

Negotiating Story Telling: Rhetoric and Reality of Rural Marginalization in the Era of Visual Culture

Authors : Vishnu Satya

Abstract : Rural communities form the backbone of our society. These communities are self-contained, for the most part, in how they can sustain themselves. Except for the essentials, they are primarily dependent on the state for their development and prosperity. The state claims to provide these through policies and agencies which are designed to guide their livelihood and future. It is assumed that the state-run policies are effective and are reaching the intended audience. Though in reality, there is an ever-widening gap between the two. The interviews conducted with farmers suggests that the support provided by the state to this marginalized community falls far short of their expectations, leaving them helpless. This paper discusses the methods used in bringing the status quo of the marginalized farmers to the forefront by comparing-and-contrasting the existing rhetoric and reality of the rural diaspora. It is seen from the hands-on oral accounts of farmers that they are left hanging between the state and their farms. Unrepresented, this community's progress and future stand severely affected. The paper presents how the visual medium acts as a catalyst for social advocacy by bridging the gap between administrative services and the marginalized rural communities. The finding was that there exists a disconnect between policymakers and the farming community, which has hindered the progress of the farmers. These two communities live exclusively from each other. In conclusion, it is seen that when the gaps between administrators and farmers are plugged through grass-root efforts utilizing visual medium, the farmer's economic situation got better, and the community prospered.

Keywords : farmers, social advocacy, marginalized, story telling

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