A Study of Communication Methods Deployed by Saint *Gadgebaba* for Social Reforms

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Abstract

The interaction done by Gadgebaba and living give messages to people. The echo of Gadgebaba's life and life work for society got spread everywhere. It made the people lightened. The people did not remain as receiver but became self-lighted messages. One important indicator of good communication is that the message reaches effectively to the receiver. Expected message of Gadgebaba not only reached to the people but it brought out transformation among them. The people became Gadgebaba and they practiced it and taught others.

Keywords: *Communication Methods Deployed by Saint Gadgebaba.*

1. **Background regarding topic and need for the Study**:

New inventions & discoveries, science & technology and related aspects have certainly brought the moments of comfort and ease in human life. Several diseases, problems and difficulties got overcome. However, it ought to be admitted that new social and economic structures have created several problems for different communities in the world. Besides global problems, many local problems have led to and increased sorrows and miseries of people in India. Spread of globalization, liberalization, challenges before availability of employment, fierce competitions, depreciation in human values, religious and social tensions and conflicts, instability, various strains and stresses etc. Such aspects are polluting entire social life. It feels very necessary for definite preventive, diagnostic and curative measures to overcome these evils. In present circumstances, we see following two machineries working for social well being following own methods:

(a) Government Machinery.

(b) Voluntary agencies and educational institutions.

Above mentioned machineries are engaged in dealing with various problems of the people. Numerical increase of them is taking place. At the same time, social problems are also increasing with varied dimensions. Working of above mentioned machineries must be acknowledged. With due respect to them, it must be admitted that, the pace of the work should be accelerated. Not only this, the people should be made self-sufficient

to solve their own problems. Different communication methods (used by different individuals, organizations and social workers), need to be deployed.

This principle and fact, made the researcher to review the communication methods deployed by saint *Gadgebaba* (1876-1956) in Maharashtra.

(A) *Gadgebaba* was related with indigenous tradition. He had studied the problems of people in depth and closely. He had deployed communication methods and developed some skills which were based on the problems of people which he had studied. He was well informed about customs and psycho-social realities. His success was emerged through 'Trial and Error' Method. It can be said that the methods which he had deployed and the skills emerged out of it were empirical.

(B) He was deprived from different types of resources and co-operation. In those days, mediums of mass communication were not so improved and available too. *Gadgebaba* was born in a lower caste considered by the society (i.e. *Parit*). He was brought up in a adverse conditions. His entire family was deprived from formal education. He did not get adequate resource/support from people.

He followed a path of well being of people. Many times it was against the existing social current. Many values and thoughts, which he had advocated were of not 'convincing' to people. In these cases, he did not get social support too. His family members had silent consent for his work, however; it was not sufficient, so for the stormy work of *Gadgebaba* is concerned He did overcome these obstacles and succeeded in communicating.

(C) *Gadgebaba* was firm honest to own thoughts. For their execution, several times he became stern. It invited people's ferment. Even then *Gadgebaba* created faith among people and developed a network in society, which could bring out definite change in society. It was due to Gadgebaba's transparency, selflessness and intense appeal.

He had put imprint of his work, which has been survived still. Several persons are following the path of *Gadgebaba.* The inspiring motives created by *Gadgebaba* are important as they were emerged through his deportment and work.

The researcher felt the need for studying these inspiring motives, which are definitely useful for the machineries engaged in solving social problems. Besides it can be helpful for ordinary persons for becoming self-sufficient by overcoming problems.

Gadgebaba studied the social problems and suggested appropriate solutions. Nevertheless the studies and literature regarding the methods deployed and skill developed by *Gadgebaba* are not much available. This aspect (studying the methods deployed by him and extracting communication skills from it) led the researcher to select present topic.

2. **Objectives of the Research:**

2.1 To study the communication methods deployed by Gadgebaba for bringing out reforms in society.

2.2   To assess how far he succeeded.

2.3   To think as how far these methods (an the skills emerged out of them) are useful to deal with today's social problems.

3. **Assumptions:**

Following situations are accepted as assumptions.

