

Indira Gandhi National Open University  
School of Journalism and New Media Studies

# **MEDIA AND INFORMATION LITERACY**

**School of Journalism and New Media Studies**  
**Indira Gandhi National Open University**  
**New Delhi**

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# COURSE INTRODUCTION:

## MEDIA AND INFORMATION LITERACY

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An individual spends nearly five hours daily with mobile/computing devices. Besides that, s/he shares considerable time with the other media platforms. This is a substantial amount of interactions with the media and communication by an individual compared to their share of time with the family, school, peers, etc. Individuals largely spend more time with entertainment content, followed by news programmes. Both these genres carry many sponsored advertisements interlaced with these media contents.

The important point here is that all these media contents are “manufactured” with the help of various professionals and, on top of it, with the instructions/directions from the decision-making bodies/persons from the media institutions. This whole operation is consciously done to maximise the profit. Media is a conduit between sponsors and audience. Eyeballs are the raw stock that helps media institutions flourish.

Besides profits, most media institutions maintain a symbiotic relationship with the power centres. This association helps all the stakeholders enjoy immense benefits in their respective areas of operations. Manufactured content for commercial profit and a symbiotic relationship with the power centres require adequate “adjustments” in the media treatment of its messages/contents.

As we all know, an individual’s opinion and knowledge system are influenced mainly directly or indirectly by the media and communication systems. Every sphere of our life requires informed decisions that make an intended betterment for an individual. That benefit largely enhances the quality of life of their immediate community and the larger society.

Now, you can relate the association between the media’s role in decision-making through opinion formation among individuals. Individuals should not become puppets of the media’s hidden agenda if any exists in their operations. Individual media users should be aware of this intricate relationship and its consequences. This particular awareness is the outcome of being media literate. This course, Media and Information Literacy (MIL) is meant to give you the required learning to understand all the dimensions of the media and communication system needed to acquire skills and competencies of media literacy.

This course is divided into four blocks, the details of which are provided below.

**Block 1 Understanding MIL** provides a comprehensive orientation on acquiring skills and competencies to understand the media and communication systems. Unit 1, Understanding Media and Information Literacy, explains the basic tenets of MIL. Unit 2 MIL, Civic Participation and Right to Information describes the role of media literacy in civic and political engagement and how a user can participate in public welfare with the help of media literacy skills. The various options for media participation are described in Unit 3, Interacting with Media and Other Content Providers. Unit 4: MIL, Teaching and Life-Learning introduces the concept of Lifelong Learning and its crucial connection to Media and Information Literacy (MIL) by emphasising its role as an ongoing process throughout an individual’s life. Unit 5, Communication and Information, Teaching and Learning, explores communication in the digital era by comprehensively examining Information Exchange and Knowledge Sharing in today’s digital landscape, elucidating their significance and impact.

**Block 2 MIL, Society and Ethics**, explores the role of media literacy in teaching-learning processes. The previous block taught about media, and in this block, you will learn more about teaching through media. Besides that, you will understand the role of various stakeholders in the media and communication processes and how these processes are linked with multiple social institutions. Unit 6: Learning Theories and MIL discusses theories for how individuals acquire knowledge and understanding as they grow, the importance of social interaction in learning, the role of observation and modelling in learning, and the mental processes involved in acquiring knowledge. Unit 7: Enabling Environment for MIL in Learning Spaces uncovers the diverse and enlightening experiences of MIL educational interventions worldwide by tracing the rich history and practices of MIL education. Unit 8: Audience: National and Global Contexts stresses understanding audiences as it remains essential in shaping effective media strategies and communication practices. Unit 9: Technology, Media and Society explores the relationship between technology and society. More importantly, it explains the demands for vigilance in combating misinformation, protecting privacy, and bridging digital divides. Unit 10: Freedom, Ethics and Social Accountability explores these critical themes, emphasising the ethical values and responsibilities that underpin MIL in an era where information and media play pivotal roles in our lives and society.

**Block 3 Journalism and Society:** Media is considered a powerful institution; it is prone to influence by the various power centres besides its commercial operations. Bias, subjectivity, hidden agendas, and favouritism are some significant criticisms. Regular news readers should be familiar with the entire news operation. This block will take you through the nuances of news operations. Unit 11: What Makes News explores the concepts, criteria, and challenges that underpin the news-making process, shedding light on how information becomes news in a dynamic and evolving media landscape. Unit 12: The News Development Process helps you explore the intricate world of news production, its stages, key players, and the evolving landscape in various media formats. Unit 13: News Reporting and the Power of the Image explores the news reporting process and images' influential role, emphasising the importance of ethical practices and evolving skills in journalism.

**Block 4 Representation in Media:** This block will take you through many shades of the crucial aspects of media operations, which will help you broaden your understanding of media institutions. Unit 14: Industry Codes on Diversity and Representation: highlights the significance of these Industry Codes of Diversity and Representation, shedding light on their role in fostering a more inclusive and representative media landscape. Unit 15: Television, Films, Print Publishing: issues of representation in television, films, advertising, and print publishing are explored along with the technical strategies employed, the impact of representation on culture, and the ongoing efforts to promote more diverse, inclusive, and responsible media portrayals. Unit 16: Representation and Music Videos deals with the cultural aspects and technical elements of music videos, emphasising their role in reflecting and shaping the values, trends, and expressions of Indian society.

Media and information systems are indispensable and metaphorically considered a “double-edged sword”. We must handle the media system more critically for our betterment. This course will give adequate understanding to achieve it.

# **Block-1**

# **Understanding MIL**



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## **BLOCK 1: UNDERSTANDING MIL**

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The first block of the course, Media and Information Literacy, explains the basic tenets of media literacy. We must handle these entities meaningfully with the abundance of media outlets and information sources. Knowing the merits and demerits as well as the advantages and disadvantages of media and information sources is crucial in the contemporary scenario. The primary reasons for media literacy requirements are that media and information are primarily profit-oriented and susceptible to many biases. Secondly, with the advent of digital media, individuals need to participate responsibly. The first block will provide foundations to understand all the intricate matters to apply media literacy in your day-to-day affairs.

### **Unit 1: Understanding Media and Information Literacy (MIL)**

This unit introduces the concept of Media and Information Literacy (MIL), focusing on its significance and intricacies. In this era defined by information abundance, media entities and content providers wield substantial influence in shaping our beliefs, perceptions, and actions. Proficiency in MIL is not merely advantageous but imperative for responsible engagement with the modern information landscape. This unit serves as a comprehensive guide to MIL. It explores the concept of media convergence and meticulously defines MIL. Subsequently, it scrutinizes the constituent elements of MIL and elucidates the fundamental competencies required for attaining media and information literacy.

Furthermore, it pivots towards an in-depth examination of MIL within the Indian context, shedding light on stakeholders and elucidating its tangible benefits. The multifaceted dimensions of MIL, encompassing Media Literacy and Digital Literacy, are dissected, given their pertinence in the contemporary digital milieu. The unit also emphasizes the pivotal aspects of comprehending information sources and discerning the diverse audiences one may encounter. To enhance the educational experience, a spectrum of pedagogical approaches that facilitate the acquisition of MIL expertise is also provided.

### **Unit 2: MIL, Civic Participation and Right To Information**

This unit explores the connection between civic participation, Media and Information Literacy (MIL), and Indian citizenship, and it begins by examining the importance of civic participation and how MIL contributes to informed citizenship in India. It discusses the strategies for fostering civic participation, emphasizing education and media. Examining civic participation in various settings, including communities and classrooms, reveals their roles in shaping democratic values. The unit delves into civic media literacy, its core elements, and adaptation to the digital era. It also discusses the Right to Information and the complex relationship among citizens, media, and democracy, including journalism's role, press freedom, editorial independence, and media pluralism. Thus, it attempts to shed light on civic participation, MIL, and engaged citizenship in India.

### **Unit 3: Interacting with Media and Other Content Providers**

This unit explores Content Creation and Curation, systematically unravelling intricate facets of media and information. Content providers play a pivotal role in shaping the media landscape. The focus is on the mechanics of "how" content is created using sophisticated technologies that shape the content permeating daily lives. Equally imperative is "why". Ownership and media economics influences and determines the

information and perspectives disseminated. Understanding “who” in content creation emphasizes the criticality of effectively targeting the intended audience. Representation in media and information becomes central, encompassing myriad forms of content and intricate portrayals through denotation and connotation. And eventually, fostering a profound understanding of how it moulds perceptions and interactions within an ever-evolving world. Within the realm of Production/User-Generated Content, this unit demarcates between audiences, users, and producers, giving due consideration to agency, authority, and autonomy integral to producing user-generated content. Concurrently, it also discusses the rights of communication and expression in this mediascape.

#### **Unit 4: MIL, Teaching and Lifelong Learning**

This unit introduces the concept of Lifelong Learning and its crucial connection to Media and Information Literacy (MIL) by emphasizing its role as an ongoing process throughout an individual’s life. There are key characteristics that define this lifelong pursuit of knowledge. An intrinsic relationship and interdependence between MIL and Lifelong Learning underscores how MIL contributes to teaching and learning processes. There are various learning contexts where MIL plays a pivotal role, including formal education, non-formal education, informal education, and special education. The facilitation of MIL skills depends on the pedagogy of MIL, encompassing the instructional process, the role of instructors, and pedagogical methods. Finally, it is important to understand MIL and Lifelong Learning within the Indian context, shedding light on their significance within the Indian educational framework. Throughout this unit, a comprehensive understanding of the interplay between Lifelong Learning and MIL provides valuable insights for personal and professional growth.

#### **Unit 5: Communication and Information, Teaching and Learning**

The unit explores communication in the digital era by comprehensively examining Information Exchange and Knowledge Sharing in today’s digital landscape, elucidating their significance and impact. The nuances of communication in learning spaces are imperative and emphasize the pivotal role of educators in facilitating effective communication. MIL skills and competencies are necessary for meaningful communication in the digital age. The unit explores information in the Digital Age and media Literacy, where the context and concepts surrounding digital information are elucidated, along with an exploration of the evolving Information Culture. It also focuses on engagement with digital technology for pedagogical development, focusing on Technology intervention and MIL, critical thinking and decision-making abilities, and learning styles enhanced by digital tools.

With this foundational understanding, you can explore the nuances and dimensions of media literacy in specific domain areas in the subsequent blocks.

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# **UNIT 1 UNDERSTANDING MEDIA AND INFORMATION LITERACY (MIL)**

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## **Structure**

- 1.0 Introduction
- 1.2 Learning Outcomes
- 1.3 Role of Media and Other Content Providers
- 1.4 Concepts of Media and Information Literacy (MIL)
  - 1.4.1 Convergence
  - 1.4.2 Definition of MIL
  - 1.4.3 Components of MIL
  - 1.4.4 MIL Competencies
- 1.5 MIL in India: Stakeholders and Benefits
- 1.6 Dimensions of MIL
  - 1.6.1 Media Literacy
  - 1.6.2 Digital Literacy
- 1.7 Understanding the Source and the Receiver
  - 1.7.1 Sourcing Information
  - 1.7.2 Audience
- 1.8 Pedagogical Approaches
- 1.9 Let Us Sum Up
- 1.10 Keywords
- 1.11 Further Readings
- 1.12 Check Your Progress: Possible Answers

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## **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

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Information has been proven essential for the growth of individuals and communities and the nation's development. We get daily information from various sources such as libraries, television, and online communication organisations. Therefore, we acquire information from multiple sources such as books, media, and historical records. Contemporary chords of the same information must support the received information. To insert new knowledge, we gain further information to maintain our social lives. Nevertheless, access to information should not be confused with acquiring information management skills.

Information is produced as a message and delivered via a medium (e.g., text, audio, visual, image) to the target audience. Sometimes, the message is formed deliberately to achieve specific goals, but we ignore its causes and consequences. Hence, we need to negotiate the message or information carefully. The power of reasoning within us can answer what, when, why, who, where, and how in every information piece we receive.

The opulence of information provides an opportunity to know about new inventions, the progress of humankind in places, disasters, and many other necessary facts that

would not be possible without information providers. However, at the same time, it also brings challenges to us. For example, the digital era has turned us into digital information consumers who have brought more risks. There are multiple sources of information on digital platforms; in some cases, the producers deliberately produce fake news, misinformation, and disinformation, and we start believing the information as truth. Media critics frequently question the objectivity and credibility of news. How do we know about the truthfulness of a piece of information? How do we know the source is trustworthy? How can we gather alternative views? What do we do with the information? People need the ability to make better decisions over information spaces, and the ability is called Media and Information Literacy. In this unit, we will discuss the role of MIL in empowering people regarding the concept of ‘Media and Information Literacy (MIL)’.

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## **1.2 LEARNING OUTCOMES**

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After reading this unit, you will be able to:

- identify the normative roles of content providers such as libraries, archives, media, and digital sources;
  - understand the convergence of media literacy and information literacy;
  - explore the concept of MIL and its branches; and
  - locate the place of media and information literacy in people’s lives and understand its importance.
- 

## **1.3 ROLE OF MEDIA AND OTHER CONTENT PROVIDERS**

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Information is essential in modern society; hence, the function of information providers is in demand. Almost every minute, we get information from various sources such as television channels, newspapers, online news portals, social media, or libraries in different forms. There are two significant forms of information: media content and non-media content.

Media content is the content produced by media in the form of a media message. Media content can be further divided into two branches: news media content and non-news media content. News media houses produce news media content based on journalistic values, which provide authentic and credible information following the elements of news such as timeliness, conflict, prominence, proximity, and human interest. For example, the news content found in newspapers, television news channels, and online news portals is called news media content. Non-news media contents are found in the form of media text, visual or audio-visual form but do not follow journalistic values or elements of news. We can find these forms in radio, television, and publications. For example, movies, advertisements, television serials, and radio dramas are produced in the forms of media and considered non-news media content. Thus, we can easily distinguish between news and non-news media content providers.

Archives, libraries, museums, and online sources (other than news) can be recognised as non-media content providers. Besides, citizens who produce content such as vlogs or blogs are non-media content providers. The critical apprehension can be applied to

all forms of content irrespective of the kinds of content providers. The normative roles of media and non-media, both content providers, fall under the critical evaluation. The content providers are expected to:

- Provide information about issues of local, national, and international importance.
- Provide valuable information in facilitating the democratic development of a country.
- Help evaluate public debates and make informed decisions.
- Act as a bridge between government and citizens.
- Help understand society and contemporary issues, thus building a sense of belonging.
- Keep a check on governmental works, corruption, and corporate malpractice, thus creating transparency in public life.
- Function in promoting the right to freedom of expression and pluralism in society.
- Work as a vehicle of cultural and social expression.

Content providers often fail to accomplish their mission. In that situation, we need to hold our steering through MIL.

#### Activity - 1

Identify the differences across contents provided by various content providers. For example, which content providers provide informational content, which content providers provide entertainment content, and which source of content focuses on delivering misinformation, disinformation, and fake news? Additionally, identify these content providers as media and non-media content sources.

## 1.4 CONCEPTS OF MEDIA AND INFORMATION LITERACY (MIL)

As a composite concept, media and information literacy (MIL) can be explained in various ways. However, it deals with the ability to engage with media and other forms of content. It comes with a broad vision to critically emphasise every form of content, including oral, text, audio, and audio-visual. However, with the increased internet penetration, digital media texts have been considered vulnerable content, which is regarded to get a critical evaluation.

### 1.4.1 Convergence

The concept of MIL was formed by UNESCO in 2007, blending two separate concepts, ‘media literacy’ and ‘information literacy’. Afterwards, UNESCO has continuously worked to develop the concept with a holistic approach encompassing multiple dimensions of information and media. The power of empowerment provided by MIL has attracted global attention to local stakeholders and entered the academic sphere to empower the common people.

IL and ML aim to empower people by making them information literate. Both terms focus on information production, distribution, and effect of the information in the form of media messages or other information. However, there are other arguments based on medium and access patterns.

The Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals (CILIP) in the UK defines information literacy:

“Information literacy is the ability to think critically and make balanced judgments about any information we find and use. It empowers us as citizens to develop informed views and to engage fully with society (CILIP, 2018).”

The National Association of Media Literacy (NAMLE) in the USA defines media literacy:

“Media literacy is seen to consist of a series of communication competencies, including the ability to access, analyse, evaluate, and communicate information in a variety of forms, including print and non-print messages. Media literacy empowers people to be both critical thinkers and creative producers of an increasingly wide range of messages using images, language and sound (NAMLE, 2019).”

The elements of media literacy and information literacy are the same. Media literacy (ML) includes the analysis of media ownership, production, distribution, consumption, and regulations related to media in its every form. At the same time, academic information sources are the receptacles of information literacy (IL). The experts of IL considered media as a sub-component of information, and IL includes multi-literacies. To justify the argument, all media can disseminate information, but not all information comes from the media. On the contrary, ML experts argue that information is a part of media, and the area of ML is broader than IL. The following table explains the two terminologies’ convergent views on content, audience, and source.

*Table 1. The convergence of media and information literacy*

<b>Information Literacy</b>	<b>CONVERGENCE</b>	<b>Media/ Digital Literacy</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>➤ Academic/research work</li><li>➤ Book</li><li>➤ Journals</li><li>➤ Monographs</li><li>➤ Patents</li><li>➤ Business</li></ul>	<b>CONTENTS FORMATS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>➤ Newspapers</li><li>➤ Radio</li><li>➤ Television</li><li>➤ Video</li><li>➤ Podcast</li><li>➤ Social Networking Sites</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>➤ Investigative research</li><li>➤ Scientific process</li><li>➤ Peer-reviewed</li><li>➤ Long editing process</li><li>➤ Editorial industry validation Citations are crucial</li></ul>	<b>CONTENT VALIDATION</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>➤ Investigation</li><li>➤ Industry validation</li><li>➤ Slow editing process</li><li>➤ Sometimes, impromptu preparation, given the nature of media</li><li>➤ User feedback/accepted assessment</li></ul>

Information Literacy	CONVERGENCE	Media/ Digital Literacy	Understanding Media and Information Literacy
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Groups – More selective</li> <li>➤ Reading skills are needed</li> <li>➤ Less digested – More cognitive demand</li> </ul>	<b>PERCEIVED AUDIENCE</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ More general mass audiences and often targeted groups</li> <li>➤ Audio-visual messages, reading and viewing skills needed</li> <li>➤ Sound bites or dramatic visuals</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ User to search</li> <li>➤ Retrieval-evaluation skills required</li> <li>➤ ICT makers blurred boundaries</li> </ul>	<b>PERCEIVED ACCESS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Media follows/targets user</li> <li>➤ Skills to filter/reject and analyse media messages</li> <li>➤ Creation/production skills are also required</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Educational use/ business</li> <li>➤ Long term-decision making</li> </ul>	<b>PERCEIVED MAIN PURPOSE FOR USE</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Entertainment and education focus</li> <li>➤ Daily and short-term decision-making</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Essentially printed text</li> <li>➤ Data chart</li> <li>➤ Usually academically produced</li> </ul>	<b>PERCEIVED AESTHETICS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ More audio-visuals</li> <li>➤ Graphics</li> <li>➤ Industry/government produced, large and small companies – mainstream and alternative</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Librarians</li> <li>➤ Info-Collection use concerns</li> <li>➤ Educators</li> <li>➤ Concern for quality information</li> </ul>	<b>PERCEIVED SKILL PROMOTERS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Mass media specialists</li> <li>➤ Media productions - truth versus bias</li> <li>➤ Focus on aesthetics, design</li> <li>➤ Digital production skills</li> </ul>	

\*Adapted from Lau & Grizzle (2020)

Media and information literacy have similarities and differences, but many overlapping areas exist. Together, the concepts work as composite concepts that include knowledge, skills, and abilities in different content dimensions, such as digital literacy, film literacy, advertisement literacy, news literacy, and library literacy.

#### 1.4.2 Definition of MIL

Presently, citizens can access information from traditional or digital sources in various formats, such as print, audio, and video. However, what does a citizen do with the

## **Understanding MIL**

information? There are other stages to be accomplished after the information is accessed. The analysis and understanding come under the consumption of information. A set of skills is needed to evaluate a piece of information, and only a citizen can use the information for further process. MIL is the one-word solution for all those abilities. Media and information literacy (MIL) provides essential competencies to be engaged with information sources and messages. These competencies allow citizens to negotiate with the information structure and develop critical thinking. It gives an understanding of the role of media and information in society. The ability offers skills for socialising in the form of self-expression and creativity.

The Moscow Declaration on Media and Information Literacy (2012) defined MIL as “A combination of knowledge, attitudes, skills, and practices required to access, analyse, evaluate, use, produce, and communicate information and knowledge in creative, legal, and ethical ways that respect human rights.”

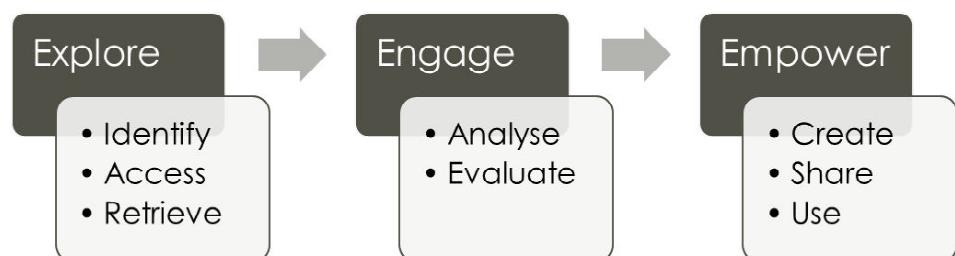
A media and information literate person can access diverse media and information sources and know which information can be accessed from where and can be used to serve what purpose, who has created that information, and why. (S)he can analyse messages, values, and beliefs disseminated by media and other information producers. Moreover, (s)he should have the knowledge, skills, and attitude toward information and media. Thus, MIL expands beyond educational, professional, and societal boundaries.

Media and information literate people should be able to:

- a. Understand the importance of media and other information providers in a democratic society.
- b. Know the role of information in daily life.
- c. Locate information.
- d. Evaluate information and contents received from providers.
- e. Use the information depending on moral principles and social values.
- f. Use specific digital skills to access, create and share information and media content.
- g. Participate in developmental and democratic activities with the understanding of free speech and expression.

### **1.4.3 Components of MIL**

MIL's three major practical applications - explore, engage and empower- are called components of MIL. The Explore, Engage and Empower Model can describe the entire set of abilities regarding media and information literacy. It is also called the triple E of MIL. Following the process of exploring, engaging, and empowering, an individual can participate in society.



*Fig. 1. The Explore, Engage and Empower Model of MIL*

The description of the model is as follows:

**Explore:** The general information empowerment process starts with identifying required media content or information. When an individual needs any information, he searches for it from different sources. Thus, with the exploration of useful information, the process begins. In this stage (s), he tries to identify, access, and retrieve information and media content using various tools, techniques, or sources.

**Engage:** The second stage in MIL is engagement. After accessing the information or media content, an individual needs to analyse it regarding social, economic, political, and cultural aspects. The credibility, authenticity, and reliability of the information or media content, as the fair representation of every section of society (e.g., gender, religion, ethnicity), must be critically evaluated. The purpose of the information, as well as the political, economic, and social interplay in it, are required to understand in this phase.

**Empower:** In the empowerment stage, individuals can use the information or media content ethically and responsibly for personal, professional, and social causes. The production of content with the help of different media tools and sharing information or media content ensure the utilisation of the information.

#### Activity - 2

Perform the following tasks: Stage 1: Search for content on “How to cure fever with home remedies?” from a random Google or YouTube search. Stage 2: If you get content on “How to cure fever with home remedies?” next, you must check the content’s source of information and authenticity. Stage 3: Once done with the verification, you can share the content - “How to cure fever with home remedies?” on Facebook or Instagram.

#### 1.4.4 MIL Competencies

MIL competencies can be defined (UNESCO, 2013) as “A set of competencies that empower citizens to access, retrieve, evaluate, understand, use and create information and media content in all formats and sources, using ICTs in a critical, ethical and effective way. The MIL competencies are composed of knowledge, skills, and attitudes. Although often synonymous with ‘skills’, in this document and for the MIL Assessment Framework, UNESCO uses the term, competencies, which is also more relevant when applied to a complex environment, including cognitive, metacognitive, and non-cognitive factors.”

The following describes MIL competencies regarding three tasks: explore, engage and empower:

##### Explore -

- Apprehend the nature, role, and convenience of the media and informational content through various resources.
- Explore and locate media and informational content.
- Access desired media and informational content successfully and ethically.
- Retrieve and store media and informational content in various ways and tools.

**Engage -**

- Discern the necessity of media and informational content providers in society.
- Analyse, evaluate, examine, articulate, and peruse the retrieved information and sources.
- Authenticate the gathered media and informational contents in pursuit of societal context.
- Organise and synthesise the gathered media and informational content.

**Empower -**

- Produce innovative and ethical new informational content or knowledge creatively, keeping a strategic purpose.
- Communicate media content, knowledge, and other information ethically and effectively using appropriate methods and tools.
- Engage with media and other information providers to nurture self-expression, intercultural dialogue, and democratic participation in pursuit of the societal context in the appropriate manner.
- Monitor the impact of disseminated media content, knowledge, and other information.

**Check Your Progress: 1**

**Notes:** 1) Use the space below for your answer.

2) Compare your answers with those given at the end of this unit.

1. How does media literacy relate to information literacy?

.....  
.....

2. Explain the triple ‘E’ of MIL.

.....  
.....

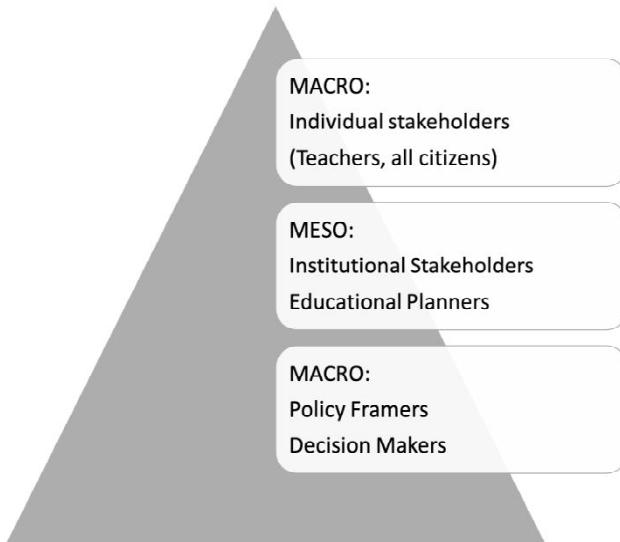
3. What are the normative roles of content providers?

.....  
.....

## **1.5 MIL IN INDIA: STAKEHOLDERS AND BENEFITS**

**Stakeholders:** The major actors involved in mechanising MIL goals are called stakeholders of MIL. Stakeholders in multiple layers play a role in making information empowerment fruitful. At the macro level, the policy framers and decision makers are the main regional, national, and international stakeholders as they implement decisions in information and media fields. At the meso level, institutional stakeholders such as teacher training institutions and educational planners take the initiative to spread MIL

learning as a necessary course to learn. Finally, at the micro level, individual stakeholders such as teachers and all citizens work to achieve the goal of MIL learning. Other than these, researchers, students, civil society, and community workers are also considered stakeholders. The active involvement of all the stakeholders is fundamental to the thriving of the MIL.



*Fig. 2. MIL stakeholders in India*

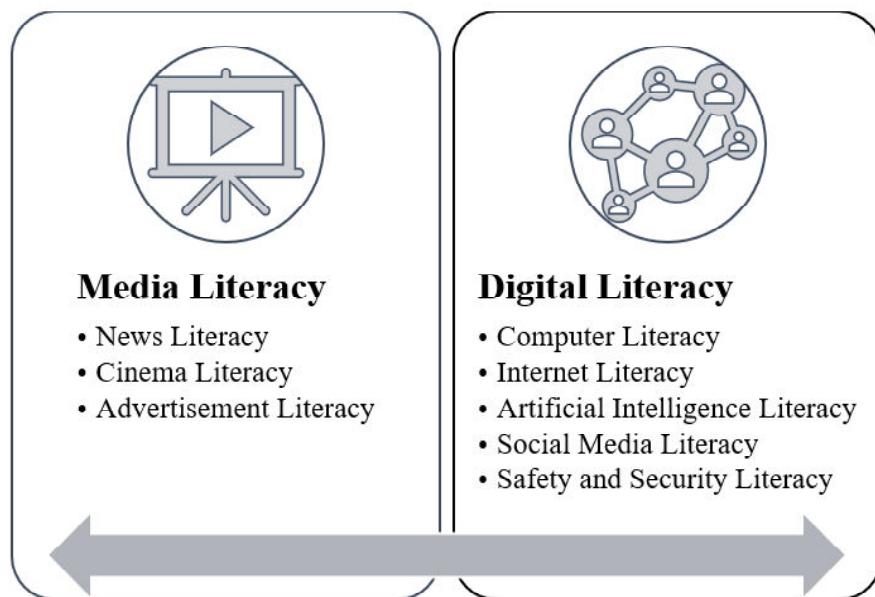
**Importance of MIL for Indian citizens:** According to UNESCO, MIL is the prerequisite for enjoying fundamental freedom and rights in personal, social, and professional spaces. As per the UNDP report (2021) on the Human Development Index (HDI), India ranked 132nd among 191 countries and territories. The spread of MIL must be required for the growth of India. It is necessary for good governance and political, economic, educational, and social development.

India, being the largest democracy in the world, needs to ameliorate the environment of logical and critical thinking. The competencies of MIL would empower marginalised groups such as differently-abled people, indigenous populations, and marginalised genders. They would be able to participate in society. In India, the MIL is concerned (i) With fostering empowerment in India in terms of freedom of speech and expression, minority rights, gender equality, and fair representation of all classes; (ii) With providing suitable information and news for decision-making; (iii) In dealing with misinformation, disinformation and fake news, data privacy; (iv) In controlling the influence of media and ICT tools (e.g., social media, and gaming); (v) In fostering political and civic engagement. (vi) In promoting inter-cultural exchange; (vi) In bringing religious and regional peace.

## 1.6 DIMENSIONS OF MIL

MIL is a multidimensional concept that helps people to participate in society and contribute to global knowledge. The insertion of various information formats, as well as structures encompassing the ability to be indulged with media and information environment, is endeavoured by MIL. From the lens of communication studies, Media and digital literacy have been the most crucial branches of MIL. Media literacy empowers media consumers by inculcating media knowledge structures in them. It helps to combat the adverse effects of media by importing the usage of media tools and messages. Media literacy deals with news literacy and other media-specific abilities.

Digital literacy empowers people with holistic expertise in digital tools. The present day's information can be dealt with and controlled by anybody using a range of MIL competencies.



*Fig. 3. Branches of MIL (compiled by author)*

### 1.6.1 Media Literacy

Media literacy has been developed considering the negative effects of media messages on receivers' minds. Media literacy is the ability to access, analyse, evaluate, and communicate messages in various forms. Media literacy abilities have involved traditional mass media to the newest form of online media with a great deal of consideration.

Understand the role and functions of media and Internet communications companies in democratic societies.

The core components of media literacy are skills, knowledge structures, and personal locus. Skills are required to build knowledge structures. Knowledge structures are accumulated information, and personal locus is media literacy's mental or internal direction.

**Skills:** Many scholars explained media literacy as thinking critically and analysing media messages in-depth. Potter (2016) emphasised seven specific skills- analysis, evaluation, grouping, induction, deduction, synthesis, and abstracting.

*Table 2. Seven skills of media literacy*

<b>Skill</b>	<b>Definition</b>
Analysis	Breaking down content into meaningful elements
Evaluation	Judging the value of an element by comparing an element to some standard
Grouping	Determining which elements and how a group of elements are different from other groups of elements
Induction	Inferring a pattern within a small subset of elements and generalising it to all elements in a content

Deduction	Using general principles to explain elements
Synthesis	Assembling elements into a new structure
Abstracting	Creating a brief, clear, and accurate description capturing the essence of a message in a smaller number of words than the message itself

**Knowledge structures:** Knowledge structures are constructed of a set of organised information used to interpret media messages. The information is received through messages from different media- television, radio, newspaper, smartphone, computer, and books. It could deliver either factual or social information. Factual information (e.g., news) can be further verified, whereas social information (e.g., beliefs) cannot be verified further. Knowledge structures in various areas are required to seek out information and construct meaning. There are specific knowledge structures regarding media, such as media content, media industries, media effects, and media audiences.

**Personal locus:** Goals and drives are fundamental elements in personal locus. The goal determines the preferences for the information. The sturdier the drive for the information, the more effort will be put into achieving the goal. The stronger the personal locus, the more conscious one can be toward media messages.

The extended definition of media literacy comprises additional abilities: understanding the role of media and digital communication organisations, using media and digital communication organisations for self-expression and democratic participation and creating user-generated content using digital tools. Media literacy is the mother of other concepts related to media organisations. Therefore, it has to be driven to achieve others.

**News Literacy:** News is not an actual demonstration of the facts. Instead, it is a produced version of factual information. We must watch the news media's function as the institution of valuable responsibilities is meant to make money. Hence, news must be critically evaluated. News literacy specifically covers the MIL competencies regarding news content. News literacy is the ability to critically analyse various forms of news content, the context of the news creation, and its consequences. Ashly (2020) defined, “We can think of news literacy as the set of attitudes, knowledge, and skills that a person brings to their consumption of information and their understanding of the structure of news media landscape.”

**Advertisement Literacy:** Advertising is a domain where a message is directed toward the audience in a much-targeted manner. The advertisement might represent distorted social realities, stereotypes, false claims, etc. Understanding the ideology, persuasion, and construction of advertisement messages has become crucial. This particular ability regarding advertising is called advertisement literacy. Advertisement literacy is the ability to interpret and evaluate advertisements' narratives critically.

**Cinema literacy:** Cinema is an audio-visual form of media content; therefore, cinema literacy is a branch of MIL. The sceptical point of view towards cinemas, understanding of their language, apprehension about its persuasive intent, and perceiving the communication techniques used in cinemas can be called cinema literacy.

## 1.6.2 Digital Literacy

Digital literacy is the key to the digital information society. Since the 1970s, digital literacy has been developed through many phases and has lightened the route to

understanding phenomena in 21st-century digital contexts. Digital literacy is a concept that defines a generic understanding of digital usage. It allows a person to learn the practical usage of information and communication tools such as the Internet, social media, and mobile. It refers to the motivation, knowledge, and skills required to empower a person digitally. Digital literacy revolves around the following:

- Identification, retrieval, and storage of information via digital tools.
- Sharing information through digital tools.
- Creation of content using digital tools.
- Understanding of digital identity
- Knowledge of digital safety and security, such as online safety measures, data protection, cyber laws, cyber security, and cyber crimes
- Recognise digital rights
- Cultural and social sensitivity in digital information processing encoding and decoding.

Digital skills are the interface between the physical world and the virtual world. A person must achieve all the skills to be an active virtual world citizen. Van Dijk and Van Deursen (2014) listed various digital skills: operational skills, traditional skills, information skills, communication skills, and content-creation skills.

*Table 3. Ranges of digital skills*

	Skills	Instances
Medium-related skills	Operational skills	Operate internet service functions Using search engines Manage different file formats
	Formal skills	Usage of the Internet by using hyperlinks Maintaining a sense of location while navigating the Internet
Content-related skills	Information skills	Locate required information Decode message online Encode message online
	Content creation skills	Creation of quality content
	Strategic skills	Usage of digital tools to reach a particular goal

**Computer literacy:** Computer literacy has been defined as the ability to use computer tools and resources such as computer hardware and software technologies. Computer literacy can include the fundamental use of a computer, such as MS Word and Excel, to an advanced stage of programming languages, such as Java and C++, and even shortcut keys from the keyboard. According to the latest definition of media and information literacy, it is composed of contemporary media and information sources. It hardly talks about computer literacy. Instead, computer literacy can be included under digital literacy, a MIL branch.

**Internet literacy:** Internet literacy, a sub-part of MIL, does not deal with the entire media and information set-up but with media and information processed through the Internet. Internet literacy refers to the ability to use the Internet with efficacy. Internet literacy can be assessed by evaluating operational internet skills, formal internet skills, information skills, communication skills, content, creation skills and strategic skills. Internet literacy is the ability to access, understand, and create informational content online (Livingston, 2009; Van Deursen & Van Dijk, 2009) while embracing the following points: the ability to deal with illegal and harmful content on the Internet, the ability to protect self-privacy and identity using security measures.

**Social media literacy:** Social media literacy can be defined as the ability to access various forms of content disseminated through social media platforms, evaluate the content, and produce content for social media platforms. Parallelly, using social media safely and securely has played a crucial role since the advent of complex social media environments. Social media literacy includes social media such as Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube. Social media literacy covers many MIL competencies that critically evaluate information and media from digital sources.

**AI literacy:** Artificial intelligence is one of the latest branches of MIL. AI is one of the latest interventions in the human-technological interface. AI is important in information gathering, processing, and spreading from producers and receivers. Artificial intelligence literacy is knowledge of the functions of AI, the ability to analyse the usage of AI, machine learning, and algorithms, and the practical implications of AI in human lives.

**Safety and security literacy:** It is important to know that any cyberspace activity might bring a threat. Knowledge about online risks and threats and an understanding affirmative behaviour are required in the modern world. Therefore, specific literacy is necessary to prevent risky behaviours and acquire skills to deal with critical situations (Kopecký & Szatkowski, 2017). The complexity of the media and information environment has given rise to the notion of safety. Hence, safety literacy is a crucial sub-part of MIL. Safety literacy is the knowledge and skills of safety measures needed in dealing with mass media, digital media, and other information sources and contents. Recently, it has dealt with digital security, such as digital banking security, social media security, and other types of digital security.

### Activity - 3

Social media can foster public participation. Discuss how social media exercise this function. Give an argument on the positive and negative sides of social media usage. Also, discuss threats and risks you have encountered while using social media.

## 1.7 UNDERSTANDING THE SOURCE AND THE RECEIVER

### 1.7.1 Sourcing Information

The information available across multiple sources varies based on accuracy, reliability, and values. Formats of content also vary depending on the technological characteristics of the source. For example, electronic sources (e.g., radio, television) contain text, images, and audio-visual, whereas non-electronic sources (e.g., books, newspapers,

and magazines) offer only text and images. Nevertheless, due to the convergence of technology, all formats come together on online sources.

Online repositories (e.g., online databases, libraries) and online media have made available information at our doorsteps. However, there are some illicit sources that we need to verify before we process the information. Hence, an important task is to critically evaluate the sources' accuracy. We can easily identify useful sources when the information usage objective remains translucent. We can access content sources such as government archives, libraries, media (television, radio, print media), online media, social media, etc. These content providers play important roles in -

- Informing
- Entertaining
- Educating
- Preserving cultural heritage
- Collecting civic history
- Promoting human rights

We need to determine the type of content that can gratify our needs. Based on the need, we can identify specific sources. For example, if we want to read a novel, we must visit a library. Likewise, we can read local newspapers if we need to read the local news. Content providers often deny their duties and become inclined towards propaganda, financial benefits, cultural hegemony, etc. However, all the information providers are equally important, and all the providers help in promoting sustainable development.

### **1.7.2 Audience**

We are accommodated with information access, and we receive much information daily. As an information audience, we engage ourselves in processing that information. When we encounter a piece of information, we filter it out (ignore) or in (process). Once we filter in a piece of information, we identify the meaning of the information to add to our knowledge structures. Our skills and competencies in evaluating information work cumulatively in information processing. The specifications of skills and competencies differ depending on the audience.

There are two types of audiences: mass audience and niche audience. The information made for the mass audience communicates to all similarly (e.g., newspapers, books). However, it is assumed that people process information within an intra-personal context. Therefore, another term regarding the target audience comes into existence besides the mass audience: niche audience. Mass media and other information providers produce information for special audiences (niche audiences) who share some common interests. The niche audiences can be distinguished based on geographical segmentation, demographic segmentation, social class segmentation, psychographic segmentation, etc. The message or information often targets a niche audience, e.g., travel magazines, political magazines, advertisements of beauty products, and games.

People use media and information sources to gratify their own needs. Following this concept, some special audiences, such as children, youth, and women, serve as niche audience groups. Children and youth are targeted by messages they should encounter, e.g., advertisements for instant foods. Specifically, they are directed to be influenced

by political or capitalist ideology in the online sphere. They often encounter biased representations of facts. Women get victimised while using social media.

Online media have broadened the path of audience participation. With the hand of online media, the traditional notion of the consumer has become stagnant, and the new concept called prosumer (active users) has lightened its way. Although many rules, laws, and safety measures must be followed while participating in online spaces, it has become a place of exposure to emotional, financial, and social attacks.

When effectively using information sources or platforms, many audiences use media and other information sources for entertainment rather than upholding tangible outcomes. Nevertheless, opportunity and challenges have to reside in every sphere of information flow, whether it is entertainment or educational exercise. Overall, audiences are confronted with content and must recognise its inhabited cleft. The thrive to misinformation and disinformation such as satire or parody, misleading content, imposter content, fabricated content, manipulated content, and fake news are major threats to news audiences. MIL helps mass audiences and niche audiences such as children and women to discern the value of information sources and contents and cultivate the effective usage of online media.

### **Check Your Progress: 2**

**Notes:** 1) Use the space below for your answer.

2) Compare your answers with those given at the end of this unit.

1. What are the seven skills of media literacy?

.....  
.....

2. Define digital literacy.

.....  
.....

3. What is a niche audience?

.....  
.....

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## **1.8 PEDAGOGICAL APPROACHES**

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*(Instructions for the course counsellors)*

Several pedagogical approaches can be applied in inculcating MIL among learners. Identify any of the pedagogical approaches of your choice and apply them to the following activities.

- a) Consider the components of MIL presented in Fig. 1. and discuss each. Parallelly, describe the importance of each of the components.
- b) Consider the following terminologies and define the similarities and differences between ‘Media and Information Literacy’. You can search the Internet or the

library for various definitions of the following terminologies. Finally, briefly explain your point of view on combining media literacy with information literacy to form MIL.

- Media literacy
- Computer literacy
- Social media literacy
- AI literacy
- Internet literacy
- Digital literacy
- Safety literacy
- Security literacy
- News literacy
- Cinema literacy

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## 1.9 LET US SUM UP

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In this unit, you have learned about the most crucial skills needed to achieve the goal of sustainable development. There has been discussion on media and information literacy as composite factors, including information literacy, media literacy, and digital literacy. MIL talks about information providers, information processing, and information receivers. The roles of content providers or sources were explained in this unit. The duties and responsibilities of content providers have been explained concerning the audience's expectations. There are some stages in the process of MIL acquisition. These were narrated as the components of MIL. Along with this, the competencies of MIL were also put together. MIL should be considered a set of competencies and assimilation of knowledge about other inclined literacies explained in this unit.

The potential branches of MIL were discussed with definitions such as advertisement literacy, cinema literacy, news literacy, internet literacy, social media literacy, and security literacy. The importance of these literacies at present was described to make you understand the phenomena. You have gained an overall understanding of making the audience empowered. Hence, the type of audience and the specifications of making an audience pool have also been discussed.

This unit will give you a clear idea about MIL and its branches, processes, and stakeholders. With this unit, you will be prepared to follow up with the deepest understanding of MIL. The MIL competencies concerning media content across print, electronic, and digital media have been discussed. In this unit, MIL presented as a nexus of human rights in developing the personal ability to be an empowered citizen.

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## 1.10 KEYWORDS

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**MIL competencies** : The abilities required to become an active audience of media and other content.

**Media literacy** : It is a person's ability to access, analyse and use media messages.

**Digital literacy** : UNESCO (2013) defined digital literacy as "The ability to use digital technology, communication tools or networks to locate, evaluate, use and create information. It also refers to the ability to understand and use information in multiple formats from various sources when presented via computers, or to a person's ability to perform tasks effectively in a digital environment."

**Critical thinking** : Critical thinking is the ability to analyse and examine information and ideas to find the connotative meaning rather than the denotative meaning.

**Prosumers** : Alvin Toffler introduced the term ‘prosumer’ in his 1980 book, ‘The Third Wave’. It refers to the combination of production and consumption. With the development of information communication technologies, media consumers can create content. Hence, not only do they consume, but they also produce content.

**Artificial intelligence (AI)** : Artificial intelligence manifests by machines to exhibit human cognitive functions such as learning and problem-solving. In this machine learning process, a class of algorithms has functioned to automate analytical model building.

## 1.11 FURTHER READINGS

1. Hobbs, R. (2011). *Digital and media literacy: Connecting culture and classroom*. Corwin Press.
2. Hobbs, R. (2016). *Exploring the roots of digital and media literacy through personal narrative*. Temple University Press.
3. Mackey, M. (2007). *Literacies across media: Playing the text (2nd ed.)*. Abingdon, UK: Routledge.
4. Neuman, W. R. (2010). *Media, technology, and society: Theories of media evolution*. University of Michigan Press.
5. Potter, W. J. (2018). *Media literacy*. Sage Publications.
6. Silverblstt. A., & Yadav. A., & Kundu. V. (2022). *Media Literacy: Keys to Interpreting Media Messages*. Kanishka Publishers.

### Online Resources:

1. <https://webarchive.unesco.org/20181207154048/http://www.unesco.org/new/en/communication-and-information/media-development/media-literacy/five-laws-of-mil/>
2. Grizzle, A., Wilson, C., Tuazon, R., Cheung, C. K., Lau, J., Fischer, R., ... & Gulston, C. (2021). Media and information literate citizens: think critically, click wisely!

## 1.12 CHECK YOUR PROGRESS: POSSIBLE ANSWERS

### Check Your Progress: 1

1. The elements of media literacy and information literacy are the same. Media and information literacy have similarities and differences, but many overlapping areas exist. Together, the concepts work as composite concepts that include knowledge, skills, and abilities in different content dimensions, such as digital literacy, film literacy, advertisement literacy, news literacy, and library literacy.

2. The description of the triple E of the MIL model is as follows:

**Explore:** The general information empowerment process starts with identifying required media content or information. When an individual needs information, he searches for it from different sources. Thus, with the exploration of useful information, the process begins. In this stage (s), he tries to identify, access, and retrieve information and media content using various tools, techniques, or sources.

**Engage:** The second stage in MIL is engagement. After accessing the information or media content, an individual needs to analyse it concerning social, economic, political, and cultural aspects. The credibility, authenticity, and reliability of the information or media content, as the fair representation of every section of society (e.g., gender, religion, ethnicity), must be critically evaluated. The purpose of the information, as well as the political, economic, and social interplay in it, are required to understand in this phase.

**Empower:** In the empowerment stage, individuals can use the information or media content ethically and responsibly for personal, professional, and social causes. The production of content with the help of different media tools and sharing information or media content ensure the utilisation of the information.

3. The normative roles of media and non-media, both content providers, fall under the critical evaluation. The content providers are expected to:

- Provide information about issues of local, national, and international importance.
- Provide valuable information in facilitating the democratic development of a country.
- Help evaluate public debates and make informed decisions.
- Act as a bridge between government and citizens.
- Help understand society and contemporary issues, thus building a sense of belonging.
- Keep a check on governmental works, corruption, and corporate malpractice, thus creating transparency in public life.
- Function in promoting the right to freedom of expression and pluralism in society.
- Work as a vehicle of cultural and social expression.

### **Check Your Progress: 2**

1. Potter (2016) emphasised seven specific skills- analysis, evaluation, grouping, induction, deduction, synthesis, and abstracting.

**Analysis:** Breaking down content into meaningful elements

**Evaluation:** Judging the value of an element by comparing an element to some standard

**Grouping:** Determining which elements and how a group of elements are different from other groups of elements

**Induction:** Inferring a pattern within a small subset of elements and generalising it to all elements in a content

**Deduction:** Using general principles to explain elements

**Synthesis:** Assembling elements into a new structure

**Abstracting:** Creating a brief, clear, and accurate description capturing the essence of a message in a smaller number of words than the message itself

2. Digital literacy is a concept that defines a generic understanding of digital usage. It allows a person to learn the effective usage of information and communication tools such as the Internet, social media, and mobile. It refers to the motivation, knowledge, and skills required to empower a person digitally. Digital literacy revolves around the following:
  - Identification, retrieval, and storage of information via digital tools.
  - Sharing information through digital tools.
  - Creation of content using digital tools.
  - Understanding of digital identity
  - Knowledge of digital safety and security such as online safety measures, data protection, cyber laws, cyber security, cyber crimes
  - Recognise digital rights
  - Cultural and social sensitivity in digital information processing encoding and decoding.
3. Mass media and other information providers produce information for special audiences (niche audiences) who share some common interests. The niche audiences can be distinguished based on geographical segmentation, demographic segmentation, social class segmentation, psychographic segmentation, etc. The message or information often targets a niche audience, e.g., travel magazines, political magazines, advertisements of beauty products, and games.

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## **UNIT 2 MIL, CIVIC PARTICIPATION AND RIGHT TO INFORMATION**

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### **Structure**

- 2.0 Introduction
- 2.1 Learning Outcomes
- 2.2 Civic Participation and MIL
  - 2.2.1 The Concept of Civic Participation
  - 2.2.2 MIL, Civic Participation and Citizenship in India
  - 2.2.3 Strategies in Civic Participation
  - 2.2.4 Civic Participation and Environments (Community and Classroom)
- 2.3 Civic Media Literacy
  - 2.3.1 Elements of Civic Media Literacies
  - 2.3.2 Civic Media Literacy in the Digital Era
- 2.4 Right to Information
- 2.5 Citizens, Media and Democracy
  - 2.5.1 Normative Role of Journalism
  - 2.5.2 Freedom of the Press and Editorial Independence
  - 2.5.3 Media Pluralism
- 2.6 Pedagogical Approaches
- 2.7 Let Us Sum Up
- 2.8 Keywords
- 2.9 Further Readings
- 2.10 Check Your Progress: Possible Answers

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### **2.0 INTRODUCTION**

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Media and information literacy (MIL) aims to make a good consumer of media messages and, second, a good citizen. In this unit, we will learn about the second aim of MIL, as we know that media and information literacy (MIL) are the solutions to the occurrence of harmful rhetoric that turns out to be in mainstream media and digital media. Parallelly, MIL is meant to form civic intentionality that is more than skill attainment approaches to develop critical consciousness. Civic intentionality in achieving the goal of civic participation secures the ability to produce an effect and create a difference in society.

The great philosopher Aristotle said, “It is not always the same thing to be a good man and a good citizen”. Civic participation performs individual and collective action in the community, thus inhabiting new languages of engagement in our society. Therefore, the accomplishments can understand not only the micro-levels and macro-levels of media culture but also the translation of the knowledge into action to perform better in a civic way. Hence, civic participation materialises with media and information literacy, specifically civic media literacy. In this sense, civic media literacy is a value-driven approach of MIL that is inherently a process toward inter-relational well-being. The abundant and pervasive digital ecosystems make civic participation more fluid and

drive the MIL into the civic culture. Wherein the strategies of civic participation and the outcome based on learning in media practices produce democratic values implicitly in the minds of citizens.

Access to information has become a fundamental point of discussion since adopting the Rio Declaration in 1992. Later, it was acknowledged in the sustainable development goals as an enabling mechanism for transparent and participatory governance. This Unit will discuss the democratic values of media and participation. According to Sustainable Development Goals, access to information is crucial for civic empowerment. It leads us to participate in the decision-making process, influence the implementation of public law, evaluate government and facilitate effective public participation. Media voices for the citizens, but the commercialisation of the media pillars the dissemination of misinformation, disinformation, fake news, and propaganda. Hence, the normative role of media functions in making democracy viable.

## 2.1 LEARNING OUTCOMES

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After reading this Unit, you will be able to:

- understand the concept of civic participation for the progression of democracy;
- understand the importance of media and information literacy for civic participation;
- construct the meaning of civic media literacy;
- describe the importance of media in making sustainable democracy;
- they understand and evaluate the right to information and information freedom; and
- understand and describe the normative role of journalism, media pluralism and press freedom.

## 2.2 CIVIC PARTICIPATION AND MIL

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Media and information literacy lead to civic empowerment through civic participation. The notion of civic participation allows every citizen to actively engage with the institutions of civil society and the public sphere, hence catering for involvement in political activity featuring democratic participation.

The four dimensions of preconditions to civic participation are mutually reinforcing factors:

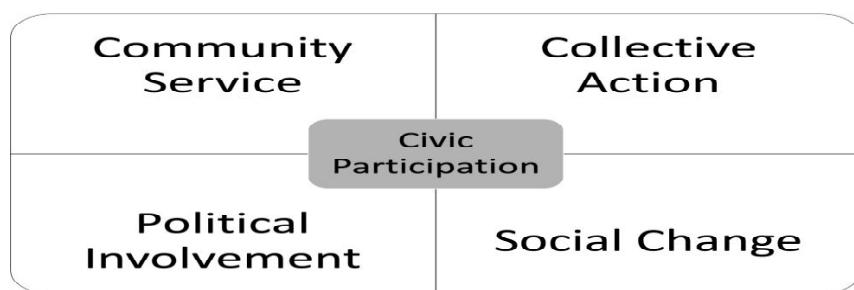
- 1) **Relevant knowledge and competencies:** People must have relevant information. The source of knowledge should be objective and comprehensive. They must have the attitude and ability to express their ideas and beliefs if they want to participate in the public sphere.
- 2) **Loyalty to democratic values and procedures:** Willingness to follow democratic principles supports the legal, political, and whole democratic governance system. Democracy will not run if the value and loyalty of the participants fail.
- 3) **Identities as citizens:** To participate, one must consider oneself a citizen. The formal perspective of citizenship conceptually indicates the political life in

a democracy. The social perspective of citizenship considers citizenship concerning particular sets of practices in terms of social agency subjectively encompassing the attributes this social category may involve.

- 4) **Respect for fundamental civil and political rights:** There must be an appreciation of civil rights and the rights of minority groups, including the idea that fundamental rights can be exercised freely.

### 2.2.1 The Concept of Civic Participation

Civic participation is a widely used term that covers a range of definitions. The definition depends on the viewer's perspective to make the term contextualised. In making it more inclusive, it can be viewed through the lens of community service, collective action, political involvement or social change. In defining civic participation from the point of view of community involvement, emphasise participation in community service as a citizen. Collective action can be defined as individual participation through collective action toward making a better society. The political definition of civic participation is activities that have a political influence, change, or understanding. Civic engagement in the dimension of social change describes an active citizen's role in shaping a community's future.

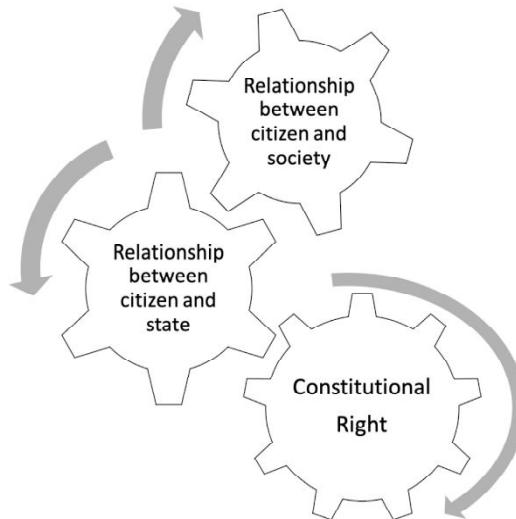


*Fig 1: Forms of civic participation*

Civic participation effectively promotes democratic governance, which is crucial for democracy in every form. Civic participation is termed as participatory behaviour of citizens that revolves around civic sense, a concept mostly related to citizenship and a sense of belonging to the community in different layers such as the local community, state community and national community. Active citizenship could be initiated and maintained using tools and resources provided directly by the media or government, sometimes by libraries and other information providers. The ability or literacy to use those resources is necessary to achieve participation.

### 2.2.2 MIL, Civic Participation and Citizenship in India

The Latin word 'civic' is rooted in two words: city and citizen. When joined with participation, the word civic is a vast action encompassing the term comes to the front. However, the concept of citizenship is reflected in the sense of belonging to the Indian community. Three dimensions of citizenship first, right-based (legal definition), the relationship between citizen and State (philosophical definition), and the relationship with the society (socio-political definition), create the understanding of civic in the sense of citizenship and State. A citizen equipped with a good knowledge of the State and civic affairs can participate in the political arena and the democratic process of the country. From a top-down point of view, the right to participate in the administrative arena is a central element of stable governance.



*Fig. 2: Dimensions of Citizenship*

The important requirements for civic participation for Indian citizens are knowledge of civic affairs and the skill to extract knowledge from the huge information pool. This allows a citizen to participate better in every sphere of the civic arena of the community and the nation. The ability can be called civic competence, which is needed to foster justice, civil rights, and democracy. Media, including print, broadcast and online, provide economic, political and social development information. As all citizens are a part of a separate media audience, they must understand the paradox of information and media. Media and information literacy (MIL) offers the necessary competencies for citizens to make them critical thinkers of the media messages and build sincere participation.

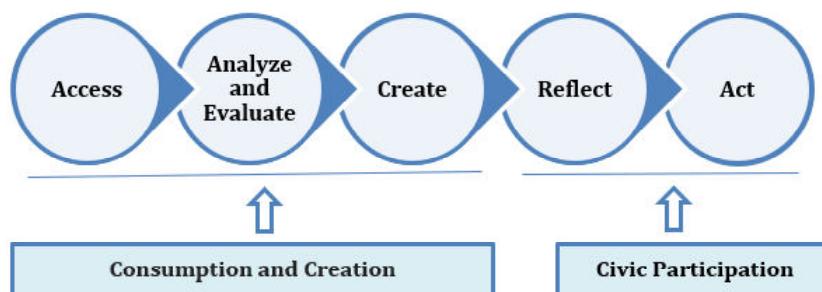
Civic participation in marginalised groups can bring a change. Specifically, women may proceed to ensure support from the government and laws of protection. It may make more aware of the rights of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. This enhances opportunities for developing quality in society across all classes and sections. The Internet provides various outlets, including the voices of minorities and other marginalised groups. MIL aids with voices in converting capabilities into valued functioning that encompasses literacy in Civic renewal, participation through digital media and participation through non-digital media

### 2.2.3 Strategies in Civic Participation

Civic participation is of different forms, and there are several indicators. The terms to describe are diverse, too. According to Keeter, Zukin, Andolina, and Jenkins (2002), the indicators of engagement can be of various kinds: civic indicators (e.g., community problem solving), electoral indicators (e.g., campaign contributions), and indicators of political voice (e.g., contacting media). Barrett and Brunton-Smith (2014) have given forms of engagement and participation. Civic participation consists of participation in community wellbeing, working for non-political organisations, voluntary work, consumer activism, etc. They have specified psychological engagement with media exposure and describe holding civic values, beliefs and skills. Engagement is the knowledge and attitude toward civic affairs and information is the pillar.

Through civic participation, citizens seek to confirm whether their voice is heard. Participation works as the building block of faith and trust in democracy. It promotes participation in politics and governmental work and influences government policy.

Renee Hobbs (2010) proposed five essential competencies of media literacy for digital media that encourage active participation through the consumption and creation of messages. Applying Hobbs's elements to the civic arena, five attributes cater to the participants' interests. These attributes are as follows:



*Fig. 3. Interconnection between attributes of MIL and civic participation*

- (i) **Access:** Access to the information
- (ii) **Analyse and evaluate:** Analyse the information to distinguish it from the invaluable knowledge. Evaluation of the valuable information to make usable knowledge
- (iii) **Create:** Creation of civic attitude toward the community or State
- (iv) **Reflect:** Application of social responsibility to self-identity and communication behaviour
- (v) **Act:** Acting in the phase of civic participation

Civic participation and empowerment serve as the vehicles through which citizens with political differences can voice non-violently in democracy. The role of media and information literate citizens in information flow must be evaluated. A media and information literate citizen firstly (i) understands the value of information in a democratic society; (ii) knows the role of information providers in democracy; (iii) recognises the source of information; secondly, (iv) the ability to evaluate information gained from any source; (v) should understand when and where to share the information; third, (vi) ability to utilise the digital skill into outcome; (vii) ability to build communication with the information providers; (viii) ability to sustain a culture in the developmental process hence enhancing the intercultural dialogue in information production.

#### 2.2.4 Civic Participation and Environments (Community and Classroom)

The learning environment changes voice, agency and participation into considerable experiences. Media literacy practices in the classroom and community make citizens inclined to be engaged and operative in participation. Thus, citizenship education is crucial in making civic participation more flexible. In an educational sense, educational practice helps build individual civic competencies, knowledge, and beliefs through civic development. The concepts of civic development expand from the school learning stage. Socio-political development theory explains that civic development of students occurs in five steps: gaining knowledge (cognitive stage- social and emotional development) where social problems are introduced; logical skills where social problems are recognised; emotional abilities (ability to contribute to social change) in the youth phase, political capabilities where youth learn to touch the problems civically, and social competencies where youth establish a relationship with the civil

society. Citizens can participate in the decision-making process when they accrue the critical skills to evaluate a problem civically and thus can contribute to the dynamic World.

At the community level, the strategic approach could be promoted to establish citizenship education, promote public awareness, and trigger participation for all ages in the community environment. Citizenship education deals with critical skills for civic literacy, diversity and intercultural understanding, environmental sustainability, democratic values, and human rights. Citizenship education must be inclusive of marginalised groups such as minorities, migrants, etc. The stakeholders of change, such as the media, government, educational institutions, community centres, and libraries, must be responsible for promoting citizenship education at the community level. For example, during the covid 19, the demand for accurate, reliable and timely information was marked. Where civic participation was stronger, the transparency and openness of the authorities had made the supply easier. Digital civic participation has helped counterbalance the threat of expanding disinformation and misinformation in response to the crisis.

## **2.3 CIVIC MEDIA LITERACY (CML)**

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Civic media literacy is a pedagogical concept that develops skills and competencies in people to act and contribute significantly to the common good. In the era of information inundation, we need skills compatible with media and information that serve the civic outcomes of our communities.

According to Paul Mihailidis (2018),

“Civic media literacies are the set of values, practices, and processes that prepare people to use media in support of solving social problems, reinventing spaces for meaningful engagement, creating positive dialogue in communities, opening up avenues for impactful action taking and working, at realistic scale, to facilitate “technologies, designs, and practices that produce and reproduce the sense of being in the world with others toward the common good”.

### **2.3.1 Elements of Civic Media Literacies**

‘Being vocal’ is the initial stage of civic media literacy practice, and its value becomes agentive while guided by CML. We can realise our ability to contribute with the help of CML. Finally, it leads to participation. Participation in the context of citizenship is about deploying and employing resources to facilitate a meaningful outcome. It always subsumes us under the agency of change. In designing media literacy practices articulated with civic intentionality, we must consider the critical media ability that can suitably achieve engagement with personal, social and civic issues. Thus, action could be taken to create constructive pathways in the stages of media literacy. According to Paul Mihailidis (2018), civic media literacy is the civic intentionality of media literacy, where civic intentionality means “Being in the world with others.” He has noted five elements in achieving civic media literacy: caring, critical consciousness, imagination, persistence, and emancipation.

**Caring:** Media opens up exposure to various views. Deconstruction of media text helps us care about certain political, social or civic issues. Thus, CML establishes closeness in our community.

**Critical consciousness:** The views we gain must be embedded with critical reflection, dialogue and standpoint. The transformed knowledge gained from critical inquiry makes the notion of our relation to the world.

**Imagination:** The creative reflection of expressing the political or civic rhetoric could be an effective way of participation. CML talks about civic imagery that can hold out expression by employing creative interventions.

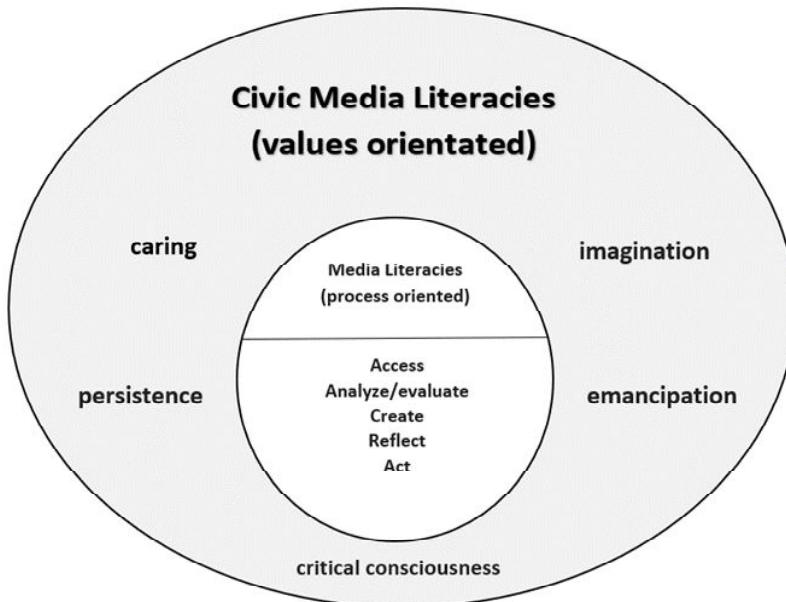


Fig.4. Civic Media Literacies

**Persistence:** Persistent mindset embraces engagement with civic, political or social issues and entails a transaction from knowledge to action, making a consciousness toward society.

