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Evaluation of advertisement and publicity scheme in the north-eastern region of India

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ABSTRACT

The North-Eastern (NE) region of India has been neglected till recently. It has not only been ignored from the development perspective but also finds minimal space in the academic arena. This paper will contribute to filling this void. It will highlight the lacunas as well as the silver lining while evaluating one of the crucial schemes, the Advertisement and Publicity Scheme in the NE States. The objectives of the paper are to examine the structure and efficiency of the scheme and to assess the performance of the scheme which aims to promote peace and counter the perceived feelings of alienation, insurgency, infiltration, and militancy in the NE States. The study has used qualitative and quantitative methods and tools for collecting primary and secondary data; a sample size of 200 beneficiaries have been taken, 25 beneficiaries each from the eight states of North East namely, Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Mizoram, Manipur, Meghalaya, Nagaland, Sikkim, and Tripura. It provides a detailed analysis of budget allocation, stakeholders, and the responses of beneficiaries. It answers the question of whether the scheme has effectively achieved its desired goals or not?

Keywords: Advertisement and Publicity, Scheme, Evaluation, North Eastern Region, Peace Promotion, India

1. INTRODUCTION

North Eastern States are one of the most volatile and insurgency-affected states in the country, India. Meghalaya, Manipur, Assam, Mizoram, Tripura, Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland and Sikkim are the eight states which make up the NE region. The thriving militancy in most of the NE states creates a hindrance in the relationship with the rest of India. With India's independence in the year 1947, such militant movements began early on. At one point in NE, more than 120 militant groups operated. Militants once enjoyed enormous support because they expressed legitimate grievances of NE people in their formative years, such as weak governance, alienation, lack of growth, and an apathetic attitude from the central government in New Delhi; however, this influence has been reduced in recent years due to good governance, proactiveness, and implementation of several Government of India (GoI) schemes in NE region. The GoI has been active in achieving peace in the NE states using strategies from diplomacy to military operations to root out militants. Thus keeping in view, the peculiar problems of the NE namely militancy, infiltration, and perceived feeling of alienation, Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA), Government of India (GoI) introduced the 'Advertisement and Publicity Scheme in North East (NE) States in the year 2012-13 (MHA, 2019). The scheme aims to promote peace and counter the perceived feelings of alienation, insurgency, infiltration, and militancy in the NE States. Presently, this scheme is in operation in the states of Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Sikkim, and Tripura.

Advertisement and Publicity Scheme for the northeast region is a central sector scheme wherein funds are devolved from the Ministry of Home Affairs to the implementing agencies for carrying out the functions in order to serve the various components under the scheme. Funds are allocated to the selected implementing agencies based on their proposal and past performance. Thereafter these funds are utilized by the implementing agencies to act in accordance with the accepted proposal, to meet the objectives of the scheme.

The implementing agencies under this scheme conduct various programs in NE states which help the populace of NE states to connect with the rest of India. Government seeks to harness the potential of network governance by incorporating private players and allowing them to augment the participatory approach. Initiatives taken under it, include, visits of youths of NE States to other States and Union Territories and vice versa by *Nehru Yuva Kendra Sangathan* (NYKS), promoted through journalist visits to the NE States, television and radio broadcasts, etc. Implementing agencies like *Doordarshan* (DD) and All India Radio (AIR), broadcast live programs, episodes, and radio jingles, disseminating information about the country to NE regions. Cultural exchange programs and film festivals are also organized by private agencies like Tattva Creations Pvt. Ltd. and Phoenix Rising Llp along with various skill development programs and vocational training courses. Besides, Monthly North East Newsletters are published by the NE Division of the MHA. The newsletter highlights the Government Schemes and other developmental activities in the NE States in different languages, i.e. Assamese, Bengali, English, and Manipuri. These programs, events, and publications intend to harbor peace and tolerance among communities. Thus, Under each component of the scheme, the agencies perform their role to reach out to the beneficiaries. For example, under the component of youth exchange programs, Tattva Creations Pvt Ltd serves as an implementing agency to organize Brahmaputra Valley Film Festival to encourage youth participation in the cultural exchange programs. So far, there has been no previous evaluative study of this scheme. This paper is a maiden attempt made to evaluate the scheme.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

As of now, there is no substantive literature available in the academic sphere on the evaluation studies of government schemes in the northeast region. A scheme like this one also faces the same issue. There has not been However, this section provides a review of the literature of the small chunk available. It includes academic papers, government websites, government official documents, advertisement and publicity component of other governmental schemes, etc.

