

POPULAR CULTURE, ITS INFLUENCE AND IMPACTS OVER TRADITIONAL MEDIA OF HMAR TRIBE OF CACHAR DISTRICT OF ASSAM

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ABSTRACT

Popular culture basically means the rapid changes and the system of global connection that occurs or happens through communication systems. This can not only be communication but transportation network and other modern technology. Popular culture due to its heavily influenced by mass media its collection of ideas and thoughts can creates a lots of impact in the mind of common people in the forming of a society. Popular culture in some way can also create a negative impact in the field of traditional media of the Hmar people.

The research paper is an attempt to find out the influence and impact of popular culture in the traditional media of Hmar culture among the hmar people of Hmarkhawlien and silchar area. The study is an attempt to know whether the popular culture is still holding the people in love with their traditional media and culture or it has taken them far away from their culture making them forget their culture and close to the foreign culture. Keeping in mind the importance of the area one village area and one town area has been selected for the study. The paper will also highlight whether popular culture should be accepted in a society where the tribal's people are rich in their traditional culture or it should be eliminated and banned in order to preserve their own culture and tradition. This study is based on primary data with selected rural and Urban areas from Cachar district. Primary data were collected by traditional, schedules and personal interview. Purposive sampling method was applied to collect data.

KEYWORDS: *Purposive sampling, importance, traditional, traditional, consumed, influence.*

INTRODUCTION

Popular Culture

Popular culture is the mix up of cultural products such as music, art, literature, fashion, dance, film, cyber culture, television and radio etc; they consumed the majority of a society's population. Popular culture has mass accessibility and appeal. The term "popular culture" was coined in the 19th century or earlier.

Popular culture is the media on the other hand which has been influence by outer country and keep important in our area. They are the culture and the daily style of usage which are being used

in outer world. It can also be term as pop culture or high culture. They are readily not available to everyone although it influence every person but they are nor reach to everyone as the folk arts, theatre, opera etc are associated with the upper socio economic strata and require more high approach, which are only available to high standard people.

Traditional Media of Hmar

The Hmars are believed to be migrated from China and settled first in Burma and scattered around Manipur, Mizoram and Dima Hasao in Assam and are recognized as a Scheduled Tribe under the 6th Scheduled of the Constitution of India They eventually stay in peace and harmony and settled in group, village chief LAL is the main head of the village.

The hmar still today adhere to their traditional culture through observing their traditional festivals like SIKPUI RUOI Which is also known as harvest festivals of the Hmar tribes, Tlaithar lawm is is a distinctive festival organized by village people in thanking of their first vegetable and fruits. From their birth to death they have lots of traditional festivals and customs.

Their culture are reflected in their folk songs and dances, Some musical instruments are Khoun (drum), Pheiphit (whistle made of bambo), Darmang (Flat brass gong), Seki (set of Mithun horn), Hnamut (Leaf Instrument), Perkhuong (guitar made by bamboo) etc. They are also rich in traditional dance like, Hranglam, Pheiphit Lam etc. Besides this they are rich in traditional dresses they have got all the dresses required to dress in a particular occasions, some of them are, Ngotlawng, Hmar-puon, Thangsuo puon, Ngoteker etc and lots more.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Literature is the integral part of the research process. It is comprehensive and broadens the knowledge base in the research area and helped the investigator the deep insight into the research problem.

- 1) John Storey (1992) discusses that popular culture provide channels for expressing socio-ritual, moral and emotional needs of a society or societies to which they especially does not belong.
- 2) Peter Burke (1994) opines that the traditional media are close to the hearts and minds of the people; so the popular culture influence is at a personal and intimate level. The popular culture can form a negative divergence of the people towards their traditional media.
- 3) Asha Kasbekar (2006) found out that in the present time, the traditional media such as music, folksongs and dances have become a very useful media of communication of the native people. But the strong influence of popular culture can overcome this and can create a barrier to the local communication.
- 4) Michael A Millett (2009) discusses that traditional folk media provide channels for expressing socio-ritual, moral and emotional needs of a society or societies to which they especially belong but if the pop culture creates impact than the people will forget all their traditional media and will come in assistance with the newly popular culture.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Primary source of data were used to collect for the study. Primary data are collected by questionnaire schedules; Purposive sampling method is applied to collect the data from the respondents. i.e. the hmar people residing from one selected village Hmarkhawlien with

population 87 and one selected town silchar with population 75 of Cachar district. Selected people like leader of Hmar student association, elder scholars, and village elders were also interviewed as they were well acquainted with the topics and which were very helpful for the formation of the study. Both male and female were chosen at the sample of the study. Keeping in mind less number of respondent simple random sampling was used to determine the samples. Total 162 samples were collected from total 325 Hmar people residing in the selected village and city.

