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**Converted in to SIM format by: Sh. M. R. Patra**

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## **INTRODUCTION TO MASS COMMUNICATION**

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### **LESSON STRUCTURE:**

In this lesson, we shall discuss about some basic aspects of mass communication. Then we shall focus on the elements of mass communication. Finally, we shall try to understand the major functions of mass communication. The lesson structure shall be as follows:

- 1.0 *Objectives*
- 1.1 *Introduction*
- 1.2 *Presentation of Content*
  - 1.2.1 *Definitions of Mass Communication*
  - 1.2.2 *Elements of Mass Communication*
  - 1.2.3 *Functions of Mass Communication*
- 1.3 *Summary*
- 1.4 *Key Words*
- 1.5 *Self-Assessment-Questions (SAQs)*
- 1.6 *References/Suggested Reading*

### **1.0 OBJECTIVES:**

The objectives of this lesson are as follows:

- *To Study Some Definitions of Mass Communication,*
- *To Study the Elements of Mass Communication, and*
- *To Study the Functions of Mass Communication.*

### **1.1 INTRODUCTION:**

Communication takes place when we have face-to-face conversation, when we think, when we address a public meeting or teach students in a class. When we think, it is intra-personal communication. When there is a conversation between two persons, it is interpersonal communication. Classroom teaching and public speeches are examples of group communication.

In addition to these three levels of communication, we also participate in another level when we read newspapers, magazines or books, listen to radio, and watch cinema or television, etc. Here the situation is different from the earlier three levels of communication. Through newspapers, magazines, radio, TV and films, etc., messages reach very large masses of people. So it is called mass communication.

## **0.1 PRESENTATION OF CONTENT:**

The content of this lesson shall be presented as follows:

- *Definitions of Mass Communication*
- *Elements of Mass Communication*
- *Functions of Mass Communication*

### **1.2.1 MASS COMMUNICATION DEFINED:**

It is *omnipresent*. The vehicles of mass communication or the mass media are everywhere. From home, office, and outside, no place has escaped from mass media. It is considered to be *intrusive* as it easily enters into the private worlds of our homes. It is *attractive* and *alluring*. Sometimes we find it *excessive* and *repulsive*.

Often it is considered to be *omnipotent* or all-powerful as mass communication of information and images through advertising makes us buy things. Wars have been won through mass communication. Most importantly mass communication shapes public opinion.

What then is mass communication? To give a simple definition:

**Mass communication a process whereby mass produced messages are transmitted to large, anonymous and heterogeneous masses of receivers.**

By '*mass produced*' we mean putting the content or message of mass communication in a form suitable to be disseminated to large masses of people. This also means that some technological means are used for both producing and transmitting the message.

The term '*mass*' means a large aggregate of people spread over vast geographical areas. The characteristics of *mass* in mass communication are *heterogeneous, anonymous, separated from each other, and loosely organized.*

*Heterogeneous* means that the individual members of the *mass* are from a wide variety of classes and categories in society. *Anonymous* means the individuals in the mass do not know each other. Also the source or sender of messages in mass communication does not know the individual members of the mass. Also the receivers in mass communication are *physically separated* from each other and share *no physical proximity*. They are, in fact, spread over different geographic locations.

Finally, the individual members forming a mass are not united. They have no social organization. If at all they are united, they are very loosely organized. Unlike groups, the mass does not have a body of customs and tradition, no established sets of rules, no structure or status roles, and no established leadership.

Eliot Friedson (1953) defined *mass* as follows:

***Mass is an aggregation of individuals who are separate, detached and anonymous.***

This is a very simplified definition of the term mass. Many changes have taken place in the recent times - particularly in the field of technologies involved in mass communication and segmentation of audience. These have resulted in the audience members being less heterogeneous and anonymous than in the past.

### **1.2.2 ELEMENTS OF MASS COMMUNICATION:**

For communication to occur we require *a sender, a message, a channel and receiver(s)*. Further there is *feed back* which is the response or reaction of the receiver, which comes back to the sender through the same or some other channel. Another element, which plays an important role in communication, is *noise* or the disturbances or barriers.

All these elements are there in mass communication also. In fact, *Harold Lasswell's* model of communication - WHO says WHAT in WHICH CHANNEL to WHOM with WHAT EFFECT' - is applicable to mass communication also. The difference from interpersonal and other levels of communication lies in the multitude of receivers. In mass communication, multitude of receivers receive the message:

- *Either simultaneously and immediately as in case of radio and television,*
- *Individually over a long period of time as in case of films, and*

- *Over centuries as in case of some books like the Bhagwat Gita, the Quran, the Bible or the great classics.*
- *Other differences are in the degree of physical proximity (in interpersonal communication sender and receiver are mostly face to face while in mass communication they may be hundreds and thousands of miles away).*
- *Mass communication differs from other levels of communication in the time taken for feedback to reach back the sender (source). In interpersonal communication the feedback is instantaneous. But in mass communication, the feedback is delayed and often negligible. In certain cases there is no feedback at all.*

Mass communication has the same basic elements as other levels of communication. They are, however, named differently. In mass communication the sender is called the *source*, the multiple receivers are called the *audience*. The channels of mass communication are called *media* or *mass media*. Also there are certain additional elements in mass communication. Let us discuss these elements in detail.

#### **THE AUDIENCE:**

Receivers of mass communication or audience vary according to the medium used. For network television like DD-1, the audience could be millions of viewers. For an average book, the audience could be several thousands. And for a scholarly journal, the audience could be a few hundred. Whatever the size, each audience is composed of individuals. Each individual has a separate and distinct personality and they react to the medium's message in different fashions.

Each individual member of an audience is exposed to, receives, perceives and retains a message differently according to his or her personal *self-concept* or *frame of reference*. Scholars often stress upon this aspect of audience individuality because audiences are often thought to be automatons or robots that react to mass communication in one single way.

Another aspect of mass communication is that individual members discuss about media contents and thus many others come to know about it who are called secondary audiences. Some times the secondary or indirect audiences may be larger than the original audience. For example millions and millions have read the *Bhagwat Gita* or the *Bible*. But more people (then who have read these religious books) know or are aware about these religious books through discussions and discourses. So it is obvious that the effect of mass communication reaches far beyond the initial audience.

#### **THE SOURCE:**

In interpersonal and group communication the sender is usually one person. He or she thinks of communicating, decides the topic or theme or concept, puts it a proper context according to the receiver and channel, encodes and transmits the message.

But in mass communication the situation is different. Rarely the source is one individual. It is usually an organization or institution. It involves a large group of people who are involved in the conceiving, collecting, processing, encoding and transmission processes.

For example when we read news story in a newspaper, we tend to think that the writer of the story (the reporter) is the sender or source. In fact, often a reporter is assigned by a superior to do the story. So the reporter is not always the initiator. Again after the story is written and reaches the newspaper office, it is either selected or rejected by a news editor or assistant editor. If selected, a sub editor edits the story, the news story is then composed by a compositor, proof read by a proofreader, sometimes rechecked by a host of senior editorial staff. Then the page make up people prepare the layout before it is printed. Only then it reaches us.

Similarly, we tend to think that newsreaders are the sources of news on radio and television. But there is a long chain of people through whom news passes. Thus the source in mass communication is a collection of people with a lot of different expertise. So the people working for the source are all trained in some field or the other.

And almost all these activities involve complex technologies, infrastructure and huge investments.

#### **THE MEDIUM:**

For the purpose of mass communication many channels or media are used. The first such medium was the book. The writing of books started about 5,500 years ago. In the early days, books were not exactly mass oriented. They were more elitist as only few people could read and even fewer people could afford books which were exquisitely designed, intricately patterned, and ornate and painstakingly hand printed works of art.

In the mid fifteenth century all these changed with the invention of movable types and printing press by Johan Gutenberg of Germany. He published the first machine printed book- *The 42 lines Bible*. With technological advances, growth of literacy and an increased demand for knowledge and information led to large-scale production and dissemination of books.

Then came the newspaper. The first newspaper was brought out in 1625. It developed through various stages and by the beginning of the 19th century had developed into a full-fledged mass medium.

Towards the end of the 19th century, in 1895, cinema came. Then in the 1920s came radio. Television followed soon and arrived in the 1930's. Other media like videocassettes followed soon. The latest mass medium now is the *Internet*, which has characteristics of all other mass media in some way or other.

All the mass media have become part and parcel of our lives. Although the mass media are usually taken for granted, they play important roles fulfilling many of our wants.

Mass media started as simple vehicles for dissemination of messages. But these have become very powerful. So much so that the media today are more important than the message. Also each medium is so unique and different, that these have developed their unique images.

For example, although radio and TV provide news almost immediately (and even while something is happening), people still read newspapers. This is because the printed word has much more credibility.

Also within a medium, individual vehicles have different features and images. For example, among newspapers of India, *The Hindu* and *The Statesman* are considered serious and sober. *The Times of India* is considered to be modern. Internationally speaking, *The Times* of London has more credibility among newspapers the world over. Same is the case with *The Time* and *The News Week* among magazines. *Reader's Digest* has a unique image of being a vehicle of clean information and education.

This overwhelming dominance of the media has led eminent communication scholar *Marshal McLuhan* to coin the phrase "*Medium is the Message*".

### **THE MESSAGE (CONTENT):**

The message in mass communication includes *information*, *news*, *views*, *education*, *entertainment* and *persuasion*. We have already discussed how message is initiated, collected, processed, encoded and transmitted.

One important characteristic of message in mass communication is that it is mostly very general in nature. This is because the message is not directed at any specific group but at a highly diverse, dispersed and heterogeneous mass. And it has to cater to the different needs, varying wants and divergent attitudes of the individual members of the audience.

One way of achieving this is through *simplicity* and *commonality*. Before preparing the message, some kind of survey is conducted to find out what audience members want and how they want it. Also the *lowest common denominator* is found out and the message is prepared for and aimed at that *audience intelligence level* or *interest level* which will attract and hold the maximum number of audience members.

Whatever type of media content or message - from information, education, to persuasion (advertising etc.) - *simplicity* and *commonality* ensure that the message is well received by the maximum number of audience members.

Recent developments include the concepts of *infotainment* or *info-edutainment*. Here mass media content includes information and entertainment and even education.

Another aspect of media content is the way it is treated by the audience members. As individuals, audience members differ from one another, No media content is equally liked or disliked or similarly acted upon by all. In fact, audience members are very *selective* about what they are *exposed to*, what they *receive*, how they *perceive* it and how much they *retain*. These are called *selective exposure*, *selective reception*, *selective perception* and *selective retention*.

#### **DELAYED FEEDBACK:**

Mass communication differs from other levels of communication, as it is *linear* and *one-way*. That is, there is no or very little response or feedback. Also even in this age of instant communication, feedback in mass communication is rarely direct and instantaneous. Also generally this feedback reaches the source *from far distances*, is of a *wide variety* (as different people react to a message differently) and most importantly reaches the source *after considerable time lapse*.

For example, the feedback to a newspaper is published in the form of letters to editor after several days of the story being published. The success of books can be judged after months and years. In fact, many books (the plays by William Shakespeare or the books of Prem Chand for example) became successful long after the authors died. Similarly, the success or failure of a film is measured at the box office (ticket counter) long after the film is released. *Delayed feedback* is, in fact, an in-built aspect of mass communication.

However, attempts are being made to shorten this delay by developing new forms of feedback. Television programme producers conduct audience survey through *People Meter*, *Nielson Meter*, etc. And programmes are rated according to audience liking. Doordarshan conducts its own rating survey called DART.

*Public opinion surveys* or *opinion polls* (developed by *George Gallup* in the 1930's) are important feed back measures. These methods are also used as an important '*feed forward*' measure as it helps decide what kind of programmes should be prepared in future. In case of advertising, a host of methods including *recall tests*, *recognitions test*, *personating tests*, etc., are conducted to find out about the effectiveness of advertising campaigns before, during, and after campaigns.



## **NOISE:**

One classic, if somewhat exaggerated, example of noise in communication is the rumour game where one person in a group is given a piece of information or a statement. This is then passed on from one individual to the next. By the time it reaches the last person, the original statement is often distorted or twisted to a great extent. Distortion or noise in mass communication is of two types - *channel noise* and *semantic noise*. Channel noise is any disturbance within the media. In the printed mass media, channel noise ranges from typographical errors, misspellings, scrambled words, omitted lines or paragraphs, misprinting, etc. Noise in the electronic media includes *static* (sounds during rain or lightening, etc.) in radio and television or any kind of mechanical failure that stops the message reaching the audience in its original form.

The increased dependency of mass media on technology compounds the problem of noise and with the increasing complexity of these technologies; the probability of more channel noise (mechanical noise) increases many folds.

Channel noise also includes all those interferences while the message is being received. For example kids shouting while you are watching TV and friends dropping in while you are reading a book also constitute noise. In fact, channel noise is present at every stage of the mass communication process from collection of information, processing, encoding, and transmission and at the reception stage. Another problem is the availability of many media at the same time. For example, reading newspapers is disturbed by the sounds from television or radio, etc. This problem could grow and get worse as more and more media become available.

One solution for channel noise is *repetition*. This is particularly used constantly in case of advertising. Have not we seen certain advertisements hundreds of times? Also television programmes are repeated at least twice. Some programmes, in fact, have more than two repeat telecasts. Repetition works on the *Law of averages*, i.e. if something is missed or not understood the first time, repetition will solve these problems. However, too much of repetition leads to boredom and the message effectiveness is diminished or lost.

Another solution for channel noise is '*perfecting the channel performance*'. Checking and rechecking or proofreading newspaper and magazine stories, reducing static in radio, clearing up hazy pictures on television, etc., are examples of attempts at noise reduction.

*Semantic noise* or *psychological barriers* are as frequent and omnipresent as channel noise. They are also equally or more problematic. While channel noises are physical; or mechanical by nature, semantic noises are about understanding of the message. Language barriers form a major semantic problem. Other problem areas include differences in education

level, social-economic status, occupation, age, experience and interest, etc. With so many different variations and differences, it is difficult to prepare messages, which will be understood as desired by the source. As discussed earlier, one-way of solving the problem of semantic noise is to use simplicity and commonality.

Also the cannons of communication- *clarity, completeness, conciseness, credibility, comprehensiveness, coherency, continuity*, etc. help solve the problem of semantic noise to a great extent.

#### **GATE KEEPING:**

This concept is unique only to mass communication. Mass media content passes through many hands within the source organization before it reaches the audience. From initiation, collection, compilation, presentation, processing, production and finally dissemination, mass media content is *regulated* at each stage. This is called gate keeping as media content passes through many '*gates*' before these are released. Media personnel engaged in the various stages or the gates exercise their discretion to decide and determine what the audience will read, see, or hear. We have already discussed the example of how a news story passes through different stages before we read it.

Gate keeping is also an *exercise in specialization* in order to reach selective audiences. Different media and particularly media organizations have developed specific formats to appeal specific audiences. This way gate keeping is limited by nature as it restricts what the audience is exposed to. However, it becomes necessary as no medium can accommodate all the information, education and entertainment. Also audiences will be deprived of specific interest messages or content.

Another feature of gate keeping is that it is highly subjective and personal. Gate keeping is a '*professionally educated guess*' about what the public will like.

#### **1.2.3 FUNCTIONS OF MASS COMMUNICATION:**

Mass communication or mass media are described as the fourth pillar of democracy. They perform the role of '*watchdog*' over the society and government in particular and expose corrupt practices. Mass media like cinema, television, radio and books, etc. help people cope with or escape from their environment. Mass media also create new values. Also mass media serve an important economic function by providing employment to millions of people. In fact, each medium - be it newspaper, television, films, books, audio and videocassettes - has now grown to the stature of an industry.

All the above functions of mass communication are secondary. The primary functions of mass communication include: *information, entertainment, persuasion* and *transmission of the culture*. Some times *education* is also considered a function of mass communication.

#### **INFORMATION:**

When we think of mass communication, the first thing that comes to our mind is information. May be it is because of the fact that the very first function mass communication ever performed was to inform. Also information is an important part of all other functions. And all media serve the information function to some extent or other.

While all media inform, the print media inform the most. Both newspapers and magazines have a strong information thrust and inform us through news. Although not considered to be a medium of mass communication the **news agencies** (*Reuter, Associated Press, United Press International, Agence Presse France* and in India *United News of India and Press Trust of India*) have the highest information content. In fact, news agencies form the major source of news for all news media.

Compared to news agencies (also called *wire-services*), newspapers have very low informational content. On an average more than half the space of any newspaper is devoted to advertisements (which is persuasion). Newspapers also perform the entertainment function as they provide features, comic strips and a variety of human-interest stories.

Books, particularly textbooks, have very high information content. Textbooks form about half the book publishing industry. Other types of books include fiction, non-fiction, and technical books. These books have less information content.

As far as TV (along with radio) is concerned, its main thrust area is entertainment. Still, TV provides us a lot of information through news bulletins, current affairs programmes etc. TV documentaries try to incorporate information and entertainment. But television cannot be blamed for ignoring information and concentrating more on entertainment. Viewers expect more entertainment from television and that is what they get.

#### **ENTERTAINMENT:**

As the print media have information thrust, the broadcast media- radio, TV and films- have a basic entertainment thrust. This is not to say that these media have an exclusive right to entertainment and provide only entertainment. Broadcast media perform other functions too. And other media also provide entertainment.

However, it is obvious that the broadcast media are intensely, purposefully, and enthusiastically entertainment-oriented. In addition, television plays an important commercial role as a medium of persuasion.

TV and radio schedule their programmes according to viewing habits of people. As less people watch TV during daytime, programmes shown during the day are not very high on entertainment content. In fact, during daytime we often get re-runs, old movies, etc. But the programmes during prime time (evenings) are very high on entertainment as more people watch TV during evenings.

Radio - particularly FM radio - provides programmes of high entertainment value all through the day and evening.

Broadcast media, particularly TV, are blamed and criticized for the mindless entertainment programmes. The problem is that people want entertainment from television. Also to be commercially viable, radio and TV have to provide more entertainment programmes so as to attract more viewers and consequently more advertisements.

Even Public Broadcasting Services, which are free from any financial pressure, being government funded, offer entertainment programmes instead of programmes of consequence like on culture, education, etc. Even BBC provides many entertainment-based programmes. And our own Doordarshan also provides large numbers of entertainment programmes.

However, things are changing for better. While we have many entertainment specific TV channels, there are channels like *Discovery*, *National Geographic*, *Animal Planet*, etc. which emphasize on information and education. Also specific education channels are catching up very fast.

#### **PERSUASION:**

Goods, services, ideas, places, events, political parties, business organizations and social and religious institutions, and even individuals need to be promoted. One effective way to promote is through persuasion. A highly prominent and visible form of persuasion is advertising. And advertising has become an important part of many mass media. So much so that most mass media - newspapers, magazines, radio and television - depend on advertising for a major chunk of their revenue. In India, the annual expenditure on advertising is projected to be about 15,000 crores. And a major portion of it goes to the mass media.

Many other means of persuasion are used in addition to advertising. These include public relations, special promotional activities and blatant and subtle attempts at image manipulation

and public opinion formation. Editorials, advertorials, letters to editor, opinion columns, etc., are often used for the purpose of public opinion formation and image manipulation.

Even films have not escaped. Commercial products are subtly and not so subtly implanted in many blockbuster films. Any recent *James Bond* film is a good example of this. *Shahrukh Khan and Juhi Chawla's film 'Phir Bhi Dil Hai Hindustani'* is another example of how films are used to promote commercial products.

Many news stories, interviews, features, etc., are initiated and implanted by public relations practitioners. In the US, political parties use TV to a great extent.

Also much of government news has a propaganda motive.

At this juncture, it is important to note a significant fact about news and advertisements. While only 10 percent of all information and news that reaches reporters and editors is published or broadcast, almost 100 percent of all advertisements received by mass media are published or broadcast. This shows how important is advertising to mass media.

In fact, commercial radio and television are solely dependent on advertisement revenues, which is their only source of income. Of course, pay channels get money through cable or DTH fees.

In case of newspapers and magazines, the cover price does not even cover the distribution cost. The rest - editorial costs, production costs and profits are covered by paid advertising. For example, one issue of any standard English newspaper in India costs something between Rs. 15/- and Rs.20/-, while almost all dailies (except business dailies) are priced between Rs. 1.50 to Rs. 2.00. And it is no surprise that about half the space in most English newspapers is devoted to advertisements.

#### **TRANSMISSION OF THE CULTURE:**

Any communication leaves a direct or indirect impact on an individual. It becomes part of one's experience, knowledge and accumulated learning. Through individuals, communication becomes part of the collective experience of groups, audiences of all kinds and finally the masses. Mass communication, being the most potent, most far reaching of all communication, plays an important role in the transmission of culture from one place to another and from one generation to the next.

#### **5.2 SUMMARY:**

- Mass communication is a process whereby mass produced messages are transmitted to large, anonymous and heterogeneous masses of receivers.

- By '*mass produced*' we mean putting the content or message of mass communication in a form suitable to be disseminated to large masses of people.
- The term '*mass*' mean a large aggregate of people spread over vast geographical areas. The characteristics of *mass* in mass communication are *heterogeneous, anonymous, separated from each other, and loosely organized*.
- *Mass is an aggregation of individuals who are separate, detached and anonymous*.
- In mass communication the sender is called the *source*, the multiple receivers are called the *audience*. The channels of mass communication are called *media* or *mass media*.
- In mass communication, rarely the source is one individual. It is usually an organization or institution. It involves a large group of people who are involved in the conceiving, collecting, processing, encoding and transmission processes.
- The first mass medium was the book. Then came the newspaper. Cinema came in 1895. Then in the 1920s came radio. Television followed soon and arrived in the 1930's. The latest mass medium now is the *Internet*.
- The overwhelming dominance of the media has led eminent communication scholar *Marshal McLuhan* to coin the phrase "*Medium is the message*".
- The message in mass communication includes *information, news, views, education, entertainment* and *persuasion*.
- One important characteristic of message in mass communication is that it is mostly very *general* in nature. This is because the message is not directed at any specific group but at a highly diverse, dispersed and heterogeneous mass. And it has to cater to the needs, wants and divergent attitudes of the individual members of the audience.
- Audience members are very *selective* about what they are *exposed to*, what they *receive*, how they *perceive* it and how much they *retain*. These are called *selective exposure, selective reception, selective perception* and *selective retention*.
- *Channel noise* is any disturbance within the media. In the printed mass media, channel noise ranges from typographical errors, misspellings, scrambled words, omitted lines or paragraphs, misprinting, etc. Static (sounds during rain or lightening etc.) in radio and television, etc.

## 5.2 KEY WORDS:

**Mass communication:** Mass communication a process whereby mass produced messages are transmitted to large, anonymous and heterogeneous masses of receivers. Mass communication

is *omnipresent*. It is *attractive* and *alluring*. Sometimes we find it *excessive* and *repulsive*. Often it is considered to be *omnipotent* or all-powerful.

**Mass:** The term '*mass*' mean a large aggregate of people spread over vast geographical areas. The characteristics of *mass* in mass communication are *heterogeneous*, *anonymous*, *separated from each other*, and *loosely organized*. *Heterogeneous* means that the individual members of the *mass* are from a wide variety of classes and categories in society. *Mass is an aggregation of individuals who are separate, detached and anonymous*.

**Anonymous:** *Anonymous* means the individuals in the mass do not know each other. Also the source or sender of messages in mass communication does not know the individual members of the mass. Also the receivers in mass communication are *physically separated* from each other and share *no physical proximity*. They are, in fact, spread over different geographic locations.

**Elements of Mass Communication:** In mass communication the sender is called the *source*, the multiple receivers are called the *audience*. The channels of mass communication are called *media* or *mass media*. Also there are certain additional elements in mass communication. Let us discuss these elements in detail.

**Nature of Message in Mass Communication:** One important characteristic of message in mass communication is that it is mostly very general in nature. This is because the message is not directed at any specific group but at a highly diverse, dispersed and heterogeneous mass. And it has to cater to the needs, wants and divergent attitudes of the individual members of the audience.

**Selectivity in Mass Communication:** Audience members are very *selective* about what they are *exposed to*, what they *receive*, how they *perceive* it and how much they *retain*. These are called *selective exposure*, *selective reception*, *selective perception* and *selective retention*.

