

Propaganda of Women Empowerment Exposed through the Cartoons of R.K. Laxman

Dr. Kasabe Prashant Dhondiba
JET's Zulal Bhilajirao Patil College, Dhule (MS)

Abstract:-

It is noteworthy to note that cartoons are utilised as authentic material for the teaching, learning and understanding for the English language, literature of women's development & upliftment in Indian society. A cartoon is first and foremost a drawing. It is a full-size pattern for implementation in painting, tapestry and mosaic. It is a self-governing art of infotainment. Laxman's cartoons can be studied for applying pragmatic, theoretical and grammatical aspects. Laxman's cartoons fully loaded with multiple dimensions. A cartoon executes multi-dimensional functions as an art form. A cartoon imbibes as well as plays moralistic, pedagogic and educative roles. Cartoons assist to wash out the evils and misfortunes from the society in an indirect and democratic way. Cartoons unconditionally take liberty to laugh at the idiocies and the pretentious tendency of political parties' policies, propaganda for the common, poor, and middle class society. A cartoonist elucidates the irrational behaviour of the social order. Cartoons make social awareness. The art of cartooning imbibes slanting or diagonal messages to the society.

The fundamental goal of a cartoon is to attract public attention to contradictions in socio-political development of women, children in the cultural spheres of life. Cartoons circuitously uncover the imbecility, double standards and deceitfulness in human behaviour and thereby generate curative laughter. A cartoon is normally entertaining but may be positively vicious. A cartoon is very open in the sense that it is more effectively illuminating than a weak article. Cartoons and Cartoonists allow us to laugh at by attracting our concentration to something that is unfathomable, unexpected and atypical. Cartoons bring into light aspects of a distinguished personality in the field of politics, social work, cinema, business and so on. The purpose is not to rub the wrong way or to disapprove with a view to correcting them. The motto of the cartoonist is 'correction through entertainment'. The cartoons are ongoing commentary of the societal factors. The cartoons are the spokesperson of the cartoonist, who tries to disclose hard-core reality of the society. The Common Man in the cartoonist of R. K. Laxman is the keen eye witness of the socio-economic development of the nation, cultural, geographical and political changes in the country. An old Common Man attempts to be the voice of the people, who are voiceless in their opinions. A bushy moustache old Common Man turns out to be an archetypal of all the common people.

Keywords:- Propaganda, Women Empowerment, Exposed, Cartoons, R.K. Laxman, etc.

Research Methodology:- For the present research paper, the researcher has used explorative method. Laxman's cartoon will be read and studied to impart message to the readers in an indirect manner.

Introduction:-

Indirectness and authenticity are dominant qualities of cartoons, which are used for the teaching and learning of the English language and literature. Words are used to gratify our needs and words can be used directly and indirectly. 'A picture is valuable than the theoretical words'. Accordingly, there are direct and indirect speech acts. It is relatively easy to encode and decode direct speech acts, because there is no inferring. The meaning is naturally accessible. The objective of the speaker is openly stated. It is a bit challenging to encrypt and decrypt circumlocutory speech acts. The researcher would like to elucidate various points of view with the help of literary example. Suppose, there are two lecturers teaching adjacent classrooms, one of the two is very good at classroom supervision whereas the other is very poor classroom controller. As a result, the second lecturer's class is very ear-splitting. After the class, the first lecturer goes to the supervisor's office

and condemns the second lecturer using the opening lines from W. B. Yeats's *The Second Coming*, which are as follows:

*Turning and turning in the widening gyre,
The falcon cannot hear the Falconer,
Things fall apart, the centre cannot hold,
Mere anarchy is loosed upon the world'.*

(Lines 1-4)

Suppose the second lecturer eavesdrops and charges the first lecturer of backbiting and condemning, the first lecturer can say that he was not criticising anyone; he was just narrating lines from *The Second Coming*. Thus, the listener cannot consider the speaker accountable for criticising his poor classroom management skill. There is no linguistic validation that the listener can produce to prove that the speaker was accusing him of pitiable classroom management.



I am proud of the spectacular transformations and improvements which are taking place among women of India.

The present cartoon shades light on the predicament of women in all the States of our Nation. India is a culture and nature of contradictions and ironies. There are prodigiously rich people, business tycoons and there are people who don't get even one meal a day. The gulf between the rich and the poor is very unfathomable. India is a completely under the clutches of patriarchal society. Men play a dominant role not only in the family but also in the politics, business, and women are quite submissive and secondary, women especially those in the rural areas of all over the country. They toil very hard. They do the cooking, washing, cleaning, giving birth to children, as well as nurturing, and many more. They take care of the family members from children to oldies. When they complete their household chores, they work very hard on the sites of buildings, mining and farms. Those who do not have any agricultural land work as employees, labourers, domestic helpers. Many of them work hard at construction industries. What is more agonising to note is that many of them do physical work and carry their children with them. Despite governmental schemes, policies and effort to empower women, they keep on powerless. They are meant to hard work, maltreatment and ill-treatment.

The cartoon displays some women working quite hard on a construction site. We observe one lady mixing sand, cement and water with a shovel. Behind her there is another woman who is carrying her child in her arm and carrying a load of mixed cement and sand on her head. A third working woman is climbing up steps or a ladder and carrying an iron basket filled with sand and cement. It is only the women who are shown working and toiling hard for their bread and butter in the picture. The men in the cartoon are not doing any kind of work. One person is reading a newspaper and other men are watching at the woman who is climbing up a ladder. On the one hand, we have not succeeded in developing the predicament of women in general and on the other, India boasts of winning miss universe and miss world crowns.