3.1 The communication methods deployed by *Gadgebaba* for building neo society were

   effective.

3.2 His work brought positive transformation in some fields of society.

4. **Research Questions (instead of Hypothesis)** :

The nature of present research is descriptive and qualitative. Instead of hypothesis, some research questions are presented.

4.1 Which communication methods saint *Gadgebaba* deployed for interacting with people for extending own messages?

4.2 How he conveyed his messages effectively?

4.3 Which of these communication methods can be used today in dealing with current social problems?

5. **Operational Definitions (of important terms in research)**:

   5.1   Social reform -This involves a deliberate effort to bring about a change in social attitudes, culturally defined role expectations and actual patterns of

behaviour of people in desired direction through process of persuasion and public education[1].

5.2   Communication Methods - The methods of effectively conveying own ideas, thoughts, opinions or emotions.

5.3   Saint- A noble person having high, human, social values is described as saint.

He possesses some of following characteristics:

- Motherly affection towards all creatures (without discrimination)
- Sympathy for human problems, selfless service of people
- Overcoming certain feelings (such as anger, envy, double-dealing, unhealthy competitions, jealousy etc.
- Always insistent about welfare and well being of all creatures and compassion.
- Dislike regarding publicity, showmanship
- Aloofness about addiction, enjoyment and pleasure lovingness.

6. **Communication**:

Communication which has immense importance in the development of human culture. It is causative for cultural unification of human communities, their development and its persistence. In broader sense, communication can be described as exchanging of ideas, information or opinions. It takes place by speech, writing or visual means. Non verbal mode is also important in communication. Human life is futile in absence of communication. Persons interact; communicate with each other with the help of words as well as without words (such as signs, symbols, and gestures). Speech is prominent example of communication. In the same way, non verbal modes and aspect (face expression, feelings in eyes, physical movements, silence, negative communication, hair styles, clothing, arrangement of furniture and other things) also bring about communication. It touches all facets of life.

Albert Mehrabian States that communication consists of 55% body language, 38% tone of voice and 7% content of words.

Methods of communication[2]:

Major methods (and types derived from the methods) can be decided on following two aspects -

1. Among whom the communication takes place?
2. Which resources are used for it?

Communication process is related with creatures, especially with human beings. Hence it can consist of mixture of several methods and types. One particular communication can be of many methods and many types. They are supplementary to each other. However, considering its broad characteristics, prominent methods can be stated as follows:

(a) Methods according to different resources -

A.1 If a person interacts with speech, it is an oral communication

A.2 Interaction which takes place with the help of written things, is a written communication. Both of them are included in verbal communication.

When a person interacts through actions, expressions, it is non-verbal communication.

A.3 Visual communication is also a type of communication, which means conveyance of information, ideas or messages through creating visual representation. It is not discussed as it is not so important in present research.

(b) Methods according to number of receivers -

B.1 Intra-personal communication - In communication, there is a need of Sender as well as receiver. in intra-personal communication the person does not interact with other person. However, he interacts with self i.e. thinks and hence communication takes place. Generally when a person has to take a decision and roles of both (the sender and receiver) are played by 'self'.

When a person is alone, he realizes the process of intra-personal communication. Otherwise also when a person is interacting with other person or listening a lecture or traveling, this communication goes on. This communication takes place on one of the following levels or both -

b.1.1 Conscious intra-personal communication

b.1.2 Sub-conscious intra-personal communication

b.1.1 : Conscious intra-personal communication - while day dreaming and thinking for some problems a person is awake and alert. It is conscious intra personal communication.

b.1.2 : Sub-conscious intra-personal communication - In it, a person is not aware of the happening. In a real sense he has no control on it. Dreaming can be included in this type.

b.2 Inter personal communication : In this method, a person interacts with other person.

b.2.1 : Face to face communication - In it, the interaction and communication among sender and receiver takes place face to face. It includes real interaction along with physical and facial expression too. It includes personal touch and affection as well as more and more interaction takes place in it. It provides immediate response of the receiver. Hence it is considered as complete communication .

b.2.2. : Distance Communication : When the interaction is not face to face and some other mode or method is applied (such as telephonic talk, interaction through mobile, correspondence) it is distance communication.

b.3 Group Communication

When a person interacts with more than one person at a time, it is group communication. Group discussions, lectures, seminars are its examples Here, a size of group (number of persons in it) varies. Group can be a two types.

b.3.1 : Primary group - It consists of institutions like family, where communication takes place very frequently.

b.3.2 : Secondary group - It consists of various social groups. The members from these groups are bound to each other culturally.