**Channel noise:** Channel noise is any disturbance within the media. In the printed mass media, channel noise ranges from typographical errors, misspellings, scrambled words, omitted lines or paragraphs, misprinting, etc. Static (sounds during rain or lightening etc.) in radio and television or any kind of mechanical failure stops the message reaching the audience in its original form forms noise in the electronic media.

**Semantic noise:** *Semantic noise* or *psychological barriers* are as frequent and omnipresent as channel noise. They are also equally or more problematic. While channel noises are of physical; or mechanical nature, semantic noises are about understanding of the message. Language barriers form a major semantic problem.

**Functions of Mass Communication:** Mass communication performs the functions of providing *information, education, entertainment, enlightenment* and *persuasion*. In addition, the functions of communication also include *transmission of culture*.

### **1.5 SELF-ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS (SAQs):**

3. Discuss the concept of mass communication in detail.
3. Discuss the salient features of mass communication.
3. Discuss the elements of mass communication in detail.
3. Discuss the functions of mass communication in detail.

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## **MEDIA OF MASS COMMUNICATION**

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### **LESSON STRUCTURE:**

In this lesson, we shall discuss the various media of mass communication. We shall start with newspapers. Then we shall focus on magazines, books, radio, recordings, television, and films.

The lesson structure shall be as follows:

- 2.0 *Objectives*
- 2.1 *Introduction*
- 2.2 *Presentation of Content*
  - 2.2.1 *Newspaper as a Mass Medium*
  - 2.2.2 *Magazines as a Mass Medium*
  - 2.2.3 *Books as a Mass Medium*
  - 2.2.4 *Radio as a Mass Medium*
  - 1.1.4 *Recordings as a Mass Medium*
  - 2.2.6 *Television as a Mass Medium*
  - 1.1.6 *Film as a Mass Medium*
- 2.3 *Summary*
- 5.3 *Key Words*
- 2.5 *Self-Assessment-Questions (SAQs)*
- 2.6 *References/Suggested Reading*

### **2.0 OBJECTIVES:**

The objectives of this lesson are as follows:

- *To study about Newspaper as a Mass Medium,*

- *To study about Magazines as a Mass Medium,*
- *To study about Books as a Mass Medium,*
- *To study about Radio as a Mass Medium,*
- *To study about Recordings as a Mass Medium,*
- *To study about Television as a Mass Medium,*
- *To study about Film as a Mass Medium.*

## 2.1 INTRODUCTION:

They are *omnipresent*. They reach every nook and corner of the world. They are considered to be *omni-potent* or very powerful. This has been proved time and again as they have toppled governments and brought about sweeping changes. They are *intrusive* as they invade even the privacy of our bedrooms. They *inform, educate, entertain* and they *persuade*.

They are the mass media. Yes, we are talking about *newspapers, magazines, radio, television, films, books, videocassettes, audiocassettes and records, and the Internet*. These mass media have given us the ability to reach millions of people with our messages simultaneously.

And these mass media have become part of our lives to such an extent that we take them for granted. We expect newspapers with our morning cup of tea or coffee. We expect information and entertainment on television at the push of a button. We expect lots of information on our computer monitors at the click of the mouse.

The mass media do all these and much more. These work as the *carriers* or *perpetuators* of the social process. Mass media help the human being in *organizing, stabilizing* and *modifying* his social life. They also help in the *accumulation, exchange* and *transmission of knowledge*.

Mass media are the means of social interaction on a much larger and broader spectrum. On one hand, the mass media provide social control. At the same time, these also provide for harmonious social change. The mass media are major reasons of cultural changes. Mass media keep watch over every thing for us and report back to us. Mass media function as platforms for discussion and interchange. Also mass media make communication *fast, pervasive* and *ubiquitous*.

On the negative side, mass media are considered to be *manipulative*. Joseph Klapper has said what mass media do is nothing but *engineering of consent*.

All the mass media are divided into two broad groups- print media and electronic media. Print media include newspapers, magazines and books. Electronic media include radio, television, films, video- and audio-records, etc. In this lesson, we shall discuss these mass media in detail.

## **2.2 PRESENTATION OF CONTENT:**

The content of this lesson shall be presented as follows:

- *Newspaper as a Mass Medium*
- *Magazines as a Mass Medium*
- *Books as a Mass Medium*
- *Radio as a Mass Medium*
- *Recordings as a Mass Medium*
- *Television as a Mass Medium*
- *Film as a Mass Medium*

### **2.2.1 NEWS PAPERS AS MASS MEDIUM:**

In very simple terms the newspaper can be defined as a printed means of conveying current information. In this sense, the first organized attempt at bringing out newspapers was in ancient Rome, where 'newsletters' were distributed at far off places to inform people about the happenings in the capital. These were, of course, in the 'written' form, as printing had not been invented.

During the times of Julius Caesar there were the *acta diurna* or daily announcements of the government and other activities, which were pasted in the capital's public places in the form of wall newspapers. These were also handwritten.

The earliest hand-printed news bulletins probably appeared in China during 618-966 C.E. under the T'ang dynasty. Mostly government officials read these.

The next big development came in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries in Germany where the Fugger family, a powerful group of merchants and bankers, issued newsletters. Agents of the Fugger family were spread all over the world and sent regular reports back home. These reports were combined in the form of newsletters and circulated to all units of the family business in different countries.

**NEWSLETTERS TO NEWSPAPERS:** The transition from newsletters to the newspaper came very slowly. In the late sixteenth and early seventeenth century, the newsletters spread to many parts of Europe and other places. For example, the first time news was presented in printed form in Mexico was in 1541.

In England in the year 1621, '*Coranto*' was published. It was also called "*Weekly news from Itlay, Germany, Hungarie, Spaine and France*". This is claimed to be the first newspaper of England.

Benjamin Harris made the first such attempt in the American colonies. A bookseller by profession, Harris published 'Public Occurrences- Both Foreign and Domestic' in 1690. Soon Harris got into trouble with the authorities and his paper died an unceremonious death after its very first issue.

The second newspaper in the American colonies came fourteen years later in 1704 when John Campbell, who was the postmaster of Boston, brought out the 'Boston News Letter'.

Soon newspapers spread to all parts of the world - mainly due to the British and French colonies. The newspaper reached its modern phase after passing through many stages. In the first phase, it was known as the '*Relation*' or '*Relacion*' in the beginning and contained a single story. It had no fixed periodicity and often was brought out once or twice a year.

The second stage was the '*Corranto*' or '*Corrante*'. This was also called a *series of relations* as it had a number of stories. Mostly corrantos were weeklies. But the title of these Corrantos changed every week depending upon the content. Corrantos covered stories from many countries.

The third stage was the '*Diurnal*'. It was more regular than the Corranto and it gave more domestic coverage, which was neglected earlier.

The final stage was called the '*News Book*' or the '*Mercury*'. It was a series of stories covering a long period of time. It was published in the book format.

Perhaps the first newspaper of the world was the 'Oxford Gazette'. Muddiman in London published it in 1625. The 'Oxford Gazette' was published twice a week. This paper had many of the characteristics of the modern day newspaper.

Slowly much technical advancement occurred. At the same time journalistic developments also took place. And in 1702, the first daily newspaper appeared in London. This

was called the 'Daily Courant'. E. Mallet published it. And slowly most newspapers developed in to the format we are familiar with now. Today,

*A newspaper is regularly published (daily or weekly), printed on unbound newsprint in broadsheet or tabloid sizes, and serves general interests or specific communities with news, comments, features, photographs and advertisements.*

This definition, however, is not binding, as many newspapers today are available on the Internet. Newspapers vary in size from tabloid size to the regular broadsheet. They range from eight pages to almost 100 pages. They also range from local newspapers serving the needs of small communities to large multi-edition papers catering to readers in many countries. Newspapers also vary in content from general newspapers covering all topics to specific ones covering business, politics, finance, fashion, etc.

Newspapers have traveled a long way from being elitist and catering to the sophisticated literates to being a mass medium reaching people of all classes. Now again, some papers have carved special niches for themselves and cater to groups having particular interests.

**ROLE OF NEWSPAPERS:** As a medium of mass communication, newspaper's most notable contribution has been as a *purveyor of information*. Books and magazines are *purveyors of ideas*. Readers around the world depend on newspapers for information about important events- near and far. Of course, in the earlier days it was the only major means of information from around the world.

Now radio and television reach people with information much before the newspaper. In fact, many people doubted if newspapers could fight off the challenge posed by radio and television - both being immediate and more entertaining. Newspapers have successfully fought off this challenge and are thriving.

The reasons behind this are many. First, newspapers offer detailed accounts, which is not often possible with radio and television. The *printed word* carries a lot of credibility than the spoken words of radio and TV. Also while one has to wait for the new bulletins on radio and TV, in case of newspapers, one can read any time one wants.

Newspapers have faced constant threats from other media. But they have fought hard to maintain their *integrity, independence* and *economic viability*. Along the way they have continued informing, educating and entertaining the readers.

Newspapers have been instrumental to a great extent in eradicating illiteracy. It is perhaps played the most important role in creating, orienting and molding public attitudes and opinions. The persuasive power of newspaper is so strong that it is still used as a major medium for advertising- both commercial and social.

Newspapers have also played the *watchdog* function very effectively. Newspapers have been most effective in holding governments accountable to the governed.

Today newspapers are no more family-owned or political mouthpieces. They are now mouthpieces of business houses as most newspapers are part of business conglomerates. Newspaper business has come to a stage of monopoly in many countries.

Among recent changes, the number of daily general interest newspapers has dropped. Special interest newspapers have consolidated. On the other hand advertising revenue continues to rise. The competition for bigger circulation has led to many such practices as price cuts.

**FUTURE OF NEWSPAPERS:** Four colour offset printing, electronic newsrooms with all the latest computers and such other gadgets, facsimile editions are some of the features of today's newspapers. The newspapers of tomorrow could be paperless. People have been experimenting with paperless newspapers for a long time now.

One step in this direction is the *tablet newspaper*. This has flat *liquid crystal display* (LCD) screen, mostly in the tabloid size, which can collect the contents of any newspaper through telephone lines or cables. Everything will be displayed on the screen at the click a button. On the other hand most major newspapers are available on the Internet.

Another development of the future could be that the newspapers will be customized. Following the '*theory of selectivity*' or reader's tendency to read only what appeals to them, mass-oriented newspapers may not be published any more.

Instead, homes will be equipped with receiving units (on personal computers). Readers can scan all the available 'items' on the monitor and get printouts of only the required items. This way the readers will exercise a lot of control on the contents of newspapers of tomorrows. This self-interest in selecting news and other items will result in high degrees of polarization.

And the daily newspapers, once described as "*the poor man's university*" by George Bernard Shaw, will become too elitist. This is because only few people will have access to such electronic newspapers.

### **2.2.2 MAGAZINES AS MASS MEDIUM:**

*A magazine is a periodical publication that contains an assortment of items in each issue.* The term magazine means '*store house*'. Keeping with this, magazines originally contained diverse contents. But in recent times these have become highly specialized, each attracting a clearly defined audience, catering to their specific range of interests. This arrangement works out real good from the advertising point of view as advertisers can reach specific target audiences more effectively.

Broadly, magazines can be divided into four groups: *consumer magazines, trade and technical magazines, company publications* (public relations publications), and *literary & scholarly journals*.

Consumer magazines are usually dependent on advertising. They try to reach the general public or particular segments of it like men, women, children, elderly people, sport lovers, film lovers, etc.

Trade and technical magazines, including business journals, are directed at relatively small and highly specific audiences in trades, business, industries, and professions. These carry information on topics related to these specific areas.

Corporations, government agencies, educational institutes and other such organizations issue Public Relations periodicals to promote their interests among employees, customers, clients, opinion leaders, etc.

Literary and scholarly journals are published with an aim of promoting and spreading knowledge. These magazines do not have much commercial viability.

Media groups and individual publishing houses publish magazines. Magazines are also published by small societies, by corporations, by trade associations, educational institutions and religious organizations. Even government departments and political parties publish magazines.

Magazines are mostly published weekly, fortnightly, or monthly. These are also published quarterly or half-yearly. A few magazines are also published once a year.

Magazines can be as general as the 'Readers Digest' or as specific as the TV programme guides. However varied magazines are, they share two common characteristics. They are published regularly and each magazine appeals to the interests of some specific segment of society.

Historically, magazines developed as a hybrid form of printed media and appealed to audiences as it bridged the gap between the purely informative newspapers and the highly intellectual books. They provided some information and some entertainment.

The origin of magazines is somewhat obscure as in the early days, the demarcation between newspapers and magazines were not so clear. However, one of the earliest magazines known is the *Journal des Scavans*. It was founded in Paris in 1665. Initially it carried abstracts of books. Soon it carried original material as well. Then came the *Tattler* and the *Spectator* (by Joseph Addison and Richard Steele) from England. These were published in the first quarter of the eighteenth century. Both these magazines included more opinion and entertainment and very little of news.

Two of the earliest American magazines were the '*General Magazine and Historical Chronicle for all the British Plantations in America*', and the '*American Magazine, or A Monthly View of the Political State of the British Colonies*'. Both were published from Philadelphia in 1741. Benjamin Franklin published the *General Magazine* and it came, just three days after the *American Magazine*, which was published by Franklin's competitor Andrew Bradford.

Both these magazines closed very quickly. The magazines that followed also did not survive for longer times because of limited circulation and lack of advertising. However, magazines flourished in the nineteenth century. *Portfolio*, *North American Review* (1815) and *Saturday Evening Post* (1821) were early success stories. Magazines like *Harper's New Monthly Magazine*, the *Atlantic Monthly*, *Gleason's Pictorial*, and *Harper's Weekly* followed soon.

The golden age for magazines in America came in the late half of the 19th century. Channels of distribution were created as surface transmission networks developed in 1860s and 1870s. A decade later the Postal Act of 1879 made many of the magazines much cheaper.



Other developments of this time were the development of cheaper pulp paper, improved printing processes, and the invention of linotype, which facilitated automatic typesetting. Another development of this time was better photographic reproduction. This way magazine could be produced less expensively, more rapidly and more attractively. Also magazines could be distributed to far off places at cheaper prices. Both the circulation and advertising revenue also increased. Successful magazines of this time were *American*, *Colliers* and *Cosmopolitan* (published by William Randolph Hearst).

Many technological and other developments in the early part of the twentieth century gave birth to the modern magazine. It was low cost, enjoyed large circulation, supported well by advertising and catered to diverse audiences. During the decade following World War I, several big magazines were established. These were *Reader's Digest* (1922), *Time* (by Henry Luce, 1923) the *New Yorker* (1925). In the mid-1930s came *Life* followed by the first men's magazine- *Esquire*.

Today magazines are published on a wide variety of subjects. The American Audit Bureau of Circulation classifies almost thirty different categories of magazines. Some of these are: *automobiles*, *brides or bridal (matrimonial)*, *beauty and sewing*, *business and finance*, *computers*, *crafts or games*, *fishing and hunting*, *clubs and associations*, *fashion*, *gardening*, *health*, *home*, *mechanism and science*, *men's*, *motorcycle*, *music*, *news*, *photography*, *senior citizens*, *sports*, *travel*, *women's*, and *youth*.

Another classification puts all magazines under three basic categories - news magazines, entertainment magazines and advocacy or opinion magazines. Today the majority of magazines are narrow either in content (subject), in target audience, or both. Few magazines are broad in both in terms of subject and audience. Readers Digest is one of the few which is broad-based both in terms of subjects covered and readership.

Magazines competed with newspapers right from the very beginning. Soon they faced tough competition from the new media- radio, films, television, etc. But like newspapers, magazines have also successfully fought this challenge. Magazines, in fact, have thrived and prospered. One example of this is the hundreds of film magazines in India, which are doing roaring business despite numerous TV

channels providing film-based programmes. Magazines on many other subjects also have been started and grown despite the rise of newer media.

The importance of magazines as a medium of mass communication, the number of magazines, the range and nature of their content, the use people make of them, their relative prestige etc. vary from country to country. All these things are influenced by historical, societal, cultural, economic, and political factors. Countries practicing free economy have more number of magazines than the socialist countries. In many countries, magazines are considered secondary in importance to newspapers.

However, magazines play an important role as disseminators of information, opinion and attitudes. And historian Theodore Peterson has credited magazines with "*providing social reform, putting issues in national perspective, fostering a sense of national integration, providing low cost entertainment, serving as an inexpensive "instructor", and offering a variety of entertainment, education and ideas representing a wide range of tastes and interests.*"

**FUTURE OF MAGAZINES:** The journey of magazines has been from elitism to a pursuit of the largest possible readers, and to the present age of specialization. Now magazines cater to readers differentiated by social, economical, educational, professional, cultural, recreational, religious, and many other interests. This trend will continue in the 21st century.

Technologically and economically, the magazine of tomorrow will differ from that of today. There will be fewer bulky magazines. More and more magazines will be printed on lighter paper. Also more magazines will be available on the Internet. This will result in rapid and widespread dissemination of information. *Custom-made* and *made-to-order* magazines will arrive. These will give readers freedom of selection. They can select the items they want from a menu and get them printed on their printers at home.

### **2.2.3 BOOKS AS MASS COMMUNICATION:**

If one goes by the definition of mass communication, books do not qualify completely as a medium of mass communication. Unlike newspapers, radio and television, they don't reach audiences simultaneously. Their audiences' size (readers) is also not as large as in case of other mass media. For example, many

newspapers have daily circulations exceeding one lakh. But there are very few books, which have sold more than a lakh copies. However, books are considered as a mass medium on their *aggregate readership*.

Books also rate as an important mass medium because of the *credibility* factor. Books are credible because of their association with formal education and because they are durable and long lasting. In fact, the hardbound book is considered to be the most credible among the printed media (many consider it to be the most credible among all media) followed by the paperback books, magazines and finally the newspapers.

*Books last. Like diamonds, books are forever.* Some books printed several hundred years ago are still in existence. And the ideas contained in some books last even longer. Some of these books *transmit culture from one generation to the next*. Books represent the *consciences of the times and people gone by*. They provide *private indulgence in a harassed and public time*. And as Marshal McLuhan has said, books *enhance individuality, orderliness, and logic*.

**HISTORY OF BOOKS:** The history of books dates back to 3,500 B.C. Those days there was no paper and no printing press. Books in those early days were mostly made of thin sheets of barks from trees or palm leaf etc. Bark sheets and leaves were painstakingly carved with pointed devices. The books thus produced were ornate with intricate designs. Around 2500 BC, the Egyptians discovered a method of making paper from Papyrus. This made writing much easier with the help of brush and ink. Later parchment was used to prepare books.

One significant early development was the invention of the *codex* by Roman people in the 4th century. By this system loose Papyrus sheets were tied by cords between thin wooden boards.

The next big step came in the middle part of the 15th century. In the 1450's Johan Guttenberg invented the printing press and movable types for the Roman script. The Chinese had developed movable types for their script several hundred years earlier, but these were cumbersome and did not find wider use.

Gutenberg is credited to be the first to print a book using mechanical printing process. This book was the '*42-line Mazarin Bible*'. It was published in the year 1456. And this marked the beginning of the era of mass communication.

Soon printing and book publishing spread to other parts of Europe. William Caxton set up the first printing press in England in 1476 and printed books like '*Dictes or Sayengis of the Philosophes*' (Sayings of the Philosophers). By 1500 AD, about 30,000 books had been printed in various parts of Europe. Most of these books were religious or philosophical in nature.

The first printing press in America was established in 1638 and soon books were printed in the new colonies also. The letterpress and movable types invented by Guttenberg reigned supreme in absolute monopoly for almost 350 years. Consequently, there was not much technological improvement in the field of book publishing between 1450 and 1800. Also owing to a very low literacy rate (only 10 percent of Americans could read and write in 1800), book publishing did not flourish until the beginning of the 19th century.

One important development that took place in the mid-19th century was the publication of textbooks. *William Holmes McGuffey* of Ohio, USA, called the father of the *Schoolbook*, published the first educational book titled *The McGuffey Eclectic Readers* in 1836. He wrote many other educational books.

Another major development of this time was *escapist literature in inexpensive, portable packages*. Such books were written and published particularly for soldiers seeking diversion during the Civil war. *Horatio Alger* was a pioneer of this development. Alger wrote 120 books of fiction with rags-to-riches themes during the later part of the 19th century. One most important distinguishing feature of such books was that these were not hard bound. Rather, these were paperbacks.

Growth and development in book publishing some what stagnated in the first half of the 20th century. The reasons attributed to this are the two World Wars and the stock market crash.

The period immediately after World War II saw the emergence of many publication houses bringing out pocket books. These included many publishing houses like Penguin Books (Britain), Pocket Books, Avon Books, Dell Books, Bantam Books, etc.

During the 1950s and 1960s many publishing conglomerates emerged. Also companies from other fields entered into book publishing.

**TYPES OF BOOKS:** The book industry comprises of fairly distinct publishing divisions. The special interest markets determine these divisions. Books sold to general

consumers through bookshops are called *trade books*. *Paperbacks* are sold through both bookstores and newsstands. The third category comprises of *textbooks* for students. Then there are the *professional or scholarly books* experts.

Trade books are usually hard bound. The subjects covered under this category include *fiction, nonfiction, biography, literary classics, cookbooks, hobby books, popular science books, travel books, art books, and sports, drama, music, poetry books*, etc. Trade book publishing is highly expensive. Only a few of these books are big moneymakers.

Paperbacks, on the other hand, are highly profitable as there is always a ready market for such books. Often trade books also have paperback versions. Textbooks are the most profitable of all. This is because these are sold year after year. Publishers only bring out new editions of old textbooks.

Professional books have a very limited market. Specialists write these books for other specialists. Such books deal with specialized professions like law, medicine, etc.

While a wide variety of books are published, the process of publishing is the same for all books. The editorial personnel of the book industry *acquire and edit manuscripts*. The production personnel (designers, printers, binders, etc.) *produce* the books. Finally, the marketing and sales personnel *promote and sell* the books.

**BOOK PUBLISHING TODAY AND TOMORROW:** Unlike other mass media, books enjoy '*freedom of content*'. Books cover all the topics and subjects. Also book publishers indulge in a lot of experimenting. Books do not follow the '*tried and tested*' practices as adopted by other mass media.

And finally, in these times of information-super-highways, books are striving really well. This has prompted Alvin Toffler, author of *Future Shock* and *The Third Wave*; to call these *bound sheets of printed matter* called the book a *powerful information technology*.

#### **2.2.4 RADIO AS MASS MEDIUM:**

Skeptics had labeled it dead and buried. Die-hard fans were lamenting its decreased popularity. But radio staged a come back. It is alive and kicking today. What better proof than this piece of statistics. Americans listen to radio for an average of 25 hours a week. Older Americans (above 65 years) listen to radio for over 30 hours a

week, Younger Americans (18-34 years) listen to it for about 27 hours a week. That is a whopping four hours of radio listening a day and in a country where other more entertaining and highly visual media abound.

Radio may be small in size. It may not be a status symbol. It may not be as complete a medium like television. But it is doing pretty well - in terms of programming, listenership, number of stations, and of course, revenues.

Radio has ceased to be a major mass medium. But it plays the *supplementary* or *support* role to perfection. It has got many features, which are not there with other media. It ranks behind television and newspapers as a source of news and in terms of credibility. It is highly portable. It is inconspicuous. But it is always there for us. Television may fail us. Newspapers may not reach us. But radio never fails us.

One of the reasons why it is neglected is that it is a *background medium*. We often listen to radio while doing other things like driving a car, shaving, cooking and even while reading newspapers.

Radio may not be a major medium today. But it is credited with a lot of 'firsts'. Radio introduced *over-the-air-advertising*. It established major networks. Radio pioneered programme effectiveness research and introduced the rating system.

But radio was hit really hard by television. With the rising popularity of television, it almost became extinct. But it recovered from the brink of extinction by learning how to *speak to the audience one to one* and *newer technology*. It became the most personal medium. Radio has achieved an intimacy, which no other medium possesses.

**HISTORY OF RADIO:** Samuel Morse invented telegraph in 1844. Alexander Graham Bell invented telephone in 1876. Thomas Alva Edison invented the light bulb in 1879. The monopoly of printing was nearing its end.