**Emancipation:** Emancipatory means the communication practice leading towards empowerment and social betterment that challenges the dominant power in media and ICT. Using technology, we can enjoy freedom through activism. CML interrogates media monopoly, navigates through alternative spaces (e.g., online), and gives power to the marginalised section.

The Salzburg Academy in Salzburg, Austria, developed a curriculum for secondary and college-level educators to explore media's role in civil society and global citizenship, connecting media literacy skills to civic voice. The curriculum was based on the notion that to get civic responsibility, one must acquire the ability and understanding to evaluate the role of media in society and the possible influence of media on local and global culture. The curriculum had two parts: (i) critical thinking and critical skills and (ii) freedom of expression. Where critical thinking and critical skills develop the learning outcome in identifying news matters, monitoring media coverage, and understanding the media's role in shaping global issues. Freedom of expression helps to ameliorate attitudes regarding the defence of freedom of expression/freedom of the press, promotion of media literacy by being responsible communicators, and motivation to the media to cover news better.

#### Activity - 1

Discuss why the citizens should participate in the civic areas of the country. What civic areas of your country do citizens need to focus more on?

## **2.3.2 Civic Media Literacy in the Digital Era**

**MIL, Civic Participation and  
Right to Information**

The digital world with mobiles, the Internet, and big data further disrupts or facilitates civic outcomes of information communication technologies. Civic media literacy establishes a core argument to banish the disruption of information outrage and parallelly invites the usage of information to welcome the general to specific well-being. Emerging information and communication norms perpetuate nuance and meaningful dialogue. Subsequently, the connective platforms of algorithms and data have restructured the scenario of people, information and media. The access, consumption and sharing of information with the communities have become spontaneous.

Along with the famous media conglomerates, the content production and engagement landscape has entered the hands of new organisations, namely Google, Microsoft, and Meta. The new legacy organisations contribute to facilitating information and communication across the globe. As a result, new connective platforms have become a pool to share information, calling the engaged people to advocate local problems and social causes. The social media movements offer a nuanced picture of civic participation using digital media to contribute to community issues. Following the recent trend, civic media literacy has become an endeavour to consolidate the audiences about the State of complexity that inhabits information platforms.

### **Check Your Progress: 1**

**Notes:** 1) Use the space below for your answer.

2) Compare your answers with those given at the end of this unit.

1) Explain the term ‘civic participation’.

.....  
.....

2) What are the elements of ‘civic media literacy’?

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.....

3) How does civic participation help marginalise sections?

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## **2.4 RIGHT TO INFORMATION**

The word freedom connotes ‘liberty’, ‘right’, and ‘power’, but from the jurisprudential point of view, the word ‘right’ is more appropriate. Right to information enables citizens to know their duties towards the nation. Preconditions for the right to information could be political stability, independence of the judiciary, availability of adequate infrastructural facilities, regulatory mechanisms, information-friendly infrastructure, etc. Proper library systems, media channels, and newspapers are potential sources for disseminating information and knowledge. Public service media needs to be employed to provide public information. Thus, media, being content providers, help ensure citizens’ right to freedom of information.

One of the aims of civic participation must be the organisation and articulation of citizens' relationship with the State. Citizens' rights, such as freedom of speech and expression, information rights, etc., proved essential in developing public communication. English philosopher Herbert Spencer propagated the view of the role of freedom of men in enhancing the capability of a person. Followed by Spencer, John Locke stressed the importance of freedom as a purpose of the law. The emergence of a right to information manifests the State's call for civic engagement. To prevent the abuse of power by the authorities and to make them accountable to the citizens, the RTI Act 2005 was passed and taken into force on December 22, 2005. This act allows citizens to request public domain documents, records, etc. However, the right is limited in national security, personal privacy and commercial confidentiality cases. With the individual right to information liberalisation, special bodies to pay attention to access to information have become fundamental, providing a way to direct civic engagement.



*Fig.5: Right to information (Source: rti.gov.in)*

Particularly in India, the freedom of information is drastically curtailed due to the inherent governance system. Many times, misinformation prevailed over the information. Hence, access to information is the backbone of a democratic country, facilitating social comptrrollership and encouraging citizen participation to conduct good governance. According to Gilreath & Jefferson (1999), informed citizenry forms the foundation of good governance. Democracy gets stronger when citizens have the right to access information held by public or private bodies indulged in public interest business.

Additionally, access to information is needed in decision-making, evaluating public officials, evaluating the governments and facilitating effective public participation. It oversight the stakeholders responsible for the vital work in making democracy well and balances the power of the State. To strengthen citizen engagement, the access and right to information provide the independence and resources that facilitate public management. Access to information in education, health, institutional transparency, agriculture, public utility service, employment and labour rights, peace and inclusiveness cater to the civic utility aspects of the right to information. It looks into preventing corruption with citizens' access to facts and data from governments.

With communication tools, the government provides valuable data about new policy framing, budget allowances, etc., that empowers citizens. If a government fails to do so, the citizens can speak out against this injustice. But, the assurance from the law often needs to meet standards and be used appropriately. The intricate bureaucracy may put important information out of reach for citizens, who often need to be made aware of the RTI law of India. That is why the deliberate assistance of independent media is essential to make the citizens' participation and democracy sail. Access to media has been an obstacle for many of the rural population in India. The causes of the ineffectiveness are either illiteracy, which may render the print media useless, or other reasons, such as financial constraints and language barriers.

## 2.5 CITIZENS, MEDIA AND DEMOCRACY

As citizens of a developing country, we often struggle to establish engagement, find access to civic institutions, and embrace civic participation. Media and information literacy that propels learning about freedom of expression and citizenship can mitigate reluctance and ease the struggle. There is a thread of connection between media, the right to information, freedom of expression and civic participation, and that is democratic values. Thus, media reforms add to the civic reforms of the country. Media allows citizens to become informed voters who are responsible and active participants in local, national, and global communities. Here, we will try to develop an understanding of the contribution of media to civic empowerment and democracy.

### 2.5.1 Normative Roles of Journalism

Without journalism, there will be a significant problem in making access to information a public domain. Journalism helps us get the information we need about our communities, cities, countries and the world. Some factors regarding journalistic practice make it more valuable to citizens. The factors are as follows:

**Accuracy and fairness:** The key objective of journalism is collecting and disseminating the truth. The positive role of journalism in combating misinformation, disinformation and propaganda makes citizens aware, positive and empowered.

**Organising knowledge:** Journalism creates organised knowledge that stipulates an idea about public service bodies' agenda, policy and implication.

**Public interest:** Journalism started as a public service that voices the public for the public. Press aims to provide information about public issues related to social, cultural, political, health, etc.

**Accountability:** Journalism should monitor the service of the bodies in power and position, including public and private organisations and the government. Besides, the media should also be accountable to the citizens.

**Independence:** Media should be opinion-free. Unbiased, as well as credible journalism, is an essential component of democracy.

**Voice of citizens:** The media should not be a platform for one-way communication. There should be an opportunity to give feedback to the media. Like 'letters to the editor', the engagement to be an active audience should come up with a new focus on non-digital and digital media.

**Focus on news elements:** Citizens need newsworthy information. Hence, the media should disseminate timely knowledge that is valuable for active citizenship.

**Balancing privacy and the right to know:** The media provides the right to know and access information. But citizens expect a balance between the right to information and privacy. There should be a clear distinction between these two converging areas.

#### Activity - 2

Assess the role of alternative or independent media in your community. Select one example and describe the key elements that make it independent. In what ways does it allow people to participate in the democratic process? In what ways is it different from mainstream media?

## 2.5.2 Freedom of the Press and Editorial Independence

Framers of the Indian constitution viewed the freedom of the press as a vivid landscape of people's rights in a democracy. Freedom of speech and expression is a right protected by the Indian constitution. Citizens can express themselves in a democratic country, and the press follows the same. Commenting on the suggestion of a separate section for freedom of the press, Dr B. R. Ambedkar said, "The press has no special rights which are not to be given or which are not to be exercised by the citizen in his capacity. The editor of the press or the manager are all citizens; therefore, when they choose to write newspapers, they are merely exercising their right to expression. In my judgement, no special mention of the freedom of the press is necessary."

The Development of information systems can only happen if journalists can freely utilise the information they obtain. Journalists in India frequently get punished for sharing specific information; in some cases, they get obstructed through repressive laws. There is no separate law for the freedom of the press in India. The legal right of freedom of speech and expression, Article 19 (1) (a) in the Indian constitution guarantees the freedom of speech and expression for all citizens of the country, including press freedom, considering the press as the representative of citizens of India. Those involved in disseminating information and opinions, such as print, electronic, and digital media, enjoy reasonable freedom. But, the press has to follow the reasonable restrictions explained under Article 19 (2) of the Indian constitution.

Although freedom is there, it fails due to the power struggle between editors and owners. Media nowadays is called an elitist bourgeois construct that considers the values and interests of the bourgeois. The meaning of freedom of the press is not accurate whether it serves the journalists, editors or the owners of the media outlets. The experience of the journalists describes that press freedom reserves the freedom of speech and expression of the owner of the concerned media house. The editor and working journalists hardly enjoy freedom within their media houses.

The reportage of serious developmental issues is steadily declining with the blurring of lines between information and propaganda. Hence, a pessimistic view of the media is often remarked on regarding the quality of media reports. Media with biased opinions due to commercialisation and commoditisation hampers the real aim of journalism. The highest authority of the house sets the editorial policy of the media. The editors follow the opinion piece and content selection guidelines instructed by the authority.

In some cases, the funding agency influences the content production in a media. The media houses influenced by political parties or their ideology hamper the objective of freedom of expression and misrepresent information. After the FDI (Foreign Direct Investment) got started, the surge of private channels victimised the flow of information.

The editorial freedom depends on the type of media. Trends in media types revolve around three traditions: independent, state-controlled, and organisational media. State-controlled media speaks for the State, whereas the organisational media voices the organisational benefits. In the case of independent media, it is free to set its editorial policy. Independent media houses often hand the ideology to business organisations to earn revenue. Frequently, it fails to pin the editorial criticism against the government. But there is always an opposite side of a coin. In community media (such as community radio stations), the content has been covered by developmental causes. The spread of internet connectivity has changed the notion of media monopoly and freedom of content. It has led to media expression for local, specific and targeted coverage.

### 2.5.3 Media Pluralism

The pillars of democracy- the legislature, the judiciary, and the executive- have been supposed to be checked by the media, which is the fourth pillar of democracy. The media compliments the democratic society by forming various opinions. As a representative of the citizens, the media is supposed to voice the people from every class, religion, and area of India. Media should be pluralistic, covering the voices of a diverse array, including marginalised sections such as women, transgender people, farmers, and minorities. Media pluralism refers to various media organisations, viewpoints, and representations of each cultural and social class. At a macro level, the diversity in media ownership (e.g., private, public, state, community) is vital in making the media system plural. In India, the indicators of media pluralism can be monitored depending on geographical, political, and cultural purposes.

Media pluralism facilitates ideological differences as well as fair representation in society. The reception of the discursive event regards the reproduction of identities. According to Karppinen (2013), the growing competition in the media market opens the way to more diverse media content. There are four philosophical concepts in media pluralism: affirmative diversity, affirmative pluralism, critical diversity, and critical pluralism. Amongst these four approaches, the critical pluralism approach evaluates public discourse with democratic value in making a legitimate expression. Normatively, the essential viewpoint of pluralism criticises the hegemonic replication in media production, welcoming an alternative viewpoint to encounter the commercial media market.

#### Activity - 3

Using the internet and library resources, research the ownership and control of today's major media companies and state-owned media operations, including how authorities allocate their advertising spending across different outlets. List their major holdings. What impact might this ownership and control have on access, choice, and freedom of expression? Research the laws in place in India to regulate media ownership and control.

#### Check Your Progress: 2

**Notes:** 1) Use the space below for your answer.

2) Compare your answers with those given at the end of this unit.

1) Explain freedom of the press.

.....

.....

2) Explain the normative roles of journalism.

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3) How does information help democracy?

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## 2.6 PEDAGOGICAL APPROACHES

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*(Instructions for the course counsellors)*

Several pedagogical approaches can be applied in teaching MIL among learners. Identify any of the pedagogical approaches of your choice and apply them to the following activities.

- Guide learners to investigate whether India has a right to information law or national access to information policies. Guide them to access the law and policy of Indian information and to what extent they address development priorities. If there is no access to information law, organise a discussion about what could be done to advocate peacefully.
- Guide learners to explore if the existing right-to-information laws of India have clauses that address public education on access to information laws or policies. Are these public education programmes being implemented? Promoting MIL is one way to help people understand how to use access to information laws and how they relate to their daily lives. Please search for reputable resources that can help to teach about the right to information.
- Do you agree that well-informed citizens are better equipped to make decisions and participate in a democratic society? Why? Write an editorial expressing your opinion.
- Divide learners into three to five groups. Guide them to select one of the Sustainable Development Goals of their choice. Help them become familiar with the United Nations metadata repository: <https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/metadata/>. Ask them to focus on the official list of indicators and data collected to report on these goals. You can have them discuss and write 5-10 bullet points about why the right to information or an absence of this right can accelerate or hinder the achievement of the SDGs. They should also answer questions such as how MIL can help citizens search for, understand and monitor the progress of the SDGs as shown by data collected through these indicators. What can individuals, groups, and communities do to educate their peers about the SDGs, and how can MIL help their efforts?

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## 2.7 LET US SUM UP

In this Unit, we have learned about civic participation, one of the desired outcomes of media and information literacy. The concept of civic participation and its prospects have also been explained. The strategies in participation would help us to train ourselves in a better way so that we can harvest fruitful communication. Through the discussion, we have understood the relationship between civic participation and democracy. Civic media literacy has been discussed as the civic intentionality of MIL. The elements of civic media literacy have been given to demonstrate how knowledge leads to participation. Civic media literacy would be useful in making a pedagogical approach to civic participation.

We have made points about citizens' right to information and the role of media in making information easily accessible. The explanation of media for democracy covers the freedom of the press, editorial policy, and media pluralism. There was an attempt to make an idea about the objectivity and accountability of media, which is crucial in manufacturing a compatible environment for citizens' civic empowerment.

## 2.8 KEYWORDS

**Civic participation** : Civic participation is termed as the participatory behaviour of citizens that revolves around civic sense, a concept mostly related to citizenship and a sense of belonging to the community in different layers, such as the local, state, and national levels.

**Civic Media Literacy** : Civic media literacy is a pedagogical concept that develops skills and competencies in people to act and contribute significantly to the common good.

**Media Pluralism** : Media pluralism refers to the presence of diverse media organisations, viewpoints, and representations of each cultural and social class in society.

**Right to Information** : To prevent the abuse of power by the authorities and to make them accountable to the citizens, the RTI Act 2005 was passed and taken into force on December 22, 2005. This act allows citizens to request public domain documents, records, etc.

**Freedom of the press** : The legal right of freedom of speech and expression, Article 19 (1) (a) in the Indian constitution guarantees the freedom of speech and expression for all citizens of the country, including the press freedom, considering the press as the representative of citizens of India.

## 2.9 FURTHER READINGS

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## 2.10 CHECK YOUR PROGRESS: POSSIBLE ANSWERS

### Check Your Progress: 1

1. Civic participation effectively promotes democratic governance, which is crucial for democracy in every form. Civic participation is termed as participatory

behaviour of citizens that revolves around civic sense, a concept mostly related to citizenship and a sense of belonging to the community in different layers such as the local community, state community and national community. Active citizenship could be initiated and maintained using tools and resources provided directly by the media or government, sometimes by libraries and other information providers.

2. Paul Mihailidis has noted five elements in achieving civic media literacy: caring, critical consciousness, imagination, persistence, and emancipation.
3. Civic participation in marginalised groups, specifically women, may help to ensure support from the government and laws of protection. It may make more aware of the rights of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. This enhances opportunities for developing quality in society across all classes and sections. The Internet provides various outlets, including the voices of minorities and other marginalised groups. MIL aids with voices in converting capabilities into valued functioning encompassing literacy in Civic renewal participation through digital media and non-digital media.

### **Check Your Progress: 2**

1. There is no separate law for the freedom of the press in India. The legal right of freedom of speech and expression, Article 19 (1) (a) in the Indian constitution guarantees the freedom of speech and expression for all citizens of the country, including press freedom, considering the press as the representative of citizens of India. Those involved in disseminating information and opinions, such as print, electronic, and digital media, enjoy reasonable freedom. However, the press has to follow the reasonable restrictions explained under Article 19 (2) of the Indian constitution.
2. Without journalism, there will be a significant problem in making access to information a public domain. Journalism helps us get the information we need about our communities, cities, countries and the world. Some factors regarding journalistic practice make it more valuable to citizens. The factors are as follows: accuracy and fairness, organising knowledge, public interest, accountability, independence, the voice of citizens, focus on news elements and balancing privacy and the right to know.
3. Democracy strengthens when citizens can access information held by public or private bodies indulged in public interest business. Additionally, access to information is needed in decision-making, evaluating public officials, evaluating the governments and facilitating effective public participation. It oversees the stakeholders responsible for the vital work in making democracy well and balances the power of the State. To strengthen citizen engagement, the access and right to information provide the independence and resources that facilitate public management. Access to information in education, health, institutional transparency, agriculture, public utility service, employment and labour rights, peace and inclusiveness cater to the civic utility aspects of the right to information. It looks into preventing corruption with citizens' access to facts and data from governments.

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# **UNIT 3 INTERACTING WITH MEDIA AND OTHER CONTENT PROVIDERS**

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## **Structure**

- 3.0 Introduction
- 3.1 Learning Outcomes
- 3.2 Content Creation and Curation
  - 3.2.1 What: Role of Content Providers
  - 3.2.2 How: Technologies of Content
  - 3.2.3 Why: Ownership and Media Economics
  - 3.2.4 Who: Targeting Audience
- 3.3 Representation in Media and Information
  - 3.3.1 Forms of Content and its Representation
  - 3.3.2 Shaping Content: Meaning-Making, Denotation and Connotation
  - 3.3.3 Influence of Shaping Content on Users
- 3.4 Production/ User-Generated Content
  - 3.4.1 Audience versus Users versus Producers
  - 3.4.2 Agency, Authority and Autonomy of Production of UGC
  - 3.4.3 Rights of Communication and Expression
- 3.5 Pedagogical Approaches
- 3.6 Let Us Sum Up
- 3.7 Keywords
- 3.8 Further Readings
- 3.9 Check Your Progress: Possible Answers

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## **3.0 INTRODUCTION**

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The emergence of Web 2.0 technologies has induced the need to understand the nuances of digital media players and their role in creating, shaping and curating content on their websites and platforms. New ICTs have also enabled the advent of newer content providers apart from media corporates, further widening the playfield. On the one hand, some digital media providers, such as online news organisations, rely on creating original content. Most digital media providers, including media corporations and smaller players such as internet libraries, lean towards curating, organising, and presenting content for their audiences.

However, one of the pillars of media and information literacy is understanding how these providers shape and curate content and the influence of this process on the audience. Moreover, the placement of such content also impacts how the users visualise the material of the said content. Therefore, the ideology and perception of digital content providers determine the dimensions of content and the knowledge and beliefs of its target audience.

This unit will explore the role of content providers on issues of content creation and curation, representation of information, influence on digital media audiences and these

platforms as a site of production for content providers and users. Apart from content intervention, this unit will also emphasise the technological, social, cultural, and economic aspects of such digital content providers.

### 3.1 LEARNING OUTCOMES

After reading this unit, you will be able to:

- comprehend the role of content providers in content creation and curation;
- distinguish the technologies employed by content providers;
- assess the ownership and media economics of digital content providers and their influence on content creation and curation;
- critically analyse the ways of representing content and its influence on the users; and
- understand the scope of opportunities for the audience and users in this process.

### 3.2 CONTENT CREATION AND CURATION

The context of how content providers construct stories, how they shape the content being presented to us, the techniques they use, and the material they curate are critical to the concept of media and information literacy.

In terms of new media, content providers have the agency and act as gatekeepers on what to include and exclude apart from the representational side of it. This unit section will give a brief insight into the role of content providers in content creation and curation and its relationship to technology, the economy and the audience.

#### 3.2.1 What: Role of Content Providers

In a mass media setup, the production aspect rested in the hands of the biggest media conglomerates who controlled what, how, and when to produce. An organised structure with a conventional production style was used in all mass media forms, including print, broadcast, and cinema. The ownership patterns of mass media were also in the hands of fewer and fewer owners. Such media empires extended far beyond the geographical boundaries with horizontal, vertical and cross-media ownership at all stages.

According to OECD (2007), the traditional offline media value chain was:

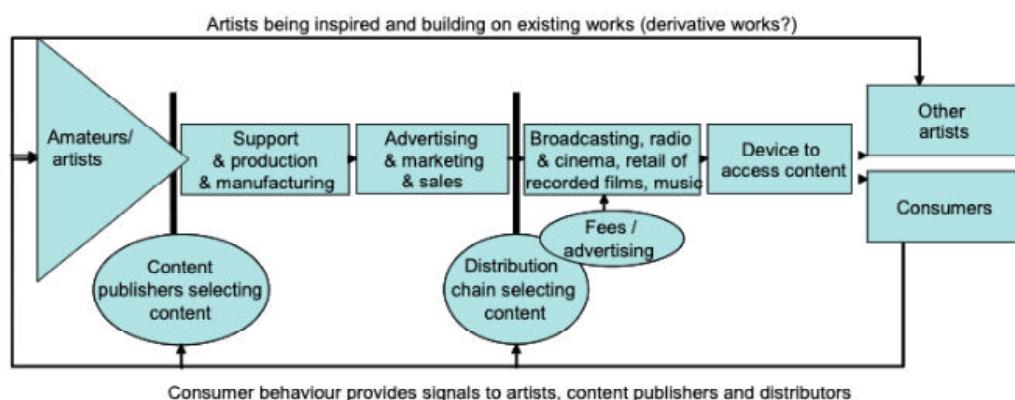


Figure 1: Traditional offline media publishing value chain (OECD, 2007)

Furthermore, such major players have a substantial presence in new media and technologies. However, the role of individual producers, especially in the blogosphere

arena, has also emerged, wherein narrowcasting, personalisation, and prosumer behaviour are visible.

OECD (2007) also reflects upon a reformed value chain for user-created content by content aggregators as well as citizens:

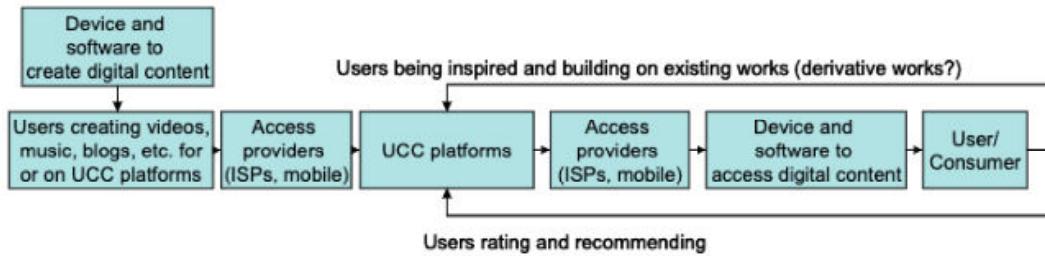


Figure 2: Original Internet value chain for user-generated content (OECD, 2007)

The playfield of digital media, similar to print and electronic media, has witnessed the emergence of online aggregators in India. In content aggregation, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Pinterest, etc., are the flag bearers for content creation, production sites and reproduction. Concerning e-commerce market aggregation, Amazon and Flipkart have emerged as prime examples of shopping in tier-1 cities in India. In comparison, ShopClues and Snapdeal cater to the audience in Tier 2 and Tier 3 cities across India. Google News is a major online news aggregator in the online news segment since it essentially provides and aggregates news from third-party media organisations. Similarly, Ola and Uber in the travel segment; Zomato and Swiggy in the food ordering segment; Gaana, Spotify, Airtel Wynk, Jio Saavn, Amazon Prime Music in the music segment; Netflix, Amazon Prime, Hotstar, ZEE5, ALT Balaji in the OTT platform segment and so on have arisen as key online aggregators in India across different spectrums of life.

In the modern landscape, the top publishers will be a group that includes Netflix, Amazon, Facebook, Twitter, and Google. The TV companies, magazines and news publishers of old face a fight to retain a relationship with audiences and maintain dominance in quality content production while not merely becoming content creators.

### 3.2.2 How: Technologies of Content

Under traditional media categories, the content was delivered in textual, visual, or aural forms. Consumers read newspapers and magazines, watch TV and films, and listen to recordings or the radio. However, the Internet today delivers hybrid content, in which aural, visual and textual forms can be intermingled in a multimedia format. Moreover, an option of user selectivity further narrows the content as per the consumer's choice. New media content is non-linear in that the user decides where to go. This offers an increased agency to the audience, in which audience choice is the core component of consumption, as opposed to provided content.

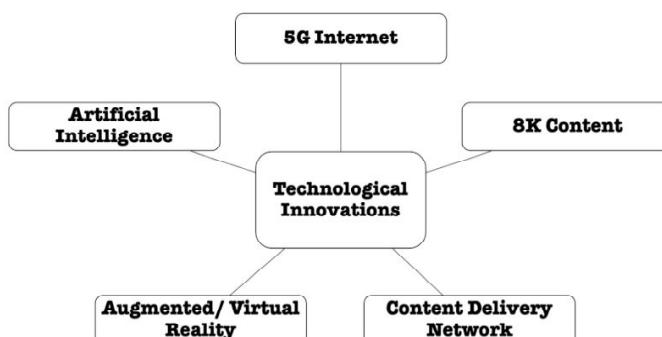


Figure 3: Latest technical innovations related to content

Key technological innovations in the media and entertainment sector are disrupting the traditional approach to the dissemination of information, especially the smartphone user base, influx of mobile Internet, broadband connectivity in rural India, public internet access through the Common Service Centres network, e-governance and embracement of digital consumption by both the private and public sectors of the economy. The new technologies of content that have emerged in recent times are:

1. **5G internet connectivity:** Although India has predominantly been a 2G market, since 2017, there has been a surge in the sale of smartphone devices owing to a combination of factors like falling data prices, better network coverage, low-cost 4G handsets and the development of locally relevant content. The 5G network will allow the telecom sector to meet the requirements of high-speed data services and support rich content-specific OTT services. With the increase in smartphone users to more than 800 million by 2022, an increasing number of Indians are likely to utilise digital distribution as the primary outlet for video consumption, thus emerging as a real threat to traditional, linear television in India.
2. **8K content and hardware:** Leading TV manufacturers have started releasing 8K TVs in mature markets like the US, China, Japan and Europe. With the advent of 5G, streaming HD content is expected to become more mainstream, which will benefit the sale of 8K TVs. We have yet to see strong traction in developing 8K content in India, but it is expected to improve in the coming years.
3. **Content Delivery Networks (CDN):** CDN significantly reduces site latency, boosts webpage load time, reduces bandwidth usage costs, and ensures the global availability of content. AI-based predictive acceleration and the use of hyper-local CDNs are a couple of key trends in this arena. India is experiencing significant growth in data consumption- specifically concerning the radio; hence, the importance of CDN is more significant than ever before.
4. **Augmented Reality/ Virtual Reality:** Augmented and Virtual Reality continues to disrupt how media is created and consumed. Big players like Facebook, Google, Microsoft and Magic Leap are developing innovative products and solutions for the market. Facebook's recent turn towards becoming Meta is due to this technical aspect of the content. In India, VR content production is gaining traction in gaming, tourism, sports, advertising, etc. While the usage of AR/VR is on the rise, widespread adoption is still in its early stages in India.
5. **Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning:** Artificial Intelligence can be defined as a collection of technologies capable of sensing, thinking and acting like rational human beings through the Internet of Things (IoT). In recent years, every individual, organisation and government has seen numerous instances of AI enter various facets of their lives- the most common applications being chatbots, facial recognition, image classification, aggregators, recommendation engines and targeted marketing. AI, along with ML, has the potential to solve complex problems effectively at all scales. In India, instant gratification amongst consumers is apparent from the rising adoption of voice assistants at the heart of the smart home and the rise of v-commerce or voice-powered shopping. In combination, these technologies are taking convenience

in the home to a new level. As Google Assistant expands to an increasing number of devices within the home, including smart TVs, the resurgence of AI and ML in our day-to-day lives has created a personalised and integrated approach.

The convenience of digital media platforms and the ease of use and access have imbued the disruption of mass media by the influx of digital media. They are expected to take over as well, dominantly.

### 3.2.3 Why: Ownership and Media Economics

Apple has its own TV and radio station. Twitter is now broadcasting live sports. Facebook is undoubtedly about to become the most prominent TV channel ever known overnight. Instagram has become an influencer paradise with content generation at its maximum. Amazon's Echo is a whole new media channel, while print publishers are heavily into Snapchat. The lines of production and distribution have collapsed with the emergence of online media.

For a brief introduction, vertical integration is when a media company owns different businesses in the same production and distribution chain. For example, 20th Century Fox owns studios in Hollywood, cinemas, TV channels, and DVD rental shops. They own parts of the chain so that they can make money from every part of it. Similarly, horizontal integration is a media company's ownership of several businesses of the same value. A media company can own a magazine, radio, newspaper, television and books.

The ownership patterns have also been emancipated extensively with the surge of the Internet. A rise in the number of digital media corporations and conglomerates is proof of the shift. Before the digital age, the mass media adopted the identities of media entities based on ownership. The media units, confined as mainly separate business entities, were named after the physical devices we used to consume media on them. For example, on TV sets, we watched TV made by TV production companies, curated by TV channel executives that we navigated by TV channels that came to us either from TV masts and TV broadcasters or from cable TV companies. These were vertical media platforms that held an identity of their own.

However, with the birth of the Internet, the form and function of existing pre-digital units were replaced by first creating the Internet vertical with ISPs, online portals, web editors, digital journalists and photographers, and, of course, digital advertising and digital agencies. With the popularisation of Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram, we added social media as a channel. We created infrastructure, roles and strategies to deal with the specific new skills we needed to perfect media in an age of sharing. Then came mobile, with its apps, mobile advertising, mobile ad networks, and mobile journalists making mobile content from mobile strategies.

In a nutshell, the lines of vertical media platforms have blurred and coincided. The production and distribution chain has considerably de-shaped and reshaped the media structures.

In the case of digital media, horizontal media ownership is much more prominent. Mergers and acquisitions are a common trend across digital media corporations for dominance in the sector horizontally, vertically and diagonally. One of the critical instances of the acquisition of Instagram and WhatsApp by Facebook is that it has become one of the forerunners for the most prominent digital media companies across the globe.

The trend of convergence and emergence of digital platform companies in India has become relevant as a broader range of businesses in India are looking to build their media and entertainment services, including e-commerce and digital payment companies. Flipkart recently announced its plans to include third-party OTT video content on its app to build user loyalty and social engagement. Paytm, India's leading digital payments and wallet company, launched Paytm First Games with a mix of free and paid games and already reported 30 million registered users within a year.

Moreover, data in the case of horizontal media platforms is more magnified and personalised, which helps in narrowcasting for the audience, especially in the case of digital advertising and marketing. Therefore, a clear demarcation has been drawn upon by the advent of digital media based on their ownership patterns.

### **3.2.4 Who: Targeting Audience**

In the past, mainstream media providers, with an eye to profit, provided what they wanted for mass consumption. Because it was oriented to a mass market, audiences took what came and hoped they had sufficient of what they wanted. This was true of magazine content, newspaper stories, television programmes and radio playlists; the producer was the one who decided on the content reaching the consumer. However, the transactional value of content on new media technologies is not as simple as two-way communication.

With new technologies, consumers can decide to hear/see/read only the materials they select in advance. With the intervention of content providers, tailor-made content for specific audiences, as per their tastes and preferences, is available due to machine learning and artificial intelligence techniques. This self-created narrowcasting is what gives the audience agency. Audience members can control what comes in their direction on demand- something impossible with conventional mass media processes. Nevertheless, this notion is more complex than it appears. Target marketing and advertising have become rampant in new media technologies, even if it comes at the cost of the privacy of the audiences. Behaviour tracking by the said content providers has often impeded the natural selection process amongst the audience, often leading to a biased form of gatekeeping from the perspective of the content providers. In the following two unit sections, we will discuss the role of content providers in shaping content for audiences and the possible opportunities for audiences to navigate through content effectively.

#### **Activity - 1**

Select a visual or text of your choice and apply the key questions listed below:

- What can you learn about the institutions involved in producing this visual/text?
- What are the messages conveyed in this visual/text?
- Who is the intended audience of this visual/text?

#### **Check Your Progress: 1**

**Note:** 1) Use the space below for your answers.

2) Compare your answers with those given at the end of this unit.

1. How has the role of content providers in content creation and curation evolved over time?

.....  
.....

2. What are the new forms of content technologies available?

.....  
.....

3. Discuss the change in economic and ownership patterns due to new media.

.....  
.....

4. How has the relationship of content providers changed with their audiences due to digital media?

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.....

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### **3.3 REPRESENTATION IN MEDIA AND INFORMATION**

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Various production processes generate representational texts in any medium, including the mass media. Representation involves:

1. How identities are constructed within the texts;
2. How the processes of production construct them to attract the attention of the audience;
3. The reception of such representations by people.

#### **3.3.1 Forms of Content and its Representation**

The rationale for studying media content is to understand the potential effects of the text and its communication or the appeal of the content to the audience. According to McQuail (2010), the motives for studying media content are:

- Describing and comparing media output
- Comparing media with ‘social reality’
- Media content as a reflection of social and cultural values and beliefs
- Hypothesising functions and effects of media
- Evaluating media performance
- The study of media bias
- Audience analysis

- Tackling questions of genre, textual and discourse analysis, narrative and other formats
- Rating and classification of content

Therefore, we need to understand the classification of media content to understand how content providers in the present scenario can shape it. The various types of media content are:

1. Print (newspapers, magazines, direct mail, etc.)
2. Television (cable, network, satellite, etc.)
3. Radio
4. Film and Video
5. Photography
6. Electronic (E-mail, the Web, etc.)

According to OECD (2007), the types of user-generated content are:

Type of content	Description	Examples
Text, fiction and poetry	Original writings or expanding other texts, novels, poems	Fanfiction.net, Quizilla.com, Writely
Photos and images	Digital photographs taken by users and posted online; photos or images created or modified by users	Photos posted on sites such as Ofoto and Flickr; photo blogging; remixed images
Music and audio	Recording and/or editing personal audio content and publishing, syndicating, and/or distributing in digital format	Audio mash-ups, remixes, home-recorded music on band websites or MySpace pages, podcasting.
Video and film	Recording and/or editing video content and posting it. Includes remixes of existing content, homemade content, and combinations of the two.	Movie trailer remixes; lip-synching videos; video blogs and videocasting; posting home videos. Sites include YouTube and Google Video; Current TV
Citizen journalism	Journalistic reporting on current events by ordinary citizens who write news stories, blog posts, and take photos or videos of current events and post them online.	Sites such as OhmyNews, GlobalVoices and NowPublic; photos and videos of newsworthy events; blog posts reporting an event; co-operative efforts such as CNN Exchange
Educational content	Content created in schools, universities, or for educational use	Syllabus-sharing sites such as H2O; Wikibooks, MIT's OpenCourseWare
Mobile content	Content created on mobile phones or other wireless devices such as text messaging, photos and videos. Generally sent to other users via MMS (Media Messaging Service), e-mailed, or uploaded to the Internet.	Videos and photos of public events or natural catastrophes that traditional media may not be able to cover; text messages for political rallying.
Virtual content	Content created within the context of an online virtual environment or integrated into it. Some virtual worlds allow content to be sold. User-created games.	Virtual goods that can be developed and sold on Second Life including clothes, houses, artwork

Figure 4: Types of user-generated content (OECD, 2007)

Now that we have understood the varied forms of media content, we must note that different media content formats are represented with diverse perspectives. The representational forms also differ with different types of content, depending on the audience's receptive and cognitive abilities. Therefore, the role of the content provider becomes more evident due to their gatekeeping with regard to the content creation and curation processes, which also determines the meaning-making of the content along with selecting content formats to communicate.

### 3.3.2 Shaping Content: Meaning-Making, Denotation and Connotation

#### Context of Shaping Content

As a construct, identity holds concepts such as class, ethnicity, gender, race and sexuality. An individual's identity relies on multiple parameters and is highly subjective in nature; however, the spectrum of identity depends on its representation. Moreover, the identity construct has its denotations, i.e., how we view ourselves and its connotations, i.e., how others view us. Identity is, therefore, a cultural construction and is external.

Identities are not given in terms of what individuals are as a whole but in more or less arbitrarily selected features they possess. Mostly, individuals have little power to choose what features will be used to identify them; they are determined socially from the outside. Stereotypes based on race, class, ethnicity, gender and sexuality are created through representation.

Therefore, in the context of their identity and representation, the subjects are ‘framed’ according to the intent of the authorial intention. In a socio-historic context, representation refers to a cycle of processes of textual and meaning production and reception in which audiences interpret texts.

The Meaning-Making trend of mass communication emerged during the 1970s and 80s when a shift from the positivist approach to a post-positivist approach was witnessed (Baran & Davis, 2015). The advent of the critical paradigm and cultural studies peaked in the United States and Europe. Empirical research into how media encodes a message and the audience decodes it was undertaken at the University of Birmingham Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies by Stuart Hall. The dynamics of media constructing a particular meaning for every message it circulates was extended to the cultural groups. However, at the heart of the meaning-making trend of mass communication, the idea of an “active audience” and their usage of “media content to create meaningful experiences” persisted (Baran & Davis, 2015).

Stuart Hall’s conception of the Encoding/Decoding theory asserts the framework of knowledge at the encoding and decoding level from the perspective of the producer and audience.

### **Factors of Influence on Shaping Content**

The influence factors on media can be understood from the light of the propaganda model of communication, which elaborates on the five filters of editorial bias proposed by Noam Chomsky and Edward Herman in their book **Manufacturing Consent: The Political Economy of Mass Media** in 1988. They are:

1. **Size, ownership and profit orientation of the organisation:** profit-minting and the owners’ financial interests, usually corporations and controlling investors.
2. **Advertising:** The major source of revenue for a media organisation, hence, plays a crucial role in influencing communication.
3. **Source of news:** The bureaucratic authority and the elites act as the source of information for media organisations and their leverage as the source.
4. **Flak and the enforcers:** The negative respondents, e.g. think tanks, who influence the media’s stance on specific issues.

The fifth filter stands redundant in the present scenario, as brought to light by Herman and Chomsky.

In context with media frames, according to Scheufele (2000), framing depends on three different processes: frame-setting, frame-building and individual-level outcomes of framing. The aspect of frame-setting concerns the media and individual frames and the relationship between the two. However, within the contextual understanding of media frames, frame-building refers to macroscopic mechanisms which deal with message construction.

Scheufele argues that the activities of policymakers, journalists and other interest groups play a vital role in shaping media frames, which can impact the volume and the character of news messages about a particular issue.

By quoting Shoemaker and Resse's (1996) work, Scheufele (2000) states three potential sources of influence on the media frames. They are:

1. Journalist-centred influences rely on the formation of frames by variables such as ideology, attitudes and professional norms of journalists.
2. **Selection of frames:** A result of factors such as the type or political orientation of the organisation.
3. **External sources:** Political actors, authorities, interest groups and other elites.

### 3.3.3 Influence of Shaping Content on Users

Berger and Luckmann (1966) have written on the “*Social Construction of Reality*”, which states that people interact with other social systems, which over time creates concepts or mental representations as habitual for us. Berger and Luckmann also brought forth three stages of the social construction of reality:

1. **Externalisation:** The process by which meaning is carried and communicated to the outside world
2. **Objectification:** Process of treating non-objective things as objects.
3. **Internalisation:** The process of internalising and unquestioningly accepting the intersubjectively externalised and objectified understandings of a social group as reality.

From the perspective of Berger and Luckmann (1966), media is one of the social institutions that construct the social reality of human beings across all social, economic, cultural, and political aspects of our lives. The content providers encode messages in their representational forms and influence our social reality: views of gender equality, women’s empowerment, gender groups, persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples and ethnic minority groups, etc. However, the influence of media content on users is not as passive as it seems.

The influence of media content on users has been studied extensively since the 1950s with the emergence of the Effects tradition. While initially the effects tradition reflected upon users having no agency or authority over how the media affects them and changes their perception (e.g., Magic Bullet Theory, Hypodermic Needle Theory), the tradition has evolved considerably, as a result of this, focusing upon Limited Effects (Lazarsfeld) and the moderate effects of media on the users. Presently, the Effects research is categorised into three major types of effects: cognitive, affective and behavioural (Baran & Davis, 2015). *Cognitive* effects involve knowledge or information, i.e. if people know more after being exposed to the media. *Affective* effects involve feelings, i.e., if the media influences people’s feelings. Finally, *Behavioural* effects involve actions, i.e., if people act differently after exposure to the media.

While the effects of the media may differ for different users, content providers have the power to influence our knowledge and understanding of the world beyond our immediate experience. As we have discussed in the previous unit sections, the role of content providers in content creation and curation is influenced by factors such as their

economics, ownership patterns, content technologies, and content providers' meaning-making tradition. The ways of representation of content right from the gatekeeping, selection and the process of encoding at the end of the producer and that of decoding amongst the users with their own interpretations. In light of how users can use their social reality to make sense of the content presented to them, Stuart Hall asserts that media texts are encoded and decoded. The producer encodes messages and values into their media, which are then decoded by the audience. However, different audience members will decode the media differently and possibly not in the way the producer originally intended.

There are frameworks of knowledge at encoding and decoding levels. Audiences encode meanings as they are decoding their messages. Audiences have to decode meanings meaningfully in order to encode. The process of encoding is a process of production (because you are creating something). Reception is also a moment of production because we create meanings and understandings.

In Encoding/Decoding Theory, Stuart Hall suggested three hypothetical interpretative codes or positions for the reader of a text:

1. **Dominant (or Preferred) Reading:** The viewer recognises and broadly agrees with the preferred or offered meaning.
2. **Negotiated Reading:** The reader accepts, rejects or refines elements of the programme in light of previously held views.
3. **Oppositional ('counter-hegemonic) Reading:** The reading is recognised but rejected for cultural, political or ideological reasons.

Therefore, the agency of users in terms of how they decode the media content and how it impacts them is interdependent on the content providers and the users themselves.

### Activity - 2

Write down all the activities you do during the day, from when you wake up in the morning until you go back to bed at night. Analyse in small groups: Do you need the information to participate in these activities? Write down the information you need next to each activity. For example, you need to know the temperature outside to get dressed; you need to know the traffic situation before you take the bus; you need to know about the economy to know if you are going to ask for a loan. Discuss: How important is information in your daily life? How many decisions would you have difficulty making without information?

### Check Your Progress: 2

- Note:** 1) Use the space below for your answers.  
2) Compare your answers with those given at the end of this unit.

1. What are the new forms of content?

.....  
.....

2. Discuss how the content providers shape content in the present scenario.

3. What are the extrinsic and intrinsic factors that influence the ways content providers shape content?

## 3.4 PRODUCTION/ USER-GENERATED CONTENT

According to Carpentier (2011), user-generated content (UGC) is one of the main innovations in the contemporary media world. The concept of UGC poses several challenges to our notion of media and the traditional forms of audience. Therefore, in this unit section, we will specifically discuss the evolved role of the user as a content provider.

### 3.4.1 Audience versus Users versus Producers

The role of the audience and their terminologies is directly linked to how we perceive them as content providers. Audience study, therefore, extends beyond diverse media technologies and also reflects on the details of participation with media, the ways people engage with media content and the implications they have for the experience of citizenship and public life. Thus, with Web 2.0 technologies, the narrow understanding of broadcast media audiences as passive recipients of broadcast messages has become redundant and moved towards the “active audience” side. However, many media scholars find the term *audience* inadequate to explain the things people do with media now, especially with social media and Web 2.0. Jay Rosen (2006) described audiences as “those on the receiving end of a media system that ran one way, in a broadcasting pattern, with high entry fees and a few firms competing to speak very loudly while the rest of the population listened in isolation from one another”. Therefore, from this perspective, the concept of the people who were previously mere audiences to mass media has transcended to become users, prosumers (Toffler) and produsers (Bruns, 2007).

According to Bruns (2007), the concept of ‘produsage’ “highlights that within the communities which engage in the collaborative creation and extension of information and knowledge that we examine on this site, the role of consumer and even that of end user have long disappeared, and the distinctions between producers and users of content have faded into comparative insignificance. In many of the spaces we encounter here, users are always already necessarily also producers of the shared knowledge base, regardless of whether they are aware of this role- they have become a new, hybrid, *produser*.”

Therefore, with *prosumer*, Toffler emphasises the interplay of production and consumption; Bruns, with *produser*, refers to the interplay of media production and usage. However, just as *presumption* registers the activities of very particular groups of interests and people, *produce* refers to communities that engage in collaborative media production activities. However, defining and distinguishing between audiences, users, prosumers, and produsers is only sufficient if we understand the nature of these people’s participation in Web 2.0.

### 3.4.2 Agency, Authority and Autonomy of Production of UGC

The rise of user-generated content provides new ways for how information, knowledge, and culture to be developed and exchanged, potentially at a lower cost. The Internet has altered the nature and the economics of information production as entry barriers for content creation have significantly declined or vanished and led to the democratisation of media production, distribution costs have declined dramatically, user costs are lower, and there is a much greater diversity of works with shelf space in the digital media being almost limitless.

These changes imply a shift away from simple passive consumption of broadcasting and other mass distribution media models to more active choosing, interacting, and creating content and a shift to a participatory “culture”. Technological change empowers individuals to “tell their stories” and to produce cultural goods such as music and video to transform the information and media content environment surrounding them (OECD, 2006). Users may derive a higher value from this content consumption as it may be more personalised and on-demand, with users having greater control over it.

Furthermore, the changed structure of communication and resulting active relationships built across exchange are argued to have important impacts on how citizens and users communicate and express themselves and positively impact social ties and social structures.

According to the OECD (2007), there are various distribution platforms for user-created content:

- Blogs
- Wikis and other text-based collaboration formats
- Sites allowing feedback on written works (such as sites which provide writers and readers with a place to post and read stories, review stories and communicate with other authors and readers through forums and chat rooms)
- Group-based aggregation (such as collecting links of online content and rating, tagging, and otherwise aggregating them collaboratively)
- Podcasting
- Social networking sites
- Virtual worlds (online virtual environment)
- Content or filesharing sites

The dimensions of agency, authority and autonomy concerning the production of user-generated content have been driven by the possibility of engaging with the Internet amongst its users. When we discuss the concept of agency, we mean the opportunity for users of varied demographics and socio-economic backgrounds to have the power to handle their communication on their own. The right to own a device and other ICTs, be a part of a digital platform, and adopt digital skills enable the idea of agency and authority amongst its users to produce user-generated content while adding to the existing media flow of information. Moreover, the possibility of having personalised platforms to blog, vlog, podcast and share information in other formats makes it feasible for the said users to gain autonomy of what and how they want to present their

information. The narrowcasting and personalisation of information have made it possible for users to obtain the agency, authority, and autonomy to produce, curate and create content and claim the space as their own.

### **Activity - 3**

Create a short audio-visual on a relevant social issue using your mobile phone for production and editing.

### **3.4.3 Rights of Communication and Expression**

Freedom of expression is an important fundamental right that is also critical for deafening and upholding other freedoms and rights. We exercise this right daily by exchanging ideas, opinions, and information. Therefore, understanding the means and structures of communication and the regulation of the environment becomes essential for those seeking to realise the freedom of expression.

Freedom of expression is guaranteed in Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), and Article 19(a) of the Indian Constitution. The UDHR states that “everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any and regardless of frontiers”. Similarly, the ICCPR states that “everyone shall have the right to freedom of expression; this right shall include freedom to seek, receive and impart information and ideas of all kinds, regardless of frontiers, either orally, in writing or in print, in the form of art, or through any other media of his/her choice”.

Similarly, communication rights, on the one hand, involve freedom of opinion and expression, democratic media governance, media ownership and control, participation in one's own culture, linguistic rights, right to education, privacy, assembly, and self-determination. They are also related to inclusion and exclusion, quality and accessibility to means of communication. Furthermore, the right to communicate originates from the post-Cold War era with the New World Information and Communication Order (NWICO); however, it is closely related to communication rights.

Therefore, the tenet of freedom of expression guarantees individuals the freedom to express themselves in words or actions, and the right to communicate stresses the freedom to have an opinion with an emphasis on including one and all. The emergence of Web 2.0 has enabled a horizontal form of communication for content providers and users. The Internet is an open platform enriching the diversity of opinions, various political and societal debates, the free flow of information, and freedom of expression. User-generated content is, in many ways, a form of personal expression, and users/creators are engaging in the form of democracy where they can directly publish and enable access to their opinions, knowledge, and experience. Preserving this openness and the decentralised nature of the Internet is an important policy objective.

Therefore, with the opportunity to explore their ideas, ideologies, and perceptions about various aspects of their lives along with the agency, authority, and autonomy to express themselves across various media platforms, new media technologies enable and empower an individual in the truest sense of the rights to communication and expression.

### **Check Your Progress: 3**

### **Interacting with Media and Other Content Providers**

**Note:** 1) Use the space below for your answers.

2) Compare your answers with those given at the end of this unit.

1. Distinguish between audience, users, prosumers and produsers.

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2. How do new media users have agency and autonomy concerning user-generated content?

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3. Briefly discuss the rights of communication and expression amongst new media audiences from the purview of user-generated content.

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## **3.5 PEDAGOGICAL APPROACHES**

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*(Instructions for the course counsellors)*

In relation to media and information literacy, the following key areas should be examined clearly in order to understand how content providers operate, how they convey meaning, how they can be used, and how the content is presented can be evaluated-including in relation to its international quotient and quality thereof.

The following key areas can be underpinned in this unit:

- Technologies of content
- Representation in media and information
- Production and user-generated content
- Audience as citizens and users/consumers
- Citizens as users/consumers of provider services

In this aspect, the following key questions can be taken forth in classrooms to reflect critically:

- What is the purpose of this text? How is this produced?
- Who created it?
- Who is the intended audience? How do you know? What is the main message?
- Who benefits, and what do they gain?
- What are my information needs? How can I identify and define this need?

- Does the information I need exist in the form I need it? If not, what action can I take? How do we understand, organise and assess the information found?
- How can I present this information in usable formats?
- How can I preserve, store, reuse, record and archive information?
- How can or should I share this content?

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### 3.6 LET US SUM UP

In this unit, we have analysed the various aspects of the interaction of the common public with content providers. From the vantage point of content providers after the emergence of new media technologies, the role of content providers is asserted from content aggregation due to the convergence and emergence of digital media with that of mass media. We have also discussed the new content technologies that have emerged recently, from 5G connectivity to Content Delivery Networks (CDNs) and artificial intelligence and machine learning. Having reflected on the economics of new media based on infrastructure, the notion of multiple media (multimedia) has materialised, which has led towards horizontal media ownership patterns across the globe. On the one hand, audiences have been able to get personalised content due to narrowcasting. On the other hand, target marketing and behaviour tracking have become rampant due to online media.

In terms of how content providers represent information, the content types influence its meaning-making aspect. The role of content providers can be observed based on the constructs of identity, representation and framing. Furthermore, this unit has also underscored the intrinsic and extrinsic factors that influence shaping the said content. Berger and Luckmann's (1966) *Social Construction of Reality* and Stuart Hall's *Encoding/Decoding Theory* have been considered to emphasise the function of content providers to mould the cognitive, affective and behavioural effects on the audience.

Lastly, the role of the public as content providers has been discussed in greater detail on the lines of user-generated content. The concept of audience has been contrasted with that of users, prosumers, and producers. Moreover, the power of new media technologies to empower the public due to their autonomy and control over what they want to communicate and express has also been reflected.

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### 3.7 KEYWORDS

**Content Delivery Networks (CDN)** : CDN significantly reduces site latency, boosts webpage load time, reduces bandwidth usage costs, and ensures the global availability of content.

**Artificial Intelligence** : Artificial intelligence is a collection of technologies capable of sensing, thinking and acting like rational humans through the Internet of Things (IoT).

**Produser** : Individuals involved in the interplay of media production and usage.

**Prosumer** : Communities that engage in collaborative media production activities.

**Communication Rights :** Communication rights involve freedom of opinion and expression, democratic media governance, media ownership and control, cultural participation, linguistic rights, the right to education, privacy, assembly, and self-determination.

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## 3.8 FURTHER READINGS

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## 3.9 CHECK YOUR PROGRESS: POSSIBLE ANSWERS

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### Check Your Progress: 1

1. Role of content providers as content aggregators; the emergence of digital media corporations; convergence of digital media with mass media.
2. Technologies of content: 5G internet connectivity, 8K Content and Hardware; Content Delivery Networks (CDNs), Augmented Reality and Virtual Reality, Artificial Intelligence/ Machine Learning.
3. Media Economics: Multimedia; Horizontal media ownership.
4. Narrowcasting and personalised approach for audiences; Target marketing and behaviour tracking.

### Check Your Progress: 2

1. Forms of content: Text, fiction and poetry, photos and images, music and audio, video and film, citizen journalism, educational content, mobile content, virtual content.
2. In the context of their identity and representation, the subjects are ‘framed’ according to the intent of the authorial intention.

3. **Intrinsic factors:** Journalistic-centred influences, editorial influence.

**Extrinsic factors:** advertisers, size and ownership of the firm, political actors and other interest groups.

### Check Your Progress: 3

1. The concept of the people who were previously mere audiences to mass media has transcended to become users, prosumers (Toffler) and produsers (Bruns, 2007).
2. The changes in the technologies imply a shift away from simple passive consumption of broadcasting and other mass distribution media models to more active choosing, interacting, and creating content and a shift to a participatory “culture”. Technological change empowers individuals to “tell their stories” and to produce cultural goods such as music and video to transform the information and media content environment surrounding them.
3. The Internet is an open platform enriching the diversity of opinions, various political and societal debates, the free flow of information, and freedom of expression. User-generated content is, in many ways, a form of personal expression, and users/creators are engaging in the form of democracy where they can directly publish and enable access to their opinions, knowledge, and experience.

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# **UNIT 4 MIL, TEACHING AND LIFELONG LEARNING**

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## **Structure**

- 4.0 Introduction
  - 4.1 Learning Outcomes
  - 4.2 Understanding Lifelong Learning
    - 4.2.1 Defining Lifelong Learning
    - 4.2.2 Characteristics of Lifelong Learning
  - 4.3 Basic Understanding of MIL
  - 4.4 Lifelong Learning through MIL
    - 4.4.1 MIL for Teaching and Learning
    - 4.4.2 The Interconnectedness between MIL and Lifelong Learning
  - 4.5 MIL in Learning
    - 4.5.1 MIL in Formal Education
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    - 4.5.4 Scope of MIL in Special Education
  - 4.6 MIL Skills Facilitation
  - 4.7 Pedagogy of MIL
    - 4.7.1 Instructing Process
    - 4.7.2 Instructor's Role
    - 4.7.3 Pedagogical Methods
  - 4.8 MIL and Lifelong Learning in India
  - 4.9 Pedagogical Approaches
  - 4.10 Let Us Sum Up
  - 4.11 Keywords
  - 4.12 Further Readings
  - 4.13 Check Your Progress: Possible Answers
- 

## **4.0 INTRODUCTION**

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This unit focuses on an important aspect of ‘Lifelong Learning’ as mentioned in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)- 4, which aims to “Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all.” As the phrase suggests, lifelong learning refers to continuous learning throughout one’s lifespan and is rightly referred to earning from ‘birth to death’ and ‘cradle to grave’.

Lifelong Learning, therefore, goes way beyond a typical formal education of school, college, and University. It can be achieved through formal and non-formal or informal settings. Communication, media Information and Communication Technologies (ICT), and digital media technologies have become indispensable in all these settings. These technologies not only provide greater access to learning opportunities but also have

the potential to enhance the quality of learning. Therefore, Media and Information Literacy (MIL) is crucial in lifelong teaching and learning.

Further, MIL emerges as a discipline in the discourse within lifelong learning due to the multifaceted challenges of the media and information environment. In this unit, you will be acquainted with the concepts related to lifelong learning and MIL. Besides, you will be introduced to the role of MIL in promoting lifelong learning and its pedagogical dimensions.

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## 4.1 LEARNING OUTCOMES

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After reading this unit, you will be able to:

- explain the concept of ‘Lifelong Learning and describe its various forms;
- highlight the relationship between MIL and lifelong learning;
- develop MIL knowledge facilitation strategies;
- understand the role of MIL in enhancing the teaching and learning process;
- identify appropriate pedagogical approaches in teaching MIL; and
- develop different practical applications and activities utilising several pedagogical approaches.

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## 4.2 UNDERSTANDING LIFELONG LEARNING

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As stated earlier, generally, lifelong learning, as the term itself, is an essential part of every individual life right from birth till death. It is required for individuals and the sustainable development of communities, societies, nations, and the whole world. Specifically, there is no clear consensus on when the concept of lifelong learning came about in the context of literature usage. However, UNESCO played a crucial role in bringing the discourse of Lifelong learning to the forefront. To begin with, its report “Learning To Be: The World of Education Today and Tomorrow”, published in 1972, is the first-ever official document that recognised that education should be both universal and lifelong regardless of age and socio-economic position. It also suggested that such a form of education is not fixed in its content and still must be conceived of as a learning process to express oneself, communicate, and question the world through various experiences to fulfil oneself. The other report, published in 1996 and entitled “Learning: The Treasure Within,” viewed learning throughout life as the “heartbeat of society.” It highlighted four pillars of lifelong learning, which are –

- (i) **Learning to know:** This aspect of learning makes one ambitious for knowledge, way beyond basic education that suggests how to learn throughout one’s life.
- (ii) **Learning to do:** Learning incorporates the methods and knowledge that one learns into skills packages.
- (iii) **Learning to be:** This encourages developing the creative potential of each individual in all its richness and complexity.
- (iv) **Learning to live together:** This can be achieved by understanding others and their history, traditions, culture, and spiritual values.

## 4.2.1 Defining Lifelong Learning

MIL, Teaching and  
Lifelong Learning

Lifelong learning has often been used interchangeably with concepts like adult education, continuing education, recurrent education, open learning, etc. However, Lifelong learning cannot be restricted to any of these terms. Rather, it encompasses all these terms and beyond. As evident in the definition given by the Council of the European Union (2011), lifelong learning refers to all general education, vocational education and training, non-formal education, and informal learning undertaken throughout life, resulting in an improvement in knowledge, skills, and competences within a personal, civic, social and/or employment-related perspective. It also includes the provision of counselling and guidance services.

According to the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), “Lifelong learning is best understood as a process of individual learning and development across the lifespan, from cradle to grave – from learning in early childhood to learning in retirement. It is an inclusive concept that refers not only to education in formal settings, such as schools, universities, and adult education institutions but also to “life-wide” learning in informal settings, at home, at work, and in the wider community”.

As stated by Longworth and Davies (1996), “Lifelong learning is the development of human potential through a continuously supportive process which stimulates and empowers individuals to acquire all the knowledge, values, skills, and understanding they will require throughout their lifetimes and to apply them with confidence, creativity, and enjoyment in all roles, circumstances, and environments”.

Lifelong Learning is, therefore, a strategy that enables people to learn at different times, from different agencies in different ways, for different purposes at various stages of their lives and careers. It paves the way for systematic acquisition, renewal, and upgrading of knowledge, skills, and attitudes, along with due recognition, validation, and accreditation of all types of learning, as required by ever-changing conditions.

## 4.2.2 Characteristics of Lifelong Learning

Lifelong learning, as we have understood, is rather a very broad term and, in a way, lacks a shared understanding of its usage globally due to its differences in implications from country to country. However, some identifiable characteristics associated with the term ‘lifelong learning’ have begun to emerge. Some of these are discussed below: -

**Eclecticism:** Lifelong learning is characterised by ‘eclecticism’, where the learner can choose various learning types. It could range from traditional classroom settings to virtual classrooms, homes, or even workplaces that allow individuals to acquire and enhance their knowledge, skills, values, attitudes, etc. It can happen through the use of multiple media, can be self-paced and self-directed, or can have mentors and facilitators.

**Embedded:** This character of lifelong learning points to the increasing integration of learning into everyday tasks and while working. Learning needs to be flexible; therefore, it is often said, ‘anywhere’ and ‘anytime’.

**Holistic:** The other characteristic of lifelong learning is that it is integrated and holistic, where the learning systems must be interconnected at different levels into a coherent exhaustive. Such an atmosphere would allow learners to move within different agencies for accreditation and certification mechanisms, credit transfer, portfolio creation, etc.

## 4.3 BASIC UNDERSTANDING OF MIL

The emergent pursuit of media and informational content in developing participation, democracy, and active citizenship has indicated a new set of skills and competencies called Media and Information Literacy (MIL). MIL covers a wide range of skills and competencies. As per UNESCO (2013), “Media and Information Literacy (MIL) brings together Information Literacy and Media Literacy, along with Information and Communication Technology (ICT) and Digital Literacy, as a new literacy construct that helps empower people, communities, and nations to participate in and contribute to global knowledge societies.” MIL refers to the ability to access, evaluate, utilise, and share information and media content to create new knowledge and enhance participation and co-existence.

Component One contents	Access and retrieval of media and other informational
Component Two	Understanding and evaluation of media and other informational contents
Component Three content	Creation and utilisation of media and other informational

*Table 1. MIL Competency Matrix (UNESCO, 2013)*

MIL has a direct connection with the development of knowledge and education in society to ensure empowerment irrespective of the social, cultural, or economic background of individuals. In the 21st century, modern knowledge led by technological shifts introduces the post-modern pedagogy that demands easy and flexible delivery of education and adaptability of multiple resources that the teacher does not control. Parallelly, the change in society, educational structure, and work culture produce the requirement of pedagogy of lifelong learning to learn 21st-century skills and competencies.

There are two different dimensions of MIL from the perspective of lifelong learning. They are: (i) Lifelong learning through MIL: MIL skills and competencies for lifelong teaching and learning; (ii) Lifelong learning about MIL: MIL as a subject of lifelong learning.

## 4.4 LIFELONG LEARNING THROUGH MIL

The concept of ‘lifelong’ also covers aspects of education that reflect a non-authoritative teaching-learning process. Mass media have played an instrumental role in the betterment of the status of lifelong learning in India. At the early stage, various lifelong learning programs produced by government agencies aired on radio channels in English, Hindi, and other regional languages. The responsibility to promote health, agriculture, environment, adult education programs, etc., has also been entrusted to public broadcasting agencies, ‘All India Radio’, and ‘Doordarshan’. With the launch of educational channels - ‘Gyan Vani’ (radio channel) and ‘Gyan Darshan’ (television channel), access to lifelong learning opportunities has increased tremendously. Afterwards, digital initiatives like information kiosks (telecenters or cyber cafes) operated in several regions of India have started ensuring better access to information and

knowledge. We must acquire specific MIL skills and competencies to ensure the definitive and positive outcome of the information offered by mass media or any other communication agency. Information gain can only be turned into learning with adequate access, appropriate analysis, and suitable use.

MIL, Teaching and Lifelong Learning



Figure 1: Public broadcasters that facilitate MIL (Source: IGNOU, Logopedia, Newson AIR)

#### 4.4.1 MIL for Teaching and Learning

Education is a communication process wherein two-way communication makes the outcome more effective. Educational institutes have shifted the teaching-learning approach from traditional learning to technology-enabled learning that allows learners and teachers to adopt ICT tools such as the Internet, smartphones, computers, mobile applications, etc. Open and distance learning institutions focus on ICT to promote lifelong learning. Therefore, ICT skills have been as essential as subjective knowledge in teaching. For example, creating and distributing learning content for online learning demands ICT skills on both ends, learners and teachers. The rise of ICT-enabled learning challenges learners to develop new skills and competencies. However, according to the optimistic view, online education has paved the way for lifelong learning due to its compatible nature, cost-effectiveness and faster learning mode. Hence, digital skills and competencies can lead the exploration of new world information and boost lifelong learning. However, the new world knowledge system brings online courses, books, libraries, news, and OTT platforms to one's doorstep, offering to learn enormously.



Figure 2: ICT tools (Source: Geralt, CC0, via Wikimedia Commons)

MIL, an integrated form, is considered fundamental for lifelong teaching and learning in the contemporary tech-surrounded environment, including ICT or digital skills and competencies. Along with this, MIL serves the 21st-century demand for integrated development. Pardede (2020) classifies 21st-century skills into three categories: learning and innovation, literacy, and life skills. Learning and innovation skills refer to the mental processes required to adapt and improve a modern work environment, which involves what is popularly called the 4Cs (critical thinking, communication, collaboration, and creativity). Literacy skills, sometimes called IMT (information literacy, media literacy, and technology literacy), are concerned with how individuals discern facts, publishing outlets, and the technology behind them. Life skills focus on the intangible elements of every individual's everyday life, including personal and professional qualities.

