

“The Analysis of Sociological Functions of “Farsi 1”, (A Satellite TV Channel) On Iranian”

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Abstract: The importance of media in new era, is so much that is overstated what media says is actual and what is out of media is untrue. In other hand, media is became an accuracy and typicality. Media, and particularly satellite, is a significant force in modern culture, particularly in Iran. Sociologists refer to this as a mediated culture where media reflects and creates the culture. Communities and individuals are bombarded constantly with messages from a multitude of sources including TV, billboards, and magazines, to name a few. These messages promote not only products, but moods, attitudes, and a sense of what is and is not important. Media in different aspects pay to producing programmes and attracting audience and in this way they dominate on actualities and turn them to what they want. Also, the effects of media such as satellite, in globalization era, attract the attention of many researchers of social and communication sciences. In this aspect, the Farsi1 channel started to work in 2009, with telecasting serials which got so much audience. We can say that Farsi1 is partly a new phenomenon that choose a new process to other Farsi language channels, in the satellite and in a short period, the cultural, social, political and security aspects of this channel, is spread so much that this research allocated to it. This research has a sociological view on Farsi1 programmes. The methodology of this research is content analysis and sample Population of that is 31 serials of Farsi1. The findings resulted from a sociological approach. Majority of the programs consisted of long-lasting TV series. About the channel impacts on the audience, the study was affected by the observations and field research conducted by the researchers, as well as the audience's ideas recorded on the website of FARSII and some others internet websites. In this article, the author pay attention, especially, to the effect of Farsi1 channel on young people and women. In summary, we can say that FARSII TV channel has positive and negative functions, both explicitly and implicitly. By disturbing the balance existed between some identity, national and religious elements, and through imposing certain culture that is different from Iranian national and religious culture, the channel has negative function. However, disseminating Persian language, an Iranian basic identity component, and using it to attract the audiences from different political and ethical networks can be views as positive functions for FARSII TV channel.

Key Words: Media, Communication, Satellite, Farsi1, Modernity, Globalization, Sociology, Social change.

1. Introduction

Mass media plays a significant role in developing attitudes and transforming concepts to the audience [1]. Globalization and communication revolution has put the media in a special place. Having such position, the media has been closely interrelated with strategic concepts such as "public diplomacy"[2], and some calls it as "media diplomacy" [3].

Now along with communication development, the media plays a great role in culture building and socialization. The First and most important function of the mass media is to change attitudes. The media can create new thoughts and values. Because human being's behavior and action is a function of his attitude. The second function of the mass media is to develop new behavior patterns in different areas, such as changing clothing, life-style, architecture, patterns of social relationships, expression and speech. The media has offered a standard language that community individuals try to adapt themselves to it. Producing a new taste,

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new leisure patterns, demands and developing consumption are among other media functions. In this way, the media makes desired harmony of its own among society people.

Today, the mass media makes a great impact on the audience, especially in Iran, and has been very effective in changing their cultural and social attitudes is the satellite. So, Many Persian speaking networks use this media to broadcast their programs.

2. Research Methodology

The approach adopted for this study is content analysis approach. Using this approach, programs of FARSII TV channel broadcasted through one year and a half were analyzed. The findings resulted from a sociological approach. Majority of the programs consisted of long-lasting TV series. About the channel impacts on the audience, the study was affected by the observations and field research conducted by the researchers, as well as the audience's ideas recorded on the website of FARSII and some others internet websites.

3. Theoretical Discussion

Developments of mass media in human beings life are so high that the current era is called "communication era". Under media bodies, the people are being born and thinking. They perceive the universe from this perspective and organize their behaviors according to patterns obtained from books, magazines, satellite channels, internet and etc.

Psychological studies in the role and power of the media shows that media has such strong power that can create a new generation in human being history; a generation that would be likely very different form previous generations, in terms of culture, values, norms and ideas. By developing certain norms, the media can inspire individuals to accept that the behavior presented in the media is a "good social" behavior. So, the media can produce a harmony in the people by using certain norms and patters [4].

3.1 Media and Globalization

Globalization is a social revolution in which geographical boards and social and cultural norms are disappeared, and human relationships quality shapes with no time and place elements. To achieve this goal, proponents of this theory have taken advantages of mass communication tools including satellite, Internet and email as an important major means [5]. Today millions of communities are affected by the satellite programs. Unfortunately, many attitudes about the satellites programs are from security and political viewpoints and few have considered social and cultural impact, while the impact on social and cultural phenomena is more preserved. Discussing issues such as identity crisis, values crisis and its cultural consequences are among the objectives of cultural-social programs.

3.2 Media and Social Changes

Social changes consist of those transformations and revolutions happening during the history in living rules for societies and nations [6]. The media are among the major factors for social changes in the new age. There is plenty of evidence that confirms the undeniable influence of the media on managing and shaping public opinions. Through different methods, the media seeks to direct mental space for targeted group towards objectives and interests of rulers. One common way to achieve this is to benefit from attractive TV series [7].

Changing norms is among strategies that these programs use to meet the desired objectives. Sometimes to rule in targeted society, aggressive states try to change normative systems of the society towards target through the media and cultural measures, rather to impose the desired values. Such changes provide opportunities to change values and norms within targeted communities, according aggressive state's desired system. Changed the young's interests, clothing and hair models, literature and research sources, how to spend leisure, developing certain artistic schools, varied music, discontinuity and alienation from cultural customs and traditional culture among young generations and severed social structures are among consequences of changing value system in communities [8].