Analysis and Interpretation Of Data

1) Distribution of correspondence on knowing their opinion whether Popular culture has got the potential to overtake the traditional culture of the Hmar tribe.

Sl no.	option	male		female		total	
		frequency	percentage	frequency	percentage	frequency	percentage
1	yes	44	45.83%	29	43%	73	45.62%
2	No	35	36.45%	25	37.87%	58	36.25%
3	Can't say	17	17.70%	12	18.18%	29	18.25%
4	Grand total	96	100%	66	100%	160	100%

The above data shows that most of the population agrees popular culture has got strong potential to attract people and influence them. More than 45% of them agrees to it and 36.25% of them disagree with it where as 18.25% of them does not know any answer to this.

2) Due to the influence of popular culture, some traditional media are being in extinct due to not in use. Do you want your old tradition to be preserved for younger generation?

Sl no.	option	male		female		total	
		frequency	percentage	frequency	percentage	frequency	percentage
1	yes	64	66.66%	32	48.48%	96	59.25%
2	no	13	13.54%	10	15.15%	23	14.19%
3	Can't say	19	19.79%	24	36.36%	43	26.54%
4	Grand total	96	100%	66	100%	162	100%

The above table shows that 59% of the people accept that popular culture has got influenced in the people and for that the people are forgetting their own traditional media. Only 14 % of them disagree, this shows that popular culture influence is much among the Hmar people.

3) Introduction of the new high culture and popular culture influence the traditional culture of Hmar?

Sl	option	male	female	total
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no.		frequency	percentage	frequency	percentage	frequency	percentage
1	yes	41	42.70%	28	42.42%	69	42.59%
2	no	22	22.91%	22	33.33%	44	27.16%
3	Can't say	33	34.37%	16	24.24%	49	30.24%
4	Grand total	96	100%	66	100%	162	100.00%

Popular culture is emerging at a rapid speed and for this reason the traditional media is going to be extinct by this. Knowledge regarding this has been taken as an important factor in order to know the hmar people that how they feel regarding this.

The above table shows that the Hmar people want their traditional media and culture to be saved from the new and popular culture as 43% of them agrees with it. Amazingly both male and female have equal percentage and only 27% of them deny it.

4) The pop culture and technology are influencing the people mind and culture, which in result create lots of modification in the traditional dresses and songs, dances etc?

Sl no.	option	male		female		total	
		frequency	percentage	frequency	percentage	frequency	percentage
1	Strongly agreed	56	58.33%	46	69.69%	102	62.96%
2	agree	3	3.35%	3	4.54%	6	3.70%
3	can't say	20	20.83%	12	18.18%	32	19.75%
4	disagree	14	14.58%	5	7.57%	19	11.72%
5	Strongly disagree	3	3.125%	0	0%	3	1.85%
6	Grand total	96	100.00%	66	100.00%	162	100.00%

New technology and popular culture are one of the main source influencing people and which creates modification in some of their traditional dresses etc. due to the influence of this many people have response positive as this creates them doing modification in their traditional dresses and songs even.

5) Do you think popular culture should be accepted among the hmar tribe?

Sl no.	option	male		female		total	
		frequency	percentage	frequency	percentage	frequency	percentage

1	yes	22	22.91%	21	31.81%	43	26.54%
2	no	41	42.70%	28	42.42%	69	42.59%
3	Can't say	34	35.41%	17	25.75%	51	31.48%
4	Grand total	96	100%	66	100%	162	100.00%

The above data shows that 26.54% of the population gives positive response and 42.59% of them have given negative answer. And, 31% of them are not able to tell anything about this. This shows that popular culture has also its importance in a society but it is not to be accepted in a hmar society and culture.

