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Title of Abstract: Role of communication and culture in social movement: A case study of the Anna Hazare's anti-corruption movement

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ABSTRACT:

Social movements after the Second World War were in the form of ecological movements, feminist movements; black movements etc .These kind of movements came to be known as new social movements. The new social movements have four basic features such as aim, social base, means of action and organisation. The social movement literature has reference to meanings, beliefs, values and the notion of ideology. The link between culture and social movements has been established by Kane (1997) and Williams (1995).

The anti-corruption movement carried out by the Gandhian Anna Hazare was one such new social movement. The anti-corruption movement was one of its kinds in the post-liberalisation era in India. After the Jaiprakash Narayan movement in pre-emergency days, India has not witnessed any reform movement or mass movement of such a magnitude. People came out in large numbers to support Anna not only in India but across USA and UK; where there is a sizeable population of immigrant Indians. Mobilisation of people for social movements is dependent on several factors .One of the key factors is media, it played a crucial role. Anna Hazare was all over the 24x7 news channel and the newspapers. People were also using mobiles and internet to spread awareness about the various local campaigns organised in support of Anna Hazare. The study would examine the various media reports on the issue and draw its conclusions.

Effective leadership is another important factor for the success of a social movement. The leader is the spokesperson of the group, the co-ordinator and the important participator in the decisions as to the goals and methods. The leader's role is important in the goal-achievement and strengthening of the movement. Anna Hazare provided all the essential characteristics of a leader for the social movement.

This paper seeks to analyze the movement in the framework of the theory of collective behaviour propounded by N.Smelser. It also seeks to examine the role of communication and culture in the success of garnering support of the masses by Anna Hazare, which was one of the key elements of his anti-corruption movement.

PAPER:

INTRODUCTION:

The term social movement was used first by Saint Simon in France to characterize the social protests that emerged in France and later elsewhere in the world. Now, social movement refers to the groups and organization outside the mainstream of the political systems. They are important source of political change. In earlier sociological literature collective behaviour and social movements were part of the same social phenomenon. Later sociological literature

differentiates between collective behaviour and social movements. One school of sociological thought treats social movements as a special case of collective behaviour. Social movements are purposeful and organised; have specific goals, formal organization and a degree of continuity

Alan Touraine, a French sociologist is of the opinion that social movements should be at the centre of sociology. Touraine treats social movements as one of the most fundamental forms of citizen action, but also wants the sociologist to join the action and not just study it.

Oomen conceptualises social movements as “those purposive collective mobilisation, informed of an ideology to promote change or stability, using any means-violent or non-violent-and functioning within at least an elementary organisational framework” (Pg11)

Blumer illustrates the transition from collective behaviour to social movements. During its developments, the social movement acquires organisation and form, a body of customs and traditions, established leadership, an enduring division of labour, social rules and social values-in short, a culture, a social organisation and a new scheme of life.”

A sociological approach to collective behaviour is put forth by Neil Smelser in his Value-added schema. According to Smelser the determinants of collective behaviour are:-

1. Structural conduciveness
2. Structural Strain
3. Growth and spread of generalised beliefs
4. Precipitating factor
5. Mobilization of participants for action
6. The operation of social control

Social movements have undergone transformation with the passage of time. The social movement like feminist movements, environmental movements are called new social movements.

Harindranath, 2000; pointed out in an earlier paper that analysing popular protests and grassroots social movements in postcolonial societies require new conceptual frames that are appropriate to specific historical and socio-cultural contexts. At the very least, this demands an adoption of existing frameworks to suit local conditions. In this instance, any analysis the role of social media in the emergence of the popular anti-corruption movement in India needs to engage with the complexities that make up the contemporary Indian political landscape. Chatterjee’s distinction between civil and political society, and the way in which that informs the constitutive elements of this anti-corruption movement, seems at least a good place to start revising the relatively unconstrained and at times uncritical enthusiasm for the potential of social media to engender social and political change.

