

VISUAL SOCIAL AWARENESS IN INDIAN SOCIETY

Dr. Milind Dhobley

Principal, DYPCAAC, Pune –INDIA

Abstract: the second largest populated country, India is the country with diversified culture and social reforms. There are certain beliefs and faiths in the community. Social issues and awareness about it is a real big task. The awareness campaign for the social problems as well as personal health issues are best handled by visual media through visual awareness, the media plays very important role. The literate and illiterate people get benefited from the visual campaign. Social issues like racism/caste, social taboos, cleanliness, illiteracy and unawareness of health and diseases. Sixty percent population lives in the village for them visual media like poster, wall advertisements, handouts etc. are generally used, where the visuals are strong. There are some issues related to social awareness and directly related to planning for the society, like water conservation, social forestry, conservation of energy resources, these issues are handled by the government and by some nonprofit organization (NGO). The social problem is made aware to the public to find out the solution by awareness campaign. And visual communication is the most effective communication in the public domain. Country like India, the visual campaign for social awareness plays most important role. The social issues related to the girl child, racism, drugs, breast cancer, and child marriages etc. are well handled by the visual campaign. The research paper is based on the role of visual media and its effectiveness for the social and health related problems. The cases will be studied to prove the impact of visual awareness on the social health.

Keywords: *Visual arts, Social awareness, Change, Emotional appeal, Challenges, Visual Communication.*

Research Problem: **Visuals campaign for society creates an impact on social awareness.**

Scope of the research: in the rural Indian society where the literacy rate is only 71 % and there are several faiths and beliefs about health and environmental issues.

Introduction: India is highly populated country. The population is full of various religion, faiths, culture and traditions. The larger population lives in a rural part of the country. The average literacy rate in India is 78%. The government of India has various plans to increase the literacy rate by 10% for every 5 years planning year. The growing population and the recourses are not matching to achieve the 100% literacy in the country.

The country is facing problems in the society to eradicate the social issues now governments as well as nonprofit organizations are working for women's empowerment, social issues like girl childbirth, social health issues like aids awareness, awareness about cancer, there are other issues like maintaining the cleanliness in the country for the better environment. The clean India mission is one of the successful campaigns running through various media of communication. Another mission is the cleanliness of river gangas. The major environmental issue like conservation of water is handled throughout the country. In this paper, the details major social issues are studied and the visuals used for social awareness are analyzed.

Case study: Water crisis in India

The country is widely spread, majority of the population lives in the rural areas. The main occupation of the rural people is farming and agriculture. The water is an essential factor for the agriculture. The water is reserved in the big and small water reservoir and supplied through the canals for the agriculture. The areas where the canals and the water reservoirs are not built the farming is dependent on the ground water and the farmers digging the tube wells extract the water for their farming. The main source of water is rain water, the level of ground water is declining day by day and it's difficult to pump the well water. The rain in the country is not very regular; enough precautions are not taken to store it for its reuse. By end of the year there are states in the country facing the water problem and experiencing the drought. The non government organizations and the government have taken initiatives to educate common people for the conservation of water. Lets us study the reality of the water crisis the causes and the actions.

Despite the recent rapid growth in the services and industrial production, agriculture is still an integral part of India's economy and society. India's agricultural sector currently uses about 90% of total water resources.[1]Irrigated agriculture has been fundamental to economic development, but unfortunately caused groundwater depletion. Due to water pollution in rivers, India draws 80% of its irrigation water from groundwater.