At such a time, a new era in electronics was heralded when in the last decade of the 19th century; Guglielmo Marconi of Italy invented a way to transmit sound without using wires. By 1901, Marconi succeeded in creating a wireless communication link between Europe and North America. In 1906 Lee De Forest along with John Ambrose Fleming perfected the '*audion*' or the vacuum tube, which made clear transmission of voice and music possible.

These developments paved the way for the first ever broadcast that took place on Christmas Eve, 1906 in Massachusetts, USA. Reginald Fessenden was the

pioneer behind this very first transmission. It took ten years of hard work to perfect the radio. This led to the first ever radio news cast in 1916. Following World War I, three American companies joined hands and formed the *Radio Corporation of America (RCA)*. These were *General Electric (GE)*, *Westinghouse*, and *American Telephone and Telegraph (AT & T)*. This marked the beginning of organized and regular radio broadcasting.

Very quickly radio established its place in the minds of listeners. Heavy doses of infotainment (music, drama, talk shows, etc., supplemented with news made radio popular almost overnight. This popularity was reflected as radio went commercial in 1922 and attracted heavy advertising. Soon radio industry developed far and wide spreading networks and by the 1930's radio become America prime mass medium. By that time it had spread its tentacles almost all over the world.

Television made its entry by the mid 1930's. And few years' later radio was overtaken - in terms of popularity - by television. Radio needed a savior. But it was already there. Columbia University professor Edwin H. Armstrong had invented *frequency modulation (FM)* transmission in 1933. It was static-free and had high fidelity sound quality. These qualities had been demonstrated by 1938. But use of FM was started only after World War-II. And only in the 1970's large-scale use of FM radio started.

In America FM has overtaken AM radio in terms of audience share. FM has caught like wild fire all over the world. In India there are about 200 FM radio stations. Most FM channels offer 24-hour service. There are dozens of private players operating FM channels.

Today radio has branched out. No more it offers only dramas, comedies and soap operas. Also radio is not solely dependent on music. Radio today offers a wide variety of programmes. It has started specializing and tries to reach smaller and more loyal audiences and advertisers. It provides a mix of local and topical information, news, current affair programmes, talk shows, interviews, musical programmes, drama and documentaries.

**FUTURE OF RADIO:** Radio's future is a mystery. It is not easy to predict the future of radio. The future of radio would depend on changing regulatory scenarios, technological advances and changing audience appeal. However, radio's current localization and specialized programming will continue. Radio transmission will improve greatly particularly because of satellite

technologies. Stereophonic broadcasting over AM brands will be further improved. And FM will continue to grow at a faster rate.

#### **8.1.4 RECORDINGS AS MASS MEDIUM:**

Recording is big money business today. From plastic records, reel-to-reel tapes, cartridges, cassettes, compact discs, to laser discs; the range of recording formats is mind-boggling. No other mass media boasts of such a wide and varied range.

The credit of capturing and recording sounds and voices goes to the scientific genius of Thomas Alva Edison. In 1877, Edison and his assistant John Kruesi build a functional sound record-playback device called the *phonograph* (translated from Greek, phonograph means sound-writer).

The phonograph was a hand-operated cylinder wrapped in tin foil with a *stylus* attached to a diaphragm, which vibrated from sound waves and cut an indentation on the tin foil. This is how sound was recorded by the early phonograph. Reversing the process i.e., when a needle ran across the indentations, the recorded sound was reproduced. This was then amplified mechanically. The first thing than Edison recorded was the song "Mary had a Little Lamb".

The next development was the *graphophone*. Chinchester Bell (Graham Bell's cousin) and Charles Summer Tainter designed this. They used a wax cylinder instead of the original tin foil, which was not reusable.

Jesse H. Lippencott bought the patents from both Edison and Bell-Tainter and started producing it commercially. Ernile Berliner improved upon the wax cylinder by inventing a flat-disc system. This system continued up to the 1920s when electronic recording system was developed. This new system offered better quality.

The booming recording business suffered badly in the 1930s and 1940s, when radio started offering music. Following World War II came the electromagnetic tape. Qualitatively this system was far superior and had an additional feature of dubbing from master tapes. The longer playing and high quality 33-RPM records replaced the 78-revolutions per minute (RPM) records, by the 1950s.

An inexpensive 45-RPM record followed soon. Also in the 50s, hi-fi (high fidelity) and stereo-recording and playback systems were developed. Cassette tape recording and particularly the personal stereo revolutionized the recording industry in terms of reach.



The past three decades have seen the marriage of musical media. Radio, TV, and films have joined together with live concerts to bring music to the masses. And the recording industry has benefited immensely from this marriage. Music videos have become an essential ingredient of promoting the recording industry. So popular music videos have become that even film songs are now being shot in the music video format. Musical channels like MTV and Channel V among others are playing an important role. In India, also we have dozens of music channels.

The recording industry covers all kinds of music - *classical* and *operatic music*, *Jazz*, *dance music* (*fox-trot*, *turkey-trot*, *Charleston*), *pop music*, *rock music*, *metal music*, *blues*, *country music*, *gospel*, and much more. In India, the recording industry covers them all - from *classical*, *semi classical*, *devotional*, *film music*, to *light music* and today's *Indi-pop*.

The recording industry started little more than 100 years ago. Soon it reached the position of a mass communication medium. Despite occasional lapses, it has kept growing. While it covers all kind of music, popular music (*rock n 'roll* in particular) is the biggest success. Now sophisticated production and marketing systems have become the hallmarks of the recording industry. While it is an important mass medium providing entertainment, it has also been playing a crucial role as a cultural and economic phenomenon.

#### **2.2.6 TELEVISION AS MASS MEDIUM:**

Be it the Gulf War, the Olympics, the Soccer and Cricket World Cups, audiences get to watch it on their television screens. Television brings events of far off places to our drawing rooms. Television captures our imagination like no other media. We see things on it, we *hear* and we see *life-like-movement*. And it is the most complete and the most dramatic of all mass media.

Television captures actual events for us, reaches as immediately, gives us shared meanings for events, situations, happenings, etc. But in addition to *packaging reality*, television also packages fiction, drama, culture, economy and many other things with equal or better ease. And increasingly this *idiot box* (so named because it provides everything on a platter) has steadily increased its hold on us.

Here is some proof about the astounding reach of television. In India, Doordarshan reaches about 260 million households. In American, more than 90 percent of the homes have TV sets. Most Americans have multiple TV sets. An average American watches TV for more than 30 hours a week. Viewers depend on television for a whole lot of reasons ranging from information, entertainment, and education and of course, to see advertisements on TV.

**HISTORY OF TELEVISION:** The inventions and discoveries in the late 1890s and early twentieth century lead to the invention of television. Vladimir Zworykin, an American scientist of Russian birth, took the first big step in the development of TV. Zworykin developed an all-electronic television system in 1923 and perfected it by 1928.

However, only experimental TV broadcasts were conducted in the early days. By 1937, quite a few experimental TV stations were in operation. Only in 1938, TV sets become widely available. And since then, television has not looked back. It has climbed the ladder of success and has become the number one mass medium in many regards.

In India, television arrived with small scale experimental telecasting in 1959. Slowly the half hour programme experiment grew. New TV stations also started coming up. In 1975, the Satellite Instruction Television Experiment (SITE) was conducted. It used an American satellite and reached viewers in six states through 5,000 communities TV sets. The growth of TV was very slow in India in the early days.

But it has grown by leaps and bounds since the early 1980s. While Doordarshan was the only channel available all over the country through the 1980's, the TV scenario in India changed with the arrival of CNN through cable TV in 1991.

Since then private TV channels, running through cable networks have mushroomed. Now we have more than 250 TV channels available in India.

From generalized programming of the early days, we now see specialized TV channels. BBC, CNN, NDTV, AAJTAK, Star News, Zee News, Total TV, INDIA TV and DD News the list of news channels is endless. There are exclusive sports channels - Star Sports, ESPN, Ten Sports, Nimbus, and DD Sports. National Geographic, Discovery and Animal Planet are highly specialized channels covering nature and wildlife exclusively.

**RATING SYSTEM:** In the television the products (programmes) are offered to the customers (viewers) free of cost or at a very nominal rate for the pay channels. As there is not much direct income through sales, television is mostly dependent on advertising for revenue.

More advertisements are shown before or during popular programmes. Popularity of TV programmes is judged from the rating of the programmes. Although rating was first practiced for radio programmes, television uses it more. Refinement of survey methods and the advancements in the field of computers have turned the rating practices into highly reliable systems.

The most prominent of these systems was developed by the A.C. Nielson Company. Another company doing rating research is the Arbitron Company. These ratings are often criticized as they use very small sample sizes. For example, Nielson Company uses a sample size of 2,000 households to study and measure the programme tastes and likings of the whole of America.

**ENORMOUS COSTS:** Another aspect of television is enormous costs. Huge amounts are spent in producing the programmes. Also the investments to build the infrastructure for transmission are also huge. Crores of rupees are spent on single episodes. In the USA, the production costs for half-hour prime time drama or action-adventure programmes are about \$ 10,00,000 per episode.

However, TV networks and channels make profits despite the high costs of programming and transmission because of high advertising revenues. Unlike other mass media, television channels and networks are not just concerned with audience appeal. They also watch out for what their competitors with in the TV industry are doing. In the highly competitive world of television networks and channels, no one wants to lag behind.

TV channels produce programmes as much against their competitors' offerings and they do for the viewers. This is reflected in the adherence to the policy of appealing to the lowest common denominator. And no other mass media practices simplicity and commonality in their content as television. From family dramas, gunfights, drug busts, crime serials, high society melodramas, family comedies, to young women in skimpy clothing, to reality shows; the range of TV programmes is grossly limited. In fact, TV is criticized for producing programme aimed at the so-

called *thirteen year old mentally* which will automatically reach every one above that level.

At another level, TV watching is considered an addiction. Television has been labeled the 'plug in drug'. Statistics about TV watching habits reflect this aspect with crystal clarity. Statistics also shows that half the population, at least in USA, is glued to TV sets during prime time.

**ADVERTISING ON TELEVISION:** Over the years television has grown as a medium of advertising also. In America more than half the advertising money is spent on TV. Television is used as an advertising medium for many reasons. One of the reasons is its massive reach. TV reaches every one and everywhere. Young and old, literate and illiterate, students and scholars, workers and experts, house wives and working women, no one escapes television.

It also offers great many new dimensions to advertising that are unmatched by other advertising media. These include drama, humour, dramatic effect, colour, stereo-sound and most importantly, the element of movement or motion. TV also has a unique ability to create mood, excitement and a sense of involvement.

**TELEVISION NEWS:** Viewers' addiction to TV news is reflected from the following findings of a research study in America. These statistics hold true to a great extent for most other countries also. One third of the adult population receives most of their news from television. For half the population, television is the only source of news. And most people find television news to be more credible.

People watch news on TV because it is immediate. Also it is more convenient and requires less effort than any other news media.

**TECHNOLOGY REVOLUTION IN THE TELEVISION INDUSTRY:** Up to the mid-1970s, television production, like cinema, depended on celluloid film. Handling this film, particularly editing was cumbersome, time consuming and costly. Film also involved bulky camera and elaborate processing and editing systems. It also was very costly.

All this changed with the advent of the magnetic videotape. These tapes were reusable and were easy to edit. Another improvement - particularly for TV news - was the development of electronic-news-gathering (ENG) equipment. ENG was highly portable and offered news crews greater mobility. Now portable digi-cams have revolutionized TV production. Improvements in satellite technology and

transmission facilities have resulted in sophisticated outdoor-broadcasting (OB) systems.

**CRITICISM OF TELEVISION:** It has been called by many names. The *boob tube*, the *plug-in-drug*, the *one-eyed monster* and of course, the *idiot box*. Television has turned millions of watchers into *couch potatoes*. TV, it is said, results in '*transcendental vegetation*'.

Television generally concentrates its efforts on entertaining the masses. It, however, has the potentiality to do better things. As Edward R. Murrow once said, "This instrument can teach, it can illuminate, and can even inspire. But it can only do so to the extent that viewers are determined to use it to these ends. Otherwise, it is merely wires and lights in a box. Used carefully, television could be immensely useful in the battle against ignorance, intolerance and indifference".

### **2.2.7 CINEMA AS MASS MEDIUM:**

Film is based on an 'optical illusion'. Still frames of individual photographs are mechanically speeded up and projected in such a way that they blend into one another, creating the illusion of motion. It is known by many names - movies, cinema, films, or motion pictures.

Film is considered a mass medium because it reaches very large audiences. It is not as immediate as newspaper, television or radio. But reaches large masses of people over a relatively long period of time. By 'film' we generally mean the commercial 'masala' films. But there are many other variations including art films, cartoon films, educational films (used as teaching aids), social documentaries, television films (specifically made to be shown on TV), and children's films.

Film does not have a well-defined audience like other major mass media. It also lacks the overwhelming presence as enjoyed by radio, TV and newspapers etc. But it has a big advantage. It commands attention. Once inside the darkened theatres, audience members forget the outside world and become captive to the charm of films.

The *larger-than-life format* of film (from 16mm, 35 mm, 70mm, cinema scope to the most recent *I-max* format) provides the film producer absolute control over *emphasis, order of presentation, continuity, dramatic effect, and timing*. These characteristics have been polished and refined over the last 100 odd years.

And film has become a superb medium of *entertainment, instruction, and persuasion*. Some scholars compare films with books. Both films and books are relatively expensive to produce, both are long term undertakings, both deal with unity and specificity of subject matter, and most importantly neither is supported by advertising. In fact, film has been called the *electric book*.

**HISTORY OF FILMS:** Film works on the principles of 'persistence of vision'. The eye retains an image for fleeting seconds after it is gone. So when individual photographs or visuals are shown one after the other at a very fast rate, then we get an illusion of movement or motion. Long back Leonardo da Vinci developed the *camera obscura*. In 1671, Athanasius Kircher developed '*magic lanterns*'. Both these machines attempted to project moving pictures.

Photography and projection were united when Leland Stanford developed the '*Zoopraxinoscope*'. Soon many developments took place. Thomas Alva Edison invented the electric light. Edison's assistant William Kennedy Laurie Dickson combined the phonograph (to record sound) and kinetoscope (to record moving pictures). Soon there were many imitations like the *Vitascope, Biograph, etc.*

Then came the Lumiere brothers. In 1895, they produced and started having commercial shows of films. Soon others followed suit and by the beginning of the 20th century, film became the third mass medium after books and newspapers.

Soon films became a form of family entertainment. Movie theatres opened everywhere. People wanted longer films with more interesting content. So the 'star system' came into being. Films now had proper stories, and technically a lot of improvements took place.

The combination of all these factors made films a booming entertainment medium. The early films were silent ones. Towards the end of the 1920s came the talkies (*Alamara*, the first talkie in India was produced in 1931). Films production centers like Hollywood and our own Bollywood opened up all over the world. And the business of films - with its huge networks of production, distribution and exhibition - grew to the status of an industry.

Film has had an obvious impact on the audiences. One reason is it is not imposed. It does not come to us. We go to theatres to watch films. So there is willingness on part of the audiences to get transported to another world for two or three hours.

Then the language barrier is minimal. Films deal with universal themes. Also it is for more transportable. Audiences all over the world watch Hollywood blockbusters. People in Russia and China loved Raj Kapoor's films. Transportability led to exchange and soon film became a cross-cultural medium.

**FUTURE OF FILM:** In its century old existence film has faced few shake-ups. First it was television. Skeptics thought no one would watch films in theatres, as so much was available on television with in the comforts of one's home. But soon it was found that TV depends too heavily on films and films form a considerable part of TV programming.

Then came videocassettes. Now it is videodiscs and laserdiscs. These eliminate the necessity of 'going out' to be entertained. But the fact that film is thriving proves that mass media share a symbiotic relationship and are not mutually destructive. Of course, film is not sitting idle. It's facing the threat posed by other media head-on.

Highly decorated theatre halls complete with shopping complexes, are now attracting more audience. Multiplexes (like PVR in New Delhi) are one way of film fighting back. Then there are 70 mm, cinemascope. Faster frame rate (shooting films at 60 frames a second rather than the current 24) is another novelty. Hollywood has started delivering films to theatre halls over satellite.

Another recent innovation is the I-max screen, which is ten times larger than the traditional 35 mm screen. Dolby stereo system, 16-track recording, etc., also has added more allure to films.

Interactive films, where audience members can have a say about how a film should end, is another novel way of attracting more audience. So it can be safely concluded that film - as a medium of entertainment and communication and as an industry - would continue to grow and hold an important part in our social system.

### **2.3 SUMMARY:**

- Newspapers, magazines, radio, television, films, books, videocassettes, audiocassettes and records, and the Internet have given us the ability to reach millions of people with our messages simultaneously.
- The mass media work as the *carriers* or *perpetuators* of the social process. Mass media help the human being in *organizing, stabilizing* and *modifying* his social

life. They also help in the *accumulation, exchange and transmission of knowledge*.

- Newspapers are regularly published (daily or weekly), printed on unbound newsprint in broadsheet or tabloid sizes. These serve general interests or specific communities with news, comments, features, photographs and advertisements.
- As a medium of mass communication, newspaper's most notable contribution has been as a *purveyor of information*. Books and magazines are *purveyors of ideas*.
- A magazine is a periodical publication that contains an assortment of items in each issue. The term magazine means 'store house'. Keeping with this, magazines originally contained diverse contents.
- Unlike newspapers, radio and television, books don't reach audiences simultaneously. However, books are considered as a mass medium on their aggregate readership. *Books last. Books are forever*. Books represent the *consciences of the times and people gone by*. They provide *private indulgence in a harassed and public time*. And as Marshal McLuhan has said, books *enhance individuality, orderliness, and logic*.
- Radio is small in size. It may not be a status symbol. It may not be as complete a medium like television. But it is doing pretty well now.
- Television captures actual events for us, reaches as immediately, gives us shared meanings for events, situations, happenings, etc. But in addition to *packaging reality*, television also packages fiction, drama, culture, economy and many other things with equal or better ease.

## 2.4 KEY WORDS:

**Mass Media:** The mass media; newspapers, magazines, radio, television, films, books, videocassettes, audiocassettes and records, and the Internet; have given us the ability to reach millions of people with our messages simultaneously.

**Newspapers:** Newspapers are regularly published (daily or weekly), printed on unbound newsprint in broadsheet or tabloid sizes. These serve general interests or specific communities with news, comments, features, photographs and advertisements. This definition, however, is not binding, as many newspapers today are available on the Internet.



**Role of Newspapers:** As a medium of mass communication, newspaper's most notable contribution has been as a *purveyor of information*. Readers around the world depend on newspapers for information about important events - near and far.

**Future of Newspapers:** Four colour offset printing, electronic newsrooms with all the latest computers and such other gadgets, facsimile editions are some of the features of today's newspapers. The newspapers of tomorrow could be a paperless one. One step in this direction is the *tablet newspaper* with flat *liquid crystal display* (LCD) screen.

**Magazine:** A magazine is a periodical publication that contains an assortment of items in each issue. The term magazine means 'store house'. Keeping with this, magazines originally contained diverse contents. Broadly, magazines can be divided into four groups: *consumer magazines*, *trade and technical magazines*, *company publications* (public relations publications), and *literary and scholarly journals*.

**Books:** Unlike newspapers, radio and television, books don't reach audiences simultaneously. However, books are considered as a mass medium on their aggregate readership. Books rate as an important mass medium because of the *credibility factor*. *Books last. Books are forever.* **Radio:** Radio may be small in size. It may not be a status symbol. It may not be as complete a medium like television. But it is doing pretty well now. It recovered from the brink of extinction by learning how to *speak to the audience one to one*. It became the most personal medium. Radio has achieved an unparalleled intimacy.

**Television:** Television captures actual events for us, reaches as immediately, gives us information about events, situations, happenings, etc. But in addition to *packaging reality*, television also packages fiction, drama, culture, economy and many other things with equal or better ease. And increasingly this *idiot box* (so branded because it provides everything on a platter).

## 2.5 SELF-ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS (SAQs):

8. Discuss in detail the role, reach, and future of newspapers a mass medium.
8. Discuss in detail the role, reach, and future of magazines a mass medium.
8. Discuss in detail the role, reach, and future of books a mass medium.
8. Discuss in detail the role, reach, and future of radio a mass medium.
8. Discuss in detail the role, reach, and future of television a mass medium.
8. Discuss in detail the role, reach, and future of cinema a mass medium.

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**HISTORY OF MASS MEDIA IN INDIA**

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**LESSON STRUCTURE:**

In this lesson, we shall discuss the history of various mass media in India. We shall start with the history of newspapers. Then we shall focus on the history of magazines, books, radio, recordings, television, and films. The lesson structure shall be as follows:

- 3.0 *Objectives*
- 3.1 *Introduction*
- 3.2 *Presentation of Content*
  - 3.2.1 *History of Newspapers in India*
  - 3.2.2 *History of Magazines in India*
  - 3.2.3 *History of Radio in India*
  - 3.2.4 *History of Television in India*
  - 3.2.5 *History of Cinema in India*
- 3.3 *Summary*
- 3.4 *Key Words*
- 3.5 *Self-Assessment-Questions (SAQs)*
- 3.6 *References/Suggested Reading*

**3.0 OBJECTIVES:**

The objectives of this lesson are as follows:

- *To study about the History of Newspaper in India,*
- *To study about the History of Magazines in India,*
- *To study about the History of Radio in India,*

- *To study about the History of Television in India,*
- *To study about the History of Cinema in India.*

### **3.1 INTRODUCTION:**

Man is a social animal. As social animals human beings have an unquenchable thirst to communicate. Towards this end, man has evolved many systems and technologies for communication. From the development of language and scripts to printing and finally to the world-wide-web of the Internet, we have developed an impressive array of communication systems. These have enabled us to send messages instantaneously across vast distances, and to arouse similar meanings in millions of people simultaneously.

Be it newspapers, magazines, radio, television, films or the other such systems and technologies, the mass media have been instrumental in shrinking the world in to a global village.

So what are these mass media? According to Wilbur Schramm:

**"A mass media is a working group organized around some device (technology) for circulating the same message, at the same time, to large number of people (spread across vast and extensive territories)".**

Thus a mass media is built around some technology and devices (printing press, broadcasting technology, satellites, etc). Being expensive and wide-ranging in nature, the mass media are usually run by institutions or organizations. They require a group of people to organize and administrate, to produce, distribute and constantly maintain the entire set up in working order.

Other features of mass media include 'mass production' and 'mass distribution'. For example, millions of copies of newspapers and magazines are produced and distributed over a vast area. In case of television hundreds of programmes are produced and telecast to vast audiences on a daily basis.

### **3.2 PRESENTATION OF CONTENT:**

Basically mass media perform as vehicles for disseminating *information, education, entertainment, and persuasion*. In the West, communication theorists have identified three other functions of mass media. These are *surveillance of the environment,*

*interpretation of information & prescription for conduct, and transmission of heritage.*

With a 5,000-year-old glorious civilization, India has rich traditions in communication. These range from the concept of *sruti* to *palm leaf writing* to *carving scriptures on stone walls (sila lekha)*, to the rich tradition of *folk sayings, songs and dramas*. With changing times, India also has kept pace with modern developments. And now we have highly developed mass media in our country. Let us discuss the history and development of these mass media in India in detail.

The presentation of content shall be as follows:

- *Newspapers in India*
- *Magazines in India*
- *Radio in India*
- *Television in India*
- *Cinema in India*

### **3.2.1 HISTORY OF NEWSPAPERS IN INDIA:**

Today the newspaper in India is a proud institution of our society. It performs the basic function of providing *info-edu-tainment* (information, education and entertainment) while working as a vehicle for *persuasion*. It also performs the role of a '*watch dog*' of the society.

Newspapers in India, however, had a humble beginning. Little more than two hundred years back, and almost one and half centuries after the first newspaper in the world was published, India had its first full-fledged newspaper. On January 29, 1780, James Augustus Hicky brought out 'The Bengal Gazette'. He was the founder editor, publisher, and printer of this first Indian newspaper. It was also called the '*Calcutta General Advertiser*'. People remember it simply as '*Hicky's Gazette*'.