TIMELINE OF ANNA HAZARE’S MOVEMENT:

5 April 2011-Anna Hazare fast.Anti-corruption law.Jan Lokpal Bill.

8 April 2011-Government agreed that five members chosen by Anna would be part of the Lokpal Drafting Committee.

30 May 2011-The union government opposed the inclusion of Prime Minister, higher judiciary under the lokpal

5 June 2011-Baba ramdev arrested

6 June 2011-Members of civil society boycotted the Lokpal Bill drafting committee meeting due to forceful eviction of Baba Ramdev from Ramlila grounds.

8 June 2011-At Rajghat Anna described his movement as second freedom struggle.

28 July 2011-Government introduced its version of the Lokpal which kept the Prime Minister and higher judiciary out of the ambit of the bill.

1 August 2011-A PIL was filed in Supreme court by Hemant Patil to restrain Anna Hazare from going on fast saying that it was unconstitutional.

15 August 2011-Anna Hazare visited RajGhat prior to the fast

16 August 2011-Anna Hazare was arrested prior to the fast.

20 August 2011-Anna left Tihar jail

28 August 2011-Anna ends fast after 288 hours of fast.



ANALYSIS:

Based on Neil Smelser's views the Anna-Hazare movement can be broken up and analyzed under the following criteria: - 1. Structural conduciveness

2. Structural Strain

3. Growth and spread of generalised beliefs

4. Precipitating factor

5. Mobilization of participants for action

6. The operation of social control.

1. THE STRUCTURAL CONDUCIVENESS:-

The social structure should provide an environment for the growth of collective behaviour. In India post-independence there has not been a mass movement except the jaiprakash narayan movement in 1974. The government in 1989 liberalised the economy, to bring in private players as well as to accelerate the pace of economic development in India and to open the Indian market to global players.

Post- liberalisation, in India there has been rampant corruption and accumulation of black money. The media has reported a wide range of stories related to such instances. But lately the media has also been a part of it in the telecom scandal.

India faces large-scale corruption at all levels of government and the private sphere as well as in everyday transaction in the public sphere. According to the corruption Perception Index (CPI) of the Transparency International (TI) it is 20%; the nation is ranked a poor 87 among 187 countries with a score of 3.3 out of 10. Lack of adequate corruption legislation and economic liberalization provided further opportunities to those interested in amassing wealth through illegal means.

In the few months prior to Anna 's campaign against corruption eight major scandals have come to be known-the Adarsh Society, Prasar Bharati,2G scandal, Commonwealth games, IPL etc. The people involved in the scams belonged to the most influential echelons of society. The scams involved politicians cum administrators like Suresh Kalamadi,Politicians belonging to well established political families like Kanzimohi daughter of the Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu Mr.Karunanidhi,Mr.A.Raja the telecom minister; top journalist like Barkha Dutt, Vir Sanghvi, Army officers of the level of Lieutenant generals. Scams have always been present in Indian Polity, but not on such a large scale like the Bofors scam which rocked the Rajiv Gandhi government. The St.Kitts scam during the tenure of Narashima Rao as Prime Minister,the urea scam.In the last few years scam have become a part and parcel of Indian political and social structure affecting every aspect of a person's life.

The PERSONALITY OF ANNA HAZARE was also an important factor for the growth of the movement. - Hazare's use of Gandhian iconography and his adoption of the method of hunger strike are not only direct references to the anti-colonial struggles of 1940s, but they are also meant to evoke the ethics of satyagraha and the memories of grassroots, popular protest against the British administration that included diverse section of the population.xii

According to the Historian Ramchandra Guha"Inside every thinking Indian, there is a Marxist and Gandhian struggling for supremacy."

A Gandhi topi wearing diminutive man always looking serious, if not frowning, going through the rites of praying in Rajghat, of by and large being silent but always looking peaceful, smiling, what can even be called warm-hearted or loving. It is this image of the "Noble Gandhian "that has triggered the heterogeneous widespread communities who have come to put their faith in Anna.