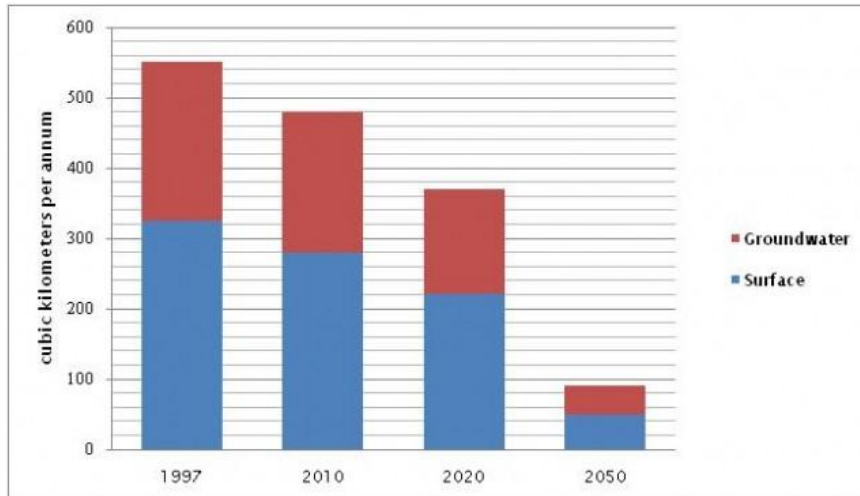


Figure 1: Utilizable water, demand, and available water surface.

Source: World Bank Report on Water in India

India's water crisis is often attributed to lack of government planning, increased corporate privatization, industrial and human waste and government corruption. In addition, water scarcity in India is expected to worsen as the overall population is expected to increase to 1.6 billion by year 2050. To that end, global water scarcity is expected to become a leading cause of national political conflict in the future, and the prognosis for India is no different.

India's supply of water is rapidly dwindling due primarily to mismanagement of water resources, although over-pumping and pollution are also significant contributors. All these problems related to water crisis are directly affecting to a common man and hence the awareness program about the water conservation needs to be designed.

The country like India where the population and the illiteracy are the problems, the visual campaign may help the public to understand the severity of the problem. The posters, banners, visual catalogs, brochure and press advertisements full of visuals are helpful. The visuals create impact on the minds very quickly. A single visuals speaks thousands words and communicate the appropriate message.

Indian woman and water crisis: In the Indian rural society women are generally take care of the household works like storing of grains, storage of water. According to the Data released by National Sample Survey Office, economic growth may not have touched the lives of these women and water crisis is looming in villages because of overharvesting of ground water. Every second woman in rural India walked an average 173 km to fetch potable water. With per capita availability of water in India falling the report shows that dependence on depleting ground water for drinking purposes in rural India is on the rise as more accessible sources are drying up. The women had to toll more as the traditional water sources are drying up. The NASSO statistics show that more households are dependent on tube wells or bore wells as principal sources of drinking water in 2012 compared to previous years. About 80% of the country's drinking water needs are met by ground water that is highly contaminated. The NASSO statistics reveal that less than 10% of rural Indian households have the facility to treat water before consuming it while the findings say that 90% of the families get safe drinking water. This data is based on the households' claims and not any scientific study. Even after so many years of Independence potable water remains a distant dream in most of the rural India.

Visual Communication through media:

- 1) Press media
- 2) Posters
- 3) Social media
- 4) Television
- 5) Internet



Fig.2 visual communications about drought through Press media



Fig.3 visual communication using photographs

Fig 2: the photo montage used in news paper article with the map of the region where the water crisis position is very critical, the news paper is one of the media to describe the conditions realistic as well as serious ways. The photo montage is the real scene observed in the state. One of the major issues is to fetch the drinking water, women of the family take the responsibility to store the water and they fetch drinking water from distance of kilometers. The drinking water sources are limited. And there is no proper distribution system by the local government authority. Another photograph (fig.3) is self explanatory showing the extreme condition of farm land. The cracked soil is showing the deficiency of water in the field. The shirtless boy sitting with his head buried in his hands adds to the severity of the condition. Thus the photograph is used to explain the issue of water crisis in the region. India water crisis is the visual campaign for the awareness and consequences of drought in India. in this visual campaign , photograph of school children shown depositing their left over water in the tanks, later on it will be used for some other purpose. This way the children are learning value of the elixir of life and its conservation.



Fig: 4 visual communication using photographs of school children depositing unused water.