The guidelines of media and publicity scheme of Ministry of Panchayati Raj includes the evaluative process of the scheme. It aims to do so through impact analysis of feedback received based on the readership, viewership, and listener survey particularly in respect to the material aired through TV and radio (MoPR, 2017). However, it does not mention any elaborative procedure for the evaluation of events and awareness campaigns which is a significant part of the advertisement and publicity scheme. In the advertisement and publicity scheme of the Ministry of Development of North East Region (DoNER), major emphasis has been given to the promotion of tourism.¹ Under the scheme, the plan has been formulated to project the intrinsic potential, successes, and milestones of the North Eastern (NE) region and establish an understanding of its special and distinctive characteristics and products. It also attempts to emphasize the position of the Central Government in promoting the process of growth by suitable strategies. Another critical goal of the scheme is mainstreaming the NE region with the rest of the country. It also has provisions, facilitating the evaluation of the scheme for the socio-economic development of the scheme. However, it does not incorporate the process or framework of such evaluation. Though its aim of mainstreaming the northeast region with the rest of the country is aligned to the objective of the scheme which is being addressed in this paper, however, its major focus of promotion of tourism makes it different than the Advertisement and Publicity scheme of the Ministry of Home Affairs. It also seeks to augment the efforts under Civic Action Program run by the Armed Forces along with the international border of India to reduce the insurgency and militancy and development of border villages (MHA, 2018).

Apart from the particular component under the various schemes of advertisement and publicity, “Bureau of Communication and outreach (BOC), Ministry of Information and Broadcast is responsible for disseminating information on government policies, schemes and programmes through multiple media of mass communication including radio, television, press, social media, internet websites, printed literature, outdoor media and traditional modes of communication such as dance, drama, folk recitals, etc”. (MIB, 2020) Thus BOC aims at providing 360-degree communication solutions with its 23 Regional Outreach Bureaus (ROBs) and 148 Field Outreach Bureaus (FOBs).²

It indicates the overlap of functions and responsibility. Thus duplication of work may lead to drain of resources and may reduce the efficiency and effectiveness. At times, it may also obscure the accountability characteristics while performing public functions. For the scheme at hand for this paper, do not have any interlinkage with the BOC and serve as a separate scheme under MHA. The understanding acquired through literature review would be handy while evaluating the scheme in this paper.

3. DATA AND METHODOLOGY

The approach adopted for the study was positivist. With the analytical frame of reference, the study has taken into account mixed approaches to suitably take the feedback of stakeholders. ‘Mixed methods’ is the combination of quantitative and qualitative approaches in a single Evaluation study” (White, 2019). Both quantitative and qualitative information has been garnered. The evaluation study has relied upon primary and secondary sources of data. The secondary information on the budget estimate, revised estimate, and actual estimate have been taken from the GoI site on statistics. The documents of the MHA and other websites on this scheme have also been used. Further, the nature of the scheme is such that it covers the whole populace of the region. Therefore, for the purpose of the study, a list of beneficiaries was provided by scheme implementing agencies, and responses of the beneficiaries were collected through a survey.

Primary data were collected from implementing agencies officials, participants of the youth exchange programmes, directors participating in film festivals, players participating in sports events, broadcasting agencies, participants of training and skill-upgradation programmes, common people and state government officials. Accordingly, data, and information were collected through a survey method and participatory discussion with immediate stakeholders. Moreover, in the backdrop of hardship due to the pandemic situation and spread of coronavirus, few telephonic interviews were also conducted to extract the required information for better results. The study has taken a holistic view by including supply-side and demand-side stakeholders. This approach was

applied to find out the impact, problems, challenges, and constraints. Furthermore, the structure and design of the scheme have been given due consideration in the evaluation study.