Anna Hazare is unmarried. Since 1975, he has lived in a small room attached to the Sant Yadavbaba temple in Ralegaon Siddhi. In his village after his retirement from the army; he brought about development by water-shed management, fought for untouchability, alcoholism.He has been able to fight the local administration of Ahmednagar district with the help of Gandhian method of Satyagraha and non-violence.

The persona of Anna Hazare and the corruption cases together provided an ideal ground for the movement to begin. The people found in Anna, a leader around whom they could rally around as well as a person who would fight for their cause. The growth of media both electronic and new media provided an impetus to the movement.

2. STRUCTURAL STRAIN:

With corruption being rampant in every sphere of life. The common man has suffered a lot. He has to pay a bribe from getting his ration card to loans etc. Every political party and its members were involved in these cases. The people have got disenchanted with the politicians especially the middle class. The middle class is the group which represents the India Shining, the group which has been part of the liberalization process, has gained from privatization due

to its education and urban nature. In terms of numerical strength the middle classes form the fastest growing segment of India's population. While the exact number varies depending on the method of enumeration, still they are roughly estimated to be around 250 to 350 million; they form 20-30% of India's population.

The Anna Hazare movement did not have a formalized organization like political parties, nor it had a mass base throughout the country. It was not embodied in any particular ideology. In fact that is one of the major criticisms against the movement that it lacks ideology. It drew people from diverse backgrounds. Even when the opposition party leaders came to support Anna at Jantar Mantar, they were not considered as part of the movement.

3. GROWTH AND SPREAD OF GENERALISED BELIEFS

The Anna Hazare movement was successful as it was supported by the middle class. All the members of team Anna were middle class icons, urban and educated like Shanti Bhushan, Prashant Bhushan, Santosh Hegde, Arvind Kejriwal, Kiran Bedi, Swami Agnivesh. He was supported by Baba Ramdev and Srisri Ravi Shankar. ix Legal activism from the 80s has been driven by the middle class. Middle class can be defined by various criteria if education is taken as the criteria then 30 million households that is 1/8th of the total population form the middle class in 2010-Devesh Kapur. Anna was able to fire the idealism of the 21st century India's burgeoning middle class. Right to Information act 2005 provides citizens with the ability to demand information from the state. 2. The middle class in a somewhat muted way continue to retain their inherited caste/community based privileges and loyalties. As such the middle class often reflect the interests of and influence the ways their own communities would operate in the democratic system. 3. The middle class are equipped with "cultural Capital" that give them access, not only to the higher echelons of state institutions involved in policy making but also to print and visual media and global audiences in a web-connected world of Facebook, Twitter and SMS. 4. The metropolitan middle classes tactical alliance with the entrepreneurial class contributes to its political influence [VI]

The India shining-middle class dislikes the political class for three reasons-Governance, Disenfranchised from the state, widespread inequality in the distribution of economic benefit.

Media whether print or film depicts the anxieties of India shining. State is responsible for the delivery of goods. India shining-the middle class-pay tax-view corruption as contractual violation, theft of their money. India shining is mostly corporate

Telecom Company provided with a toll free number for people to support the cause, their energy could be seen around India Gate, they provided money to the movement, Facebook, Twitter pages.

The movement swung from being a mere spectacle to political wave. When the dabbawallas of Mumbai joined Anna it was historical in more ways than one. They had stopped delivering lunch for the first time in their 123 year history. What was being dubbed as a middle class movement had expanded to include other groups like Mumbai's municipal scavengers.

4. PERCIPITATING FACTOR;

The arrest of Anna Hazare on 16 August 2011 from his house even, before he had begun the fast. According to the spokesman of Delhi Police, Rajan Bhagat, said police arrested Hazare under a legal provision that bans public gatherings and protests at the park in Delhi. The Delhi police gave permission based on the conditions included restricting the length of the fast to three days and the number of protesters at the site to 5,000. Anna was produced before a magistrate, on the same afternoon i.e. 16 August 2011, who offered him bail but Anna Hazare refused to provide the bail bond. Anna was sent to judicial custody for seven days and taken to Tihar jail. Other members of team Anna like Arvind Kejriwal, Shanti Bhushan, Kiran Bedi and others were arrested from different locations in Delhi. Media reported about incidence of violence against the arrest across the country. The opposition parties in the country criticized the government action and equated it with the emergency days. Due to nationwide protests and demonstrations in support of Anna; the government finally had to give in to Anna's demand to let him continue his fast at the Ramlila Grounds.

