters to Editor. The present study has excluded Business Page, Sports, Weather Reports and Advertisements.

SAMPLE SIZE: Four Mainstream English Dailies of India during 2018.

TEST OF SIGNIFICANCE: In the present study, z-test was applied to find out the significant differences. Z-test was preferred because the sample size was more than 30. (the University of Leicester. 2000).

The researchers used 2 levels of significance- significant and insignificant.

Significant: When space devoted to Climate change as a Myth was more than Climate change as a reality. In a statistical test, if z-calculated was more than z-tabulated value i.e. 1.64.

Insignificant: Vice versa of Significant. When z-calculated was less than z-tabulated value i.e. 1.64.

OBSERVATIONS

Coverage of Climate Change in four mainstream English newspapers of India during the sample period including News, Photographs, Cartoons, Letters to the editor, Articles/Features and Editorials

Table 1:

Newspapers	2018			Total
	Climate Change As A Myth	Climate Change As A Reality	Neutral	
TOI	0.1	0.4	0.1	0.6
TH	0.1	0.6	0.1	0.8
HT	0.1	0.4	0.1	0.6
IE	0	0.7	0.1	0.8

(Statistical Technique = Percentage)

TOI = The Times of India HT = Hindustan Times

TH = The Hindu IE = The Indian Express

A significance level of overall coverage of Climate Change in four Mainstream English dailies of India during the sample year including News, Photographs, Cartoons, Letters to the editor, Articles/Features and Editorials

Table 2:

Period	P1	P2	Z-cal	Z-tab	Significance
2018	0.10	0.75	-40.62	1.64	Highly Insignificant

P1= Proportion of Climate Change as a Myth

P2= Proportion of Climate Change as a Reality

Z-cal= Calculated value of Test of Significance for difference of Proportions

Z-tab= Tabulated value from the standard normal table at 5% level of Significance

is 1.64 for one-tailed z-test.

With the application of z-test, the following result has emerged. To describe results from the table-2, Z-calculated value was -40.62, it was much lesser than the Z-tabulated value that is 1.64. So, it was highly insignificant. This means that space devoted to Climate Change as a Reality gets more coverage than Climate Change as a Myth. The analysis of the data reveals that the alternative hypothesis 'H2' was rejected, and the null hypothesis is accepted. The above tables also reveal that insufficient space is given to Climate Change by mainstream English dailies of India Here, in this case, alternative hypothesis 'H1' was accepted.

CONCLUSIONS

Climate Change is the main threat to everything. So far all our social institutions have done so little. Now take the example of media as a social institute in combating climate change. Where is it? The researchers after objectively analyzed the sample newspapers of 2018 came to know that insufficient space is given to Climate Change. The study applauded mainstream English dailies of India for giving more space to Climate Change as a Reality.

Most of the literature review reflects that filters-driven media serves and performs the obligations of State and Corporates. It distorts the news and distracts people from major issues. Here, in this case, there is no denying the fact that meager space is given to Climate Change, but sample newspapers conscious people about the Anthropocene.

The present study suggests that sufficient space of newspapers should be given to the Climate Change issue. So that earth can be saved from devastation.

PROPOUNDMENT OF THEORY

Researchers suggest here a theory Savior theory of Fourth Estate. There is no denying the fact that a number of theories proved that media has the power to do miracles. Now the researchers propound this theory to request media to take charge of saving the planet earth.

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