There is a match between the newspaper headline (Miss Universe, Miss World) and the caption of the cartoon (*I am proud of the spectacular transformations and improvements which are taking place among women of India*). It is ironic that this transformation and enhancement is taking place among exclusive and elite class women alone. When we put next to the newspaper heading

and caption of the cartoon, we notice similarity between the two. At one level, the cartoon fulfils the quality maxim. In other words, when we read the newspaper headline and the cartoon caption, we comprehend that the speaker is telling the fact because miss universe and miss world awards are symptoms of some kind of revolutionary transformation and improvement in the position and role of women in India. But when we juxtapose the cartoon caption and what the women in the picture are doing, we can say that the speaker is telling an untruth because what the women in the cartoon are doing does not support the claim that there is transformation and development in the condition of women in India. In this latter sense, one can say that the caption under the cartoon violates the quality maxim. Another maxim that the cartoon violates is the maxim of manner. The speaker's proposition is optimistic but the speaker's insinuation is negative. In other words, he says that there is improvement, but in fact, he means that there is no development.

With the help of this cartoon the researcher tries to focus on the diehard condition of the sugar-cane cutting labourers especially women workers in the Beed district of Maharashtra. The women labourers' predicament is unfathomable. Most of the women labourers' have been removing their wombs. It is happening because they think that they should not remain absent in the farm, and the foremen should not cut their daily wages. Such kind of thousands of cases are taking place in the so-called developed State, Maharashtra. All over the country we find the same condition of brick kiln women workers as well as sewage workers of India. The political leaders are busy in creating the propaganda of development but the reality is far away from all these news. The social, print media is busy in creating the fake picture of the women's development. The above cartoon has aptly focused and exposed hidden reality of the country.

The aim of the cartoon is not to criticise the policy makers but to show them factuality of the society. Instead of giving women free of cost schemes like 'free ration, favourite sister (Ladki Bahin)' they should get free and quality education to make them independent. Mahatma Phule and Savitribai Phule as well as Dr. Bhabha Ambedkar expect the real empowerment women to make the country successful. Mahatma Phule once said that, "If you educate a man, you educate an individual. But if you educate a woman, you educate an entire family and, eventually, a Nation". The Nation is in need of such kinds of policies and schemes.

Conclusion:-

The chief theoretical concept used in the study of cartoons here is that of circuitousness or twisting quality of it. A cartoon has two features to it—the pictographic feature and the linguistic facet. The pictorial aspect to some extent is considered as the direct speech or comment on the ongoing conditions. But the linguistic facet is considered as the indirect statement to uncover the deadly reality of the society. Indirectness is used to disclose double standard face of the socio-political leaders who are directly and indirectly accountable for the nepotism, corruption, illegal work and destruction of the harmony. This cartoon aims to unfold the terrible socio-economic, political, dying and moribund education system, and unending question of unemployment, etc. Today's generation is totally and blindly immersed and engrossed in the WhatsApp universities fake agenda of 'Mandir-Mashjid'. They easily become the prey to fake propaganda. It is also observed that critiquing the ongoing wrong-doings in an indirect manner is the different characteristics of art of cartooning. The cartoon tries to focus on the hidden face and double-standard nature of the political leaders as well as parties. They show off themselves as the custodian of the society but in reality they have been ransacking the resources of the country. Corporates, businessmen accompanied with the political leaders destroying the culture, nature and property of the nation for their own benefits only. Corruption has become the character of these political leaders. All these things are exposed by the cartoon and the cartoonist. R. K. Laxman's cartoons have truly recognised indirectness as the pivotal feature of his art of cartooning.

At the end the researcher tries to request to the society in general and the policy makers in particular that they should stop making the fake propaganda of women empowerment and implement policies for the real development of the women. If they are not capable to do then they



should come down from the power. If we want to make our country a Vishwaguru then factual women upliftment should take place otherwise the country as a whole will be in danger.

References

A. Primary Sources:

Laxman, R. K. *Brushing up the Years (A Cartoonist's History of India 1947 to the Present)*. New Delhi: Penguin Books 2005.

B. Secondary Sources:

Abraham, A. *The Penguin Book of Indian Cartoons*. New Delhi: Penguin Books, 1988.

Art, W. *Great Cartoonist and their Art*. Gretna: Pelican Publishing Company, 1987.

Austin, J. L. *How to do Things with Words*, New York: Oxford University Press, 1962.

Brown, G. and G. Yule. *Discourse Analysis*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983.

Bhandari, D. R. K. *Laxman: The Uncommon Man*, Mumbai: Bank of India, 2009.

Khanduri. R. G. *Caricaturing Culture in India Cartoons and History in the Modern World*, Cambridge University Press, 2014.

Orwell, G. *Animal Farm*. New Delhi, Peacock Books. 2004.

Patil, J. S. *Use of R. K. Laxman's Cartoons for Eng. Lang. Teaching*. Pune: Ave Maria, 2014.

Patil, Z. N. (Chief ed.) *Innovations in English Language Teaching*, Hyderabad: Orient Blackswan, 2012.