On 20 August 2011 Hazare "left the Tihar Jail for the Ramlila Grounds." Hazare promised reporters "he would fight to the 'last breath' until the government gets his team's Jan Lokpal Bill passed in this session of Parliament, which ends on 8 September.

.5.MOBILIZATION OF PARTICIPANTS FOR ACTION:

Various factors aided in mobilising people for action. One, was the persona of Anna Hazare himself, the other was the composition of Team Anna all middle-class icons and the third was the use of media and especially social media.

Anna Hazare represents the contemporary Gandhi. A Gandhian with white Khadi and a Gandhi cap. He had a huge portrait of Gandhi behind him on the elevated platform. He adopted the Gandhian technique of Satyagraha and non-violence; but not the Gandhian ideology. He was able to gain sympathy from both the urban and the rural masses through Gandhism. The symbolism of a dalit and a Muslim girl to offer coconut water and honey to Anna to break the fast. All this was shown on Television screens which reached every home both India and abroad and helped garner support for the movement.

Within a few days of Anna Hazare's first fast demanding a strong Lokpal (on 5 April 2011), supporters across various cities of India started a campaign known as "I Am Anna Hazare", during Anna Hazare's second fast, the *topi*, the cap which Anna Hazare became synonymous with, became almost a fashion statement. Sales of the *topis* hit an all time high. [Kiran Bedi](#) declared that the "I am Anna" *topi* should be used as a deterrence method whenever someone asked for a bribe. She went to say that the *topi* should be always kept in one's bag and whenever anybody ask for a bribe, the *topi* should be shown to them.

SOCIAL MEDIA:

Sanson for example, claims that “Face book is an asset to political mobilization and organization because the power of the “network” is at its heart. Hazare’s use of Gandhian iconography and his adoption of the method of hunger strike are not only direct references to the anti-colonial struggles of 1940s, but they are also meant to evoke the ethics of Satyagraha and the memories of grassroot, popular protest against the British administration that included diverse section of the population.

Use of social media in mobilization of popular protest in the form of marches, demonstrations and public meetings in New Delhi and Mumbai.

Within twenty four hours of cabinet's endorsement of a weak Lokpal Bill, over ten thousand peoples from across the country sent faxes directly to the government demanding a bill with stronger provisions. The Mumbai Taxi Men’s Union, comprises over 30,000 taxi drivers have extended their full support to Hazare’s fast by keeping all taxis off the roads on 16 August 2011. Lawyers of [Allahabad High Court](#) described Lokpal Bill proposed by the government as against the interest of the country and pledged their support to Hazare by hunger strike at Allahabad on 16 August 2011.

ROLE OF MEDIA:

Herman and Chomsky-manufactured consent-role of media in creating public opinion.

Powerful visuals which made an impact on those of us who watched the refusal of Hazare to leave the Tihar jail even after he had been released until he got permission to fast and was given the Ram Lila grounds. While the movement is not a creation of the media, it has certainly helped in co-constituting it, not necessarily to neutral effects.

The most striking aspect of Anna’s fast was the way it completely captured the news agenda [viii].

The most striking visual representation of Anna Hazare’s movement-as it has been christened by the media-was a portrait of Bharath Mata in the vivid hues of Modern calendar art, holding the national flag in one hand, and while the other hand bestowed a silent benediction on all who had turned up to bear witness to hazre’s act of conscience. Under this dominant motif were the subsidiary images of Mahatma Gandhi, Bhagat Singh and other martyr’s in the cause of the nation’s freedom.xi

Comparing Anna Hazare movement with the freedom struggle

Second by second bulletins were issued on TV-about Anna’s health.

No discussions on the provisions of the bill.