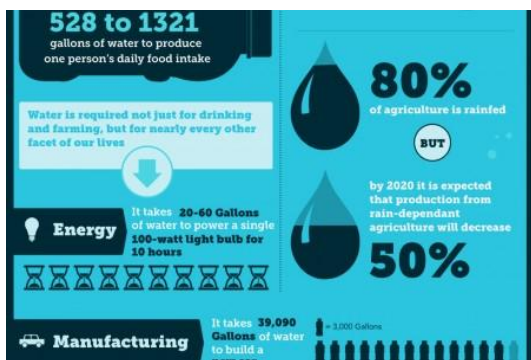


Fig 5: Info graphics used for social communication



Fig6: banner on web media

The info graphics about the water shows details of the use and importance of water into day to day life it is not only that the water is required to produce the food but it is required for the every facet of our life, like to produce energy, in all kind of manufacturing and industrial productions of goods. The visual used to communicate this is simple graphics.

The visual awareness campaign is not limited to print media but there are other visual Medias through which the message can be delivered. In the country like India where the illiteracy and population are the major issues the visual campaigns are run to get success in two ways the separate campaign for the urban area and separate for the rural areas. Their understanding level and problem areas are different. In the rural areas the water source is only one and it is fetched from the common source, where as in urban areas the water is supplied through the pipeline system by the city authority. But for the conservation of water the targeted audience is an individual. The posters, wall paintings, and even the information brochures can best be used in rural areas, the television advertisements, social media advertisements, awareness stickers, press releases, flash hoardings, and badges are the best communicative visual media for the urban target audience. The nonprofit organizations are active in the awareness program through their volunteers they reach to the drought areas for the awareness. The people are made aware by showing the visuals how they can contribute in the water conservation program by adopting and implementing the rain water harvesting system with which they can store the rain water and reuse it.

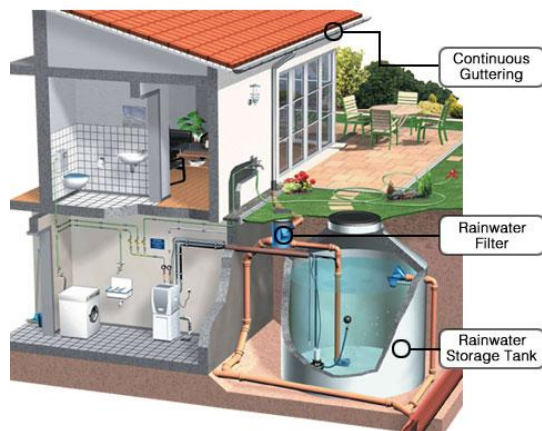


Fig7: Rain Water harvesting explained through visuals.
Source: Water field technologies, Mumbai, India

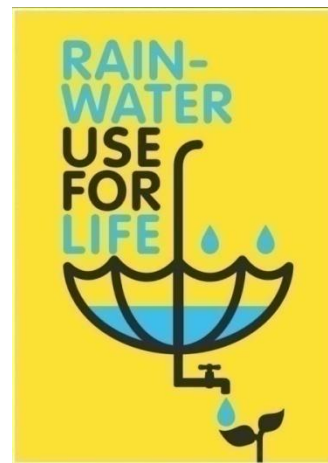


Fig8: State Government used this poster for the awareness program

The State government of Telangana has taken initiative and made it mandatory to contribute in the rain water harvesting campaign they made it mandatory for the colonies and the builders to construct rain water harvesting unit in their premises at their costs. The technical support will be provided by the government. They have developed a separate portal for the information and technical support for rain water harvesting.

The government and the NGOs organize school level competition for the students to show their talent through visuals for the subject like water conservation. In picture drawn by kids for the competition shows how the urban and rural crowd is suffering from the water crisis. It is very creatively and rendered the activities of urban cities where the water is consumed and ultimately affects the source of drinking water for the rural people. One of the basic reasons for this is the unequal distribution of water supply.



Fig 9: The visual drawn by kids in the completion

NGO'S STUDY HIGHLIGHTS FAULTS IN THE CIVIC BODY'S WATER SUPPLY SYSTEM top story 20% WATER IS WASTED DUE TO THE PIPELINE'S IMPROPER DESIGN