#### **4.4.2 The Interconnectedness between MIL and Lifelong Learning**

The first step in achieving the educational goal is literacy. Basic years of education add feathers to the crown of lifelong learning. In the course of lifelong learning, information plays a vital role; hence, information providers actively contribute to the process in which the attitudes, knowledge, and beliefs of learners are enhanced and developed. Media and information literacy develop throughout life's journey, with basic education as the basis of it. A media and information literate individual can recognise information needs in gaining new knowledge and knows how to locate, access, and retrieve information to learn, analyse, and use the information for lifelong learning. Translating knowledge into insightful practice develops efficiency at every stage of human life. MIL complements this pursuit of outcome inlaid with empowerment. Thus, MIL supplies a mechanism for lifelong learning. MIL and lifelong learning have reciprocal and reinforcing relationships. Thus, these two interlinked paradigms are critical to the global information society. MIL facilitates lifelong learning and develops the following capacities:

- The learner can be an active explorer and creator.
- The learner can reflect on life and the environment.
- The learner can bring self-actualisation and exploration.
- The learner can understand the cultural meaning of dialogue.

MIL helps an individual to be self-motivated and self-directed toward learning. It brings empowerment, helping individuals of all age groups irrespective of social status. MIL often does not glide across the lifespan, depending on the context of an individual. One can drop achieving media and information literacy after a certain period. But, one can't pursue lifelong learning without being media and information literate. MIL and lifelong learning substantially improve the following:

- Options to form an opinion
- Quality and utility of education in all its forms
- Social and economic condition
- Participation in social, cultural, and political contexts

The business of MIL is the pursuit of practical learning that refers to the system whereby a learner amplifies the capacity to develop independently and socially to participate and contribute to society. There is a vast array of opportunities one can find through it.

The branches of MIL, such as media literacy, digital literacy, security literacy, and safety literacy, are primers to open the treasure box of lifelong learning.

MIL, Teaching and Lifelong Learning

## 4.5 MIL IN LEARNING

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The need to adapt to today's interconnected and fast-changing world has made lifelong learning even more relevant. Information is growing exponentially in this digital age, and it is believed that every two years, it doubles. In such a situation, there is a need to be constantly updated with the latest developments in all fields of life. As rightly described by UNESCO's Institute for Lifelong Learning (UIL 2010), this "exponential growth in, and changing nature of information in the digital age, the difficulty of foreseeing the skills sets required for knowledge-based economies, demographic shifts, and increased mobility, the growing concern for unsustainable patterns of consumption and production, are all underlining the relevance of lifelong learning as the conceptual framework and organising principle of all forms of education in the 21st century."

Besides learners, teachers can apply MIL skills to what they are teaching for lifelong learning. MIL skills in using ICT tools help this process. The UNESCO ICT in Education Programme listed the following benefits of using ICT in Education:

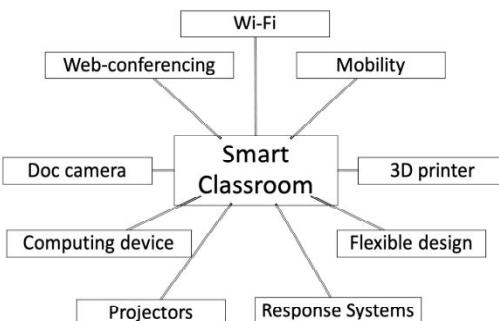
- Expand educational opportunities by making education available anywhere, anytime, and anywhere.
- Improve learning outcomes by making learning more interactive and involving learners in the subject matter.
- Improve motivation to learn by improving the relevance of content and making learning more fun.
- Enable education to be tailored to individual learning needs and abilities.
- Enable locally relevant teaching materials in local languages to be created and disseminated quickly and affordably.
- Facilitate technology-skill formation, teamwork abilities, and other "21st century skills" among learners.
- Bring about pedagogical improvements and learner-centered teaching.
- Provide conditions that permit and promote lifelong learning.
- Increase the effectiveness and efficiency of education planning and delivery.

Recently, ICTs, specifically digital technologies, have played an important role in promoting and enhancing lifelong learning opportunities in all their distinct forms.

### 4.5.1 MIL in Formal Education

This refers to the highly institutionalised educational system often associated with education. It is characterised by an organised education model, structured and administered by laws and norms, and subject to strict curriculum objectives, methodology, and content. Such a system is "chronologically graded and hierarchically structured" and spans from school to college and reaches the university level. ICT and digital technologies in such a setting can be used to communicate, create, disseminate, store, and manage information. It could be as simple as using a PowerPoint presentation,

a digital whiteboard during a lecture, interactive multimedia sessions, etc. It could also be blended learning, where certain classes are conducted online, and few are in person. It could be the highly ICT-driven Open and Distance Learning (ODL) system where the teacher and learner are physically apart throughout the learning process, and the communication gap is filled with various communication technologies. Alternatively, it could be purely online education, where the whole teaching and learning process happens virtually through a Learning Management System (LMS).



*Figure 3: ICT tools for formal education (M.U.Paily, CC BY-SA 4.0  
<<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0/>>, via Wikimedia Commons)*

It has been largely documented now that the meaningful use of ICT has several benefits. Particularly when the teachers are Media and Information Literate, they could use these technologies to provide creative and individualised student options. This will, in turn, lead to higher-order thinking skills among the learners as they can express their understandings better. This will also prepare them to deal with ongoing technological change in a larger society and any dynamic workplace of this century.

#### 4.5.2 MIL in Non-formal Education

This kind of learning refers to any organised, systematic educational activity outside the formal system to provide selected types of learning designed to serve identifiable clientele and educational objectives. It is flexible in terms of curricula and methodology and is usually outside the control or regulation of the bureaucratic formal system. It focuses on developing need-based skills, competencies and attitudes such as tolerance, empathy, unity, etc. It is usually flexible, functional, and cost-effective. A recent example is the increasing availability of non-formal education in the form of Open Education Resources (OERs) and Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs), which are enabled and driven by ICT. Developing ICT or digital skills among certain groups of people can also be done through a non-formal education setting.

Non-formal education initiatives have effectively used ICT for mass literacy campaigns, training of health workers, and capacity building under rural community development projects. ICTs in television, radio, Internet, mobile phones, computer kiosks, community learning centres, radio, and video conferencing could interplay in non-formal education. MIL largely inculcates non-formal learning. Benefits of MIL in non-formal education:

- Develop livelihood skills and contribute to poverty alleviation
- Capacity building
- Improve the overall effectiveness of monitoring and evaluation

#### 4.5.3 MIL in Informal Education

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This is the lifelong process by which every person acquires and accumulates knowledge, skills, attitudes, and insights from daily experiences and exposure to the environment, whether at home, work, or play. Informal education learning does not follow any specific plan and can happen in any setting, and learning occurs unconsciously. Such learning method is individual or group concern rather than institutional or external concern. Such learning can occur through interaction or simply observing family and friends, from travelling, reading newspapers and books, listening to the radio, watching films or television, or surfing the Internet. It can also happen by visiting museums and libraries, community settings, social media interactions, or playing virtual games. It is estimated that 70–90% of human learning falls into this category.

Michael Eraut (2000) identified three forms of informal learning. First is incidental and implicit - new facts, ideas, and behaviours are learned without conscious attempts or explicit knowledge of what is being learned. The second is reactive - where learning is explicit but virtually spontaneous. The third is deliberate, clearly intending to acquire new knowledge or skills.

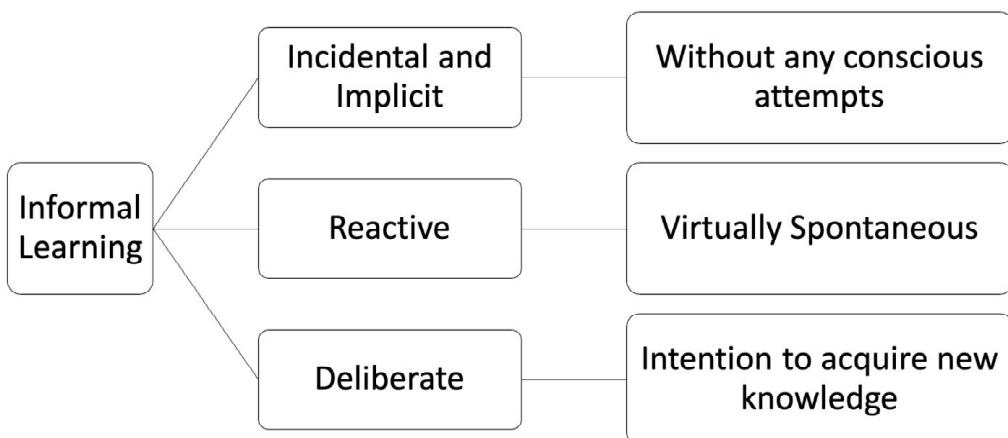


Figure 4: Types of Informal Learning

Again, ICT greatly impacts informal learning, whether the learners are children or adults. Informal learners can immediately access necessary information through search engines like Google. YouTube has also matured into one of the biggest resources for educational content ever. Social media tools enable learners to share knowledge and join learning communities. The worldwide move to free and open publishing also provides informal learners access to many online resource repositories and open education resources (OER).

#### 4.5.4 Scope of MIL in Special Learning

ICT has changed the perception of learning for persons with disabilities. Media and information literacy would help persons with disabilities pursue lifelong learning. With ICT and relevant digital skills, they can overcome the challenges faced during learning. However, the inclusion of persons with disabilities can be assured with universal accessibility in learning design. The design of educational programs using technology-enabled devices ensures easy access by persons with disabilities and helps them overcome their specific limitations. Parallelly, ICT-run assistive technology tools are used to enhance their activities. Televisions, talking calculators, talking watches, remote controls, speech recognition systems, etc., have proven capacity-building tools for

them. Online education is another option that has made learning easier. They can also benefit from media programs such as television, radio, and digital content. In recent times, smartphones and mobile applications have started to serve the needs of learners. For example, IGNOU's 'IGNOU e-Content' provides learning material through mobile phones.

### **Activity 1**

Use online sources to access documents on 'the role of MIL skills in the learning process'. Answer the following questions after reading the documents.

- How do MIL skills help to learn effectively?
- Why is MIL vital to making better decisions?
- Why is life-long learning easier for MIL-competent individuals?

### **Check Your Progress: 1**

**Notes:** 1) Use the space below for your answer.

2) Compare your answers with those given at the end of this unit.

1. Define 'Lifelong Learning'.

.....  
.....

2. What are the dimensions of MIL from the perspective of lifelong learning?

.....  
.....

3. How does MIL help the lifelong teaching-learning process? Give an example.

.....  
.....

## **4.6 MIL SKILLS FACILITATION**

In the 21st century, we inevitably encounter challenges regarding privacy, algorithms, media representation, online radicalisation and extremism, fake news, etc. MIL skills help us to deal with those challenges. One can achieve the required skills through training, courses, and daily activities. Some of the action-oriented ways of facilitating MIL skills are:

- Reading media text (newspaper, radio, television, digital text) carefully
- Investigating news and sources, context, values of news, and other information
- Running an online profile to share interests, ideas, photos, or videos.
- Thinking carefully about online appearance
- Sharing creative work online on Twitter/Facebook/WhatsApp/any other platform

- Communicating user-generated content through blogging or vlogging
- Using a safe process to store passwords
- Using images and visual aids to explain or present ideas
- Using programming software or tools
- Using digital tools to create, edit, and share textual data, photos, and videos
- Installing any application with a proper understanding of terms and conditions and security issues
- Protecting computers and mobile phones with strong and safe passwords
- Creating levels in a video game
- Protecting personal data using various methods
- Developing knowledge about algorithms

## 4.7 PEDAGOGY OF MIL

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The post-modern concept of literacy talks about the influence of information and communication technologies on contemporary society and includes all aspects of media and information literacies in the domain of literacy. Numerous institutions, such as UNESCO and the Center for Media Literacy, have identified the art and science of MIL education. UNESCO's media and information literacy curriculum for teachers has six different segments, and the pedagogy of MIL has been included in one of the segments. The instructional theory of MIL is not rigid in its structure. According to a nation's socio-economic condition, any stakeholder of MIL can develop conceptual knowledge and manage the learning content. However, the teaching of MIL occurs through an activity-based approach where contents with practical applications are delivered. It can be school education, college education, or lifelong learning programs that would add to the MIL level of an individual. In India, most formal education courses (such as school education, college degree, and university degree) do not include MIL as one of their subjects. Nevertheless, different folds of MIL training have emerged as skill enhancement courses. MIL as lifelong learning has emerged through informal and non-formal education for the voluntary pursuit of MIL skills.

### 4.7.1 Instructing Process

The cognitivism of Piaget has influenced the modern definition of pedagogy. The concepts of cognitive development by Bruner and Vygotsky have laid the foundation for the process of learning, which includes some stages: remember, understand, apply, analyse, evaluate, and create. The activity of teaching MIL not only encompasses delivering education about MIL but also inculcating empowerment. The learners would learn with internalisation of procedures, structures, and skills according to their context. Hence, learners' social, cultural, and economic backgrounds are important in MIL teaching. Rather than following the traditional way of teaching, MIL as a skill-based subject can be instructed using modern pedagogy.

The following characteristics of teaching are majorly involved in instructing MIL:

**Art:** The art of teaching MIL consists of the responsive, creative, and intuitive features of teaching. For example, in promoting MIL, game creation can be a creative and

responsive way of teaching. Game-based learning (GBL) is an effective pedagogical strategy for MIL teachers (Sousa & Costa, 2018), as it can informally attract young and active learners.

**Craft:** The craft of teaching MIL refers to skills and practice-based teaching. The teaching of MIL needs a range of media and information skills. Only a person with good domain knowledge in media and content production, information sources, and digital media can be a teacher of MIL.

**Science:** The science of teaching MIL implies the research-based informed decision-making and theoretical parts of MIL. Teaching the ethical use of information as a MIL Skill with special reference to MIL theories can equip learners with principles such as respect for privacy, intellectual property, fair representation, and non-maleficence.

#### **4.7.2 Instructor's Role**

A person who teaches MIL is considered an instructor. There is no fixed approach to teaching MIL. A teacher or instructor can adopt any method or approach for teaching. Therefore, teachers are the principal agents of change in framing MIL (Wilson et al., 2011). Empowering through MIL provides ladders toward change - achieving tolerance, inclusiveness, and pluralism in a culturally diverse society.

The teacher plays a role in productive learning. An educator guides the learners' ability to understand problems, tension, and nuances in the journey of the MIL learning process. The key elements of MIL's pedagogy are intentionality, consciousness, reflection, attention, and tenacity. Instruction is a process where a teacher uses techniques to achieve higher achievement. Unlike formal learning, the instructor of MIL deals with the pragmatic value of education. There are several roles of an instructor. Some of those are -

- An instructor lays down instrumental objectives related to the topic he/she will discuss.
- A single teaching method should not be used in teaching the whole subject. Hence, the instructor identifies pedagogical approaches for particular units/topics.
- The use of the top-down approach (deductive/analysis) and bottom-up approach (inductive/synthesis) are observed.
- He/she understands the background knowledge of the learner and language skills.
- The instructor links the lesson topic with the learners' personal experiences.
- The instructor makes the learning interesting and ensures active learning. The use of interesting strategies such as videos, interactive sessions, and stories are some of the strategies that an instructor follows.
- An instructor adds important concepts and keywords to the activity, promoting the diversity of knowledge.
- He/She helps learners identify what they already know and do not know.
- He/She facilitates the learner's ideas and thoughts

- The instructor suggests teaching aids. For example, while teaching the identification of fake news, the instructor can mention using software to identify fake news from the web.
- An instructor uses strategies to stimulate ideas: brainstorming, mind mapping, and K-W-L (What do I know? What do I want to learn? What have I learned?).

### 4.7.3 Pedagogical Methods

Several pedagogical approaches can be applied in the teaching of MIL. Identifying one is the teacher's task. Pedagogical approaches to teaching MIL are discussed below:

#### (i) Problem-Based Learning

Problem-based learning as a pedagogical method can be used to inculcate MIL learning in developing a coherent learning process. Problem-based learning allows the development of skills and attributes like knowledge acquisition, enhanced group collaboration, and communication. The learners learn by constructing reasoning on what they know and what they need to know about media. Through this, learners can understand how to solve real-life problems. The teacher facilitates the process by guiding and supporting them. An example of problem-based learning in MIL teaching would be to find out the threats and risks of using social media.

#### (ii) Collaborative Learning

From an educational point of view, collaborative learning refers to the observation of group work in the teaching-learning process. While using collaborative learning as a pedagogical tool of MIL, the teacher uses the power of engaged learners to process information and concepts. In collaborative learning, learners collaborate as a group to enhance effective learning through MIL-based projects. In this process, learners present their ideas and listen to others' viewpoints, thus understanding an issue, concept, and real-life phenomenon. Working collaboratively to run a Facebook page that promotes the voices of blind people could be a good way of teaching MIL.

#### (iii) Issue-Enquiry Approach

The issue-enquiry approach is a way to motivate learners and engage in their learning through an in-depth investigation of a specific issue. It is mainly associated with inquiry-based learning, so it gives more opportunities to be used in MIL skill development. In this method, learners show curiosity in exploring many dimensions of one issue; thus, it promotes a deeper understanding of an issue, which can help solve any problem related to the specific issue or help make an evidence-driven decision. New skills can be achieved through identification of the issue, access to the major underpinned ideas, clarification of the facts with analysis, interpretation in personal space, and acting to get the desired outcome. An example of the usage of this approach in MIL teaching would be exploring the pattern of gender representation in a specific newspaper.

#### (iv) Scientific Enquiry

Scientific inquiry involves evidence-based techniques in gaining new knowledge and skills. Scientific inquiry can be used to instruct MIL from a subjective or objective point of view. In this approach, knowledge is acquired following a scientific sequence

of inquiry: observing, questioning, finding existing answers to the question, planning for new input to the answer, gathering pieces of evidence, analysing data, and writing the explanation. Examples of scientific inquiry in MIL could include investigating the impact of hate speech, the rise of fake news, etc.

#### (v) Case Study

A case study is a method of in-depth and multifaceted exploration of a single event, issue, or phenomenon. However, more than one event or issue is studied in collective or multiple case studies. This method is used in multiple disciplines, including media studies. It can be a potential approach to teaching MIL. The real-life events can be studied by adopting a systematic method of inquiry. Identification of the problem, data collection, data analysis, and reporting are all steps of conducting a case study. In this approach, a learner can get the answer for how and why an issue has occurred. An example of a case study would be an inquiry into the influence of COVID-19 on e-health interventions.

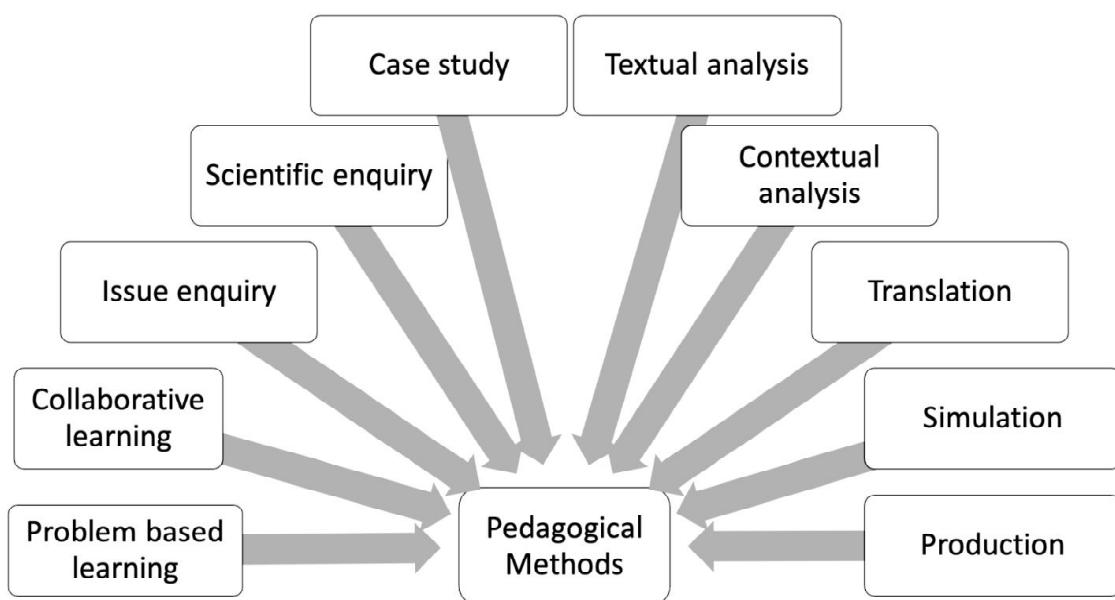


Figure 5: Pedagogical methods used in MIL

#### (vi) Textual Analysis

Textual analysis is a method to analyse and interpret various forms of text. Denotation and connotation - subtext, symbolism, values, codes, and conventions of media texts- can be understood using this method. There are many dimensions of textual analysis, such as semiotic and content analysis. Textual analysis of film, social media content, and advertisement can give knowledge about contemporary cultural, social, and political interpretations of facts and phenomena. In teaching MIL, textual analysis would be a great method of learning technical, symbolic, and narrative media and informational content codes. MIL teacher can ask the learner to do a textual analysis of a video from YouTube or a piece of news collected from the web. The learner would find out the text's source, purpose, audience, textual features, claims, etc..

#### (vii) Contextual Analysis

Contextual analysis is a method to analyse any issue, event, or phenomenon within a specific social, cultural, political, or economic context. Contextual analysis has been used to identify opportunities and threats to any contemporary issue. MIL is used to

understand the relationship of a concept related to MIL with theoretical approaches. For example, learners can undertake a project on a ramification of social media content and video games according to a specific point of view or context.

#### (viii) Translations

Translation is a process where a source text in a particular language is communicated using another language. This method allows learners to translate a media text into another language to communicate with a specific language-based target group. For example, a report by PIB in English can be translated into Hindi to form a news report for Hindi-speaking people.

#### (ix) Simulations

Simulation refers to mimicking the function of any system, organisation, or team to represent a real-world situation. It involves students in role-playing to learn skills and concepts related to a specific activity. It can be an effective method in teaching MIL. A teacher can begin the lesson by placing learners in real-world scenarios to act and react skillfully according to the situation. MIL teachers can use simulation to demonstrate the function of a film production team. To do that, the teacher makes the students play the role of the film production team members.

#### (x) Production

Production is a student-centred learning approach where the teacher draws the guidelines for excavating knowledge by applying the learning process by doing. Media and information content production employs a few phases, such as pre-production, production, and post-production, that offer experiential learning. It seems engaging and memorable for the learners to gain complex knowledge of MIL. Learners can creatively express themselves while producing media texts (print, audio, audio-visual, picture). Production enhances the creation as well as the communication skills of a learner. As an example of production, learners can make a documentary or digital story on homophobia and upload it on any social media platform.

#### Activity - 2

Perform the following tasks:

1. Identify any of the five pedagogical approaches to teach issues related to MIL.
2. Describe the key components that make the pedagogical approaches effective for teaching and learning MIL.

## 4.8 MIL AND LIFELONG LEARNING IN INDIA

Lifelong learning has become a topic of discussion in the discourse of education and training policies worldwide. It has been endorsed by national and international policy actors, including UNESCO, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), the World Bank, ILO, etc. Over the last decades, Lifelong learning has been discussed in Indian education policy documents. The Report of the Education Commission (1964-66) discusses that education goes beyond schooling and is a lifelong process. The National Policy on Education in India - 1986 (modified in 1992) stressed lifelong education in achieving universal literacy and institutionalising

opportunities for everyone to continue the education of choice and at convenience. The critical development of skills and knowledge required for the development of society has kept the government active in translating documents into practices. As a result, governments, NGOs, and universities have started many programs to promote lifelong learning.

The National Adult Education Programme (NAEP) of the Indian government (1978) influenced UGC to endeavour lifelong learning with numerous activities such as continuing education, refresher courses, and post-literacy. Colleges and universities have initiated UGC-funded programs to accomplish the mission of new knowledge in society. With the introduction of the Eleventh Five Year Plan (2007-2012), the Government of India integrated the idea and scope of lifelong learning. Most recently, the National Education Policy (NEP) - 2020 puts forward adult education and lifelong learning. The union budget for 2021-2022 drafted the increase in the availability of access to resources and more advanced materials. The objective was to impart 21st-century skills like digital and financial literacy to the learners through online mode.

India is a developing nation where change is an unremitting phenomenon. One of the benefits of lifelong learning is that it ‘adapts to change’. Lifelong learning would help learners to be aware of the changes in different areas such as technology, culture, and society. While acknowledging the existence of lifelong learning, we can’t deny the thrust of new media technology. Globalisation and expansion of ICT have served as forcing factors in updating skills and knowledge to be globally competitive. The Indian economic position depends on the labour force’s skills; hence, providing them with relevant skills is important. Lifelong learners would be able to embrace new topics that they find compelling. Thus, they can look for a new career opportunity and work position. The large population of India suffers due to joblessness. Lifelong learning allows one to win the job market by being well-versed in the job field. Life, society, and media are changing throughout the century. Therefore, every human should process lifelong learning to be updated with the ever-modern world.

Indian traditional philosophies have promoted deep, continuous learning from generation to generation. The understanding is that the notion of lifelong learning is the key to the learning society, and it is not a system of education but a principle of it. Since many crises keep hampering the nation and its population, lifelong learning through MIL and learning about MIL can seek practical remedies for the crisis at macro and micro levels. MIL is linked with challenges of openness and changes, thus encompassing stability and continuity in lifelong learning. The three main focuses of lifelong learning about MIL are expansion, innovation, and integration. Expansion can be done by multiplying the learning situation, creating new motivation, and offering all kinds of opportunities. Innovation can be provided by creating alternative learning patterns in diverse situations. Integration escalates the process of expansion through adequate linkage.

### **Check Your Progress: 2**

**Notes:** 1) Use the space below for your answer.

2) Compare your answers with those given at the end of this unit.

1. Write about the instructor’s role in teaching MIL.

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2. What are the three characteristics involved in teaching MIL?

MIL, Teaching and Lifelong Learning

3. How can you apply textual analysis in teaching MIL?

## 4.9 PEDAGOGICAL APPROACHES

(Instructions for the course counsellors)

Numerous pedagogical approaches can be applied to promote MIL among learners. Identify any of the pedagogical approaches of your choice and apply them to the following activities:

- (i) Guide learners to learn the usage of digital media tools for storytelling. The teacher can initiate the process by giving ideas: what to do? How do you identify a topic or platform? How do you plan the storytelling?
- (ii) Make small groups of students and ask the groups to find out the possible threats and risks they encountered or can encounter in the future while using social media. They can be asked for ways to solve this problem. Students can:
  - Examine the risks and threats one can encounter while using social media.
  - Explore what they already know about underlying threats and issues related to it.
  - Identify information and tools necessary to be safe and secure using social media.
  - Evaluate possible ways to solve the problem.
- (iii) Develop a lesson plan to teach ‘analysis of message or information’.

## 4.10 LET US SUM UP

The present policy of the Indian education system has focused on institutionalising lifelong learning. Lifelong learning has been discussed here as an empowering factor in the growth of an individual. You have learned about the definitions, concepts, and characteristics of lifelong learning. Its characteristics would help you understand and put the meaning in a larger frame. MIL consecrated in the learning environments has been discussed with the explanation of formal, non-formal, informal, and special education. The unit would also help you explore more pedagogical approaches to teaching MIL. You have read about how media and information literacy (MIL) improves lifelong learning. Discussing MIL, information, digital literacy, and 21st-century skills would exploit learning that can bring curiosity to know more on this topic. Moreover, the unit would be a foreword explaining lifelong learning through MIL, core areas, and implications in various ways.

## 4.11 KEYWORDS

**Lifelong Learning :** According to the Council of the European Union, lifelong learning refers to all general education, vocational education

and training, non-formal education, and informal learning undertaken throughout life, resulting in an improvement in knowledge, skills, and competencies within a personal, civic, social and/or employment-related perspective.

**Informal Education :** Informal learning is the lifelong process by which every person acquires and accumulates knowledge, skills, attitudes, and insights from daily experiences and exposure to the environment, whether it is at home, at work, or play.

**ICT** : According to the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (2009), “ICT refers to a diverse set of technological tools and resources used to transmit, store, create, share, or exchange information. These technological tools and resources include computers, the Internet (websites, blogs, and emails), live broadcasting technologies (radio, television, and webcasting), recorded broadcasting technologies (podcasting, audio and video players, and storage devices), and telephony (fixed or mobile, satellite, video/video-conferencing, etc.).”

**Pedagogy** : Pedagogy can be defined as the general principles of effective teaching that make a difference in the intellectual development of learners.

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## 4.12 FURTHER READINGS

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1. Brockett, R. G. (2014). *Teaching adults: A practical guide for new teachers*. John Wiley & Sons.
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3. Fedorov, A. (2017). *Media and information literacy education dictionary*. Scholars' Press.
4. Field, J., & Leicester, M. (Eds.). (2003). *Lifelong learning: Education across the lifespan*. Psychology Press.
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## 4.13 CHECK YOUR PROGRESS: POSSIBLE ANSWERS

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### Check Your Progress: 1

1. According to the Council of the European Union, lifelong learning refers to all general education, vocational education and training, non-formal education, and informal learning undertaken throughout life, resulting in an improvement in knowledge, skills, and competencies within a personal, civic, social, and/or employment-related perspective. It also includes the provision of counselling and guidance services.

2. There are two different dimensions of MIL from the perspective of lifelong learning. They are: (i) Lifelong learning through MIL: MIL skills and competencies for lifelong teaching and learning; (ii) Lifelong learning about MIL: MIL as a subject of lifelong learning.
3. ICT skills have been as essential as subjective knowledge in teaching. The creation of learning content for online learning and the distribution of that content demand ICT skills from both learners and teachers. The rise of ICT-enabled learning challenges learners to put about new skills and competencies. Hence, digital skills and competencies lead the exploration of new world information and boost lifelong learning.

**MIL, Teaching and Lifelong Learning**

### **Check Your Progress: 2**

1. The teacher plays a role in productive learning and guides the learners' understanding of problems, tension, and nuances in the journey of MIL learning. MIL's pedagogy's key elements are intentionality, consciousness, reflection, attention, and tenacity. Instruction is a process where a teacher uses techniques to achieve higher achievement. Unlike formal learning, the instructor of MIL deals with the pragmatic value of education.
2. The three major characteristics involved in instructing MIL - are art, craft, and science.
3. In teaching MIL, textual analysis would be a great method of learning technical, symbolic, and narrative media and informational content codes. MIL teacher can ask the learner to do a textual analysis of a video from YouTube or a piece of news collected from the web. The learner would find out the text's source, purpose, audience, textual features, claims, etc..

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# **UNIT 5 COMMUNICATION AND INFORMATION, TEACHING AND LEARNING**

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## **Structure**

- 5.0 Introduction
- 5.1 Learning Outcomes
- 5.2 Communication in the Digital Era
  - 5.2.1 Information Exchange
  - 5.2.2 Knowledge Sharing
- 5.3 Communication in Learning Spaces
  - 5.3.1 Educators' Role in Communication
  - 5.3.2 MIL Skills and Competencies for Communication
- 5.4 Information in Digital Age & Media Literacy
  - 5.4.1 Context and Concepts
  - 5.4.2 Information Culture
- 5.5 Engagement with Digital Technology for Pedagogical Development
  - 5.5.1 Technology Intervention and MIL
  - 5.5.2 Critical Thinking and Decision-Making Abilities
  - 5.5.3 Learning Styles
- 5.6 Evaluation of Instruction Processes & MIL
- 5.7 Pedagogical Approaches
- 5.8 Let Us Sum Up
- 5.9 Keywords
- 5.10 References
- 5.11 Check Your Progress: Possible Answers

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## **5.0 INTRODUCTION**

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Communication is at the core of human existence. It is the extension of information dissemination or exchange to create meaning in life. In teaching and learning, it is crucial to understand that communication occurs in different situations and through various modes. The term communication has been around for ages and has been inherited by humans for generations now, using different techniques and methods. Since immemorial, people have communicated using symbols, sounds, gestures, and words. The basis of communication is exchanging information and creating new information for the social construction of language. With the development of technology and the availability of various mediums for communication, the exchange of information has changed its meaning from knowledge sharing to inclusive meaning, making strategies for social development.

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## **5.1 LEARNING OUTCOMES**

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- to analyse the relationship between information and communication;
- to understand the dynamics of digitalisation in the teaching and learning process; and
- to understand the application of information and communication theories using MIL skills.

## 5.2 COMMUNICATION IN THE DIGITAL ERA

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Communication in the developing era of technology is going through transitions and getting better platforms with the introduction of new technology then and there. The concept of interaction has changed in computer-mediated communication for all spheres of life. Communication is not about just the sender and receiver anymore; the platform and the features that the platforms allow play a significant role in the smooth flow of communication. As Bharadwaj, Ravinder, and Kannan (2004) state, “the Internet has been acclaimed as the Information Super Highway of the Twenty-First Century”. The internet plays a significant role in the dissemination and exchange of information. The modern age, or this contemporary period, is known as “the information age”, where networking and communication are made more accessible. The cyber-world or virtual reality is the new world where interactions occur at high speed without many inhibitions. According to Kumar (2011), it is natural and a requirement for existence to use communication resources to share experiences through symbols and mediated interaction.

On the other hand, it is known that the lack of communication can be disorienting altogether; it can lead to anxiety and impaired judgment. Though this is sensory deprivation, the “information explosion” changed lives enormously. There have been tremendous changes in the teaching system due to ICT usage, furthering the computer-based education system. ICT empowers people regarding education and communication (Sarkar, 2021). The three main factors driving lives in the 21<sup>st</sup> century are “speed, virtuality, and networking”, which has become an intangible part of people’s lives (Rivoltella, 2008).

### 5.2.1 Information Exchange

According to Gill (2021), the Digital ecosystem (DE) is known as “a set of distributed, adaptive, and open socio-technical systems. Being parts of such ecosystems, individual persons, public and private organisations are becoming increasingly dependent on each other” (Krogstie, 2012). There is a discourse that a digital ecosystem is an intricate network of the individual as well as organisational actors (informational organism) “who need to share information for value co-creation.” It is also considered that the ing of information the informational organisms) is critical and core to these DEs. The concept of information is explained as a group of related data elements. This data contains the content as well as documents. The exchange of such data is a basic necessity to keep the world going. Data elements represent raw facts as data attributes, documents, and content containers. It is relative as well as contextual in nature. Information exists where the participants are taken from unknown to known, that is, “information deficit” to the known value of information recognition or information gain. Information exchange is moving from the unknown to the known, seeking knowledge of various concepts in varied capacities.

### 5.2.2 Knowledge Sharing

Knowledge sharing is exchanging information between friends, family, or community. It is an intangible value that is used to create a competitive advantage. Knowledge sharing varies based on the culture and structure of the organisation or institution. Knowledge sharing is at the base of decision-making and problem-solving. Tacit Knowledge stays within the mind of people and is expressed in the form of skills and a value judgment. The way knowledge is shared according to the platforms is based on the understanding that is made available between the various entities. Tacit sharing of content occurs via different ways of socialisation. Meanwhile, embedded knowledge sharing occurs when the information in the form of knowledge is shared through delineated products or routines. Creating a knowledge-based economy has become the goal of many developing countries, especially those that suffer from a scarcity of natural resources. The creation of knowledge-based economies in developing countries involves the development of their higher education systems. The integration of digital technologies into the higher education systems of these countries has the potential to contribute to their development and restructuring. (Gasaymeh, 2017). MIL skills and competencies play a significant role in this process, where the information available must be exchanged to create new knowledge. However, MIL skills enable an individual to do the same systematically.

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## 5.3 COMMUNICATING IN LEARNING SPACES

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The basic communication process, which has a sender (originator/source), message (content), channel (medium), receiver (responder/decoder), and feedback (receiver to the sender and vice versa), is the foundation of most communication models. This kind of process takes place in any social interaction space. We will consider the models and discuss the various elements concerning educators' and learners' roles in the process. The discussion will also lead to the changing dynamics of the roles played by all participants in the teaching-learning process with digitalisation. In this context, it is necessary to understand how Media and Information literacy skills can enhance the roles played by all participants in the pedagogical system.

Learning is considered the process of “acquiring knowledge or skills” and has transformed the learning environments and led to new learning paradigms like e-learning, ubiquitous learning, and social learning. This is considered linked to the emergence of technology, digital media, and wireless communication. These new setups lead to the paradigm shift of the learning scenarios with varying characteristics such as permanency, where the information is available until the learner purposely removes it; the second character is the easy accessibility of information; another characteristic is the immediacy and flexibility by which information can be retrieved using various technologies, the crucial characteristics of interactivity where learners can interact with peers, teachers, and experts efficiently and effectively through different media in the various communities of learning. There is a characteristic of context awareness where the environment can adapt to the learners' real-life situations to provide adequate information. Moreover, finally, the most relevant is digital-mediated communication, where the network of connected devices and ubiquitous technologies are extended to various learning environments.

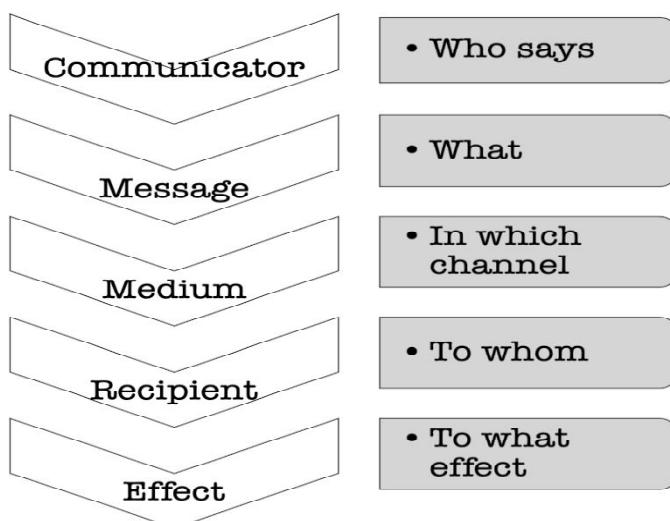
### 5.3.1 Educators' Role in Communication

The Shannon and Weaver (1949) model discussed the linear concept of communication, which is one way of communication, and the information is transferred to the receiver

through a medium. They emphasised the importance of the message or the meaning contained by the message as the most crucial part. It enhances semantic accuracy. Suppose this model is considered in the education scenario. In that case, it will be considered redundant as the information transmission system or the “sage on stage” role of a teacher or educator is nowhere to be seen now. Communication is not linear anymore.

On the other hand, the learner’s role has changed from a passive audience to an active audience where they participate and engage in negotiation. The knowledge-gaining process is now different, with Information Communication Technology taking the role or charge of information dissemination, and the role of the teacher is restricted to instructing to use the information in a constructive direction and to engage in critical thinking for real-life scenarios. However, the elements of noise can be interpreted as miscommunication or communication barriers that occur due to multiple reasons, for example, a plethora of knowledge, reliability issues with information produced and created, the inability to interpret in the proper context, etc. This model applies more to the mediums like radio, telephone, etc. The developing technology changes how learners use radio, telephone, or the internet for education.

On the other hand, Gerbner’s Model is based on the perception of an event and the perceptual dimension (the process of interaction and negotiation). In the process, the intense method of matching our external stimuli to the preconceived notions and experiences exists; in this context, the educator’s perception plays a vital role in understanding the concept and the notions and then further explaining it to the learners and conveying it to the learner. The idea of the event and the message formulated by the teacher need critical thinking and evaluation skills (negotiation at a higher order) for the teacher to convey the same. The learner’s perception, the preconceived notion of the existence of an event and the acceptance of information from the teacher. The learners gather knowledge from the early stages of life in various social environments. Therefore, the concepts the learners construct during the period of teaching and learning affect the further education process. For that matter, the idea of an event perceived by a learner in one particular situation may alter according to the dimensions explained by the new educator.



*Figure 1: Laswell's Model of Communication*

Another model, Laswell’s Model, forms the base of general mass communication concepts, theories, and models. The report writing in journalism follows this concept of the varying stages of mass communication:

- Who
- Says what
- In which channel
- To whom
- With what effect

In the above model, for the education context, when the teacher communicates with the learner, the medium and the message play a vital role in the effectiveness of the message. For the teaching-learning process to succeed in the context, it is necessary to understand the dimensions of the medium as well as the need for the message; on the other hand, for the learners, the message plays a major role, though the role of the medium is crucial too and the effectiveness of feedback process is also necessary for the overall transaction of the communication to complete.

Newcomb's Model of communication focuses majorly on the role of communication in the social structure and the relationships constructed in society. It is a triangular model highlighting the crucial role of context or society in which communication exists. According to Newcomb, communication is "maintaining the equilibrium for the social system". In this model, A and B are the sender and receiver of the message, and adding to this is the X factor, which is the social environment in which they exist; if we consider this model for the present scenario of education, the social environment is always less of formal or informal learning. In this context, the role of the educator becomes crucial. Though it is not a linear method of communication, it still highlights the importance of the environment in which society. Also, in this category, if A changes his or her relationship to X, B will have to change his or her relationship with X or A. This stands in case the teacher creates a homely environment or changes the pedagogy to online mode, and the student also needs to change his or her outlook towards the environment or the teacher. In this model, the role of understanding the changing dynamics of digital education comes into play for both the teacher and the student.

On the other hand, Westley and MacLean's communication model highlights the intervention of the third party between the sender and receiver or, for that matter, between the event and the final receiver and brings across the idea of distant experience in the foreplay. This model also stands the importance of feedback; here, in the case of an event, suppose A sends a message about the event to B (X1). Here, B is unaware of or was not in direct contact with the event; therefore, there would be interpretations of A that may intervene or enhance the message's quality (Fiske, 2010).

**Activity - 1**

What are the communication tools we use in our daily lives? List any 4 of them in the space given below.

- a) .....
- b) .....
- c) .....
- d) .....

### Check Your Progress: 1

**Notes:** 1) Use the space below for your answer.

2) Compare your answers with those given at the end of this unit.

1. What is the use of ICT in the education system?

.....  
.....

2. What do you mean by tacit knowledge?

.....  
.....

3. Why is Shannon and Weaver's model redundant in the 21<sup>st</sup> century?

.....  
.....

### 5.3.2 MIL Skills and Competencies for Communication

Media and information literacy are the capabilities to be efficient and effective in a digital society, which becomes essential competencies if we consider them, especially in learning environments. To effectively curate, produce, and participate in the digital ecosystem, it is necessary to acquire these competencies. It is no longer about accessibility to media; it is about the critical usage of the mediums to fulfil the varying needs of human interaction, knowledge enhancement, and lifelong learning. This enhances effective learning systems, mainly as discussed in earlier sections, in the context of communication models in the education environment. In the new learning environment

The set of competencies offered by MIL will better address the challenges that all people experience due to the characteristics of new learning environments: new gadgets, constant connection, and widespread access to all types of information everywhere, anytime, and anywhere. In this setting, MIL becomes a crucial element of 21st-century learning. MIL will promote improved usage and comprehension of 21st-century learning settings.

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## 5.4 INFORMATION IN DIGITAL AGE & MEDIA LITERACY

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### 5.4.1 Context and Concepts

The information exchange in the digital era is making communication easier. Big data and the development of other innovations are crucial regarding information exchange in the social structure. The developing communication science embraced information theoretic principles to examine group decision-making, interpersonal control in relationships, mass communication, and talk and quiet sequences in dialogues following Attneave's seminal "Applications of Information Theory to Psychology." Nevertheless, for the application of information theory in social sciences, there were some cumbersome tasks of data collection and logical interpretation, which were ineffective until the

emergence of Big Data and its contribution to understanding the information theory. Critical analysis of the data providing information for the betterment of society is now more accessible and more effectively done at various levels. Recently, advanced human interactions have been taking place in digital settings, which has rekindled interest in using information theory in the social sciences. While academics may now compute measures that converge pretty slowly due to the new amount of behavioural “big data” and our computational capabilities, the development of the social sciences has also resulted in a rise in interest in more complex nonlinear techniques and measures. There are ways in which the entropy within the information theories is applied for various business organisations to set trading policies. Their usage of elements of information theory provided for mathematical computation by Shannon and Weaver, which is used in the basic communication process to read common human behaviourism patterns for social development.

#### **5.4.2 Information Culture**

Since the inception of information theory, it has been clearer how to quantify information than what information is. What is the development of information culture, and for the interpretation of various information, Hartley and Shannon provided effective formulae for calculating the volume of information. However, these formulas provide false results when used in unrelated areas without comprehending the information phenomenon.

The first reference to information culture is typically attributed to Mariam Ginman, a researcher from Finland. According to Ginman (1993), an information culture is flexible and innovative, mainly when management is receptive to information about the external environment. An information culture was offered as a desired and required condition for the company to be effective and competitive. However, this view of information culture has gained many dimensions through the contribution of other researchers (notably Oliver & Foscarini, 2014). It is now also known as a concept that encompasses all cultural settings, including positive ones where effective and efficient systems and processes have already been implemented and are being used adequately by all relevant parties, in addition to those highly negative ones where information may not be well managed. The varying information culture dimensions may be used to concentrate on various locations and settings, or they can be utilised to give an extensive scope for a comprehensive look at the problems and difficulties associated with information and data management in corporate or community contexts.

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### **5.5 ENGAGEMENT WITH DIGITAL TECHNOLOGY FOR PEDAGOGICAL DEVELOPMENT**

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There are multiple digital technology theories, such as Digital learning theories and approaches, such as RAT, SAMR, TPACK, Digital Blooms, Connectivism, Design Thinking, and Peeragogy, which help teachers develop curricula that get students to use technology to research, curate, annotate, create, innovate, problem-solve, collaborate, campaign, reform and think critically.

Dr. Joan Hughes created the RAT Model, an assessment framework meant to assist teachers in accurately self-evaluating their use of technology in the classroom. It entails the following actions:

The use of technology that functions as a different means to the same educational purpose but does not alter the recognised teaching techniques is referred to as a

replacement. Amplification: While the work stays the same, technology's amplification assures the expansion of instructional methods' efficiency, efficacy, and productivity. Transformation refers to the creative and novel curriculum, education, or learning change. The goal is to examine the extent of technology use in the classroom using the RAT Model while ensuring it fulfils its intended purpose. On the other hand, the SAMR model was created to assist teachers in integrating technology into their lessons. The concept, made popular by Dr. Ruben Puentedura, helps educators plan, create, and integrate technologically-assisted digital learning experiences. The objective is to change how kids learn so that they succeed at greater levels. A flexible framework of methods for peer learning and peer knowledge development is known as pedagogy. It is a process through which individuals collaborate to create and apply knowledge, as opposed to pedagogy, which deals with transferring information from teachers to pupils. Peeragogy's adaptability and scalability are its main advantages. The learning mindset and techniques explored through pedagogy projects are usually used in wikis, organisations, hackerspaces, schools, and other networked collaborations throughout society. These kinds of models, theories, and concepts lead us to understand how digital technology is integrated into the learning framework for communication and information exchange. The crux for us is to understand that there are multiple ways in which education technology can be utilised with maximum capacity using MIL.

### 5.5.1 Technology Intervention and MIL

According to Lewin and Lundie (2016). There is a promise that digital education will change the ways of teaching and learning through the vast array of digital learning resources and radically restructured virtual learning experiences, often accepted without considering the “problematic social, ethical and epistemic assumptions underpinning such changes.”. In his study, Richard Davies emphasises the relational aspect of communication in modern internet-related technologies. He makes a case for a more thorough analysis of the opportunities for regular, small-scale social interactions in online learning. Different and occasionally opposing conclusions may be formed regarding the potential of digital interactions for humanising education between the levels of abstraction (Florida, 2011b) of information theory examined by Lundie and of user interface investigated by Davies.

### 5.5.2 Critical Thinking and Decision-Making Abilities

Governments worldwide have accepted that ICT plays a significant role in improving education, and massive investments have been made in this area for a while. In the previous decade, information and communication technologies (ICT) have rapidly developed globally for work and business purposes. There is an emphasis by Krumsvik (2011) states that there is a growing importance of addressing teachers' self-efficacy regarding the teaching-learning practice with ICT. The various attempts to use ICT in education have been met with multifaceted reactions. Halevi 2017

#### Check Your Progress: 2

**Notes:** 1) Use the space below for your answer.

2) Compare your answers with those given at the end of this unit.

1. Why is MIL critical in the 21<sup>st</sup> century?

.....  
.....

2. What changes does Big Data bring to social sciences?

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3. Why is Information Culture, according to Ginmann?

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### 5.5.3 Learning Styles

A key component of learner preferences is learning style. The idea that different people retain knowledge in various ways is expressed by the phrase “learning style” (Ozata & Ozdamar-Keskin, 2014). It involves how an individual perceives, processes, and interprets information (Simsek, 2004). The literature has a variety of models for learning styles. To clarify our study goals, we have picked the VARK Model by Fleming and Mills and the Learning Style Model by Grasha and Reichmann.



*Figure 2: VARK Model of learning (Source: Preply.com Images, CC BY 2.0 <<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/2.0/>>, via Wikimedia Commons)*

The VARK (Visual et al.) Model, developed by Fleming and Mills in 1992, refers to four learning style dimensions connected to applying experience and practice (simulated or actual).

- Visual learning style (representing any information in visual aids such as maps, diagrams, charts, etc.)
- Auditory learning style (information that is “heard or spoken.”),
- Reading-writing learning style (the preferred style is when information is displayed as words),
- Kinesthetic learning style (the preference is related to the usage of understanding and practice, simulated or actual).

It can be said—and is generally acknowledged—that the development of digital environments has led to the emergence of new learning paradigms like e-learning, ubiquitous learning, and social learning. Learning has undergone a significant transformation as acquiring knowledge or skills. Digital media, emerging technology, and cellular communications with constant connectivity have all been closely tied to

this rise (Ehlers, 2012). Due to the influence of information and communication technology, the widespread use of computers at the beginning and linked devices in the latter have encouraged a paradigm change within education.

## 5.6 EVALUATION OF INSTRUCTION PROCESSES & MIL

According to Media Information Literacies, there are multiple ways in which various communication and information theories can be conceptualised. In the 21<sup>st</sup> century, the idea of communication and its role in teaching-learning has transformed into digitalised language, and perpetual changes in how interaction is transforming according to the four stages of the education revolution emphasised the need for changes in the concept of Media Information literacy. Information literacy is the capacity to identify when information is needed, where to find it, how to evaluate it, and how to effectively communicate that information in all its forms, traditional and modern. Media literacy is the capacity to access, analyse, evaluate, and create media in all forms. Here, it is clear that there is already a sizable overlap between the two concepts. Not surprisingly, they are frequently used virtually interchangeably for convenience. The changes in the Education Revolution were evidently from 1.0, done through the method of sage on stage and lecture-based. It was dedicated to how the individual memorised; the literacies of that time were based on basic writing and reading skills. There was a lower level of engagement in the traditional classroom setup. Whereas internet-based learning emerged with time, computer literacy played a significant role; cautiously, one by one, education paved the way to adopting technology in a more integrated manner. Student participation increased, and the usage of open-source information led to the emergence and development of information literacy. The concepts of education technology in communication and interaction lead to developing skills and competencies using communication tools in teaching-learning. Later, with the education revolution, 3.0 usage of different sources of information came into existence, and digital technology penetrated in every way where consuming and producing knowledge while using and analytically approaching a concept came into existence. With this, media information literacy took charge; each revolution changed the kind of literacy needed at each level.

Students learned to consider the purpose of various types of information before starting the deeper level job of analysing information. Determining the information's reliability will be quite helpful in determining the information's objective later.

The media and other information sources like libraries, museums, archives, and the internet keep information for various reasons.

These reasons include informing, educating, entertaining, gathering together, providing access, facilitating teaching and learning, promoting values and rights, and preserving cultural heritage. With the later stages of education, even electronic media permeated many of our waking hours thanks to video streaming websites, social networking platforms, digital billboards, and podcasts. Moreover, while we have profited from this widespread and immediate connection in our personal and professional lives, it also presents numerous difficulties. The pupils must acquire particular techniques to navigate and filter this potentially overwhelming sea of information since 4.2 billion individuals are using the internet and sending and receiving countless messages.

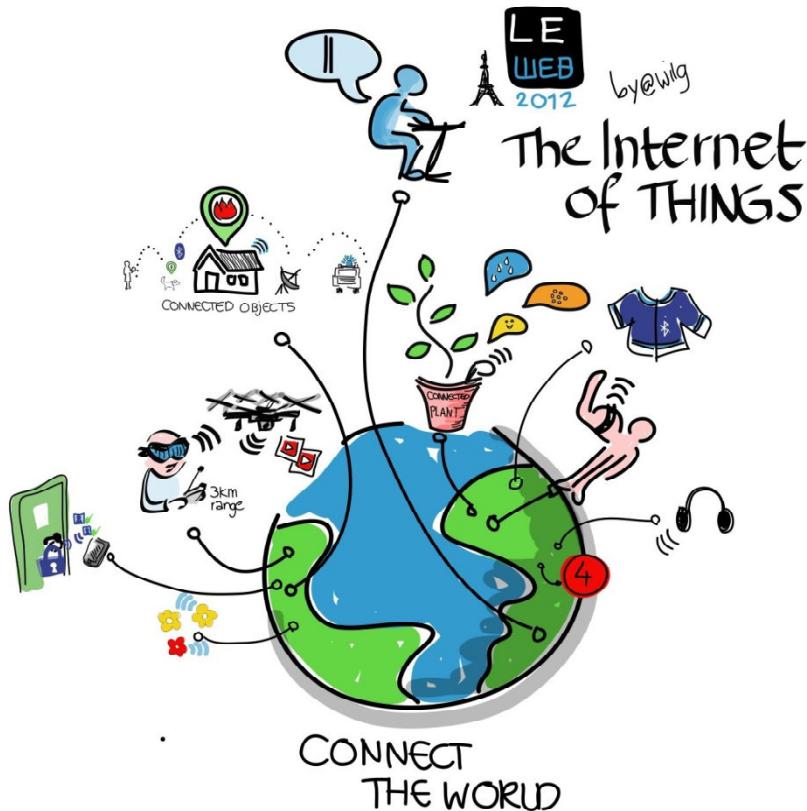


Figure 3: The idea of the Internet of Things (Source: Wilgengebroed on Flickr; CC BY 2.0 <<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/2.0/>>, via Wikimedia Commons)

The Education Revolution 4.0 has introduced the transformation of artificial intelligence technology, machine learning, and the Internet of Things, empowering students to learn, communicate, and inform by creating knowledge and getting involved in the epistemology of truth and identity of existing ideas and concepts. It is based on skill development and enhancement of latent skills needed to use technology at best. Gaming literacy, library literacy, and other tangents of MIL are deeply entangled with the featured tools and elements of innovation in education.

## 5.7 PEDAGOGICAL APPROACHES

*(Instructions for the course counsellors)*

Suppose we use content providers such as libraries, archives, museums, media, and digital communications companies in learning spaces. In that case, we need to consider our ways of educating the students on the following:

- How are we using them?
- How do they impact how information is communicated to learners?
- How do learners communicate among themselves?
- How do learners communicate with educators?
- What data are the providers collecting about this process, and with what implications?

Communication and information models provide a framework for conceptualising the place of MIL within the education and learning experience. These models provide the opportunity to closely examine the role of educators, learners, and information providers in learning spaces.

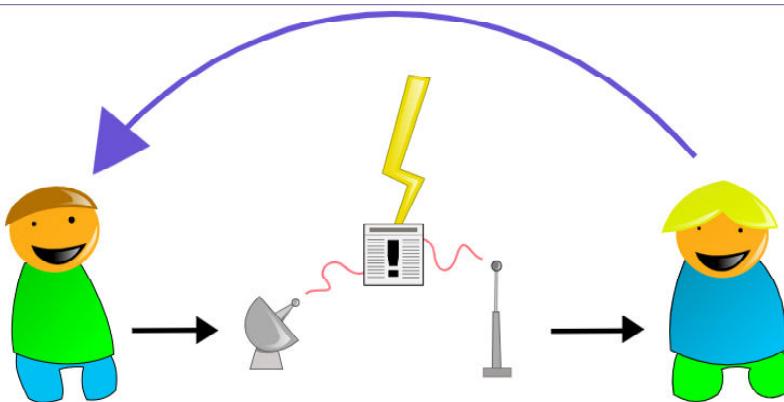


Figure 4: Depiction of Shannon and Weaver Model of Communication (Einar Faanes, CC BY-SA 3.0 <<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/3.0/>>, via Wikimedia Commons)

A simplistic model was proposed using an engineering paradigm after the Second World War (Shannon & Weaver, 1948; Schramm, 1954; Berlo, 1960). This model assumes the process is linear and begins with a message's sender. In contrast, many would highlight the structuring agency of channels and their driving force, as well as shaping by genres and formats of the message. While the model also misses significant issues of community, culture, power, and engagement with meaning, it does identify elements that can give limited insights, such as:

- Sender (originator/source)
- Message (content)
- Channel (medium)
- Receiver (responder/decoder)
- Feedback (receiver to the sender and vice versa as the loop continues).

## 5.8 LET US SUM UP

This unit has introduced you to two significant elements of society, communication and information, which create the basis of social constructs. The need for these two is also pertinent in the education system, where the teaching and learning process is executed only through the appropriate construction of information culture through various communication tools and platforms. In the 21<sup>st</sup> century, when the tide of communication has taken a turn and transformed the way the exchange of information, especially in the education system, Media Information Literacy Skills stand to be an evident requirement for quality education. In this Unit, we have discussed the role of communication concerning the digitalisation of networks, tools, and mediums to communicate. Then, we discussed the phenomenon of information exchange and how knowledge is shared during this exchange. We have also learned the role of MIL skills in developing tacit knowledge. Then, we learned how communication has changed according to the learning spaces, which led to the discussion about the educator's role and the skills needed to fulfil their directed roles. The need for MIL is specific and describes how it will help in a better way. Here, we discussed various communication models and conceptualised the need for MIL. Then, the Unit discussed various MIL skills for lifelong learning and knowledge enhancement. Then there is the vivid description of how to integrate MIL skills into the information age as well as within the media culture in the teaching-learning process, then the engagement of digital technology concerning pedagogical development

is discussed, which is like the crux of how MIL skills can be integrated through pedagogy within the framework of information theories, communication models and digital technology concepts applicable in the teaching-learning process of 21<sup>st</sup> century, the technological intervention engages the learner for better critical thinking abilities and decision-making abilities. Further, according to the learning styles, evaluation of instruction processes is done using MIL skills, where the application of MIL skills according to the education Revolution and its tools are introduced in detail, which leads to the conclusion of the chapter.

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## **5.9 KEYWORDS**

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- Information Exchange** : Information exchange moves from unknown to known, seeking knowledge of various concepts in varied capacities.
- Knowledge Sharing** : Knowledge sharing is exchanging information between friends, family, or community. It is an intangible value that is used to create a competitive advantage.
- Information Culture** : A concept encompassing all cultural settings, including positive ones where effective and efficient systems and processes have already been implemented and are being used adequately by all relevant parties, in addition to those extremely negative ones where information may not be well managed.
- Learning Style** : Involves how an individual perceives, processes, and interprets information.

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## **5.10 FURTHER READINGS**

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1. Henderson, M., & Romeo, G. (2015). *Teaching and digital technologies: Big issues and critical questions*. Cambridge University Press.
2. LeFever, M. (2011). *Learning styles*. David C Cook.
3. Oberg, D., & Ingvaldsen, S. (2016). *Media and information literacy in higher education: Educating the educators*. Chandos Publishing.
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## **5.11 CHECK YOUR PROGRESS: POSSIBLE ANSWERS**

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### **Check your Progress: 1**

**Ans.1** There have been tremendous changes in the teaching system due to ICT usage, furthering the computer-based education system. ICT empowered people in terms of education and communication.

**Ans.2** Tacit Knowledge stays within the mind of people and is expressed in the form of skills and a value judgment.

**Ans.3** Suppose Shannon and Weaver's model is considered in the education scenario. In that case, it will be considered redundant as the information transmission system or the "sage on stage" role of a teacher or educator is nowhere to be seen now. Communication is not linear anymore. On the other hand, the learner's role has changed from a passive audience to an active audience where they participate and engage in negotiation.

### Check your Progress: 2

**Ans.1** The set of competencies offered by MIL will be better able to address the challenges that all people experience due to the characteristics of new learning environments: new gadgets, constant connection, and widespread access to all types of information everywhere, anytime, and anywhere. In this setting, MIL becomes a crucial element of 21st-century learning.

**Ans.2** In applying information theory in social sciences, some cumbersome tasks of data collection and logical interpretation were ineffective until the emergence of big data and its contribution to understanding information theory.

**Ans.3** According to Ginman (1993), an information culture is flexible and innovative, mainly when management is receptive to information about the external environment. An information culture was offered as a desired and required condition for the company to be effective and competitive.



**Block-2**

**MIL, Society and Ethics**



## **BLOCK 2: MIL, SOCIETY AND ETHICS**

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One of the major focus areas of propagating media and information literacy is educational interventions. There are two dimensions to this intervention - one is teaching about media, and the second one is teaching through media. Teaching about media is a process through which the basic tenets of media literacy are taught. Teaching through media is about using various media platforms for teaching-learning processes. In our previous block, we concentrated on teaching about media and in this block, you will learn more about the teaching through media. Besides that, you will understand the role of various stakeholders in the media and communication processes and how these processes are linked with multiple social institutions.

### **Unit 6: Learning Theories and MIL**

Learning theories are pivotal in understanding how individuals acquire knowledge and skills. In the Media and Information Literacy (MIL) context, these theories help elucidate how people process, evaluate, and apply information from various media sources, enhancing their critical thinking and information management abilities in the digital age. The unit discusses theories for how individuals acquire knowledge and understanding as they grow, the importance of social interaction in learning, the role of observation and modelling in learning, and the mental processes involved in acquiring knowledge. It also discusses the importance of revisiting and deepening understanding over time, observable behaviours, active learning and personal meaning-making. It further extends to learner-centred education and the significance of networked knowledge in the digital age. The unit helps to comprehend how individuals acquire, process, and use information effectively in the digital age, fostering critical thinking and informed decision-making.

### **Unit 7: Enabling Environment for MIL in Learning Spaces**

The unit uncovers the diverse and enlightening experiences of MIL educational interventions worldwide by tracing MIL education's rich history and practices. The evolution and impact of MIL, highlighting the unique approaches and contributions from North America, is noteworthy. Beyond this, insights from the vast and dynamic landscapes of Asian Experiences of MIL Training are provided. It informs about the distinctive approaches, challenges, and innovations that have emerged in Asia, providing valuable insights into the global tapestry of MIL education. Additionally, it provides overarching Global Conventions for MIL Training that serve as guiding frameworks in this field. These conventions play a pivotal role in shaping the direction and standards of MIL education internationally. The unit provides a comprehensive and nuanced understanding of MIL's multifaceted nature, guided by global experiences and conventions.

### **Unit 8: Audience: National and Global Contexts**

The term 'audience' has a rich history, evolving from its origins to become a central concept in media and information literacy (MIL). Understanding 'audiences' involves understanding their dynamic roles in receiving, interpreting, and responding to media content. Theories on audiences stretch across various traditions, including structural, which focuses on media's influence on individuals; behavioural, which examines audience responses; and cultural, which explores the socio-cultural context of audiences' interpretations. The future of audiences is evolving in the digital age, with changing media consumption patterns and the rise of interactive and participatory media. As

MIL adapts to this shifting landscape, understanding audiences remains essential, guiding educators and researchers in fostering critical thinking and responsible engagement with media and information. Approaches to audience research vary, ranging from quantitative studies to qualitative analyses. This unit stresses understanding audiences as it remains essential in shaping effective media strategies and communication practices.

### **Unit 9: Technology, Media and Society**

Technology plays a pivotal role in the intricate relationship between media and society. Technological advancements have significantly impacted the evolution and practice of freedom of expression. Digital platforms and social media have given individuals unprecedented avenues to express their opinions and access information, shaping the dynamics of public discourse. Technology has transformed the purpose of media in society, expanding its reach and immediacy. The unit discusses how technology-aided media is a powerful tool for disseminating information, educating the public, and fostering civic engagement. It also discusses the challenges of misinformation and the erosion of traditional gatekeeping functions. Journalists now navigate a digital landscape where accountability takes on new dimensions. Alternative media outlets have emerged to address these challenges, leveraging technology to provide independent and diverse perspectives. While empowering, this unit explores technology and demands vigilance in combating misinformation, protecting privacy, and bridging digital divides.