Sample size has been selected based on the convenience of field researchers and available beneficiaries.³ Further, the convenience sampling design was supported by a random sampling method to keep the chances of being selected in the sample, equal. The field research team covered all eight states keeping the sample size of 25 beneficiaries from each state. Thus the total sample size of 200 beneficiaries across the eight northeast states, ensures equal geographical representation in the sample.

For the data analysis, Microsoft Excel software has been used for both data entry and analysis. Content analysis of the qualitative responses received in the interview schedule has been carried out. The observation-based information and in-depth interviews have contributed significantly to the qualitative findings of the evaluation study. Furthermore, the study has done an extensive analysis of budget and stakeholders and has considered outcome/output indicators to assess the scheme.

4. ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

This section will give broad study findings based on primary and secondary data.

Budgetary Allocation and Expenditure Pattern

Table 1: Budgetary Allocation and Expenditure Patter (Rs. In crore)

| Year | BE | RE | AE |
|---------|------|------|------|
| 2012-13 | 6.00 | 6.00 | 6.00 |
| 2013-14 | 2.00 | 2.00 | 2.00 |
| 2014-15 | 3.00 | 3.00 | 3.00 |
| 2015-16 | 3.00 | 3.00 | 2.91 |
| 2016-17 | 2.00 | 2.00 | 1.97 |
| 2017-18 | 3.00 | 3.00 | 2.90 |
| 2018-19 | 3.00 | 3.00 | 2.76 |
| 2019-20 | 3.00 | 3.00 | 2.52 |

Source: Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India

The above table shows that during the period from 2012-13 to 2019-20 the budget sanctioned by MHA for the scheme is Rs. six cr., Rs. two cr., Rs. three cr., Rs. two cr, Rs. three cr., Rs. three cr. and Rs. three cr., respectively which has been fully utilized by the implementing agencies during 2012-13 to 2014-2015. However from 2015-16 to 2019-20, there is a difference between the funds released by the MHA and the actual expenditure in the respective years. During this period, out of Rs.14 crores sanctioned, Rs. 13.06 crore was utilized till 2020.

Table 2: Component-wise expenditure pattern (Rs. In lakh)

| Year | Printed Published materials | Radio broadcast | TV broadcast | Sports event | Cultural Event & Training program | Total |
|--------------|-----------------------------|-----------------|---------------|--------------|-----------------------------------|----------------|
| 2015-16 | 31.52 | 28.88 | 164.77 | 0 | 71.61 | 296.77 |
| 2016-17 | 0 | 0 | 69.97 | 31.00 | 99.03 | 200.00 |
| 2017-18 | 0 | 0 | 75.67 | 17.16 | 197.17 | 290.00 |
| 2018-19 | 14.48 | 0 | 28.08 | 5.00 | 228.00 | 275.56 |
| 2019-20 | 31.41 | 0.25 | 9.75 | 0 | 258.59 | 300.00 |
| Total | 77.41 | 29.13 | 348.23 | 53.16 | 854.41 | 1362.33 |

Source: Authors' Computation

The component-wise budget analysis shows the varied allocation of funds to the different components of the scheme in the last five years. Funds have substantially increased over time for the component, Events, and Programs (cultural, vocational training). In the year, 2019-20 more than 50 per cent of the funds have been allocated to it. Whereas funds for TV broadcast has declined during the same duration of time.

The figure above, also shows the erratic expenditure pattern for sports events. In the year 2015-16 expenditure under sports events was Rs. 0, which increased to Rs. 31 lakh in 2016-17 and reduced again to Rs.0 in 2019-20. Similarly for the component, radio broadcasts, funds released in 2015-16 was Rs. 28.88 lakh, however in the subsequent years from 2016-17 to 2018-19 it remained Rs.0 and then in 2019-20 it again received minimal funds of Rs. 0.25 lakh.