6) Distribution of correspondence in order to know whether People of the urban area are mostly influence by popular culture than rural area.

Sl no.	option	male		female		total	
		frequency	percentage	frequency	percentage	frequency	percentage
1	yes	42	43.75%	36	54.54%	78	48.14%
2	No	24	25%	16	24.24%	40	24.69%
3	Can't say	30	31.25%	14	21.21%	44	27.160%
4	Grand total	96	100.00%	66	100.00%	162	100.00%

The above data shows that popular culture has mostly influence the people who are in urban areas as 48% of them have accepted the question where as more than 27% of them are not able to tell anything and only 24% of them do not agree with this.

Summary of Findings

The demographic profile of the respondents can be summarized as follows-

Total 162-questionnaire schedule was used to gather the first hand information. Here, attempt has been made to analyze the profile of the respondents in cachar district of Assam.

The table shows that the hmar people believe the newly popular culture has got strong potential to overtake the traditional media of hmar. They believe that the popular culture can be strong in influencing the hmar culture as more than 45% of them agreed to it, so it strongly shows that the popular culture can overtake the hmar traditional culture.

The majority of the hmar person agrees that some of the traditional media of hmar has got extinct due to the popular culture influence as more than 59% of them have agreed to it and only 14% of them have disagreed to it. They feel that their culture is in danger and they want to preserve their traditional culture from the new popular culture.

The Popular culture has its influence in the traditional culture of the hmar. The above data shows that new culture is emerging very high and it has got influence in the hmar culture. 42% of them agreed to it, so it shows that the popular culture is influencing the traditional culture of the hmar.

The above data shows that the popular culture has brought modification and changes in the traditional media of Hmar as 62% of them have agreed to it. This means that there has been changed in the traditional media of Hmar and they will never like to have modification and changes in their traditional media.

Popular culture which is the new culture and mostly the influence of western culture is mostly mixing up with the culture of native people. The above data shows that the hmar people do not want the popular culture to be accepted in their society and among their tribe. But around half of the populations have not answered anything about this as they think that popular culture mostly does not have negative impact too.

However the reason be many, but according to the data collection and interpretation we can see that urban culture has mostly got much influence among the respondents as they led them forget their own, but rural person are stick in their old tradition and they do not want any modification at that and they even don't want it to be accepted.

CONCLUSION

Popular culture comprises mostly all new forms of communication, which may be in the form of dance, songs, music, arts etc. An attempt has been made to know the reach and role of popular culture in the existing Hmar culture and traditional media. The study reveals that the traditional media is regarded very important in the formation of their culture by the hmar people.

It cannot part away from them as long as they are Hmar. Traditional media carries significant meanings of yearly important events. Every tribal traditional media depicts the different important occasions of the year. The popular culture after the introducing among them has create lots of changes in their thought and minds. In some way it has even change in their traditional folk music, dances etc.

Today the practice of traditional media is losing its stands though preservation of its importance remains enforced. It is because of high standard of modern and popular culture influence. Changes in the traditional practices among the Hmar can be seen due to many factors like modern education; coming in contact with other culture, settling down from rural to urban etc. The rituals are too heavy or difficult so people lighten it in the present time, as these are very tough to follow in present society.

Popular culture has lots of impact in the traditional media of hmar. However people does not have strong negative impact but it has strong potential to influence them and that is the reason they don't want it to accept in their society. It is also seen that popular culture has mostly influence in the urban areas rather than the rural areas .If the people especially the urban folk are taught through the traditional means of communication then they will also have more and deep feelings and love toward their own traditional media.

Since the modern society is forgetting many of the culture and tradition, due to the popular culture influence it would be good if a refresher course or conferences are organized from time to

time as rural folk did not have much influence till now. So they can be made aware from this and can be kept far away from the reach of popular culture.

Although we are marching to the modern society, the originality of our culture and tradition are not losing but started giving more importance than earlier days, trying to recover what we have lost. Level of understanding will be high if a community is communicated through traditional media because it exists with them. But if the influence of popular culture with the new media happens to access in the same way than it will not be far when the native tribe people will mostly forget their own traditional media and adopt the new and popular culture.

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