### **Unit 10: Freedom, Ethics and Social Accountability**

Freedom, ethics, and social accountability are paramount for Media and Information Literacy (MIL). Self-regulation, governed by codes, laws, and ethics, guides how media and information are disseminated and consumed. A robust Code of Ethics underpins responsible journalism, emphasizing essential values such as accuracy, fairness, and impartiality. As technology advances, new ethical areas emerge, challenging traditional norms. In the digital age, a Code of Ethics for New Media addresses issues like online privacy, digital citizenship, and combating misinformation. Citizens, too, have rights and ethical responsibilities in the MIL landscape. The freedom to access information comes with the duty to use it responsibly and to discern reliable sources from falsehoods. This unit explores these critical themes, emphasizing the ethical values and responsibilities that underpin MIL in an era where information and media play pivotal roles in our lives and society.

With this understanding of media in society, you can approach and handle all your media and communication interactions more meaningfully.

# **UNIT 6 LEARNING THEORIES AND MIL**

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## **Structure**

- 6.0 Introduction
- 6.1 Learning Outcomes
- 6.2 Learning Theories and MIL
- 6.3 Piaget's Theory of Cognitive Development
- 6.4 Vygotsky's Theory of Learning
- 6.5 Social Learning Theory
- 6.6 Cognitive Learning Theory
- 6.7 Bruner's Spiral Curriculum
- 6.8 Behaviourism Learning Theory
- 6.9 Constructivism Learning Theory
- 6.10 Humanism Learning Theory
- 6.11 Connectivism Learning Theory
- 6.12 Pedagogical Approaches
- 6.13 Let Us Sum Up
- 6.14 Keywords
- 6.15 Further Readings
- 6.16 Check Your Progress: Possible Answers

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## **6.0 INTRODUCTION**

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Learning theories help us understand how people learn and acquire knowledge over time. But more importantly, they help us understand how the educational system can help us learn. Learning theories can help us teach media literacy in more effective ways.

There are many different learning theories, like Behaviourism, Cognitive Learning Theory, Constructivism, Social Learning Theory, Humanism, and Connectivism. Each of these theories has its perspective and framework, which can help us understand how to use media literacy for better teaching and learning. Knowing the different theories and frameworks will help teachers use media literacy correctly to teach students how to handle media responsibly.

This unit also looks at how media literacy education has been standardised worldwide. Over the past 40 years, there have been many attempts to include media literacy in school programs, and various declarations have provided guidance and policies to improve and make media literacy education consistent.

We will also explore different learning theories and how they can be used in media literacy education, along with many global decisions regarding media literacy training.

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## **6.1 LEARNING OUTCOMES**

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After reading this unit, you will be able to:

1. grasp major learning theories and how they relate to media literacy;
2. describe how various learning theories can help with media literacy education programs and activities;
3. assess and criticise current media literacy education methods using learning theories;
4. utilise important ideas and principles from learning theories to create media literacy lesson plans and activities;
5. apply learning theories to comprehend the mental, emotional, and social aspects of media literacy learning; and
6. judge the success of various media literacy educational efforts.

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## 6.2 LEARNING THEORIES AND MIL

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Learning theories help us determine how people learn and gain knowledge and how teaching can make it easier. These ideas are important for media literacy education, where we teach people to think carefully when they see or make media stuff. There are many learning theories, like behaviourism, cognitive learning, constructivism, social learning, humanism, and connective, and they all focus on different parts of learning, which matters for media literacy teaching.

Behaviourism is a way of learning that says outside things, and rewards make us act a certain way. It believes we learn by doing something repeatedly until it becomes a habit. In teaching people about media, we can use behaviourism by giving rewards or punishments for how they use media, like watching or making messages that follow certain rules or values.

Cognitive learning theory says that our thinking is crucial for learning. It includes things like paying attention, remembering, and solving problems. This theory believes that learning happens when we think about what we're learning and create new knowledge. In media education, we can use this theory by telling students to think carefully about what they see in the media and analyse it smartly with their brains.

Constructivism in learning says learners must create knowledge by actively working with the material. According to this theory, learning happens when we use what we already know to understand new things. In media education, we can use constructivism by urging students to use what they already know when they look at media messages and to make their messages based on their thoughts and experiences.

Social learning theory highlights how people learn by watching others and interacting with them. According to this theory, learning happens when we observe, copy, and get input from others. In media education, we can use social learning theory by prompting learners to talk with friends about what they watch and ask for advice on their media creations.

Humanism in education underscores the distinct characteristics of each learner, including their feelings, encounters, and convictions, as well as their ability to guide their learning. In media literacy instruction, humanism can be employed by tailoring the learning process to each learner's specific requirements and preferences while promoting self-guided learning concerning media consumption and creation.

Connectivism is an educational theory highlighting connections and networks' significance in the learning journey. It suggests that learning happens when knowledge is created and shared within networks rather than solely through individual experiences. Connectivism can be put into practice when teaching media literacy by motivating learners to interact with various media outlets and critically examine media messages, considering the interconnections between media networks.

In this setting, let's explore different learning theories and how they relate to teaching media literacy.

## 6.3 PIAGET'S THEORY OF COGNITIVE DEVELOPMENT

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**Conservation:** Piaget introduced the idea of conservation, which means that alterations in how something looks don't alter its basic qualities, like size, weight, or quantity.

**Formal operation:** adolescents attain formal thinking skills during the last phase of cognitive growth. This includes the capacity to ponder abstract ideas, employ hypothetical thinking, and perform logical deductions.

Piaget's cognitive development theory connects with media literacy in various ways. Piaget highlights how actual experiences, especially during early developmental stages like sensorimotor and pre-operational, are vital for cognitive growth. Media literacy offers students these real-life experiences, aiding their world comprehension and fostering critical thinking abilities.

Secondly, Piaget's theory highlights that students learn best when they actively build their knowledge by interacting with their surroundings. Likewise, media literacy stresses the significance of actively engaging with media content to comprehend its messages and assess its effects critically.

Thirdly, Piaget's theory proposes that how our thinking grows is affected by our interactions with others and our culture. Learning about media literacy can assist students in grasping the cultural and social settings where media messages are. Jean Piaget's cognitive development theory is a significant and widely recognised framework aiming to clarify how individuals progress in their thinking abilities from infancy to adolescence. Key aspects of Piaget's theory pertain to individual learning theories and their relevance in media literacy education.

The key aspects of Piaget's Cognitive Development Theory include stages of development, schemas, assimilation and accommodation, object permanence, egocentrism, conservation, and formal operation.

**Stages of development:** according to Piaget, learners go through four clear cognitive growth phases, each having distinct qualities and constraints. These phases encompass the sensorimotor phase, pre-operational phase, concrete operational phase, and formal operational phase.

**Schemas:** Piaget suggested that children create mental structures, known as schemas, to structure their encounters and understand the world. These schemas always change and adjust as the child engages with their surroundings.

**Assimilation and accommodation:** Piaget proposed that students blend fresh

knowledge into their existing mental frameworks using assimilation while adapting and expanding these frameworks to fit new information through accommodation.

**Object permanence:** Piaget proposed that babies don't understand that things still exist when they can't see them until they acquire object permanence, a skill usually acquired at approximately eight months old.

**Egocentrism:** Piaget suggests that children tend to be self-centred in early childhood and find it challenging to grasp how others see things.

**Conservation:** Piaget introduced the idea of conservation, which means comprehending that alterations in how something looks don't alter its basic characteristics, like size, weight, or quantity.

**Formal Operations:** During the last phase of cognitive growth, teenagers attain formal operations, where they gain the capacity for abstract thinking, employ hypothetical reasoning, and participate in logical deduction.

Piaget's cognitive development theory has connections with media literacy in multiple ways. To begin with, Piaget stresses the significance of hands-on learning in cognitive growth, particularly during the sensorimotor and pre-operational stages. Media literacy can offer students practical encounters that aid their world comprehension and foster critical thinking abilities.

Next, Piaget's theory underscores the significance of students actively building their comprehension of the world through their interactions with their surroundings. Likewise, media literacy underscores the importance of actively engaging with media to grasp its messages and to assess its influence thoughtfully.

Piaget's theory proposes that social interactions and cultural surroundings play a role in cognitive growth. Media literacy aids students in grasping the cultural and social settings in which media messages are made and consumed and how these settings can impact their outlook and convictions.

## 6.4 VYGOTSKY'S THEORY OF LEARNING

Lev Vygotsky's learning theory highlights how social interactions and cultural surroundings influence the growth of our thinking abilities. The key aspects of Vygotsky's theory include:

Vygotsky suggested that learning happens in the **Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD)**, which is the gap between what a learner can do independently and what they can achieve with the help of someone who knows more.

**Social Interaction:** Vygotsky stressed the significance of social engagement in learning. He asserted that when learners interact with individuals who possess greater knowledge, they can absorb new ideas and abilities better.

**Scaffolding** means offering temporary assistance to aid learners in finishing tasks they can't do on their own. Scaffolding aims to slowly decrease the assistance as the learner gets better at the task.

**Cultural tools:** culture equips us with aids, like words and symbols, which make learning and mental growth easier. These aids are passed on during social exchanges and are crucial for cognitive advancement.

Students use talking to themselves out loud, known as **private speech**, to control their behaviour and thinking. Over time, this private speech becomes internalised as students grow and transform into inner speech.

**Collaborative learning**, working with classmates, means learning with friends and can be useful in boosting cognitive development. This is because it allows learners to interact socially, exchange information, and discuss meanings, which can be very beneficial.

Vygotsky believed that learning happens when people interact, and media literacy can promote teamwork in learning by involving students in conversations and group tasks. Students can learn from their peers by sharing their views and thoughts about media content. Vygotsky stressed the significance of language in education, and media literacy can assist in language development by giving students chances to express their ideas about media content. It can also enhance students' critical language skills by teaching them how to analyse and assess the language used in media materials. Vygotsky held that a student's cognitive growth is influenced by their cultural environment, and media literacy can help students grasp the cultural setting in which media content is created and consumed. By learning about diverse cultures and viewpoints through media, students can better understand the world around them. Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) refers to the gap between what a child can do independently and what they can do with assistance from someone more knowledgeable. Media literacy can be a supportive tool for students learning by allowing them to engage with media content slightly above their current comprehension level. With guided practice, students can acquire new skills and knowledge.

## 6.5 SOCIAL LEARNING THEORY

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Social Learning Theory, also called Social Cognitive Theory, is a learning theory that highlights how watching and interacting with others influence our actions. The primary aspects of this theory include:

**Observational learning**, the Social Learning Theory, suggests that people can acquire fresh behaviours by watching others and seeing the outcomes of their actions. This is also known as modelling/vicarious or learning through observation.

The outcomes of actions can impact the chances of those actions happening again. **Reinforcement** can be positive (providing rewards) or negative (imposing punishments).

**Self-efficacy** is a person's belief in their capability to accomplish a task. Self-efficacy can be shaped by personal encounters, observing others, and receiving input from peers.

**Mental processes** like focusing, recollection, and drive are significant in acquiring knowledge and conducting oneself. These mental activities can determine if a person observes a specific behaviour and how effectively they recall and imitate it.

**Reciprocal Determinism:** the Social Learning Theory proposes that behaviour, surroundings, and individual factors all interact in a two-way manner. In other words, behaviour can affect the surroundings, surroundings can impact behaviour, and individual factors can affect both behaviour and the surroundings.

Social and cultural **contexts** can influence behaviour. For instance, cultural customs and beliefs can impact appropriate or favourable actions.

Social learning theory underscores the importance of watching, copying, and imitating to acquire knowledge. According to this theory, individuals learn by observing others and the outcomes of their actions. Media literacy, on the other hand, can be seen as a method to implement the principles of social learning theory. It aids students in nurturing their critical thinking abilities regarding media messages. There are various connections between social learning theory and media literacy, and here are a few ways that exemplify it:

The social learning theory proposes that students can gain knowledge by watching others. Media literacy allows students to watch and assess media content, including media figures' actions and viewpoints. Through this method, students can develop the ability to identify and assess how media messages affect their beliefs and actions.

The social learning theory highlights the significance of modelling, which means showing a behaviour or attitude for others to copy. Media literacy can aid students in comprehending how media figures are depicted and the influence of these depictions on actual behaviour. For instance, media literacy can enable students to identify the impractical body ideals shown in media and inspire them to oppose them daily.

The social learning theory proposes that individuals tend to repeat actions that bring them positive rewards. Media literacy can assist students in comprehending why certain behaviours are depicted in media messages and the potential outcomes. This comprehension empowers students to make informed choices regarding embracing specific behaviours or attitudes.

According to social learning theory, individuals are inclined to participate in actions they think they can accomplish effectively. Media literacy aids students in boosting their self-assurance by offering chances to practise scrutinising and assessing media content. As a result, students can acquire the abilities and self-belief necessary to make well-considered choices regarding their media consumption.

## 6.6 COGNITIVE LEARNING THEORY

Cognitive Learning Theory is an educational theory that highlights the significance of mental processes in influencing behaviour. The key aspects of Cognitive Learning Theory include:

**Information processing:** Cognitive Learning Theory suggests that learning consists of working with information, which includes paying attention, perceiving, remembering, and solving problems.

People arrange and make sense of information using mental frameworks known as schemas. **Schemas** are thinking patterns that assist individuals in comprehending and classifying information.

The Cognitive Learning Theory presents the idea of **metacognition**, which relates to a person's understanding and management of their thinking processes. This involves observing, assessing, and adjusting one's cognitive actions.

Learning works best when it matters and makes sense to the learner. **Meaningful learning** occurs when you link new information to what you already know and comprehend.

The significance of **transfer** means using what you've learned before in fresh situations. To boost transfer, we can aid learners in linking their new knowledge with what they already know.

The significance of **feedback** during the learning journey. Feedback offers learners insights into their performance and assists them in adapting their learning methods.

Cognitive learning theory examines how people handle information to make choices and tackle issues. It asserts that learning happens in the mind through processes like sensing, focusing, remembering, and problem-solving. In media education, we can consider applying cognitive learning theory principles to enhance students' ability to think critically about media messages. Let's explore the connections between cognitive learning theory and media literacy.

Cognitive learning theory proposes that perception is an engaged procedure that includes picking, arranging, and comprehending sensory data. Media literacy aids students in nurturing critical thinking abilities related to perception by instructing them to identify various forms of media communications and grasp how these messages are crafted to attract audiences.

The cognitive learning theory proposes that attention is a finite resource that needs to be distributed among various tasks. Media literacy can aid students in enhancing their attention abilities concerning media by instructing them to concentrate on essential elements of media messages while disregarding distractions. According to cognitive learning theory, memory is an engaged process that includes encoding, storing, and recalling information. Media literacy can assist students in honing their memory skills regarding media by teaching them how to recall crucial information in media messages and identify common patterns in different media messages.

The cognitive learning theory proposes that problem-solving is an intricate procedure encompassing recognising a problem, creating potential answers, assessing the likely results of each answer, and picking the finest one. Media literacy can aid students in cultivating their media-related problem-solving abilities by instructing them to scrutinise and assess media messages, detect possible problems or concerns, and devise efficient remedies.

## 6.7 BRUNER'S SPIRAL CURRICULUM

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Jerome Bruner's Spiral Curriculum is an educational framework that underscores the significance of revisiting key concepts and ideas during the learning process. The primary characteristics of Bruner's Spiral Curriculum include:

Learning should follow a spiral path, where students revisit essential ideas and concepts at higher levels of sophistication. This is the idea of **conceptual progression**. This approach enables a deeper and more intricate comprehension of concepts as time progresses.

**Active learning**, where students should participate in tasks that demand advanced thinking abilities like problem-solving and critical thinking.

**Discovery learning**, wherein students are motivated to investigate and unearth fresh concepts and notions independently. This facilitates a more profound and enduring educational encounter.

**Multiple Representation** underscores the significance of employing various forms to illustrate concepts and thoughts, like visuals, sounds, and physical experiences, to accommodate diverse learning preferences and boost comprehension in academic settings.

**Scaffolding** involves educators offering assistance and direction to students while they grasp fresh concepts and notions. Scaffolding ensures that students can expand upon their current knowledge and comprehension.

Employing **real-life contexts** to assist students in grasping the significance and value of their learning is significant. This approach enhances the meaningfulness and attractiveness of learning for students.

Bruner's Spiral Curriculum is an educational concept that highlights the significance of using previous knowledge and personal experiences to aid learning. According to this theory, students should be exposed to intricate ideas progressively and organised, commencing with basic concepts and gradually advancing from there. Media literacy can be seen as an approach to implementing Bruner's Spiral Curriculum principles to assist students in honing their critical thinking abilities concerning media communications. Here are a few methods in which Bruner's Spiral Curriculum and media literacy are interconnected:

Bruner's Spiral Curriculum underscores the significance of using existing knowledge as a foundation for effective learning. Media literacy supports students in enhancing their critical thinking abilities concerning media by leveraging their previous media-related knowledge and experiences. To illustrate, students can progressively and systematically familiarise themselves with media literacy principles, commencing with basic ideas and steadily progressing to more advanced notions.

Bruner's Spiral Curriculum highlights the value of hands-on learning and investigation. Media literacy can prompt students to actively interact with media messages, critically assess them, and investigate diverse approaches to interpreting media content.

This emphasises the significance of discovery-based learning, encouraging students to independently explore and uncover fresh information. Media literacy can promote this type of learning by offering chances for students to investigate and unearth novel ways of understanding media texts.

Bruner's Spiral Curriculum underscores the importance of feedback in enhancing learning. Media literacy can offer students feedback regarding their comprehension of media messages, aiding them in grasping how these messages are crafted and can be deciphered from various perspectives.

### Check Your Progress: 1

**Notes:** 1) Use the space below for your answer.

2) Compare your answers with those given at the end of this unit.

1. What are behaviourism's fundamental concepts and underlying beliefs, and how can they be utilised in teaching media literacy?

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2. How does cognitivism explain the cognitive processes involved in media literacy learning, and what are some strategies for enhancing these processes?
- .....  
.....

Learning Theories and MIL

3. What are the main differences between constructivism and connectivism, and how can they inform the design and assessment of media literacy educational interventions?
- .....  
.....

## 6.8 BEHAVIOURISM LEARNING THEORY

Behaviourism is a learning theory that concentrates on visible actions and how rewards and penalties affect these actions. The key aspects of the Behaviorism learning theory include:

**Stimulus-response (S-R) Connections:** learning happens when a specific stimulus triggers a particular response, forming S-R connections.

The significance of using rewards or punishments, also known as reinforcement, to influence and repeat certain behaviours. **Reinforcement** can be positive (providing rewards) or negative (removing unpleasant stimuli).

The significance of **punishment** in moulding behaviour is that it reduces the chances of a behaviour reoccurring by introducing an unpleasant stimulus or taking away a positive one.

**Conditioning** is wherein behaviour is acquired by repeatedly connecting a specific stimulus to a specific reaction.

**Generalisation** happens when a reaction to one signal is also seen in response to similar signals. **Conversely, discrimination** occurs when a response is limited to the initial signal and doesn't extend to similar ones.

Behaviourism prioritises visible actions as the primary sign of learning (**observable actions**) instead of internal mental processes.

Behaviour is acquired by connecting actions to outcomes, which can either strengthen or weaken those actions. Although behaviourism isn't as frequently used in teaching media literacy as other theories, there are still methods to use behaviourist principles in media literacy education.

Behaviorism highlights the importance of reinforcement in moulding behaviour. When teaching media literacy, we can utilise positive feedback to motivate students to think critically about media content. To illustrate, educators or guardians can commend students for identifying and examining media content featuring stereotypes or false information.

Behaviourism highlights the importance of using consequences to decrease undesired actions. These consequences can be applied to dissuade students from thoughtlessly consuming media content in teaching media literacy. To illustrate, guardians should

restrict students' media access if they exhibit a deficiency in critical thinking while consuming media content.

Behaviorism posits that learning behaviour occurs when individuals observe and imitate others. In media literacy education, students can acquire critical thinking abilities by watching and imitating those who exhibit these skills. Such role models may encompass educators, guardians, or fellow students who critically examine media content.

Behaviourism proposes that when a stimulus is encountered repeatedly, it can lead to habituation, a situation where the reaction to the stimulus weakens with time. In media literacy education, students can be instructed to carefully examine media messages to prevent habituation. This enables them to uphold their capacity to identify and evaluate media messages featuring stereotypes or other concerning content.

Behaviorism isn't the most widely used learning theory in media literacy education. However, certain aspects of behaviourism can be beneficial in fostering critical thinking abilities concerning media content. By employing positive encouragement, penalties, observational learning, and habituation, media literacy education can support students in becoming more knowledgeable and accountable media consumers.

## 6.9 CONSTRUCTIVISM LEARNING THEORY

Constructivism highlights how learners actively build knowledge and comprehension. The key aspects of the Constructivism learning theory include:

**Active Learning:** Constructivism suggests that learning is a dynamic activity where individuals build their knowledge and comprehension by actively engaging with their surroundings and experiences.

**Social Interaction:** Constructivism underscores the significance of social engagement and cooperation in learning. Learning is viewed as a social endeavour in which people collaborate to create meaning and understanding.

**Prior Knowledge:** Constructivism recognises the significance of what one already knows and has encountered in the process of learning. Individuals use their existing knowledge and insights to form fresh understanding.

**Multiple Perspective:** Constructivism suggests that various viewpoints and explanations for knowledge exist, and learners shape their comprehension according to their individual experiences and points of view.

**Problem-solving:** Constructivism highlights the significance of solving problems and engaging in inquiry-based learning. Students are prompted to actively find answers to issues and pose inquiries to build their comprehension.

**Contextual Learning:** Constructivism underscores the value of learning in a relevant context. When learning is connected to real-life experiences, students are more inclined to create meaningful knowledge and understanding.

Learning involves creating **mental frameworks** using the learner's knowledge, past experiences, and interactions with others. Constructivism can find application in teaching media literacy through various methods:

**Active Learning:** Constructivism highlights the significance of hands-on learning, where learners actively participate in forming their comprehension of the world. Media literacy

education entails motivating students to actively interact with media content, critically assess it, and develop their comprehension by drawing on their existing knowledge and experiences.

**Social Interaction:** Constructivism underscores the value of social involvement in the learning journey. In media literacy education, this implies urging students to converse and exchange their interpretations of media content with others, participating in social interactions that enhance their grasp of the messages.

Constructivism highlights the significance of creating **mental models**, which are inner depictions of a student's grasp of a specific concept or notion. In media literacy education, students are urged to construct mental representations of how media messages come together, encompassing the methods employed to convince or impact the viewers.

**Reflective Thinking:** Constructivism highlights the significance of thoughtful reflection, in which students contemplate their learning journey and assess their comprehension. In media literacy education, this entails motivating students to ponder their grasp of media messages, appraise their analytical abilities, and pinpoint areas for enhancement.

Media literacy education can enable students to become better informed and more discerning media message consumers by involving them in active, cooperative, and thoughtful learning encounters.

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## 6.10 HUMANISM LEARNING THEORY

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Humanism is a teaching approach centred on recognising and nurturing each student's distinct attributes and capabilities. The primary characteristics of the Humanism learning theory include:

Humanism emphasises the **learner as the focal point** of the educational journey. It regards learning as a distinct and personal encounter that varies for every learner.

Humanism highlights the significance of **self-directed learning**, promoting learners to take charge of their education and establish their objectives.

Humanism underscores the significance of individual progress. Education is regarded as a means to foster **personal development** and enable learners to recognise their capabilities.

Creating a **favourable learning setting** is crucial in Humanism. It underscores the significance of establishing a supportive, non-critical atmosphere that motivates students to venture into fresh ideas and embrace risks.

Humanism highlights the value of **experiential learning**, where students are urged to gain knowledge through hands-on experiences and thoughtful contemplation.

Humanism highlights the significance of **holistic learning**, urging learners to ponder the interrelationship between various knowledge domains. It views learning as a means to foster personal advancement and progress across all facets of one's life.

In media literacy education, humanism can be employed in various ways:

**Personalisation:** Humanism underscores the significance of tailoring the learning experience to individual learners, considering their needs and interests. In media literacy

education, this entails encouraging students to investigate media content that relates to their own lives and passions and to analyse such content in a significant and pertinent manner.

Humanism highlights the significance of **self-guided learning**, wherein the learner assumes accountability for their learning journey. In media literacy instruction, this implies motivating students to proactively engage in their learning by discovering and scrutinising media content that holds personal meaning and pertinence to their lives.

**Emphasising emotions:** Humanism gives special attention to emotions regarding learning. It acknowledges that emotions can strongly influence motivation and learning. In media literacy education, students are urged to examine their emotional responses to media content and to thoughtfully assess the emotional tactics employed in media messages.

Humanism highlights the significance of **holistic growth**, understanding that education should encompass academic knowledge and the nurturing of the entire individual. In media literacy education, this implies urging students to scrutinise media communications while considering their principles, convictions, and life encounters and ponder how media messages might affect their overall welfare.

By involving students in personalised, self-guided, emotionally engaging media literacy instruction, with a strong emphasis on overall growth, we can assist them in becoming better-informed, discerning, and accountable users of media content.

## 6.11 CONNECTIVISM LEARNING THEORY

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Connectivism highlights the significance of networks, links, and technological tools in learning. The key characteristics of the Connectivism theory include:

**Networked Learning:** Learning happens via networks and connections rather than solely through individual experience or guidance.

**Technology:** It grants learners access to information, resources, and networks.

**Distributed Cognition:** Knowledge is spread among groups of people and technology rather than being confined only to one person's thoughts.

**Lifelong Learning:** Continuous learning and adjusting to shifts in a fast-evolving world.

**Personal Learning Networks:** Learners should actively create and sustain personal learning connections involving people and materials to aid their learning.

**Openness:** It is the significance of being open in learning, which includes readily available information, resources, and connections, along with a willingness to exchange knowledge and thoughts with others.

Connectivism is an educational theory highlighting the significance of links and networks in learning. It proposes that learning isn't solely an individual activity but a social one where knowledge is formed and exchanged through networks. Connectivism can be put into practice in various ways when teaching media literacy.

Connectivism highlights the significance of networked learning, where students interact with each other and various learning materials through different platforms and situations. In media literacy education, this implies motivating students to interact with diverse

Connectivism emphasises the need to thoroughly assess sources, understanding that some sources are more dependable than others. In media education, this entails urging students to critically assess media origins, considering elements like prejudice, standpoint, and expertise while gauging the trustworthiness of information conveyed in media communications.

Connectivism acknowledges that technology is a potent instrument for generating and disseminating knowledge through networks. In media literacy education, students are urged to use technology to interact with media content, produce their own content, and convey their insights and awareness of media messages to others.

Connectivism underscores the significance of lifelong learning, acknowledging that learning is an ongoing journey that lasts a lifetime. Media literacy instruction implies motivating students to cultivate the abilities and mental approaches needed to persistently learn about media as they encounter fresh technologies and media channels over time.

Connectivism offers a structure for teaching media literacy, focusing on networked learning, critically analysing sources, utilising technology, and continuous learning. When we involve students in media literacy education that considers the interconnectedness of media networks, the significance of critically assessing sources, and the role of technology in generating and disseminating knowledge, we can enable them to develop into better-informed, discerning, and accountable consumers and creators of media content.

### **Check Your Progress: 2**

**Notes:** 1) Use the space below for your answer.

2) Compare your answers with those given at the end of this unit.

1. How can the principles of humanism guide the creation of media literacy programs that focus on learner's interests, needs, and experiences?

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2. How can we apply the principles of social learning theory to foster collaborative and participatory media literacy learning environments?

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3. What are some examples of media literacy educational interventions that incorporate multiple learning theories, and how effective are they?

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## **6.12 PEDAGOGICAL APPROACHES**

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*(Instructions for the course counsellors)*

In an academic setting, both teachers and students can form groups. Each group is tasked with producing short, 5-minute videos they create, possibly using a smartphone

or computer software. These videos are then presented, followed by a structured discussion. Participants, whether educators or learners, are expected to respond to the following questions:

- What are the main components of the theory?
- What are its focus and strengths?
- How does it differ or relate to at least one theory?
- What are its weaknesses?
- Can educators or learners give at least one real-life example where they have seen this theory add value to their education or learning process?
- What might be missing from the theory or model?
- How do you think MIL can help?
- Are there any other theories of interest?

Develop a lesson plan or outline for a curriculum unit that incorporates the strategies and activities mentioned in this Unit. Consider developing a stand-alone lesson/outline in MIL or a lesson/outline that integrates MIL into an existing course. Identify the key considerations/accommodations educators need for learners to demonstrate these skills successfully.

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## 6.13 LET US SUM UP

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Learning theories are structured models that aid in comprehending how individuals grasp information, whereas media literacy pertains to accessing, examining, assessing, and crafting media content. Investigating learning theories and media literacy holds significance as it enables us to formulate efficient approaches for fostering discerning thinking and responsible conduct when interacting with and generating media content.

Several important theories about learning are useful in teaching media literacy. These theories include behaviourism, cognitive learning, constructivism, social learning, humanism, and connectivism. Each of these theories offers a unique view of how people learn and has significant implications for teaching media literacy. By using these theories in media literacy education, we can assist people in acquiring the abilities and information required to navigate the ever-changing world of media effectively.

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## 6.14 KEYWORDS

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**Behaviourism** : Behaviourism is a learning theory that emphasises the role of external stimuli and rewards in shaping behaviour.

**Cognitive learning theory** : Cognitive learning theory emphasises the importance of mental processes in the learning process, including attention, perception, memory, and problem-solving.

**Constructivism** : Constructivism is a learning theory that emphasises the importance of learners constructing their knowledge and understanding through active engagement with the material.

**Social learning theory** : Social learning theory emphasises the role of social interactions and modelling in the learning process.

**Humanism** : Humanism is a learning theory that emphasises the unique qualities of individual learners, such as their emotions, experiences, and beliefs, and their capacity for self-directed learning.

**Connectivism** : Connectivism is a learning theory that emphasises the importance of connections and networks in learning.

Learning Theories and MIL

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## 6.15 FURTHER READINGS

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## 6.16 CHECK YOUR PROGRESS: POSSIBLE ANSWERS

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### Check Your Progress: 1

1. Behaviorism underscores the significance of conditioning and rewards in moulding behaviour. Implementing behaviourism in media literacy education involves using incentives and penalties to motivate students to participate in media analysis and production activities. To illustrate, offering praise or rewards for finishing media projects can strengthen desired behaviours, while offering criticism or withholding rewards can deter unwanted behaviours.

2. Cognitivism looks at how our minds work when we learn, like paying attention, understanding things, remembering, and solving problems. In media literacy teaching, you can use cognitivism by using methods that improve these mental processes, like using pictures, getting students involved, breaking information into smaller parts, and giving feedback and help to help students learn better.
3. Constructivism underscores the significance of learners actively building their understanding by engaging with their surroundings. In contrast, connectivism underscores the value of interconnected learning and the capacity to retrieve and assess data in digital settings. These concepts can shape the planning and evaluation of media literacy educational efforts by highlighting the significance of learners' pre-existing knowledge, the necessity for social engagement and teamwork, and the importance of nurturing critical thinking abilities for appraising information from diverse origins.

### **Check Your Progress: 2**

1. Humanism underscores the significance of learners' interests, requirements, and personal encounters in shaping their learning journeys. In media literacy education, humanism can guide the creation of educational plans that precede learners' interests and offer opportunities to contemplate their experiences, linking them to the analysis and production of media content. For instance, urging learners to craft media projects mirroring their encounters and viewpoints can foster a connection with the material and cultivate a feeling of ownership over their education.
2. Social learning theory highlights the value of social interaction and role modelling in shaping behaviour. This theory can be applied in media literacy education by establishing cooperative and participatory learning settings that motivate learners to engage and glean insights from one another's experiences. For instance, group assignments or peer review procedures can prompt learners to share their ideas and perspectives, facilitating learning through feedback exchange.
3. Instances of media literacy educational strategies that incorporate multiple learning theories encompass using multimedia elements to offer visual and auditory cues that bolster learners' concentration and memory, employing social media platforms to promote collaboration and interaction among learners, and implementing gamification tactics to furnish incentives and feedback that reinforce desirable conduct. The efficacy of these approaches may vary depending on the particular circumstances and the needs and interests of the learners.

# **UNIT 7 ENABLING ENVIRONMENT FOR MIL IN LEARNING SPACES**

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## **Structure**

- 7.0 Introduction
- 7.1 Learning Outcomes
- 7.2 Global Experiences of MIL Educational Intervention
- 7.3 Experiences of MIL Training in Europe
  - 7.3.1 European Schoolnet
  - 7.3.2 Media Literacy Network
  - 7.3.3 Digital Competence Framework
  - 7.3.4 National Media Literacy Programs of Europe
- 7.4 Tracing Experiences of MIL Education in North America
  - 7.4.1 Media Literacy Experiments in Canada
  - 7.4.2 Media Literacy Experiments in the USA
- 7.5 Asian Experiences of MIL Training
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  - 7.5.2 Media Literacy Experiments in South Korea
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  - 7.6.2 Prague Declaration “Towards an Information Literate Society”
  - 7.6.3 Alexandria Proclamation on Information Literacy and Lifelong Learning
  - 7.6.4 Fez Declaration on Media and Information Literacy
  - 7.6.5 Paris Declaration on Media and Information Literacy in the Digital Era
  - 7.6.6 Moscow Declaration on Media and Information Literacy
  - 7.6.7 Belgrade Declaration of UNESCO on Media and Information Literacy
- 7.7 Let Us Sum Up
- 7.8 Further Readings
- 7.9 Check Your Progress: Possible Answers

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## **7.0 INTRODUCTION**

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Media literacy training aims to teach children, students, and young people how to access accurate information, critically analyse and evaluate media messages, and participate responsibly in society-wide communication processes. By doing so, they can become informed and active consumers or producers of media content. The importance of media literacy training has increased worldwide due to the proliferation of media platforms and the rise of disinformation and fake news. With the democratisation of access to media and information through technology, participation in media has become more accessible to the general public.

This unit will explore media literacy educational interventions from various global contexts, including Europe, North America, and Asia. We will analyse these interventions' goals, methods, and outcomes and evaluate their effectiveness. We will examine case studies and examples from various regions to comprehensively understand media literacy education. We will assess the impact of these interventions and compare their outcomes to identify the most successful strategies. We will discuss the importance of adapting media literacy education to local contexts, including cultural, social, and political factors. We will examine the contributions of government agencies, educational institutions, civil society organisations, and media outlets. We will explore practical strategies for implementing media literacy education daily.

You will deeply understand media literacy education from a global perspective. You will be able to apply the principles of media literacy education to your context and develop strategies for promoting media literacy in your community.

Throughout this unit, we will explore educational interventions from various global contexts, focusing on Europe, North America, and Asia. In addition to examining these experiences, we will also delve into the ongoing efforts to standardise media literacy training interventions in education.

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## 7.1 LEARNING OUTCOMES

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After reading the unit, you will be able to:

- to identify and analyse media literacy educational interventions from different global contexts, including Europe, North America, and Asia;
- to evaluate the effectiveness of different media literacy educational interventions based on their goals, methods, and outcomes;
- to identify the challenges and opportunities in designing and implementing media literacy educational interventions in different global contexts. They will be able to understand the importance of adapting media literacy educational interventions to local contexts, including cultural, social, and political factors;
- to recognise the role of different stakeholders, including government agencies, educational institutions, civil society organisations, and media outlets, in designing, implementing, and evaluating media literacy educational interventions; and
- to apply the principles of media literacy education to their contexts, including their own media consumption and production practices.

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## 7.2 GLOBAL EXPERIENCES OF MIL EDUCATIONAL INTERVENTION

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Media literacy educational intervention has become a critical issue worldwide in recent years. The rise of disinformation and fake news, as well as the proliferation of media platforms, has made it increasingly important for individuals to access accurate information, critically analyse and evaluate media messages, and participate responsibly in society-wide communication processes. Various organisations, educational institutions, and media outlets have implemented media literacy training programs to address this

issue. These programs aim to educate individuals on how media messages are constructed, how they can influence public opinion, and how to identify and evaluate bias and propaganda.

In Europe, media literacy education has been a key component of the European Union's media policy since 2007. The EU's Media Literacy Strategy aims to promote media literacy as a lifelong learning skill and to support the development of high-quality media literacy initiatives across the EU. Many European countries have developed media literacy initiatives, including the UK's Media Smart program, which provides primary schools with free teaching materials and resources.

In North America, media literacy education has been integrated into school curricula in many states and provinces. For example, the Ontario Ministry of Education has included media literacy as a key component of its Language curriculum, and the US National Association for Media Literacy Education has developed standards for media literacy education in K-12 schools. Media literacy organisations such as the Media Education Lab at the University of Rhode Island and the Center for Media Literacy in California have developed media literacy resources and professional development opportunities for teachers.

Media literacy education is gaining importance in Asia, especially in countries like Japan, South Korea, and China. In Japan, media literacy education has been integrated into the country's national curriculum since 2013, and the government has launched various media literacy initiatives, including establishing a media literacy promotion council. In South Korea, media literacy education is included in the country's national middle and high school curriculum. In China, media literacy education is part of the country's media regulations and has been included in its national curriculum standards.

Now, let us trace the experiences of media and information literacy education interventions from specific regional/country perspectives. These are just a few examples of media literacy experiments across the world. These initiatives aim to equip people with the skills to critically evaluate media messages and make informed decisions in an increasingly complex and ever-changing media environment.

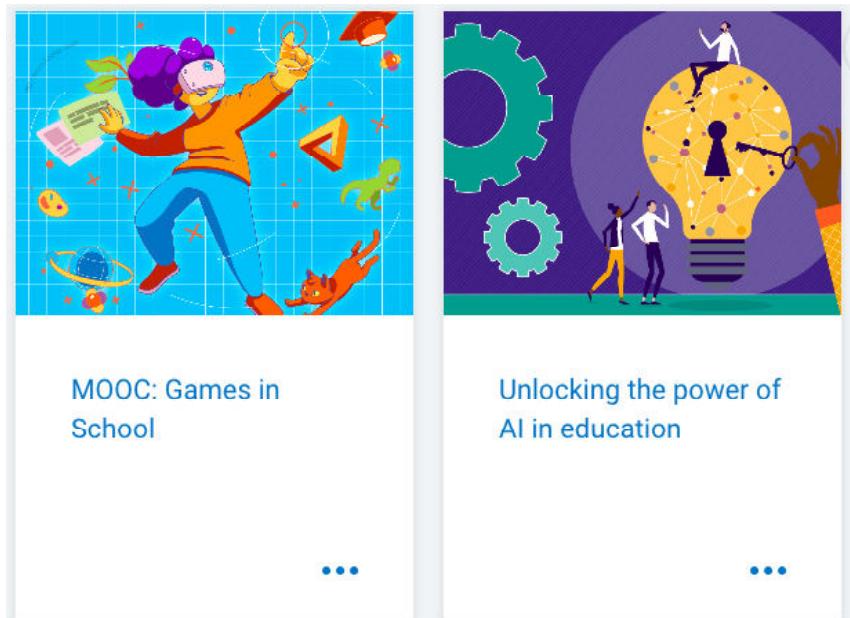
## **7.3 EXPERIENCES OF MIL TRAINING IN EUROPE**

In Europe, media literacy programs are often integrated into formal education systems, focusing on digital competencies and critical thinking skills. The European Schoolnet runs several initiatives to promote media literacy. In Europe, media literacy experiments promote media literacy skills and critical thinking among the general public, especially with the rise of digital and online media.

These initiatives aim to empower European citizens to make informed decisions about the media they consume and to participate responsibly and critically in a digital and interconnected world.

### **7.3.1 European Schoolnet**

European Schoolnet (EUN) is a network of European Ministries of Education, established in 1997 to support the development of e-learning in schools across Europe. The organisation is headquartered in Brussels, Belgium, and it promotes innovation and best practices in education, focusing on the use of digital technologies in the classroom.



*Figure 1: Media literacy for education (Source: <http://www.eun.org/>)*

One of the key areas of focus for European Schoolnet is media literacy. The organisation runs several initiatives to promote media literacy among students and teachers, including the “Media and Information Literacy for Teachers” program. This program provides training and resources to educators to help them integrate media literacy education into their teaching and to support students in developing critical thinking and digital competencies.

European Schoolnet also provides a platform for collaboration and exchanging ideas and best practices between educators and policymakers. The organisation works closely with other stakeholders, including industry and academia, to develop and promote innovative approaches to media literacy education.

### 7.3.2 Media Literacy Network

The Media Literacy Network (MLN) of Europe is a network of organisations and experts working to promote media literacy across the continent. The network was established to provide a platform for collaboration and exchanging ideas and best practices between media literacy practitioners and researchers.

The MLN promotes media literacy education and advocacy in Europe, empowering people to critically evaluate media messages and make informed decisions in an increasingly complex and rapidly changing media landscape. The network works closely with other stakeholders, including governments, media organisations, and industry, to promote media literacy and digital competencies.

The MLN provides various resources and support to media literacy practitioners, including training, research and development, and policy advocacy. The network collaborates with other media literacy organisations, including the European Schoolnet, to promote integrating media literacy education into formal and informal learning environments.

### 7.3.3 Digital Competence Framework

The Digital Competence Framework (DCF) was developed by the European Commission to outline the skills and competencies required for digital citizenship and

media literacy in Europe. The DCF guides educators and policymakers to help equip citizens with the skills they need to participate in a digital society.



Figure 2: The Digital competency framework

(Source: <https://publications.jrc.ec.europa.eu/repository/handle/JRC128415>)

The DCF comprises five core competencies: information and data literacy, communication and collaboration, digital content creation, safety and security, and problem-solving and decision-making. These competencies are further broken down into specific skills and knowledge areas that individuals need to master to be considered digitally competent.

The DCF is designed to be flexible and adaptable, and it can be adapted and customised to meet the needs of different countries, regions, and communities. The framework is based on the idea that digital competencies are essential for full participation in the digital society and that everyone, regardless of age, background, or location, should be able to develop these skills.

### 7.3.4 National Media Literacy Programs of Europe

Many European countries have established national media literacy programs to promote the development of critical thinking and digital competencies among their citizens. These programs vary in scope and focus, but they all aim to empower people to critically evaluate media messages and make informed decisions in an increasingly complex and rapidly changing media landscape.

For example, in the United Kingdom, the government has established a national media literacy strategy to promote the development of media literacy skills and competencies among young people. The strategy includes a range of initiatives, including teacher training programs and media literacy education resources for schools.

In France, the national media literacy program promotes media literacy and digital competencies among young people, focusing on integrating media literacy education into the formal education system. The program includes teacher training programs, student workshops, and the developing of media literacy resources and tools.

Similarly, in Germany, the national media literacy program promotes media literacy skills and competencies among young people, developing critical thinking and digital competencies. The program includes teacher training programs, student workshops, and the developing of media literacy resources and tools.

In each of these countries, the national media literacy programs are designed to promote the development of media literacy skills and competencies among citizens, focusing on empowering them to participate in the digital society responsibly and critically. The government and other stakeholders support the programs, and they are seen as an important tool for promoting digital citizenship and media literacy across Europe.

### Check Your Progress: 1

**Note:** 1) Use the space below for your answers.

2) Compare your answers with those given at the end of this unit.

1. What is the purpose of media literacy educational interventions?

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2. Why has the importance of media literacy training increased worldwide?

.....

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3. What are some challenges and opportunities in designing and implementing media literacy educational interventions?

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4. Why is it important to adapt media literacy educational interventions to local contexts?

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## 7.4 TRACING EXPERIENCES OF MIL EDUCATION IN NORTH AMERICA

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### 7.4.1 Media Literacy Experiments in Canada

Canada has a strong tradition of promoting media literacy and digital competencies among its citizens. Several initiatives and programs are aimed at promoting media literacy and digital competencies across the country.

For example, the Canadian government has established a national media literacy strategy to promote the development of critical thinking and digital competencies among young people. The strategy includes a range of initiatives, including teacher training programs and media literacy education resources for schools.

Another important initiative is the Canadian Centre for Digital and Media Literacy (CCDML), a national organisation that promotes media literacy and digital competencies across Canada. The CCDML provides various resources and support to media literacy practitioners and educators, including training, research, and policy advocacy.

In addition, there are several media literacy organisations and initiatives in Canada that are focused on promoting media literacy and digital competencies, including MediaSmarts, which is a Canadian non-profit organisation dedicated to promoting media literacy among young people, and the Media Awareness Network, which is a national organisation dedicated to promoting media literacy education in Canada.

### National Media Literacy Strategy Of Canada

The National Media Literacy Strategy of Canada is an initiative established by the Canadian government to promote the development of critical thinking and digital competencies among its citizens. The strategy is designed to help equip citizens with the skills they need to participate in the digital society responsibly and critically, and it includes a range of initiatives aimed at promoting media literacy and digital competencies across the country.

The strategy includes initiatives such as teacher training programs, media literacy education resources for schools and research and policy advocacy to promote media literacy. The government works with various stakeholders, including media literacy organisations, educators, and industry partners, to implement the strategy and achieve its goals.

### Canadian Centre for Digital and Media Literacy

The Canadian Centre for Digital and Media Literacy (CCDML) is a national organisation promoting media literacy and digital competencies across Canada. It is a non-profit organisation that works with various stakeholders, including government agencies, educators, industry partners, and media literacy organisations, to promote media literacy and digital competencies in Canada. The CCDML provides various resources and support to media literacy practitioners and educators, including training, research, and policy advocacy.

The CCDML also researches media literacy and its impact on individuals, communities, and society. The organisation's research focuses on digital citizenship, media consumption habits, and the effectiveness of media literacy education. The findings of this research are used to inform the development of new media literacy resources and programs.

Another important activity of the CCDML is advocacy. The organisation advocates for policies and practices that support digital and media literacy education in Canada. This includes advocating for media literacy to be integrated into school curricula and working to ensure that media literacy education is accessible to individuals from diverse backgrounds.

### 7.4.2 Media Literacy Experiments In the USA

The United States has a long history of promoting media literacy and digital competencies, and several initiatives and programs are aimed at promoting these skills and competencies across the country.

For example, the National Association for Media Literacy Education (NAMLE) is a non-profit organisation promoting media literacy education in the United States. NAMLE provides various resources and support to media literacy practitioners and educators, including professional development opportunities, research and policy advocacy, and school media literacy education resources.

Another important initiative is the Digital Promise League of Innovative Schools, a network of K-12 schools in the United States working to promote digital competencies

and media literacy among their students. The League provides its member schools professional development opportunities, resources, and tools to support integrating digital competencies and media literacy into their curricula.

In addition, there are several media literacy organisations and initiatives in the United States that are focused on promoting media literacy and digital competencies, including the Media Literacy Project, which is a non-profit organisation dedicated to promoting media literacy education and advocacy, and Common Sense Media, which is a national organisation dedicated to promoting safe and responsible media and technology use by children and families.

## 7.5 ASIAN EXPERIENCES OF MIL TRAINING

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Various organisations and educational institutions have implemented media literacy experiments in Asia to promote critical thinking, responsible use of media, and digital citizenship. Here are some examples of media literacy experiments in different countries across Asia.

### 7.5.1 Media Literacy Experiments In Japan

Media literacy has been a topic of growing importance in Japan in recent years. The government has recognised the need to promote media literacy education to help citizens better navigate the increasingly complex media landscape. In 2020, the government announced a new plan to strengthen media literacy education in schools to enhance citizens' ability to critically evaluate information and understand the implications of media in society.

Media literacy education in Japan has been primarily focused on schools, with the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT) leading efforts to promote it in the curriculum. In 2018, MEXT revised the curriculum guidelines for elementary, middle, and high schools to include media literacy as a key component of the education system.

Several initiatives by non-governmental organisations and academic institutions also aim to promote media literacy in Japan. For example, the Japan Association for Media and Communication Studies (JAMCS) holds an annual conference on media literacy, which brings together academics, media professionals, and policymakers to discuss the latest research and developments in the field.

In addition, the Japanese government has partnered with UNESCO to promote media and information literacy (MIL) in the Asia-Pacific region. Japan has hosted several MIL-related events, which brought together policymakers, educators, and media professionals to discuss the role of MIL in building sustainable and inclusive cities.

Despite these efforts, media literacy education in Japan still faces challenges. One of the biggest obstacles is the lack of teacher training in media literacy. Many teachers feel ill-equipped to teach media literacy and may lack the resources or support to do so effectively. In addition, there is a need to address the digital divide in Japan, which can limit access to information and exacerbate existing inequalities.

### 7.5.2 Media Literacy Experiments In South Korea

South Korea has actively promoted media literacy among its citizens, especially young

people. The government has implemented various policies and programs to improve the media literacy of the population.

One significant initiative is the Media Literacy Education Certification Program for Teachers, launched in 2012. This program trains teachers to incorporate media literacy education into their teaching, helping students learn how to analyse and evaluate media content critically. The program also includes online courses, workshops, and conferences to keep educators updated with the latest developments in media literacy.

Another program that has been implemented is the Smart Media Education Program. This program aims to promote media literacy among children and teenagers by providing tools to help them navigate and critically analyse digital media content. The program also provides training for parents and teachers to help them teach children how to use digital media safely and responsibly.

The Korean government has also invested in developing a media literacy curriculum and resources. The Ministry of Education has developed a media literacy curriculum for primary and secondary schools, including media ethics, copyright laws, and online privacy. The curriculum is designed to teach students how to access, analyse, and create media content effectively.

The government has also created media literacy campaigns with media organisations and NGOs. For example 2016, the Korea Communications Commission launched the “Digital Citizenship Campaign” to promote safe and responsible internet use among young people. The campaign included public service announcements, educational materials, and workshops for parents and teachers.

### **7.5.3 Media Literacy Experiments In Singapore**

Singapore has been actively promoting media literacy through various initiatives and programs in recent years. The Media Literacy Council (MLC) was established in 2012 as a collaborative platform between the government, industry, and community to champion media literacy in Singapore.

One of the main initiatives by the MLC is the Better Internet Campaign, which aims to promote responsible online behaviour and digital citizenship. The campaign includes educational resources and workshops for students, parents, and educators. The MLC also partners with schools and organisations to conduct media literacy workshops and seminars.

In addition, the MLC launched the “Be Internet Citizens” program in partnership with Google, aimed at teaching teenagers how to be responsible and safe online. The program covers online hate speech, misinformation, and privacy. Another notable initiative is the Media Literacy Council’s annual “Better Internet” conference, which brings together experts, policymakers, and stakeholders to discuss the latest trends and challenges in the digital landscape. The conference provides a platform for sharing best practices and exchanging ideas on how to promote media literacy in Singapore.

The government has also implemented policies to promote media literacy. For example, the Ministry of Education has introduced media literacy as part of the national curriculum for primary and secondary schools. Students learn about critical thinking, digital citizenship, and online safety. Moreover, various organisations and non-governmental entities have also launched media literacy initiatives. For example, the Media Literacy

Council partners with the National Library Board to conduct media literacy workshops and talks for the general public.

#### **7.5.4 Media Literacy Experiments In China**

China has recently tried to promote media literacy, especially as digital media and technology rapidly develop and shape society. The Chinese government has implemented several initiatives to educate the public on media literacy and encourage responsible media consumption.

One of the primary initiatives is including media literacy education in the national curriculum for primary and secondary schools. The Ministry of Education introduced media literacy in the national curriculum in 2018. The curriculum includes media ethics, digital citizenship, and critical thinking. The goal is to equip students with the necessary skills to navigate the media landscape responsibly and informally.

Additionally, the government has launched several campaigns and initiatives to promote media literacy among the general public. For example, the China Internet Network Information Center (CNNIC) launched the “Media Literacy in China” campaign in 2019. The campaign aims to educate Chinese citizens on identifying fake news, misinformation, and propaganda in online media.

Furthermore, various media literacy training programs have been implemented in China. For instance, the China Media Academy offers courses on media literacy to media professionals, journalists, and educators. The courses cover media ethics, media laws, and media regulation.

Moreover, various organisations and non-governmental entities have also launched media literacy initiatives. For example, the China Association for Science and Technology (CAST) launched the “Science Communication for All” program, which includes media literacy training for students and the general public.

#### **7.5.5 Media Literacy Experiments In India**

Media literacy training in India has gained significant attention in recent years due to the rapid expansion of media platforms and increasing concerns over disinformation and fake news. The government of India has taken initiatives to promote media literacy in the country. In 2019, the National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) issued guidelines for media literacy education in schools. The guidelines suggest integrating media literacy concepts and skills into the existing curriculum, providing teacher training in media literacy, and creating a safe and inclusive learning environment for students.

Several non-governmental organisations (NGOs) have also taken the initiative to promote media literacy in India. For example, the Internet and Mobile Association of India (IAMAI) launched the ‘Digital Literacy for Women’ campaign to educate women on digital and media literacy skills, particularly in rural areas. The Center for Media Literacy and Digital Citizenship (CMLDC) has also developed media literacy modules for students and teachers, providing them with resources and tools to critically evaluate media content.

There are also media literacy initiatives at the state level. For example, the state government of Maharashtra has launched a program called ‘Media Literacy and Ethics

in Schools' to provide media literacy training to students, teachers, and parents. The program aims to equip participants with the skills to evaluate media content and understand its impact on society.

Despite the efforts made by the government and NGOs, there are still challenges in promoting media literacy in India. The country's vast population has diverse cultural, linguistic, and socioeconomic backgrounds, making it challenging to develop a comprehensive media literacy program catering to all groups. Furthermore, there is a lack of awareness among the general public about media literacy, and more efforts are needed to raise awareness and promote media literacy education at all levels.

## 7.6 GLOBAL CONVENTIONS FOR MIL TRAINING

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Media literacy education has gained increasing attention recently as the media landscape has rapidly evolved with new technologies and platforms. As a result, various global conventions and standards have been developed to promote media literacy education and ensure its integration into educational policies and curricula.

These conventions and standards aim to address the challenges of the fast-paced media environment and help individuals develop the skills and knowledge necessary to critically analyse and evaluate media content, communicate effectively, and engage in informed civic participation. They provide a framework for governments, educational institutions, media professionals, and civil society organisations to work together towards promoting media literacy education.

Some of the key conventions and standards on media literacy education include the Grunwald Declaration on Media Education, the Prague Declaration "Towards an Information Literate Society", the Alexandria Proclamation on Information Literacy and Lifelong Learning, the Fez Declaration on Media and Information Literacy, the Paris Declaration on Media and Information Literacy in the Digital Era, the Moscow Declaration on Media and Information Literacy, and the Belgrade Declaration of UNESCO on Media and Information Literacy. These documents outline the importance of media literacy education and guidance on how it can be integrated into education policies, curricula, and programs.

### 7.6.1 Grunwald Declaration on Media Education

The Grunwald Declaration on Media Education is a statement that outlines the importance of media education for individuals and society. It emphasises the importance of media education for empowering individuals and building inclusive and informed societies. It was adopted in Grunwald, Germany, in 1982 and is considered an important landmark in media education.

The declaration outlines the principles and recommendations for promoting media education, recognising its role in fostering critical thinking and media literacy skills among individuals. It highlights the importance of media education in creating informed and responsible citizens, promoting inclusiveness and diversity, and countering disinformation and media manipulation.

The Grunwald Declaration calls for integrating media education into formal and non-formal education systems and encourages interdisciplinary and inter-sectoral collaboration in promoting media education. It also stresses the importance of

researching, evaluating, and disseminating best practices in media education. It recognises media education as a human right and an important element of democratic societies.

The points outlined in this policy document emphasise the need to initiate and support comprehensive media education programs at all levels of education, including adult education. The focus should be on developing critical awareness and competence among media users through analysing media products, using media as a means of creative expression, and effectively using media channels. Training courses for teachers and intermediaries should also be developed to increase their knowledge and understanding of the media and appropriate teaching methods. There is also a need to stimulate research and development activities for media education and support actions undertaken by UNESCO for international cooperation in media education.

### **7.6.2 Prague Declaration “Towards an Information Literate Society”**

The Prague Declaration “Towards an Information Literate Society” is a document that was adopted by the European Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (EFLA) in 2003. The declaration emphasises the importance of information literacy as a key competence for full participation in a democratic society and individual and social development. It calls for developing information literacy skills and competencies through education and lifelong learning opportunities and promoting information literacy in all sectors of society, including education, business, and government.

The policy document highlights the importance of creating an Information Society for social, cultural, and economic development in the 21st century and beyond. Information literacy is crucial for effectively participating in the Information Society, and it encompasses identifying, locating, evaluating, organising, creating, using, and communicating information to address issues or problems. Information literacy, access to essential information and effective use of ICT can reduce inequities and promote tolerance and mutual understanding. Governments should develop interdisciplinary programs tailored to specific needs and contexts to promote information literacy nationwide. Information Literacy should be integral to Education for All, contributing to achieving the United Nations Millennium Development Goals and respecting the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

### **7.6.3 Alexandria Proclamation on Information Literacy and Lifelong Learning**

The Alexandria Proclamation on Information Literacy and Lifelong Learning is a statement that was adopted by the UNESCO General Conference in 2005. The Proclamation recognises the importance of information literacy as a key component of lifelong learning in the digital age. It highlights the need for individuals to develop the skills and competencies necessary to access, evaluate, use, and create information effectively and responsibly in all aspects of their lives.

The Alexandria Proclamation emphasises the role of information literacy in empowering individuals and communities to participate fully in the information society and to make informed decisions about their lives. It also acknowledges the importance of partnerships between educators, the government, and other stakeholders in promoting information literacy and lifelong learning.

The Proclamation calls for integrating information literacy into formal and non-formal education systems and developing national and international initiatives to promote information literacy. It also stresses the importance of ongoing professional development for educators to ensure they have the skills and knowledge necessary to teach information literacy effectively.

The declaration describes various strategies for promoting information literacy and lifelong learning. These strategies include regional and thematic meetings to adopt these principles, professional development for personnel in various sectors, the inclusion of information literacy in education and government policy-making, programs to enhance the employability and entrepreneurial capabilities of disadvantaged groups, and recognition of lifelong learning and information literacy as essential elements for accrediting all education and training programs.

#### **7.6.4 Fez Declaration on Media and Information Literacy**

The Fez Declaration on Media and Information Literacy (MIL) is a statement that was adopted by the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) in 2005. The Fez Declaration recognises the critical role of MIL in empowering individuals and communities to participate fully in the information society and to make informed decisions about their lives.

The Fez Declaration highlights the need for individuals to develop the skills and competencies necessary to access, evaluate, use, and create information effectively and responsibly. It also recognises the importance of MIL in promoting freedom of expression, cultural diversity, and social cohesion. The Declaration calls for integrating MIL into formal and non-formal education systems and developing national and international initiatives to promote MIL. It also stresses the importance of ongoing professional development for educators to ensure they have the skills and knowledge necessary to effectively teach MIL.

The International Forum on Media and Information Literacy (MIL) reaffirmed its commitment to MIL for All and proposed initiatives to promote MIL worldwide. The forum stressed the need to integrate MIL into educational curricula, both formal and non-formal, to promote critical thinking and analysis skills in learners and teachers. The production and distribution of user-generated content (UGC), particularly youth-produced media, was also included as part of MIL. The forum also advocated conducting research on the state of MIL in different countries and expanding the UNESCO-UNITWIN-UNAOC-MILID network to include other universities worldwide. Additionally, they proposed setting up national, regional, and international institutes or centres on Media and Information Literacy. The forum emphasised MIL's importance for intercultural dialogue, mutual knowledge, understanding, and ethical values in communication, information, and media. They endorsed the setting up a regional MIL Institute or Centre to enhance its international relevance.

#### **7.6.5 Paris Declaration on Media and Information Literacy in the Digital Era**

The Paris Declaration on Media and Information Literacy in the Digital Era is a document that was adopted by the UNESCO Member States in 2014. It highlights the importance of media and information literacy (MIL) as a fundamental right and a key competence in the digital era. The declaration recognises MIL as a means of empowering individuals to engage in informed dialogue and make informed decisions and promoting social

inclusion, active citizenship, and cultural diversity. It calls on Member States to take concrete steps to promote MIL and to integrate it into education systems and lifelong learning opportunities.

The Paris Declaration on Media and Information Literacy in the Digital Era provides several key recommendations for promoting MIL. One of these recommendations is the integration of MIL into formal and non-formal education systems, including developing lifelong learning opportunities in MIL. The declaration also calls for cross-sectoral cooperation to promote MIL, including partnerships between the education, culture, media, and technology sectors. In addition, the declaration emphasises the importance of international cooperation in developing and disseminating MIL initiatives and best practices.

The availability of diverse and reliable information sources is another recommendation by the Paris Declaration. It calls for promoting a diverse and pluralistic media landscape that provides reliable, accurate, balanced information access. Developing MIL competencies and skills, including critical thinking, creativity, digital, and data literacy, is also highlighted as a key recommendation.

The declaration also calls for the promotion of MIL among marginalised and vulnerable groups, including women, children, rural communities, and persons with disabilities. These recommendations aim to empower individuals with the skills and knowledge needed to navigate and critically engage with the media and information landscape in the digital era.

### **7.6.6 Moscow Declaration on Media and Information Literacy**

The Moscow Declaration on Media and Information Literacy (MIL) is a statement that outlines the importance of MIL in promoting informed and responsible citizens, fostering critical thinking, and building inclusive and informed societies. The declaration was adopted in Moscow, Russia, in 2012 and is considered an important landmark in MIL.

The declaration calls for recognition of the importance of Media and Information Literacy (MIL) to the well-being and progress of individuals, communities, economies, and civil society. It encourages integrating MIL promotion into national policies and outlines the need for collaboration between stakeholders, including government, educational and media organisations, libraries, archives, museums, and NGOs. Structural and pedagogical reforms are suggested to enhance MIL, and it is recommended that MIL be integrated into the curricula at all levels of education. Support for networks and organisations working on MIL issues is prioritised, with investments in capacity building. The declaration calls for research on and developing tools for MIL, including frameworks for understanding, evidence-based practices, indicators, assessment techniques, and implementing MIL standards. MIL-related competencies that support reading, writing, speaking, listening, and viewing are encouraged, along with intercultural dialogue and international cooperation. The statement emphasises investment in processes that support the long-term preservation of digital information and the promotion and protection of rights to freedom of expression, freedom of information, right to privacy and confidentiality, ethical principles, and other rights.

### **7.6.7 Belgrade Declaration of UNESCO on Media and Information Literacy**

The Belgrade Declaration on Media and Information Literacy is a document that UNESCO adopted in October 2019. It builds on the Paris Declaration on Media and

Information Literacy in the Digital Era. It highlights the importance of media and information literacy (MIL) in the rapidly evolving media and information landscape. The declaration emphasises the need for MIL as a means of promoting democratic participation, cultural diversity, and human rights, as well as a means of fostering media literacy and digital citizenship.

The Belgrade Declaration sets out several key recommendations to promote media and information literacy (MIL) in today's rapidly changing world. Firstly, the declaration calls for integrating MIL into national education curricula, ensuring that individuals have access to the skills and competencies necessary to critically evaluate, understand, and use media and information in their daily lives. The development of lifelong learning opportunities in MIL is also encouraged.

The declaration stresses the importance of cooperation between sectors, including education, media, and technology, to promote MIL. This cross-sectoral approach recognises the complex and interconnected nature of today's media and information landscape. The declaration also emphasises the need for MIL in the context of new technologies, such as artificial intelligence, and calls for developing relevant MIL competencies and skills.

The declaration discusses various approaches to implementing a media and information literacy (MIL) curriculum. One approach is a stand-alone course that is mandatory for all learners and teachers, while another involves intensive face-to-face training followed by a project assignment. The article also suggests integrating MIL components into related courses or offering the curriculum online as a certificate, diploma, or degree programme. In-house MIL training courses can also be developed for all professionals, and the curriculum can be offered through community engagement and outreach. UNESCO member states should consider gender equality in the content, learning outcomes, and evaluation of the MIL curriculum. Additionally, cultural communication barriers should be evaluated in the areas targeted for integration.

### **Check Your Progress: 2**

**Note:** 1) Use the space below for your answers.

2) Compare your answers with those given at the end of this unit.

1. Identify two media literacy educational interventions from different global contexts and describe their goals and methods.

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2. Evaluate the effectiveness of a media literacy educational intervention you are familiar with based on its goals, methods, and outcomes.

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3. Identify two challenges and two opportunities in designing and implementing media literacy educational interventions in different global contexts.

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4. Recognise the role of two different stakeholders in designing, implementing, and evaluating media literacy educational interventions.
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5. Apply the principles of media literacy education to your context, including your own media consumption and production practices.
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## 7.7 LET US SUM UP

This unit focused on media literacy training and its increasing importance in today's world. The proliferation of media platforms and the rise of disinformation and fake news have made it necessary to educate individuals on how to access accurate information, critically analyse and evaluate media messages, and participate responsibly in society-wide communication processes. The unit also explored media literacy educational interventions from different global contexts, including Europe, North America, and Asia. It analysed these interventions' goals, methods, and outcomes and evaluated their effectiveness.