Stakeholder Identification and Analysis

As a part of evaluation of 'Advertisement and Publicity Scheme in NE Region', the study has conducted the stakeholder identification and analysis. To determine the external and internal stakeholders, it is critical to get acquainted with the overall scheme beneficiaries and an institutional mechanism driving the strategy and implementation.

Broadly, following beneficiaries have been identified:

NE Population: The ultimate beneficiaries of the scheme are the people of the northeast. Although there are no scheme level touchpoints with the NE population, the scheme is aimed at connecting the NE population and youth in particular to the other states

and union territories of India. It is done through cultural and youth exchange camps, film festivals, capacity building events, and sports events.

State departments of NE States: Departments like information and public relations and department of tourism act as an implementing agency in some states.

Private agencies and Startups are key stakeholders of the scheme as they act as an implementing agencies, and bring in new, innovative and creative ideas to engage NE population in fruitful activities. In addition to the above, the following institutions will also play a vital role in the project execution:

- MHA’s Programme Management Unit
- Knowledge partners and sponsor agencies
- Local media agencies and channels

Furthermore, the study has also done an elaborate analysis of- (a) the modes of engagement adopted by the key identified stakeholders (b) frequency of engagement (c) effectiveness of the mode of engagement (Effective, Moderately effective or Not effective) (d) the extent to which scheme effectiveness is dependent on the stakeholders (High, Moderate, Low), and (e) the degree of influence that each stakeholder has on the scheme effectiveness (High, Moderate, Low). The below table summarizes this analysis:

Table 3: Detailed Stakeholder Analysis

| Stakeholder | Primary Mode of Engagement | Frequency of Engagement | Effectiveness of Mode of Engagement | Extent to which the scheme effectiveness is dependent on stakeholder | Degree of Influence Stakeholder have on effectiveness of scheme |
|--|---|------------------------------|-------------------------------------|--|---|
| Ministry of Home Affairs | Official communication | As required | Effective | High | High |
| Government implementing agencies (Doordarshan, All India Radio, Lok Sabha, Nehru Yuva Kendra etc.) | Through their respective channels, broadcasts and telecasts. | Frequent | Moderately effective | Moderate | High |
| Private implementing agencies (Tattva Creation, Phoenix Rising, Delhi Press Patra Prakashan etc.) | Organizing events like cultural fests, film festivals, youth camps etc. | As per the contract with MHA | Effective | High | High |
| Third Party Service Providers (NGOs, Sponsors, social organisations etc.) | Support the selected implementing agencies in execution of scheme | As required | Moderately effective | Low | Low |

From the above analysis the study has found that- Stakeholder engagement that MHA pursues is need-based and formal. The implementing agencies may remain the same or change year on year, based on their performance, requirement and need.

The government implementing agencies has huge potential to influence the effectiveness of the scheme but so far, the mode of engagement has not been very successful. However, their outreach and performance also depend on the infrastructure availability and accessibility (like cell towers, electricity, transportation, affordability etc.) which in turn depends on other governmental projects and schemes.

On the other hand private implementing agencies have been relatively effective in implementing the scheme but their outreach is limited to the small population.

Table 4: Scheme Analytical Framework

| Components/ Inputs | Implementation Activities | Outputs Indicators | Key Intended Outcomes | Long Term Impact |
|--------------------|---------------------------|--------------------|-----------------------|------------------|
|--------------------|---------------------------|--------------------|-----------------------|------------------|

| | | | | |
|--------------------------------|--|---|--|---|
| Media Publicity and Broadcasts | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Television (TV) broadcasts • Radio broadcasts • Printed published material | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effectiveness and quality of telecasts and shows, radio jingle, published articles in magazines and newspapers • Number of journalist visits | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lessen the perceived feeling of alienation in North East region • Information dissemination | Eradication of militancy and insurgency while “promoting peace” in the region |
| Youth Exchange Programs | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cultural festivals and programmes • National integration and youth leadership camps | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participation in dance / music/film/cultural festival and youth camps | | |
| Sports Events | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sport tournaments • Honouring and facilitating sportspersons | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participation in tournaments of different sports • No. of felicitation functions | | |
| Awareness and Training Program | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Awareness campaigns • Skill up-gradation and vocational training programmes | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Awareness campaigns through different mediums • Participants in skill up-gradation and vocational training programmes | | |