Faulty pipeline, illegal connections, seepage LEAD TO WATER CUT

Manasa Kund (Belt)
 City-based Nagarjuna Charita March (NCM) has petitioned the Pune Municipal Corporation (PMC) for stopping a 50% water cut in the city. The NCM stated it would ensure hard water for citizens.
 The march had set out to study a few places and about the problems in the water supply system in the city. It highlighted seepage from the civic body's water supply system that degraded Pune's water quality and health.
 The study pointed out that there are various leaks in the design of the pipelines, from old water meters to illegal water connections. There is a need to upgrade water supply and to build a smart water supply system.
 The study stated that the civic body is losing that amount to Rs.10 crore every year due to leaks of pipes. In 1997, the state government had asked the civic body to measure about 500 TMC water in the city every year to conserve water. But the civic body did not implement this request and accordingly, it has been paying the bill to the state government since 2004. The NCM claimed in the study.
 The study pointed out that the due to the faulty pipeline design that brings water from Khandasriya reservoir to Purnani water works, nearly 50% of the water is leaked. Moreover, illegal water connections and water leakage through old pipes are common. Former municipal commissioner Pravin Patil had accepted in a report that water supply would have been cut for 10 days if not for the water cut.
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Fig 10: The awareness through the photographs published in the news paper

Fig10: The news paper as a social media works to create social awareness amongst the public it is the mediator between the government authorities and the common public. The problem related to the regulations of water supply is continuously monitored by the news paper media. And create awareness about the water leakages if any in the city. The poster is well explained through visuals. The city Bangalore has no river flowing through it juvenate its ground water. Rainwater harvesting is the only way to rejuvenate the water. The city is surrounded by lakes and these lakes recharged with the rain water will help to store well.

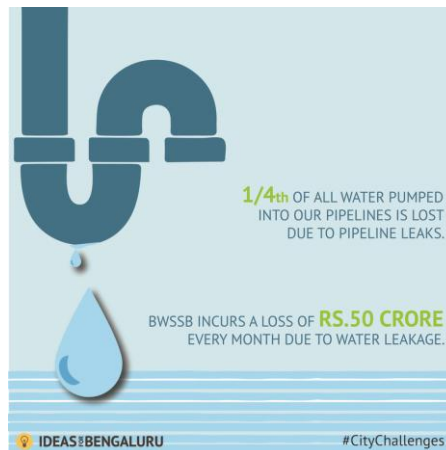


Fig 11: simple graphical presentation to make aware about the linkage problem. Source: poster design by Nandan Neilekani



Fig:12 (A)



Fig:12(B)

The NGO, I GO GREEN FOUNDATION published posters for visual campaign

Role of NGO : the nonprofit organizations or non Government organizations are working and active in the save water campaign foundations like I Go Green Foundations are working for environmental education through Sensitization programs to schools, colleges, organizations and CBOs (Community Based Organizations) and promote eco friendly solutions for sustainable development. The organization educate people about waste management, rain water harvesting, Promote rain water harvesting structures (WHS), indoor plants and Roof Gardens. Simple posters are designed to communicate the importance of water for the safe future. The fig. 12 (A) & (B) shows simple things to do for the safe future. The visuals conveys idea of thousand words the style of illustrations especially used to communicate simple message to kids about the water conservation. The forms of visual stickers are used in very playful manner so to convince the children.



Fig13: The playful stickers are created for kids to make them aware. Source: Bal Bharati Public School



Fig14: The simplified illustrative style used for social water conservation campaign.

Government of India Initiative on the water conservation: The Union Water Resources Minister Sushri Uma Bharti launched a user friendly android based mobile application *Jal Sanchayan* that helps user to understand and know more about Rain water harvesting .It allows user to know about the potential rainwater harvesting for the users location.

Conclusion: the social problem like water conservation is not limited to a certain region or a particular geographical location. The study shows that it is a universal problem. A Country like India is facing this problem because of lack of planning and distribution method. Another reason is unawareness about the consumption and resources the growing population and the supply of food and water are disproportionate. The urbanization migrants in the city are another problem as the farming fields are facing the shortage of water the fields are becoming infertile. The farmer is completely dependent on the rainwater, the irregularity of the rainfall created problem for the irrigation. The level of groundwater is going deeper. In such conditions recharging the available water sources is very important. The awareness campaign is helpful. It is evident from the visual campaigns running through various media that it has created awareness among the people. The campaign is made more effective by using visuals. The visuals change according to the media and target audience. The result of the survey proves the reaching ability of visual campaign.

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