The unit examined case studies and examples from various regions to comprehensively understand media literacy education. It assessed the impact of these interventions and compared their outcomes to identify the most successful strategies. The unit highlighted the importance of adapting media literacy education to local contexts, including cultural, social, and political factors. It examined the contributions of government agencies, educational institutions, civil society organisations, and media outlets.

You might have developed a deep understanding of media literacy education from a global perspective and will be able to apply the principles of media literacy education to your context. The unit also explored practical strategies for implementing media literacy education daily. Throughout the unit, there was a focus on ongoing efforts to standardise media literacy training interventions in education.

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## 7.9 CHECK YOUR PROGRESS: POSSIBLE ANSWERS

### Check Your Progress: 1

1. Media literacy educational interventions teach individuals how to access accurate information, critically analyse and evaluate media messages, and participate responsibly in society-wide communication processes.
2. The importance of media literacy training has increased worldwide due to the proliferation of media platforms and the rise of disinformation and fake news.
3. Some challenges in designing and implementing media literacy educational interventions include adapting to local contexts, including cultural, social, and political factors. Opportunities include engaging stakeholders, including government agencies, educational institutions, civil society organisations, and media outlets.
4. Adapting media literacy educational interventions to local contexts is important to address cultural, social, and political factors that may impact the effectiveness of the intervention.

### Check Your Progress: 2

1. One example of a media literacy educational intervention is the “Media Smarts” program in Canada, which aims to promote critical thinking skills in media consumption among children and youth. The program provides educational resources for teachers and parents and interactive online games and activities for students. Another example is the “Media and Information Literacy for Development and Civic Engagement” program in the Philippines, which aims to enhance citizens’ understanding and use of media for democratic participation and community development. The program includes training for educators, community leaders, media professionals, and community-based media production projects.
2. The “NewsWise” program in the United Kingdom is a media literacy educational intervention that aims to teach children critical thinking and news literacy skills. The program includes in-classroom resources for teachers and interactive online games and student activities. According to a study conducted by the BBC, students who participated in the program demonstrated a better understanding of news sources and were likelier to check multiple sources before trusting a news story. However, the study also found that the program did not significantly improve students’ ability to identify fake news.
3. One challenge in designing and implementing media literacy educational interventions is adapting the content to local cultural, social, and political contexts. Another challenge is ensuring access to resources and technology in communities with limited resources. The growing use of social media and technology as tools for education and engagement is an opportunity to design media literacy educational interventions. Another opportunity is the potential for stakeholder collaboration, including government agencies, educational institutions, civil society organisations, and media outlets.

4. Government agencies can play a role in designing and implementing media literacy educational interventions by providing funding and policy support. Educational institutions can provide training for educators and students and integrate media literacy into existing curricula. Both government agencies and educational institutions can participate in evaluating the effectiveness of media literacy educational interventions.
5. To apply the principles of media literacy education to my context, I can critically evaluate the sources of news and information that I consume and fact-check any claims before sharing them with others. I can also engage in online discussions to share perspectives and challenge misinformation. As a media content producer, I can ensure that I am creating accurate, balanced content based on reliable sources. I can also consider the potential impact of my content on others and be mindful of the messages I am conveying.

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## **UNIT 8 AUDIENCE: NATIONAL AND GLOBAL CONTEXTS**

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### **Structure**

- 8.0 Introduction
  - 8.1 Learning Outcomes
  - 8.2 History of the Term ‘Audience.’
  - 8.3 Understanding ‘Audiences’
    - 8.3.1 Public-Crowd-Group-Mass-Audience
    - 8.3.2 Characteristics of Media Audiences
    - 8.3.3 Types of Audiences
    - 8.3.4 Audience Typologies
  - 8.4 Theories on Audiences
    - 8.4.1 Bullet Theory
    - 8.4.2 Individual Difference Theory
    - 8.4.3 Social Category Theory
  - 8.5 Audience Conception Traditions
    - 8.5.1 Structural
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    - 8.5.3 Cultural
  - 8.6 Approaches to Audience Research
    - 8.6.1 Media Effects
    - 8.6.2 Cultivation Analysis
    - 8.6.3 Uses and Gratification
    - 8.6.4 Cultural Studies
    - 8.6.5 Reception Analysis
    - 8.6.6 Everyday Life
  - 8.7 Future of the Audiences
  - 8.8 Pedagogical Approaches
  - 8.9 Let Us Sum Up
  - 8.10 Keywords
  - 8.11 Further Readings
  - 8.12 Check Your Progress: Possible Answers
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### **8.0 INTRODUCTION**

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This unit examines the concept of media audiences and its development historically. One of the elements of communication is ‘the receiver’. The S-M-C-R (Sender-Message-Channel-Receiver) model, which is linear, gives no role to the ‘receiver’. The subsequent two-way model, including feedback, made the ‘receiver’ active beings reacting to the message sent by the sender. The term ‘receiver’ became ‘audience’ when the message gained the character of public performance. But we use the term ‘audience’ in a variety of contexts. In the Indian context, we also call them ‘public’, say general viewers in a cinema hall, to indicate those using mass media.

This unit will discuss the term's evolution, followed by the terminological differences between public, crowd, group, and audience. We shall also examine the characteristics and types of audiences, theories about audiences, audience conception, traditions, and a few of the audience research approaches.

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## **8.1 LEARNING OUTCOMES**

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After reading this unit, you will be able to:

- explain the concept of the audience;
- describe the evolution of media audiences;
- identify the characteristics, context, and typologies related to media audiences;
- discuss the theories and approaches associated with media audiences; and
- explain the relevance of audiences in media studies.

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## **8.2 HISTORY OF THE TERM ‘AUDIENCE’**

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The term ‘audience’ is the most contested territory in media studies. ‘Who is the audience’ is often difficult to define for a filmmaker, a television producer, or a journalist writing a news report. Yet, all of them create a message for ‘perceived’ receivers. The audience is the one for whom the communication takes place. Senders vaguely define their audience - yet the discourse around ‘audience’ is open-ended. We do not call people waiting for the bus as an audience. An audience means the person has been engaging with the media.

In oral cultures, the ‘audience’ was always present, whereas, with the emergence of the written word, the receivers and the sender were freed from the constraints of time and space. Written word made it possible to reach out to receivers not even anticipated by the sender. The beginning of printing and later with photography, sound recordings, motion pictures, radio and television, and now the Internet have changed the concept of the ‘audience’. It has changed from a ‘fixed’, defined, homogeneous conception to polysemic, unstructured, diverse, and heterogeneous individuals.

Though communication and theatrical processes are much older, the last quarter of the sixteenth century witnessed the gradual emergence of polarised identities of performers and listeners in musical performances. The emergence of the broadcast system then brought out the concept of individuals sitting in the privacy of their homes listening to the radio or watching television. These individuals were different from those attending lectures or concert halls. They were not located at the place where the message was created. Let us take an example: you are watching a film made on Mahatma Gandhi. Depending upon the type of film (documentary or feature film or actual footage), the film is made ‘about’ a time/place, it is made ‘in’ a time/place, and you, as a viewer, watch it in another time/place. Receivers, most often referred to as the ‘audience’ of mass media, are usually distanced from the senders.

McQuail (2000) elaborates on the features of the Graeco-Roman audience, many of which can be applied to today’s audiences. They are

- Planning and organisation of viewing as well as listening of the performances themselves;

- Events with public and popular characters;
- Secular (thus not religious) content of performance- for entertainment, education, and vicarious emotional experience;
- Voluntary, individual acts of choice and attention;
- Specialisation of roles of authors, performers, and spectators; and
- Physical locatedness of performance and spectator experience.

The advent of mass media demanded the formalisation of its audience listeners, readers, and viewers for any medium – and they may not be directly observable. Most often, broadcast systems were privately owned or operated through state licenses. It became necessary for them to address public needs. So, even for economic reasons, assessing public opinion and sentiment to define the audience became necessary. Measurement of audiences was also essential for market research and advertising departments, which led to the development of measuring devices. Such processes impacted the conception of the audience.



*Figure 1: Audience during a television broadcast*  
 (Source: National Archives and Records Administration, Public domain, via Wikimedia Commons)

Media fragmentation and abundance in the late twentieth century have led to more focus on ‘receivers’ for varied reasons. With the Internet, the audience became further distanced from the physical notion of space and time. In the digital age, politically, socially, technologically, and even economically, the concept of audience demands a re-definition. This has led to the advent of Web 2.0, social media applications, and the diffusion of mobile phones, which has wired the world, creating and eventually breaking online-offline dichotomies.

In the 21st century, with the creation of ‘international’ audiences, media have become more marketable commodities and cultural artefacts for world trade. Media messages are treated as goods that must be packaged, marketed, and distributed to reach perceptual ‘audiences’, some created by artificial demands, others pre-existent due to social and cultural affinity to the media and message content. Audiences then become ‘consumers’ of media goods. Media and entertainment became one industry covering publishing, film and television production, and performance genres, including various popular music and sports.

Unlike in the past, the audience is now defined more as a ‘sociological’ concept than the earlier ‘physical’ medium-centric concept. Audiences are socially situated and textually constituted subjects. They derive meaning or ‘meanings’ from the media text. John Fiske (2000), in his book *Television Culture*, defines audience as “the social subject has a history, lives in a particular formation (a mix of class, gender, age, religion, etc.) and is constituted by a complex cultural history that is both social and textual”.

Mosco and Kaye (2000) remark, “The concept of the audience is one of the governing ideas in mass communications research. It is also one of the most hotly contested...the concept was created largely out of marketing departments of companies with a stake in selling products through media”. They further remark that it has expanded the scope of media studies, but it is puzzling why the discipline of communication studies keeps using this marketing concept.

## 8.3 UNDERSTANDING ‘AUDIENCES’

If you examine your experience of listening to radio, watching television or films, listening to music, being on social networking sites, or even being part of a concert, you would know what it is to be a member of an ‘audience’. The English word ‘audience’ has Latin roots - *audire* to hear. Mosco and Kyle (2000) elaborate on the context of the earliest use of the word in the 14th century. They remark that the audience referred primarily to formal hearings before a magistrate, court official, or sovereign and how the sense of power is inherently linked to the word/concept. We also use words like ‘mass’ or ‘group’ as the connotation of the audience. Let us understand how words have different meanings that get used interchangeably.

### 8.3.1 Public-Crowd-Group-Mass-Audience

You know your friends; it’s a group. Usually, in a group, members know each other, share common values, know about membership, have a certain structure of relationships, and continue over time with some goals to achieve. The crowd is larger and restricted. It is observable and within a particular place. Crowds gather at the place of demonstration or an accident. It has spontaneity of formation and dispersal, unlike a group. The crowd also shares the same ‘mood’ and some degree of identity, but it has no structure, moral, or social composition.

Unlike groups and crowds, the public is relatively large, more dispersed, and enduring. Public conceptually refers to political formation around a cause or an issue. Protesters and union gatherings indicate the public who work to achieve political change. Democratic societies gave rise to the need for ‘informed citizenry’. Publics are thus linked to public opinion. In State-supported public service broadcasting, the audience is public, not the consumer, as with commercial broadcasting.

McQuail (2000) attributes the credit for defining mass to Herbert Blumer in 1939. Unlike the other concepts, Blumer defined mass as a new type of social formation in modern society. Mass refers to different, heterogeneous, fluid, desperate, irrational, unintellectual, scattered, loose, anonymous, and large numbers of individuals as a collective. Mass reflects members not knowing each other yet sharing similar ‘interests’. The concept of mass also assumes an element of manipulation by someone else. They are not self-aware, without self-identity, and incapable of acting together to attain objectives. Unlike the audience, mass is also used for ‘mass market’ and ‘mass electorate’.

Audiences as spectators for public events, readers of printed books, viewers of motion pictures visiting cinema-hall, television viewers, internet users, or members of social networking sites – indicate ‘institutionalisation’ by the media. Unlike mass audiences, audiences have been much more dispersed, individualised, privatised, and large due to the advent of digital media. Changes in technology and society impact audiences. Unlike all other concepts, media audiences are linked to media as receivers and are exposed to a common message. They have their likes and dislikes, interests and preferences, and expectations in their engagement with the media.

### 8.3.2 Characteristics of Media Audiences

Media audiences can be examined based on the following characteristics.

- 1) **Numbers:** Most media audiences are largely perceived in terms of numbers. Being technologically mediated and involving large capital investments to reach them, audiences inevitably were considered ‘numbers’. With the advent of multiple media outlets and distribution mechanisms, the physical number of the audience still matters to the ‘sender’ media institution. But in academic discourses, audiences do not only refer to ‘number’ but also to the ‘social’ context. So, the audience is not a mere quantity but has qualities.
- 2) **Anonymity:** The audience members do not know each other. Their nature varies depending on the medium. There is no face to the audience. Sometimes, the audience gets appropriated and rejects messages the sender would have thought would succeed. The public knows everything, but the senders do not know them.
- 3) **Heterogeneity:** Media audiences vary in their primary characteristics as individuals. They could be people of different ages, genders, or political ideologies having differential social and economic standing. They are not organised and self-acting.
- 4) **Geography/Place:** Usually, in the world before the Internet, transnational television, and satellite radio, audiences were geographically constituted. In concerts and lecture halls, audiences are face-to-face, but media audiences are often not. Cinema halls and early television changed the ‘localness’ of print media readers. With new media technologies, audiences’ time and place become much more anonymous, large, and passive.
- 5) **Time:** The audiences are also defined in terms of ‘daytime’, ‘prime time’, ‘first telecast’, ‘repeat show’, ‘regular’ or ‘one-time’, and so on. Prime-time audiences are usually considered working people, whereas afternoon shows are for homemakers. With newer technologies like Video on Demand, recording of live telecasts, and digital media, the notion of real-time audiences needs to be further studied.
- 6) **Medium/Channel/Content:** Media organisations try to define those they attempt to reach out to as their audiences. By its very nature, the type of medium also defines the broad characteristics of its audiences. For example, newspapers are usually for literature, whereas radio programming language will define its intended listeners. Even within the same medium, genre/ type of content defines its audience. Language, semantic codes, genres, subjects, and styles define the audience for that message. In today’s television

environment, channels differentiate themselves through content. Researchers have shown how genre defines audiences, like soap operas for women and sports and news for men. There is also a concept of a ‘gendered audience’. Gendered audience refers to the nature, type, and volume of particular media usage by males or females and how their roles, preferences, and interests influence these choices.

- 7) **Expectations:** Audiences have certain expectations from the media to address their information, entertainment, and education needs. Media makers also attempt to address audience expectations. Print and electronic media continue to ‘measure’ their audiences as precisely as possible to change their message content in line with audience expectations. Filmmakers often visit cinema halls to assess viewers’ responses to their films.
- 8) **Longevity:** Audiences for any given medium may or may not be fixed continuously; depending upon the medium, audiences may change their preferences or shift away. Even in a medium like television, the audience for a given program may vary as people move in and out of the channel or program using remote control. As a mass communication student, you must know that media audiences are rooted in society’s social and cultural systems and technoeconomic bases. Members of the audience produce, reproduce, develop, and distribute culture through media. In the following section, an attempt has been made to discuss different types of audiences.

### 8.3.3 Types of Audiences

There is no consensus on the types of audiences in media studies, as scholars have suggested varied classifications. We can broadly define it based on its size, geography, and sphere of usage.

There can be a group audience or a mass audience. As you know from earlier discussions, a group refers to ‘taste’ culture or ‘class’ culture, such as people who like watching a particular program or like an actor. There is also a ‘fan culture’. Group audiences usually have similar interests and are interested in particular ‘types’ of media content. The mass audience represents audiences created for mass media like television or film. The same media content is mass-distributed to people for mass consumption.

We also refer to audiences as local, national, or transnational audiences. Unlike earlier music concerts or lecture halls ‘local’ audiences, mass media channels made most audiences ‘national’ or ‘regional’. Satellite broadcasting and the Internet made transnational audiences possible. It is often argued that local audiences will likely have similar interests and homogenous characteristics. Local cable channels, community or campus radio stations, and newsletters create local audiences. Public service broadcasting creates a national audience.

By sphere of usage, we imply the public or private sphere. Certain mass media have public character, for example, films in cinema halls, which the audience watches away from home and experiences a sense of being part of society/ collective in theatre. Research has shown that in non-Western societies, cinema-hall audiences have a distinctly different character than in Western societies. Even in folk performances like Ram Lila Bhavai or Lavani, the performer/viewer dichotomy does not exist, and audience members also become part of the performance. Private sphere media usage depends upon an individual’s likes, needs, interests, or motivations. It is usually within the confines

of the privacy of the home. Digital technologies, especially hand-held devices like mobiles or tablets, have merged the public-private divide. Today, you listen to people's most personal conversations in most public spaces or see individuals watching films on smartphones or tablets while travelling by train or bus with you.

### 8.3.4 Audiences Typologies

There are three main ways of defining the sender-audience relationship: Audience as a target, audience as a participant, and audience as a spectator. In its early and even present avatars, mass media transmit information and beliefs to its potential 'target'. Audiences are perceived as a destination for sending signals or messages for control or influence. Public service advertisements for anti-smoking or rural health missions are examples of target frameworks. In the 'participant' framework, based on Carrey's expressive/ritualistic model, audiences share and increase commonality with the sender. Communication, being normative, does not want to change the receiver. Television shows with studio audiences, dial-in radio shows, and online responses/comments by readers to newspaper articles are examples of a participating audience. In the spectator audience, the sender only seeks attention and does not want to transmit information or influence. The examples of sports matches advertising to catch attention are spectatorship instances.



Figure 2: Types of audiences

(Source: News 18, Carine06 from the UK, CC BY-SA 2.0  
<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/2.0/>, via Wikimedia Commons)

Ien Ang (1991), in her landmark book "Desperately Seeking the Audience", takes an institutional perspective. Referring to television audiences, she notes American television audiences are a 'market' whereas European television audiences are 'public'. She uses Rom Harre's concept of audience as a 'taxonomic collective', which is "an entity of serialised, in principle unrelated individuals who form a group solely because each member has a characteristic that is like that of each other" (Harre, 1991).

## Check Your Progress: 1

Audience: National and Global Contexts

- Note:** 1) Use the space below for your answers  
2) Compare your answers with those given at the end of the unit
- 1) Mention differences between ‘participant’ and ‘spectator’ audiences.

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## 8.4 THEORIES ON AUDIENCES

Some mass communication theories define the relationship between media and audiences.

### 8.4.1 Bullet Theory

Hypodermic Needle or Magic Bullet theory began in the 1940s and 1950s. It was born out of the stimulus-response assumption. It believed that the media had a direct, immediate and powerful impact on its audience. It also presumed that the media changed the behaviour of its audience. Messages were viewed as bullets, and the audiences were sitting ducks to be struck by the media.

The theory came when Hitler monopolised mass media to unify the German public; radio and television became popular, and persuasion industries such as advertising and propaganda emerged. In his 1922 work titled ‘Public Opinion’, Walter Lippman emphasised the role of media.

During that time, there were studies examining the influence of motion pictures on children and several propaganda theories. It was a time when the power of the media was overestimated.

The theory views a needle or bullet being ‘injected’ or ‘shot in’ at the ‘mass’ audience, and the audience gets immediately influenced. The underlying assumptions are that audiences are passive, do not have other sources of information, and will believe whatever media transmits. There have been a few examples of this. The Indian media telecast of Lord Ganesha idols drinking milk, which made everyone else go and try it, or the American experience of ‘War of Worlds’ in the 1940s when millions of Americans believed that aliens were invading Earth, and so they fled their homes. Bullet theory assumes the audience is an enormous, undifferentiated mass.

The theory was refuted when evidence of audiences rejecting media messages or differentially interpreting them came through research.

### 8.4.2 Individual Difference Theory

This theory was rooted in psychology after World War II and negated Bullet Theory. It stated that even if the media presents messages, audience members interpret them selectively. This selection is influenced by individual characteristics such as knowledge, attitudes, practices, mode of personal gratification from media consumption and so on. Individuals selectively choose exposure, attention, perception and retention.

This theory presented that since the media messages are perceived selectively by the individual member, the retention, interpretation, and influence are also individual-specific

as each individual possesses diverse psychological mechanisms. Media content, while activating them, does not do so indiscriminately. Unlike bullet theory, the media effect is limited as it is based on individual differences.

This theory negated the role of social structures and the individual's membership in the social group. Since it isolates the individual from his/her social environment, it gives no framework to media producers to make messages for individuals. Uses and gratification approaches to audiences also stem from this theory.

### 8.4.3 Social Category Theory

This theory assumes that groups or categories of people with specific characteristics exist in any given society. Members of those groups or social categories react to the media messages in a similar way. Let us take an example of the response to an English music video or reality show on a Western channel, which would be easily accepted by young college-going youth compared to the elderly, who may disapprove of the presentation. Unlike individual difference theory, here, the selection by the individual could be based on his/her age, occupation, sex, income, education, prior exposure, and so on. An individual's social category or context influences the media attention and response pattern.

All the three theories discussed above define the nature of the audience of the mass media. By now, you know that no single theory is right or wrong, and each theory explains the context in which they were born. It also needs to be understood that mass communication as a discipline is still inventing its foundation.

Most earlier theories were born from sociology, psychology, anthropology, etc. Also, being a behavioural science, most theories are normative and culture-specific.

#### Activity - 1

Select a television program of your choice. List your primary characteristics (age, education, sex, occupation, income, etc.) of the audience for that program. Now, try to talk to five people with similar characteristics and examine which of the above theories is applicable in the context of that television programme.

## 8.5 AUDIENCE CONCEPTION TRADITIONS

Now you understand that the audience has varied typologies and theories to relate them to mass media. Here, we will discuss how audiences have been conceived in three main traditions. Each of these traditions, in a way, represents the progression of audience concept through research methodologies and their relationship with media.

### 8.5.1 Structural

With the development of mass media, it became essential to know who was using which medium. This tradition looks at media systems and individual media use. Also known as audience measurement, it examined the 'reach' of print media based on circulation figures, gathering data essential for management to seek advertisements. Apart from the size of the audience, there is a need to know basic social compositions and link advertising with the market research industry. Structural tradition looks at demographics, amount and kind of media exposure, 'flow' of audience from one media to another, and so on. It is centred on questions like 'who does what with which media'.

### **8.5.2 Behavioural**

This tradition explores the effects and use of media by its audiences. As we discussed earlier, the early mass media research was based on the ‘effects’ of media on children or young people. Early studies viewed the audience as passive, receiving media unknowingly, getting exposed to ‘impact’ or ‘influence’. Most effects research adopted experimental methods and manipulated communication (channel, content, reception) to examine audience response. Another type of behavioural tradition is media ‘use’ research. A lot of structural data was juxtaposed with the media use data to conclude media effects. A great deal of research on motives and selection patterns of audiences has also been undertaken within this tradition. Here, the question is ‘What does the medium do to people?’ unlike socio-cultural tradition, which questions ‘what people do with media’.

### **8.5.3 Cultural**

Unlike the previous traditions, this tradition looks at media as institutions and how audiences negotiate the meaning of media texts. Reception analysis, cultural studies and everyday life approaches represent this tradition. It not only looks at media content but also the context of reception. More qualitative and ethnographic, this tradition examines the social and cultural context of meaning production by audiences. It also examines how media messages are embedded in ideology and how audiences negotiate their meanings from those messages. The objective here is not to examine influence or use but the nature of relationships and rituals associated with the consumption by the audiences.

#### **Check Your Progress: 2**

**Note:** 1) Use the space below for your answers

2) Compare your answers with those given at the end of the unit

1. Outline the main characteristics of the following traditions of audience research:

1) Structural

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.....

2) Behavioural

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3) Cultural

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## 8.6 APPROACHES TO AUDIENCE RESEARCH

In the previous sections, we discussed how theories and traditions in media studies have evolved over the years and influenced the audience's conception. Now, we shall discuss varied ways of researching audiences and how that reveals their relationship with mass media. By now, you must have understood that the paradigms of role and relationship between media, audiences and society influence the approach to audience research. Following is a brief description of more prominent approaches to audience research.

### 8.6.1 Media Effects

One of the oldest approaches came into existence to understand audiences' responses to media content. Rooted in the stimulated immediate response model, the effects approach tried to establish a correlation between media messages and their influence on their receivers. This approach presumes that audiences mostly passively send and receive media messages. This approach was aligned with bullet theory, but it was eventually realised that numerous other variables interfaced with the message (sent and received) and response (as recorded). Characteristics of the source, the message itself, the channel, the context of reception, receiver motivations and needs, besides many extraneous factors questioned, affect research tradition. There are varied effects traditions, each with assumptions about the 'image of audience', 'text', 'societal context', basis of involvement, and hypothesised effects. Persuasion studies, knowledge gaps, uses, gratification, and diffusion also borrow from the effects approach.

### 8.6.2 Cultivation Analysis

George Gerbner and his colleagues are credited with this 'influential and sometimes controversial' research approach. 1969, it was named a cultural indicators research program, applied mainly to television audiences. There are three different elements to it:

- a) Institutional processes impact the production of media content through decision-making and policy formation.
- b) Message System Analysis, as messages are a reflection of mainstream modern culture.
- c) Relationship between exposure to television messages and audience beliefs and behaviours by comparing groups of light and heavy users of the medium under study.



*Figure 3: George Gerbner*

(Source: <http://50.asc.upenn.edu>, CC BY-SA 4.0

<<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0/>>, via Wikimedia Commons)

This approach to audience analysis examines macro-system-oriented as well as individual-oriented micro phenomena. The structure of culture, changes in that structure, and processes occurring within that structure are examined. It was criticised for emphasising the ‘quantum of exposure’ and negating other sources of information to the audience members.

### **8.6.3 Uses and Gratification**

This approach was based on the works done on radio use by listeners in 1937 by Paul F Lazarsfeld (1901-1976), attitude change work by Carl Iver Hovland (1912-1961) and many others. Lazarsfeld’s work intended to measure radio’s impact on listeners’ attitudes, leading to the development of opinion polls as a methodological tool for audience research. Hovland’s work in social psychology examined propaganda studies and attitude changes in people.

Gratification studies built on the notion of selectivity give an active role to audience members. It states that the viewer/listener chooses messages and media not only to define prior opinions and habits but also to satisfy needs, interests and strivings. Media are used to escape, achieve social mobility or for reassurance. Rooted in functional analysis, this approach links content and effects research.

### **8.6.4 Cultural Studies**

Developed during the sixties and seventies, on the ‘borderland’ of social sciences and humanities, cultural studies most directly consider the audience. It focuses on the actual message or discourse of communication and the genre of media message. The critical research approach considers media as principal instruments of ruling elites for maintaining ideological control over its audiences. Unlike literary criticism, it explores popular and mass culture. Unlike all the three approaches discussed above, cultural studies are qualitative and critical.

### **8.6.5 Reception Analysis**

From the quantitative tradition of audience research, reception studies brought in qualitative analysis in audience research. In the last twenty years, reception analysis has become an established field of study. David Morley’s pioneering work of ‘Nationwide’ television audiences in 1980 is considered the beginning of reception analysis. You need to understand that cultural studies and reception analysis overlap, and cultural studies have broader concerns. Based on Hall’s encoding/ decoding model, reception analysis viewed television programmes as ‘meaningful’ discourses or texts structured in dominant ideology. It refers to studies focusing on audiences’ meaning, production, experiences, and interaction with media texts.

### **8.6.6 Everyday Life**

Unlike earlier works on ‘researching audiences’, everyday life or day-to-day life approach borrows from humanities and focuses on subjectivity. It examines audience experiences and the role of media in their daily life. Rooted in reception analysis, it acknowledges that members of the audience interpret the media messages contextually. The circumstances, outlook and prejudices in ‘everyday life’ situations influence the reception of media content. Unlike the earlier passive audiences who were consuming media commodities, this approach, like uses and gratification, looks at audiences as active beings. The audience’s active role is in interpreting the meaning of the media messages.

**Activity - 2**

List your expectations as an audience member for television news channels and newspapers. Do you find any difference? Analyse the reasons.

## **8.7 FUTURE OF THE AUDIENCES**

While you read this, more and more content will be generated by social media audiences. With user-generated content on social networking sites and acknowledgement by the Main Stream Media (MSM), another dichotomy of writer-reader has disappeared. Now is the time of collaborative content generation and real-time interactivity. While the State is becoming increasingly rigid about forms of reaction and action by audiences, technology and society keep surprising everyone. There have been numerous examples of citizen journalism, where users post personal accounts of disasters or political insurgency, blogger protests, online petitions, flash mobs, etc. People who are not ‘trained’ to create media content are becoming ‘producers’ today. Alvin Toffler used the term ‘prosumers’ (producer/professional--consumers) in 1980 in his book *The Third Wave*, which has turned out to be true.

From Ang’s question of ‘what it means, or what it is like to live in a media-saturated world’ in 1996 to Liz Bird’s ‘audiences are everywhere and nowhere’ in 2003, audience research has come a long way. From the one-to-many and centre-to-periphery conception of mass media to the more diverse, one-to-one and many-to-many media, it will create newer audiences. Audiences today use media in multiple ways. For instance, you watch television on mobile and SMS your friend and update your status on social media in new areas for audience research.

## **8.8 PEDAGOGICAL APPROACHES**

*(Instructions for the course counsellors)*

- Collect and describe examples of how people use various content providers and ICTs daily. Explore and examine the focus of entertainment celebrities and discuss who might be the target audience. Who is included, who is omitted, and what are the central themes and indicators that may reaffirm identity and audience? What do these sources tell you about how audiences use content? How might these uses be different from what the producers intended?
- Imagine how a family from a completely different background from the ones featured in the reality show, the entertainment performance, the news, etc., interpret some current television programmes or advertisements. What would this say about content providers and audiences today? What are the implications for society?
- Consider how marginalised groups- which might include indigenous people, racialised groups, groups with low socio-economic status or those in poverty, ethnic and religious minorities, women, and members of the LGBTQIA+ community (the groups may vary depending on the context)- relate to the mainstream media in terms of media representations and audience response.
- Analyse the messages and values conveyed through a popular media text, such as a television programme and on social media. How might the messages

change if people of a different social group (e.g., age, ethnic background) were included or if the male and female characters switched roles? How might this impact the audience? What would change, why, and what might be the consequences if these changes took place?

- Analyse how language is a key factor in determining what content is presented, how, to what degree, and how it may affect what we know and how we act. Are local languages as readily available, present and influential as other languages? What is the impact of some languages being more predominant than others? Does it shape our knowledge base in favour of values, attitudes, and compartments that may not align with our local cultural values? Can hegemony be transformed into diversity?
- Discuss how people, especially students, engage with social media and how their engagement affects their daily lives regarding attitudes, behaviours and actions. What are the implications? Does their social media engagement go along with greater citizen participation or not? Is there an increase in “slacktivism”, meaning civic actions are limited to clicking “like” buttons or sharing posts? What are their key concerns and interests? Educators should research and further develop other activities concerning the nexus between global citizenship and social media.

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## **8.9 LET US SUM UP**

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This unit exposed you to the concept of media audiences – their evolution, characteristics, theories, approaches and traditions to research them. The very nature of defining communication influences the way one views audiences. The audience becomes ‘public’ in public service broadcasting, whereas in commercial broadcasting, they are ‘consumers’. Audiences differ in geography, time, heterogeneity, longevity, medium and expectations. There are three traditions of audience research- structural, behavioural and socio-cultural. Audience research approaches have differed from effects to everyday life and cultural studies to reception analysis.

Now, you can appreciate that the audience is important in understanding media and society relationships. Media audiences define communication, and communication occurs because of them. With digital technologies, the future of the audience has become more dynamic as the audience has become media producers.

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## **8.10 KEYWORDS**

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***Audience*** : The social subject that has a history, lives in a particular formation (a mix of class, gender, age, religion, etc.) and is constituted by a complex cultural history that is both social and textual

***Magic Bullet Theory*** : The theory views a needle or bullet being ‘injected’ or ‘shot in’ at the ‘mass’ audience, and the audience gets immediately influenced

***Individual Difference Theory*** : It states that even if media presents messages, members of the audience interpret them selectively

***Social Category Theory*** : This theory assumes that there are groups or categories

of people with specific characteristics in any given society.

**Media Effects Theory** : The effects approach tries to establish a correlation between media messages and their influence on their receivers.

**Uses and Gratification** : It states that the viewer/listener chooses messages and media not only to define prior opinions and habits but also to satisfy needs, interests and strivings.

**Reception Analysis** : refers to studies focusing on audiences' meaning, production and experiences and their interaction with media texts.

## 8.11 FURTHER READINGS

1. Ang, I. (1991), *Desperately seeking the audience*, Routledge, London Barnouw, E. (1989) (ed.), *International Encyclopedia of communications*, OUP, New York.
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3. McQuail, D. (1997), *Audience Analysis*, Sage, California McQuail, D. (2000), *Mass Communication Theory*, Sage, London Nightingale, V. (2011) (ed.), *The Handbook of Media Audiences*, Wiley and Blackwell, United Kingdom Ross, K. and Nightingale, V. (2003),
4. *Media and Audiences: Issues in Cultural and Media Studies*, McGraw-Hill International, England

## 8.12 CHECK YOUR PROGRESS: POSSIBLE ANSWERS

### Check Your Progress: 1

- 1) The 'participant' audience is based on Carrey's expressive/ritualistic model. It shares and increases interaction and commonality with the sender. Television shows with studio audiences, dial-in radio shows, and online responses/ comments by readers to newspaper articles are examples of a participating audience. On the other hand, the Spectator audience is the sender who only seeks attention and does not want to transmit information or influence. The examples of sports matches advertising to catch attention are spectatorship instances.

### Check Your Progress: 2

- 1) **Structural tradition** looks at media systems and individual media use. Also known as audience measurement, it examined the 'reach' of print media based on circulation figures, data essential for management to seek advertisements. It is centred on questions like 'who does what with which media'.

- 2) **Behavioural tradition** explores the effects and use of media by its audiences. This tradition has also researched audiences' motives and selection patterns. Here, the question is, 'What does the medium do to people?'.  
3) **Cultural tradition** looks at media as institutions and how audiences negotiate the meaning of media texts. Reception analysis, cultural studies and everyday life approaches represent this tradition. The objective here is not to examine influence or use but the nature of relationships and rituals associated with the consumption by the audiences.

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# **UNIT 9 TECHNOLOGY, MEDIA AND SOCIETY**

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## **Structure**

- 9.0 Introduction
  - 9.1 Learning Outcomes
  - 9.2 Evolution and Practice of Freedom of Expression
  - 9.3 Purpose of Media in a Society
    - 9.3.1 Four Pillars of Democracy
    - 9.3.2 Watchdog Role of Media
  - 9.4 Role and Accountability of Journalists
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## **9.0 INTRODUCTION**

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In contemporary times, technology and media have emerged as indispensable societal elements. The marriage between technology and media has unprecedentedly expanded the horizon of communication and networking. The technological revolution has aided media development, from print to new media. We must note that it is through technology that media exists. You know that interpersonal communications are direct; however, interactions with mass media content are indirect since they depend on technology to facilitate the connection.

With the advent of the technological revolution, we can see that new media formats are developed and presented to people more quickly than the media that came before. For instance, while it took “175,000 years for writing to become established, and about 1,000 years for printing to gain a firm foundation as a medium, audiovisual media (radio, television, and movies) penetrated society within a few decades, and digital media gained prominence in even less time” (Poe, 2011, p. 164). We live in a

media-saturated world and depend on many old and new media for information, entertainment, and networking. Mass media and mass communication began 560 years ago with the “print revolution” that took place in Europe in the fifteenth century. As we evolved through the centuries, mass communication developed from mechanical to electronic transmission, giving way to the modern digital world. While technological developments are an essential part of the narrative about the media, the effects of media and technology on society are essential to the deliberation. Media technologies significantly impact society and imply that integrating technology and media into social settings greatly influences individual social interaction.

## 9.1 LEARNING OUTCOMES

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After reading this Unit, you will be able to:

- understand the interconnectedness between technology, media, and society;
- outline the role of media in democracy;
- evaluate the importance of freedom of speech and expression; and
- analyse the global implications of technology and media.

## 9.2 EVOLUTION AND PRACTICE OF FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION

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On principle, Freedom of Expression encourages the freedom of an individual or a community to communicate their thoughts and ideas without fear of retribution, suppression, or legal sanction. We must note that the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) identifies the right to freedom of expression as a human right. In several countries, there is constitutional law that protects free speech. Words like freedom of speech, free speech, and freedom of expression are used synonymously in political discourse. In legal parlance, freedom of expression includes seeking, obtaining, and communicating information or ideas, irrespective of the medium used.

Note under Article 19 of the UDHR, it is stated that “everyone shall have the right to hold opinions without interference” and “everyone shall have the right to freedom of expression; this right shall include freedom to seek, receive, and impart information and ideas of all kinds, regardless of frontiers, either orally, in writing or print, in the form of art, or through any other media of his choice”. Therefore, freedom of speech and expression is the first condition of liberty. Globally, it occupies a favoured and significant position in the hierarchy of liberty. Many call freedom of expression the mother of all the other liberties that form the essence of any society and must be protected.

*“Give me the liberty to know, to utter, and to argue freely according to conscience, above all liberties.”* – John Milton, Areopagitica

In the late 6th century to early 5th century BC, the principle of free speech emerged in the ancient Athenian democracy. Notably, the values of the Roman Republic included freedom of speech and religion. In 1689, England’s Bill of Rights approved freedom of speech as a constitutional right, which is in effect today. Meanwhile, the French Revolution of 1789 adopted the Declaration of Rights of Man and Citizen. Adopted in

1791, freedom of speech is a highlight of the First Amendment to the United States Constitution.

In India, the constitution secures rights to freedom of speech under Article 19 for every citizen. The preamble to the Indian constitution resonates with fundamental freedom as the liberation of thought, expression, faith, belief, and worship, which has been incorporated as a human right or particularly a fundamental right under Article 19 (1)(a).

Universally, it is accepted that the very basis of a democracy is the unrestrained surge of words, ideas, thoughts, and expressions. The fundamental right to speech and expression devoid of any state control is not only imbibed in the constitutions and decrees of countries but also part of international resolutions such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, European Convention on Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights to name a few.

### **9.3 PURPOSE OF MEDIA IN A SOCIETY**

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Freedom of speech and expression is considered the lifeblood of a democratic polity. It also is significant for the functioning of the media. In any democratic society, media is fundamental to political life, and the right to freedom of speech enables the media to work effectively.

The purpose of media can be categorised as follows:

- ✓ Inform
- ✓ Educate
- ✓ Entertain
- ✓ Surveillance
- ✓ Correlation

We must understand that media sway society in several ways. The common masses get information about the happenings worldwide through the media 24/7. Through round-the-clock media exposure, people form opinions and make judgments regarding different issues. Note that the media keeps people informed, educated, and entertained. The new media, electronic media, and print media are the primary sources of information. Since its initiation, the media has served as the overseer of the people and performs the surveillance function. The media dishes out all content from information about the budget, corruption, and scams to lifestyle and entertainment. Additionally, media has a correlation function, implying that the media's selection of news and its elucidation affects how society comprehends and responds to it. People's approaches toward political matters, events, public policy, etc., are predisposed by how the media structures and presents the issue in their discussions and presentations.

**For instance,** The media's reporting of the Vietnam War played a critical part in altering the convictions of the American populace, who started opposing sending soldiers to fight a losing war.

#### **9.3.1 Four Pillars of Democracy**

Democracy is a form of government in which the people can deliberate and decide on the legislature or elect governing officials to do so on their behalf. Thus, democracy is

the rule of the people through their elected representatives. Note that freedom of expression and the space to voice opinions by different sections of society are considered to be the merit of democracy. A democratic polity is founded on four pillars: i) Judiciary – the Indian Judiciary manages the common law system. It comprises the Supreme Court, High Courts, District Courts and Tribunals/Boards, and safeguards laws and orders that do not curb the citizen's fundamental rights. ii) Legislative - representatives voted by the people are part of the legislative body, responsible for making and changing laws. In India, the supreme legislative body is the Parliament (two houses, namely Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha) at the centre and the legislative assembly at the state. iii) Executive - is selected by the election system in India. The candidates voted to the parliamentary houses are the Members of Parliament (MP), and those voted in the state legislature are Members of the Legislative Assembly (MLA); iv) Media – is the overseer and is responsible for keeping the citizens up-to-date about the undertakings of executives, legislative and judiciary.



Figure 1: Pillars of Democracy (Source: Jagran; 19 March 2019, Maize & Blue Nation, CC BY 2.0 <<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/2.0/>>, via Wikimedia Commons)

In the Indian context, the first three pillars maintain a system of checks and balances. Meanwhile, the latter, that is, the media, is the most influential entity. Media guarantees transparency in all three systems. The watchdog makes us conscious of several socio-cultural, financial and political issues in the country. Freedom of the press is not explicitly stated in Article 19(1) (a) of the Constitution; it is the freedom of speech and expression mentioned. In the Constituent Assembly Debates, Dr Bhimrao Ambedkar, Chairman of the Drafting Committee, stated that no special mention of the freedom of the press was essential as the press, an individual, or a citizen were the same in the context of the right of expression.

### 9.3.2 Watchdog Role of Media

As stated in our preceding discussion, media plays a critical role in a democratic polity and society. We must note that the media, known as the fourth pillar of democracy, watches over the other three pillars, legislature, executive, and judiciary, by exercising the right of freedom of speech and expression. The media has been vested with being the watchdog and gadfly role in exploring misconduct by politicians, officials, private businesses, etc. The media is, therefore, a crucial apparatus of answerability, along with being an apparatus of communication. Globally, it is accepted that a free press, free media, and an independent judiciary serve as commanding counterpowers to corruption in public and private life. As the fourth pillar, the press bridges the government

and the people. The bridge helps to create transparency at several levels, like access to information, answerability and legality of individuals, institutions and processes themselves, and equitable contribution and public debate.

### Activity - 1

Find out which agency of the central government disseminates information regarding government policies and projects to the media in India. Write a short note on this function.

Note that the media, as the watchdog, acts as an instrument for the preclusion and inquiry of allegations of violations or malpractice. This watchdog role ranges from officials' culpability and actions while 'in office' and all other processes. For instance, media reporting on issues and candidates during an electoral process enables voters to form an opinion and aids in the electioneering process. In the context of India, the press has played a critical role in the freedom movement.

The characterisation of the press as a social watchdog emerges from a classical liberal notion of the power associations between government and society within a democracy. The watchdog philosophy of the press is hinged on a pluralistic view of social influence. It is seen as "a simple extension to the (newspaper) press of the fundamental individual rights to freedom of opinion, speech, religion and assembly" (McQuail, 1994, p. 128). The watchdog function infuses the press as a medium for discussion, an investigator of indecorum, an adversary to domination and knowledge, and the protector of truth, freedom, and democracy. This is exemplified in the traditional notion of a 'fourth estate', historically attributed to Edmund Burke: "There are three estates in parliament, but in the reporter's gallery yonder sits a fourth estate more important than they all" (Carlyle, 1841, cited in Donohue et al., 1995:118).

### Check Your Progress: 1

**Notes:** 1) Use the space below for your answer.

2) Compare your answers with those given at the end of this unit.

- 1) Define 'Freedom of Speech and Expression'.

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- 2) Discuss the relevance of 'Freedom of Speech and Expression' in the context of media and society.

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## 9.4 ROLE AND ACCOUNTABILITY OF JOURNALISTS

The media is weighed down by the heavy duty of being the communication channel between the government and the governed. Thus, the role of journalists is to work as eyes and ears of any newspaper or news channel. We must understand that a journalist's

role comes with great power and, thus, great responsibility. The media should work transparently to ensure truthful, accurate, verified information is communicated to the public. Therefore, journalists are expected to work objectively, free from bias, as holding those in power accountable is no mean feat.

Notably, the media must also hold itself answerable to serve the public. Both journalists and the media should be dedicated to the people's interests. Ideally, journalists do not create stories, and they are expected to provide factual and truthful information. Recently, "fake news" (planned misinformation) has been rising, which is the opposite of ethical journalistic practices. Fake news occurs when journalists are disordered, insensitive, and deceived by their sources. It also occurs when journalists, copy editors, or a producer produce a sensational headline or a "clickbait" (*a practice of writing overstated or misleading headlines to draw clicks on a piece of content*), expands and polishes the story further than is defensible by the facts. Such actions lead to the heresy of good press conduct and ethics.

## Clickbait: The changing face of online journalism

© 14 September 2015



Cabin Crew Take Secret Pictures, You Won't Believe The Results  
(Time To Break)



20 Celebrities Who Have Beaten Cancer  
(Celebstars)



The Must-See Technology That Is Changing the Way You Listen...  
(Sound Online by Sony)



15 Reasons Why You Should Never Support Horse Racing  
(Sports Mozo)



44 Stunning Images Of Things You Had No Idea  
SCREENGRAB/WALESONLINE



Life Insurance Companies Hate This  
SCREENGRAB/WALESONLINE



New Leader for Atlanta Symphony  
SCREENGRAB/WALESONLINE



Fiji send England Rugby World Cup warning  
SCREENGRAB/WALESONLINE

*Figure 2: Examples of Clickbait journalism*

(Source: <https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-wales-34213693>)

To ensure accountability and adherence globally, there are codes of conduct and ethics assigned to journalists. This emerges from the fact that media today does not continue to be only the Fourth Estate; it has secured a reputation in society and governance. The power of media can make or destroy any individual, institution, or thought. It is omnipresent and all-powerful, and with such voluminous power and strength, the media cannot lose sight of its freedoms, duties, and commitments. Some of the universally well-acknowledged ethical norms are as follows:

- a) **Accuracy and fairness:** Report verifiable facts, inaccuracies, and subjective remarks should always be avoided.
- b) **Prepublication Verification:** Journalists must verify and check the information before publication to avoid complications post-publication.

- c) **Caution Against Defamatory Writings:** Newspapers should not publish anything liable for defamation or libel against any individual or organisation.
- d) **Privacy:** Intrusion on the privacy of individuals is not approved unless dwarfed by genuine superseding public interest.
- e) **Eschew Suggestive Guilt:** Newspapers should abjure suggestive culpability by association. Implying they should refrain from identifying the family, relatives, or acquaintances of a person sentenced or suspected of a crime when they are entirely innocent, and a mention of them is not pertinent to the reported issue.
- f) **Corrections:** When any factual mistake or oversight is discovered or confirmed, the media organisation should publish the correction swiftly, with due distinction.
- g) **Communal Reports:** Appropriate corroboration before publishing reports on communal clashes or disputes must be done. Avoid identification of people based on caste, religion or community.
- h) **Sensational Headlines:** Headlines should match the contents of news stories and be unambiguous, precise, and authentic. A sensational headline is a strict NO.
- i) **Abjure Vulgarity and Obscenity:** Indecent and vulgar items should be avoided, and violence should not be glorified.

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## 9.5 PUBLIC INTEREST JOURNALISM

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Public interest journalism is “the news and current affairs media that has the primary purpose of recording, investigating, and explaining issues of public interest or significance” (Public Interest Journalism Initiative). This form of journalism is critical in guaranteeing that the community is reasonably informed, enabling citizens to participate in public debate and make informed decisions. Reporting can uncover corruption, remove dishonest people from public office, etc. Increasingly, the emphasis on public-interest journalism has grown, though no globally defined definition exists. It is the opposite of fake news, propaganda, censorship, and voyeurism. The defining characteristics of Public Interest Journalism include the following:

- Plurality
- Evidence-based
- Independence
- Neutrality
- Practical

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## 9.6 ISSUES WITH THE COMMERCIALISATION OF MEDIA

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In the age of information society, one of the biggest challenges of the mass media is how to solve a fundamental paradox that has surfaced from the complicated realities of their professional practice. Globally, the mass media assumes two positions: i) a social

institution and ii) an industry. We must understand that an industry does not exist without a product or service to offer to consumers. In the case of mass media organisations, the product they offer is ‘content’. Several internal and external factors affect the mass media content decision-making process. A multi-layered process of gatekeeping exists in media content creation. The most crucial factor is the economics of the industry. We must understand that advertisers are an indispensable external influence in any calculation of the business aspects of the mass media. Advertisements generate all the revenue for privately owned broadcast media and the majority for print and new media.

Media commercialisation refers to reorganising media structures, roles, and contents to indicate the profit-seeking targets of media industries. It underlines the notion that economic considerations regulate media products. Therefore, for any media organisation to stay floating in a competitive world media economy, it must produce enough revenue to cover the expenses and break even with substantial profits on investment.

## 9.7 NEED FOR ALTERNATIVE MEDIA

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Let us first try understanding the meaning of ‘alternative media’. It is defined as media sources that are different from mainstream media. Alternative media does not indicate a specific format and includes newspapers, magazines, newsletters, radio, television, films, new media, wall paintings, graffiti, street art, etc. In “Manufacturing Consent”, Herman and Chomsky (1998) mentioned the evolution of the radical press in the first half of the nineteenth century in Great Britain. “This alternative press effectively reinforced class consciousness; it unified the workers because it fostered an alternative value system and framework for looking at the world”, which encouraged them to collective action. At one time, this radical press threatened mainstream media and the legislature. Alternative media differs from mainstream media in content, production, and distribution. Alternative media should be seen as something other than the mainstream but a platform where opinions of all shades and pluralistic views are accommodated. Alternative media aims to voice different opinions rather than enunciate only mainstream media’s popular or adverse opinions.

## 9.8 TECHNOLOGY AND ITS ROLE IN SOCIETY

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Over a period, technology has become essential to the structure of society. It is an all-encompassing term referring to processes, methods, and tools resulting from scientific knowledge for practical functions. Technology is ever-evolving and is well-integrated into the functioning of society. For societies to flourish and develop, technological advances have become imperative. At the same time, human societies’ cultures, beliefs, and ambitions have shaped how civilisations have been established, profited from, and burdened by technology.

Some foundational role of technology in society includes:

- Defines how people communicate with each other daily
- Learning has become more interactive and shared
- Provides better access to resources
- Enables better livelihood opportunities
- Facilitated the formation of a network society and global citizen

- Helps economies to grow
- Better governance
- Infused scientific temperament in agriculture, sustainable development
- Increased workforce efficiency
- Healthcare and wellness advancements

From the simplest form of technology, the prehistoric discovery of how to control, the invention of the wheel, to the modern-day printing press, the telephone, and the Internet, technology has played a role in the progression of society at every age.

The amalgamation of technology in society has had far-reaching consequences, both good and bad. At the same time, humankind's benefits from technological advancements are well accounted for. You, therefore, need to consider the adverse outcomes of technology impacting society. One of the areas where technology has impacted adversely is the environment. Note that the Industrial Revolution ushered in new technologies with enormous power, leading to the transition to new manufacturing processes in the first world countries. This has been followed by prolonged industrialisation and more technological advancements in developed countries followed by developing countries. The impact of technology use on the environment has included the misuse and damage of our natural earth, leading to pollution, depletion of natural resources, and initiating severe climatic changes. Likewise, human well-being and health have been affected owing to excessive exposure to gadgets and other devices. The irony is that technology is being used again to find a remedy for the problems that emerged because of it.

### **9.8.1 Relationship Between Technology and Society**

You understand that a symbiotic relationship exists in the above milieu between technology and society. A society is an organised cluster of people connected for social, political, and religious purposes, while technology is an application that enables the betterment of life.

Note that the relationship between technology and society is reciprocal. On the one hand, society leads to technological change; on the other, changing technologies influence social evolution.

It is said that 'necessity is the mother of invention,' implying that all technological inventions have been designed to meet the requirements of society. Thus, technology is inherently tied to the culture and its populace's activities. Studies have suggested that whatever problem technology solves, it can also modify society's behaviours and operations, which may result in new problems. Such alternations or new ways of life give way to even more technological innovations. In a broader framework, society may use technology to survive, prosper, and achieve higher levels of global development by establishing greater societal effectiveness. From a micro perspective, you need to note that technological developments change human behaviour to the point of modifying human adaptive processes and thus influencing organismic development.

### **9.8.2 Technology and Inequality**

In recent times, there has been an augmented growth of technology. It has invaded several aspects of human life, including jobs, economic shifts, etc. Technology diffusion in daily life has taken place unprecedentedly: "The era of smart machines holds the

promise of a more prosperous future for all” (Qureshi, 2021, p. 17). Technology has improved efficiency, expanded economic growth, provided better access to basic services, and supported knowledge and information dissemination. However, technology is a significant cause of inequalities in the modern day. Therefore, the question arises: is technology reaching out to everyone equally?

Technology has been a strengthening influence on the global economy. Nevertheless, technology heightens marginalisation and inequality for those who cannot pay for it or earn a living through it. Unsurprisingly, technology does play a visible role in the job and will become more dominant. According to the World Economic Forum’s (WEF) “The Future of Jobs” 2020 report, the pandemic interrupted labour markets with a turnaround in technology acceptance, job creation, and loss. A key report finding states that technology will accelerate with a “significant rise in interest for encryption, non-humanoid robots, and artificial intelligence”.

The WEF report also indicates that new jobs will overtake the market. By 2025, 85 million jobs may be replaced by a change in the division of labour between humans and machines. At the same time, 97 million new roles may arise that are customised to the new division of labour between humans, machines, and algorithms. You must understand the implications of such a shift. It will be coupled with the need for reskilling labour and expanding jobs requiring analytical, problem-solving, and self-management skills. Those who are unskilled or do not have the means to upskill themselves are more likely to lose opportunities. For example, as Artificial Intelligence becomes conventional, its unsettling effects are expected to be seen at an unmatched speed and scale, which emphasises the need for administrations and stakeholders to discuss and shape their collective future. Technologies and solutions ought to respond to the requirements of the poor, who need to be empowered to access and use such technologies. Technology should be used to implement the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which aim to reduce rather than accentuate inequality.

This brings us to the question of the digital divide, which has widened the gap between ‘the haves and have-nots. The digital divide is the disparity between demographics and regions regarding access to modern information and communications technology (ICT). Such technology includes the telephone, television, personal computers, and mobile and internet connectivity. Note that the gap typically exists between urban and rural areas, between the educated and the uneducated, between socioeconomic clusters, and, globally, amongst the developed, developing, and underdeveloped countries. Universally, though the uses and importance of Information and communication technologies (ICTs) are expanding radically, the disparity of the digital divide is also enduring.

In the context of India, for example, education is impeded for many without internet access. This became evident during the COVID-19 pandemic when students in rural and peripheral areas could not continue online education without proper device access. The national survey by the Indian Council for Research on International Economic Relations (ICRIER) and LIRNEasia found that only 20 per cent of school-age children in India had access to online education during the pandemic. Out of this 20 per cent, only half participated in the classes. Digital India initiatives have been taken up full throttle. However, the availability and access to infrastructure may not be available for all, widening the vicious cycle of inequality in the context of education, economics, gender, and governance.

## 9.9 TECHNOLOGY IN MEDIA

Technology is the lifeline of the media industry, from print and electronic to new media. Emerging technologies at every point have changed the way information is gathered and disseminated to the masses. Today, it is challenging to discuss media and how communication takes place in society without addressing the influence of technology on media.

Technology is evolutionary, and one technology gives way to a newer, better version. Herein, you need to understand the concept of disruptive technology, which has had a colossal impact on the media. Disruptive technology can be understood as a product, service, or development that significantly impacts the functioning of an entire industry and/or may create new industries/markets. For example, the invention of the Internet and the World Wide Web created a niche for online media to develop, revolutionising content creation and consumption. Another example is automated journalism. Also known as Robot journalism, automated journalism is one of the industry's most debated examples of emerging disruptive technologies. Robots aid journalists, content creators, and publishers by explaining and examining data to produce content. Automated journalism also tests headlines and information sources and detects trending stories. 'Bandito', developed for The Washington Post, provides real-time analysis to distinguish the best-performing content and make enhancements to stories that do not quite 'hit the mark'.

### Activity - 2

Find out the following:

- What is multimedia? Define it.
- What are the components of multimedia?

### 9.9.1 Technology, Media and Freedom of Speech

With a brief on the all-persuasive nature of technology in media, you must examine the aspect of freedom of speech in this context. In India, Freedom of Speech is defined as a fundamental right in Article 19 of the constitution. Freedom of speech is the foundation of a democracy, which provides scope for the media to function. Media also serves as the custodian of that freedom. Freedom of speech and expression is generally understood as the idea that everyone has the natural right to liberally articulate themselves through any media devoid of outside intervention, such as censorship, fear of retaliation, threats, and intimidation.

Freedom of speech is a complex right; it is not absolute, and traditionally, restrictions by law have been imposed on it. Media professionals globally have found themselves entangled with the administration through legal sanctions that have a bearing on freedom of speech and expression. Some laws that govern the freedom of speech of media include:

- The Parliament ordained the Cinematograph Act of 1952 to guarantee that films are exhibited in harmony with the walls of Article 19(1)(a) and 19(2) of the Indian Constitution.
- **Sedition, Section 124A Indian Penal Code:** this law states that anyone, by words, either spoken or written, or by signs, visual representation, or otherwise,

attempts to bring hatred or disrespect or enthuses to stimulate disaffection towards the government recognised by law shall be punished with imprisonment.

- **Defamation, Section 499 Indian Penal Code:** defamation is defined as communicating a fabricated statement, either orally or in writing, about a person that damages the individual's reputation. Written defamation is called 'libel', whereas oral defamation is 'slander'.
- **Information Technology (Intermediary Guidelines and Digital Media Ethics Code) Rules 2021:** one crucial provision of this law includes the Code of Ethics. It states that for news and current affairs publishers, the codes that apply are (i) rules of journalistic conduct formulated by the Press Council of India and (ii) the Cable Television Networks Regulation Act, 1995. For online producers of curated content, it requires them to (i) categorise content in itemised age-appropriate groups, limit access to age-inappropriate content by children, (ii) exercise discretion in presenting content affecting the sovereignty and integrity of India, and (iii) make content more available for disabled persons.

Media operation and communication have been revolutionised with ever-evolving technology like the Internet. An open forum has been created for media to disseminate information aided by portable devices, laptops, tablets, mobile phones, etc. Progress in media and information technologies brings newer threats to the conventional notions of freedom of speech and opportunities to protect and extend those freedoms.

### 9.9.2 Technological Determinism and New Media

At this point, it is essential to draw upon the influence of technology on media and, thereby, on society at large. You can use the lens of technological determinism to understand the correlation. Technological determinism theory provides a causal connection between technology and society's nature. It examines the degree to which technological factors predispose human thought or action. The term 'technological determinism' was devised by Thorstein Veblen, stating that technology is the driving force of culture in society and regulates its progress in history.

The modern information society is an offshoot of the development of innovations and new technologies that have socio-political implications.

- The Internet and the new media have altered society's structure. The development of computers, networks, and the Internet has profoundly transformed many features of human communication and how individuals act. Our networked societies include E-commerce, online education, e-governance, social media, and data journalism. Note that the term 'new media' encompasses computing, computer technologies and related data contents, and digital technology-mediated communication. The term 'new media' is fluid and evolving, with a focus on i) computer technologies and digital content production, along with ii) cultural forms and contexts in which technologies are used. With the advent of new media communication, the socio-cultural, economic, and political eco-system has been altered, creating new social norms and raising ethical concerns.

Some impact of new media on society can be summarised as follows:

**Merits:**

- Ease of access to varied information
- Enhancement of cross-cultural exchanges
- Global communication and networking enhanced
- Opportunities for newer kinds of jobs
- Prospects of learning new skills
- Development of alternate forms of media

**Demerits:**

- Information overload
- Development of fake news
- Difficulty in verifying the correct information
- Loss of personal communication
- Concerns regarding data theft and privacy
- Addiction to gadgets has an impact on cognitive development

**Check Your Progress: 2**

**Notes:** 1) Use the space below for your answer.

2) Compare your answers with those given at the end of this unit.

1) Define the term Technological determinism.

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### 9.9.3 Ethical Concern: Ownership, Accountability, Surveillance and Privacy

In our efforts to understand the interconnectedness between technology, media, and society, the final focus is on ethical concerns. New forms of technology are reshaping the practice of a once simple means of communication, social norms, etc. News media employ communication technology to collect texts, videos, and images from across the globe with extraordinary speed and varying degrees of editorial control. The same technology permits news media to distribute this information to audiences worldwide. This increasingly competitive media industry has paved the way for ethical concerns that plague the workings of the industry globally.

**Media Ownership and Concentration:** In the context of India, for example, media ownership has become more public through stock market listings. Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) in media has infused fresh capital via which consolidation takes place in the media sector. Note that the incursion of newspapers and news magazines into television and radio broadcasting and television media in newspapers has created integrated media businesses (Zee TV owns the DNA newspaper, Times of India owns TV Times Now, and Radio Mirchi). This media consolidation reduces competition, limits choices for viewers, and lowers content quality.

**Accountability:** Often, media accountability is confused with self-regulation. Thus, you should note the difference between the two. Media accountability holds the media accountable to the people it serves and the profession. Self-regulation implies initiating a code of conduct to avoid confrontation with the administration and law. The press council is one such example of self-regulation in media. Media accountability is a matter of contention, with the surge in fake news, advertorials, and paid news, wherein truth, fairness, and objectivity are compromised. Over time, the misappropriation of media freedom by manipulation, suppression, misrepresentation, propaganda, and disinformation has eroded the media's credibility as a social institution. Note that the loss of trust in media harms society's very functioning basis. Thus, the accountability of media is of paramount importance.

**Surveillance and Privacy:** With the rise of social media, privacy concerns have surged. Occurrences of data thefts have distressed users and forced them to reconsider their interactions with social media and the safety of their personal information. You can refer to the incident of the consulting agency Cambridge Analytica, the firm misused the private information of over 50 million Facebook users to sway the 2016 American presidential election. Cyberattacks and data fissures are actualities of life for government organisations, businesses, and individuals alike in today's digitised and networked world. These mounting privacy concerns have provoked advocacy for tighter regulations. Some critical social media threats include Data Mining, Phishing, Malware Sharing, and Botnet Attacks.

Technology has exposed people and society to newer vulnerabilities. It has altered how people function in day-to-day life in a highly technologically driven world.

## 9.10 PEDAGOGICAL APPROACHES

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*(Instructions for the course counsellors)*

While analysing the relationship between technology, media, and society, the following approaches can be taken forward to research and report the evolution of freedom of expression and press freedom in their country:

- Historical developments in the evolution of the theory and practice of freedom of expression and its correlation to press freedom
- Journalists and/or media agencies that have made specific contributions to press freedom and democracy
- Events in democratic movements where news media and news reporting played a significant role

To highlight the relationship between technology, media, and society, the teacher can ask the learners to interview journalists on their views of the role of journalism in promoting or pursuing democracy. The interviewees can be requested to cite specific instances when media coverage played a significant role in the national or international landscape, as well as managing potential tensions between ownership and public interests. The educators then write a two-page reflection paper based on the interview, indicating the specific function of the media, how the media operated, and the key issues that were addressed.

## 9.11 LET US SUM UP

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In current times, technology and media have infused the veins of society. The nuptial between technology and media has extended the horizon of communication and

networking in unusual ways. While you understand that technological developments are an essential part of media development, you must also reflect on the effects of media and technology on society. Through technological determinism, you can understand how media technologies have transformed societies and civilisations globally. Undoubtedly, technology has many benefits, but it comes with a price. Technology has been a supporting factor for the global economy, media, and the like. However, technology intensifies marginalisation and disparity for those who cannot pay for it or earn a living through it.

## 9.12 FURTHER READINGS

1. Elizabeth M. Perse, J. L. (2016). *Media Effects and Society* (Routledge Communication Series). Routledge.
2. Neuman, W. R. (2010). *Media, Technology, and Society: Theories of Media Evolution* (Digital Culture Books). The University of Michigan Press.
3. Shirky, C. (2011). The Political Power of Social Media: Technology, the Public Sphere, and Political Change. *Foreign Affairs*, pp. 28–41.
4. Winston, B. (1998). *Media, Technology and Society*. Routledge.
5. Yuvaraj, M. (2016). Adoption of technology in recruiting library professionals and faculty members: A case study of social media in India. *The Bottom Line*, 241–250.

## 9.13 KEYWORDS

- Freedom of Expression*** : Freedom of Expression encourages the freedom of an individual or a community to communicate their thoughts and ideas without fear of retribution, suppression, or legal sanction.
- Public-interest journalism*** : The news and current affairs media that has the primary purpose of recording, investigating, and explaining issues of public interest or significance
- Technological determinism*** : Technological determinism theory provides a causal connection between technology and society's nature. It examines the degree to which technological factors predispose human thought or action.
- Media accountability*** : Media accountability holds the media accountable to the people it serves and the profession.