The study has construed the scheme in the form of the above table for its evaluative purpose. “It points to evaluation issues and a balanced set of key performance measurement points, thus improving data collection and its usefulness” (Wholey, Hatry, Newcomer, 2010) The output indicators identified would help in measuring the effectiveness and efficiency of the scheme while evaluating whether the scheme has achieved its desired objectives or not. The impact shows the larger psychological and philosophical perspective and intangible change that the government wishes to bring in through this scheme.

Participation of Beneficiaries

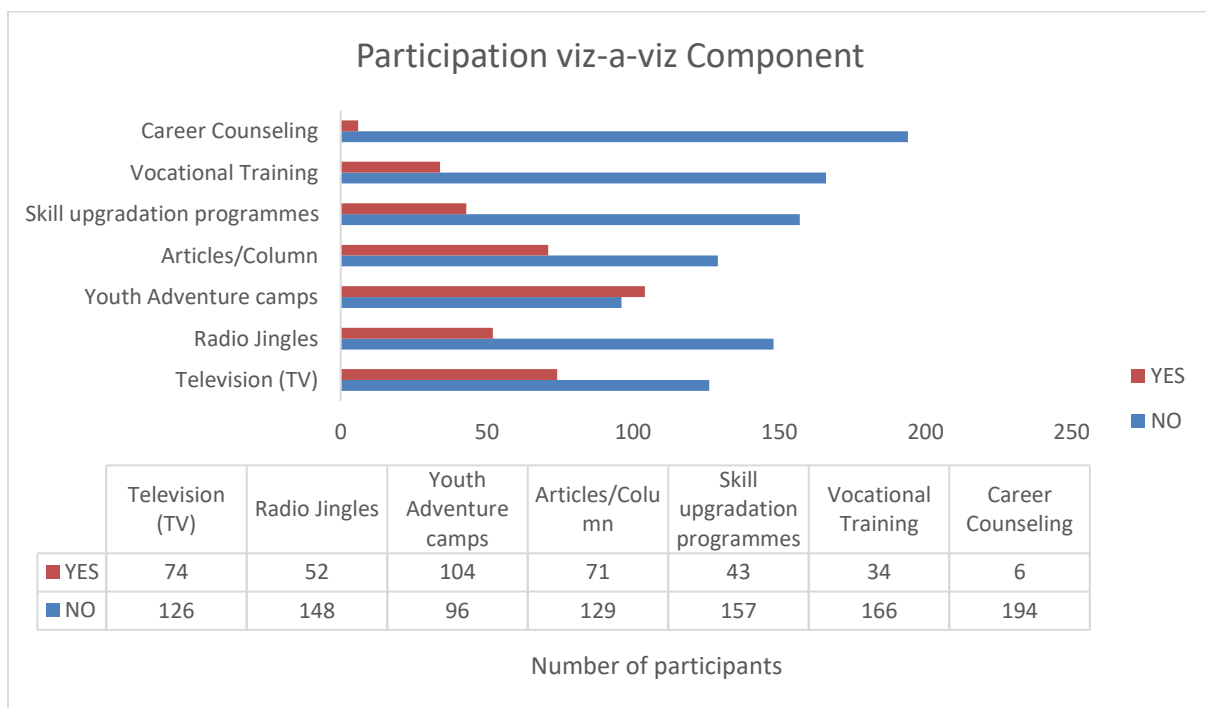


Fig. 1: Participation viz-a-viz component

The figure indicates that the participation is not very encouraging under the different components of the scheme. Except for youth adventure camps, all the other components have the majority of ‘No’s than ‘Yes’. The study found that the beneficiaries were unaware of the scheme and services therein. Only three per cent of the total respondents participate in the career counseling sessions.