This was a small-sized two sheet weekly full of malicious contents and was poor in production quality. Also the paper was filled up with advertisements keeping with the name- The Calcutta General Advertiser. In fact, the entire front page was devoted to advertisements.

Soon Hicky faced competition, as few months later, Messer B. Messinck and Peter Read brought out the '*Indian Gazette*' in November 1780. Many other

newspapers were started soon. These included the *Calcutta Gazette* (1784), the *Bengal Journal* (1785), etc.

In 1785, the government printer of Madras Richard Johnson brought out '*Madras Carrier*'. R. William's '*Madras Gazette*' (1795) and Humphrey's '*India Herald*' (1796) followed soon. In Bombay, the first newspaper was '*Bombay Herald*' (1789). '*Bombay Courier*' (1789) and '*Bombay Gazette*' (1791) followed.

This early period was marked by strict government control and censorship. Any newspaper writing against the government was heavily punished. In fact, the British government had deported one William Bolts who had planned to start a newspaper as early as 1776. This was four years before Hicky's *Gazette* was published. Hicky was harassed, his press was confiscated and finally he was forced to close the paper just after one year. Two other editors *William Duane* (1794) of the *Bengal Journal* and *Dr. Mclean* (1798) of the *Bengal Hukaru* were deported back to England.

**GOLDEN ERA BEGINS:** No reputed journalist or newspaper emerged in the late 18th and early 19th century. Then in 1811 came James Silk Buckingham. Some merchants from Calcutta had started the '*Calcutta Chronicle*' and invited Buckingham from England and made him the editor. Highly learned and widely traveled, Buckingham introduced a new approach to journalism in India. He did not follow the usual practice of scandalizing news as was practiced by his predecessors. He initiated clean journalistic practices and covered the problems of local people and their lives. Buckingham started a crusade against the evil practice of '*Sati*'. Also Buckingham was the first journalist to champion the dual causes of social reforms and freedom of press.

Then came Raja Ram Mohan Roy. He was the greatest crusading social reformer of that time. He recognized the power of newspapers and started a Bengali newspaper '*Sambad Kaumudi*' (1822), a Persian paper '*Mirut-ul-Akhbar*' (1822) and also an English magazine on religious affairs. Described by many as the '*first modern Indian*', Raja Ram Mohan Roy was the first Indian to use newspapers as a platform for change and social reforms.

This phase was also the establishment of the pro-British paper "*The Times of India*" (1838). This newspaper continued to support British causes up to 1947 when

it changed into Indian hands. Now, after more than 150 years of service, The Times of India has grown into perhaps the biggest English daily in the country.

This early phase saw journalists working with missionary zeal. Journalism for most practitioners was a mission. Most journalists and newspapers were part of the nationalist movement and freedom struggle.

However, the 'mission' phase of Indian journalism ended with our country attaining Independence in 1947. Many changes took place after Independence. Most newspapers (previously owned by the British) changed into Indian hands. News agency services became available on a regular basis with the Press Trust of India, which started in 1946.

The missionary zeal was replaced with a professional approach. Journalism becomes a profession. People joined newspapers not to serve the country or a cause but to earn a salary. Similarly, newspaper organizations also became profit-oriented.

Competition among newspapers increased, as they got involved in readership battles. Factors like technological developments, rising literacy levels, increased buying power of people and a keen interest to know what is happening around contributed to the growth of the newspaper. And soon, it grew to newer heights.

By the 1970s newspapers in India acquired the status of an industry. Now with more than 55,000 newspapers (including periodicals), Indian newspaper industry is flourishing today. In fact, there are more than 5,000 daily newspapers. And all these newspapers (dailies and periodicals) have an estimated circulation of about 75 million copies.

The Indian newspaper industry is one of the largest in the world. It has a long and rich history and heritage. The Times of India is more than 150 years old. There are half a dozen newspapers (The Tribune, The Statesman, etc) that have played long innings and are centurions. The Hindustan Times celebrated its 75th anniversary recently.

And all through these years, the Indian newspaper industry has evolved into a powerful force. It provides employment opportunities to thousands of people. It informs, entertains and also educates the readers so that they can participate fully in the affairs of the state.

**ROLE OF NEWSPAPERS:** Indian newspapers had their birth during the British rule. And they had an important role to play in the country's freedom struggle. In fact, many newspapers were started by leaders of national repute as 'mouth pieces' of the freedom struggle. Newspapers - both at the national and regional level - played a crucial role in informing the nation about the progress of the freedom movement. Bal Gangadhar Tilak brought out the *Keshari* and *Maratha*. Mahatma Gandhi started *Young India* and *Harijan*. Jawaharlal Nehru started the *National Herald*.

So many newspapers were started for the very purpose of fuelling the freedom struggle. When this goal was achieved and India attained Independence, the Indian newspapers lost their mooring for a brief while. After the initial hesitation of whether to play the role of an adversary or an ally to the government, soon Indian newspapers started playing the role of a '*watchdog*'. Indian newspapers also have been playing the role of a catalytic agent to hasten the process of social and economic development in the country.

However, Indian newspapers are characterized by their overt emphasis on politics and crime. Even a political rumour gets front-page coverage. Also crime stories are given a lot of prominence and space. Now Indian newspapers, at least the big newspapers, have a lot of entertainment content in their columns. Most major newspapers are better designed and have colour pages and many supplements.

**FREEDOM OF PRESS:** From the sedition trials of Tilak (1897 and 1908) and Mahatma Gandhi (1922), the Vernacular Press Act of 1878, the Newspapers (Incitement to offences) Act of 1908, the Indian Press Act of 1910, the Indian Press (Emergency Powers) Act of 1931, the Press (Objectionable Matter) Act of 1951, the Newspaper (Price and Page) Act of 1956 bear testimony of the suppressive and oppressive measures taken against the Indian newspapers.

However, the suppression and oppression reached brutal heights during the 1975-77 Emergency regime of Indira Gandhi. The Official Secrets Act of 1923 still haunts the Indian newspapers. A recent attempt of suppressing freedom of newspapers in India was the Defamation Bill of 1988, introduced by Rajiv Gandhi. However, this was withdrawn following strong and united opposition by the newspapers.



### 3.2.2 HISTORY OF MAGAZINES IN INDIA:

Magazines made their appearance in the late 17th and early 18th century in Europe. The first magazine in America was Andrew Bradford's *American Magazine* that was closely followed by Benjamin Franklin's *General Magazine and Historical Chronicle*. These two magazines were started in 1741.

In India, like newspapers, magazines also appeared late. Raja Ram Mohan Roy published perhaps the first magazine in India. It was an English magazine on religious affairs. This magazine was brought out in the early 1820s. While some magazines were published in the early days, none survived for more than few issues.

Even the dawn of Independence did not lead to publication of magazines. One of the early successes was the *Illustrated Weekly of India* of the Times of India group. But the situation changed in the mid 1970s, which saw a magazine boom. Few things that contributed to this change were a revolution in production techniques particularly colour printing, commercialization, etc.

Magazines published before 1970s were very low on production value because of lack of better printing technologies. Also magazines were very costly and not many people could afford them. Changes also took place in the fields of style and substance of editorial content, variety of topics covered, and professionalism, marketing and designing.

One result of the 1975-77 Emergency was that it established 'investigative journalism' in a big way. Newspapers could not take up investigative journalism to any great extent being busy with coverage of day-to-day events. So many magazines came up to fill this void.

Leading this magazine boom was *India Today*. It was started in 1975. It was started as a news magazine while most of the existing magazines were either literary digests or general magazines covering a wide variety of topics. Madhu Trehan, the publisher, was encouraged by the success of the very first issue of India Today. Trehan's brother Arun Purie took over as the editor of India Today and made it a big success.

With skillful editing and slick production, India Today captured two kinds of readers. One, the existing newspapers readers who wanted to read well-written, detailed and analytical stories; second, the people who did not read newspapers

much and wanted the news delivered to them once a fortnight in a glossy, easy-to-digest package.

Soon India Today became the highest circulated English magazine. Now it is brought out as a weekly. Now India Today is published many regional languages including Hindi, Tamil and Telugu. India Today group also brings out Business Today, which is a highly successful business magazine. India Today also has a television wing called TV Today. TV Today runs AAJTAK and Headline Today.

While India Today has trailed blaze of glory, one magazine that gave it tough competition was the *Sunday*. The Anand Bazar Patrika group of Calcutta started it in 1970. M.J. Akbar was its first editor and continued up to 1982 when he became the first editor of the *Telegraph* (English daily brought out by the Anand Bazar Patrika group). The *Sunday* pioneered the trend of investigative journalism and exposed many wrong doings including the famous Bhagalpur jail-blinding episode.

Two magazines from the south that made big at the national level were *The Week* and the *Frontline*. The Malayala Manorama group from Kottayam started *The Week*. After enjoying a lot of success in the eighties, *The Week* lost its circulation in the mid 1990s. Soon it bounced back with a design revamp and now it is doing pretty well. The publishers of *The Hindu* started the *Frontline*. It was a fortnightly, which is the first pictorial news magazine of India. Its collection of photographs and many do not match high printing quality even today.

*The Illustrated Weekly of India* enjoyed a lot of success, particularly under the editorship of Khushwant Singh. But it lost its circulation in the 1980's. Soon it made a comeback with a different format, a face-lift and many interesting articles and features. Its new editor Pritish Nandy provided it with energetic leadership. His startling interviewed with politicians, ministers and VIPs made the *Illustrated Weekly* a big favorite with readers.

Most notable of Pritish Nandy's interviews were with the then Deputy Prime Minister Devi Lal (who described the Prime Minister V.P. Singh as spineless) and with Chandra Shekhar, then a prominent leader, who accused that his telephone was being tapped and his house was bugged. But after more than a century of existence, the *Illustrated of India* stopped publishing in 1993 as its circulation fell steeply.

Specialized magazines had started making their appearance during the magazine boom of the mid 1970s. *The Hindu* Published *The Sportstar*. Then there was the *Sports Week*. Many film magazines appeared during this time, as did magazines for men and women. A late entrant the *Outlook* is doing very well now.

Now we have reached a situation where we boast of magazines of all types and on all possible subjects from computers, automobiles to nature and wildlife. The magazine boom has produced some of India's best contemporary journalists- Arun Purie, M.J. Akbar, Arun Shurie, and Pritish Nandy among others.

### **3.2.3 HISTORY OF RADIO IN INDIA:**

Radio came to India soon after it was invented in the last part of the 1890s. The first experimental radio broadcast in India was done from the roof of the Times of India building in Bombay on August 20, 1921. In February 1922, the first transmitting license was granted. In November 1923, Radio Club Calcutta was launched. But it did not start broadcasting for almost a year.

July 31, 1924 marked a red-letter day for India. On that day the first radio programme went on air.

The Madras Presidency Radio Club telecast it. This was not regular radio broadcasting. This was amateur broadcasting. Soon such amateur radio clubs were started in Calcutta, Bombay and Lahore (which was then part of India).

Regular broadcasting in India was started in 1927 when the *Indian Broadcasting Company Limited* came into being. This was a private concern started by a group of Indian businessmen. They were inspired by the success of the European Broadcasting Company and started their company with two very weak transmitters in Calcutta and Bombay. Radio sets were costly and there were not many listeners. By 1930, the Indian Broadcasting Company had about 7,000 listeners. The company could not grow much and soon started losing listeners.

The same year (1930) the Indian Broadcasting Company handed over the Bombay station to the Government. It was renamed the *Indian State Broadcasting Service (ISBS)*.

Lionel Fielden was the first Controller of the Indian State Broadcasting Service. This long and complicated name was changed to the short and easy *All India Radio* (AIR) on July 8, 1936. Soon in 1938, short-wave transmission began.

Lionel Fielden bought "a veneer of respectability, a little polish, some enterprise, a good deal of pride and prejudice, if not much sense and sensibility" to All India Radio.

During the World War II, high-powered transmission was started by AIR. During the war, all news bulletins were broadcast from a central newsroom. This led to the establishment of the News Services Division of AIR. Also the External Services Division was established in 1939 with a broadcast in 'Pustoo' language.

**POST INDEPENDENCE ERA:** In 1947, AIR had only six stations in the major cities, a few low power transmitters and there were about a mere 2.5 lakhs of radio receiver sets. Soon 'pilot' stations started and low power transmitters were installed. By 1951, twenty-five stations were functioning. But AIR had not gained much in listenership and popularity. While the English speaking elite listened to *BBC*, the common people listened to *Radio Ceylon*, which broadcast Hindi film songs.

To counter this the *Commercial Broadcasting Service (CBS)* was launched. It is popularly known as *Vividh Bharti*. The arrival of *Vividh Bharti* saw a sea change in the popularity of AIR and listenership soared to dizzy heights.

Soon Community Listening Schemes and Rural and Farm broadcasts were started. All these contributed to the growing popularity and increased listenership of AIR. A major change took place in 1988 when the national channel of AIR was launched via satellite.

**SPECIFIC AUDIENCE BROADCASTS:** AIR stations all over the country cater to the specific needs of different audience/listener groups. Apart from news, current affairs, documentaries, drama and music (classical, light, film and folk), AIR also has School Broadcasts (produced by NCERT and SCERTs), programmes for the Armed Forces, Rural Programmes, Farm and Home programmes, Women's programmes, Children's programmes, Tribal programmes, programmes for Youth, and University broadcasts, etc.

**FM RADIO AND AIR:** With the advent of television in a big way in the Mid-1980s, AIR lost its popularity. It continued losing listeners till FM radio came. Madras,

Calcutta, and Bombay stations of AIR were the first to introduce FM transmission. FM radio reached very short ranges but provided clear and static-free broadcasts.

But FM caught the listener's imagination when the New Delhi station of AIR started providing 24-hour service through FM. Soon the other three metros also introduced 24 hour FM broadcasting. Now Goa also provides round the clock FM broadcasting. There are about a dozen private FM channels.

With a mixture of music, information, news and programmes of popular taste, the 24-hour FM services have achieved both popularity and listenership. Also about 300 FM stations have been started in all major cities of the country.

**AIR TODAY:** As on first January 1999, AIR had total of 195 broadcasting centres. Out of these 109 are regional stations, 74 local radio stations, and nine are relay stations. In addition, there are three Vividh Bharti (Commercial Broadcasting Service) broadcasting centers at Chandigarh, Kanpur, and Vadodhara and 30 CBS (Vividh Bharti) centers. There are 145 medium wave transmitters, 55 short wave transmitters and 103 very high frequency (VHF) or FM transmitters.

Reach wise, AIR covers about 90 percent of the total area of the country and 97.3 percent of the population (as on 01.01.99). There are about an estimated 10 crores of radio sets in India.

AIR offers broadcasts in 24 languages and 16 dialects as part of its Home Services. As part of its External Services, AIR broadcasts programmes in 24 languages. As part of its National Service, AIR broadcasts 88 news bulletins in 19 languages. AIR broadcasts a total of 137 news bulletins in 66 languages and dialects. The number of news bulletins broadcast in the External Services is 65 in 24 languages.

#### **3.2.4 HISTORY OF TELEVISION IN INDIA:**

The earliest experimental television broadcasting was started in the USA in the 1920s. By the 1930s, regular TV broadcasting was started with the NBC of New York and BBC TV of London telecasting programmes regularly. But unlike radio, television took a long time in coming to India. The first experimental TV station was started in New Delhi on September 15, 1959. This started with a half hour daily programme that reached a radius of 40 kilometers only.

These early experiments were conducted with help of UNESCO to find out the potential of TV in community development and formal education. Educational programmes on science for teachers were broadcast in 1961. This kind of programming continued on television for the first few years.

Both the viewing public and TV set manufactures put pressure on the government and entertainment programmes were started in August 1965. The popular early programmes on TV were film song based.

In January 1967, rural programming was started with *Krishi Darshan*. This programme reached the farmers in Delhi, UP and Haryana through 80 village tele-clubs. *Krishi Darshan* is telecast even today and is quite popular among rural viewers.

The Bombay TV centre was started in October 1972. It had a range of 70-100 kilometers. TV stations were established in Srinagar and Amritsar in 1973. Two years later, in 1975, three more stations were started in Calcutta, Madras and Lucknow.

The *Satellite Instructional Television Experiment* (SITE) was launched in August 1975. It continued for one year. SITE beamed educational and instructional programmes to villages in six states- Madhya Pradesh, Bihar, Rajasthan, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka and Orissa. Programmes were received in a total of about 5,000 villages in these six states.

On 1st January 1976, television went commercial and advertisements were telecast. The same year television was separated from All India Radio and was made an independent media unit of the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting. It was also given a new name *Doordarshan* in 1976. The next year, for the first time in the history of broadcasting in India, political parties shared equal radio & TV time for election propaganda purposes.

National Programmes of Doordarshan was inaugurated on August 15, 1982. This was followed by the introduction of colour. In the same year, INSAT-1A, India's first domestic communication satellite was placed in the orbit. But it failed to become operational. However, INSAT-1B, placed in the orbit by the American shuttle '*Challenger*' in August 1983 become operational. Now India has made a lot of progress in the satellite sector with INSAT-3B fully operational since March 2000.

In addition to the seven transponders of INSAT-2B and INSAT-2C, the INSAT-3B will provide three Ku-band transponders with 12 extended C-band transponders and S-band mobile satellite service payloads. This will increase the DD's capacities at least two folds. With this increased capacity Doordarshan plans to launch an exclusive educational channel - *Vidya Vahini* as part of the *Swarna Jayanthi Vidya Vikas Upagraha Yojana*.

In addition to the National Channel (DD1), Doordarshan has the highly popular Metro channel (DD2). It also has an exclusive news channel (DD-News) and a sports channel (DD-Sports). Then there are quite a few regional channels of Doordarshan. As on March 1999, DD1 had about 1000 transmitters and DD2 had 57 transmitters. Through these (High, Low and Very Low Powered Transmitters), Doordarshan reaches about 260 million households. That is a staggering 87.9 per cent by population and 74.8 per cent by geographic area.

**PRIVATE TV CHANNELS IN INDIA:** Doordarshan enjoyed monopoly in telecasting in India for a long time. But in 1991, CNN entered India through highly localized cable networking in cities like Delhi and Bombay. CNN brought the Gulf War live to Indian homes. Soon other private channels followed. *STAR TV* (Satellite Television Asia Region) network entered India cautiously but soon consolidated its position. It now has about half a dozen channels (*Star Plus, Star World, Star News, Star Movies, Channel-V, Star sports*, etc.).

Zee TV started out with Star TV but soon parted way. Over the last few years, it has developed into a major network. It now has many channels like *Zee TV, Zee News, Zee Cinema, Zee Movies, Zee English, Asian Sky Shop*, etc. It also has branched into regional languages through Alpha TV Punjabi, Alpha TV Marathi, Alpha TV Gujarati, and Alpha TV Bengali. More regional channels from the Zee TV network are in the pipeline.

Other major private TV channels (mostly available through cable) are *Sony* (entertainment), *SETMAX* (entertainment and sports), *ESPN* and *Star Sports* (Sports), *National Geographic, Animal Planet* and *Discovery* (wildlife and sciences), *MTV, Music Asia, ETC, B4U*, etc.

### **3.2.5 HISTORY OF CINEMA IN INDIA:**

Cinema came to India just six months after it made its commercial entry on the world stage in late 1895. On July 7, 1896, the first cinematographic exhibition by the Lumiere Brothers was held in Bombay. The exhibition included "*living (moving) photographic pictures in life sized reproductions*". This exhibition included scenes like the arrival of a train, of workers leaving a factory, of a sea bath etc. These were recordings of real life happenings captured on the film reel. Cinema or the *marvel of the century* as it was described had arrived in India.

Soon many such reality pictures were made in India. In 1912, a full-length play - *Bhakta Pundalik* - was cinematographically recorded by R.G. Torney and shown in theatres.

The first Indian features film was made by Dada Saheb Phalke in 1913. The film was *Raja Harischandra*. This four reel long silent film with subtitles in Hindi and English supplemented with musical accompaniment by musicians proved to be a big hit. Dada Saheb Phalke made more than a hundred films - both short and features films. Some of his popular films were *Savitri*, *Lanka Dahan*, *Krishna Janma*, *Bhasmasur Mohini*, etc.

With these films Phalke started the trend of religious and mythological films. Hundreds of such religious and mythological films were made during that first decade (1913-1920) of the history of Indian films.

The second decade saw the emergence of another genre or category. Film makers produced satiric or comedy films dealing with social problems. Chandulal Shah of Bombay made *Gun Sundari* (Why Husbands Go Astry) and *Typist Girl* (1918) D.G. Ganguly of Calcutta made satiric comedies like *England Returned* (1921) and *Barrister's Wife*.

Himansu Rai started the trend of co-productions when he made the *Light of Asia* (1925), *Shiraz* (1926), *A Throw of Dice* (1929), and *Karma* (1934) with financial and technical support from a German film company. The first lady of Indian Cinema Devika Rani had her first major role in *Karma*.

Well over a thousand films were made in the '*silent era*' (1896-1931). But unfortunately almost all these films are lost or destroyed. Only ten silent films are preserved in the National Film Archives (NFA), Pune.

The first '*talkie*' film shown in Indian was the *Melody of Love* (1929). Two years later in 1931, Ardeshir Irani made the first Indian talkie *Alam Ara*. This film



had 12 songs and had a grand release in Bombay. Music and songs became popular and all films after *Alam Ara* have had songs. Notable exceptions are B.R. Chopra's *Kanoon*, K.A. Abbas' *Munna* (1954) and Kamal Hassan's silent film *Puspak*.

Slowly the business of films - particularly the production of films became a small industry. With increased complexities, individuals could handle all aspects of film making any more. So came the *studio system*. V. Shantaram started the *Prabhat Films Company* with his friends in Bombay. *Himansu Rai* established *Bombay Talkies* in 1935. Another Bombay based film company was the *Imperial Film Company*. *J.B.J Wadia and his brother Homi Wadia set up Wadia Movietone*. In Calcutta, B.M. Sircar and Dhiren Ganjuly started the *New Theatre Company*.

Studios also came up in other film production centres like Pune, Madras, Coimbatore, etc.

V. Shantaram's Prabhat Film Co. produced *Ayodhacha Raja* (1932) *Sant Tukaram* (1936), *Amar Jyoti* (1936), *Duniya Na Mane*, and *Admi*. Wadia Movietone introduced fearless Nadia as heroine and made a total of 130 films producing many adventure films like *Toofan Mail*, *Hunterwali* (starring Nadia) and the first film on Hindu-Muslim unity - *Jai Bharat* (1936). New Theatre Co. of Calcuta produced such great hits like *Chandidas* (1932), *Devdas* (1936, starring immortal sign star K.L. Saigal) and *Mukti*.

By the 1940s, the studio system broke down. It's place was taken by the *star system*. Most big names- actors, actresses, writers, directors, musicians, etc.- declined work for studios on a monthly salary basis. Instead they accepted offers from producers who paid the best. Two more things made their entry in the 1940s. These were formula films and black money. These three things - star system, formula film and black money - are prevalent even today.

The most important films of the 1940s were *Dr. Kotnis Ki Amar Kahani*, *Dharti Ke Lal* (V. Shantaram), *Pukar* (Sohrab Modi), *Aurat*, *Sister*, and *Mother India* (Mehboob Khan). This decade also saw the starting of the Calcutta film society by then aspiring filmmaker Satyajit Ray.

The fifties saw the introduction of colour. Sohrab Modi's *Jhansi Ki Rani* (1953) was the first Indian film in colour. In this decade both Sohrab Modi and Mehboob Khan continued making big films. Two film makers, who later made it very big, Raj Kapoor and Guru Dutt started their careers in the 1950s.

Raj Kapoor made many big hits including *Awara*, *Barsaat*, *Shree 420*, *Sangam*, *Bobby*, *Mera Naam Joker*, *Prem Rog*, *Ram Teri Ganga Maili*, etc. Guru Dutt started with comedy films like *Mr. and Mrs. 55* and *Baazi*. But soon he changed track and made such tragic classics like *Kagaz Ke Phool*, *Pyasa*, *Sahib Bibi Aur Gulam*.

Kamal Amrohi also came during this time and made memorable films like *Mahal*, *Dawa* and *Pakeezah*.