The centre for media studies (CMS) conducted an exhaustive media monitoring exercise between 16 and 28 August 2011-involving two news channels-each in English and Hindi. The two Hindi channels-Aaj Tak and Star News devoted 97% of total news time during prime viewing hours (7 to 11pm) to Anna fast. The two English channels-CNN-IBN and NDTV 24x7 the corresponding figure was 87%. In the English channels, the figures were roughly about 65% of broadcast time for the Ramlila event, 23% for advertisements and the rest for news. The Hindi channels were not different in terms of total time dedicated to the Anna fast, but with advertisements occupying about 30% they had virtually no time for other news. It is also estimated that through Anna's 13-day fast, the viewership of English news channels increased by over 70% and of Hindi news channel by over 80%. (i)

The news clips were classified by their tone, 5,592 were positive towards Anna and his cause, while 92 were characterized as negative.

The Bennett and Coleman Co's flagship newspaper, the Times of India, was a stellar performer in mobilizing crowds for the Anna fast. The TOI's Delhi edition covered the 13 day event over 123 broadsheet pages branded "August Kranti", highjacking a talismanic moment from India's struggle against colonialism. Overall coverage included 401 news stories, 34 opinion pieces, 556 photographs and 29 cartoon strips. One seven of these days, the front page of TOI had eight column banner headlines. Negative stories if any were attributed to public figures like the Islamic cleric, A nationwide confederation of government employees from the Scheduled castes.

The newspaper launched a toll-free number for readers to give a missed call if they endorsed the demand for a strong lokpal bill.

On 26 August the TOI determined that the moral advantage from these exchanges had accrued to Anna with the loud banner that read: PM walks the extra mile Anna Unmoved." Two days later, the TOI reported the culmination of Anna's fast, which came about in ambiguous circumstances that fell conspicuously short of his maximal demand, under the headline: "Anna wins it for the people".

There was much discussion on the need for a strong Lokpal Bill, but no clarity on how it could be achieved. In the BIG FIGHT programme on NDTV 24x7 on 20 August 2011, the entire audience declared itself to be in favor of Team Anna's Lokpal bill. Yet no hands went up when the next question was asked about how many in the audience had actually read the bill.

People today are stirred up like never before over the quality of governance and willing to express themselves forcefully. And the 24 hour news channels that have multiplied over the last half decade provide them with a platform.

Within moments of preventive arrest effected to stop Anna from beginning his protest. Delhi's news channels had fanned out across the city to provide saturation coverage for the ensuing demonstrations. Traffic was thrown out of gear in several parts of the city when the crowds came out, but the media cared little. As the Delhi edition of TOI put it in its local

news page on 17 August:”City centers comes alive with marching throngs “And elsewhere under the headlines “Massive jams in City. But few were complaining. “The newspaper made a special effort to record that city commuters with nerves frazzled by the chaos were pacified by others who explained the issue at stake.

Clearly ,this seems that the pathway that the media is embarked upon, by its resolve to function as an echo chamber for the elite perceptions, amplifying and reinforcing them in every manner possible.

6. THE OPERATION OF SOCIAL CONTROL: The final variable for any collective behaviour to take a form of movement is social control. Social control basically are of two types; one which minimizes conduciveness and strain; the second type of social control is exercised only after the collective behaviour begins to mobilise. Depending on the kind of social control exercised the direction, speed etc is based. In the case of Anna Hazare once his fast was able to draw a large number of common men for their support, politicians from the opposition parties visited Anna at jantar mantar and they were not given due weight age by Anna and his supporters. Swami Agnivesh and Baba Ramdev also came out in support of Anna’s anti-corruption movement .When Ramadev organised a rally at Ramlila Grounds in Delhi ,one day before the rally the police showed their high=handedness in removing Ramadev and his supporters from the Ramlila grounds and later Ramadev was arrested and the media flashed photographs of baba Ramadev dressed up as a woman and trying to escape the police; it also carried stories of how people were beat up mercilessly and a woman volunteer had sustained spinal injuries in the process.