4. Introduction of FARSI 1 TV Channel

FARSI1 TV channel began to work with the aim of broadcasting programs for more than 100 million viewers across Asia. In July 31th 2008, the networks began to show advertising messages. Soon, it was placed at the head of satellite networks. FARSI1 is run by "Middle East Broadcast Company" that is a partnership company News Corporation and Moby Group [9]. From the early, the channel has been based on two distinct characteristics; Persian dubbed series and demonstrating long and continuous TV series. The network programs consist mainly of the newest and most popular movies and TV series. Most of them are being broadcasted every night. TV series categorize in drama, love, comedy, action and children classes, mostly released with mild censorship to the Persian version.

4.1 Audience

It seems that FARSI1 has paid much attention to entertain people. Before launching the channel, the founders had conducted field studies in IRAN, Afghanistan and Tajikistan and some other Persian speaking countries. The network, however, could find its position among Iranian audience, as Iranian new generation is eager to entertainment and FARSI1 meets this demand.

4.2 Why FARSI1

Considering the network programs shows that may elements to encourage the audience and families are observed. To clarify aspects of the subject, we refer to some components:

- To broadcast TV series from countries that have almost the same culture as Iran.
- To classify the audience, majority belongs to women and youth and the middle class.
- Iranian community is currently wants to keep distance from political debates and disputes. The community needs to engage in cultural activities and entertainment and FARSI1 have recognized this need and guide the community towards a certain culture.
- Tendency to FARSI1 is influenced by the visual attractiveness of this channel and using new modes impact.
- For most audiences, long TV series are attractive in terms of story and characterization.
- FARSI1 shows what the Islamic Republic of Iran would not like to show, such as sexual and illegal relationship.
- One of FARSI1 tools to attract the audience is to broadcast dubbed TV series.
- TV Series is the focus of FARSI1. So, the audience leaves any things away to follow them; like a puzzle, the audience follows the TV series to the end. Another technique adapted is that TV series are broadcast throughout 24 hour a day and do not leave the audience .So, the audience may be spend 4 or 5 hours in a day to watch the network.

5. Content Analysis for FARSI1 Programs

In the preset study, 31 TV series aired on broadcast in FARSI1 have been investigated. The main contents consist of family, entertainment and romance, having hot, new and albeit unfamiliar issues compares to Iranian culture. The network produces a modern discourse; the discourse that leads to create new literature, language, fields, and values in Iranian society. FARSI1 production seems to seek cultural reengineering. Cultural approach has been adapted, because in modern climate focus on cultural fields is more effective rather than political and economic areas. Investment required for cultural areas is also very low. Such expertly selection by the network must be considered as a factor to change and transform current cultural conditions of society.

Here, content analyzing for FARSI1 programs are developed:

- to strengthen feministic movement and to promote equality trends across the community
- to disseminate western-style social freedom
- To change and alter values, norms, culture and identity dimensions
- Leading individuals to certain life style explicitly within a foreign culture and inconsistent with Iranian culture
- Promoting extreme vulgarity in clothing and speech
- To consider national and religious occasions, ignoring political issues and focus on the family
- To collapse ethical and privacy taboos and normalize them

- To promote free illegal relationship.

Close observation and content analysis show that soon a special culture and a new type of family and social relationships will dominate the country through FARSII, because What the audience sees on FARSII is a collection of images that are attempting to represent a series of norms and normalize some others. But, by identifying cultural mode of Iranian society, FARSII attempts to run continuously, but slowly. FARSII attempts to not be known among Iranian families as a western media broadcasting obscene images, instead it tries to change individual values and demands step by step and offer its message professionally and implicitly through presenting western cultural symbols.

6. Sociological Functions of FARSII TV channel

Experience shows that observing the same meaning and theme on TV in a given period time can cause many impacts on minds. These effects are in most cases unconscious, and in particular they affect on subconscious mind. Therefore, changed values in individual minds can be gradually revealed in personal and social life and performance.

In this case, FARSII programs are living along with people and in long time they cause impacts such as dissatisfaction of life, reduced satisfaction, living as TV characters, and diminished family ties; as a result family may severely hurt as a basic social element [10]. Below are some sociological functions of this network:

- To target family; weakened family foundation and unstable social bases; de-identifying family concept as the smallest effective and independent social unit;
- To promote the feminist movement;
- Cultural dominance on Persian language communities;
- To intensify the conflict between tradition and modernity;
- To promote abnormalities and value chaos;
- Ignorance of moral principles and values.

7. Conclusion

In summary, we can say that FARSII TV channel has some negative functions, both explicitly and implicitly. By disturbing the balance existed between some identity, national and religious elements, and through imposing certain culture that is different from Iranian national and religious culture, the channel has negative function. The opponents believe that cultural changes may lead to political changes and provide a discussion incompatible with Islamic republic of Iran's. According to these groups, the media threats against Islamic Republic of Iran have been directed towards social phase, rather than political phase. In the light of this, Launching TV channels as FARSII that seems to have no certain political and thought trends can be investigated. These groups believe that threats due of the channel are dominant over its opportunities. Influences of FARSII on social and cultural areas are much more compared with other Persian-language satellite networks. This will practically caused weakened foundations of society and thinking.

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