Two of the biggest grossers of Indian cinema were made in the 1950s- V. Shantaram's *Jhanak Jhanak Payal Baaze* (1955) and Mehboob Khan's *Mother India* (1957). *Jhanak Jhanak Payal Baaze* had noted dancers Gopi Krishna and Sandhya in the lead roles and with its colourful costumes, splendid decor, locations and dances accompanied by foot tapping and liting music had a record 104 week run in a single theatre in Bombay. *Mother India*, starring Nargis in the title role and supported by Sunil Dutt and Rajendra Kumar, was a moving tale of suffering and sacrifice.

The 1960s began with *Mughal-e-Azam*. Lavishly made with magnificent sets, grandous dance and music sequences, flowing Urdu and that famous pair of Dilip Kumar and Madhubala, *Mughal-e-Azam* was a huge success. Raj Kapoor started the trend of shooting on foreign locations with *Sangam* (1964).

The sixties also saw the emergence of the first super star - Rajesh Khanna. Other stars who shined in the 60s were Jeetendra, Shammi Kapoor and Shashi Kapoor.

The 1970s brought the biggest star of them all - Amitabh Bachchan. Bachchan started with K.A. Abbas' *Saat Hindustani* (1969). He soon made his mark as an angry man in *Zanjeer*. He followed it up with great hits like *Deewar* and the greatest hit of all times *Sholay* (1975). In between a romantic love story by Raj Kapoor - *Bobby* (1973) introduced two new faces in Rishi Kapoor and Dimple Kapadia.

However, violence was the main theme of the films made in the 1970s. Fore runners of this genre were Amitabh Bachchan's *Amar*, *Akbar*, *Anthony* (1977) and *Muqaddar-Ka-Sikandar* (1978).

Most of the films in the eighties were a mixture of revenge, romance with music and dance. One of the biggest hits of the 80s was Feroz Khan's *Qurbani*. The

eighties also saw films like *Ek Dujhe Ke Liye*, *Love Story*, *Ram Teri Ganga Maaili*, *Maine Pyar Kiya*, *Qayamat sa Qayamat Tak*.

Also 'disco' made its entry mainly through Mithun Chakravarty starrer *Disco Dancer*.

The eighties also saw many star sons entering the film world. Prominent among them were *Kumar Gaurav*, *Sanjay Dutt*, *Sunny Deol*, etc.

The 1990s continued to follow the formula adopted in the 80s. The newer developments in the 90s include increased foreign location shooting, technical sophistication in production of films, bold experimentation in theme. Ram Gopal Verma's *Satya* and *Kaun* and E. Niwas' *Shool* - starring Manoj Bajpayi did good business despite having bold themes. However, feel-happy family entertainers like *Hum Apke Hai Koun*, *Dilwale Dalhania Le Jayenge*, *Kuch Kuch Hota Hai* and *Ham Saath Saath Hain* did roaring business.

Newer talents like Shahrukh Khan, Kajol, Manoj Bajpayi, Karan Johar emerged during the 1990s.

The new millennium is only a few years old and has seen much new things including the emergence of Hrithik Roshan, son of actor-director-producer Rakesh Roshan. Many see Hrithik as the new super star. His first film *Kaho Na Pyar Hai* has been declared a super hit. Another new star who is making waves is Amitabh Bachchan's son *Abhishek Bachchan*.

**SATYAJIT RAY:** An Account Executive in an advertising agency in Calcutta, Satyajit Ray had established the Calcutta Film Society in the late 1940s. But his love for the medium of film was so overpowering that he left his job to make films. Starting with *Pather Pancheli* in 1954, he completed the Apu-trilogy (*Pather Pancheli*, *Aparajito* 1951) and *Apur Sansar* (1959).

He followed these films with many classics like *Jalsaghar*, *Devi* (1960), *Teenkanya* (1961), *Charulata* (1964), *Nayak* (1966), *Gopi Gyne Bagha Byne* (1968), *Aranyer Din Ratri* (1970), *Pratidwandi* (1970), *Seemabaddha* (1971), *Sonar Kela* (1974) *Ashani Sanket* (1973), *Ghare Baire* (1985), and *Ganasatru* (1989). All these movies were in Bengali and did very well in Bengal while earning acclaims, accolades and awards at national and international film festivals.

Ray also made one Hindi film - *Satranj Ke Khiladi* in 1977 in addition to some two-dozen documentaries. Ray's films traced the outline of the middle class in modern India. Satyajit Ray portrayed reality and shunned fantasy.

**NEW WAVE CINEMA:** Satyajit Ray's success - both in Bengal and on foreign soils - encouraged many to start making 'real' films. These films do not rely on fantasy and are often branded as *new wave films* or *art films*. This movement got a boost with establishment of the Film Finance Corporation (FFC) in 1960. It was later renamed as National Film Development Corporation (NFDC). NFDC provides finances for 'good' cinema. The most notable co-production of NFDC was Sir Richard Attenborough's *Gandhi*.

The prominent among new wave film makers are Mrinal Sen (*Bhuban Shome, Baishey Sharvan, Akash Kusum, Interview, Padatik, Chorus, EK Din Pratidin, Parashuram, Mrigaya, EK Adhuri Kahani, EK Din Achanak*), Basu Chatterji (*Sara Akash*), M.S. Sathyu (*Garam Hawa*), Kumar Sahani (*Maya Darpan, Tarang*), Mani Kaul (*Uski Roti*).

**MIDDLE CINEMA:** In the 1970s, a new movement in filmmaking was initiated. It involved making serious films with a motive to make profits. This movement was branded the *middle cinema*. Shyam Benegal pioneered this movement with films like *Ankur* (1974), *Nishant* (1975), *Manthan, Bhumika* (1977), *Kandura, Junoon* (1979) etc. Govind Nihalani followed him with films like *Aakrosh* (1980), *Ardhya Satya*. Other filmmakers of this movement are Saeed Mirza (*Albert Pinto Ko Gussa Kyon Ata Hai, Mohan Joshi Hazir Ho*), Ravindra Dharmaraj (*Chakra*), Ketan Mehta (*Bhabni Bhavai, Holi*).

### 3.3 SUMMARY:

- A mass media is a working group organized around some device (technology) for circulating the same message, at the same time, to large number of people (spread across vast and extensive territories).
- With a 5,000-year-old glorious civilization, India has rich traditions in communication. These range from the concept of *sruti* to *palm leaf writing* to *carving scriptures on stone walls (sila lekha)*, to the rich tradition of *folk sayings, songs and dramas*.

- The early phase of newspapers saw journalists working with missionary zeal. Journalism for most practitioners was a mission. Most journalists and newspapers were part of the nationalist movement and the freedom struggle. However, the 'mission' phase of Indian journalism ended with our country attaining Independence in 1947. Most newspapers (previously owned by the British) changed into Indian hands.
- Radio came to India soon after it was invented in the last part of the 1890s. The first experimental radio broadcast in India was done from the roof of the Times of India building in Bombay on August 20, 1921. In February 1922, the first transmitting license was granted. In November 1923, Radio Club Calcutta was launched. But it did not start broadcasting for almost a year.
- With the advent of television in a big way in the Mid-1980s, AIR lost its popularity. But FM caught the listener's imagination. With a mixture of music, information, news and programmes of popular taste, the 24-hour FM services have achieved both popularity and listenership. About 300 FM stations have been started in all major cities of the country.
- The *Satellite Instructional Television Experiment* (SITE) was launched in August 1975. It continued for one year. SITE beamed educational and instructional programmes to about 5,000 villages in Madhya Pradesh, Bihar, Rajasthan, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka and Orissa.

### 3.4 KEY WORDS:

**Role of newspapers:** Indian newspapers had their birth during the British rule and played an important role in the country's freedom struggle. Post Independence, Indian newspapers started playing the role of a '*watchdog*'. Indian newspapers also have been playing the role of a catalytic agent to hasten the process of social and economic development in the country.

**Oppression of Press:** Many draconian rules and acts bear testimony of the suppressive and oppressive measures taken against the Indian newspapers. However, the suppression and oppression reached brutal heights during the 1975-77 Emergency regime of Indira Gandhi. A recent attempt of suppressing freedom of newspapers in India was the Defamation Bill of 1988, introduced by Rajiv Gandhi.

However, this was withdrawn following strong and united opposition by the newspapers.

**FM Radio:** With the advent of television in a big way in the Mid-1980s, AIR lost its popularity. But FM caught the listener's imagination. With a mixture of music, information, news and programmes of popular taste, the 24-hour FM services have achieved both popularity and listenership. About 300 FM stations have been started in all major cities of the country.

**SITE:** The *Satellite Instructional Television Experiment* (SITE) was launched in August 1975. It continued for one year. SITE beamed educational and instructional programmes to villages in six states - Madhya Pradesh, Bihar, Rajasthan, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka and Orissa. Programmes were received in a total of about 5,000 villages in these six states.

### **3.5 SELF-ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS (SAQs):**

0. Discuss in detail the history and development of newspapers in India. Give suitable examples.
0. Discuss in detail the history and development of magazines in India. Give suitable examples.
0. Discuss in detail the history and development of radio in India. Give suitable examples.
0. Discuss in detail the history and development of television in India. Give suitable examples.
0. Discuss in detail the history and development of cinema in India. Give suitable examples.

### **3.6 REFERENCES / SUGGESTED READINGS:**

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**MEDIA SYSTEMS**

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**LESSON STRUCTURE:**

In this lesson, we shall discuss the various media systems. We shall start with the *Authoritarian Theory*. Then we shall focus on the *Libertarian Theory*, the *Social Responsibility Theory*, and the *Soviet Media Theory*. Finally, we shall discuss the *Development Communication Theory*, and the *Democratic Participation Theory*. The lesson structure shall be as follows:

- 4.0 *Objectives*
- 4.1 *Introduction*
- 4.2 *Presentation of Content*
  - 4.2.1 *Media Systems- An Introduction*
  - 4.2.2 *Authoritarian Theory*
  - 4.2.3 *Libertarian Theory*
  - 4.2.4 *Social Responsibility Theory*
  - 4.2.5 *Soviet Media Theory*
  - 4.2.6 *Development Communication Theory*
  - 4.2.7 *Democratic Participation Theory*
- 4.3 *Summary*
- 4.4 *Key Words*
- 4.5 *Self-Assessment-Questions (SAQs)*
- 4.6 *References/Suggested Reading*

**4.0 OBJECTIVES:**

The objectives of this lesson are as follows:

- *To Get an Introduction to the Media Systems,*
- *To study about the Authoritarian Theory*
- *To study about the Libertarian Theory,*
- *To study about the Social Responsibility Theory,*
- *To study about the Soviet Media Theory,*
- *To study about the Development Communication Theory,*
- *To study about the Democratic Participation Theory.*

#### **4.1 INTRODUCTION:**

We have access to many mass media, from newspapers, magazines, radio, television, films, audiocassettes, video, and now Internet. Man's need for information, entertainment and generally to be in touch with the outside world along with the immense technological advancements have resulted in the above mentioned mass media. And today the world has shrunk, as Marshal McLuhan once put it, in to a 'global village'. Mass media inform, educate, entertain and persuade. They also have been instrumental in bringing down governments, starting wars, bringing about and felicitating change and development. They have grown into such statures that they are considered to be the fourth pillar of democracy.

However, media do not grow up in a vacuum. These mass media have emerged, grown, changed and even may die as a result of geographical, technological, economic, cultural and other forces.

Mass media operate differently in different countries. Different countries have different governmental systems, political situations, and socioeconomic & cultural conditions. They have different goals. They also have different approaches towards achieving these goals. And in different countries, different systems have evolved with regard to the functioning of the mass media. For example countries like the USA, which are free societies, the media enjoy a lot of freedom. In fact, the First Amendment of the Constitution of USA ensures freedom of Press (and thus all mass media).

Countries ruled by dictators or Kings and monarchs exercise a lot of control over the media. In many such countries censorship is a common practice. Many countries don't interfere with the functioning of media. The mass media, in these countries, are considered social institutions, which function in a socially responsible manner.

All these various systems of media emerge out of the social, political, economic, cultural situations prevailing in different countries.



## **4.2 PRESENTATION OF CONTENT:**

The presentation of content in this lesson shall be as follows:

- *Media Systems- An Introduction*
- *Authoritarian Theory*
- *Libertarian Theory*
- *Social Responsibility Theory*
- *Soviet Media Theory*
- *Development Communication Theory*
- **DEMOCRATIC PARTICIPATION THEORY**

### **4.2.1 MEDIA SYSTEMS- AN INTRODUCTION:**

A total of six media systems are prevalent in different countries. These are the *Authoritarian system, Libertarian system, Social-Responsibility system, Soviet-Media (Communist) system, Development-Communication system, and the Democratic Participation System*. These systems are also referred to as *theories of media*.

Some countries have a single media system. In fact, most of the countries have a combination of different systems.

The first four of these six theories or systems have been in practice since a long time. But they were first enunciated and documented in 1956 by *Fred Siebert, Theodore Paterson* and *Wilbur Schramm* in their book "*Four Theories of the Press*". The word 'Press' was used as at that time only the newspaper was the major mass medium as magazines, radio and television, etc., had not fully realized their potential. These four theories - Authoritarian, Libertarian, Social Responsibility, and Soviet-Media theory - present a Western viewpoint. And each of them suits particular political and economic circumstances of the developed West.

The rest two, Development Communication theory and Democratic-Participation theory, have been developed specifically for the developing countries of Asia, Africa and Latin America. Now we shall discuss these media systems in detail.

### **4.2.2 AUTHORITARIAN THEORY (SYSTEM):**

Kings, monarchs, dictators, military rulers and even democratically elected governments have tried to control the flow of information in the mass media. According to this theory, mass media should abide by the governments dictates. The media are expected to be subordinate to the

established authority. The authority expects the mass media not to offend majority morals, political and economic values.

This system holds the State in higher status than any other entity. The saying "*State is the Law*" fits this theory.

Dictatorial, monarchical and even democratic governments use this system to exert authoritarian control over the mass media. The strictness with which the 'Official Secrets Act' is enforced both in Britain and India goes to prove that even democracies practice authoritarianism.

The authoritarian system resorts such control measures as *pre-censorship* and *banning*. Many laws and acts have been enacted in different countries by different regimes. And these legislations are enforced strictly. '*Licensing*' is another means of authoritarian control. In the authoritarian system, stringent measures are taken against those who raise their voices against the State or the ruling classes.

Under this system, media personnel lack freedom and independence. Their reports often have to be submitted for advance censorship. This censorship is justified on the ground that the State must always take precedence over others. Such censorship is more rigidly enforced during times of emergency as experienced in India during 1975-1977.

Now let us discuss some other examples of this practice. The authoritarian regimes of Latin America do not generally use a formal system of censorship. However, they regularly intimidate and terrorize journalists into suppressing news unfavorable to the regime. South Africa has a Censorship Board for books, periodicals, films, plays and audio records. They, however, do not interfere much with the newspapers. In India, the government exercises a lot of control over two major media channels Doordarshan and All India Radio. Also there are many regulatory bodies like the Central Board for Film certification, which censors films.

This authoritarian system was prevalent throughout the 17th century and extended its reign till the later half of the 18th century. While a majority of countries do not adhere to this complete authoritarian system, some countries in Latin America, Africa, the Middle East and Asia still operate under this system.

The Authoritarian system was slowly taken over by the Libertarian system in the early part of the 19th century. However, authoritarianism still remains in the certain degrees as different kinds of control are exercised over mass media in many countries even now.

#### **4.2.3 LIBERTARIAN THEORY:**

Mass media perform many functions, which include information, entertainment, education and persuasion. These media help discover truth by presenting all kinds of evidence. Media also function as watchdogs- keeping an eye on all kind of happenings and bringing them to fore. The authorities did not take this 'watchdog' function of the media lightly and they had clamped restrictions.

But early in the 17th century, people voiced against this authoritarian approach. Liberationists like epic poet *John Milton* (in his '*Aeropagitica*') and *John Stuart Mill* (in '*On Liberty*') argued for free and fair treatment of the press. Slowly this movement became stronger and by the early 19th century, Libertarianism was being practiced in many countries. This great change was the result of changing political philosophies and the coming of democratic governments.

Libertarians universally regarded 'public enlightenment' as a major function of the press (later all mass media). From *Milton*, to *Stuart Mill* to *Locke*, every body considered the media as an important partner in the search for truth. Libertarians considered the press as a *feeder* of information (so that man could form his own ideas), as a *stimulator* by presenting ideas of others. This way the press was considered as one of the most pervasive (wide spread) and inexpensive of educators.

Then came the great American libertarians like *Thomas Jefferson*, *Benjamin Franklin* and *James Madison*, They, along with others, argued that the state exists to serve the needs of the people and not the people to serve the needs of the state. This was in utter contrast to the prevailing authoritarianism. Liberationists made their arguments on the basis of the fundamental rights of an individual to freedom of expression and right to information.

Soon many democracies - particularly in the West - started adopting this libertarian approach. According the libertarian theory, the individual, and not the state is supreme. Thus popular will is granted precedence over the power of the State. This theory argues that 'truth' can be arrived at only through freedom of speech and diverse points of views. Thus free press (media) is highly essential to a free society and to uphold the dignity of the individual.

Under this system, the government or State is not to be involved in the running of mass media. To ensure complete freedom to the press (media), the mass media should be privately owned. Only then the media can perform its duties of being informers, enlighters, educators. Also private ownership of media ensures that the media can play the role of 'watch dog' over the Government or State. Otherwise, media owned by the Government could be more interested in perpetuating the interests of the party in power than encouraging a free exchange of information

and ideas. Also media subsidized by the government would threaten the autonomy of the privately owned media.

The libertarian theory also links media autonomy with profit making. Like in free economies, where each individual working for his own gain ultimately contributes to the wealth of all, in the market place of information and ideas, each individual (or media) freely expressing ideas and opinions furthers the inevitable emergence of truth. Also this way the media are concerned about the needs and wants of the people and as *George Sokolsky* had once expressed, "*the battle for circulation (or listenership or viewership) becomes a battle for the truth*".

Contemporary critics, however, have challenged this notion. They are of the view that bad publications (or media) tend to drive out good publication (or media). Liberationists viewed man to be essentially moral. But that does not hold true today. People would go to any extent to make a profit.

Another criticism of the libertarian theory is that it provides the so-called 'freedom' to only a privileged few. Only the rich and the elite have access to the media and the large mass of poor people get marginalized further because of lack of access to media. The poor do not have either access or affordability to use media as tools of free expression.

Also this 'freedom to few' leads to monopolies. Media owners use this freedom to expand their business. This theory protects only the rights of the media owners and not others. Also market forces play a far greater role in deciding what kind of information and other fare to be disseminated through the media. Public good does not play any role here. For this reason only the social - responsibility theory was initiated.

#### **4.2.4 SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY THEORY:**

We have already discussed that the free-market approach does not ensure public good. The libertarian theory, while having quite good points, has its own shortcomings. To find out these shortcomings and the means of overcoming them, the Commission of Freedom of the Press was instituted in the USA in 1949. This Commission found out that the free-market approach to press freedom had not met the informational and social needs of the less well-off people. On the other hand, this free approach had increased the power of the rich and elite.

Also by this time other media like films, radio and television had emerged. The emerging scenario demanded a fresh approach. The burning question was the accountability of the media. Also some kind of public control was suggested.

Thus emerged the social-responsibility theory. This theory is based on the proposition: "*Whoever enjoys freedom has certain obligations to society*". Proponents of this theory, like those supporting the libertarian theory, say that the press (and other media) has to perform the function of enlightening the public, safe guarding civil liberties, etc.

However, the social-responsibility theorists say that the media, which enjoy protected and privileged positions (as in case of US media that are guaranteed freedom under the first Amendment of the American Constitution. The Indian Constitution does not guarantee any exclusive freedom for the press). In return, the media should pay back by being socially responsible.

This theory shifts the focus from the individual to the society. Also excluded from its purview is profit- making as the sole motive. There is no place for political patronage either. *Horace Greeley*, who shaped the American press to a great extent in the mid 19th century, wanted the press to ignore profit making and political bondage (being subservient to some political party).

*Henry Raymond* of the *New York Times* called on newspapers "*to give readers the broadest possible coverage and to actively promote community welfare*". Later *William Rockhill Nelson* (of the *Kansas City Star*) wanted newspapers to be an *aggressive force for community betterment*. Still later *Joseph Pulitzer* advocated commercialism to be banned from the editorial room. He was of the opinion that *commercialism in the editorial room was a degradation and destroyer of moral power*. Pulitzer also said "Without high ethical ideals a newspaper not only is stripped of its splendid possibilities for public service, but may become a positive danger to the community".

Many other eminent media personalities in the 20th century have reminded their fellow media men of the responsibilities which went with freedom.

This sense of responsibility has been represented by codes of ethical standards for the media. One of the first such codes of ethics was the *Canons for Journalists*, adopted by the *American Society of Newspaper Editors* in 1923. These are perhaps the most comprehensive codes and include *acting with responsibility to the general welfare, truthfulness, sincerity, impartiality, fair-play, decency and respect for individual privacy*.

These codes of ethics are more attuned to libertarian theory. The codes enumerated for films and the broadcasting media in most parts of the world are much more restrictive. The codes for the Press have mostly been self regulatory being developed by the media men

themselves. These codes endorse high professional standards including *truth, accuracy, objectivity and balance*.

On the other hand, the codes for electronic media have been marked by government intervention and regulation. Examples such codes in India are the *Cinematograph Act, Broadcasting Code for AIR and Doordarshan, Cable TV Regulation Act*, etc.

However, under the social responsibility theory, public interest is of greater value than unregulated freedom of expression. Thus news offensive to religious and ethnic minorities, or news likely to lead to social tension and violence needed to be under-played. Self-regulation became the key to social responsibility. Thus Press Councils were established.

These councils evaluate the state of the media from time to time and draw up codes of ethics. Anti-monopoly legislations (in the face of growing concentration of media leading to monopolies) also were by products of this theory. While the media evolved their own self-regulating codes, this theory also legitimized state and public intervention to keep a check on unwanted practices by the media.

This system exists largely in most democracies of Western Europe and the more developed countries of Asia.

#### **4.2.5 SOVIET MEDIA THEORY:**

This theory is an extension of the authoritarian theory. It has developed from the Marxist-Leninist-Stalinist philosophy to mass communication. Following the 1917 Revolution, Lenin advised the communist press to "*Learn, organize and propagandize*". Lenin viewed the press as "a powerful instrument, no less than bombs and machine guns". The Communist Party, accordingly, controlled the Soviet press. Later on other media were also subjected to a similar treatment.

The basic assumption of the Soviet media theory was that "the individual should change so that he or she will share with and support society as a whole". Its main purpose was to support the Communist Party in its efforts to revolutionize society, to make each person work for the good of the whole society rather than his or has own interests. Thus the mass media were owned by the State i.e. the Communist Party. Every piece of information and every idea disseminated through the media had to be interpreted by members of the Communist party.

Lenin was of the view that the government must not be criticized when it did what it believed to be right. However, criticism was not totally banned. Criticism and exposure (mostly

of anti-party and anti-government activities and persons) was the chief function of the media. Even party workers and bureaucrats were not spared. But Institutions could not be criticized.

Under this system, the media were used to "socialize" the people. The primary function of media, thus, was to *educate, inform, motivate and mobilize* people; and to support progressive movements everywhere in the country. Censorship and other restrictions on media were legitimized under this system.

While the Central Committee Propaganda Department looked after controlling news, the Censor Board (GLAVLIT) looked after censorship. It employed as many as seventy thousand 'censors'. They read each and every news story and article and approved them before they were published. This kind of extensive censorship ensured effective and complete control over information as also resulting in conformity of views as intended by the Communist Party.

However, the era of *Perestroika* and *Glasnost* under Mikhail Gorbachev brought sweeping changes in this system. So much so that the once powerful and united Soviet Union broke up. Sweeping changes have also occurred in other countries where this system was prevalent. These countries include Romania and Poland.

**NORMATIVENESS OF THE FOUR THEORIES OF PRESS:** Dennis McQuail has termed these four theories or systems - Authoritarian, Libertarian, Social Responsibility and Soviet media theory - as *normative* or *what ought to be*. That is because these theories mainly express the ideas of how the press (media) should act or how they can be expected to operate under a prevailing set of conditions and values.