Communication with masses - Here a person interacts with innumerable persons. The group (of people) is big in number as well as heterogeneous. They may be having different languages, culture behavior or cult & faith.

Some theories of communication3:

1. **Authoritation Theory** - This theory exists when the communication resources or mediums are working according to the orders of administrative chief (such as king, in-charge of army chief, even democratic rulers in emergency period).

2. **Liberal Theory or a theory of freedom expression** - This theory gives importance to freedom of expression .

3. **Social Responsibility Theory** - This theory has been emerged due to polar aspects from liberal theory. It is expected that the power of expression of newspapers should not overcome social responsibility (only by advocating freedom of press).

4. **Communism theory** - This theory advocates implied principle of workers' impact on media.

5. **Democratic participant media theory** - This theory condemns two drawbacks namely commercialization and monopolization which were emerged due to freedom of press theory. Besides this, present (democratic participant media) theory gives importance to democratic values, safeguards rights of citizens and minority groups and keeps away outer interferences.

6. **Bullet /Hypodermic theory** - It implies following principle :

The message directly attracts the receiver or audience. This theory shows utility of effective media as a best source for propagation.

7. **Psychological theory or a theory of personal differences** - This theory indicates that different persons give different responses to one stimuli. These different responses are received due to different motivations from the receivers.

8. **Personal influence theory** - This theory describes the influence of a person who communicates with people. Instead of message and its content, the edited information given by the persons puts impact on people. People accept the edited information.

7. **Methodology** :

Communication methods deployed by saint *Gadgebaba* are studied in present research. The study is conducted by applying principles of historical research. Historical research is described as an application of scientific method for describing and analyzing the events in past. Besides, case study and principles of other following methods are applied in present research too. Statistical aspects are of less importance in present research. The communication methods deployed by saint *Gadgebaba* for social enlightenment, transformation and improvement are studied here. Hence, the nature of this study has become qualitative. Content analysis is done here.

Sources of Data Collection -

(a) **Primary Source** - It includes the Marathi feature film *Mahatma Phule*, in which the *kirtan* of saint *Gadgebaba* has been included. The book (*Shri Gadgebaba*) written by *Prabodhankar* K.C. Thackre is a valuable resource, because Prabodhankar wrote the particular book by staying with

Gadgebaba. Besides, the remembrance by eminent personalities, *kirtans* and letters by *Gadgebaba* are included in primary source.

(b) **Secondary Source**: Discussion with different experts, academicians and social workers along with books, articles, movies are used as secondary source.

8. **Data Analysis and Presentation**:

The information collected from different sources got analyzed and edited. The information which was not required, bised, gaudy, untrue and the information only based on guess was kept aside. Selected and edited information was presented in the structure of research. It was analysed and final report was written.

9. Discussion and Findings:

The life and mission of saint *Gadgebaba* can be described as a continuous flow of humanity. He directed common man towards a good life for well being of self and society. He showed a right path to cruel, evil minded addict persons and powers. Throughout life he worked for the comfort of poor, depressed and deprived sections in society, women, lepers, unhappy persons, farmers, labourers etc. He performed the roles of social revolutionary and social educator successfully. He helped and inspired many social revolutionary reformers and persons working for education and upliftment of society. He attacked superstitions, injustice, inequality, exploitation, violence, idolism, excessive rituals, idolism, corruption, cheating. All the characters of the noble concept - '*saint*' are applicable to *Gadgebaba.* However, it is seen that instead of godliness, spirituality and emancipation, he preached and worked for well being of creatures and dreamt a society based on happiness and equality. Lacs of rupees were collected for the institutions and other work of *Gadgebaba*. The accounts and transactions of all these were very much clean and transparent. *Gadgebaba* dwelt a life of ordinary person. He intentionally avoided to get benefited from the property collected through his work. He criticized severely the persons involved in such evil things. Following forms were used by him in his work:

(1) **Kirtan -** *Gadgebaba* performed *kirtans* very effectively. Besides his ordinary appearance and torn clothes, *Kirtans* performed by him were very touching as they consisted of well being of human being and the animals, Hence, thousands of people used to gather to listen to his *kirtans* without formal propagation.