## 9.14 CHECK YOUR PROGRESS: POSSIBLE ANSWERS

### Check Your Progress: 1

- 1) Freedom of speech is a code that supports the freedom of a person or a community to articulate their opinions and ideas without fear of retaliation,

censorship, or legal sanction by the administration. Article 19(1) (a) of the Indian Constitution states that “all citizens shall have the right to freedom of speech and expression”. The values behind this Article lie in the Preamble of the Constitution, where a vibrant resolution is made to protect all its citizens, liberty of thought and expression.

- 2) ‘Freedom of Speech and Expression’ is a complex right that necessitates ethical usage of the power it bestows on the citizens and, thereby, the media. It is a mechanism that can be used for good and bad, where the danger lies. Media is a very powerful means of exercising freedom of speech and expression. However, it has also been progressively used for unlawful and unethical practices, which have enabled the government to censor the media. While on the one hand, the misappropriation of media necessitates the need for legal censorship, on the other hand, there are justifiable concerns about the infringement of the civil rights of people as an inescapable consequence of censorship. Thus, it becomes imperative that within the purview of ‘freedom of speech and expression, ‘ media operates via self-regulation, which ensures the fourth pillar of democracy works for the public.

### **Check Your Progress: 2**

- 1) Technological determinism is a theory that provides a causative connection between the nature of society and technology. It states that a society’s technology regulates its traditional principles, social structure, and history. According to the theory, social progress follows an inevitable curse driven by technological innovation.

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# **UNIT 10 FREEDOM, ETHICS AND SOCIAL ACCOUNTABILITY**

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## **Structure**

- 10.0 Introduction
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- 10.9 Let Us Sum Up
- 10.10 Further Readings
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- 10.12 Check Your Progress: Possible Answers

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## **10.0 INTRODUCTION**

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The role of media professionals is not merely to inform the public but to inform the public ethically, primarily keeping the tenets of freedom of expression and their social responsibility and accountability in check. In this Unit, we shall focus on the ethical value systems you can set for yourself as a media professional to face the challenges in your day-to-day work.

We shall start by defining the concept of self-regulation and distinguishing between codes, laws, and ethics to understand the subject better. Then, we shall briefly look at some important codes of ethics, such as the Canons of Journalism and the Commission on Freedom of Press report, to link them with the present times to understand how these ethical principles are still valid and pertinent. We shall examine the universal tenets of journalism or ‘essential shared values’ and discuss some emergent areas of ethics such as diversity and sensitivity, advocacy, digital media ethics, citizen journalism, and sting operations. This discussion will explain how media ethics and self-regulation

are interlinked. If media professionals follow certain ethical principles and norms, it will lead to self-regulation on their part and the profession.

Moreover, with the advent of the Internet, a great deal of content is being created online, and it is important that the Internet remains open and transparent and protects the rights of individuals contributing to sharing and exchanging knowledge. This allows them to create content freely and fosters creativity while making knowledge accessible to everyone. The temptation to copy or modify easily available content is difficult to fight. Ownership, privacy, confidentiality, and intellectual property need to be respected in virtual life, just like in our real life.

Therefore, new media ethics can be described as a set of ethical considerations defining our online conduct. New media ethics tell us how to use new media appropriately without breaching any law or infringing on the online rights of other users. In this Unit, we will also emphasise the model code for creators, distributors, and users of online content.

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## **10.1 LEARNING OUTCOMES**

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After reading this unit, you will be able to:

- distinguish between codes, laws, and ethics;
- describe universal media ethics;
- analyse emerging ethical areas such as diversity, advocacy, and digital media;
- describe the different aspects of new media ethics; and
- discuss the importance and challenges related to it.

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## **10.2 CONCEPT OF SELF-REGULATION, CODES, LAWS AND ETHICS**

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At the outset, let us look at the concept of Self-regulation, a voluntary act by an individual media professional and a media organisation. Any external agency does not impose it; therefore, it carries more credibility in the eyes of the public. Self-regulation ensures that the media can operate independently, which is in the interest of the media, its different stakeholders, and the audience. Several self-regulatory mechanisms exist for the Indian media to facilitate ethical conduct, such as codes of ethics, press councils, and ombudsmen. Organisations like the News Broadcasters Standards Authority (NBSA) and Broadcasting Content Complaints Council (BCCC) have been set up as an internal self-regulatory mechanism for television (news and entertainment), respectively. Self-regulation is not a new concept, as it has existed for a long time in the form of codes of conduct, ethics, and practices. These terms are often used interchangeably, but each has a different meaning and scope and is also interlinked in some ways. Let us look at them in detail for a proper understanding and application.

**Code:** Code is a systematic set of guidelines or framework for standard moral behaviour – it is an index of what is generally considered desirable. A code is a document that sets out guidelines to proscribe particular types of conduct deemed unethical and identify other types of conduct as being ethical. According to Retief (2009), “it serves as the

conscience of the worker as an individual and the organisation as a whole". A code is not a legal document and cannot be enforced by law. Some scholars argue that codes work against the independence of the free press and lead to self-censorship. However, it cannot be denied that adherence to codes can make the recurrence of past mistakes less likely and improve future work.

**Law** is a set of rules established in a social system that demand or prohibit specific actions. The courts of law govern these and are abiding by their people, and breaking the law is punishable. Some media laws, such as the Contempt of Court, Libel and Defamation, Official Secrets Act, etc., will be discussed in detail in Block 2 of this course. However, laws have limitations because new areas keep emerging, and the Government cannot enact laws for every situation. Some occasions require carefully interpreting the existing regulations to determine the best course of action.

**Ethics:** Ethics do not involve applying formal codes and rules but are more like self-check or self-control; thus, they are all about personal decisions and practices. Ethics is not law, although law often stems from a society's ethical values at a specific time. Violations of the law involve punishment, whereas ethical misconduct does not. According to American media theorist John C. Merrill (1982), "law is socially determined and socially enforced. Ethics, on the other hand, is personally determined and personally enforced". Ethics provide a media person with certain fundamental principles or standards by which s/he can judge an action as right or wrong, good or bad, responsible or irresponsible. Thus, ethics is primarily personal, and law is predominantly social. Ethical standards are individual and internal, and an outside force cannot punish them.

## 10.3 CODE OF ETHICS

Different bodies and institutions have formulated various codes of conduct from time to time. According to a UNESCO report, more than 370 Codes of Practice are said to be listed by the International Press Council in different parts of the world. Although journalists generally resist any code as these are seen to keep a particular check on their freedom of expression, codes of conduct are aimed to help the journalists and contribute to their freedom. It is believed that a good code does not impose restrictions; instead, it flags the problem areas that need to be anticipated and avoided in discharging their duties. Some media organisations prefer codes of practice or ethics instead of codes of conduct. Whatever the terminology, they all aim to develop a responsible attitude in exercising journalistic duties and creating a 'collective conscience of the profession'.

It will be useful to take a brief overview of the evolution of codes of ethics to analyse how the ethical values outlined by them continue to be pertinent and meaningful today.

### 10.3.1 Canons of Journalism

The first code of ethics for journalists was adopted in 1910 in the United States by the Kansas Editorial Association, which William E. Miller wrote. The Kansas Code was primarily focused on advertising and called for advertising policies that were "forthright and fair and news that was honest, just and decent. In another initiative, journalists formed the American Society of Newspaper Editors. It adopted an ethical code called "Canons of Journalism" in 1923, highlighting the importance of responsibility, freedom, independence, honesty, accuracy, impartiality, fair play and decency. These Canons were adopted as a model followed by other newspaper and press association codes.

The Radio Code was adopted in 1928 and was later expanded into the Radio and Television Code, covering advertising and programme content. However, adherence to these codes was voluntary, and noncompliance went unpunished. According to Ferre (2009), “concern for journalism ethics became synonymous with culling values from the facts of human experience so that reporters could produce news that was neutral, unbiased and factual”.

The advent of television was a watershed in the history of media, which hit the imagination of the masses and briefly eclipsed radio and cinema. It also led to the significant expansion of media organisations and the growth of the advertising industry, “which financed daily newspapers, magazines and books”. All these developments led to increased media concentration in a few hands, and the US Government made various efforts to break the monopoly of large media companies and provide diverse perspectives.

### **Activity - 1**

Examine a code of ethics established by international journalist associations or national media organisations (one example is the code of ethics established by the International Federation of Journalists; another example would be the BBC’s professional standards). Assess the intended purpose of each element of the code.

- Discuss why a code of ethics should be developed and agreed upon by the members of the profession themselves and not imposed by external agents or authorities.
- Discuss the mechanisms needed to enforce the code of ethics
- Look for examples and examine the differences between 1) code of ethics and 2) code of conduct ethics established by international journalist associations or national media organisations, for instance.
- Discuss self-regulation, forms of co-regulation, and statutory regulation. What are the pros and cons of each for professional, independent journalism?

### **10.3.2 Commission on Freedom of the Press**

The US Commission expanded the scope of media ethics on the Freedom of the Press under the chairmanship of Hutchins in 1947. It called upon the press to provide “trustworthy “daily news, a form of public expression, inclusive reporting free of stereotypes. These stories pursue and probe democratic life and universal access to daily news. It reaffirmed the principle of freedom and that press plays an essential role in political and social life”.

The Hutchins Commission report identified five essential requirements against which the performance of media institutions might be measured:

- “The press must provide a truthful, comprehensive and intelligent account of the day’s events in a context that gives them meaning. In this process, facts are insufficient; the truth about the facts (relevant background surrounding the facts) is also essential. Media should put stories in perspective and evaluate the credibility of conflicting sources.
- The press must serve as a forum for exchanging comments and criticism.

- The press should project a representative picture of the constituent groups of society. Racial, social and cultural groups should be depicted without resorting to stereotypes.
- The goals and values of society should be presented and clarified.
- The press should provide full access to the day's intelligence”.

These could be accomplished if the press was more responsible, journalists were better trained, and the press effectively regulated itself. Self-regulation was considered the key feature, and government intervention was the last resort.

The Hutchins Commission laid the foundation for Social responsibility theory and stimulated a series of attempts to describe normative media theories. Ferre (2009) argued that although the press ignored the Hutchins Commission report, the social responsibility aspect was taken seriously by Journalism Schools. McQuail (1998) observed that “these recommendations were followed by many different codes of ethical conduct depending upon the conventions and traditions of the country and on who formulated the code – whether it was publishers, editors, journalists or an external regulatory body”. Retief (2009) believed that these codes’ most crucial contribution was safeguarding media freedom and preventing government regulation of the media.

### **Check Your Progress: 1**

**Note:** 1) Use the space below for your answers.

2) Compare your answers with those given at the end of this unit.

1. Why is it important for a media professional to develop a strong value system?

.....  
.....

2. What do the Canons of Journalism stand for?

.....  
.....

3. What is the role and importance of a code of ethics?

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## **10.4 ESSENTIAL ETHICAL VALUES**

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Every media professional should strive for specific essential ethical values traced across cultures and nations, such as truthfulness, fairness, independence, accountability, objectivity and privacy. These are briefly recapitulated here as they are crucial for quality journalism, empowering ordinary readers, and maintaining democracy.

**Accuracy:** As we know, journalism is a vital public trust. Its objective is to inform people of the rights and wrongs committed, expose corruption, and unearth scandals in different sectors of life. A truthful account of an incident is accurate, factual, and based on evidence and aims to bring the truth out in the public sphere and lead democratic debates on a given issue. It is substantiated by cross-checking facts and

figures and guards against rumours, speculations and hearsay. Pre-publication verification is a cardinal principle of good journalism. Accuracy, besides factual details such as names, places, dates, times, people involved, spellings, etc., is maintained using appropriate headlines that are not misleading and justify the story. The recent trend of re-enactments and dramatisation in news channels tends to colour facts. Accuracy also has to be ensured during editing as well as translation. As discussed in the previous Unit, the mad rush to break stories may lead to factual errors.

According to famous journalist Carl Bernstein,

*“The greatest felony in the news business today is to be behind, or to miss a big story. So, speed and quantity substitute for thoroughness and quality, for accuracy and context. The pressure to compete, the fear somebody else will make the splash first, creates a frenzied environment in which a blizzard of information is presented and serious questions may not be raised”.*

Since news stories are written/telecast under tremendous pressure and in a hurry, even the most meticulous and conscientious journalist will likely make mistakes. Senior journalist Vinod Mehta (2011) emphasised, “Every effort should be made to prevent it by being extra diligent and giving attention to the details. However, in case of a bonafide bloomer, instead of a cover-up, you should bring it to the notice of your seniors, and clarification may be issued as quickly as possible. Subsequently, all efforts should be made to ensure accuracy at all levels to maintain your credibility and the organisation you serve”.

**Objectivity:** Emphasising the need for objectivity, famous journalist C.P. Scott said, ‘Facts are sacred; the comment is free’. Objectivity involves the separation between news and opinion. It is often argued that the neutrality of journalists is a myth, as they tend to have strong views.

Media houses work under various pressures, including those from the Government, advertisers, corporate houses, and PR agencies. As a media professional, the fundamental question you must ask is to whom you are accountable. Is it the Government of the day, the management of the media house, the advertisers, corporate houses or the PR agencies? If journalism is a public trust, then your ultimate accountability lies with the common reader/viewer/listener, especially the deprived and marginalised sections of society.

**Privacy:** Maintaining privacy is yet another essential ethical issue. You would have noticed that television channels often transgress the boundaries of decency in their mad rush for TRPs. Intrusion in private grief is a charge made on media very often as media tries to capture each drop of tear, whether a common layperson, celebrity or even a national icon. For example, the family of Nelson Mandela, an anti-apartheid hero, while on life support in a hospital, accused the news crew of obstructing entry to the hospital, making themselves a significant nuisance. His daughter called the foreign media ‘vultures’ who failed to respect the family’s feelings while covering the deteriorating medical condition of Mandela. Some scholars argue that privacy can be breached only when there are sufficient reasons that the issue is for the ‘public good’. However, the need to maintain sobriety and decency cannot be overemphasised at any stage.

### **Essential Shared Values**

The above discussion can aptly be summed up in the words of Elliott (2009), who identified the following ‘essential shared values’ sustained across cultures and time:

- 1) “Journalists should strive to publish news accounts that are balanced, accurate, relevant and complete (BARC).
- 2) Journalists should strive to publish news accounts that are BARC without causing harm that could be prevented.
- 3) Journalists should strive to give citizens the information that they need for self-governance. This principle is the defining principle for the practice of journalism and the one that justifies causing harm in the production of news stories. If citizens need to have that information, it is justified to publish it, even if the information causes damage to some individuals or group”.

Thus, you must develop your own ethical value system, which you must adhere to without any outside pressure and interference to retain your freedom.

## 10.5 EMERGING ETHICAL AREAS

As societies become complex, new issues keep emerging, expanding the nature and scope of media ethics. You will require different skill sets and strong ethical principles to face such emerging challenges. Moreover, the role and canvas of a media professional are also changing. In addition to reporters, journalists and sub-editors, some of you will also work as web designers, camera persons, producers and editors. The ethical dilemmas you will face in discharging your respective roles will also vary. You may also need specific ethical principles besides the general principles discussed above. For example, as a television producer, you may have to take care of your camera angles, especially while looking at women and children subjects. It has often been found that while focusing on children, the camera ‘looks down’ at them, posing serious ethical concerns - the same holds for female subjects. Similarly, while editing the content of an interview, you will have to guard against selective editing. Let us look at some such ethical dilemmas that need to be considered.

### 10.5.1 Diversity and Sensitivity

For a country like India, with a population of over 1.2 billion comprising varieties of class, caste, religion, ethnicity, sexual orientations, disability and geographical areas, diversity is a huge ethical issue. There are several regions and linguistic zones, each with a distinct culture and identity; various languages are spoken, including 22 officially recognised languages and about 1652 dialects across the country. In a liberal and democratic set-up, all members and groups enjoy equal rights. However, it has often been found that specific issues and concerns relating to disadvantaged sections of society, Dalits, disabled, minorities and those in far-flung areas do not get adequate media space, which further suffers due to stereotypical representations. Identifying people by race/caste/religion/community is a charged media has often been faced with, which can be avoided unless genuinely relevant to the story. According to Whitehouse (2009), if one segment of society is ignored, vilified or even inappropriately sanctified through mass media narratives, those marginalised and the community as a whole will be harmed.

To take the example of the projection of women, various studies have revealed that issues related to women have largely been invisible in media unless they are crime-related or sensational. Women rarely get covered as contributors to development and governance. Although employment opportunities in media have increased for urban-

educated women, the representation of women continues to suffer from stereotyping, showing them as victims and belonging to weaker sections.

Violence against women, especially rape, one of the most heinous crimes against women, has come centre stage lately. You may recall the brutal gang rape on a Delhi bus in December 2012, which became a defining moment and highlighted the patriarchal attitudes and misogyny on the part of the perpetrators of the crime. The widespread public outrage brought people across the spectrum together with the media as a strong ally. The continued media focus and coverage led to the issue gaining new prominence in the public discourse, including political party manifestoes, election campaigns and even the Union budget. According to the National Crime Report Bureau, the incident accounted for increased reporting of crimes as more women feel empowered to come out with their cases. However, a word of caution here is a need for balanced coverage in such sensitive issues as the clamour for instant, and retributive justice can even turn counter-productive and harm the cause itself, as shown in the 2019 Hyderabad gang rape case. Media may not be the fundamental cause of the problem as it does not exist in a vacuum. However, it is in the power of the media to give a realistic and adequate portrayal of their problems and concerns.

### **10.5.2 Advocacy and Ethics**

The above discussion brings us to the issue of advocacy and ethics. Advocacy stems from the word advocate – a person who pleads in favour of another; thus, advocacy is support or argument for a cause. One may argue that if a media person takes a position on an issue, it is at variance with the concept of objectivity. However, advocacy is based on the premise of human rights, democracy and peaceful coexistence. Baker (2009) argues, “Advocacy is for noble (or morally justifiable) causes with moral virtue and with principled motives and means. A principled advocate embodies and enacts truth, transparency, respect and concern for disadvantaged sections of society”. S/he follows the path of equity, equality and social responsibility, treating people empathetically.

Mehta (2011) observes that a journalist occasionally has to cover an incident or event with stipulated two sides. Still, one side is so horrific and unforgivable that you may decide to concentrate on just that side. You can take sides when confronted with one of these terrible happenings, but basic guidelines must be followed. Some examples in this regard could be acid attacks on women, environmental degradation, pollution, and so on. Thus, harnessing communication for worthy purposes with moral means to achieve professional objectives is ethical. However, suppose advocacy is used for self-interest, deceit, manipulation, and disregard for others. In that case, it leads to the loss of face for all those involved and the lowering of society’s moral compass.

### **10.5.3 Use of Hidden Cameras**

As you know, there are three types of journalistic writing - Objective, Interpretative and Investigative. Objective writing is neutral, balanced, factual, and purely for information dissemination; interpretative writing involves analysing and interpreting complex issues, claims made by the government and policy issues. The investigative report works on the premise that something somewhere is wrong and aims to dig beneath the surface in search of ‘why’ and ‘how’. The primary objective of investigative journalism is to uncover the truth for the public good. This pursuit follows an adversary role, whether it is the Government or the corporate sector.

Investigative journalism involves a detailed enquiry of reports, documents and developments. Sting journalism is an offshoot of investigative journalism. Operation West End, Operation Duryodhan, Operation Chakravyuh, BMW Expose Case, and Cash-for-Vote Scam were some cases where sting operations using hidden cameras were conducted. However, using hidden cameras raises thorny privacy, entrapment, and accountability issues. Since the filming of a person is done covertly, it leads to the erosion of privacy and, at times, even obscenity. In some sting operations, illegal methods, such as bribery, trespass, etc., have also been reported. Sting operations should not be used as a shield of public purpose in the garb of settling one's scores and can land the reporter in trouble regarding defamation, libel, etc. The journalist needs to ensure accuracy and observe general standards of decency. Care should be taken to ensure that there is no selective editing and that the context of the footage used is demonstrated. The identity of those not directly related to the event but caught on the footage must be masked. The content must be conclusive without loose ends so that it does not leave room for confusion and interpretations.

In addition to the areas discussed above, ethics are linked with other aspects such as war and conflict reporting, reporting sub-judice matters and so on. A firm grounding in ethics will enable you to make correct decisions in these areas.

#### **10.5.4 Introduction to Digital Media Ethics**

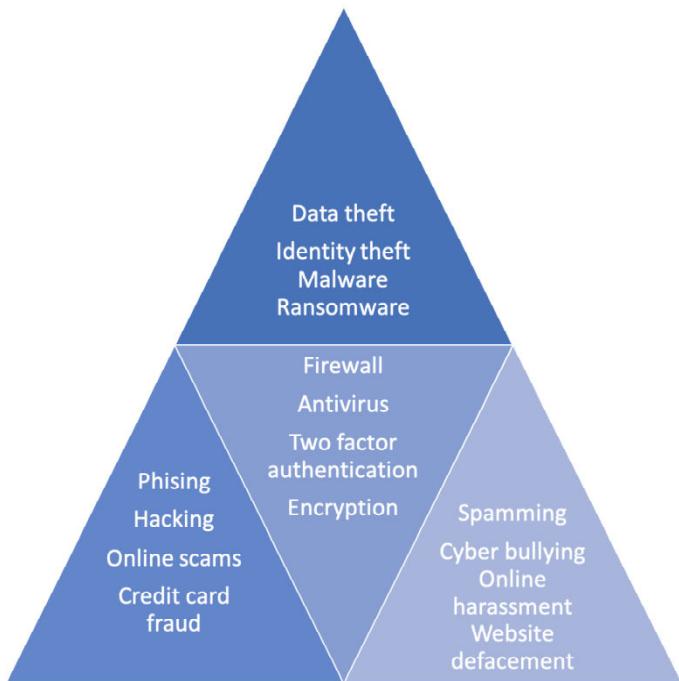
Digital media is a rich information source enabling information sharing and dissemination without any filters or means to restrict the content. The new media has radically changed how news is collected and disseminated and emerged as a challenge to traditional journalism, which is seen as a one-way transfer of information. Many of the population, especially the youth, are increasingly dependent on new media platforms for their information and entertainment needs.

Social media platforms are being extensively used for sharing views and also as news sources. The authenticity of these sources may be difficult to verify as, at times, people use pseudonyms or write anonymously. Often, when a comment is made on Twitter or Facebook, it is countered aggressively or 'trolled' systematically by the opposing group or party. The trend is especially pronounced in political comments or in which celebrities are involved, leading to sensationalism and vilification of those involved. Some of these comments may be selective in nature and contribute to partisan interests using provocative language. Since journalists follow social media trends like a wire service, at times, such trends get reflected in the mainstream media.

Attribution of the source is yet another area of ethical concern. Publishing news not attributable to any source or under the guise of unnamed or unidentified sources indicates poor journalism. Some websites clearly state that the content on the site can be used freely, while in some instances, there are conditions to use. The material is used with appropriate citations for educational purposes, research, etc. However, permission must be taken from the individual or organisation concerned for commercial purposes.

Various cyber crimes, such as morphing, phishing, data theft, hacking, cheating, and pornography, have further compounded the digital sphere. Digital manipulation of images and pictures and selective editing can lead to misrepresentation and misinformation. It is extremely difficult to get evidence, and often, the real culprits may be operating from other countries and beyond the purview of the Indian legal system. The conviction rate in cyber crimes is abysmally low, and lengthy judicial procedures further compound

the process. New crimes emerge daily, calling for preventive measures such as training on new software and constant updates of knowledge to address some of these concerns.



*Figure 1: Types of cybercrimes with cybersecurity measures at the core*

### Check Your Progress: 2

**Note:** 1) Use the space below for your answers.

2) Compare your answers with those given at the end of this unit.

- What are the essential ethical values needed in a media professional?

.....  
.....

- Why is it important to consider diversity and sensitivity in media ethics?

.....  
.....

## 10.6 CODE OF ETHICS ON NEW MEDIA

All the content on news websites may not come from reliable sources and can also be inaccurate. In such cases, it is prudent that the users be informed when a news item is less reliable or has been edited only after being taken from another source. This helps them to be better prepared to handle such information. In the case of images, new end technologies have facilitated the easy capture, sharing, and transmission of data. Also, in many cases, the news may need to be verified, or inappropriate images could appear beside stories, thus requiring the reader to be discerning.

The reports generated through anonymous sources and hoax data are also commonplace. During the second season of IPL, a blog named ‘Fake IPL Player’ was started. The anonymous writer was believed to be a Kolkata Knight Riders team

member but could not be identified. The blogger's identity was revealed only after the writing caught international attention and garnered a huge number of visitors. Before that, the team management had taken measures like curbing internet access and banning laptops from stopping the posts. This is the downside of information coming in through new media. It is impossible to ascertain the source and authenticity of the information correctly.

The problem is also faced by news employees who want to share their thoughts online. Companies are often not open to allowing this since it can lead to many problems. For instance, a person's remarks about a group or community could be hurtful and incite violence, ending up spoiling the company's reputation. To avoid this, many companies have devised clear guidelines so their employees can use social media fearlessly. They often spell this out as 'Social Media Policy'. For this reason, the leading publication, Los Angeles Times, has drawn up a social media policy. It says that:

- 1) Principles of integrity, professionalism, privacy and impartiality should be observed by journalists when posting online.
- 2) The authenticity of what employees post is important. Online journalists should verify questionable content with credible sources before posting or tweeting about it.
- 3) It is essential for employees to properly define their association with the publication as they would do offline.

Thus, it is clear that both content producers and readers need to have a system of checks and balances for their online behaviour. Their etiquette cannot be controlled but can be guided with the help of social media policies, drawing up ethical guidelines etc.

### **Activity - 2**

Examine a code of ethics established by information professionals, such as libraries or archivists, including major principles and values. See how this code could potentially differ from a code of conduct established by international journalist associations or national media organisations.

- Discuss differences between directional and aspirational codes
- Discuss differences between codes of conduct and codes of ethics
- Discuss information ethics issues related to accuracy, transparency, ownership, access, privacy, security and community
- Discuss how information ethics influence personal decisions, professional practice and public policy
- Discuss how evolving new information formats and needs influence ethical principles and how these codes are applied (e.g., social media policies, digital preservation, privacy, and access to public information).

## **10.7 RIGHTS AND ETHICAL RESPONSIBILITIES OF CITIZENS**

It is not just the content creators who need to be restricted by ethical boundaries; here are unwritten protocols for readers. Something as innocent as 'liking' a page or tweeting

on a trending topic can sometimes lead to a violation of online ethics due to the nature of the content. Other issues facing readers are cyber disinhibition, inadvertent self-disclosure, and cyber crimes such as bullying, doxing, phishing etc. On the consumers' end, mainly social media users, the problem of invasion of privacy is not fully understood.

Readers in the online world are still unaware of the data trails they willingly give to internet service providers and are thus falling into a situation where they have no control over their data. The disclosure problem is compounded by the lack of awareness among Internet and new media users, which can lead to an invasion of privacy.

Companies often dictate social networking site's terms of service and privacy policies as per their requirement, and readers have little or no say in changing them. They are also unaware of their virtual identities and how data mining firms use them.

Similarly, social networking sites often collect and share information with third-party users. Still, users cannot control this since failure to accept these policies usually results in the inability to sign up or access these sites and applications.

Thus, we reveal much more about ourselves online than we had planned to simply because we do not care to go through the privacy settings or disclosure agreements while downloading apps or accessing social media. The least a user can do is to read and understand these carefully and limit the amount and type of personal information they upload. The increasing cyber disinhibition, or the phenomenon of loosening social restrictions and inhibitions in the virtual world, is a major cause of ethical and legal violations.

### **Activity - 3**

Visit the Digital Citizenship website [<https://www.digitalcitizenship.net>] and review the nine elements of digital citizenship. These nine elements require individuals to lead and assist others within one's community to become active digital citizens, recognise the positive and negative consequences of actions, and practice good habits. Cognitive justice also acknowledges the importance of representing content from minority groups, using lesser-known but valid resources and promoting indigenous knowledge.

- Provide examples based on your personal experience of each of the nine elements.
- Evaluate your competency about these elements and consider which aspects require improvement.
- Discuss how information and digital access influence your ability to evaluate information.

#### **10.7.1 Ethics Related to Citizen Journalism**

The access and availability of technology have led to the growth of the concept of 'citizen journalism' wherein the common person decides and presents the issues of importance and concerns. Citizen Journalism is not an entirely new concept, as it existed in some form involving ordinary people in contributing news. However, the term gained currency in 2005. The ease of dissemination of information through the web has made it extremely simple to post information on the Internet. Similarly, the accessibility of smartphones with built-in cameras and advanced features has empowered ordinary

citizens to write, post, and publish material. It is democratic and participatory and can use various media forms as empowering tools. The CJs, as they are popularly called, are not regular employees of a media organisation and may not be professionally trained journalists.

Over time, some confusion has also emerged about who a citizen journalist is. Do bloggers, stringers, or those engaged in user-generated content (UGC) also fall into this category?

It is important to distinguish as the content they posted could be more of an opinion or comment than hard news. Since they do not possess conventional training in journalism, they may not have the necessary skills in research and cross-checking facts. The processes related to gate-keeping, filtering, agenda-setting and ensuring information integrity are some issues in citizen journalism.

### **10.7.2 Instances of Ethical Violations**

New media is a powerful tool to reach out to people, but it is sometimes misused for personal attacks and running malicious campaigns with intended or unintended consequences. Trolling, cyber vandalism and smear campaigns are mounted on the Internet to garner quick support.

Sometimes, these incidents go out of hand and create gross ethical and legal violations. For example, the pictures of the brutal murder of a northeastern student in the Munirka area of Delhi were shared online without respect for the individual's privacy or his family's consent. Similarly, leaked pictures of film stars holidaying abroad caused a lot of annoyance to the people concerned. In the above cases, we can hold the person who circulated the pictures legally guilty. Still, people who came across the pictures and shared them further indulged in gross ethical violations. In case any content being circulated on the net is found to be objectionable, it must be reported to the particular site and the authorities so that necessary action may be taken.

Another ethical violation is the trend of shaming videos. These are videos where people are humiliated with punishments such as chopping off their hair, beating, etc., and are recorded to be uploaded online to promote online embarrassment. There have been reports of kids, teenagers and even adults feeling suicidal after their shaming videos came online. This disturbing trend also includes videos of pet shaming. Though they are intended to serve as a punishment, such videos often go 'viral' and can affect the mental and social health of the persons concerned.

People of all age groups use the Internet, and not all users are discerning enough to understand the consequences of the data they may end up sharing online. Anything once posted on the Internet remains there forever and can be dug up any time later and cause embarrassment. Therefore, we must be extra careful in putting up or sharing our pictures with friends and colleagues.

We often find abusive and derogatory language in web page comment sections, chat rooms, social networking sites, etc. This trolling is a result of disinhibition or the breaking down of socio-cultural norms in the virtual world. Another significant threat is an addiction to these sites. The overuse of apps and social networking sites is causing an alarming situation where addicted users are psychologically more dependent on their virtual identities than on real-world scenarios. The ubiquitous 'selfie' also becomes a menace at times. Clicking a selfie at any minute of the day is not a crime. However, how, where

and when it is clicked decides whether there has been an ethical violation. Former US President Barack Obama faced a lot of flak for clicking a selfie at the funeral of Nelson Mandela. As we look at the advent of the ‘Internet of Things, i.e., devices connected with the Internet that can be remotely operated, the responsibility of using the technology better has also increased manifold.

### **10.7.3 Do’s and Don’ts of Ethical Violations**

The guidelines for ‘netiquette’ are very simple. When we post something in relation to a text, we should point to the original text while commenting so that our post is not taken out of context. We must be careful while posting any data online, and before doing so, one must consider the long-term consequences. We should be sensitive to online readers who may represent different beliefs, sensibilities and cultures. If we have made a mistake, we must immediately apologise and remove the concerned posted text. We should be gracious in disagreements, too. Expressing any negative opinion online on a public forum can be disturbing for any individual. Below is a list of ways to prevent unethical online practices.

#### **Do’s and dont’s of New Media Ethics**

- “Do not open messages from strangers
- Do not forward messages/rumours without first verifying the claims
- Do not impersonate individuals or secure their passwords through unauthorised means
- Never send pictures to strangers
- Avoid downloading copies of pirated software or movies, songs, etc.
- Respect the privacy of others, just as you expect the same from others.
- Do not use other users’ computer resources without their permission.
- Use the Internet ethically.
- If found, complain about illegal communication and activities to Internet Service Providers and local law enforcement authorities.
- Users should not intentionally use the computers to retrieve or modify the information of others, which may include password information, files, etc.”

#### **Check Your Progress: 3**

**Note:** 1) Use the space below for your answers.

2) Compare your answers with those given at the end of this unit.

1. Why is social media policy important in the present context?

.....

.....

2. What can readers do to safeguard their online experience?

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## 10.8 PEDAGOGICAL APPROACHES

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*(Instructions for the course counsellors)*

With a glimpse of the code of ethics and conduct in this unit, the learner should be able to discuss indexes such as the Freedom of the Press Index of Freedom House, the Worldwide Press Freedom Index of Reporters without Borders, or a relevant regional measure, such as the media Afrobarometer. The learner can:

1. explain whether they think such indexes are relevant or useful to development;
2. identify and explain the factors or variables that have affected the freedom of the press.

Criteria covered in this indices include the following:

- Degree of freedom of print, broadcast and online media
- The legal environment for media
- Political pressures that influence reporting
- Economic factors that affect access to information
- Media ownership concentration
- Direct attacks on journalists and media
- The existence of state monopoly in media
- The existence of censorship and self-censorship in media
- Difficulties for foreign reporters
- How do digital communications companies curate news media content compared to other countries (e.g., e-personal content, entertainment, etc.)?

Learners can also collate examples of reporting that depict prejudices, including stereotyping, mythmaking, obscenity and graphic images. Participants should be led through a discussion on the importance of standards and general guidelines for journalists.

Lastly, educators can guide learners in making an inventory of the coverage by citizen reporting of an event or issue prominently covered by mainstream media. They can then check for factual errors or bias.

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## 10.9 LET US SUM UP

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The debate surrounding ethical issues in media has increased prominence in the last few decades, and the issue is being hotly debated at various levels and fora. In this Unit, we discussed that ethics imply the freedom to choose; hence, a firm grounding in ethics will help you understand various critical issues in your profession and follow the correct path. Ethics form the bedrock of the key processes of journalism - identifying information, gathering, selecting and presenting the information. In this way, ethics ensure

the reliability of the information on which the credibility of a media organisation depends. Because of the complexities in the present media scenario, the ethical dimension of each area needs to be thoroughly examined. The exposure and guidance thus gained will help you to make responsible decisions in different capacities in your work. As a new generation of media professionals, you must critically understand your role in a highly competitive and profit-driven media environment and act as harbingers of change for the well-being of society and the profession. Furthermore, learning to differentiate between ‘open’ and ‘free’ content is an important aspect of understanding online ethics and using web content. These were discussed in detail, along with some instances of ethical violations and how these can be handled effectively.

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## **10.10 KEYWORDS**

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- Code** : Code is a systematic set of guidelines or framework for standard moral behaviour – it is an index of what is generally considered desirable.
- Law** : It is a set of rules established in a social system that demand or prohibit specific actions.
- Ethics** : Ethics provide a media person with certain fundamental principles or standards by which s/he can judge an action as right or wrong, good or bad, responsible or irresponsible.
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## **10.11 FURTHER READINGS**

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## **10.12 CHECK YOUR PROGRESS: POSSIBLE ANSWERS**

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### **Check Your Progress: 1**

1. A professional media needs to develop a strong ethical sense and value system

so that s/he can make correct choices to face the complexities and challenges of the real world in his/her professional life.

2. The Canons of Journalism stand for responsibility, freedom, independence, honesty, accuracy, impartiality, fair play and decency in journalism.
3. Codes of ethics aim to develop a responsible attitude among media professionals toward their work and flag the problem areas that need to be anticipated and avoided in discharging their duties.

#### **Check Your Progress: 2**

1. The essential ethical values needed in a media professional are accuracy, objectivity, and privacy.
2. According to Whitehouse (2009), if one segment of society is ignored, vilified or even inappropriately sanctified through mass media narratives, those marginalised and the community as a whole will be harmed.

#### **Check Your Progress: 3**

1. Social media is designed to be an easy-to-use system for voicing our opinions. But there is a need to be aware of the new dangers it exposes us to. Social media policies define the limits of actions that can be performed on social media and thus help us follow responsible online behaviour - both as content producers and users.
2. Social networking sites often collect information and share it with third-party users. Although users cannot control this, it is prudent that they go through the privacy settings or disclosure agreements while downloading apps or accessing social media. The user should read and understand these carefully and limit the amount and type of personal information they upload.
3. We should double-check the data we post online and be critical, observant and watchful while sharing content or talking to strangers. We should also encourage our acquaintances and friends to point out any inadvertent errors or mistakes we have committed.

**Block-3**

**Journalism and Society**



## **BLOCK 3: JOURNALISM AND SOCIETY**

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Media plays a crucial role as a fourth pillar in a democracy. This role brings a considerable responsibility for the news organisations to support the democratic processes. Watchdog and gatekeeping are considered the significant roles news outlets perform objectively to strengthen the performance of various public institutions and bring transparency in decision-making. You can understand the importance of news organisations' role in society through these roles. Media is considered a powerful institution; it is prone to influence by the various power centres besides its commercial operations. Bias, subjectivity, hidden agendas, and favouritism are some significant criticisms. Regular news readers should be familiar with the entire news operation. This block will take you through the nuances of news operations.

### **Unit 11: What Makes News?**

News is essential information that is deemed timely, significant, and relevant to a particular audience. It informs, educates, and engages the public in current events and issues. Specific criteria are applied to determine what qualifies as news, including novelty, impact, proximity, prominence, and human interest. Facts and verification are paramount in news reporting, maintaining objectivity and non-partisanship. However, limitations, such as time constraints, editing differences, and varying mediums, impact the news-making process.

Additionally, the rapid pace of news production in the digital age has raised questions about accuracy and verification. The constant assessment of news involves evaluating its "news factor," considering its impact, significance, and relevance to the audience. Shaping news requires thoughtful consideration of how the information is presented, ensuring accuracy and objectivity.

In this unit, we delve into the concepts, criteria, and challenges that underpin the news-making process, shedding light on how information becomes news in a dynamic and evolving media landscape.

### **Unit 12: The News Development Process**

The process of news-making is a complex and dynamic journey that involves identifying news, recognising compelling stories, and bringing them to the public in various forms of media. It comprises a series of stages, from pre-production research to post-production editing and dissemination. Key players in this process include journalists, editors, photographers, videographers, and producers who collaborate to ensure accurate and engaging news content. Each media platform, whether TV, radio, print, or digital, has unique production methods and challenges.

News production has become more immediate and interactive in this digital age, allowing for real-time updates and audience engagement. However, this fast-paced environment also raises concerns about accuracy and the spread of misinformation. Quality control and review are critical steps in news-making, where editorial standards are upheld, and stories are fact-checked and verified. This unit helps you explore the intricate world of news production, exploring its stages, key players, and the evolving landscape in various media formats.

### **Unit 13: News Reporting and The Power of The Image**

News reporting has transformed in the digital age, distinguishing between traditional and new media platforms. Irrespective of the platform, adherence to good reporting

practices remains paramount, involving accuracy, impartiality, and ethical considerations. One of the most potent tools in news reporting is the power of images. Visual storytelling can convey emotions, provide context, and enhance the impact of a news story. Images can capture the essence of an event or issue in a way that words alone often cannot. Learning the attributes of news reporting involves honing skills in writing, interviewing, fact-checking, and understanding ethical responsibilities. It also entails adapting to the evolving landscape of new media, where information is disseminated rapidly and interactively. This unit explores the news reporting process and images' influential role, emphasising the importance of ethical practices and evolving skills in journalism.

After completing these units, the next time you read or watch any news, you should be able to decipher all the meanings of given news presentations. More importantly, based on this critical understanding, you should be able to make informed decisions for your personal and professional circumstances.

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# **UNIT 11 WHAT MAKES NEWS?**

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## **Structure**

- 11.0 Introduction
- 11.1 Learning Outcomes
- 11.2 What is News: Concept and Definition
- 11.3 Criteria for Information to Become News
  - 11.3.1 News Factor as a Constant for Assessment of News
  - 11.3.2 Considerations While Shaping News
  - 11.3.3 Thoughts on Making a Judgement About News
- 11.4 The five W's and one H's of Newsgathering
  - 11.4.1 News Value and Its Important Attributes
  - 11.4.2 Facts and Verifications
  - 11.4.3 Objectivity and Non-Partisanship
- 11.5 Limitations in the News Making Process
  - 11.5.1 Inherent Restrictions of Time and Money
  - 11.5.2 Difference in Editing and Reporting
  - 11.5.3 Differences in Medium
  - 11.5.4 Importance of News in Our Life
- 11.6 Pedagogical Approaches
- 11.7 Let Us Sum Up
- 11.8 Keywords
- 11.9 Further Readings
- 11.10 Check Your Progress: Possible Answers

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## **11.0 INTRODUCTION**

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In the previous units of this course, we have discussed media and information literacy, communication and information, technology, media and society. Based on the topics discussed, we would like to progress to the most important subject of news and its making. Nevertheless, before we start discussing this topic, we must pay a short visit to this subject and its relevance in today's time when there is an overdose of every piece of information coming our way, courtesy – new media and its various subsidiaries that also constitutes the vast landscape of social media.

Before revisiting some famous and frequently used news descriptions worldwide, let us take this opportunity to share our understanding of news in the traditional sense. In this age of news being treated more like a commodity than a service, one can easily assume it to be something associated with the business of selling information. However while taking a deeper dive to understand its importance and gradual inroads in our daily lives, we can describe News as the constant on which modern human settlement has survived and thrived for decades. We can also say that the survival and evolution of modern human settlement and innumerable socio-cultural practices across the globe would not have been possible without the contribution of news in our day-to-day lives.

In this unit, we will try to understand the concept of news in one of the most accessible and comprehensible manners; let us start this process with the most used definition of News. According to a popular theory, the letters in the word “NEWS” come from the four directions listed below: North, East, West and South. This illustrates how news can originate from anywhere. News is information on recent events occurring, as well as a report on a current event that was previously unknown.

Another famous phrase concerning the news given by New York Sun Editor John B Bogart between (1841 and 1921), was, “When a dog bites a man, that is not news because it happens so often. However, if a man bites a dog, that is news.” The quote is also attributed to Charles Anderson Dana (1819–1897).<sup>1</sup>

This could be partially true in some sense, but then, let us think of the recent incident where a pet Pitbull dog had mauled its owner, an older woman, in her own house, and she died on the spot of the injuries. This was an incident covered extensively by every media, and it raised concerns among the general people and the news value of the incident.<sup>2</sup>

This illustrates how news can originate from anywhere. It is a report on a recent incident that was not previously known or information or knowledge on current incidents and occurrences in our surroundings. However, though what John Bogart had said about news a century ago was true, in the same way, we could also say that an incident like a dog biting a woman/man also makes news vis-à-vis the above-cited incident from Lucknow.

Thus making it more pertinent for everyone, especially teachers and educators, to revisit and understand the evolving concept of news.

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## **11.1 LEARNING OUTCOMES**

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After reading this unit, you will be able to:

- define News;
- describe the process of making news;
- explain the core concepts of news making;
- identify the do’s and don’ts of news making;
- state the five W’s and one ‘H’ of the news; and
- critically analyse the role of news in our lives.

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## **11.2 WHAT IS NEWS: CONCEPT AND DEFINITION**

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Information about current affairs is known as news. Word-of-mouth, printing, postal services, broadcasting, technological communication, or the testimonies of observers and witnesses to events are just a few of the various mediums that may be used to provide this information. To distinguish news from soft media, some people use the

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<sup>1</sup> [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Man\\_bites\\_dog](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Man_bites_dog)

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.indiatoday.in/newsмо/video/lucknow-woman-mauled-to-death-by-her-pet-pitbull-dog-1975667-2022-07-14>

term “hard news”. As a unique use of the plural “new” form, the English term “news” emerged in the 14th century. Like the French Nouvelles and the German Neues, the Middle English corresponding term was news.

“News,” as its name suggests, often refers to disseminating brand-new information.<sup>3</sup> News differs from the more meticulous studies of history or other scholarly fields because it is fresh and unpredictable.<sup>4</sup> Even though the most crucial details of a news story have already happened or are anticipated to happen in the future, news prominently portrays the world in the present or recent past.<sup>5</sup>

The definition of news is allegedly elusive. However, the news will always be something that readers, listeners, and viewers find surprising and hard to believe. However, here are some of its definitions:

- When a dog bites a man, that is not news, but when a man bites a dog, that is news. (Charles Anderson Dana, American journalist, 1819-1897)
- News is what somebody somewhere wants to suppress; all the rest is advertising. (Lord Northcliffe, British publisher 1865-1922)
- Well, the news is anything interesting that relates to what is happening in the world and what is happening in the culture that interests your audience. (Kurt Loder, American journalist, b. 1945)
- What you see is news, what you know is background, and what you feel is opinion. (Lester Markel, American journalist, 1894-1977)
- It is hardly news that catches readers. Features hold them. (Lord Northcliffe, British publisher 1865-1922)
- To a journalist, the good news is often not news at all. (Phil Donahue, American entertainer, b. 1935)
- No news is good news. (Ludovic Halevy, French author, 1834-1908)
- [News is] a first rough draft of history. (Philip L. Graham, American publisher, 1915-1963)
- For most folks, no news is good news; for the press, the good news is not news. (Gloria Borger, American journalist, b. 1952)
- The real news is bad. (Marshall McLuhan, Canadian communications theorist, 1911-1980)

It would help if you now better understood the broad definitions of news provided above. However, it might be challenging to define “news” precisely. Any information must be truthful, novel, and engaging to be properly called “news.” Reporting on facts is necessary since news is impossible without them. The reader, listener, audience or spectator must learn these things for the first time to accept it as news. The definition of news has been repeated more than often: it is information published in newspapers and magazines’ news sections, aired on radio and televised by television networks, or made available online and nowadays also shared on Social Media. News also covers

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<sup>3</sup> Stephens, History of News (1988), p. 13.

<sup>4</sup> Smith, The Newspaper: An International History (1979)

<sup>5</sup> Park, “News as a Form of Knowledge” (1940), pp. 675–676.

the personal affairs, relationships, and scandals of the well-known, wealthy, and infamous.

The communication networks that convey the news have always been connected to how quickly it spreads. This also means that the speed at which a piece of news spreads directly relates to that area's network system. As a result, the routes via which news may spread or expand have traditionally been controlled, extended, and regulated by governmental, religious, and commercial interests. Maintaining political influence over a sizable region has been tightly linked to that area's postal or communication services for a very long time.<sup>67</sup>

Even when we consider the future of journalism in the digital era, the deceptively fundamental question "What is news?" still holds. Asked how they define news, journalists sometimes reply: "I know it when I see it." Pressed on why something has been deemed newsworthy, a typical response is: "Because it just is!" (Brighton & Foy, 2007, p. 147).<sup>8</sup> Nevertheless, as journalists and citizens expected to be media literate in modern times, we must test our understanding and acceptance of any information as news. For this, you need to develop an understanding of news through a rigorous and consistent study of news as a subject flowing in our surroundings. To test the understanding of News, Harcup and O'Neil decided to revisit one of the most read and cited seminal academic works of Galtung and Ruge's "What is news? Galtung and Ruge revisited" (Harcup & O'Neill, 2001).<sup>9</sup> Furthermore- this created a chord between their understanding of News vis-à-vis what was discussed in this research article. So, now I would like to list those points here for you to have a better and more precise understanding of the News. You can go through these summarised points below.

1. **The power elite:** Narratives about influential people, groups, or organisations.
2. **Celebrity:** Information about persons who are already well-known.
3. **Entertainment:** Stories that feature sex, the entertainment industry, human interest, animals, a developing drama, or that provide the potential for hilarious treatment, amusing images, or clever headlines.
4. **Surprise:** Narratives that have a surprise or contrast aspect.
5. **Stories with dark undertones,** like war or tragedy, are bad news.
6. **Good news:** Narratives have exceptionally upbeat undertones, such as rescues and cures.
7. **Relevance:** Stories about topics, people, or countries the audience considers relevant.
8. **Follow-up:** Articles regarding newsworthy topics.
9. **News agenda:** Articles that follow or complement the news organisation's

The summary shared above clarifies the standard concept and idea of News practised and followed everywhere in the world. Newsrooms could be different, and so could

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<sup>6</sup> Fang, History of Mass Communication (1997), pp. 14–15.

<sup>7</sup> Stephens, History of News (1988), p. 27

<sup>8</sup> Brighton, P., & Dennis Foy. (2007). News Values. London: Sage. [Crossref], [Google Scholar]

<sup>9</sup> Harcup, T., & Deirdre O'Neill. (2001). "What is News? Galtung and Ruge Revisited." Journalism Studies 2 (2): 261–280. DOI: 10.1080/14616700118449, [Google Scholar]

## 11.3 CRITERIA FOR INFORMATION TO BECOME NEWS

What qualifies as news in terms of information? What factors may be considered when choosing what information to report as news?

1. **Timeliness:** Newsworthy information and events are immediate and recent since they have just happened or taken place/occurred. Because it is something that is ‘new’, it is newsworthy.
2. **Closeness:** Incidents that occur near our surroundings or in proximity are news because they impact the people living in our neighbourhood and nearby areas; local information and events are always noteworthy to people residing in and around that area, compared to those that happen far away. For example, an earthquake in Delhi will generate more interest and curiosity among the people living in and around the national capital than in Indonesia or Dubai.
3. **Impact:** The number of people impacted by the narrative is very significant, as that signifies the importance of news. For example – The death of millions of people in the COVID-19 pandemic worldwide harmed humankind.
4. **Prominence:** Under their fame, renowned persons receive greater media attention, and thus, they play an essential part in newsmaking. For example – the death of actors Sushant Singh Rajput and Irrfan Khan.
5. **Weird:** Anything that can shock the audience will have a news value. The bizarre creates an audience. For example, There was a nude photoshoot by actor Ranveer Singh.
6. **Conflict:** Fighting is an essential part of our lives. We naturally seek out confrontation now and then because conflict validates us. For example— elections, the Russia-Ukraine war, etc. A battle is always easy to cover, and we also get compelled to predict the winner in every case.
7. **Human Interest:** One of the most inclusive categories — and one of my favourites — is this. These tales reveal something about the state of the human race, from rags to riches tales, experience pieces, something extraordinary that defies the existing boundary of our day-to-day life and its struggle. These stories of grit, grandeur, willpower, love and humanity can evoke powerful feelings in us. They make us grin, cry, be happy, laugh, and find meaning in our lives.

### 11.3.1 News Factor as a Constant for Assessment of News

Conceptually, news factors are assumed to be a text’s qualities rather than an event’s inherent characteristics. The media apply them to heighten the legitimacy of an event becoming news (Bednarek & Caple, 2014).

They are factors that affect the newsworthiness quality of any information made public for the consumption of the general audience. In other words, we can say that News

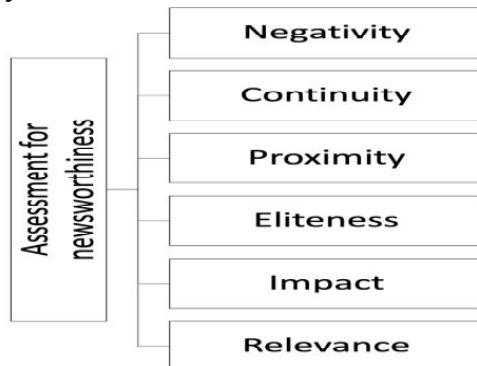
elements are technical and editorial finesse employed by the media to increase the validity of an event becoming news; conceptually, they are thought of as features of a text or visuals or treatment of the content rather than the intrinsic attributes of an event itself.

A manual examination of news stories from print, web, and television shows that the length of a story and its chance of making the front page or serving as the first item on a newscast positively correlates with the overall number of new components in that story.

According to Cotter (2010),<sup>10</sup> News elements are considered “from the beginning to the conclusion of the reporting and editing process” (p. 74). As a result, they affect both the selection of news and the choice of how well-known a story should be. After all, prominence indicates how much weight journalists and/or editors have given anything (newsworthiness, Schulz, 1982)<sup>11</sup>

From the functional viewpoint, an event is not inherently noteworthy; instead, it is given that status by attributing or adding news characteristics through language, image, and typography to present it as news to an audience. The media employ news elements to increase the validity of an event or information becoming news. They are conceptually understood to be text qualities rather than the event’s intrinsic traits. However, contrary to this - under the causal model, news factors are inherent qualities of a story that determine the treatment journalists give to the story in the newsroom.

However, in both models, a story is assumed to be more newsworthy when it has more news components. Moreover, there is a greater possibility that the event will be covered extensively by notable media.



*Figure 1: Information characteristics that affect the news judgement of journalists  
(Elder, 2006)*

Elders (2006)<sup>12</sup> discovered seven news characteristics that consistently affect journalists’ assessments of any information’s newsworthiness, namely — negativity (damage; the bad elements of an event or issue), continuity (frequency; having been in the news previously), proximity (cultural, geographical, and/or economic “nearness”), eliteness (presence of persons, organisations, or nations of elite rank participating in an event), impact and relevance (the significance and consequence/influence of an event in terms of current events).

<sup>10</sup> Cotter, C (2010). *News Talk: Investigating the Language of Journalism*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

<sup>11</sup> Schulz, W. (1982). News Structure and People’s Awareness of Political Events. *Gazette* (Leiden, Netherlands), 30(3), 139-153. DOI: 10.1177/001654928203000301

<sup>12</sup> Elders, C. (2006). News factors and news decisions. Theoretical and methodological advances in Germany. *Communications*, 31(1). DOI: 10.1515/commun.2006.002

## 11.3.2 Considerations While Shaping News

What Makes News

News is information on recent happenings. This can be communicated in various ways, including oral communication, writing, mailing, broadcasting, technological communication, or the testimonies of observers and witnesses to the occurrences. The news is occasionally called “hard news” to distinguish it from soft media.” However—making and shaping news content involves some essential and significant considerations. Let us have a brief familiarity with them.

**Truth and Accuracy**— Even if journalists cannot always guarantee “truth,” getting the facts correctly is the fundamental tenet of journalism. Along with:

**Independence**— Journalists must be unbiased; They should not speak up for particular political, business, or cultural interests in any official or informal capacity.

**Fairness and Impartiality**— Most stories have two or more sides to them. While it is not required to include all perspectives in every piece, stories should be fair and provide background information. Although objectivity is not always feasible or desirable (in the face of, for instance, cruelty or inhumanity), unbiased reporting fosters confidence.

**Humanity**— Journalists need to act responsibly. Even when the information they print or broadcast may be harmful, they must be mindful that their actions and words can affect other people’s lives.

**Accountability**— The capacity for self-restraint is the hallmark of professionalism and ethical journalism. When journalists make mistakes, they need to fix them and show genuine and not fake regret. They needed to listen to what our audiences had to say. They may not be able to change the opinions or writings of their readers or viewers, but they can always give a patient hearing to their grievances and provide solutions if they find their actions wrong.

## 11.3.3 Thoughts on Making a Judgment About News

What is a good news judgment? Or what is that judgement which brings out the good news to the fore?

As a process, news judgment involves making wise decisions, conducting thorough research, communicating, and meaningfully sharing and displaying information. It lies in the undefined intersection of moral insight, well-honed intuition, and ethical reasoning. When searching for a good story or project, many weak signals are available during the news-collecting process. Finding the mega stories—the powerful signals—and searching for threads within them has proven to be the most effective approach to judging the news. I am telling this with my experience of two decades in the newsroom.

Focusing on the news peg of the day or moment is one of the most used and successful patterns in an excellent news judgment. Although it is a perfect spot, the newsroom’s perspective often restricts journalists’ efforts. Therefore, it becomes essential for them to use their judgement to broaden their perspective and explain to readers a point that cannot be adequately expressed to people easily.

However—there are nine elements on which news judgments should be made, and they are as follows:

- Timeliness/Relevance
- Proximity

- Impact/Consequence
- Prominence
- Conflict
- Human interest
- Currency
- Extremes/Superlatives
- Novelty.

**Activity - 1**

Take a list of 15-20 headlines, then ask yourself the following:

- What are the important stories?
- If you have space/airtime for only five, which ones would you choose? Please give reasons for your selection.
- If you are from (a) a TV news channel, (b) a broadsheet, (c) a tabloid, (d) a radio news program, or (e) an international news agency, which stories would you choose? Pick only five.

**Check Your Progress: 1**

**Note:** 1) Use the space below for your answers.

2) Compare your answers with those given at the end of this unit.

1. What is news?

.....  
.....

2. What factors may be considered when choosing what information to report as news?

.....  
.....

3. What are the considerations while shaping news?

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.....

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## **11.4 THE FIVE W'S AND ONE H'S OF NEWS GATHERING**

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The Five Ws, Five Ws and one H, or Six Ws, are inquiries whose responses are seen as fundamental in acquiring information. They include Who, What, When, Where, and Why. The five Ws are frequently referred to in journalism (see news style), research, and police investigations. They make up a method for discovering all the facts about a

subject. According to the Five W's concept, a report is only deemed complete if it responds to the following queries beginning with an interrogative word:

- It is about whom?
- What happened?
- When did it happen?
- Where did it happen?
- What caused it, and why?

A good news story should always have clear information regarding the who, what, when, where, and why. Some authors would include a sixth question, too: “How,” even though “How” can also be answered by the answers to the previous four questions.

For example- How did it take place?

Here, we must remember that each query must have a factual response; these facts must be present for the report to be accurate and complete. It is worth noting that none of these queries can be answered with “yes” or “no.” It has to have a reason behind it.

#### **11.4.1 News Value and Its Important Attributes**

What are news values, and how significant are they?

Every phase of the news process involves the conscious or unconscious use of news values, which guides decision-making.

News values, or the characteristics that constitute a news article “newsworthy,” are ingrained in texts and guide behaviour. News values “shape texts” because they limit the range of possibilities by offering decision-making criteria. A group of specific criteria, or “news values,” that includes proximity, impact, change, prominence, conflict, timeliness, utility, and the unexpected, are used to judge newsworthiness. At every stage of the news process, consciously or unconsciously, news values guide decision-making. One of the most significant practice-based and ideological variables in determining the subject and format of news articles, as well as the choices made by journalists, is the news value of the news item. News value is important because it propagates the whole idea of newsworthiness.

A few of the guiding elements that decide whether a story is newsworthy or not are listed below:

These elements decide whether a story is newsworthy: impact, currency, prominence, closeness, weirdness, conflict, significance and human interest.

Understanding this list of news values can help you land those important news placements.

#### **Activity - 2**

Identify the value-driving news. Focus on the following questions:

- Identify the lead article or main headline story of a particular issue of a print or online news platform
- Identify the news values that have driven the article. Explain how you identified each.

- Are there multiple values? Does the presence of more drivers make the story more important or more interesting?
- Analyse the newsworthiness of the article. Do you think it should have been published? Why or why not?

### 11.4.2 Facts and Verifications

#### *What are facts, and what is verification of news?*

A fact is said to have occurred or is believed to be true. However, before presenting claims as facts, you must determine their credibility as a journalist. This affects how you convey things to your readers or listeners. You will encounter three types of facts in your work as a journalist. Some facts have been demonstrated to be real, truths that are likely to be assumed as accurate despite the lack of proof, and things that may be true yet seem false. So, to get clarity in such a situation, a journalist typically uses his verification skills.

“Verification is the editorial technique used by journalists — including fact-checkers — to verify the accuracy of a statement,” says Bill Adair, the founder of PolitiFact and currently the Knight Professor of the Practice of Journalism Public Policy at Duke University.<sup>13</sup>

At the core of journalism is the discipline of verification, which is also being used by other professions.

In journalism, fact-checking is a particular use or part of verification applied while verifying any fact. Adair points out that verification is a crucial activity that makes fact-checking possible.

In their book, “The Elements of Journalism”, Tom Rosenstiel and Bill Kovach write, “The essence of journalism is a discipline of verification.” That discipline is “a scientific-like approach to getting the facts and the right facts.”<sup>14</sup>

This is a helpful explanation of what verification is. Additionally, it also assists in describing the methodology used by fact-checkers to do their task. You must engage in verification exercises to be a fact-checker. However, many people who are not fact-checkers or journalists engage in verification.

Thanks to the growth of social media and user-generated material, the importance of verification has returned to the forefront of journalism and assumed a new urgency for civil groups like human rights activists and law enforcement bodies.

#### *What is the importance of verification?*

The whole process of verification is important not only for the journalist or the news outlet but also for the audience because he/she is then able to evaluate the veracity of the information, the method by which the information was obtained, and the motivations and prejudices of the journalist who provided it. Transparency in the whole process

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<sup>13</sup> <https://datajournalism.com/read/handbook/verification-1/additional-materials/verification-and-fact-checking>

<sup>14</sup> Kovach, B., & Rosenstiel, T. (2021). *The Elements of Journalism*, Revised and Updated 4th Edition: What Newspeople Should Know, and the Public Should Expect. Crown Publishing Group (NY).

shows the viewers that the journalist respects their audience and does not take them for granted. Transparency is, therefore, the strongest defence against mistakes if, unfortunately, source deceit takes place.

In order to construct a brand, verification is crucial for journalists since it brings in the reader's confidence. If there is inaccuracy or disinformation, a journalist's ideal course of action is to fix their error swiftly with proper facts. This will increase the reader's confidence in him/her, demonstrating the journalist's dedication while disseminating information. Being the first to break the news is less essential than getting it right. Thus, journalists should put more significant pressure on themselves to get it right than to break it first.

### **Activity - 3**

The learners can access a series of news items from digital communications companies and conduct exercises on the following:

- How to tell if the news is from a trusted source?
- What are trusted sources of news? Why are they trusted?
- Is the news real or fabricated but disguised in the genre of news? How can you tell?
- Do social media platforms benefit from false information? What about search engines?
- To what extent should digital communications companies be responsible for managing false information on their platforms?

#### **11.4.3 Objectivity and Non-Partisanship**

Journalistic objectivity is at the forefront when we talk about key ideas related to professionalism in a journalistic career. Fairness, objectivity, factuality, and non-partisanship are all possible definitions of journalistic objectivity. It has been customary and practice for years to report with less responsibility and credit a spokesperson, the media, or other sources for the information circulated. Media outlets refrain from forming opinions, stay clear of uncertainty, and avoid making overtly biased judgments. The intellectual foundation of every journalistic endeavour is objectivity or generally accepted neutrality.

According to Social Scientist Michael Schudson, "the belief in objectivity is a faith in 'facts,' a distrust in 'values,' and a commitment to their segregation".<sup>15</sup> Objectivity also outlines an institutional role for journalists as a fourth estate, a body that exists apart from the government and large interest groups.<sup>16</sup> These five terms — neutral, disinterested, nonpartisan, impartial and independent — are perhaps not exact synonyms, but they come close to describing objectivity. We can picture these phrases being incorporated into the wall of a journalism institute of the bygone era. The ability to remain impartial, just, and unaffected by one's feelings, prejudices, or preferences is

<sup>15</sup> Carey, J. (1982). The Discovery of ObjectivityDiscovering the News: A Social History of American Newspapers.Michael Schudson. American Journal of Sociology, 87(5), 1182–1188. DOI: 10.1086/227565

<sup>16</sup> Carey, J. (1982). The Discovery of ObjectivityDiscovering the News: A Social History of American Newspapers.Michael Schudson. American Journal of Sociology, 87(5), 1182–1188. DOI: 10.1086/227565

known as objectivity. It prevents social scientists, journalists and professionals in the public domain from interfering with or tampering with the data collecting and processing processes.

For example – Suppose you are a practising journalist, and there is an election in your constituency; you can motivate people in your area to go to the polling booth and cast their vote, but you cannot ask them to vote for any particular candidate.

You can demonstrate objectivity in three basic ways:

- By being emotionless and showing no signs of being upset or anxious.
- Looking at things as they are rather than from a personal point of view.
- Being impartial and cognizant of both sides of perspectives.

Much like objectivity, nonpartisanship is the other important side of the coin in making news. Nonpartisan refers to something neither biased nor affiliated with any political party or power centre. It also means that one is neither backed nor governed by any political party or a particular interest group. It could be expressed as untouched, uninvolved, uninfluenced, unprejudiced and unimplicated by any interest group.

The nonpartisan approach of journalism is based on the convention that politics should be covered as though both parties are equally responsible for all transgressions. No one should be exempt from criticism and calling them out unequivocally. Tata Tea and Janaagraha in India launched the nonpartisan ‘Jaago Re One Billion Votes’ campaign to motivate people to cast their votes 2009 general election. Anal Saha was the campaign’s founder, and it was a nonpartisan effort.<sup>17</sup>

### **Check Your Progress: 2**

**Note:** 1) Use the space below for your answers.

2) Compare your answers with those given at the end of this unit.

1. What are the 5Ws and 1Hs in the news-gathering process?

.....