Similarly, more than fifty per cent of the beneficiaries have not availed the services under any component of the scheme (except youth adventure camps). Only the youth adventure camp got above fifty per cent of positive response. This finding tells that the scheme has not yet made a sound foundation in the region. However, the youth is relatively much more aware than others and is participating in the events. It gives an optimistic picture and shows that the intent of the scheme is in the right direction. Engaging youth in productive activities and integrating them with the rest of India would steadily improve the situation and augment the peace process in the northeast region.

Preference of the Respondents

The study analyzed the preferences of the respondents regarding the medium of publicity used under the scheme. Based on the questionnaire, respondents of each state were asked to rank six mediums namely, television (TV), radio, newspaper, magazine, internet/websites, and mobile apps from 1 to 6 wherein 1 stand for most preferred medium and 6 for least preferred.

The beneficiaries in the state of Sikkim chose Internet/Website as the most preferred medium for advertisement and publicity (around 56%) followed by Assam (52%) and Arunachal Pradesh (24%). The second most preferred medium by beneficiaries is TV i.e. around 40% in Arunachal Pradesh, followed by Assam (20%) and Sikkim (8%). The third position is secured by the use of mobile apps. A similar trend is observed when total responses were analysed based on their first preferences for each medium. More than fifty per cent of respondents (106) gave first preference to Internet/websites.

Table 5: Medium-wise preference

| Medium | Television(TV) | Radio | Newspaper | Magazines | Internet/websites | Mobile apps |
|--|----------------|-------|-----------|-----------|-------------------|-------------|
| No. of beneficiaries (first preference to particular medium) | 57 | 3 | 13 | 0 | 106 | 21 |

Source: Authors' Computation

Furthermore, newspapers haven't become totally redundant yet but it has minimal effect on enhancing the outreach. The least preferred mediums used by the people are radio and magazines. No beneficiary has given first preference to magazines. Therefore, it suggests that the regions have low readership. It also shows that the people in northeast regions are increasingly connected to the internet, thus government and other agencies can take leverage of its potential for advertising and disseminating correct information.

Effectiveness and quality of content

Table 6: Effectiveness and quality of content

| | Effectiveness of Publicity (Online & offline) | Quality of content of TV Broadcast | Quality of content of Radio Jingles | Quality of content of Article/Column |
|------|---|------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Mean | 2.58 | 3.03 | 3.46 | 3.03 |

Source: Authors' Computation

The Table 6 shows the perception of respondents regarding the effectiveness and quality of content that have been broadcasted or published through different mediums like TV, radio, newspaper, and internet (websites and mobile apps). To record psychometric responses, beneficiaries were asked to rate effectiveness on the five-point Likert scale based on the questionnaire. The scale of 1 to 5 indicates 1 as most effective, 5 as least effective and a 2.5 as the average. Based on the responses, the mean value for each medium was calculated which gave the understanding of the degree of effectiveness of a medium. It was observed (and as shown in Table 4.2) that the mean value for most of the mediums have drifted away from the average effectiveness. Quality of content of TV broadcasts, radio jingles, and articles/columns range between 3 and 4. It clearly indicates that the beneficiaries do not have a positive perception and are not very satisfied with the quality of service/content provided. Only the mean value for online and offline publicity clubbed together (2.58) is near average level. Thus it shows that people have a nearly positive perception of the quality and effectiveness of online and offline content.

Key Bottlenecks and Challenges

The study has found that key bottleneck in the implementation of the scheme is the inadequate funds allocated to the implementing agencies for conducting programs and skill-based courses. The budget allocation has reduced to Rs. three cr. and has remained stagnant for the last three years (from the year 2017-18 to the year 2019-20). Even from the field study and in-depth interviews with implementing agencies and beneficiaries, the dearth of monetary resources is quite visible which hampers the effective implementation of the scheme. It has also adversely affected the quality of services and its outreach. The implementing agencies organizing film festivals, cultural exchange programs, and other events have to depend on other sponsors for organizing the event which in turn adds uncertainty to the event. Therefore minuscule budget allocation towards the scheme will not justify the purpose and broad objective of the scheme intending to peace promotion and reduction in the feeling of alienation. Funding is a significant issue that limits the programmer's outreach as operators are not able to increase the scale of their events due to insufficient funds and maximize the number of beneficiaries. Operators have mentioned their plans to include more and more areas of the north-east region in the programmes they conduct but financial limitations restrict them in doing so.