In practice, however, no media system follows any one of these theories exclusively (except perhaps the Soviet media theory). What must media systems follow is a mixture of two or three of these theories.

**SUPPLEMENTARY THEORIES (SYSTEMS):** The four original theories of press (media) are mostly in tune with the political philosophies and socioeconomic circumstances of the developed western world. The developing third world countries with their prevailing political, social, economic and cultural conditions could not directly follow these systems. For these countries - especially those in Asia, Africa and Latin America - two other theories have been developed. These are the Development Communication Theory and the Democratic Participation Theory.

#### **4.2.6 DEVELOPMENT COMMUNICATION THEORY:**

None of the four theories of media is fully applicable to the developing countries. This is because of the peculiar situations prevailing in these countries. First the press in many of these countries is free and commercially run. The broadcasting media in Asia and Africa to a great extent are run by the state. The broadcast media in Latin America is privately owned. Another feature of these countries is that they are dependent on the developed world to a great extent for both hardware and software. Although, these countries have stated producing on their own, they are far from being self-reliant.

The most common feature of these countries is perhaps their commitment to social and economic development. For this reason, these countries want to use the mass media as tools of development. Unlike in the above-mentioned theories, the emphasis here is on the larger national interest and public good.

So certain freedom of the media is curbed and certain limitations are imposed. These curbs and restrictions are in the interest of causes like national integration and nation building.

Development communication means the media have the responsibility to support the national governments in their efforts of nation building including eradicating illiteracy, promoting family planning, increasing production and employment, etc. The mass media are expected to work in close contact with the government to promote (and help implement) the various developmental plans, programmes and projects of the governments.

This theory also has a shortcoming. Media people often equate 'development' with government propaganda and thus do not believe what the government has to say.

#### **4.2.7 DEMOCRATIC PARTICIPATION THEORY:**

In most parts of the world and especially in the affluent West, the mass media have become highly commercialized. These media are considered to be 'commodities'. Another feature of mass media around the world is top-down, one-way and non-participative nature of the communication. The communicators usually plan and prepare communication programmes sitting in ivory towers and have no idea about the ground realities. The resultant communication is usually an imposition on the receivers (readers, listeners and viewers). Such communication does not take into account the audience's needs and wants, does not involve them and thus is not very effective.

Many critics raised protests against this non-participative nature of mass media. Most of these critics were from Latin America and they included *Paulo Freire, Reyes Matta, Luis Beltran,*



*Diaz Bardenave* and *Fuen Zalida*. These critics emphasized the positive uses of the media and also on the need for "access" to the media and "right to communicate"

Thus emerged the Democratic Participation Theory. It is also called the *participatory theory* or the *democratization theory*. This theory lays stress on the need for local and community participation in media and specifically news and programme production. Participatory theorists argue that people must speak for themselves and not *spoken through* by professional journalists and programme producers.

Also Participatory theorists oppose any kind of commercial, political or bureaucratic control of media. Their view is that the media exist to serve the people and not the interests of governments or commercial enterprises.

Another feature of this theory is 'demassification'. The ultimate purpose is to put the media in the hands of communities. Examples of these are the small community newspapers and radio stations in many Latin American countries where the people own and run them. *Farmers, working as reporters and subeditors, run 'Adike Patrike' of Karnataka.*

Participating theorists claim, that such a system would lead to the 'liberation' of the people (politically, economically and culturally) through a process of conscientization.

#### **4.3 SUMMARY:**

- Mass media inform, educate, entertain and persuade. They also have been instrumental in bringing down governments, starting wars, bringing about and felicitating change and development. They have grown into such statures that they are considered to be the fourth pillar of democracy.
- Mass media operate differently in different countries. Different countries have different governmental systems, political situations, and socioeconomic and cultural conditions. And in different countries, different systems have evolved with regard to the functioning of the mass media. For example countries like the USA, which are free societies, the media enjoy a lot of freedom.
- Media do not grow up in a vacuum. These mass media have emerged, grown, changed and even may die as a result of geographical, technological, economic, cultural and other forces.
- These theories were first enunciated and documented in 1956 by *Fred Siebert, Theodore Paterson* and *Wilbur Schramm* in their book "*Four Theories of the Press*". The word 'Press' was used, as at that time only the newspaper was the major mass medium at that time. These four theories - Authoritarian, Libertarian, Social Responsibility, and Soviet-Media

theory - present a Western viewpoint. And each of them suits particular political and economic circumstances of the developed West. The rest two, Development Communication theory and Democratic-Participation theory, have been developed specifically for the developing countries of Asia, Africa and Latin America.

- According to the Authoritarian theory, mass media should abide by the governments dictates. The media are expected to be subordinate to the established authority. The authority expects the mass media not to offend majority morals, political and economic values. This system holds the State in higher status than any other entity. The saying "*State is the Law*" fits this theory. Dictatorial, monarchical and even democratic governments use this system to exert authoritarian control over the mass media.
- The authoritarian system resorts such control measures as *pre-censorship* and *banning*. Many laws and acts have been enacted in different countries by different regimes. And these legislations are enforced strictly. '*Licensing*' is another means of authoritarian control. In the authoritarian system, stringent measures are taken against those who raise their voices against the State or the ruling classes.
- According the libertarian theory, the individual, and not the state is supreme. Thus popular will is granted precedence over the power of the State. This theory argues that 'truth' can be arrived at only through freedom of speech and diverse points of views. Thus free press (media) is highly essential to a free society and to uphold the dignity of the individual. Under this system, the government or State is not to be involved in the running of mass media. To ensure complete freedom to the press (media), the mass media should be privately owned. Only then the media can perform its duties of being informers, enlighters, educators.
- The basic assumption of the Soviet media theory was that "the individual should change so that he or she will share with and support society as a whole". Its main purpose was to support the Communist Party in its efforts to revolutionize society, to make each person work for the good of the whole society rather than his or has own interests. Thus the mass media were owned by the State i.e. the Communist Party. Every piece of information and every idea disseminated through the media had to be interpreted by members of the Communist party.

#### **4.4 KEY WORDS:**

**The System Approach:** Mass media operate differently in different countries. Different countries have different governmental systems, political situations, and socioeconomic and

cultural conditions. They have different goals and approaches towards achieving these goals. And in different countries, different systems have evolved with regard to the functioning of the mass media. For example countries like the USA, which are free societies, the media enjoy a lot of freedom.

**Authoritarian System:** According to this theory, mass media should abide by the governments dictates. The media are expected to be subordinate to the established authority. The authority expects the mass media not to offend majority morals, political and economic values. This system holds the State in higher status than any other entity. The saying "*State is the Law*" fits this theory. Dictatorial, monarchical and even democratic governments use this system to exert authoritarian control over the mass media.

**Libertarian System:** According the libertarian theory, the individual, and not the state is supreme. Thus popular will is granted precedence over the power of the State. This theory argues that 'truth' can be arrived at only through freedom of speech and diverse points of views. Thus free press (media) is highly essential to a free society and to uphold the dignity of the individual.

**Soviet Media System:** The basic assumption of the Soviet media theory was that "the individual should change so that he or she will share with and support society as a whole". Its main purpose was to support the Communist Party in its efforts to revolutionize society, to make each person work for the good of the whole society rather than his or has own interests.

**Normativeness of Media Systems:** Dennis McQuail has termed these four theories or systems - Authoritarian, Libertarian, Social Responsibility and Soviet media theory - as *normative* or *what ought to be*. That is because these theories mainly express the ideas of how the press (media) should act or how they can be expected to operate under a prevailing set of conditions and values.

#### **4.5 SELF-ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS (SAQs):**

7. Discuss in detail the Libertarian Theory. Give suitable examples.
7. Discuss in detail the Social Responsibility Theory. Give suitable examples.
7. Discuss in detail the Soviet Media Theory. Give suitable examples.
7. Discuss in detail the Authoritarian Theory. Give suitable examples.
7. Discuss the Development Communication Theory. Give examples.
7. Discuss the Democratic Participation Theory. Give suitable examples.

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## **THEORIES OF MASS COMMUNICATION**

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### **LESSON STRUCTURE:**

In this lesson, we shall discuss the various theories of mass communication. We shall start with the Hypodermic Needle Theory. Then we shall focus on the Two-Step-Multi-Step Theory, Commercial Theory, Play Theory, Uses and Gratification Theory, Theory of Selectivity, and the Individual Difference Theory. The lesson structure shall be as follows:

- 5.0 *Objectives*
- 5.1 *Introduction*
- 5.2 *Presentation of Content*
  - 5.2.1 *Mass Communication Theories - An Overview*
  - 5.2.2 *Hypodermic Needle Theory*
  - 5.2.3 *Two-Step-Multi-Step Theory*
  - 5.2.4 *Commercial Theory*
  - 5.2.5 *Play Theory*
  - 5.2.6 *Uses and Gratification Theory*
  - 5.2.7 *Theory of Selectivity*
  - 5.2.8 *Individual Difference Theory*
- 5.3 *Summary*
- 5.4 *Key Words*
- 5.5 *Self-Assessment-Questions (SAQs)*
- 5.6 *References/Suggested Reading*

### **5.0 OBJECTIVES:**

The objectives of this lesson are as follows:

- *To Have an Overview of Mass Communication Theories*
- *To study about the Hypodermic Needle Theory,*
- *To study about the Two-Step-Multi-Step Theory,*
- *To study about the Commercial Theory,*
- *To study about the Play Theory,*
- *To study about the Uses and Gratification Theory,*
- *To study about the Theory of Selectivity, and*
- *To study about the Individual Difference Theory.*

### **5.1 INTRODUCTION:**

According to *Edwin Emery*, an American communication scholar, *communication is a part of human behavior. We communicate with one another by directing a message to one or more of the senses- sight, sound, touch, taste or smell.* But, in larger situations when we communicate with masses, messages are received simultaneously by a large number of people with varying backgrounds at diverse places in homes, factories, offices, and market places.

This is mass communication. Here the message is delivered and received by diversified audiences through the use of a medium of mass communication. These masses then make use of the received content- information, ideas, and attitudes- according to their perception, needs and understanding. Experts of the field have developed their own perceptions and understandings. These perceptions and understandings are then shaped into theories. In this lesson, we shall start with an overview of mass communication. Then we shall discuss some major mass communication theories.

### **5.2 PRESENTATION OF CONTENT:**

The content of this lesson shall be presented as follows:

- *Mass Communication Theories- An Overview*
- *Hypodermic Needle Theory*
- *Two-Step-Multi-Step Theory*
- *Commercial Theory*
- *Play Theory*

- *Uses and Gratification Theory*
- *Theory of Selectivity*
- *Individual Difference Theory*

### **5.2.1 MASS COMMUNICATION THEORIES- AN OVERVIEW:**

The word "*mass*" means multiple, large size, aggregate, collective, group, crowd, mob, congregation, etc. Communication is *sending out of information, sharing with, imparting to, or giving information to.*

Thus, mass communication means sharing information or a message with a large number of people simultaneously at one place or at several places. The act of communication begins with birth. It continues all through one's life. It is a social process. Communication can be delivered in several ways: verbal (with the help of words), non-verbal, graphic, audio-visual, even by signs and symbols.

The nature, process, role, effects, use, perception of the messages so communicated are interpreted through numerous theories, and communication research models. These theories have been innovated, experimented, explained, interpreted and reinterpreted over a period of time. Many communication researchers and specialists have termed these theories differently taking into account the circumstances, environments and their perception of the effects.

In addition to communication specialists, several scholars in political science, sociology, psychology public administration and even anthropology have contributed several theories to underline and spotlight the effects of mass communication in different situations. These researchers have endeavored to prove that signs, symbols, meanings, language and visual representations lead to divergent theories of which communication is the epicenter. But as, Denis McQuail opines, four types of perspective have led to propounding different theories of mass communication.

First, *the media culturalist* perspective emphasizing the media content and influence of the perception of media messages. Second, the *media materialist* perspective who stresses political-economic and technological aspects of the media. Third, the *social-culturalist* perspective that influences social factors on media production and reception and functions of the media in social life. Finally, the *social materialist* prospective views media as a reflection of economic and materialist conditions of the society.

It is worth stating here that a mass communication theory does not mean putting media effects in the straightjacket of a law. "But a set of ideas which can help make sense of a phenomenon, guide action or predict a consequence." On these premises, McQuail categorizes four kinds of theories relevant to mass communication; social scientific, normative, operational and everyday theory.

However, it has been widely accepted that most of these theories are based on studies of signs, symbols and meanings and their relations to the objects and concept to which they belong. Interpretation, elaboration and criticism of such interpretations have further led to enunciation and propounding of more theories and models.

Thus, there are numerous theories and models. While some have found wide acceptance, others have fallen by the wayside. Some of these are briefly discussed as under:

### **5.2.2 HYPODERMIC NEEDLE THEORY:**

This is a very significant theory indicating and dealing with effects of mass media. The multifarious media effects are credited with media's vast powers over audiences. According to this theory, *mass media cast direct, immediate and intense effect on the audience by injecting information into the consciousness of the masses*. The reason is that the audiences are treated as impressionable beings that can easily be manipulated.

A physician injects an antibiotic into the blood stream of a patient with the help of a hypodermic needle, and the medicine reaches all parts of the body. Similarly when some information needs to be given to society, it can be introduced at various points. This information will travel through communication channels of the society and create the desired effect. This theory is also called the *Bullet Theory* as information can be fired into the social systems as bullets.

The theory overlooks the influences of the intervening factors. Besides, the audiences are also considered such beings as can be "taken for a ride" by the media. The audience generally lack capacity and potential to question the media messages. The theory is based on the assumption that learning and communication are possible due to the relationship between stimuli and response.



Under this theory, one-way process of communication is prominent and in fact dominant. Several intervening variables such as physical, psychological, sociological, economic, cultural and some others also impact it. The fact is that the audience can be manipulated, exploited and maneuvered, which may not be true always.

### **5.2.3 TWO STEP AND MULTI STEP THEORY:**

Since communication is generally a well-planned process, it follows various steps before it can be effective. These processes are therefore characterized as on-step' two-step or multi-step. Mass communication researchers have found that social interaction plays significant role in modeling the behavior of the people in particular situations and on receipt of a given message.

In case of one-step flow of message, the opinion leaders' role is not so important. For, even they do not have a first-hand experience or exposure. Then, the researchers have found that after the opinion leaders impart information, the message flows smoothly after that, i.e., through the second stage. So, the message flows through two, and later through many stages or steps via mass media. These communication processes are, therefore, termed as one-step, two-step or multi-steps.

Also media researchers have found that though individuals are influenced by mass media, but it is the face-to-face communication that makes a lot of difference. The multi-step process means, as stated earlier, inter-personal and later through mass media-- the sequential flow of message is equally effective. In case of multi step messages, various media and networks go a long way in affecting the individuals.

Besides, other variables which contribute in these steps generally include: the source, quality, exposure or availability of mass media, extent of audience exposure to communicating agencies, nature and content of the message and finally the importance of the message to the receivers or audiences.

The two-step theory proves quite significant in helping the message to be effectively received and followed. The multi-step theory also embraces all other aspects of the social systems in the context of mass communication. The communicators and the receivers fully interact among themselves. The receivers include: the primary group, larger social groups and the society as a whole.

#### **5.2.4 COMMERCIAL THEORY:**

Mass media today plan, produce and disseminate their messages taking into consideration the commercial aspect also. For, it has been found by researchers that developmental message, if covered in entertaining programmes, go a long way in shaping their tastes. This theory, therefore, considers consumers as primary targets, and avers that mass media produce programmes, serials, and entertainment shows keeping in view the tastes, needs, wishes and status of the audiences.

The theory is also known as the *laissez faire* theory. According to this theory, big business houses, monopolies and multi-national corporations operate mass media. These lead to intense competition among programme producers and mass media exercise tremendous manipulative powers. Also there comes about a large variety and diversity of information, opinion and viewpoints reducing the chances of manipulation and lowering professional standards. With the advent of multi-channel programming on television in India since 1990s, the *laissez-faire* environment is amply visible.

#### **5.2.5 PLAY THEORY:**

Media impacts have been interpreted in a variety of theories and models. Generally, media are believed to be exercising corrupting or dangerous effects on masses. Several communication scholars have highlighted media's harmful interferences on the audiences. Yet another view is that media provide audiences only with 'play experience'.

A communication researcher, William Stephenson, has opined that media are there to provide pleasure. Newspapers are not read for news or information, but for pleasure and entertainment. Stephenson thus concludes that entertainment is the primary function of mass media. He brands media as 'buffer against conditions which would otherwise be anxiety producing'. He interprets the impact in these terms because he feels that mass media protect people from worries by deliberately focusing on the higher aspects of life. This, he feels, lightens the burdens of the audiences. He believes social responsibilities and several other obligations of people diminish pleasure of life for them.

The function of the mass media should be to help reduce pressures on the people and provide such communication as enhances their pleasures. This theory generally applies to the field of broadcast media.

#### **5.2.6 USES AND GRATIFICATION THEORY:**

As opposed to the play theory, uses and gratification theory propounds that "media serve a variety of needs stemming from the personal social situation of the individual." Researchers have "sought to interpret the motives for content, choice and the satisfactions looked for and derived from media in terms of everyday social circumstances and needs -- for instance, the needs of household wives for advice and status reassurance or those of newspaper readers for their daily ration of security."

Generally, audiences use mass media in two ways: compensatory and supplementary. While compensatory use refers using media for education deficiency, need of social success or raising one's status. Media are also yoked for extending existing knowledge parameters and tackling social conundrums.

Researchers like Denis McQuail, Blumler, Berelson and others have explained how the mass media are used for such purposes. They have placed human needs in several categories. Mass Media profusely assist in serving to gratify the needs of the audiences.

As McQuail states, the following are the major motives for and satisfaction from the media:

- Getting information and advice,
- Reducing personal insecurity,
- Learning about society and the world,
- Finding support for one's own values,
- Gaining insight into one's own life,
- Experiencing empathy with problems of others,
- Having a basis for social contact,
- Having a substitute for social contact,
- Feeling connected with others,
- Escaping from problems and worries,
- Gaining entry into an imaginary world,

- Filling times,
- Experiencing social release, and
- Acquiring a structure for daily routine.

These motives can be conveniently subdivided into four categories of satisfaction, uses and gratification:

- *Diversion,*
- *Personal relationships,*
- *Personal identity, and*
- *Surveillance.*

All these are based on audiences' preferences to seek gratification for relief in times of worry, tension, conflict, reinforcement to meet tough situation in social and personal life.

We have thus seen that nature of mass communicating; processes and impacts have been interpreted, expounded and debunked in many ways. This process goes on. It is in this way that theories and models change and are recast from time to time. The purpose is not only to achieve academic excellence, but also to make a particular discipline more realistic. Theories often reflect human, social, national and international realities.

### **5.2.7 THEORY OF SELECTIVY (SELECTIVE EXPOSURE, SELECTIVE PERCEPTION, AND SELECTIVE RECEPTION):**

This theory relates to how the audiences use the mass media and media messages. Selective perception means that the messages that are regarded favorably is more likely to be recalled by a reader, viewer or listener than the items that are regarded unfavorably. Further, if possible, the viewer will, shape his or her own interpretation of a news event to be congruent with viewers or readers existing attitude.

Two areas similar to selective perception are: *selective exposure* and *selective retention*. Some persons habitually watch Doordarshan news rather than *Star News* or *Zee News*, or read *Outlook* and not *India Today*. Some persons consistently avoid materials they know to be distasteful, or that would create dissonance.

Researchers find that selective retention plays a role in the effectiveness of efforts to change attitudes through informational campaigns. People remember what

they want to remember. The question is: who needs to receive the message from whom?

There is a thin line of difference between selective perception and selective retention. Selective retention, according to *Joseph Klapper*, occurs when a person who has been exposed to a communication of a few minutes before, presents a distorted or incomplete report of its contents, it is difficult to determine whether the content of (media exposure) was selectively perceived in the first place, whether it was correctly perceived but not retained, or whether the two processes complemented one another.

The difficulty of making such distinctions is obviously far greater, if the period between exposure and report is a matter of days or weeks. Selective retention of pictorial material has greater possibilities. Therefore, as *Joseph Klapper* points out, selective exposure, selective perception and selective retention do not occur among all people in all communication situations. One or more of these processes occur among a stipulated percentage of audiences.

Researcher has found that about one-third of a group does not practice selective exposure, one-fifth are exposed to more to communication opposing their interests. But, it has been proved that selective processes do occur most frequently.

#### **5.2.8 INDIVIDUAL DIFFERENCE THEORY:**

According to *Melvin DeFluer* and *Evertte Denis*, individuals react to particular media differently. Such reactions are based on individual's own characteristics. Besides, when information flows to individuals, each human being "brings a unique pattern of predispositions to mass communication."

An individual's needs, attitudes, prior belief and other cognitive and emotional states play an important part in screening and selecting media exposure and interpretation". This means that certain audiences are selective to what they read listen to or watch. Besides, as *Klapper* says, it also means that the pattern of understanding and interpretation of one person may be different from that of another who is attending to identical media content.

Thus, recognition of individual differences was an important factor leading to differences in the impact of media output on different individuals.

Besides, it also recognizes the existence of different social categories of audiences and with different effects of the media output. The theory also recognizes the existence of different impact on sub cultural groups.

### 5.3 SUMMARY:

- The nature, process, role, effects, use, perception of the messages are interpreted through numerous theories, and communication research models. These theories have been innovated, experimented, explained, interpreted and reinterpreted over a period of time. Many communication researchers and specialists have termed these theories differently taking into account the circumstances, environments and their perception of the effects.
- According to the hypodermic needle theory, *mass media cast direct, immediate and intense effect on the audience by injecting information into the consciousness of the masses*. The reason is that the audiences are treated as impressionable beings who can easily be manipulated.
- Mass media today is big business. All mass media plan, produce and disseminate their messages taking into consideration the commercial aspect also. This theory considers consumers as primary targets. This theory is also known as the *laissez faire* theory.

### 5.4 KEY WORDS:

**Mass:** The word "*mass*" means multiple, large size, aggregate, collective, group, crowd, mob, congregation, etc. *Communication* is sending out of information, sharing with, imparting to, or giving information to.

**Mass Communication:** The act of mass communication means sharing information or a message with a large number of people at one place or at several places in one country or in many countries. The act of communication begins with birth. It continues all through one's life. It is a social process. Communication can be delivered in several ways - verbal (with the help of words), non-verbal, graphic, audio-visual, even by signs and symbols.

**Theories of Mass Communication:** The nature, process, role, effects, use, perception of the messages is interpreted through numerous theories, and communication research models. These theories have been innovated,

experimented, explained, interpreted and reinterpreted over a period of time. Many communication researchers and specialists have termed these theories differently taking into account the circumstances, environments and their perception of the effects.

**Hypodermic Needle Theory:** It is believed that *mass media cast direct, immediate and intense effect on the audience by injecting information into the consciousness of the masses*. The reason is that the audiences are treated as impressionable beings who can easily be manipulated. This is the crux of the hypodermic needle theory. This also called the Bullet Theory.

**Commercial Theory:** According to this theory, big business houses, monopolies and multi-national corporations operate mass media. Thus there is a definite commercial angle. This results in large variety and diversity of information, opinion and viewpoints reducing the chances of manipulation and lowering professional standards.

#### **5.5 SELF-ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS (SAQs):**

14. Discuss in detail the hypodermic needle theory.
14. Discuss in detail the play theory.
14. Discuss in detail the cultural theory.
14. Discuss in detail the needs and gratification theory.
14. Discuss in detail the two-step and multi-step theory.

#### **5.6 REFERENCES / SUGGESTED READINGS:**

- **Mass Communication Theory;** By. *Stanley J. Baran and Dennis K. Davis*. **Wadsworth**, 1997
- **Fundamentals of Human Communication;** By. *Melvin L. Defleur, Patricia Kearney and Tomothy G. Mayfield*, 1997
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## **EFFECTS OF MASS COMMUNICATION**

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### **LESSON STRUCTURE:**

In this lesson, we shall broadly discuss about the effects of mass communication. We shall also focus on researches conducted about effects of mass communication briefly.