.....

2. What is verification of news?

.....

.....

3. What is journalistic objectivity?

.....

.....

## **11.5 LIMITATIONS IN THE NEWS MAKING PROCESS**

The newsmaking process occurs in the newsroom of a news media institution, home to many other players in the news industry. Namely, the marketing, advertising, monitoring,

and editorial teams. Thus- the news media could be seen as an institution with a process that offers a useful framework for examining news information more carefully. News information comes in numerous forms and is influenced by various factors. Various stakeholders handle information before it reaches the media, and many of them are motivated more by political, professional, or financial interests than by the event's objective journalistic value. Such material is transferred via editorial channels controlled by several "gatekeepers" inside media institutions before being altered, modified, or eliminated. Gatekeepers who assess the relative worth of news content are one of the several professional and peculiar influences in determining what will be produced and circulated. These inherent stakeholders, along with infrastructural factors, sometimes pose limitations to the whole newsmaking process.

Some of the structural and functional limitations faced in the newsmaking process are as follows:

- Absence of trust transparency.
- Different communication philosophies.
- Working-place disputes.
- Language and cultural differences.
- Selective demography of news gathering.
- Lack of creativity.
- Limited lifespan of the news item, and
- Credibility diminished because of the misuse of the medium.

### **11.5.1 Inherent Restrictions of Time and Money**

Television, radio, movies, newspapers, magazines, and Internet-based Websites/portals are just a few of the various forms of mass media that make up the Indian media industry. In the late 18th century, we saw the beginning of the Indian media. In India, print media first appeared in 1780; in 1927, the first radio broadcasts were made. One of the earliest forms of media is found in India, even before the time of King Ashoka, when it is said to have existed. Today, large businesses that profit from advertising, membership fees, and selling content granted copyright dominate many media outlets.

The largest newspaper market in the world, with more than 100 million copies sold each day, is found in India, which has 70,000 newspapers and more than 500 satellite channels, more than 80 of which are news broadcasters. However – the more diverse and dynamic we get in terms of media outlets, the more complicated it becomes in terms of their functioning, infrastructure and logistics. Today, any piece of obscure news or information is bound to make it to the newsroom via television, radio, print, and online. All of these work in an altogether distinct, different indigenous landscape, which means that they all have limitations in terms of money and time.<sup>18</sup> Nevertheless, despite being different in nature and treatment, journalism as a tenet has creative limitations in all its forms and is cursed with a short life. Not forgetting is the question of

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<sup>18</sup> [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Media\\_of\\_India](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Media_of_India)

credibility due to abuse of the medium. Here, I would list a few of the many limitations that each of these industries is facing in current times:

<b>Limitations in Print/Newspapers</b>	<b>Limitations in Television</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Limited lifespan</li> <li>• Competing messages item</li> <li>• High cost of paper</li> <li>• High Printing Cost</li> <li>• Lack of advertisements</li> <li>• Layoffs and shutting down of editions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Limited shelf life of content</li> <li>• Cannot provide details of news</li> <li>• High production costs</li> <li>• Scarcity of skilled staff</li> <li>• Urban centric</li> <li>• The huge number of advertisements</li> </ul>
<b>Limitations in Radio</b>	<b>Limitations in Digital/Online</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The short span of life</li> <li>• Demographic ambiguity</li> <li>• Extensive lead time needed</li> <li>• The only sound, no visual</li> <li>• Selective audience</li> <li>• Declining reach</li> <li>• Mostly infotainment</li> <li>• Monetarily less profitable</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A subsidiary of a TV channel/newspaper</li> <li>• No independent chain of reporters</li> <li>• Fierce competition among advertisers</li> <li>• Credibility issues</li> <li>• Young and urban audience</li> <li>• Fake news</li> <li>• Amateur language of presentation</li> <li>• Undertrained workers</li> </ul>

### 11.5.2 Difference in Editing and Reporting

Journalists are professionals who include editors, TV hosts, reporters, and photographers. Reporting, editing and presenting would be considered subsets of the journalism universe. Therefore, by this definition, reporting and editing are undoubtedly important components of journalism. An editor sorts through the material and makes it relevant for the audience while the reporter gathers information on the ground. Editing refers to preparing a print, broadcast, or television news report. A report is read, revised, changed, added value to, polished, enhanced and made better for publishing throughout the editing process. Editing also includes condensing.

An individual who conducts all the investigation, writing, and interviewing is a reporter. Their primary duty is to locate a story and compile all the information. Both aim to provide the public with trustworthy news or information. In order to enlighten the reader, he or she compiles information about a public event and then provides it. Reporters are expected to offer unbiased analysis of stories that editors find newsworthy. Reporters are frequently given “beats” or specialised subjects, such as business, politics, economy, the environment, or education. Sometimes, journalists need to write the articles they cover. For instance, to meet the deadline for the article, occasionally, a reporter at the scene of a story would telephonically or otherwise communicate the material to another writer or editor in the newsroom. Both adhere to a defined format when creating newsworthy material.

While both writer/editor and reporter/editor write a fair amount, their daily activities are very different. Editors oversee, examine, and rewrite the material while reporters create and gather original data. Both are crucial to producing written content to enlighten, persuade, or entertain readers. However, editors' tasks need more insight and analysis because they have to oversee the management and effective publishing of a specific work or set of works. Here is when their working methods or differences in reporting and editing becomes apparent, and despite their effort complement each other's work, it is more than not that the end product or piece of news either loses the tonality of the reporter's copy or comes out as a better and different version of what the reporter has filed.

It is considered both the plus and minus-point of the whole process of news making but – cannot be avoided or bypassed.

### **11.5.3 Differences in Medium**

Print media, broadcast media, and online news sources are the three primary categories of news media. There are three major categories into which the news media may be divided: Print (newspaper/magazine), Electronic (TV/Radio — which includes traditional radio, telephone, and television broadcasts), and the Internet (online news portals/websites — digital computer-mediated communication, computer networking, and telegraphy) are the three main media at work in today's time. There are now several types of mass media, including social media platforms and streaming services. Old Media refers to the more conventional formats, including print, cinema, television, and radio, whereas New Media mainly comprises computer technology, the Internet, and smartphones.<sup>19</sup>

In mass media, A medium is a verbal or nonverbal communication tool. The word “medium” (or “media”) refers to a wide range of resources and instruments that authors, speakers, and other knowledge producers utilise to create, preserve, and transmit messages. In contrast, a news channel is a channel for transmission or dissemination. The amount of information sent to the audience—readers, listeners, or viewers—directly depends on the medium through which the news is provided. Therefore, presenting the news can influence how the audience perceives the reported events. The primary purpose of media, with the aid of a suitable medium, is to send and share information.

As we have all heard, the popular proverb ‘medium is the message; here, I would like to emphasise that it holds for every country and each communication that is taking place across the globe through any kind of mass media that half the communication is done while choosing the platform through which communication is established with the audience. For example, we want to raise awareness about the childbearing rights of women in our country and choose Twitter and Facebook as our communication medium. In that case, we will end up creating a failed communication project. Our target audience or stakeholders, in this case, would be women from rural and poor backgrounds. With the massive digital divide discussion taking place globally- this would mean a half-hearted and thwarted mass communication effort.

Could a community radio initiative have been the most effective medium for this project?

If you answer yes, you understand the medium's importance in mass communication.

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<sup>19</sup> <https://www.pewresearch.org/journalism/2000/10/31/differences-in-medium/>

## 11.5.4 Importance of News in Our Life

News is that aspect of communication that informs us about evolving events, problems, and people in the outside world. The primary purpose of news is to inform the public, even though it may also be engaging or entertaining. A civilised society needs news for various reasons, primarily to inform the public about situations that may impact them locally. You may build an open and critical mind by reading the news. Reading the news may slow down your ageing and learn something new daily. Reading the news can help you tell facts from fiction. Your creativity may improve after reading the news. In society, newspapers have a significant impact. They function as a tool for forming opinions, a platform for public discussion and debate, and a mechanism to safeguard the public and make them aware of wrongdoing (Martin & Copeland, 2003).<sup>20</sup> The public becomes more informed thanks to the news. In India, there are two different kinds of newspapers. While some newspapers exclusively focus on local State concerns, others cover news from the whole country. News is intended to inform and enlighten readers about current affairs and happenings. They are utilised to give kids the knowledge they desire or need to know about the world around them. News outlets work hard to provide as much information as possible while publishing or broadcasting news. Suppose a journalist writes on an ongoing case. However, little information may be accessible to him at a particular moment. In this scenario, the journalist may speak with people involved in the case or attempt to gather background material to assist their audience in learning more.

Politics and the political viewpoints of journalists, editors, and even magazine owners may significantly impact the reliability spectrum by influencing the tone of their stories. Whether you were requested to inform, educate, or convince, your evaluation brief will define where your work falls on the spectrum. Write with objectivity, being unbiased, and keeping your opinions out of your writing if you are writing to inform. Be careful not to fabricate or create fake news when assigned to write an article (false or misleading information presented as news). Do use a formal, professional tone while writing or producing news.

The democratic promise of news must be taken seriously, and we must work to fulfil it.<sup>21</sup> It would help if you worked to present views of democratic citizenship in more upbeat and optimistic ways. That is the only way we as a country could contribute little to making news daily.

### Check Your Progress: 3

**Note:** 1) Use the space below for your answers.

2) Compare your answers with those given at the end of this unit.

1. What are the structural and functional limitations of the newsmaking process?

.....  
.....

2. What is the difference between editing and reporting of news?

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<sup>20</sup> Martin, S. E., & Copeland, D. A. (2003). *The function of newspapers in society: A global perspective*. Praeger.

<sup>21</sup> Lewis, J. (2006). News and the empowerment of citizens. *European Journal of Cultural Studies*, 9(3), 303

## 11.6 PEDAGOGICAL APPROACHES

*(Instructions for the course counsellors)*

Various pedagogical approaches are possible in the realm of this unit. However, most of the pedagogical approaches here are application-based in nature.

- I. The first pedagogical approach can be undertaken by conducting a textual analysis. Here, the educators analyse the newsworthiness of each of the front-page stories of a major newspaper (or its online edition) based on the criteria for assessing the news value of a story. This typically includes such factors as:

- Timeliness
- Impact and importance
- Prominence
- Proximity
- Conflict
- Human Interest
- Necessity
- Unusualness/Oddity

Besides these normative attributes, news is often selected for its dramatic and even entertainment value. It is also chosen based on implicit ideas about what is ‘important for whom’ and what is the likely ‘impact on whom’.

They then analyse the stories based on the factors to consider in making news judgments or shaping the news. These are:

- Truthfulness: accuracy (getting the facts right) and coherence (making sense of the facts)
- Dedication to the public interest
- Informing, rather than manipulating, the public
- Completeness/comprehensiveness
- Diversity (inclusion of news of all communities, not just targeted audiences)

These normative factors can be seen in the extent to which news items identify their sources, reveal verification used (e.g., triangulation of sources), and transparency of journalists’ views that affect what they do- such as to what facts and voices are most salient for them, and why. Attention should also be paid to the placement of articles, headlines, font size, photographs, and captions.

- II. The second pedagogical approach for this unit can be undertaken by learners in the form of a contextual analysis. Here, the educator reviews the coverage of a media organisation of choice/relevance on a particular topic and particular day and compares and contrasts the angling (i.e., selling of a particular point of view or

perspective) and treatment (i.e., information performed, sources acknowledged, interviews done, any visual support of news stories) of at least two broadcasters' coverages.

## 11.7 LET US SUM UP

During this unit, you were allowed to examine how news is produced in India and internationally. News is a fabricated phenomenon that is generated to influence us in various ways. It was emphasised that because we live in a mediated environment, we need to learn more about media and educate ourselves on how these messages in the form of news are produced and distributed. This unit covered the necessity, goal, and process of news production. It was mentioned that news creation is a form of education that cultivates critical thinking, competence, and literacy among a wide range of audiences from various socioeconomic classes, age groups, and societal backgrounds, empowering them to become active members of their nation. To assist you in assessing the reliability of information from various sources, the three Indian media outlets were looked at. It also explained how to dissect a media message from the standpoint of the platform. There was a description of the distinctions between media, medium, and messages and instructions on interpreting these differences and deciphering the messages sent by various media tools. The conversation will help you find your way through the newsmaking process in diverse newsroom messaging and acquire information from various sources. After studying this chapter, you can assess the media's implicit and explicit messages with your interpretations. You can investigate how news items are formed and generated in various media platforms (print, verbal, visual, or multimedia).

## 11.8 KEYWORDS

- News** : News refers to disseminating brand-new information
- News factor** : They are factors that affect the newsworthiness quality of any information made public for the consumption of the general audience
- News judgment** : News judgment, as a process, involves making wise decisions, conducting thorough research, communicating, and meaningfully sharing and displaying information.
- News value** : News values are the characteristics that constitute a news article “newsworthy,” are ingrained in texts and guide behaviour
- Fact** : A fact is said to have occurred or is believed to be true.
- Verification** : Verification is the editorial technique used by journalists — including fact-checkers — to verify the accuracy of a statement.

## 11.9 FURTHER READINGS

1. Roshco, B. (1975). *Newsmaking*.
2. Matthews, J. (2009). “Making It Our Own” BBC Newsround Professionals and Their Efforts to Build a News Agenda for the Young. *Television & New Media*, 10(6), 546–563.

3. Gant, C., & Dimmick, J. (2000). Making local news: A holistic analysis of sources, selection criteria, and topics. *Journalism & Mass Communication Quarterly*, 77(3), 628–638.
4. Donohew, L. (1967). Newspaper gatekeepers and forces in the news channel. *Public Opinion Quarterly*, 31(1), 61–68.

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## 11.10 CHECK YOUR PROGRESS: POSSIBLE ANSWERS

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### Check Your Progress: 1

1. “News,” as its name suggests, often refers to disseminating brand-new information. News differs from the more meticulous studies of history or other scholarly fields because it is fresh and unpredictable. Even though the most crucial details of a news story have already happened or are anticipated to happen in the future, news prominently portrays the world in the present or recent past.
2. The following points can be considered as criteria for information to become news:
  - Timeliness
  - Closeness
  - Impact
  - Prominence
  - Weird
  - Conflict
  - Human Interest
3. The following are the considerations for shaping news:
  - Truth and Accuracy
  - Independence
  - Fairness and Impartiality
  - Humanity
  - Accountability

### Check Your Progress: 2

1. The Five Ws, Five Ws and one H, or Six Ws, are inquiries whose responses are seen as fundamental in acquiring information. They include Who, What, When, Where, and Why. The five Ws are frequently referred to in journalism (see news style), research, and police investigations. They make up a method for discovering all the facts about a subject. According to the Five Ws concept, a report is only deemed complete if it responds to the following queries beginning with an interrogative word:

- It is about whom?
- What happened?
- When did it happen?
- Where did it happen?
- What caused it, and why?

A good news story should always have clear information regarding the who, what, when, where, and why. Some authors would include a sixth question, too: “How,” even though “How” can also be answered by the answers to the previous four questions.

2. In the field of journalism, fact-checking is a particular use or part of verification which is applied while verifying any fact. Adair points out that verification is a crucial activity that makes fact-checking possible. In their book, “The Elements of Journalism”, Tom Rosenstiel and Bill Kovach write, “The essence of journalism is a discipline of verification.” That discipline is “a scientific-like approach to getting the facts and the right facts.”
3. According to Social Scientist Michael Schudson, “the belief in objectivity is a faith in ‘facts,’ a distrust in ‘values,’ and a commitment to their segregation”. Objectivity also outlines an institutional role for journalists as a fourth estate, a body that exists apart from the government and large interest groups. Therefore, the ability to remain impartial, just, and unaffected by one’s feelings, prejudices, or preferences is known as objectivity. It prevents social scientists, journalists and professionals in the public domain from interfering with or tampering with the data collecting and processing processes.

### **Check Your Progress: 3**

1. Some of the structural and functional limitations faced in the newsmaking process are as follows:
  - Absence of trust transparency.
  - Different communication philosophies.
  - Working-place disputes.
  - Language and cultural differences.
  - Selective demography of news gathering.
  - Lack of creativity.
  - Limited lifespan of the news item, and
  - Credibility diminished because of the misuse of the medium.
2. On the one hand, an editor sorts through the material and makes it relevant for the audience while the reporter gathers information on the ground. Editing refers to preparing a print, broadcast, or television news report. A report is read, revised, changed, added value to, polished, enhanced and made better

for publishing throughout the editing process. Editing also includes condensing. On the other hand, an individual who conducts all the investigation, writing, and interviewing is a reporter. Their primary duty is to locate a story and compile all the information. Both aim to provide the public with trustworthy news or information.

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# **UNIT 12 THE NEWS DEVELOPMENT PROCESS**

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## **Structure**

- 12.0 Introduction
  - 12.1 Learning Outcomes
  - 12.2 Identifying News and Recognising a Story
    - 12.2.1 Developing a News Story Idea
    - 12.2.2 Going Beyond the 5 W's and 1 'H'
  - 12.3 News Production: Concept and Definition
    - 12.3.1 Stages of News Production (Pre to Post-Production)
    - 12.3.2 Key Players in the Process
    - 12.3.3 Comparing News Production in TV/Radio/Print and Digital
  - 12.4 The Television Production Team
    - 12.4.1 News/Data Gathering to News Writing
    - 12.4.2 Discipline of Verification, Independence and Accountability
  - 12.5 Quality Control and Review
    - 12.5.1 Influences on News Production
    - 12.5.2 Conflict of Interests
    - 12.5.3 The End Product
    - 12.5.4 Circulation and Dissemination
  - 12.6 Pedagogical Approaches
  - 12.7 Let Us Sum Up
  - 12.8 Keywords
  - 12.9 Further Readings
  - 12.10 Check Your Progress: Possible Answers
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## **12.0 INTRODUCTION**

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We have discussed and completed eleven units of this course, encompassing several MIL-related topics. This ranged from understanding media and information literacy to civic participation and right to information and learning theories and enabling environment for MIL along with the national and global audience, their freedom, ethics and social accountability, etc.

In Unit 11, the previous unit of this curriculum, we dealt with the newsmaking process, or we can also say that we tried to find out the five Ws and one 'H' of the newsmaking process. While doing so, and through the brainstorming we went through, we touched upon various stages and components of newsmaking. This included discussing news factors as a constant, considerations and thoughts while making judgments about news, news value, the difference between facts and verifications, objectivity and non-partisanship in the newsroom, limitations and inherent restrictions while churning out news for the audience and last, importance of news in our life.

In this unit, we'll be moving a step further in this direction. Since you have understood the components that constitute news, we'll now discuss the news development process within the newsroom without differentiating between the newsrooms. This means that we'll have a broader spectrum of discussion, which will have TV, Newspaper, Radio and Digital newsrooms as main subjects.

The process of producing newspapers/news bulletins or broadcasting news from a radio station is a process that begins with the collection of news items, articles, editorials, advertorials, and advertising and ends with the printing and folding of the physical copy, airing of news bulletin through radio broadcasts and telecasting news from news channels or publishing online through a digital platform. Pre-press, press, and post-press are the three stages of the production process. The audio-visual medium consists of primarily three stages: pre-production, production, and post-production. However, we should not forget that the production process starts only when news/content gathering is done in advance, so in practice, it has four stages. Therefore, it is important to distinguish between the terms “production process” and “manufacturing” since, practically in every nation, the “production process” is where many taxes are assessed and collected. Manufacturing also refers to the phases of packaging and packing because it is at this step that the product becomes marketable, especially in the Print sector where news pieces are often printed in newspapers.

It is possible to think of news production as the process of turning occurrences into news that can be published or aired in one of the many media outlets based on a set of standardised and accepted criteria. It is defined as an activity where “news workers/journalists are engaged in the production of the written, visual, or auditory materials classified as news and information.”

Therefore, from here, we start our quest to learn about the news development process in this unit, which is specially dedicated and carved for the purpose.

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## 12.1 LEARNING OUTCOMES

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After reading this unit, you will be able to:

- describe the process of development of news;
- developing a news story idea;
- four stages of news production;
- fact-checking methods; and
- influences and conflict of interests.

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## 12.2 IDENTIFYING NEWS AND RECOGNISING A STORY

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Whether a story is newsworthy or not depends on the five main fundamental criteria. However, knowing that a good narrative should include at least two people is important. It's critical to remember that, even if a story is noteworthy, it will likely not be able to compete with breaking news content like a royal engagement, an international disaster or some major political development.

1. **Timeliness:** Newsworthy subjects are those that are currently happening. Customers/readers/viewers value immediate updates and ignore outdated, unrelated content. What occurred last week is no longer fascinating; what happened today is news.
2. **Inferring:** A noteworthy tale has a large social impact. The media will pay greater attention to a fire that forced the evacuation of a whole apartment at a big posh colony/complex than a single home or JJ cluster in a slum area.
3. **Proximity:** Local stories will be more relevant and get more publicity if they are closer to the action. Distance between locations is only one aspect of proximity; it also involves interpersonal connections. News about the northeast may not be as important for people residing in Delhi or Mumbai, but it would definitely be important for residents of Kolkata or Darjeeling.
4. **Prominence:** In every society, celebrity status naturally gives a person more media attention.
5. **Human Interest:** This is one such feature of newsworthiness that ignores some of the other comparatively important requirements. Human-interest tales arouse feelings and provoke reactions. These stories frequently do not pass away in front of us and cannot significantly impact many or many individuals. These fascinating or unusual stories are frequently featured in a separate section of publications and broadcasts but are considered to be most read and relatable by the audience.

So, next time you read a newspaper or read news online, try to determine what made the story intriguing to you that made you read the newspaper; it would surely fit into one of the categories we have discussed here in this section.

### 12.2.1 Developing a News Story Idea

The creation of story ideas is a collaborative effort between editors and reporters in any and every newsroom. Reporters should make thorough submissions to editors rather than expecting them to accept every clumsy idea. Editors are supposed to assist journalists in crafting, concentrating, and delivering stories. Before you even determine if and how to pursue a new and challenging story, particularly one that will take some time to complete, you may need to do a lot of reporting and writing.

Some advice for news professionals:

- **Write down your thoughts:** Write a comprehensive proposal for a significant business narrative, especially a project concept. This provides the editor with additional in-depth material to think about and discuss with other team members and editors. A written request necessitates thought and action. Writing also gets you started on narrowing your effort and creating the narrative. Sometimes, a strong proposal may serve as the foundation for a series summary or a story's beginning.
- **Offer relevant news items:** Newsworthy, current stories should and will surely attract your editors. The same goes for projects. Be sure to mention the potential news value of your suggestion. Should it be used before, following, or during a forthcoming event? Would a birthday, holiday, or hearing serve as a time marker? Has the matter become more urgent due to a recent report or

decision? An editor or channel head might properly remark that the story could be done at any moment if a reporter suggests an “evergreen” story that could be completed at any time, frequently indicating that there are more urgent matters to deal with. If your article seems timeless, explain to the editor why it is still relevant today. Find a new perspective while reviving an old idea.

- **Make detailed and persuasive suggestions:** Don’t suggest a thorough investigation. The editor may quickly acquire a sense of the story you want to convey and start experiencing the reporter’s joy because of the narrow focus on the story idea. Describe in your note why readers will care about this article. Even if you believe that the relevance or significance of the story is quite obvious, explain to your editor why readers should care about it and how you plan to make that relation obvious in the narrative. Bring clarity to the table.
- **Take a look at earlier reporting:** Check out the coverage in other publications/channels. If your publication or another paper covered this topic a few months or years ago, explain how the situation has evolved in this period or how this particular story will vary now from before. Describe how you plan to investigate the problems the competition has overlooked. Share your knowledge. The more you understand, the more persuasively you can express your desire to learn. Your chances of hearing that the story would be worth pursuing “some other day” increase when it looks more hypothetical or speculative in nature. Inform your editor of your expected discoveries from the coverage. Although you don’t require all the details in your proposal, you must have enough information to convince your editor.
- **Try not to give up quickly:** Ask your editor why they don’t want to write a certain article if you think they should not miss it. Determine precisely what is missing from your proposal. Keep in mind that the editor might be correct. The notion may have delighted you that you lost perspective on it. Alternatively, it’s also possible that you left out some crucial details from your proposal. You might need to conduct extra study to persuade your editor of the local impact. You may also have overlooked adding a news peg to the proposal. If the editor makes reasonable arguments that you can answer, you could decide to continue with the narrative further.

### 12.2.2 Going Beyond the 5 W’s and 1 ‘H’

Everyone is familiar with the standard “5 W” inquiries that journalists ask: who, what, where, when, and why (with an added “how”). But in addition to those foundational inquiries, you should consider the following six questions. Although they are centred on the process of storytelling, they are, in essence, information given by journalists. Your responses to these queries can go through a change during the consumption process of news. It’s perfectly fine. The aim is to make a creative investment at the start of your watching or reading an article or news capsule that will guide you till the finish of it.

#### *What is the central query of the story?*

You may be familiar with composing key statements or asking questions while watching/reading the news. However, questions are always better than assertions. A question provides the audience with a task or a challenge to complete. The report or news

creates a journey for the listener or reader while focusing on the process and ways through which that question is addressed. (For instance, “Why are sports person voting against their team members in an election?”)

One needs to be careful while consuming news since there could be more than one story if you have multiple inquiries about a news item. You need to choose one and respond fully to it to find answers to your questions.

### ***What does the story not concern?***

Journalists often take too much load in one story that they file, which is too frequent. This makes sense for them as media professionals, and they feel obligated to be thorough in their work and worry about the repercussions of missing out on a detail. However, the fact remains that no tale/story — not even a one-hour documentary or a lengthy piece of 2500 words in The Times of India — can cover the entirety of a subject.

It’s their primary responsibility to provide information memorably and straightforwardly, but you, as a news consumer, must outline the possible angles, inquiries, and contexts in the news item. Compare them to your driving query. Do they help you in getting your query answered? Or did it divert or disperse the attention from the main topic? After that, decide whether the content is worth watching or reading.

### ***How do we ensure that the news item is accurate in representation?***

The first step is to check the story’s transparency in the first place. Does it explicitly state that there are several opinions, even if it doesn’t explore them?

Second, look for tension. One-sided stories frequently lack the tension that makes for a gripping tale. Therefore, consider where the conflict is, even if your attention is on a single individual or circumstance. (There would be no story without conflict, suspense, or anything important at risk.)

Finally, as an audience, we should not forget that equity or fairness across coverage is possible in every situation. Although no single article can fairly represent every point of view, a thorough coverage can do it.

### ***What components make a perfect recipe for news?***

A reporter/presenter prepares their story’s elements in advance as it aids them in conceiving the story and its coverage planning.

However, the onus lies on us as viewers/readers to know who the crucial voices in our society are. What difficult situation requires explanation in a report? Which statement best answers your central query? What connection will unite different parts of the story or incident? What characterises it?

Pondering and thinking about all this will give you an understanding of the whole idea of new development in the newsroom or a news professional’s mind, further empowering your understanding of news.

Do not think the solutions to these issues are just out there, waiting for you to understand them. Not at all. You must make decisions when responding to these questions and tackle them efficiently. You need to free yourself from preconceived notions to create them independently. This will enable you to explore news beyond the five Ws and one H.

### Activity - 1

Create an issue plan for the next publication/programme for a newspaper or television news bulletin. The issue plan must include the lineup of articles or stories to be written or produced based on their inclusion, the story's scope, and the possible angle or treatment of each story.

### Check Your Progress: 1

**Note:** 1) Use the space below for your answers

2) Compare your answers with those given at the end of the unit

1. What are the five criteria for a story to be newsworthy?

.....  
.....

2. What are the key questions to ask after the 5Ws and 1H in a news story?

.....  
.....

## 12.3 NEWS PRODUCTION: CONCEPT AND DEFINITION

By portraying the news as a practice, the International Encyclopaedia of Communication describes news as ‘the product of teamwork in media outlets’ (Nossek, 2008). However, by taking into account specific characteristics, such as tasks, structures, procedures, routines, and impacts on the news, the concept of “news creation” goes beyond this.

News production can be seen as transforming events through systematic criteria into news that is publishable in the media. News production tasks are activities ‘where news workers/journalists produced the written, visual, or audio texts designated as news and information appearing in print media and on broadcast and cable television, radio, and the Internet’ (Ettema, 2008).

The major duties of these news professionals are to “report, investigate, write, and edit stories as well as develop and combine visual pictures and the graphic formats for news and information.” Editors, producers, and news directors participate at a higher level of news production in the selection of news, which frequently involves a process outside the control of news employees. News production is described by Weischenberg and Matuschek (2008) as ‘the process where in the modern newsroom, a journalist controls everything – the electronic gathering of information (e.g., through an online news ticker), the text processing software, the layout, and the printing which in essence is the description of the process for the news production.’

The majority of news is created within the restrictions of news organisations. The editorial hierarchy typically has three layers of decision-making authority: The lowest category of journalists comprises reporters with little autonomy. The news and information are gathered and produced by these journalists, who often have little to no editorial

responsibility. “junior managers” are at the intermediate level in the editorial structure. These journalists have operational power, and they regularly make operational choices. They are often in charge of the newsroom’s smaller departments, such as a beat, a desk, or a bureau. Senior or executive management holds the last level of strategic power in the newsroom. They can shape the strategic objectives of their news organisations.

Regarding the organisational design of newsrooms, it can be said that division of labour is a common feature. Reporters, editors, and news commentators are the three roles that newsrooms commonly divide their staff into (columnists). For journalists, news routines are “repeated techniques and patterns that facilitate job completion and assure immediacy in an unpredictable environment while working under production restrictions” (Lowrey, 2008). There are several kinds of news routines, such as those for news collection, selection, writing, editing, layout/design, fact-checking, and editorial coordination and administration. Influences on news creation come from various levels, including the level of the person, media routines, organisation, extra-media level, and ideological level. (Shoemaker & Reese, 1996). According to comparative research on journalists’ views of these factors, political, economic, organisational, professional, procedural, and reference groups were identified as the six main levels of impact (Hanitzsch et al., 2010). It was believed that organisational, institutional, and operational impacts were more potent than political and fiscal pressures.

As we all know, information on recent events is generally known as news. This can be expressed in several ways, such as by spoken communication, writing, mailing, broadcasting, electronic communication, or even through eyewitness and other third-party witness testimony. The term “hard news” is often used to distinguish news from soft media. A news producer is a professional journalist who chooses and supervises the stories and topics the news will cover. They work with journalists, editors, desk staff and directors to meet deadlines and offer consistent time slots while ensuring that the material is produced efficiently. The production of news by an army of news producers, as well as entertainment-related video and audio content for diverse audiences to consume on a variety of digital and online phones, social networking sites, and broadcast media, including radio, is primarily known as mass communication and is an intrinsic and most important part of news journalism.

A Producer is expected to be able to properly time the newscast while working with the studio staff, anchors, input and output team, reporters and stringers in the field and various other office support staff, including the ingest, assignment and team of video editors. A producer must be able to write swiftly and proficiently and make sound judgments about the news. Content generation, pre-press, press and postpress are the stages of the production process. The producer must understand the difference between the process of manufacturing and manufacturing as an independent exercise. The process of manufacturing news while coordinating with the whole team, from those who are based in the newsroom to those who are working from the field, is actually the process or effort taken towards producing news.

When we/work as news producers, compiling information diligently is equally crucial while generating a news report. It’s normally the producer only who, with the passage of time, is promoted to the desk/shift editor. Thus, he or she must learn to choose news items while keeping the listeners’ interests in mind. Therefore, he or she must also be aware of these skills. A news producer should know to organise the news story in decreasing order of interest and significance in the rundown of the news bulletin. This

is described as the bunching of the elements, where the most significant and engaging information should appear at the top of the bulletin, and the least significant information should appear at the bottom. The goal is to keep the audience's interest for the longest amount of time. When significant news is unavailable on a particular day, sports and weather stories are given prominence. If there is a hurricane that hits some locations, if Indian athletes win a major competition, or if there are other significant sporting events, the scenario will change. News from the nation, the world, and your region is covered via national bulletins. Regional bulletins concentrate on local news and developments.

### 12.3.1 Stages of News Production (Pre to Post-Production)

Content gathering, pre-press, press, and post-press are the four stages that make up the entire production process, and this is also known as production hierarchy. It could be news, a newspaper, a media production or even a radio programme.

Every stage has a purpose and a set of objectives, and each must be accomplished before moving on to the next. There are four main stages to it, and the fifth one is added at last in a way we can say, to sum up, the whole pre and post-production exercise, which is called the distribution or dissemination of produced news or production property.

- The first stage of news production, as mentioned above, is content gathering, which falls into the story planning category. While planning the story only, the producer ideates the story, the concept, and the subject as the target audience. Once there is clarity on these points, content is gathered from diverse perspectives to dig deeper into the subject.
- Once the planning is done, the next stage is the pre-press stage, where a lot of time is spent researching the subject/topic of the production. All background information, questions that must be addressed, facts, draft, framework, initial script, etc., are prepared. But, even while doing so, you as a producer have to be prepared for the unexpected at the last moment. The pre-press stage also includes the availability of the logistics. The guest lineup, the machines, the edit bays, the camera, the vehicle, the interviewee, equipment, permission of the editor, etc.

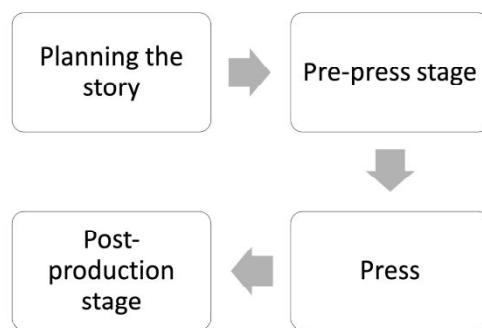


Figure 1: News production hierarchy

- From the pre-press stage, one moves towards the 'PRESS' stage of the production process. This is the actual stage where all planning is put into action, and while doing so, you also have to take care of the quality control of the production, the hygiene, and the order of the production process. All materials gathered for the production are being put to use, news angles are covered, HDL, body and summary of the story are devised, angels developed,

and facts and ethics are cross-checked; all this is done to ensure that whatever has been produced by you as producer makes sense, is not confusing and fits the bill of an impartial and objective news item.

- The final stage is the post-production stage. Here, editing moderation of the produced product/story is done to suit the availability of time and space is adjusted and aligned. The producer ensures that the available resources are used in the best possible manner. It is clear and not confusing in its final form; it will inform and educate the audience and may give way to a public debate but won't make unnecessary noise. The post-production stage is also the last opportunity for you as a producer to mend if any mistake has been made unknowingly or because of a lack of knowledge and experience. It also apprised the producer of his work and its effect on the audience. Did you do well or made some mistakes? All this and many more queries are addressed in the final and last stage of the post-production, the most important of which is whether the whole exercise was rewarding in professional terms.

### 12.3.2 Key Players in the Process

In this unit, we are discussing the development process of news, and till now, we have discussed in detail the various stages of news production. Now that we have gained a fairly good idea about the various stages through which news is produced, we would like to delve slightly into the subject of key players in this whole process. But there is a catch to this; for some of you, the term key players could mean human beings or human minds involved in this whole process, which is correct, but- for some people, who could be called media professionals or media creators, key-players in the production process could entirely mean different things. They could carry altogether different and distinct connotations. Let's discuss in brief what or who are those key players:

1. **Headline:** The heading or the title of the news piece is the headline and easily the most important key player of any piece of news, irrespective of the medium.
2. **The byline or reporter's sign-off** is the next important player in the news development process. This line reveals the author of the piece or despatch news capsule, along with their location. Start of the piece.
3. **Lead Paragraph/Opening**, shot, or opening voice-over is another important ingredient that makes a piece of news more credible; it lends authenticity to the whole product because it takes the audience to the location from where the story is filmed.
4. **Supporting Paragraph** or body of the story: this is the premise on which the story is built. It also gives space to the second version of the whole story, making the story objective and unbiased.

Having said all the above points, let's not forget to mention some intangible key-playing elements in the news development process, which come to the fore or seek validation through the journalists involved in news production.

A journalist normally has to play four types of journalistic roles while being on the job or while dealing with news items they are— normative, cognitive, practised, and narrated — which correspond to conceptually separate ideas: What journalists should do, what they aspire to do, what they do in practice, and what they believe they are doing are

some important thoughts that invisibly guide this whole process. Look at the figure below, where this idea is explained through pictures.

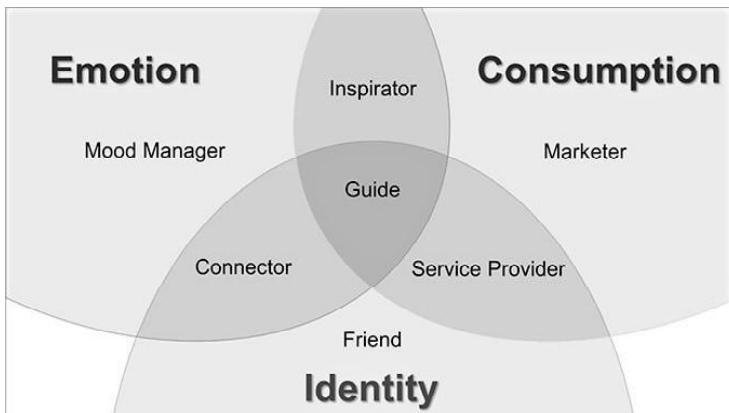


Figure 2: Professional Identity and Roles of Journalists; Oxford research

Just go through the terms written on this image, and you will get a glimpse of the various stakeholders competing with each other via the news production staff to get a place in this process. Think about it; this will eventually give you better clarity of the whole picture.

#### Activity - 2 How is News Produced?

Visit a television news organisation and interview the following on their respective duties and accountability:

- Editors- Central desk (Radio, Online, TV)
- Reporters- Assigned according to beats
- Segment producers
- Camerapersons- Field and Studio
- Video Editors
- Executive producer
- Supervising producer
- Anchors- Read from the prompter
- Others: character generator operator, researchers, engineering and personnel

#### 12.3.3 Comparing News Production in TV/Radio/Print and Digital

The opening topic of this unit delved into detail with the whole idea of news production. We have till now discussed news story ideas, news production, key players and various stages of news production in totality. Now, we will have an insightful discussion on the differences in news production for different media through which news dissemination occurs. Or to understand the difference in the news production process for different news outlets, which means TV, Radio, Print/Digital.

Let's start with the Print media or Newspaper.

1. **Newspaper :** One is probably more interested in the headlines when they pick up the morning newspaper from their doorstep than in making it. Even

though every newspaper is slightly different, the manufacturing steps are surprisingly simple. Before the paper reaches your hands, several people play various roles.

The various steps involved in news production in a newspaper are as follows:

**Newsgathering** begins with reporters travelling to their specific beats to find articles and cover events, as well as the marketing section acquiring advertisements. Every newspaper relies heavily on news collection. After the stories were gathered, the sub-editor used a red pen to make corrections to the copies that the reporters supplied. The chief sub-editor then used a blue/white editor and a green pen to make the final edits.

**Pre-Press:** After editing stories, the editor and other sub-editors will convene an editorial conference to decide what will appear in the paper for the day. Pre-press is where photos are edited, advertisements are created and compared, and newspaper pages are laid out and designed. Page planning, which simulates the final look of each newspaper, is how the newspaper is planned on a mock-up sheet. The newspaper pages are assembled with pre-press text using graphics, cut lines, colours, and images.

**Press:** The primary phase in creating a newspaper is the printing procedure. The pillars in creating and processing print products are efficiency, dependability, and reasonable production.

## NEWS PRODUCTION PROCESS

### News Production

- Step 1: News gathering from different sources
- Step 2: Filing News Stories/News Writing
- Step 3: Sub Editing: Checking structure and language of news story by
- Step 4: Policy Check and approval for copy
- Step 5: Layout and Designing

**News Circulation/Distribution:** Printed copies are distributed to the designated distributors for further circulation to the audience

**News Reception:** Readership of Newspapers

2. **Radio:** Radio production entails all duties associated with the audio content and operation of all programs to be broadcast on radio, including conceptualising the radio show, planning every aspect of it (such as scheduling, sourcing, and guest confirmation), supervising presenters, content producers, assistants, and other crew members, using various broadcast techniques like soundboards and editing/production software, and editing interviews/reports/conversations.

### *Radio Production: What is it?*

The process of creating and delivering content for radio, the internet, or other streaming and mobile platforms is known as radio production. Planning a news show or episode concept is the first step, followed by coordinating and carrying out every single task necessary to produce that show. The radio producer is the one who must take the helm of this creatively and organizationally complex process.

A radio producer works “behind the scenes,” and their main duty is to ensure that all programs are broadcast according to the established schedule and that the program content is current and well-researched. Radio producers are important when creating a great radio broadcast, even though, as listeners, we may only be familiar with radio jockeys. The field of radio production is perfect for you if you enjoy listening to the radio and are amazed by the exciting, fascinating, and fantastic stuff that is broadcast on it.

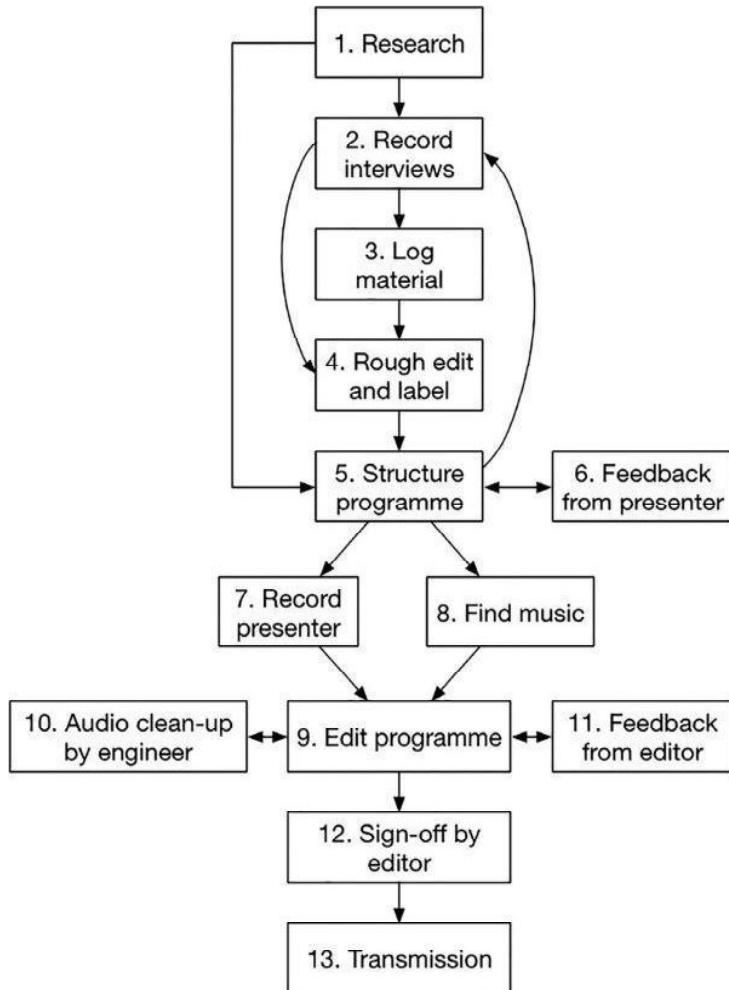


Figure 3:(Mark D. Plumley uploaded this figure; A Contextual Study of Semantic Speech Editing in Radio Production Article Mar 2018)

- 3. Television:** A production is known as a “video production” if it is meant to be broadcast on any form of television, which includes but isn’t limited to Free Television, Pay Television, and Pay-Per-View. An artistically commercial production is not a television production. There are three different kinds of live television production. Live, live-to-tape and pre-produced.

The top abilities required to be a successful TV producer are as follows:

Task delegation, planning, prioritisation, flexibility, analytical abilities, working in a fast-paced environment, and analytical skills. The producer has to work in different capacities, which are devised according to the five stages of TV production:

**Stage 1:** The idea, also known as project development.

**Stage 2:** The Plan, sometimes referred to as Pre-production

**Stage 3:** The Shoot, or the production itself.

**Stage 4:** The Completed Work or Post-Production

**Stage 5:** Constitutes the steps involved in wrapping up and broadcasting the news item.

The showrunner, executive producers, and editors get things done with the assistance of producers. The script has to be revised or updated as their initial duty. Whether you're recording a television series, a TV news bulletin, a current affairs program, an instructional video, or a 15-second advertisement, editing is probably the most crucial part of any production. Effective editing takes the raw elements and produces a coherent, interesting final product. The thrilling aspect of the entire process is when a newscast is broadcast, which is a really difficult task. Today, creating a newscast isn't just restricted to television; You can also use YouTube or construct your news website to broadcast a daily story. Remember that broadcast journalism is a storytelling profession rather than just reporting facts if you are committed to doing one.

DUCK MUSICAL LIVE x										
Status		Story								
PAGE	TAL	SLUG	CAM	SHOT	FORMAT	GRAPHICS	CH	VID-ID	STATUS	REACTION
A2		TOSS TO DUCK	2	OTS					00..00	00..00:00
A3	SPT	DUCK MUSICAL LIVE	SAT		SATELLITE	NEW...	00..00	00..00:00		
A4		DUCK MUSICAL PKG			PKG		2015..	00..00	00..00	
A5	SPT	DUCK MUSICAL TAG					2015..	00..00	00..00:00	
A6		FIRST WX	WX		WX OFC		NEW...	00..00	00..00:00	
SMU		GUN BAN TAG	REM	DBX			NEW...	00..00	00..00:00	
B/S		EDUCATION SUMMER	3	2-shot	VO/A/U/L		NEW...	00..00	00..00:00	
B/S		EDUCATION LIVE	REM	3-shot	SAT/V/S		NEW...	00..00	00..00:00	
L1		EDUCATION TAG	REM				NEW...	00..00	00..00:00	
BZU		EDUCATION SIDE	1		GFX FULL	EDUCATI...	NEW...	00..00	00..00:00	
BZU		GRAINGER SIDE		1	OTS	EDUCATI...	NEW...	00..00	00..00:00	
PAGE TAL SLUG CAM SHOT FORMAT GRAPHICS READ SOT TOTAL BACKTIM CG APPROVE										
A3	SPT	DUCK MUSICAL LIVE	SAT	"	SATELLITE	"	00:26	00..00	00..00:00	
MODIFIED:		MOD BY:	EDITOR	WRITER	VIDEO-ID:	CH	STATUS	TAPE #	TIMECODE	AIR-DATE
24/07/15 11:33:11										
Glue List Story										
0		(REMOTE SCAN)								
		BASED ON THE BEST-SELLING BOOK THE DUCK COMMANDER FAMILY BY WILLIE AND KORIE ROBERTSON, THIS STIRRING NEW SHOW WILL MAKE ITS WORLD PREMIERE AT THE CROWN THEATER INSIDE OF THE RIO ALL-SUITE LAS VEGAS HOTEL AND CASINO IN APRIL 2015.								
0		(TAKE VO)								
		DUCK COMMANDER MUSICAL TRANSPORTS THE LOUISIANA BAYOU TO THE LAS VEGAS STAGE IN A CAPTIVATING 90-MINUTE SHOW – SEASONED WITH ALL THE SOUTHERN SPIRIT AND DOWN-TO-EARTH HUMOR YOU EXPECT FROM AMERICA'S MOST FAMOUS REDNECKS, THE ROBERTSON FAMILY.								

Figure 4: (Rundown of a News bulletin. Image credit: Sean Thorp)



Figure 5: (Television live studio with news anchors, floor director, and camera operators | Images credit: TV5)

### Check Your Progress: 2

**Note:** 1) Use the space below for your answers

2) Compare your answers with those given at the end of the unit

1. What are the three levels of decision-making authority in the editorial hierarchy of a newsroom?
- .....  
.....

2. What are the stages of news production?
- .....  
.....

3. Which are key players in a news report?
- .....  
.....

## 12.4 THE TELEVISION PRODUCTION TEAM

Personnel working in TV production are typically divided into two groups: above-the-line and below-the-line. Technical staff members such as camera, audio, TD, VTR, grip, and gaffer are categorised as below-the-line. In contrast, creative staff members such as producers, writers, directors, and actors are categorised as above-the-line. The staff in the pre-production phase are the casting director, costume designer, director, location manager, makeup artist, researcher, scriptwriter, set designer, and television producer.

The production's visual presentation is the responsibility of the production designer. They create, plan, coordinate, and arrange set design, equipment accessibility, and production appearance on screen. The set designer or scenic designer are other names for the production designer. They hold Master of Fine Arts (MFA) degrees in scenic design, making them skilled professionals. The set designer works with the studio director to build the production's setting, exchanging information about this environment with the technical/studio director. The stage's appearance and technical assembly are designed by the set designer under the direction of the art/studio director. The formation of an internal or external field studio for a specific project is planned and managed by the studio director, who may also serve as the production manager.

A person who manages one or more parts of video production for a television program is known as a television producer. Some producers play a more executive role in developing and presenting new shows to television networks. Still, after they are picked up, they concentrate on business issues like contracts and budgets. The daily operations are handled by other producers, who take part in tasks including screenwriting, set design, casting, and directing.

A professional operating a film camera or video camera as a film crew member is known as a camera operator or, depending on the situation, a cameraman or camera person. Depending on the situation and technology, a camera operator in a video production may also be referred to as a videographer, television camera operator, or video camera operator. They typically use a professional video camera.

A producer of on-air still and motion graphics is known as a graphics coordinator, abbreviated as GC or font assist, and they typically work on television programs. A full page (a graphic that fills the entire screen) or a lower third are only two examples of

how the graphics coordinator chooses what information should be shown on-air (a bar graphic appearing in the lower third of the screen).

A video control operator, sometimes identified as a video engineer or operator, manages the video console in addition to the more common video control. This content includes test patterns as well as live and recorded telecasts. Operators of the video console use dials to adjust the contrast, framing, brilliance, colour balance, and integrity of the transmitted image while keeping an eye on the activity on the set through video monitors and set switches. They keep an eye on the show to verify that it is being transmitted in a technically sound manner, and they examine it to make sure the signal is working properly and prepared for timely broadcasting.

Post-production is a step in creating films, videos, audio recordings, and photographs. All production activities which take place after the main shoot or after recording specific program parts are referred to as post-production. Post-production is the umbrella term for a variety of processes. Editing, video editing, colour grading, sound editing, animation and visual effects insertions, screening, and the beginning of the airing process are all post-production stages in television.

An expert team is needed to make a televised news broadcast. The entire show's planning, from budgeting to scheduling, is the responsibility of a production crew. A program's financing is arranged by an executive producer, who also usually decides on advertising, material selection, and segment length. They also supervise the production staff. To keep newscasts on schedule and within the executive producer's allotted budget, line producers keep an eye on them. Travelling to the scene of breaking news stories, news reporters speak with people and gather information that news writers then use to create reports. The audience is given access to the news reports by news anchors who operate in a studio. During the broadcast segment featuring a new anchor, a reporter appears on camera to provide extra information.

#### **12.4.1 News/Data Gathering to News Writing**

**Newsgathering:** Observation, dialogue, interviews, and research are the four main approaches that journalists employ to acquire their news. Collecting newsworthy information is known as news gathering. Spreading news information is known as news reporting. The terms "journalist" and "reporter" are interchangeable and have the same meaning. They are people in charge of news gathering and reporting. Observation, discussions with informants, desk and web research, and interviews are the main approaches for acquiring news. A journalist should be able to combine the facts from there to produce reliable reporting. As they transform information into news, reporters often follow a set process. The processes are 1) discovery, 2) information collection, 3) impact judgement, 4) focusing on key components, 5) organising, and 6) successfully employing language. In the media, news collecting or documenting is a distinct activity, particularly at the start of the communication process. The process of exchanging information can be used to collect data. Interaction and interactivity are made possible via virtual communication. When we examine news stories, we can see that they are based on information from various sources, including tangible sources like books, files, and records, the reporter's observations, source interviews, and online sources.

**News Writing:** News has a lot of potential to be fascinating or even amusing, but its main purpose is to inform people and give them power. Thus, journalism aims to give the public the knowledge they need to make the best decisions for their own lives,

social groups, societies, and governments. Newspapers, radio, and television all employ journalism, sometimes known as news writing, to report stories. The ABCs of news writing—Accuracy, Brevity, and Clarity—must be adhered to while writing in a journalistic style. These three components must be considered in addition to the audience and tone of the story. News articles aim to inform and enlighten readers about current issues and happenings. They are employed to give readers knowledge about the outside world that they require or desire. The purpose of news stories is to keep readers up to date on current affairs and events. They are used to give readers knowledge about the world they need or want to know. The following are the key guidelines for creating effective news stories: First, keep things straightforward and avoid jargon. Get right to the point. The main plot point should be presented in the first paragraph and be captivating enough to draw the reader in. Always answer the questions of who, what, why, where, when, and how.

### **12.4.2 Discipline of Verification, Independence and Accountability**

Quality journalism is characterised by verification, independence, and accountability. It involves determining whether a particular information is reliable and true or not. To present the most accurate account of events, journalists gather data. They consult sources, conduct extensive research, and present reliable documentation to substantiate their claims. Three key ideas — creativity, humility, and transparency — form the philosophical cornerstone of the discipline of verification. Transparency implies presenting your evidence so that readers can determine whether or not to accept it. What is ethical journalism? It is news that a dependable, independent organisation has backed up.

Independence consists of impartiality mixed with freedom from authority or influence. Along with independence come objectivity, justice, and balance. Media independence is the absence of outside influence or control over a media organisation or person. It distinguishes between independent and state media based on their ability to “make decisions and behave according to their rationale.

Accountability is the action of accepting accountability for the reporting. The names of news organisations and the contact information for journalists should be readily available. The ability to acknowledge mistakes when they are made is perhaps most vital for any news organisation or journalist. Accountability journalism, often known as “watchdog” or “investigative” journalism, concentrates on the needs of the public and frequently reveals facts that could be damaging to an advertiser. To achieve this, one should emphasise the four pillars of accountability: people, purpose, performance, and progression.

#### **Activity - 3 Analysis of Information Sources**

Identify a subject or story available in a print or online news story and a public social media post. Consider the following questions:

- Based on the journalistic process of verification, independence and accountability, is there a difference between the two? Explain.
- Did the article and social media post follow the verification process? How can you tell?
- Is the source independent and/or authoritative? Why?
- Is there accountability on the part of the source? Explain.

**Check Your Progress: 3**

- Note:** 1) Use the space below for your answers  
2) Compare your answers with those given at the end of the unit

1. How is the personnel in TV news production divided?

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2. Explain the process of news gathering and writing for television.

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3. What are the characteristics of quality journalism?

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## 12.5 QUALITY CONTROL AND REVIEW

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Since the advent of commercial journalism, the news industry has undergone some of the most significant disruptions, making the subject of what makes for high-quality journalism more urgent than ever. The news is no longer the only domain of a small number of specialised institutions that only sporadically share the same ideals or professional standards. The increasing ability of the public to select the news they want and to participate as both producers and consumers has increased the significance of audience preference in determining quality. The debate over how to instil civic and news literacy in young people has gained fresh traction due to the audience's expanding power.

When discussing journalism and its quality, it is useful to specify the level. For example, source diversity is often cited as a goal for quality journalism (Napoli 1999; 2003), but the term "source" will vary with the level. An individual story may, for instance, not contain much diversity in sources, but diversity could exist among all the stories available that day about a given event or trend. Thus, the diversity available to a community would be greater if all the journalism products in the market were evaluated. (Lacy and Rosenstiel, 2015).

In addition to being vital for its own sake, high-quality news has political repercussions. However, defining, operationalising, and assessing the quality of news media is challenging because the standards for evaluation depend on ideas about the ideal society, which are fundamentally debatable. Despite agreement on the importance of news media quality for society, much confusion exists regarding defining, operationalising, and measuring the construct. Perhaps the most common view is that the news media is getting worse in the era of digitisation.

Media organisations are experiencing unprecedented technological, financial, and technological pressures, which have exposed them to severe public scrutiny and put their management practices in the spotlight. In many democratic contexts, media

practitioners have responded to these public pressures by instituting quality control measures to gain public support and forestalling government interference.

If quality is seen to be a measure of a journalist's capacity to carry out their duties, then raising the standard of journalism would increase the public's capacity to use it to make wiser judgments and act as a deterrent to abuse and misconduct by those in positions of authority. Quality journalism will mean different things to different people. Still, because of socialising, ideas are much more likely to be exchanged by members of the group who have some kind of similar experience. Finding these shared meanings inside and between groups is key to establishing quality journalism. Broadly, there is more common meaning within groups than between groups.

### 12.5.1 Influences on News Production

The topic of who the individuals or groups attempting to sway or influence news are has long been relevant. According to several different sources, the government, interest groups, advertising, and other media are the most important factors that affect journalism or news coverage. This influence results from how much of an impact the media has on our personal and professional lives. The "media effect," or mass media, impacts many facets of daily life, including voting behaviour, personal opinions and beliefs, and how someone learns about a subject after receiving erroneous information.

Influences from outside the News circle or external influences include The government, advertisers or commercials, interest group organisations, different media or mediums of mass communication and local interests. In the modern world, the media's ever-increasing supply of news and information shapes public opinion. The decision to publish a piece of news can be influenced by political pressure, target rating points (TRPs), and editorial prejudice. Several things influence the decision of what to broadcast or print. First and foremost, following media house policy, the majority of news editors compete for the greatest TRPs, which directly translates into enormous ad earnings. In addition, political pressure may exert pressure on an editor's judgement and force them to publish news that furthers a certain political objective. News articles promoting extreme political beliefs can bring mass public unrest in a nation. Last, a news editor's personal convictions and viewpoints or adherence to the "house style" can provide a news item with a unique perspective. Many media outlets are either pro- or anti-government, pro- or anti-military, and as a result, news editors are forced to follow a specific policy, which in turn influences news.

Having listed some prominent external factors affecting news production in any media house, we should not forget some very common and inherent circumstances within these news structures that influence news production in a very subtle and invisible manner. They could be summed up as – time/deadline, speed/competition while delivering news earlier than others, lack of space or airtime, profit/revenue and last but not least, the predominant bias within the newsroom.

### 12.5.2 Conflict of Interests

The term "conflict of interest" refers to situations in which unspoken duties or allegiances may conceivably intervene between journalists, journalism organisations, and the audience they primarily serve. Conflicts of interest can take many forms, from writing about close friends or relatives to receiving complimentary media copies for review. When journalists establish sides on political or social problems, confrontations also occur.

Conflict of interest has developed into a structural ethical issue for journalism that is integrated into the processes of creating content. Before the advent of digital media, journalists, publishers, and broadcasters recognised it as a challenge that must be addressed. Today, it is purposefully incorporated into journalists' daily tasks. According to Wasserman (2009: 229-241), 'Conflict of interest comprises a variety of instances where undeclared obligations or loyalties exist that might plausibly intervene between journalists and journalism organisations and the public they principally serve.'

Dependence on sponsors by news organisations is a huge conflict of interest in journalism. News organisations must uphold their owners' loyalty, another massive conflict of interest in journalism. Conflict of interest is "a clash between a person's self-interest and professional interest or public interest" (Business Dictionary, 2016). Any activity that could endanger the interests of their organisation or the objectivity of communication experts should be avoided. That includes keeping personal objectives apart from those of the company.

However, there are six strategies for averting disputes which can lead to a conflict of interest and land anyone in a problem.

- Keep away from sources who offer you freebies or gifts.
- Never give money to political or activist organisations.
- Avoid getting involved in politics.
- Keep your friendships with the people you cover at a minimum.
- Family and friends should not be covered.
- Stay away from financial disputes.

These are a few small but day-to-day strategies through which one can not only avoid challenges related to conflict of interest while working as a news producer and a field reporter but what matters, in the end, is that this problem will not end anytime soon.

### **12.5.3 The End Product**

How would you describe the final piece of content you produce?

Designing a news magazine, newspaper, or television news program is artistic. However, news articles and products must be produced swiftly and effectively since they are commodities. Instead of worrying about the production and delivery of your stories or news capsules, you should concentrate on the art of delivering them.

Few things can compare to the satisfaction of a well-timed, well-executed broadcast, which is why producers spend numerous hours planning and creating their programs. When the program performs at its peak, a producer may feel excitement in the control room. The flow of a good newscast makes it enjoyable to watch. Although it takes a team to make something, the producer is the team leader, bringing the many pieces together and creating a strategy that turns the initial data into a finished good. Despite this, it is important to note that several of the finest news shows are those in which the team reacts to big news rather than following a script or rundown. Producing when you're on the run and knowing that you've pushed yourself and your team to their absolute boundaries to win the big story is the most exhilarating feeling.

Countless news and information programs are available on radio, television, and the Internet; your newscast must compete with them. In addition to expanding the variety

of news sources, technology has also made it simpler for viewers to skip commercial interruptions. A lot of research has been done to find out what listeners expect from a broadcast, and generally speaking, some aspects of the program are more appealing. We've talked about how the network's capabilities significantly impact news coverage. One resource type is technical resources like cameras, recorders, and live trucks.

Human resources like correspondents, videographers, editors, and others are another. Utilising these tools to create the greatest newscast possible is one of the main responsibilities of a producer. Using all of the resources at our disposal to report far more news is what is meant by "pushing the envelope." Producers often choose to take the safe route and handle things quickly. But in a time of heightened competition and expanded news options, being safe is not necessarily a good idea.

#### 12.5.4 Circulation and Dissemination

The number of copies circulated of a specific publication is measured by its circulation. A publication's viewership is an estimation of its audience. It includes managing grievances, handling new customers and renewals over the counter and by mail, instructing an administrative staff to keep records, alerting customers when their memberships need to be renewed, and more. The circulation department is responsible for circulating and distributing the news product, which is the main source of revenue for the news organisation. It's also the department's responsibility to deliver the news at the right places, like selling the media product, delivering it to the retailer, and collecting data from the subscribers. Circulation managers' role also impacts the survival of media outlets, irrespective of whether they belong to print, digital or electronic media. In today's time, the circulation job is also substituted by digital media and advertising managers. Any media organisation would be successful in its ability to sell its product to the audience, viewers or readers along with producing quality products. As we all know no product is produced or manufactured for oneself, but it is for the audience. Thus, any media product's success is directly related to its successful penetration into the audience. It should be able to satisfy the needs of its readers/viewers and be accepted by them. All this comes under the circulation department.

News dissemination refers to the entire process by which specific contents are articulated, selected, transformed into news, and received by audiences. News dissemination is the complete process by which certain materials are expressed, chosen, turned into news, and received by news audiences. Instead of being sequential, disseminating news is continuous, dynamic, and synchronically self-referential. The reintroduction of values, meanings, and intents that the public and political actors have acquired leads to a process in which news discourse continually replicates itself from its past in an uncertain way. The dissemination of news content guarantees that the advantages of the work are shared with everyone and that it is put to optimal use, making it a crucial part of the production process. The likelihood that someone will receive and accept information after it has been delivered from a news source is known as an effective information dissemination possibility. To minimise losses and guarantee the safety of humans and subjects alone, it is crucial to understand how different media disseminate information and to have an effective plan for doing so in pre-crisis situations.

#### Check Your Progress: 4

**Note:** 1) Use the space below for your answers

- 2) Compare your answers with those given at the end of the unit

1. What are some of the influences on the news production process?

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2. What are the strategies for averting a conflict of interest in news production?

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3. What is the role of the news circulation department?

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## **12.6 PEDAGOGICAL APPROACHES**

*(Instructions for the course counsellors)*

Various pedagogical approaches are possible for this unit. However, the most apt pedagogical approach can entail using textual analysis. The learner can analyse newspaper accounts of a major issue or event and examine the information provided. The learner then explains the assessment, considering the factors and process in “identifying news and recognising the story”:

- Elements of the news (5Ws and 1H: Who? What? When? Where? How?) and redefining them: news is data with meaning (who is the character, what is the plot, when is time, where is the setting, why is motivation or causation, how is narrative)
- The notion of news has expanded over the years to include the questions: “So what?” meaning that the significance should be explained; “What’s the solution?” meaning that news can go beyond the important function of exposing problems and give exposure to the range of possible solutions.
- Journalism is “storytelling with a purpose”: finding the information people need to live good lives and presenting the information in a meaningful, relevant and engaging way.
- Is it possible to assess if the news includes answers to the questions “So what?” and “Is the solution to the problem being reported?”. While not all news can include these elements, there is a general drive to ensure that more new stories do so.

The learner should also check for verifiability based on the core principles of verification: do not add; do not deceive the audience; be as transparent as possible about methods and motives; rely on your original reporting; and exercise humility.

The learner should also apply at least one technique of verification: sceptical editing, accuracy checklist, method of verifying presumed facts, and rules on anonymous sources. A reference that can be used is *The Elements of Journalism* by Kovach and Rosenstiel.