The other challenge they face is while teaching skill development courses. It is the lack of infrastructural amenities that could have helped them in facilitating a better learning process for the candidates. Furthermore, most of the insurgency/ militancy affected areas are in remote parts of northeastern states which stay unconnected to the rest of the mainland as they are devoid of infrastructure

facilities like telecom and internet services, this act as a hindrance towards development and dissemination of information, awareness, and communication. Lack of infrastructure and connectivity also leads to a lack of awareness. It was observed not only amongst the people of the northeast but also amongst the state officials. They were completely unaware of the scheme. It shows that even after more than 70 years of independence, accessibility to basic information through mediums like newspaper and television remains a big challenge for them.

5. CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

The study has attempted to fill the void of lack of evaluation studies and literature on one of the most crucial government scheme, Advertisement and Publicity Scheme for NE. The alienation of northeast states from the rest of the states and union territories is not only amongst the people and government priority list but is also sensed in the arenas of academic researches and literature. The bona fide purpose of this scheme, to counter the perceived feelings of alienation, insurgency, infiltration, and militancy, and to promote peace in the region is highly significant, the study provides a detailed analysis of various components of the scheme like budget, stakeholders, the effectiveness of different mediums of advertisement and publicity, etc. The study used qualitative and quantitative research methods and tools while utilizing and analyzing secondary and primary data to assess the scheme. It found that the budget allocation for the scheme has been halved over time from 6 cr. in 2012-13 to 3 cr. in 2019-20. And there is a minor variation between the budget estimates and actual expenditure during this time. The study further indicates that awareness about the scheme is hardly found among the state governments and public in the field and implementation of the scheme has fallen short of meeting its desired objectives. Thus, it has largely been ineffective in the promotion of peace and harmony.

The study found that inadequate funds allocation to the implementing agencies limits their effectiveness. It also requires the demand-driven approach and region-wise assessment to streamline the allocation of funds for the programme. Further, the lack of career counseling leaves the youth in the lurch and bewildered without directing them on how to capitalize on their skills. The study also observed that there is a lack of awareness amongst the population and state officials which leads to ineffective coordination and collaboration with other agencies. The study found that the conventional mediums of advertisements like newspapers and radios are not much effective, newer platforms like social media and the internet are becoming popular amongst the population of the northeast. The scope and significance of the scheme are far-reaching. It fosters trust in the public and augments national integration. Therefore it requires a new vigor and energy to enhance its effectiveness, efficiency, and outreach to meet its desired objectives in a cost and time-effective manner.

Suggestions

Though the scheme has benefitted only a limited number of participants under the programs of youth exchange, sports events and skill-up gradation, but it has a huge potential. Advertisement and Publicity Scheme is one of its kinds that not only serves its objectives but also forms the backdrop of many other schemes through the dissemination of awareness, information and communication. The expansion of coverage and outreach of the scheme would allow more youth and the common public to actively participate and engage in socio-economic activities under the ambit of the scheme. This would help them in exploring new opportunities and getting a platform to showcase their talent which may boost up their confidence level and enhances their career opportunities. It would help in building an inclusive society by bringing-in the people of different socio-economic strata. The frequently organized cultural exchange programmes like film festivals, music, and dance fests and programmes would help in connecting the youth of northeastern region with the rest of mainland India and vice-versa. Thus it would help not only in reducing the perceived feeling of alienation amongst the people of the northeast region but also makes the people of the mainland aware of the local culture, tradition, cuisine, languages, and practices of NE. Thus along with peace and harmony, national integration is also promoted.

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