The lesson structure shall be as follows:

- 6.0 *Objectives*
- 6.1 *Introduction*
- 6.2 *Presentation of Content*
  - 6.2.1 *Effects of mass communication*
  - 6.2.2 *Researches on the effects of mass communication*
  - 6.2.3 *Models on the effects of mass communication*
  - 6.2.4 *Theories on the effects of mass communication*
- 6.3 *Summary*
- 6.4 *Key Words*
- 6.5 *Self-Assessment-Questions (SAQs)*
- 6.6 *References/Suggested Reading*

### **6.0 OBJECTIVES:**

Mass communication has become essential components of the modern society. Mass media like radio, television, newspapers, films etc. play an important role in our lives. Mass media perform the following functions: *To Inform, To Educate, To Entertain, and To Persuade*. Mass communication additionally performs the function of transmission of culture.



But more than the roles, scholars are concerned about the effects of mass communication. In this lesson, we shall discuss about these effects. The objectives of this lesson are as follows:

- *To understand the effects of mass communication,*
- *To understand the researches conducted about the effects of mass communication,*
- *To understand the models on the effects of mass communication, and*
- *To understand the theories on the effects of mass communication.*

## **6.1 INTRODUCTION:**

It has been widely recognized and well established from the works of many researchers that mass media have tremendous effect on society at large. Though all our everyday activities are profusely affected by mass media, we rarely admit or accept these facts. Often, we take mass media and their impact on our lives for granted. As Denis McQuail puts it:

*"We buy certain goods and services because of advertisements in the media, go to a film praised in a newspaper review".*

On the negative side, as Joseph Klapper said long ago:

"Whether violence in the media produces delinquency, whether the escapist nature of much of the fare does not blind people to reality, and just what the media can do to the political persuasions of their audiences?"

The fact of the matter is that all our actions, ideas, movements, behavior and attitudes are deeply influenced by mass media in some way or the other. Rightly has, therefore, McQuail opined,

**"Our minds are full of media-derived information and impressions. We live in the world saturated by media sounds and images, where politics, government and business operate on the assumption that we know what is going on in the wider world".**

In this lesson, we shall broadly discuss about the effects of mass communication. Also we shall discuss about the Researches on Effects of Mass communication, Models on Effects of Mass communication, and Theories on Effects of Mass communication.

## **6.2 PRESENTATION OF CONTENT:**

The content of this lesson shall be presented as follows:

- *Effects of Mass communication*
- *Researches on Effects of Mass communication*
- *Models on Effects of Mass communication*
- *Theories on Effects of Mass communication*

### **6.2.1 EFFECTS OF MASS COMMUNICATION:**

Media researchers have come to the conclusions that since media effects play vital role in human attitudes and behavior, there are several stages before such effects are widely visible or perceptible. These effects are intimately connected with the progresses, development and proliferation of mass media.

With the advent the new century newer and better mass media are still being developed, modified and innovated. Beginning with 1930 till 2000s, innumerable, fantastic and mind-boggling inventions have been made in media gadgets and instruments. However, it has also been amply proved that mass media powers and effects can and do vary with the times. There will only be a difference in the levels and kinds of effects. For, "media effectiveness" is a guide or index to the efficiency of mass media in achieving a given aim or a planned communication goal.

In the initial stages of media research, it was stated that media exposure first affects the human mind in *conversion*, then it makes minor changes in *attitudes* and then these attitudes are reinforced. This final act of reinforcement makes a lot of difference.

### **6.2.2 RESEARCHES ON EFFECTS OF MASS COMMUNICATION:**

Later researches found that the effects of mass communication also depended upon the *opinion, belief, and behavior patterns of the receiver*. Moreover, it was also found that a lot of other factors also controlled the media effects. Media could be instrumental to an extent in making the intended changes among the audience possible. Also it was found that media were capable of facilitating minor changes, reinforcing what existed or could even preventing a change.

Many studies also found that the effects of a particular medium on a particular audience could always be directed, manipulated and modulated in a particular manner. For example viewing of television programmes by children of a given age,

or political broadcast for an underdeveloped populace, public information for health and safety, and other such campaigns.

Effects of mass communication also to differ, particularly, if receiver community/audience is not in tune with communication. For example, the effects of fantasy and of media depiction of crime and violence are likely to be different among children. Therefore, ordinarily speaking, media of mass communication, as *Joseph Klapper* points out, do not serve as necessary and sufficient cause of audience effects, but rather function among and through a nexus of mediating factors and influences.

Secondly, these mediating factors generally make mass communication a contributory agent, and not the sole cause, reinforcing the existing conditions.

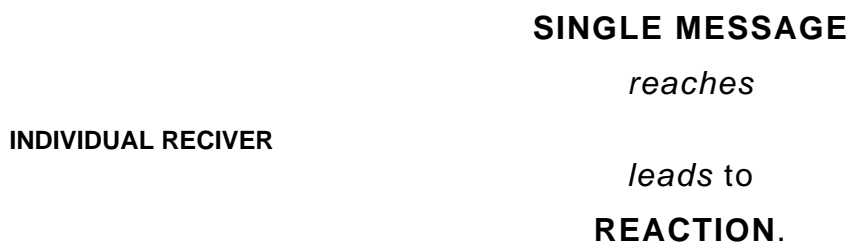
Thirdly, mass communication also often serves as a directly contributory agent or as an agent of direct effect.

Fourthly, under some situations, mass communication media produce direct effects.

Mass Media also are responsible for producing a variety of effects depending upon the objectives of the media outputs and the timing when these are intended to produce a particular type of effect. Long-term and short-term effects, therefore, can vary with the type of media exposure, depending upon local community/group, and the prevailing cultures.

### **6.2.3 MODELS ON EFFECTS OF MASS COMMUNICATION:**

Dwelling extensively on media effects, McQuail has spelled out a model which he calls "**stimulus - response**" model, which can be represented as under:



But another researcher, **McGuire**, put it in the form of six stages of effect in the following sequences:



**COMPREHENSION  
YIELDING  
RETENTION  
OVERT BEHAVIOUR.**

This model of media effect has found greater acceptance because "media messages contain particular stimulus attributes that have differential interaction with personality characteristics of audiences members". This is because individual responses vary according to the status of the audiences' categories and also age, occupation, life styles, gender, religion, etc. In this regard Melvin DeFleur has observed that, members of a particular category "generally select more or less the same communication content and will respond to it in roughly equal ways."

Another media-effect model is: *source-receiver relation and effect*. This is also almost on the same lines as the previous model. The basis of this model is that the impact or effect of the content of mass communication is dependent on the relationship shared between the source and the receiver.

Kelman propounded another model. He pointed out that the media effects pass through several processes before the audiences finally realize or notice it. These are:

**COMPLIANCE  
IDENTIFICATION  
INTERNATIONALIZATION.**

The effect of mass communication is perceptible when there is change in one's attitude. This change is the result of one's changed motives (needs or wishes).

Other prominent researchers such as *Elihu Katz, Chaffee Rosar* and many others have worked on this area of media effects on audience and media's power to influence, change, and convert.

Empirically, it has been stated that to begin with media exposure on audiences has little or no effect. After some time, the effects are mixed and increased exposure activates audience (to a maximum of 14%). Then the effect is reinforced further and, finally only about 8% are converted i.e. attitudinal and other changes occur only a small percentage of the exposed audience members.

#### **6.2.4 THEORIES ON EFFECTS OF MASS COMMUNICATION:**

Some early researchers propounded the *Hypodermic Needle Theory* or the *Bullet Theory* of the effects of mass communication. According to this theory, the information through mass media works like a bullet in a direct and intense manner. Also many early communication theorists were of the view that mass media and mass communication have similar impact on all the audience members.

Later on the *Theory of Individual Difference* recognized that individual members of the audience have different attitudes, beliefs etc. and thus react to the messages differently. Still later it was disproved that the mass media have *direct response* on the audience members. It was found that mass communication often works in a two-step or multi-step manner. The message first reaches the *opinion leaders* who further disseminate to larger audiences.

But no one has ruled that mass communication does not change attitudes, behaviors and ultimately society as a whole. No research on effects of mass communication media has so far provided a precise principle, applying which one can predict individual behavior following exposure to mass communication. However, it has certainly been proved beyond any ray of doubt that mass communication and mass media do mould, fashion and craft new behavior and attitudes. To begin with, mass media bring about quick transformation as a result of direct, immediate, universal exposure on the audiences in the early stages. But, these have later been seen to turn into selective, indirect effects over a period of time.

In the recent years, eminent researchers such as *Melvin De Fleur, George Gerbner and Everette Rogers* have stated that media can influence society and any societal group's culture, values, their choice, public policies and perhaps everything else. They have determined that generally through five stages a society embraces changes brought about by media influence. These stages are:

**AWARENESS STAGE,  
INTEREST STAGE,  
EVALUATION STAGE,  
TRIAL STAGE** and

## ADOPTION STAGE.

Dissemination and diffusion of information through mass media can facilitate adoption and social change. It has, therefore, been alleged that mass media have come to decide what people/audience should know and what should be kept away from them. In other words, media have come to set the agenda for the people. This is particularly true of political campaigns, especially those relating to elections. The *Agenda Setting Theory* was propounded on this basis.

Some researchers have also propounded *theories of indirect effect of mass media*. For example, as *DeFleur* states, media effect can be nominal or intense, depending on the education of the receivers. Again, one-to-one effect of media can be quite different than in a group. Many researchers believe that many factors intervene between media's content and responses to it.

Education for example can cultivate critical, reasoning ability. And thus the effect of mass communication on educated people would be different than that on uneducated audiences. Similarly, rural environments or urban setting, religion, occupation, gender can alter the impact of mass communication.

In any case, mass communication and mass media do have effect on our personality, identity, status and behavior in any situation.

### 6.3 SUMMARY:

- We buy certain goods and services because of advertisements in the media; go to a film praised in a newspaper review.
- Whether violence in the media produces delinquency, whether the escapist nature of much of the fare does not blind people to reality, and just what the media can do to the political persuasions of their audiences?
- Our minds are full of media-derived information and impressions. We live in the world saturated by media sounds and images, where politics, government and business operate on the assumption that we know what is going on in the wider world.
- "Media Effectiveness" is a guide or index to the efficiency of mass media in achieving a given aim or a planned communication goal.
- Researches have found that the effects of mass communication depend upon the *opinion, belief, and behavior patterns of the receiver*.

- Media could be instrumental to an extent in making the intended changes among the audience possible. Also it was found that media were capable of facilitating minor changes, reinforcing what existed or could even preventing a change.

#### 6.4 KEY WORDS:

**Effects of Mass Communication:** Media exposure first affects the human mind in *conversion*, then it makes minor changes in *attitudes* and then these attitudes are reinforced. This final act of reinforcement makes a lot of difference.

**McQuail's Model of Media Effects:** McQuail has spelled out a model which he calls "*stimulus - response*" model, which is represented as: *Single message reaches individual receiver leads to reaction.*

**McQuail's Model of Media Effects:** Another researcher, *McGuire*, presented media effects in six stages in the following sequences: Presentation, *attention*, *comprehension*, *yielding*, *retention*, and *overt behaviour*.

#### 6.5 SELF-ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS (SAQs):

5. Discuss in detail the effects of mass communication. Give suitable examples.
5. Discuss the researches conducted about the effects of mass communication. Give suitable examples.
5. Discuss in detail models devised with regard to the effects of mass communication. Give suitable examples.
5. Discuss in detail theories propounded with regard to the effects of mass communication. Give suitable examples.

#### 6.6 REFERENCES / SUGGESTED READINGS:

- **Mass Communication Theory;** By. *Stanley J. Baran and Dennis K. Davis.* **Wadsworth,** 1997
- **Fundamentals of Human Communication;** By. *Melvin L. Defleur, Patricia Kearney and Tomothy G. Mayfield,* 1997
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## **INFOTAINMENT**

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### **LESSON STRUCTURE:**

In this lesson, we shall broadly discuss about the infotainment role of mass media. We shall focus on edutainment briefly. Finally, we shall try to understand popular culture and mass communication. The lesson structure shall be as follows:

- 7.0 *Objectives*
- 7.1 *Introduction*
- 7.2 *Presentation of Content*
  - 7.2.1 *Mass Media and Information*
  - 7.2.2 *Mass Media and Education*
  - 7.2.3 *Mass Media and Entertainment*
  - 7.2.4 *Infotainment and Edutainment*
  - 7.2.5 *Mass Media and Popular Culture*
- 7.3 *Summary*
- 7.4 *Key Words*
- 7.5 *Self-Assessment-Questions (SAQs)*
- 7.6 *References/Suggested Reading*

### **7.0 OBJECTIVES:**

Mass media of communication have become essential components of modern day living. Even in the societies that are still underdeveloped and are going through the process of socioeconomic and cultural change, mass media like radio, television, newspapers, films etc. play an important role. It is generally agreed that mass media perform the following functions:

- *To Inform,*

- *To Educate,*
- *To Entertain, and*
- *To Persuade.*

Many scholars believe that mass communication additionally performs the function of transmission of culture. Some other scholars of mass communication have added surveillance as also an important function of mass media. Surveillance means to keep an eye on whatever is happening around and to report the important happenings.

The objectives of this lesson are as follows:

- *To understand the concept of infotainment,*
- *To understand the scope of infotainment,*
- *To study the marriage of information, education, and entertainment,*
- *To study how various media perform infotainment, and*
- *To study how infotainment influences popular culture.*

## **7.1 INTRODUCTION:**

Mass media are described as the fourth pillar of democracy. They perform the role of 'watchdog' over the society and government in particular and expose corrupt practices. They help in transmission of the culture. Mass media like cinema, television, radio and books etc. help people cope with or escape from their environment. Mass media also create new values. Also mass media serve an important economic function by providing employment to millions of people. In fact, each medium - be it newspaper, television, films, books, audio to and videocassettes - has now grown to the stature of an industry.

All the above functions of mass communication are secondary. The primary functions of mass communication include: *information, entertainment, and persuasion.*

In this lesson, we shall discuss specifically the infotainment role of mass media.

## **7.2 PRESENTATION OF CONTENT:**

The content of this lesson shall be presented as follows:

- *Mass Media and Information*
- *Mass Media and Education*
- *Mass Media and Entertainment*
- *Infotainment and Edutainment*
- *Mass Media and Popular Culture*

### **7.2.1 MASS MEDIA AND INFORMATION:**

The mass media perform the functions of information providers by working as mirror images of the society. It means that whatever important happens in the society becomes the content of the media and the audiences remain informed about the events and processes around them.

News and current affairs content of the media directly perform the functions of information channels. The information function does not only relate to the present but the media of mass communication also pass on the information from one generation to another thereby maintaining a cultural and social continuity.

Other than news and current affair programmes, the content of mass media may also indirectly present before the receivers the image of the society in the form of stories, drama, dance, novels, etc.

### **7.2.2 MASS MEDIA AND EDUCATION:**

Providing useful information that adds to the knowledge and skills can be considered as education. Thus, while performing the roles of information providers the mass media also educate. All information received from mass media may not be educative.

Education becomes an important function of mass media and some media perform more educative functions than others. News reports in newspapers are primarily informative in nature but articles and editorials are both informative and educative.

Special articles about health, careers, car maintenance, beauty care etc. are primarily educative in nature.

On radio and television, there are programmes that are similar to classroom situation and provide education.

### **7.2.3 MASS MEDIA AND ENTERTAINMENT:**

The word 'entertain' is derived from the Latin word 'tenere' meaning to hold or to keep steady, busy or amused. Thus entertainment may be defined simply as a narrative, performance or other experience that can be enjoyed by large and heterogeneous group of people. It is usually sought for its own sake rather than for informational or educational purposes. Some scholars have also described entertainment as information for those who seek no information.

Entertainment is a ubiquitous phenomenon. No society exists without it. As soon as man is able to meet the survival needs action starts for relaxation and recreation.

Entertainment can also be defined crudely as any activity designed to delight and to enlighten through the exhibitions of the fortunes and misfortunes of others and also through the display of skills. It is more than comedy, drama and tragedy.

Broadly, it includes any kind of game or play - athletic or not, competitive or not, witnessed or not, participative or not. It includes musical performances by self, for self or for others or by others for self or for others. Similarly dance is also a form of entertainment.

### **ENTERTAINMENT AND MORALITY:**

Plato in his own time has set a trend that the entertainment is to be judged in moral terms. Aristotle in his Poetics gives an account of the working of the drama but does not talk of the moral content of entertainment.

It is interesting to note that most Christian philosophers of the early ages did not approve of the entertainment. Many of them reflected about the nature of joy, in particular, amusement and laughter. They detected nothing but evil in them. For example, Hobbs though that amusement is a process of observing imperfection in other men.

Pascal condemned entertainment in strongest words. He thought that the need to amusement arises from the sense of unhappiness. He said that entertainment is an acceptable means of relief from happiness. The modern concept of entertainment is an acceptable means for relief and discontent and unavoidable stress of daily life.

In ancient India, entertainment was not only accepted as an essential component of social life but it was also considered as an art and able entertainers were rewarded.

Natya Shastra written by Bharat Muni hundreds of years ago is considered to be the best book on dance and drama for recreation and relaxation. In fact Bharat Muni is considered to be the father of modern day science of entertainment. All though the ancient Indian civilization various forms of entertainment, dance, drama, humour, poetry developed in various formats. Almost every society had its own traditional form of entertainment. Poetry is only of them. Most of the entertainment forms of the traditional Indian societies were participative in nature where the spectators became the part of the performance.

With the advent of mass media of communication additional sources of entertainment were added to the society. Major thrust to mass media entertainment took place when cinema started as silent movies. The actual theatrical performances now could be converted into moving pictures.

Later, sound added to the value of entertainment and today cinema whether in cinema hall or on a TV screen or on Internet is the major and most important entertainment medium all over the world. Television brought this entertainment world into the drawing rooms and bedrooms.

Today watching television is one of the important items on the daily routine of most people.

Radio has also played the role of a very important but also very personal medium of recreation, relaxation and entertainment.

### **NEWSPAPERS AND MAGAZINES:**

Different media of mass communication lay different emphasis on the above-mentioned functions. Newspapers are primarily the media of information. They may also educate, entertain and persuade.

Many magazines are also performing the same functions and they are primarily informative in nature. But there are magazines, which are primarily educative or entertaining. Popular spiritual magazines are primarily educative in nature and teach various aspects of religion and moral life. Chandamama on the other hand is a magazine whose primary function is to entertain. Most of the film magazines based on gossip and speculation are primarily recreational in content.

Even in case of newspapers there are many examples where separate pages are fixed for entertainment only. Punjab Kesari and also Dainik Tribune on certain weekdays have a cover page, which is purely entertaining in nature.

The 'middle' in most English newspapers, the third editorial in many newspapers, comic strips, crosswords, puzzles and Saturday and Sunday supplements are by no means purely informational in nature. But there is no doubt that newspapers, as the name itself suggests, deal primarily with pure information. Entertainment, here, may be a secondary function.

### **RADIO:**

A careful analysis of the content of radio would reveal that the major component of the content is recreational in nature primarily based on music. The major portion of the music is also derived from the films. No doubt there is very important information content on radio in the form of news, newsreels, news analysis, talks discussions etc. But such programmes occupy only a small portion of the total radio broadcast time.

It can be said that though radio is primarily recreational in nature information is also a major component.

### **CINEMA:**

Cinema by its nature and the way it has developed is pure entertainment. The history of early Hollywood films shows that in the beginning the films were of about half hour duration and in one show two to five films were shown. Some of these early films were in the form of present day serials.

Gradually it got established that a film should be between 120 minutes to 180 minutes duration. The subject matter and the treatment of the subject matter is such that the only objective of the Director, Producer and others is to provide delight and happiness to the viewers.

Even tragedy is used for this purpose.

It is said that cinema provides escape from the day-to-day problems and anxieties for three hours. This according to many scholars perform the functions of catharsis that is the anger and displeasure against the society which gets stored in the minds of the people gets softened by three hours of escape from the realities.

Cinema is in fact a combination of all the art forms and performing arts. It includes real stories, humour, satire, comedy, tragedy, fiction, dance, drama, song, music, athletics, violence, love, revenge etc. All sections of society irrespective of socio economic status are influenced by cinema.

### **TELEVISION:**

Though totally different in its technology, television can be considered as an extension of cinema. The content of television may be primarily borrowed from cinema or the productions are cinema like. By its content television is more like radio rather than like newspapers or television.

Its primary function is recreation and entertainment but there are ample programmes on news and current affairs. So much so that it is used both as a source of information and a source of entertainment.

Both radio and television have also been used as effective media for education and persuasion. Classes on radio are held for school students as well as on television. The distance education programmes use both radio and television as teaching aids.

The capability of radio and television as important media for education has been proved again and again and it is rightly advocated that both these media should be used to eradicate

illiteracy and also to provide school and higher education. In fact, in India radio and television have been extensively used for education and launch of Vidya Vahini is an example.

From the above discussion it becomes clear that information education and entertainment cannot be put under tight compartments. Information can be both educative and entertaining.

An educational programme can be entertaining also and even a purely entertainment programme may provide useful information and inculcate some good or bad habits.

Therefore, two new terms are being used quite often. These are 'infotainment' and 'edutainment'.

#### **7.2.4 INFOTAINMENT AND EDUTAINMENT:**

Infotainment is a process of providing information in a manner that it also entertains the receivers. Similarly Edutainment is a process which educated pure informational programmes have not many receivers and the impact of pure information programmes is also low. Therefore, writers, producers and directors provide information and education along with the entertainment. This is generally achieved in two ways.

Firstly, information may be provided in a manner that it attracts attention, sustains the interest and leaves an impact. Bland or uninteresting reading of news in a radio or television bulletin creates a situation where the listeners and viewers cease to be attentive after some time, may be after seconds only.

But the same news read or presented in an attractive male or female voice with pauses or interventions may increase the span of attention. Or presentation of news in the form of dialogue between two presenters creates a drama like situation and is more effective.

Even the scripting or writing of the news may be done in a manner that it arouses interest.

The second way of providing information in an entertaining manner is to provide information and education in the garb of entertainment. To the reader, viewer or listener the content appears to be entertaining but at the end he or she is more informed or better informed.

During our childhood we have all listened to the stories from our parents, grand parents, uncles etc., which are called folk tales. All these stories had information and education in them but they were presented in such manner that children wait for them eagerly.

Most of these stories provided the framework for moral values in the personality of the growing child.

Many radio and television programmes provide lot of information and education through entertainment. All the religious serials are supposed to inculcate religiosity amongst the viewers but at the same time the presentation of these serials is entertaining.

The mass media inform, educate and entertain, they also try to make people think and behave in particular manner. This is the motivational or persuasion function of the mass communication. All advertisements in radio, newspapers, television etc. are persuasive in nature.

The entire industry of advertising is based on the basic concept of providing information and persuasion in the grab of interesting and attention catching short time commercials. Some of the commercials we all know have proved to be more interesting and entertaining than the entertainment programmes them.

Use of drama, animation, celebrities, humour, threat, reward, punishment etc. is used to create interest as also impact. In fact advertisements are considered to be the best examples of infotainment and Edutainment.

Radio was once a very popular medium. With the advent of television its listenership decreased. But now FM transmission has once again established radio as a content medium specially, for young. The emerging radio is mainly an entertainment medium but it has also taken up the job of providing information like weather traffic conditions etc.

Even the entertainment programmes on FM radio have a component of new information for the teenagers. They come to know about new, songs, singers and performers. This information is vital for many listeners, especially for teenagers.

As discussed earlier newspapers also are taking up the functions of entertainment and their infotainment content is gradually increasing. In the emerging competitions between different newspapers and between newspapers and electronic media it is essential that newspapers change their presentation of the information such that it becomes worth reading.

More pictures in newspapers and publication of pictures in colour and regular columns, which are entertaining in nature, are some of the methods, which they are adopting. In fact, in coming years the entire content of the media is likely to be both infotainment and edutainment. Pure entertainment programmes do not find much receivers because everyone wishes to be benefited - information wise - even during pure relaxation.