(2) **Letters -** *Gadgebaba* was illiterate. He utilized this form very effectively by dictating letters. Use of simple language, clear cut instructions and thoughts, intense appeal, praising of good conduct and sharp criticism of bad things, unbiasness, compassion, beauty of *varhadi* (Marathi dialect), presenting traditions and customs neatly are some of the features of the letters.

(3)**Institutioonalization of social work acivities** - So far spreading and continuing the work, *Gadgebaba* institutionalized it. He founded several institutions. Transparent, selfless transactions were features of such institutions. *Gadgebaba* handed over such institutions to proper persons for right working.

(4) **Co-operation to parallel working persons** - *Gadgebaba* cooperated the persons who were working for social enlightenment and social well being in total. He propagated the work of such persons working for society. In many cases he provided resource support to such persons. In various situations, *Gadgebaba* provided any sort of help to them. He saved several institutions.

(5) **Motivation emerged through *Gadgebaba's missionary* work and life** -
Gadgebaba's messages (though beneficial to people) were many times indigestible. However, his idealistic conduct and entire life was so transparent that it inspired the people.

(6)**Work through Journal** - *Gadgebaba's* work was documented in a journal (*Janta Janardan*).

The features of the methods deployed by saint *Gadgebaba* through his life and mission –

1. For the upliftment of depressed and deprived sections of society, *Gadgebaba* advocated the need of spread of education. He insisted on inner and outer cleanliness. He also advocated for human value based on discernment and free from superstitions. He propagated some socially important messages such as drawbacks of liquor addiction, animal slaughter, untouchability, money lending etc.
2. Institutions for the deprived and neglected creatures were established in which wealthy persons and ordinary persons contributed.
3. *Gadgebaba* could imbibe his thoughts in the religious persons and the atheists too.
4. While working, *Gadgebaba* condemned publicity strongly. He did not create own culture. His work got institutionalized and continued putting his imprint.
5. Besides social enlightenment, *Gadgebaba's* work for society organization is guiding to Government of Maharashtra for community organization, villages cleanliness.
6. *Gadgebaba's* work created an exception to the belief that only starry, wealthy and the persons who got backing and background of huge personality and history of work can do the hectic work of social building by solving various problems. *Gadgebaba* became an icon for the work for social upliftment as he worked with adhesion.
7. Communication requires sender and receiver. It also needs channels, mediums etc. However in case of *Gadgebaba* the communication became so effective in absence of some of the above mentioned requirements.
8. In the midst of 20th century, freedom movement, different movements for social equality along with various agitations for different ideas were in existence. *Gadgebaba's* contemporary work which was full of indigenous communication method received full support from people. It could bring about expected social change.

A new theory has been added in communication by the work of saint *Gadgebaba* as follows :
Spread of moral values through own conduct:

Gadgebaba lived and behaved as he spoke It inspired the people and enlightened their life. Expected messages of *Gadgebaba* spread in society like sweet smell without any means and propagation.

The interaction done by *Gadgebaba* and living gave messages to people. The echo of *Gadgebaba's life* and life work for society got spread everywhere. It made the people lightened. The people did not remain as receiver but became self-lighted messages. One important indicator of good communication is that the message reaches effectively to the receiver. Expected message of *Gadgebaba* not only reached to the people but it brought out transformation among them. The people became *Gadgebaba* and they practiced it and taught others. Innovative type and theory of communication emerged through it. Moral and noble values could spread among people through his conduct of *Gadgebaba.*

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