The police took this step as they did not want the anti-corruption movement to gain ground and simultaneously raids were carried out on the premises of baba ramadev’s ashram in Hardwar in an attempt to divert the attention of the masses from the real issue.

The baba ramadev’s incident did not cause any damage to the anti-corruption movement of Anna Hazare.

When Anna Hazare and his team were denied permission to go on fast at Ramlila grounds in August 2011.On the day even before the fast was to begin Anna Hazare and his associates were arrested by the government which acted as a catalyst for the movement to gather momentum. Anna Hazare and his anti-corruption movement were virtually relayed 24X7 all over the media-print, television and social media. The government hardened its stand on denying permission to Anna to carry on his fast in Delhi, but despite several attempts by the government emissary Anna refused to relent to the request of relinquishing his fast. Anna finally got a permission to hold the fast at Ramlila grounds as well as make the government agree to table the Lokpal bill in Parliament in 2011.

INDIAN CULTURE:

India is a culture that respects the ascetic: one who renounces material comforts and in the extreme instance nourishment. The persona of Anna Hazare has been compared to an ascetic as he lives in a temple in his ancestral village. Has no family of his own does not any large amount of property only a small piece of land and the pension he receives from the Indian Army. In his attire of wearing khadi and in his style of protests he has been compared by many to Mahatma Gandhi.

D.P.Mukherjee's most valuable contribution in terms of approach to culture was his identification of the Indian middle class as the key to an understanding of Indian culture. The middle class was a product of the economic colonial policy, on the one hand and social and educational policy on the other hand. This non-productive class played significant roles in Indian history: a)it contributed to the consolidation of the British rule; b) it led a successful nationalist struggle against that regime, c)it launched a socialist struggle d) it brought about partition of the country, and e) it became the main force behind planned social change in post-independent India. DP Mukherjee understood culture in reference to material conditions of life, yet he did not deny autonomy to culture.

The British rule in India resulted in the liquidation of the established middle class and the emergence of the spurious middle class. The restlessness of the middle class made it a counterfeit class and therefore its handiwork in the social domains of education, culture ,and politics as well as economy was bound to be of spurious quality.DP believed that it would be unrealistic that such an elite would lead India into along the path of modernization. But the middle class constituting the majority of the population has taken various initiatives in modern India. Many initiatives have been middle class initiatives like the dalit movement. The Anna Hazare movement also saw a large middle class taking part in it, supported by the corporate in terms of funds etc.

The NRIs abroad and their solidarity demonstrations also gave support and publicity to the movement outside the country. After announcements by Prashant Bhushan on local television, and social media sites (including Face book), a march of thousands in support of Hazare began from the India Gate to Jantar Mantar.People took out processions in various parts of the country which was largely comprised of the e working class and adult youths i.e. students.

CONCLUSION:

Social movement is based on the premise of remaking socio-economic and political arrangements. The Anna –Hazare anti-corruption movement wanted to bring about accountability and transparency in the government machinery which would help India to be a corrupt free nation. Many scholars would not consider it as a movement as it lacked in ideology. But new social movements have been of the similar nature. Anna 's anti-corruption movement fits the definition of Yogendra Singh of social movements, "Social movement is a process of collective mobilization of people in society in an organized manner under an individual or collective leadership in order to realize an ideologically defined social purpose."

On analysis of the various feature of collective behavior put forth by Smelser-structural conduciveness, structural strain, growth and spread of generalized beliefs, mobilisation of participants for action and the operation of the social control. In the analysis it is become evident that communication has played an effective role in promoting and strengthening the movement. All forms of media gave ample coverage to the movement which helped in garnering the support of the masses. The core members of team Anna were middle –class

icons which the masses were able to identify themselves with .These members also had a good public image like shanti bhushan,kiran bedi arvind kejriwal etc.The personality of Anna was equated to that of a crusader for a genuine cause for the masses. From the various evidences in the paper it is clear that culture and communication have played an effective role in promoting,sustaning and strengthening the Anna Hazare anti-corruption movement.

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