#### **7.2.5 MASS MEDIA AND POPULAR CULTURE:**



Another way of looking at the content of the media is to consider media as the vehicles of spreading popular culture. Much of the content of the mass media today is popular culture that is sold for profit and is integrating to the economics to the media. Audiences are made to consume popular culture ranging from various forms of entertainment to support and even to pornography.

*Ray Maden* adds more features and define popular culture as “anything produced” for dissemination by the mass media or mass production or transportation, directly or indirectly, and that reaches a majority of people”.

A simple definition of popular culture can be “popular culture is a mass communicated message that make limited intellectual and aesthetic demand-content that is design to amuse and entertain audiences”.

All the print, film and electronic media present popular culture, in this sense. In fact it covers most of what is retained in radio, television and cinema. In fact today we see entire channels devoted to popular culture and it seems they are becoming more and more popular.

The content can vary from telecasting a film as it is or selected scenes, songs, count down shows, chat shows or a mixture of all these. Even most of the serials, which are called soap operas, are a part of the popular culture as disseminated by the media. Songs and music of the films are also a part of it.

In recent years known film music has also become very popular and daily albums of songs and dance are being launched.

Some popular culture such as advertising can be considered as promoting a project or point of view. But almost all-popular culture has an entertainment function. It is typically designed to amuse and serve as a pastime.

We know that the media of mass communication have the great power and potential to be used for the growth and development of the society but in fact most of the media specially television seem to be engaged in useless and mindless dissemination of popular culture which serves no better function than providing at the most light entertainment for pastime.

Karl Marx once said that religion is the opium of masses indicating that the religious practices keep the individuals and masses passive and resistance to change and modernization. Visualizing the non-productive use of mass media the great Chinese leader once opined that media is the opium of masses.

By transmitting programmes of low intellectual caliber with almost no message content the popular culture of television and radio today converts the large audiences into inactive non-thinking citizens.

The policy planners, teachers and others have to consider and evaluate this trend whether the phenomenon of popular culture should be allowed to play such an important lives of the people today. Media have strong influence and we have to decide for what purpose we should use them.

### **7.3 SUMMARY:**

- Entertainment is a ubiquitous phenomenon. No society exists without it. As soon as man is able to meet the survival needs action starts for relaxation and recreation. Entertainment can also be defined crudely as any activity designed to delight and to enlighten through the exhibitions of the fortunes and misfortunes of others and also through the display of skills. It is more than comedy, drama and tragedy.
- A simple definition of popular culture can be “popular culture is a mass communicated message that make limited intellectual and aesthetic demand-content that is design to amuse and entertain audiences”.
- Some popular culture such as advertising can be considered as promoting a project or point of view. But almost all-popular culture has an entertainment function. It is typically designed to amuse and serve as a pastime.
- Infotainment is a process of providing information in a manner that it also entertains the receivers. Similarly Edutainment is a process which educated pure informational programmes have not many receivers and the impact of pure information programmes is also low. Therefore, writers, producers and directors provide information and education along with the entertainment. This is generally achieved in two ways. Firstly, information may be provided in a manner that it attracts attention, sustains the interest and leaves an impact. Bland or uninteresting reading of news in a radio or television bulletin creates a situation where the listeners and viewers cease to be attentive after some time, may be after seconds only.

### **7.4 KEY WORDS:**

**Entertainment:** Entertainment is a ubiquitous phenomenon. No society exists without it. As soon as man is able to meet the survival needs action starts for relaxation and recreation.

Entertainment can be defined crudely as any activity designed to delight and to enlighten through the exhibitions of the fortunes and misfortunes of others and also through the display of skills. It is more than comedy, drama and tragedy.

**Infotainment:** Infotainment is a process of providing information in a manner that it also entertains the receivers.

**Edutainment:** Edutainment is a process which educated pure informational programmes have not many receivers and the impact of pure information programmes is also low.

**Popular Culture:** Popular culture is a mass communicated message that make limited intellectual and aesthetic demand-content that is design to amuse and entertain audiences. All the print, film and electronic media present popular culture, in this sense. In fact it covers most of what is retained in radio, television and cinema. In fact today we see entire channels devoted to popular culture and it seems they are becoming more and more popular. Some popular culture such as advertising can be considered as promoting a project or point of view. But almost all-popular culture has an entertainment function. It is typically designed to amuse and serve as a pastime.

#### **7.5 SELF-ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS (SAQs):**

4. What is infotainment? Discuss in detail giving examples.
4. Discuss how the various mass media provide infotainment.
4. Discuss how the various mass media are influenced by infotainment.
4. Discuss how popular culture is influenced by infotainment.

#### **7.6 REFERENCES / SUGGESTED READINGS:**

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## **M. A. Mass Communication (1<sup>st</sup> year) / PGDMC**

**MASS COMMUNICATION**

**MMC 102 / PGDMC 102 Lesson: 8**

### **MASS COMMUNICATION AND DEVELOPING SOCIETIES**

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#### **LESSON STRUCTURE:**

In this lesson, we shall broadly discuss about the role of mass communication in developing societies. First we shall focus on the characteristics of developing societies. Then we shall try to understand the role of mass communication in development. The lesson structure shall be as follows:

- 8.0 *Objectives*
- 8.1 *Introduction*
- 8.2 *Presentation of Content*
  - 8.2.1 *Characteristics of Developing Societies*
  - 8.2.2 *Role of Mass Communication in Development*
  - 8.2.3 *Media and Development: The Indian Experience*
- 8.3 *Summary*
- 8.4 *Key Words*
- 8.5 *Self-Assessment-Questions (SAQs)*
- 8.6 *References/Suggested Reading*

#### **8.0 OBJECTIVES:**

The objectives of this lesson are as follows:

- To study the Characteristics of Developing Societies, and
- To study the Role of Mass Communication in Development.
- *To Study the Indian Experience of Development*

### **8.1 INTRODUCTION:**

It is now a well-established fact that mass communication has become part and parcel of our lives. Mass communication, over the last two centuries, has developed in leaps and bounds. More specifically, mass communication has developed more within particular societies with advanced economic, political and social systems.

To adequately and appropriately comprehend mass communication, we have to recognize it as a part of human society. We also have to consider the social and economic factors that help shape it. For communicating messages to the masses we use several mass media. These mass media facilitate more rapid and accurate dissemination of information. To meaningfully exist and profitably operate, mass communication requires the support of political, social and economic systems.

Mass communication performs the functions of *informing, educating, entertaining, and persuading*. All these four functions are adequately performed in the developed societies. But in the developing and less-developed societies, the situations are different. The main national goal of these countries is *development*. Owing to compulsions of their rather less satisfactory situations, the developing societies (read poor and very poor nations) employ mass communication to reform or change their conditions.

In the modern and fast developing world, mass media are instrumental in disseminating information, transmitting knowledge, providing quickest and most effective means to reach the masses. Thus mass communication can be used as vehicles of development.

### **8.2 PRESENTATION OF CONTENT:**

In developing countries of Asia, Africa and Latin America, mass media often have proved to be a boon for spreading the messages of rapid social change, economic prosperity and political awareness. Besides, since communication of ideas, skills, thoughts, opinions, and knowledge leads to improvements in life styles, rise in living

standards, economic betterment and general change in easing environments, developing countries seek active assistance of mass media.

Moreover, because functions of mass media also include information, instruction, entertainment and persuasion, in developing countries mass media are usually employed for taking such messages as are instrumental in achieving above development. In this lesson, we shall discuss about the role played by mass media in developing societies. The content of this lesson shall be presented as follows:

- *Characteristics of Developing Societies*
- *Role of Mass Communication in Development*
- *Media and Development: The Indian Experience*

### **8.2.1 CHARACTERISTICS OF A DEVELOPING SOCIETY:**

With achievement of freedom, many countries of the world were confronted with colossal problems of economic reconstruction, progress and general development. Looking at their then prevailing economic environments, and social and political situations, these countries were compartmentalized in the following three categories of development:

- *Developed,*
- *Underdeveloped,* and
- *Least developed.*

The advanced nations of the West are naturally branded developed. In the developing category are those, which are economically not well off, but have the potential and capacity for progress due to their strong economic potential, vast natural resources and able, enlightened human resources. Least developing nations were deemed to be extremely poor economically with meager natural resources, low literacy levels, highly backward infrastructure and unsatisfactory logistics.

In order to initiate economic reconstruction in the developing and least developed countries, several studies were conducted to find whether mass media could be helpful. Media scholars such as **Wilbur Schramm, Harold Laswell, Lazarfeld, Daniel Lerner** and others concluded that media of mass communication could indeed be of tremendous support in motivating people towards economic upliftment, social and political developments. They were also thought to be capable of affecting many other new trends for the betterment of these nations.

Therefore, mass communication has been widely and quite effectively utilized for achieving rapid and overall development. In India, which is one of the most prominent developing nations, mass communication has been used in several diverse areas- such as agriculture, family planning, health, hygiene, malnutrition, poverty, illiteracy, civic awareness, etc.

India's successful green revolution has been a thundering success with a lot of help from the media of mass communication. India's booming population too has of late seen downward trend due to effective mass media campaigns advocating family planning and population control. Rise in the literacy rates is also the result of successful media effort. There are other such examples galore.

### **8.2.2 ROLE OF MASS COMMUNICATION IN DEVELOPMENT**

Generally speaking, as developing countries seek to grapple with several daunting tasks such as national integration, socio-economic mobilization, political participation, social activism, fighting illiteracy, superstition and ignorance, mass media can play highly useful role in such areas.

Besides, mass media have played supporting roles and can further provide support in numerous developmental areas. Some such functions of communication include:

- *Surveillance of the environment;*
- *Correlation of the parts of society in responding to environment;*
- *Transmission of social heritage from one generation to the next.*

However, in developing societies, the role mass media can be summarized as under:

- Since people economically in developing countries are hungering for information constantly, media can supply latest information and education, which can serve as support to development.
- Mass media can be a solid support in motivating, persuading and influencing the masses in to participating in the nation's development efforts.
- Transmission of the development programmes can be easy, quick and more meaningful. Mass media can indeed create a great impact on large number of people at the same time, and instantaneously.

- Enlightenment, elucidation, and explanation of the messages can be done by mass media in case of difficult and diverse programmes.
- Mass media can help communicate to the people latest techniques in agriculture, industry, health, nutrition, hygiene and educating people about various social practices and customs.
- People's support, participation and active involvement can be advocated, canvassed and procured for various social, economic, and developmental issues.
- Science and technology can be brought to the doors of the people with a view to creating what Jawaharlal Nehru called "scientific temper". UGC programmes on television have proved the usefulness of the medium. "Turning Point" and "Living on the Edge", two other Doordarshan programmes succeeded in creating profuse impact on the masses. Krishi Darshan is a living example of creating awareness about highly successful agricultural practices from all over the country.
- Women's welfare, childcare, general awareness about health and hygiene created by All India Radio's "Phone-in" programmes have been widely effective and popular.
- *School Television*, the *Country Wide Classroom* programmes of University Grants Commission, and IGNOU's new learning channel (*Vidya Vahini*) are some of the latest examples of media's contribution in overall development of the country.

These are some of the areas, among several other new and emerging fields where mass media can be used by developing countries in overcoming some of the insurmountable hurdles in the paths of their progress and development.

### **8.2.3 MEDIA AND DEVELOPMENT- THE INDIAN EXPERIENCE:**

From the early stages of the mass media in India, various attempts were made to exploit their potential for developmental purposes. As early as 1933, *rural radio listening communities* were formed in Bhiwandi (near Bombay). During this period, rural programmes were broadcast regularly in Marathi, Gujarati and Kannada. Allahabad and Dehra Dun beamed their first rural broadcasts in 1936. By 1939 there were over a hundred-community radio sets for rural listening in the North West Frontier Province alone.



**Broadcasting as Public Service:** THE INDIAN BROADCASTING COMPANY WAS SET UP ON JULY 15, 1927 AFTER MERGING THE RADIO CLUBS AT BOMBAY, MADRAS AND CALCUTTA. THERE WAS AN EARNEST DESIRE THAT RADIO IN INDIA WOULD WORK IN A SPIRIT OF PUBLIC SERVICE. IT WAS ALSO THOUGHT THAT RADIO WOULD OVERCOME THE PROBLEMS OF DISTANCE, OF DIFFERENT LANGUAGES AND CULTURES, ETC.

The Government took it over on April 1, 1930. It was renamed as the Indian State Broadcasting Service (ISBS). Later, in 1936, it was again renamed as All India Radio (AIR). More than public service, however, the Government was concerned with the prevention of grave menace to the peace and tranquility of India. Accordingly the Governor-General was given 'unrestricted powers' to deal with such a menace under the Indian Wireless Telegraphy Act (1935). The Act continues to be in operation to this day.

**SITE (SATELLITE INSTRUCTIONAL TELEVISION EXPERIMENT):** In 1967 a UNESCO expert mission and the Indian Government conducted a study on the use of a satellite for national development. Accordingly, in 1969 the Department of Atomic Energy entered into an agreement with the National Aeronautic and Space Administration (NASA) of the United States for the loan of a satellite free of cost for one full year starting from August 1975.

It was the first experiment ever to relay educational television programmes direct (not from relay stations) from a satellite to receivers (with front-end converters) in 2400 villages (some unelectrified) scattered over six selected regions in the states of Orissa, Madhya Pradesh, Bihar, Rajasthan, Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka. Besides, conventional receivers in 2500 villages and towns got the programmes through earth transmitters, which picked up the satellite signals through Receive-only Stations.

**SITE PROGRAMME:** The four-hour telecast beamed every day from earth stations at Delhi and Ahmedabad concentrated on programmes on education, agriculture, health and family planning. These were planned and produced by AIR at Production Centres set up in Delhi, Hyderabad and Cuttack, with the help of committees which included Central and State Government representatives and experts from universities, teacher training colleges, and social workers. Besides, the ISRO (Indian Space Research Organization) set up its own Audio-Visual Instruction Division to plan and produce programmes.

However, as the satellite had only one video channel and two audio channels it could transmit just one picture at a time with synchronized sound in two different languages. So it was possible to beam programmes to only two linguistic regions at a time.

**SCHOOL TELECASTS:** Of the 4-hour daily telecast, an hour and a half was aimed at pre-primary and primary school children aged 5 to 12. During this duration, programmes were telecast for 22 minutes each day in Telegu, Kannada, Oriya and Hindi - and were watched on community receivers installed in schools, so that TV was regarded as part of the education system. (Adults watched social education programmes later on the same sets).

The goals of these school broadcasts were two-fold:

- To make school more interesting, and so reduce the drop out rate.
- To improve children's basic concepts and skills, promote aesthetic sensitivity; instill habits of healthy living, bringing awareness of modernization of life and society.

However, the social evaluation report on SITE in two volumes by ISRO, published in September 1977, observes on page 5 of the Foreword:

'The observed fact that the school enrolment of the drop-out rate was not affected by the introduction of TV in schools proves that these factors depend primarily on social and economic parameters and not on the attractiveness or otherwise of the school curriculum; the children do not have an independent choice in the matter. So unless circumstances are changed so that parents do not have to make use of child labour for economic reasons, TV in schools is not going to affect enrolment or the dropout rate.

**AGRICULTURE:** The Ministry of Agriculture set out the following objectives for SITE:

- *Dissemination of information and demonstration of dry land farming etc., advice on poultry and animal husbandry, recommendation of practices for crops and their management, and so forth.*
- *Broadcast of information regarding organizations in districts, which are responsible for supply of agriculture inputs such as seeds, fertilisers, implements, and for services in marketing, credit and so forth.*
- *Giving advice and demonstration on pests and their control.*
- *Broadcast of weather forecasts and market trends.*

- *Narration of success stories of farmers, preferably within the region, and other relevant news.*

SITE had an ambitious goal in promoting new agricultural practices like dry-land farming and use of fertilizers, pest control, market trends and weather forecasts. It broadcast programmes on agriculture for 30 minutes each day for each linguistic group, plus 30-minute entertainment programmes in Hindi.

The ISRO conducted a study on SITE and concluded that there was 'some gain though it is not statistically significant'.

**THE POWER OF TV:** Television is considered very powerful as an instrument of change and development. TV cannot bring about changes on its own. It can work as a change agent. It can be an effective tool for disseminating information. The effectiveness of TV depends on a host of factors like infrastructure support, practicability of recommendations, follow-up on the programmes, etc. The choice of the medium, as in case of TV, should be determined not by the glamour but by assessing the needs of the situation, people, and experiences of the educator.

**RADIO RURAL FORUMS:** Radio Rural Forums or 'Charcha Mandals' were very innovative and highly participatory platforms. These were started in Pune in 1959 in collaboration with UNESCO. The Radio Rural Forums were based on the *Canadian Farm Forum Project*.

By 1965 the number of Mandals (of 15-20 members) rose from 900 to 12,000 in various parts of the country. But they reached only the more advanced sections of the -rural population. Membership of the Mandals showed a fairly high preference for the more advanced sections of the village community. The small farmers, landless cultivators, artisans, craftsmen and women had only a token and inactive membership.

More than 70,000 community radio sets were installed all over the country in the early seventies. But later studies found that 50% of them were not working on any given day. The 'transistor' revolution in the more prosperous villages gradually put paid to the experiments in community listening. Later in the eighties, the onslaught of television almost wiped radio out.

During the mid-1990s fresh attempts were made to revive community or local radio, both by All India Radio and social action groups. The new thrust was towards *local radio for development*. Community Radio was established in many places. The radio programmes were broadcast in the dialect of the local people. The focus of news and entertainment programmes

was health and family welfare, women's empowerment, micro-credit, watershed management, rural development and non-formal education. But this also failed soon.

**RURAL BROADCASTS:** Since 1966 All India Radio has been putting out Farm and Home Broadcasts to keep farmers informed on the use of fertilizers, pesticides, seeds and new implements. There are many such units in the country, but they are inadequately staffed. There is a dearth of personnel qualified in agriculture. The Rural-Urban programmes, and the Intensive Nutrition programmes introduced some years ago cater in the main to rural elites. All AIR stations beam programmes for rural audiences, but these add up to a measly 7% of the total transmission time.

**MEDIA AND FAMILY PLANNING:** Family planning has been adopted as a national policy since the early fifties. During the sixties, Extension Officers in family planning were posted at select AIR centres. They worked in close coordination with government and voluntary agencies. Radio, films and the press carried the message of family planning to the masses in feverish campaigns that reached their climax during the Emergency.

Studies carried out by the National Institute of Community Development, Hyderabad, demonstrated that 'extensive awareness' among people of the principles and practice of family planning was brought about, but that the gap between awareness and acceptance was very wide. A UNESCO study conducted in 1969 came to the same conclusion, and recommends the use of the oral-and traditional media for propagating the message.

G.N.S. Raghavan once wrote, "If the practitioners of traditional media internalize the message of family planning and incorporate it into some of the locally popular tunes, for group singing, or singing accompanied by dance, there will be achieved an interaction and reinforcement of the message, in a pleasant and persuasive form, which can be rivaled by no other means of communications."

And, Dr Bhaskara Rao found from his survey of the usage of the condom in rural and urban areas that only 6% of potential users of the condom in rural areas used the device, whereas 20% used it in urban areas. He also found that interpersonal communication between health workers and others was more effective in propagating the family planning message rather than any mass media. Indeed, the most effective canvasser for family planning has been a person sterilized himself who passes on the message by word of mouth. The interpersonal relationship of the opinion leaders with the local people is also of great importance, as also the

availability of the devices, the purchasing power of the local people, and the social and religious sanctions of the community.

**TRADITIONAL MEDIA AND DEVELOPMENT:** There are the clear advantages of using traditional media, of even integrating them into the mass media. In India, such media have played important roles in the communication and promotion of new ideas and the adjustment to a new or evolving social or political situation.

We know that interpersonal exchanges cannot be dispensed with in the effort to change attitudes and behaviour. The folk media allow for such interactions, for they are essentially participatory, flexible, and familiar. Since they are not usually pure art forms, developmental messages can be introduced through them.

Only a few folk forms lend themselves easily (without shocking the audience) to the propagation of developmental messages. It is evident that the local people identify most with their own folk forms and the characters in them (the performers, if they are well known, are liked by the audience, and respected for their talent and skills). What is more, the folk forms- drama, song and dance, and religious discourses- can be adapted to suit local conditions, local dialects and local concerns and interests.

**SONG AND DRAMA DIVISION:** The Central Government realized the potential of the folk media in bringing about development long back and it set up the Song and Drama Division under the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting. The Regional Offices of this organization work in collaboration with the Field Units spread all over the country. Block Development Officers, Village Level Workers, extension officers and other local leaders also help them.

Over 60 departmental troupes and 600 private troupes sponsored by the Song and Drama Division put up nearly 20,000 performances each year. The programmes include folk plays; poetry recitation; (Kavi Sammelan, Mushaira, Kavi Darbar); folk recitals like Qawalis, Palla, Villupatu, Yakshyagan; puppet shows; religious discourses (Harikatha, Bhagwat Katha, Daskathia); folk songs; and folk dances.

However, the troupes comprise largely urban-bred artistes whose chaste or pure literary language are unfamiliar to the dialect-speaking rural folk. These performances fail to reach the poor in remote areas.

### **8.3 SUMMARY:**

- Mass communication, over the last two centuries, has developed in leaps and bounds. More specifically, mass communication has developed more within particular kind of societies with advanced kind of economic, political and social systems.
- Mass media facilitate more rapid and accurate dissemination of information for use and utilization by the masses. To meaningfully exist and profitably operate, mass communication requires the support of political, social and economic systems.
- Mass communication performs the functions of *informing, educating, entertaining, and persuading*. All these four functions are adequately performed in the developed societies. But in the developing and less developed societies, the situations are different.
- The main national goal of the developing countries is *development*. Owing to compulsions of their rather less satisfactory situations that developing societies (read poor and very poor nations) employ mass communication to reform their conditions. In the modern and fast developing world, mass media are instrumental in disseminating information, transmitting knowledge, providing quickest and most effective means to reach the masses. Thus mass communication can be used as vehicles of development.
- Depending upon the prevailing economic environments, and social and political situations, these countries were compartmentalized in the following three categories of development: *Developed, Underdeveloped, and Least developed*.
- Among the developed are the advanced nations of the West. In the developing category are those, which are economically not well off, but have the potential and capacity for progress due to their strong economic potentiality, vast natural resources and able, enlightened human resources. Least developing nations were deemed to be extremely poor economically with meager natural resources, low literacy levels, highly backward infrastructure and unsatisfactory logistics.
- In developing countries of Asia, Africa and Latin America, mass media can prove to be a boon for spreading the messages of rapid social change, economic prosperity and political awareness.

#### **8.4 KEY WORDS:**

**Mass Communication:** Mass communication, over the last two centuries, has developed in leaps and bounds. More specifically, mass communication has developed more within particular kind of societies with advanced kind of economic, political and social systems.

**Functions of Mass Communication:** Mass communication performs the functions of *informing, educating, entertaining, and persuading*. All these four functions are adequately performed in the developed societies. In the modern and fast developing world, mass media are instrumental in disseminating information, transmitting knowledge, providing quickest and most effective means to reach the masses. Thus mass communication can be used as vehicles of development.

**Mass Communication and Development:** The main national goal of the developing countries is *development*. Owing to compulsions of their rather less satisfactory situations that developing societies (read poor and very poor nations) employ mass communication to reform their conditions. In the modern and fast developing world, mass media are instrumental in disseminating information, transmitting knowledge, providing quickest and most effective means to reach the masses. Thus mass communication can be used as vehicles of development.

**Types of Developing Countries:** Depending upon the prevailing economic environments, and social and political situations, these countries were compartmentalized in the following three categories of development: Developed, Underdeveloped, and Least developed.

**Characteristics of Developing Societies:** Among the developed are the advanced nations of the West. In the developing category are those, which are economically not well off, but have the potential and capacity for progress due to their strong economic potentiality, vast natural resources and able, enlightened human resources. Least developing nations were deemed to be extremely poor economically with meager natural resources, low literacy levels, highly backward infrastructure and unsatisfactory logistics.

## **8.5 SELF-ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS (SAQs):**

9. Discuss the concept of development.
9. What are the characteristics of developing societies? Discuss in detail.
9. Discuss the role of mass communication in development.
9. Discuss the importance of development communication in a country like India.

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