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## **12.7 LET US SUM UP**

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In this unit, the main emphasis was to acquaint you with the news development process. Since we all live in a multimedia-centric news production and consumption environment

today, it was important to give an insight into the news development procedure across all three newsrooms. In the previous unit, what is News, I tried to explain the concept of news and its various branches. However, in this unit, topics dealt with in detail are developing news story ideas, news production (pre to post), production team, data/information gathering, quality control and review of news content, influences and conflict of interests. This is done with the hope that it will help you all understand the news development process in any news organisation. I've tried to comprehensively accommodate the subject in a manner that will clarify all three media - TV, radio, print and multimedia. After going through this unit, we think it will be easier for you to navigate the varied newsroom systems employed to gather information and develop a news item. After reading this chapter, you can evaluate the implicit and visible messages in media using your interpretations.

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## 12.8 KEYWORDS

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- News Production** : News production can be seen as transforming events through systematic criteria into published news in the media.
- Pre-Press Phase** : Pre-Press is where photos are edited, advertisements are created and compared, and all the newspaper pages are laid out and designed.
- Radio Production** : The process of creating and delivering content for radio, the internet, or other streaming and mobile platforms is known as radio production.
- Post-Production** : Post-production is the umbrella term for a variety of processes. Editing, video editing, colour grading, sound editing, animation and visual effects insertions, screening, and the beginning of the airing process are all post-production stages in television.
- Accountability Journalism** : Accountability journalism, often known as “watchdog” or “investigative” journalism, concentrates on the needs of the public and frequently reveals facts that could be damaging to an advertiser.
- Conflict of Interest** : The term “conflict of interest” refers to situations in which unspoken duties or allegiances may intervene between journalists, journalism organisations, and the audience they primarily serve.
- News Dissemination** : News dissemination refers to the entire process by which specific contents are articulated, selected, transformed into news, and received by news audiences.

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## 12.9 FURTHER READINGS

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## 12.10 CHECK YOUR PROGRESS: POSSIBLE ANSWERS

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### Check Your Progress: 1

1. The five criteria for checking if a story is newsworthy or not are:
  - Timeliness
  - Inferring
  - Proximity
  - Prominence
  - Human Interest
2. The key questions to ask after the 5Ws and 1H in a news story are:
  - What is the central query of the story?
  - What does the story not concern?
  - How do we ensure that the news item is accurate in representation?
  - What components make a perfect recipe for news?

### Check Your Progress: 2

1. The editorial hierarchy typically has three layers of decision-making authority: The lowest category of journalists comprises reporters with little autonomy. The news and information are gathered and produced by these journalists, who often have little to no editorial responsibility. “junior managers” are at the intermediate level in the editorial structure. These journalists have operational power, and they regularly make operational choices. They are often in charge of the newsroom’s smaller departments, such as a beat, a desk, or a bureau.

Senior or executive management holds the last level of strategic power in the newsroom. They can shape the strategic objectives of their news organisations.

2. The five stages of news production are:

- Content Gathering Stage
- Pre-Press Stage
- Press Stage
- Post-Production Stage
- Distribution or Dissemination Stage

3. The key players in the news development process are:

- Headline
- Byline or reporter's sign-off
- Lead Paragraph/Opening shot or opening voice-over
- Supporting Paragraph or body of the story

### Check Your Progress: 3

1. Personnel working in TV production are typically divided into two groups: above-the-line and below-the-line. Technical staff members such as camera, audio, TD, VTR, grip, and gaffer are categorised as below-the-line. In contrast, creative staff members such as producers, writers, directors, and actors are categorised as above-the-line. The staff in the pre-production phase are the casting director, costume designer, director, location manager, makeup artist, researcher, scriptwriter, set designer, and television producer.
2. Journalists or Reporters are in charge of news gathering and reporting. Observation, discussions with informants, desk and web research, and interviews are the main approaches for acquiring news. A journalist should be able to combine the facts from there to produce reliable reporting. As they transform information into news, reporters often follow a set process. The processes are: 1) discovery, 2) information collection, 3) impact judgement, 4) focusing on key components, 5) organising, and 6) successfully employing language.
3. Quality journalism is characterised by verification, independence, and accountability. It involves determining whether a particular information is reliable and true or not.

### Check Your Progress: 4

1. Influences from outside the News circle or external influences consist of - The government, advertisers or commercials, interest group organisations, different media or mediums of mass communication and local interests. Moreover, the internal influences could be summed up as – time/deadline, speed/competition while delivering news earlier than others, lack of space or airtime, profit/revenue and last but not least, the predominant bias within the newsroom.
2. There are six strategies for averting disputes which can lead to a conflict of interest and land anyone in a problem.

- Keep away from sources who offer you freebies or gifts.
  - Never give money to political or activist organisations.
  - Avoid getting involved in politics.
  - Keep your friendships with the people you cover at a minimum.
  - Family and friends should not be covered.
  - Stay away from financial disputes.
3. The circulation department is responsible for circulating and distributing the news product, which is the main source of revenue for the news organisation. It's also the department's responsibility to deliver the news at the right places, which is like selling the media product, delivering it to the retailer, and collecting data from the subscribers. Circulation managers' role also impacts the survival of media outlets, irrespective of whether they belong to print, digital or electronic media.

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# **UNIT 13 NEWS REPORTING AND THE POWER OF THE IMAGE**

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## **Structure**

- 13.0 Introduction
- 13.1 Learning Outcomes
- 13.2 News Reporting for Traditional Versus New Media
  - 13.2.1 The Immediacy of Breaking News
  - 13.2.2 News Reporting for Newspapers and Magazines
  - 13.2.3 News Reporting for TV News Channels and Radio
  - 13.2.4 News Reporting for Online Digital and Multimedia Platforms
- 13.3 Good Practices of News Reporting
  - 13.3.1 On-site Reporting
  - 13.3.2 Sourcing and Citation of Information
  - 13.3.3 Authenticity and Credibility
  - 13.3.4 Cross-Checking and Double-Checking Facts and Figures
  - 13.3.5 Non-Prejudicial
  - 13.3.6 Privacy and Confidentiality
- 13.4 The Power of Image in News Reporting
  - 13.4.1 Visuals and Photographs: Impacts and Response
  - 13.4.2 Reporting for Audio and Visual Media
  - 13.4.3 Writing for Visual Media
  - 13.4.4 Leveraging the Visual Quotients
- 13.5 Learning Attributes of News Reporting
- 13.6 Pedagogical Approaches
- 13.7 Let Us Sum Up
- 13.8 Keywords
- 13.9 Further Readings
- 13.10 Check Your Progress: Possible Answers

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## **13.0 INTRODUCTION**

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As you learned in the earlier Units, the role of media is to inform, educate and entertain people. Among the three roles, informing is important, made possible by news gathering and news reporting by journalists and media houses. The role of providing news or information has, however, undergone a significant change since the first newspaper came into existence. As you know, news reporting is both a science and an art, and technological changes have altered how news is gathered and the tools used in the process. Because of the above changes, news content has also been transformed.

Earlier, news reporting was a monolithic and linear process, with reporters reporting on facts and events. Now, news reporting claims to probe news or the truth behind the news, making news reporting the art of investigative journalism or sting operation as it

has come to be called in the late 20th and 21st centuries. It means news reporting is no longer confined to chronicling the events but has begun to ask fundamental questions. The earlier questions of the 5 Ws – who, what, when, where and why- now emphasize the investigation part. As news reporting often deals with people in power, social hierarchy and political control, the role of media has been further magnified with the advent of new media, which has begun questioning the earlier paradigm.

We all know that media and journalists are not stand-alone identities but derive their role and responsibility from the ecosystems in which they are born and evolved. Like all other agencies, it attempts to adjust and derive its sense of identity depending on the social and political system it belongs to. As a result, you will find significant changes in news reporting related to democratically, authoritarian, or Communist-run regimes. The media often attempts to maintain the status quo and adjust to its ecosystem's social and political realities. However, this is not always the case, as the media also fought against oppressive rules and authoritarian governments in some countries. They have been responsible for creating public awareness and subsequent change in the regime. Recently, *Reporters Without Borders*, an NGO of independent journalists, has been fighting to safeguard the values of journalism and the right to freedom of information.

### **13.1 LEARNING OUTCOMES**

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After you have gone through this unit, you will be able to.

1. understand news reporting in the traditional versus New media;
2. describe the good practices of news reporting;
3. analyse the power and perceptive image and its impact;
4. understand the use of new technology in news gathering and in; and
5. learn the attributes of news reporting.

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### **13.2 NEWS REPORTING FOR TRADITIONAL VERSUS NEW MEDIA**

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Among all aspects of journalism, news gathering is one of the most vital features as it determines the character of the publication and helps create a brand. With the technology change, while other aspects of media organizations have been deeply impacted, news reporting has remained a constant with not much impact on it. Whether it's traditional media of newspapers, radio and magazines or the new and digital media, news reporting has remained the same. It still follows the old reporting principles from the ground zero and of authenticity and credibility, which adds credence. It still needs field work as vigorous as in the traditional media. What has changed are the technology and the means of communication, which have accelerated the process.

Mobile phones, the Internet and social media have significantly reduced the time lag before the news reaches the readers. News reporting is the perennial element of journalism, enjoying constant value, irrespective of the technologically-driven media. With the emergence of new technology, the periodicity of news gathering has increased

as the readers vie for instant gratification in reports and news bytes. It has accelerated the process of news gathering.

### 13.2.1 The Immediacy of Breaking News

The immediacy of breaking news refers to minute-to-minute reporting on social, political, or economic events affecting many people. The immediacy of news reporting gains more importance in natural calamities like earthquakes, floods, cloudbursts, hurricanes, pandemics, etc. It was recently evident during the COVID-19 pandemic that the shortage of vaccines and oxygen cylinders became vital to save lives. In addition, international war and conflict are other areas where breaking news gains the utmost importance. The Russian attack on Ukraine and the civilian population were put on alert through breaking and inside reports.

But the hunger for immediate news has a flip side, which sometimes becomes harmful and compromises principled journalism. Understandably, it has accelerated the process of news gathering, but it has also compromised the quality of news and its credibility. If you remember, in the traditional media, there was no concept of breaking news in the 24-hour newspaper publication cycle. Instead, it carried the last news received with the title “At the time of going to press....” Another aspect of breaking news has been its compromised position vis-à-vis the process of gatekeeping, which plays a vital role in the credibility of news publishing. With the increased flow of news and the haste of news delivery, there is less time for the media to check the integrity of the information. It is one of the reasons that electronic media, especially TV news channels and digital media, focus on event-based direct broadcasts or live telecasts. The event-based reporting is based on the premise that ‘what is seen is what is believed in’ as readers are directly transported to the site of the incident.

There is another group of news reporting called ‘developing news’, which is directly related to breaking news. There is no final in such cases, and the news is still unfolding. Such news needs continuous reporting with a timeline before reaching the outcome. One of the recent examples of such news was a change in the political regime in Maharashtra in 2022 after the defection of Shiv Sena MLAs. A group of MLAs led by Eknath Shinde had revolted against the Shiv Sena chief and Maharashtra Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray. Before the no-trust motion could be tabled in the Legislative Assembly, these MLAs were flown to Guwahati and later to Goa and interned in hotels. The incident occurred in June 2022 and continued for weeks before Mr Shinde was sworn in as the state’s chief minister. This story was a developing story as every day, some or the other news was filtering into the media about the MLAs, the incumbent chief minister, and the Supreme Court’s decision on the issues. Such news stories need continuous reporting as they can decide the country’s political future and its people.

### 13.2.2 News Reporting for Newspapers and Magazines

Unlike reporting on breaking news in TV news channels and digital media, newspapers and magazines have a different role because of their production cycle. The next edition of the daily newspaper comes only 24 hours after you have received your newspapers early in the morning. As newspapers are not in a hurry to provide breaking news, they use the available time for in-depth reporting on the issue. A newspaper tries to find out the reason, the cause, and its impact on policies, people, the economy, and politics. Depending on the impact value of the news, some news makes it to the paper’s front page while others recede to the inside pages. The reporters and correspondents of

newspapers prefer not only to visit the site of the action but also to meet people related to the event and take quotes from government officials. They are also accompanied by photographers who take the visual shots and send them to the news desk.

At times, when the newspaper doesn't have the reporters at the site of action, the story is filed based on agency reports to which these newspapers subscribe. Some of the prominent news agencies of India are the Press Trust of India (PTI), ANI, IANS and Reuters, AP, and AFP, among others. However, what differentiates newspaper reporting from other mass media is its emphasis on details and the background to which readers can relate. Sometimes, when the events have high news value, the editorial team writes an editorial or opinion piece on it while critically examining the issue and providing an informed opinion to its readers. In fact, by doing so, newspapers play another vital role in creating public opinion among their readers.

News reporting for magazines is very different from TV news channels or newspapers. There are various types of magazines, and depending on their genre, they may or may not need news reporting. Depending on the periodicity of the magazine - weekly, fortnightly or monthly, the editorial team decides the nature and frequency of news reports. While dealing with the subject in detail, the magazine news reports provide an analytical approach to the subject, with historical background, quotes from policymakers and its long-term impact. They also refer to prominent books on the subject and quote experts while strengthening their arguments through data displayed in tables and graphs.

Unlike the new features in the newspapers, which occupy four or five columns, magazine reporting and field dispatches are mostly long-form, spreading writing through 4 to 12 pages. Another important difference in the form and nature of editorial content is that magazine news may take a different angle on social issues that may not find a place on the front pages of newspapers. The magazine news reporting has a long shelf life and is sometimes preserved for reference. Some of India's popular English news magazines are *India Today*, *Frontline*, *The Week*, *Outlook*, *Open*, and *Caravan*. Some of these magazines, like *India Today* and *Outlook*, also come in Hindi and other regional languages. A large number of magazines are genre-based and do not need news reporting. Some of them have niche audiences like women and youth. These magazines include *Samanya Gyan Darpan*, *Vanitha*, *Pratiyogita Darpan*, *Sarita*, *Grihashobha*, *The Sportstar*, *Meri Saheli*, *Bal Bhaskar*, etc.

### **13.2.3 News Reporting for TV News Channels and Radio**

Unlike news reporting for newspapers and magazines, TV News Channels have 24/7 periodicity and need continuous news feeds to survive and participate in the highly competitive broadcast space. TV news channels involve a high setup and operational cost and employ many people, creating high business risk. Their revenue earning capacity depends on their Television Rating Point (TRP), a measure of viewership and success of the TV news channels. To enhance TRP and increase viewership, most TV news channels have evolved their unique selling point (USP) by calling themselves the fastest and most credible, and some claim that they provide news or the truth behind the news. All these features mentioned above are directly or indirectly related to the process of news gathering and news reporting. The 24/7 news channels compete to be the first to provide news related to events, politicians, or celebrities.

A TV news anchor's role is to read these stories and dramatize certain events to create curiosity and attract people's attention to news stories. The broadcast of these stories assumes different forms depending on the importance of the story, visuals, and other

details available on the TV news channels. The news about which not many details and visuals are available and has only one line of information is run through tickers or running script you see on your TV screen. Sometimes, the reporter does a piece to the camera (PTC) and addresses the viewers directly while reporting on the event.

As seen, the news-gathering process is almost the same for all mediums. Still, TV news reporting is more complex and involves multiple professionals like cameramen, Outdoor Broadcast Van (Ob Van), Liv U and Dejero, Satcom and Ingest and other infrastructure. Reporting on an event uses all forms of communication, including words, pictures, graphics, and video. It should be remembered that illiterate people also view TV news channels, so particular emphasis should be given to simplicity and clarity of expression, words and phrases. As a rule, such news should begin by providing the most crucial part of the information first, followed by less important and then least important parts in sequential order while narrating the story. The reporter and anchor are also advised to use simple, brief sentences and avoid ambiguity and incoherence while reporting events. For a TV reporter, it is also essential to understand the nature and profile of viewers to present news in a way easily understood by them.

### **13.2.4 News Reporting for Online Digital and Multimedia Platforms**

Online and digital multimedia have significantly changed accessibility and reach to readers and viewers. At the same time, it has diversified the mechanism of news reporting, thus involving the masses in the process. You must have seen a lot of videos and news alerts by common people posted on social media going viral, and the mainstream media subsequently taking up those feeds and reporting on it. Digital media enjoys a unique position because of its distinctive news reporting and dissemination features. Its segmented and customized features allow catering to different audience groups, whether the audience is literate or illiterate. Unlike TV and newspapers, it doesn't need much setup and operational cost and can be started by anyone with a meagre investment. You must have seen many YouTubers and small and big journalists running their websites, blogs, and YouTube channels with decent followers and subscriber bases.

While the process of news reporting largely remains the same in all mediums, the difference lies in the infrastructure required and the narrative style of digital journalists. To have a digital platform, you need a hosting site, mobile phone/laptop and editing software before putting the news content on the website or uploading a video on YouTube. For the real-time display of news content, a digital journalist can also livestream his/her reporting and tag people and authorities related to it. Suppose you are catering to a particular segment of people or a news subject. In that case, you can hashtag them so that they are easily searched and located by readers interested in the subject. In addition to the real-time display of news, digital media also provides a high degree of interactivity with its readers, with whom digital journalists could interact and receive feedback, a vital feature of all active online journalism.

Digital media's ubiquity has transformed how news is read and accessed with features like customized news for the segmented audience. Unlike newspapers, which depend on circulation and TV broadcasting facilities, digital media needs a device and Internet connection both on the part of the source and the receiver of the information. A reader can choose to read the news of his/her interest area and ignore the rest by subscribing to customized news, which is tailor-made to their needs and finds a place in their mailbox. Thus, in digital media, you can read your news anytime and anywhere (provided

it has Internet facilities). One can even go back to the news later by saving the Uniform Resource Locator (URL), unlike in the newspaper and TV, which is geographically and timely bound.

There is yet another feature of digital media that makes it unique in the form of editing news stories. Newspapers and TV do not allow people to correct or update a story once it is printed or broadcast. In digital media, one can re-edit the story, make corrections, update new developments and publish it again. However, the same is not applicable in the case of videos that have to be re-uploaded. But to maintain the credibility and authenticity of the news, it is always advisable to mention the changes at the end of the news article so that readers who visited the page earlier know it.

### **Activity - 1**

Examine the media coverage of current events and issues and assess to what extent these concerns are valid.

### **Check Your Progress: 1**

**Note:** 1) Use the space below for your answers.

2) Compare your answers with those given at the end of this unit.

1. What is the production cycle of newspapers?

.....  
.....

2. What is the news-gathering process of TV channels?

.....  
.....

3. What are the benefits of news reporting for digital and online media?

.....  
.....

## **13.3 GOOD PRACTICES OF NEWS REPORTING**

With the advent of digital media and the mushrooming of social networking sites, the number of media platforms for news dissemination has increased. This has led to the transmission of unverified news content, mainly misinformation and disinformation and has come to form what has been popularly called fake news. But it must be noted that there is nothing called fake news. News cannot be fake because it has passed through the muster of verification and gatekeeping - the cardinal principles of journalism. At best, these are fake content and not news. It must also be admitted that there has been considerable liquidation in the gatekeeping process. While it was a sacrosanct principle in the traditional media when reporters and correspondents were asked to verify news several times before it was published, the same is not true in digital media. In the fast-paced breaking news culture, digital and TV media are always in a hurry to be the first ones to publish breaking news, even at the cost of going wrong. This often puts a question mark on the credibility of the news and media organizations. Nonetheless,

many traditional media organizations led by senior journalists follow good journalism principles, including the following.

### **13.3.1 On-Site Reporting**

This particular challenge has cropped up with the emergence of new digital media, in which there is less and less original fieldwork reporting. It has been observed that most of the reporting is armchair or desk reporting, where reporters and correspondents do not go to the field but instead report from their desks. So much so that even TV reporting has taken a backseat when the anchor briefs the viewers from their offices. There is no doubt that field reporting involves considerable cost. Still, an absence of it deprives the viewers of the fundamental issues and hands-on experience that reporters get while talking to the victims and reporting the ambience of the incidents. Now, a large amount of reporting has become surveillance reporting, which is technologically driven. There is no substitute for fieldwork reporting as real issues, and the truth behind the news is put on the back burner.

### **13.3.2 Sourcing and Citation Information**

In the absence of fieldwork reporting, a good news reporter is expected to share the source of information without jeopardizing the safety and identity of its sources. As large numbers of news are simple facts, the reporters are expected to take the official versions from the authorities while, at the same time, talking to those who may be affected by such reports. Sourcing and citation of the information vary from news to news, and reporters should maintain self-censorship while filing their news reports.

### **13.3.3 Authenticity and Credibility**

Authenticity and credibility of news are important criteria when judging the merit of the news. News that is not credible and authentic could create rumours, leading to serious losses of property and lives, especially when it is a sensitive issue. A news writer is expected to take a measured step and should verify the authenticity of news from all possible sources before publishing and broadcasting it. These two attributes are major indicators of the prestige and professionalism of media organizations.

### **13.3.4 Cross-Checking and Double-Checking Facts & Figures**

This is the cardinal principle of good journalism, as it is based on facts. It has been observed that sometimes the facts and figures given by the government authorities could go wrong, and as a rule, reporters are expected to check, cross-check, and double-check the facts he/she is providing to the readers. Sometimes, old reports come in handy while validating the truthfulness of the information. It is always better to check the information from multiple sources and quote the source when there is an anomaly.

### **13.3.5 Non-Prejudicial**

This is another subjective area in which a reporter must always be conscious. Many prejudices are subconsciously governed, which a reporter is unaware of and may pass on while writing or reporting an incident. All stereotypical depictions of people, religion and politics should be avoided and only be governed by the merit of the news that a reporter is reporting on. While describing a situation, some fashionable adjectives, adverbs and superlatives should be avoided; instead, a balanced report should be prepared.

### 13.3.6 Privacy and Confidentiality

There are definite rules and norms to safeguard the source's safety and security, which provides sensitive information to the reporters. You must have heard about Deep Throat's identity in the Watergate scandal. That was not revealed for many years as it could have compromised the person's safety. A reporter has to take special care to take due permission before quoting him/her in the report and maintain a confidentiality clause if asked by the individuals. Revealing the source's identity sometimes puts even the government in a precarious position.

## 13.4 THE POWER OF IMAGE IN NEWS REPORTING

The traditional media was constrained by limited space, so the scope to play up the pictorial elements was constricted. It was used to carry pictures of national leaders on important occasions or events. However, the pictorial and visual aspects have been amplified with digital media gaining unlimited space. A separate digital media, Instagram, emphasizes visual aspects, with political leaders and celebrities hogging the limelight with massive followers. As visuals are important aspects of storytelling and news reporting, they have carved a special place in the visual communication of the media. Let's look at some of the special features of photojournalism.

### 13.4.1 Visuals and Photographs: Impact and Response

News reporting is one of the main pillars of journalism, without which independent media would lose its relevance. There are various kinds of newspapers, magazines, TV Channels and digital media platforms that literature, social issues, religious issues and sports could drive. News reporting is one of the major strengths of newspapers, magazines, and TV channels, whose major strength lies in the news. One of the reasons that news reporting is a challenging task is that it entails heavy investment and vigilant adherence to the principle of reporting and ethical practices. More often than not, it must adhere to self-censorship and restrain inflammatory language lest it creates social whiplash.

News reporting also creates social perception, which plays a major role in a news story's social, political and religious narration. How a news story is told, how the source portrays it, and how the readers receive it shapes the narrative and the image-portrayed event, community, policy and person. Before we discuss the power of the real image, let's first understand the creation of an image through a script or a story that assumes a dominant role in news reporting. The way a news reporter uses verbs, adjectives, and, at times, superlatives creates an image in readers' minds that could either affirm or negate his/her perception.

The media portrayal sometimes reinforces pre-existing preferences or prejudices. Incidentally, this method of reporting is far removed from classical storytelling, which is mainly fact-based and devoid of personal perception. Despite these changes, news reporting from ground zero based on objectivity, neutrality, and unbiased attention continues to form the bedrock of good journalism. Good reporting also involves sustained and continuous follow-up of the event and painstakingly putting the small details into the larger whole to solve the puzzle. You must have read about the investigative reporting of Bob Woodward and Carl Bernstein for *The Washington Post*, who reported on the Watergate Scandal that led to the resignation of US President Richard Nixon.



*A team of Washington Post staff working on the Watergate Scandal.*

*(Photo Courtesy: History Extra.com)*

In addition to the written script, which forms the main narrative of news stories, still pictures, videos and multimedia create their narrative. Let's see how some images have defined the period of angst and suffering and have so succinctly portrayed the events of their era. Take, for example, the image of Phan Thi Kim Phuc, known as "the girl in the picture", which was shot by Pulitzer Prize-winning AP photographer Nick Ut during the Vietnam War in 1972.



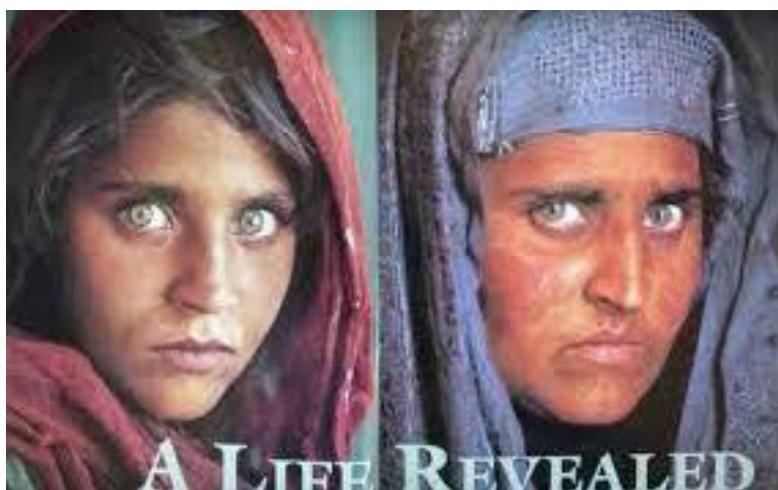
*The Girl in the Picture (Photo Courtesy: New York Times)*

The picture shows a 9-year-old girl running naked on the street with her back burnt, depicting atrocities on civilians. There is no word which can describe the suffering of the young girl. It is said that a picture is worth a thousand words. The picture was so traumatizing that the editors of the *New York Times* hesitated to publish it. But after much deliberation, it found a place on the paper's front page, thus drawing the world's attention to the sufferings of the Vietnam War. The picture has been adjudged the Picture of 1973.

Another picture that merits mention is that of an Afghan girl named Sharbat Gula (Sharbat Bibi), which was published on the cover of *National Geographic* in June 1985. The picture was popularly called "the First World's Third World Mona Lisa" and was shot by *National Geographic* photojournalist Steve McCurry. The girl was photographed

when she was 12 years old and was living in one of the refugee camps in Pakistan after the occupation of Afghanistan by the Soviets. The photograph is unusual for the clarity of facial expression that shows the grit of an Afghan girl staring at an uncertain future with broad, open eyes.

*National Geographic* launched a campaign to search for the girl. She was finally located in her hometown in Afghanistan when she has photographed again in 2002, and the two photographs were juxtaposed against each other.



*First World's Third World Mona Lisa (Photo Courtesy: National Geographic)*

As seen in the case of Vietnamese girls and Afghan women, the sufferings of common people form the main narrative while depicting the impact of war and people's subsequent dislocation and migration. In the same league, the picture of a three-year-old Syrian toddler washed up on Turkey's beach in Bodrum on September 2, 2015, drew the world's attention towards Syrian refugees trying to escape the war-torn country. The lifeless drowned toddler with facedown was found after 12 Syrian refugees tried to make their way to the Greek island of Kos and died on their way. The toddler was later identified as Alan Kurdi, who had drowned with his 5-year-old brother. These refugees belonged to Kobani, a Syrian town under fire during the fight between Islamic State insurgents and Kurdish forces. The image was so evocative and expressive that it immediately caught the world's attention and became a trending picture on Twitter with the hashtag #KiyiyaVuranInsanlik (humanity washed ashore).



*The Syrian boy on Greece's Bodrum beach on September 2, 2015 (Photo Courtesy: Wikipedia)*

### 13.4.2 Reporting for Audio and Visual Media

Audio and video files are two important digital media aspects conspicuously absent in the earlier traditional media. Their reach and appeal have been so impressive that

dedicated digital spaces are assigned to them. At the same time, audio has been a special feature of radio and video that the TV; the two have seamlessly converged in the digital space. The podcast has emerged as one of the sought-after content for news, features, and discussion, which now most newspaper and TV websites have incorporated into their digital space. Depending on the nature of the news, podcasts are a series of audio files available to the readers, either free or subscription-based. A good media podcaster makes the subject interesting by simplifying it for common listeners by modulating his/her voice, sound pitch play and tone. The subjects of the podcasts vary from cinema to food to travel to news and entertainment. Some popular Indian podcasts include The Mythpat Podcast, Maed in India, Internet Said So, Ranveer Show, Tastes of India and In Focus by The Hindu.

The expansion of telecom infrastructure and Internet penetration has further facilitated the reach of audio and video to a large group of a heterogeneous mass audience. Many news organizations have dedicated video channels on which they host their content and keep updating from time to time. Some of these videos are also on social media, where people pick them up. When many people access videos in a given period, they are said to go viral because of their accessibility and popularity. In fact, video has become the most widely watched content in today's media content. Many videos with the highest viewership numbers run in billions and belong to music, entertainment, and religious content genres. As the lifespan of news content is fleeting, it does not occupy a permanent slot in the highest viewership category.

### **13.4.3 Writing for Visual Media**

The principle of good journalistic writing stands equally true for visual media, which means that the narration of the news story has to be simple, attractive and close to the readers who can identify themselves with the content of the medium. As mentioned earlier, the conversational tone of the script is most suitable for the medium. The sentences should be simple. A complex sentence should be broken into 8-10 words, with each sentence conveying a particular idea. The use of heavy words and jargon should be avoided as far as possible. The transition from one sentence to another should match the visual transition to be effective and communicative. As people's digital attention is flickering, it is best to begin the story with its most startling or unique aspect and then gradually shift to known facts. In most cases, viewers' attention and retention are the most critical aspects of video viewing. They should be given due attention by incorporating stunning visuals, graphics, and archival screenshots in the video library.

### **13.4.4 Leveraging the Visual Quotients**

The visuals and video have the highest viewer quotients among all media content. It decides the priority of video content and should be leveraged accordingly. Video content should be placed at the right place and at the right time when there are chances they would be searched for on the subject. It should be rightly tagged and indexed with popular keywords on the subject. When the video content matches the searchable content, the video hosting site should be able to display it when required. The video content should be compelling and competent enough to draw viewers' attention. It should be watermarked to protect the ownership rights of the video and should be embedded. It is also advisable to create playlists so that viewers can continuously engage and subscribe to them for future engagement.

**Activity - 2**

Discuss reactions to images of people personally affected by tragedy or disaster. Research and reflect on the strategies journalists use in mainstream and alternative media to depict the emotional impact of events while maintaining people's privacy and dignity.

## **13.5 LEARNING ATTRIBUTES OF NEWS REPORTING**

The learning curve for news reporters continues lifelong. In addition to learning new methods of gathering news and using new technology, he/she has to ensure that the reports, features, and opinion pieces they write truly reflect the essence of the time. Some ethical questions about information sources must be addressed while maintaining the prevailing privacy laws. Certain self-restraint norms need to be followed depending on the subjects of the reporting - political, economic, sports, health, international affairs or crime. While reporting on the judiciary or court, the reporter has to ensure the decorum and dignity of the judges are maintained lest they are implicated in contempt of court. The reporter must also ensure that he/she gives the full and correct versions of all the parties involved in the report and should not favour one over the other.

### **Check Your Progress: 2**

**Note:** 1) Use the space below for your answers.

2) Compare your answers with those given at the end of this unit.

1. What are some of the good practices of news reporting?

.....  
.....

2. What is the ideal way to include visual elements in news reporting?

.....  
.....

## **13.6 PEDAGOGICAL APPROACHES**

*(Instructions for the course counsellors)*

In this unit, learners can research and analyze the news coverage of a major event, such as a man-made or natural disaster. This case study can focus on the images from news coverage and the representations of people and issues connected to these events. Learners can survey the Internet to locate the images that appeared in the mainstream media.

Research and analyze the news coverage of major events such as man-made or natural disasters. This case study should focus on the images from news coverage and the representations of people and issues connected to these events. Educators can survey the Internet to locate the images that appeared in the mainstream media.

The following questions can be used to analyze the coverage and the images in detail:

- Describe what was represented in online news sites, television, and newspaper coverage. Identify the images that were used most often. Examine how these representations are constructed, considering the use of camera angles, the composition of a photograph, types of shots, who or what is shown in the footage/photograph and who or what is excluded.
- What message is conveyed through the use of these images? What story do the images tell? Assess the potential of these images to become iconic. What impact might these images have on audiences? Consider the effect of the images on the viewer's understanding of, or relationship to, the subject.
- Discuss whether or not information about the event that does not exist in images will be remembered. Explore the power of images to 'obliterate' other information not contained in visual form. What are the implications of this for informed citizenship?

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## **13.7 LET US SUM UP**

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As mentioned earlier, news reporting is both an art and a science and has to be dealt with the humane and technological face. It is very responsible work and has the potential to make or mar the reputation of the news organization and the reporter. While the immediacy of the news has assumed a central role in the competitive news domain, the reporter has to ensure the accuracy of the news he/she is providing as it may impact some people negatively. Depending on the news medium, the style and presentation of news should be transformed accordingly.

The news presentation must be simple, lucid, attractive and factual and should be presented so that even an illiterate person understands it. We also discussed the power of image while discussing news reporting. We realized it has a very high visual impact and should be given due importance wherever such visuals show compelling and empathetic elements. At the end of the Unit, we also discussed new methods and technology in news gathering. To survive in the competitive media space, a reporter has to constantly keep him/herself updated with new technological devices to improve his/her newsgathering skills.

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## **13.8 KEYWORDS**

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- Developing News** : This news reporting group is closely associated with what we now call breaking news. In such news, there is no final; the news is still unfolding and needs continuous reporting with a timeline before reaching the outcome.
- URL** : The Uniform Resource Locator is the address of a web page or a website on the World Wide Web.
- Television Rating Point (TRP)** : A measure of viewership of the TV news channels.

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## **13.9 FURTHER READINGS**

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### **13.10 CHECK YOUR PROGRESS: POSSIBLE ANSWERS**

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#### **Check Your Progress: 1**

1. Newspapers and magazines have a different role because of their production cycle. The next edition of the daily newspaper comes only 24 hours after you have received your newspapers early in the morning. As newspapers are not in a hurry to provide breaking news, they use the available time for in-depth reporting on the issue. A newspaper tries to find out the reason, the cause, and its impact on policies, people, the economy, and politics. Depending on the impact value of the news, some news makes it to the paper's front page while others recede to the inside pages.
2. TV news reporting is more complex and involves multiple professionals like cameramen, Outdoor Broadcast Van (Ob Van), Liv U and Dejero, Satcom and Ingest and other infrastructure. Reporting on an event uses all forms of communication, including words, pictures, graphics, and video. It should be remembered that illiterate people also view TV news channels, so particular emphasis should be given to simplicity and clarity of expression, words and phrases. As a rule, such news should begin by providing the most crucial part of the information first, followed by less important and then least important parts in sequential order while narrating the story. The reporter and anchor are also advised to use simple, brief sentences and avoid ambiguity and incoherence while reporting events. For a TV reporter, it is also essential to understand the nature and profile of viewers to present news in a way easily understood by them.
3. Online and digital multimedia have significantly changed accessibility and reach to readers and viewers. At the same time, it has diversified the mechanism of news reporting, thus involving the masses in the process. You must have seen a lot of videos and news alerts by common people posted on social media going viral, and the mainstream media subsequently taking up those feeds and reporting on it. Digital media enjoys a unique position because of its distinctive news reporting and dissemination features. Its segmented and customized features allow catering to different audience groups, whether the audience is literate or illiterate. Unlike TV and newspapers, it doesn't need much setup and operational cost and can be started by anyone with a meagre investment.

You must have seen many YouTubers and small and big journalist having their websites, blogs and YouTube channels running with decent followers and subscriber bases.

**Audience: National and Global Contexts**

### **Check Your Progress: 2**

1. Some good practices of news reporting are:
  - On-Site Reporting
  - Sourcing and Citation Inputs
  - Authenticity and Credibility
  - Cross-Checking and Double-Checking Facts and Figures
  - Non-Prejudicial Reporting
  - Privacy and Confidentiality
2. The visuals and video have the highest viewer quotients among all media content. It decides the priority of video content and should be leveraged accordingly. Video content should be placed at the right place and at the right time when there are chances they would be searched for on the subject. It should be rightly tagged and indexed with popular keywords on the subject. When the video content matches the searchable content, the video hosting site should be able to display it when required. The video content should be compelling and competent enough to draw viewers' attention. It should be watermarked to protect the ownership rights of the video and should be embedded. It is also advisable to create playlists so that viewers can continuously engage and subscribe to them for future engagement.



**Block-4**

**Representation in India**



## **BLOCK 4: REPRESENTATION IN MEDIA**

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In the previous three blocks, we have learnt the holistic approach of media literacy and its applications in learning, specifically on news operations. The smooth functioning of any operation requires rules, regulations and ethical considerations. These are more critically needed for media operations because of their influence and scale of operations across broad sections of society. This block will take you through many shades of these crucial aspects of media operations, which will help you broaden your understanding of media institutions.

### **Unit 14: Industry Codes on Diversity and Representation**

Media is a robust platform that shapes our perceptions and understanding of the world. It's not just about what's presented but also about how it's represented. The codes governing representation in media, particularly regarding diversity, play a crucial role in ensuring fair and accurate portrayal. These Industry Codes on Diversity and Representation set the standards for inclusivity in media content, encompassing gender, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, and more. They aim to challenge stereotypes, encourage authentic storytelling, and promote diversity both in front of and behind the camera. However, issues of representation persist. Media often grapples with underrepresentation, misrepresentation, and perpetuating harmful stereotypes. Consequently, these codes are indispensable for promoting responsible and equitable media practices. This unit highlights the significance of these Industry Codes of Diversity and Representation, shedding light on their role in fostering a more inclusive and representative media landscape.

### **Unit 15: Television, Films and Print Publishing**

Television, films, advertising, and print publishing are potent platforms for storytelling, where representation takes centre stage. Issues of representation in these media forms are complex and multifaceted and significantly influence our perceptions and societal norms. Technical strategies in representation comprise a range of tools and techniques used to convey characters, cultures, and ideas. This includes casting choices, storytelling methods, and visual imagery that shape the narratives we consume. However, these industries often grapple with challenges related to underrepresentation, misrepresentation, and the perpetuation of stereotypes. The consequences of these issues ripple through society, reinforcing biases and limiting the voices and stories that are heard. In this unit, issues of representation in television, films, advertising, and print publishing are explored along with the technical strategies employed, the impact of representation on culture, and the ongoing efforts to promote more diverse, inclusive, and responsible media portrayals.

### **Unit 16: Representation and Music Videos**

Music is cherished in Indian society, with its melodies echoing the diverse tapestry of cultures and regions. Music videos have gained unprecedented reach and popularity recently, transforming the music landscape and its profound connection with our society. A music video is a fusion of auditory and visual artistry, weaving together elements such as cinematography, choreography, and narrative storytelling to enhance the emotive power of music. These videos are not just a showcase of musical talent but also a reflection of our society's diverse segments, encapsulating cultural richness, social issues, and personal stories. They exert a substantial influence on societal norms. Parallelly,

the alternative music industry has emerged as a platform for unconventional voices and genres. A critical analysis of music videos can unravel their artistic, cultural, and societal impact. This unit deals with music videos' cultural aspects and technical elements, emphasizing their role in reflecting and shaping the values, trends, and expressions of Indian society.

Media literacy is an essential skill set in the contemporary scenario. It helps you to navigate through a highly populated media environment for the sake of making informed decisions. Media literate eventually becomes a watchdog's watchdog - which means media is supposed to monitor the performance of public institutions. Media literacy helps individuals to monitor the performance of powerful media institutions. Along with all four blocks, we hope this learning will broaden your role and responsibility with the multiple communication avenues.

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# **UNIT 14 INDUSTRY CODES ON DIVERSITY AND REPRESENTATION**

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## **14.0 INTRODUCTION**

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What we see – and don’t see – in the media affects how we view reality. Media works can be imagined as mirrors reflecting an audience’s experience. These windows give them access to experiences they otherwise wouldn’t have known, or, in some cases, both.

Representation in content or products can take many forms. Many of us live in an image-filled culture, and daily, we are surrounded by representations on television, feature films, news reporting, and books, both online and offline.

This unit will highlight the different aspects of representation, issues of diversity and the importance of diverse representation in the media.

## 14.1 LEARNING OUTCOMES

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After reading this unit, you will be able to:

- define representation and the role of identity in media representations;
- understand the various codes of representation in the media;
- comprehend how representation is constructed in traditional and digital media;
- demonstrate the role of diversity in media representations; and
- explore the issues of media representation.

## 14.2 REPRESENTATIONS AND PRESENTATIONS

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Reporters, authors, videographers, advertisers, publishers and filmmakers, bloggers, vloggers, producers of user-generated content, and people generally use images, audio, and written words to convey content. They usually face limitations of time, space, resources, and other editorial constraints to prepare and present stories to the public. Inevitably, they ‘represent’ people, issues, or events by signifying what they see as relevant, such as characteristics like race, gender, sexuality, age, or class. This selection sometimes involves stereotypical or oversimplified representations, which can be used to label individuals or groups and justify narrow beliefs and attitudes. This may or may not be the intention of the author, producer, or journalist/reporter. Sometimes, it is the recipient’s interpretation (viewer, reader, or listener). Where speakers act as instruments of conflict, hate speech, or discrimination, it is logical that they should be accountable for their actions. At the same time, diversity and plurality of voices and content are internationally accepted. A balance must be struck that concern about representations does not chill diversity and that a plurality operates within the parameters of protected speech.

We also need to understand that content providers work in a social context and are social actors within that social context. They are influenced by society and, in turn, influence society. We must look deeper into the national context within which particular libraries, archives, museums, media, and digital communication companies operate.

### 14.2.1 Contextualising Identities

As a construct, identity holds concepts such as class, ethnicity, gender, race, and sexuality. An individual’s identity relies on multiple parameters and is highly subjective. However, the spectrum of identity depends on its representation. Moreover, identity has its denotations, i.e., how we view ourselves, and its connotations, i.e., how others view us. Identity is, therefore, a cultural construction and is external.

This perspective is found in symbolic interactionism and social constructionism. In structural framings, identities are constituted through the subject’s positioning through language. Moreover, identity as a construct is extremely fluid and varies according to the subject. An individual’s relationship to his/her social role and its related expectations are internalised through socialisation.

Identities are not given in terms of what individuals are as a whole but in terms of more or less arbitrarily selected features they possess. Mostly, individuals have little power

to choose what features will be used to identify them; they are determined socially from the outside. Stereotypes based on race, class, ethnicity, gender, and sexuality are created through representation.

### 14.2.2 Defining Representations

Various production processes generate representational texts in any medium, including the mass media.

Representation involves:

1. How identities are constructed within the texts;
2. How the processes of production construct them to attract the attention of the audience;
3. The reception of such representations by people.

The subjects are ‘framed’ according to the intent of the authorial intention. In a socio-historical context, representation refers to a cycle of processes of textual and meaning production and reception in which audiences interpret texts.

Media representations are the mediated presentations of social realities. Thus, the media content ‘represents’ some other social aspects based on the narratives they form. All media content, including written and visual content, through which we make meaning/sense of those represented is called text. The study of representations becomes essential since they do not come with a single meaning. The same event can have multiple meanings and perspectives, sometimes “stereotypes” and sometimes conflicting with “binary oppositions” (Barthes, R.:1977; Hall, S.:1997).

The process becomes more complicated when it comes to representations on the Internet. Here, the responsive text itself becomes a part of the media content. Although, essentially, it is seen as ‘presentations’ or “self-presentations,” it becomes a “public text” (Illouz, E.:2007) in order to make a ‘general representation’. Whether such a text represents the acceptance of ‘difference/otherness’ in the case of marginalised sections with intimacy is a matter of inquiry.

### 14.2.3 Key Terms of Representation

Some of the key terms of media representation are:

**Mediation:** the process everything goes through before it reaches an audience. This can be how a film script is written and rewritten before it makes it to production, how newspaper or magazine photographs are cropped and captioned, or how real-life events - like a protest or a speech by a politician - are portrayed in a news report.

**Selection** refers to what has been selected to include in a media text. This can be particularly important in newspaper articles, where selecting certain facts over others can change the angle of a story; what is omitted is sometimes as important as what is included.

**Anchorage:** words that go along with images to give those pictures a certain meaning in a specific context. This includes captions and headlines in newspapers and taglines in adverts or on film posters.

**Ideology:** a set of beliefs or values that shape how people view the world.

**Power:** the ability to influence or control people and events, often seen in media representation through who is given a voice and who is excluded.

**Framing:** how a story or issue is presented in the media.

**Marginalisation:** relegating a group or individual to a lower or outer edge of society, often in the media.

**Othering:** portraying someone or something as different, strange or alien.

**Stereotype:** a widely held but oversimplified image or idea of a particular group of people or things.

**Misrepresentation:** the incorrect or inaccurate portrayal of something in the media.

**Bias:** a preference or prejudice in favour of or against one thing, person, or group compared with another.

**Tokenism:** the practice of including only a small number of members of a minority group in media in order to appear diverse.

### Check Your Progress: 1

**Note:** 1) Use the space below for your answers.

2) Compare your answers with those given at the end of this unit.

1. Define representation.

.....  
.....

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## 14.3 CODES OF REPRESENTATIONS

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### 14.3.1 Various Codes of Representation

The codes of media representation refer to the techniques and conventions that media producers use to create meaning and convey messages to their audiences. Some of the prominent codes of media representation are:

#### *Visual codes*

This includes using colour, lighting, camera angles, composition, and other visual elements to convey meaning.

#### *Audio codes*

This includes using music, sound effects, and dialogue to convey emotion, set the tone, and reinforce messages.

#### *Symbolic codes*

This includes using symbols, metaphors, and other abstract representations to convey meaning.

#### *Technical codes*

This includes editing, special effects, and other technical aspects of media production to create a specific style or mood.

This includes language, tone, and style in written media such as news articles, opinion pieces, and blogs.

### ***Cultural codes***

This includes using cultural references, stereotypes, and norms to convey meaning and create a shared understanding among audiences.

### ***Performance codes***

This includes using acting, movement, and other forms of performance to convey emotion and messages.

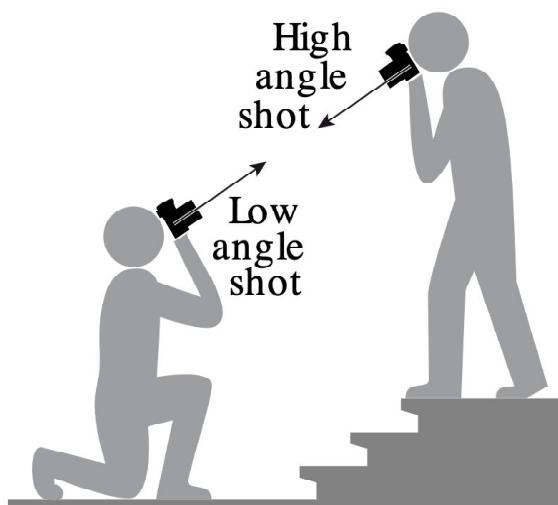
## **14.3.2 Construction of Representation**

Constructing a representation of different identities heavily depends on the media form. For example, in print, representation can be constructed based on:

- Layout and Design
- Language and Mode of Address
- Camera shots and angles in any photographs
- Visual codes
- Anchorage

Similarly, in audio-visual mediums, including television and cinema, the following attributes affect the construction of representation:

- ***Casting:*** The actors and actresses selected to portray characters in media can significantly impact how those characters are represented. Casting choices can affect the physical appearance, personality, and behaviour of characters and the overall diversity and representation of the media.
- ***Writing and storytelling:*** How characters are written and portrayed in media can shape the audience's perceptions and understanding of different groups of people. Storylines, dialogue, and characterisation can all contribute to how characters are represented in media.



*Figure 1: High and low-angle camera shots*

(Source: Paligui, CC BY-SA 4.0 <<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0>>, via Wikimedia Commons)

- ***Camera shots and angles:*** A low-angle camera shot can make someone seem more powerful and in control than they are, while a high-angle shot of the same person may make them seem less important or influential.
- ***Cinematography and visual design:*** How media is filmed and presented visually can also contribute to representing characters and groups. Camera angles, lighting, and colour choices can all affect how the audience perceives characters.
- ***Editing and post-production:*** Media producers can manipulate the audience's emotions by representing certain characters or situations through editing. How it is edited will determine how the characters are represented and how the audience responds to them.
- ***Marketing and promotion:*** The way that media is marketed and promoted can also affect representation. Marketing materials like trailers and posters can shape the audience's expectations and perceptions of the media and its characters.

Overall, representation in media is a complex and multifaceted process involving various creative decisions and techniques. Media creators need to be mindful of the impact of their choices on representation and strive for accurate, diverse, and inclusive representation in their work.

#### Activity - 1

Select one mainstream film and analyse the representation based on the abovementioned attributes. Compare the analysis with a film from alternative cinema.

### 14.3.3 Understanding the Language of the Internet

The Internet is a platform to access and create ‘new’ content along with the existing content of traditional ‘mainstream’ media. Since the representations are ‘mediated,’ they are ‘produced’ in one perspective rather than its entirety. For example, the Barthesian concept of the simulacrum or ‘representation through filters’. Similarly, various scholars claim that reality does not exist in one form; it is contextual and open to multiple interpretations (Derrida:1970; Barthes:1973; Baudrillard:1991; Hall:1997). So, in order to understand the representation of ‘multiple social realities’ on the Internet, we have to read the content as text. The text is read for media processes such as -

- ***Framing and priming:*** Positioning subjects/stories in an intended way so that they may be understood in a particular way.
- ***Labelling and stereotyping:*** Presenting the subject/event with one particular ‘fixed’ perspective.
- ***De-legitimisation and ex-nomination:*** While de-legitimisation constructs the categories of groups to exclude them from society, the process of ex-nomination ‘un-name’ the dominating groups to “naturalise” their domination in society.
- ***Intertextuality:*** Cross-referencing of the conventions and visual styles in media content.

With this, the comments/responses and posts on the Internet create the part of discourse as supplementary/complementary to the mainstream content. Another question is whether it really makes a mark as ‘mainstream’ content to represent the marginalised section. Is there any impact of local content on a large scale? On SNSs like Facebook, Twitter performance is counted on two key factors - “speed and engagement time” (Hill and Bradshaw:2019). With this, the impact of online content can be called a “change of the second order” where ‘revolution’ passes at a pace (Radhakrishnan, 2007). Thus, the ‘medium’ transforms representations into the ‘post-representational state’. Immersion of this type establishes the dominance of the medium over the message and sometimes takes us far away from reality. “They give expression to - and also diminish - our consciousness” (Radhakrishnan: 2007).

Machine-driven language is also analysed quantitatively for representation using software and programs such as Google Analytics, one of the popular websites for statistics services. It tracks and measures online traffic to learn patterns. However, the data-mining programs, descriptive mapping of densities, or social network analysis such as Ncapture, R Programming, or Word Cloud do not tell us about the nature of the representation nor the “personal information field” as constituted online (Srivathsan, 2007). Moreover, data networking through forwards, shares, likes, viral videos, and hashtags cannot guarantee the representation of marginalised sections since ideological processes are embedded or hidden. For example, computer-generated images through mathematical processing can create ‘virtual/simulated reality’ or peer-to-peer (P2P) file-sharing without detection. Qualitative data analysis software like Nvivo is now being developed to analyse online content.

#### 14.3.4 Unconventional Forms of Representation

As representations are perspectives or “frames of understanding” (Hall:1997), the mainstream media is often blamed for supporting only the dominant frame by excluding or misrepresenting the marginalised. The Marxists and political-economic theorists have this view. Recently, with more “intensive” communication flow, “extensive” networking, and “less controllable” visibility coming from all over the Internet, the representation is not coming from top to bottom anymore (Thompson:2005 cited in Orgad:2012). Therefore, the Internet is being investigated to study unconventional forms of representation where local social identities are being studied to know the differences and processes of marginalisation on a global scale.

**Microblogging / Blogging / Video-blogging:** Although personal perspectives in the form of articles were always been a part of traditional media, they have become an integral part of social media as blogs, vlogs, and microblogs. Unlike traditional media, the Internet provides a free platform for all ‘private persons’ to publish a blog globally. While the previous is known for formal structure and ‘authority,’ blogs and microblogs on the Internet are non-formal - an innovative form of fact-fiction-drama- documentary-commentary-all in the “public mediated realm” (Orgad:2012). Being the ‘legitimate alternative text,’ this content influences the traditional media (Woodly, 2008; Singer, 2014; Srivastava & Roy, 2016). However, the open gateways do not guarantee the participation of marginalised voices. Today, when we get our worldview through the Internet converging the traditional forms of media, we cannot forget that blogs are essentially personal accounts and can trap us in ‘manipulated representations’, especially in the absence of the ‘fact-checking’ tools (Silverstone: 2007; Orgad:2012).

**Gaming:** Online games provide a fine example of the narrative construct based on technology and social structures (Murray, H.:1997). Close observation tells us how

symbolically they form or take the path of personal stories, experiences, and life cycles based in real-time and situations. Panikkar (2007) emphasises the role of carefully designed gaming ecosystems: “The furious pace at which information is coded and transmitted has the virtue of making information generation and communication far more democratic. This can help hitherto powerless groups level the playing field as far as their capacity to reach and influence broader audiences.”

**Animation:** On digital platforms, as a “sophisticated and flexible medium,” animation provides filmmakers/content creators freedom of creativity (Wells, P.:1998). According to Mirium Harris, Lily Husbands, and Paul Taberham (2019), an expansion in broader perspectives is expected with more ‘experiments’ in animation online. The power of animation lies in the fact that it calls for the total attention of the viewer, hence impacting their sensibilities immensely. Recently, with 2D/3D computer animation, filmmakers have been experimenting with unconventional plots to touch upon the lives of the marginalised with individual narratives. Most such films are accessible freely on the Internet.



Figure 2: Meme on project discussions on Wikipedia (Source: Wiki-shitposting, CC BY 4.0 <<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>>, via Wikimedia Commons)

Similarly, there are unconventional forms, such as memes. This “user-driven imitation and remixing” practice continuously occupies online space (Shifman, L:2014). These simulating ecosystems call upon audiences for immersion and are an effective medium to highlight the conditions/issues concerning the marginalised. Indeed, genuine participation is the key.

### Activity - 2

Explore more alternative and unconventional forms of representation and make a list.

### Check Your Progress: 2

**Note:** 1) Use the space below for your answers.

2) Compare your answers with those given at the end of this unit.

- What are some of the codes of representation?

.....

.....

- How is representation constructed in print media?

.....

## 14.4 REPRESENTATION OF DIVERSITY IN MEDIA

### 14.4.1 Decoding Diversity

Diversity in media representation refers to the representation of people from different backgrounds, identities, and experiences in media, including but not limited to race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, ability, religion, and age. It involves creating a range of characters and storylines that reflect the diversity of the real world and ensuring everyone is represented fairly and accurately.

Diversity in media representation aims to ensure that all individuals have access to media that reflects their experiences and perspectives and to provide opportunities for marginalised groups to see themselves represented in positive and empowering ways. This can help to promote understanding and respect across different groups and to challenge stereotypes and discrimination.

Some of the ways to ensure diverse representation in media are:

- **Hiring diverse creators and decision-makers:** One of the most important ways to ensure diverse representation is to involve a diverse group of creators and decision-makers in the media production process. This includes writers, producers, directors, and executives. A diverse team can bring a range of perspectives and experiences to the table, which can help to ensure that the final product is inclusive and representative.
- **Conducting research:** Conducting research on the audience and their needs, preferences, and demands can help media creators understand the demographics and interests of their audience. This can help creators to better understand what kind of representation is needed in their media.



Figure 3: Gender Roles

(Source: Myotus, CC BY-SA 4.0 <<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0/>>,  
via Wikimedia Commons)

- ***Being mindful of stereotypes:*** Media creators should be mindful of stereotypes and actively work to avoid perpetuating harmful and inaccurate portrayals of different groups. Instead, they should work to create complex, nuanced characters that reflect the diversity of the real world.
- ***Seeking feedback:*** It's important to seek feedback from members of the communities being represented to ensure that the media accurately reflects their experiences and does not perpetuate stereotypes or inaccuracies.
- ***Training and resources:*** Media companies can provide training and resources to their staff to help them better understand and represent diverse groups. This can include sensitivity training, workshops, and access to resources such as cultural consultants.

By taking these steps, media creators can help ensure that their work is inclusive, accurate, and representative of diverse experiences and perspectives.

#### 14.4.2 Social Markers of Identity Representation

The social markers of identity representation are the different categories and characteristics individuals use to identify themselves and are often represented in media. Identity can be socially understood under the following categories:

***Race and ethnicity:*** refer to categorising individuals based on physical and cultural characteristics.

***Gender and sexuality:*** This refers to the categorisation of individuals based on their biological sex and sexual orientation.

***Class*** refers to categorising individuals based on their economic and social status.

***Age:*** This refers to categorising individuals based on their chronological age and perceived life stage.

***Religion*** refers to categorising individuals based on their religious beliefs and practices.

***Disability*** refers to categorising individuals based on their physical, mental, or sensory impairments.

***Nationality and citizenship:*** This refers to categorising individuals based on their country of origin or citizenship status.

Media representation of these social markers of identity can significantly impact how society perceives and treats individuals. Accurate and respectful representation can help promote understanding and acceptance, while inaccurate or negative representation can perpetuate stereotypes and contribute to discrimination and marginalisation.

#### Activity – 3

Choose ten print news reports from 2 newspapers. Analyse how the social markers of identity representation are identified and construed in the news reports across different newspapers.

#### 14.4.3 Understanding Marginalisation and the Marginalised

The term marginalised is derived from the word ‘margin’, which means something at the periphery or fringe. It is an identity resulting from the process of marginalisation.

We can understand the relative concepts of ‘exclusion and inclusion’ through the process. While social inclusion makes people or individuals participate in social-economic-political activities and provides a sense of importance, exclusion deprives them of it.

The marginalised groups or individuals may lack reach and easy access to various socio-economic resources such as food, health, education, employment, social security, etc. Various measurement indexes, such as the Human Development Index (HDI) and Multidimensional-based Poverty Index (MPI), have been developed by global agencies that look at marginalised sections based on various parameters. According to Carolyn Kagan and Mark

H. Burton (2005) states, “Little control over lives and resources, marginalised may become stigmatised and are often at the receiving end of negative public attitudes.” The process thus results in the socio-psychological effects of being ‘not important’. Because of the feeling of alienation, people/ individuals feel themselves as ‘marginalised’ with ‘no voice’.

Marginalisation also means being in a ‘position of powerlessness’ in the political process. Here, the terms ‘reach and access’ and ‘social exclusion’ are seen in power relationships. Thus, the process includes “Oppression, exclusion, vulnerability, or discrimination. [It] is the idea of identity [given] by others in the interest of the dominant groups in society” (Kagan & Burton, 2005). In a condition of social exclusion, the marginalised “Lack effective participation in key activities or benefits of the society in which they live” (Razer et al. as cited in Mowat, J. G.: 2015) due to the “Barriers that block the attainment of livelihoods, human development, and equal citizenship” (Alakhunova et al.:2015).

Thus, if we take the degree of ‘access’ ‘inclusion’ and ‘participation’ of groups or individuals in socio-economic-political decision-making as indicators of the process of marginalisation, the concept of marginalised as an ‘identity’ is “a social construct - different in time and space” (Sharma, R.:2018) and comes in layers. It may be based on economic-political exclusion and/or social inequality, “Having ‘powerful, negative impacts’ on [a person’s] everyday life” (Pachankis as cited in Sharma: 2018). Madsen (2006) expounds on marginalisation at three different levels, i.e. “The approach to the individual; his social and cultural conditions; and the complex interplay between people and their social environment” (cited in StorØ, 2013). Therefore, “marginalised” is contextual, situational, and relational. For instance, there are marginalised individuals within dominant groups and dominant individuals within the marginalised communities. Crime victims (both men and women), patients without health facilities, children without education, and “All those struggling for a day-to-day decent life are marginalised despite their caste/religion affiliations” (Sharma, 2018). Similarly, “As life cycle stages change, risk of marginalisation increases or decreases” (Kagan and Burton: 2005).

This means there needs to be a continuous effort to locate and remove the chances of marginalisation in a full circle and to create conditions for mainstreaming by increasing the chances of participation of all in the total socio-economic-political spheres. The Internet certainly provides us with a platform for networking in this direction.

### **Check Your Progress: 3**

- Note:** 1) Use the space below for your answers.  
2) Compare your answers with those given at the end of this unit.

1. What are the social markers of identity representation?
- .....  
.....

2. What do you understand by marginalisation?
- .....  
.....

## 14.5 ISSUES OF REPRESENTATION

### 14.5.1 Gender Portrayal and Sexualisation

The portrayal of gender in the media has been a topic of debate for many years. Gender is often portrayed in the media in stereotypical and limiting ways, which can reinforce harmful gender norms and perpetuate inequality. Here are some common examples of how gender is often portrayed in media:

**Gender stereotypes:** Media often portrays men and women in stereotypical roles, such as men as strong and dominant and women as nurturing and submissive. Similarly, men are portrayed to be strong and assertive, while women are portrayed as passive and emotional. These stereotypes can reinforce gender norms and restrict individuals from fully expressing themselves.

**Objectification:** Women are often objectified and depicted as sexual objects rather than complex individuals with their agency. Objectification and sexualisation of women can reinforce harmful attitudes toward women and promote a culture of harassment and violence.

**Toxic masculinity or hyper-masculinity:** Men are often portrayed as hyper-masculine, with an emphasis on physical strength, aggression, and dominance. Media also often promotes toxic masculinity, which can lead to harmful behaviours such as aggression, violence, and a lack of emotional expression.

**Gender binary:** The media often presents a binary understanding of gender, reinforcing the idea that there are only two genders and that they are inherently opposite and complementary.

**Lack of representation:** Women and non-binary individuals are often underrepresented in media, both on-screen and behind the scenes. This lack of representation can perpetuate the idea that certain genders are less important or less capable.

**Intersectionality:** The intersection of gender with other social markers of identity, such as race, sexuality, and class, can result in unique forms of representation and marginalisation.

It's important to note that there has been progress in recent years, with more diverse and nuanced representations of gender in media, including the rise of feminist and LGBTQ+ media. However, much work must be done to create media that truly reflects the diversity and complexity of gender identities and experiences.

To address these issues, media creators must be mindful of how gender is portrayed. This includes creating more diverse and complex characters, challenging gender

stereotypes, and avoiding the objectification of women. It also involves actively working to include more women and non-binary individuals in media production and decision-making roles. By doing so, media creators can help to promote more positive and inclusive attitudes towards gender in society.

#### Activity - 4

Select five audio-visual ads and analyse closely how gender is portrayed in the advertisements chosen. Understand the context of gender representation using elements of colour tone, dialogue, dress/attire, profession, type of advertisement, product advertising, music, picturisation, camera angles, and props.

### 14.5.2 Stereotyping

Stereotyping refers to making assumptions or generalisations about a group of people based on their perceived characteristics or attributes, such as their race, gender, religion, or nationality. Stereotypes can be positive, negative, or neutral but are often oversimplified and based on incomplete or inaccurate information.

Stereotyping can lead to the formation of biases and prejudice, which can harm individuals and society as a whole. It can result in discrimination, exclusion, and marginalisation of certain groups and can perpetuate inequality and injustice.

Stereotypes in the media are created in a variety of ways. Here are some common factors that contribute to the creation of stereotypes:

**Lack of representation:** When certain groups of people are underrepresented in the media, it can lead to stereotypes and misconceptions about those groups. For example, if a particular race or ethnicity is consistently portrayed negatively or stereotypically in the media, it can reinforce harmful attitudes and biases.

**Simplification of characters:** To tell a compelling story, media creators often simplify characters by emphasising certain traits and downplaying others. However, this can sometimes lead to the creating of one-dimensional, stereotypical characters.

**Cultural norms:** Media is often influenced by cultural norms and beliefs about what is considered “normal” or “acceptable” behaviour for certain groups. This can lead to the perpetuation of stereotypes and the reinforcement of harmful attitudes and biases.

**Commercial interests:** Media companies often prioritise commercial interests over social responsibility, which can create stereotypical characters and storylines designed to appeal to a broad audience.

**Lack of diversity in media production:** When media production teams are not diverse, it can lead to a lack of perspective and understanding about different groups of people, contributing to stereotypes.

To address the creation of stereotypes in media, it is important to have diverse representation on and off-screen, challenge harmful cultural norms, and prioritise social responsibility over commercial interests. This can help to create more complex and nuanced characters that reflect the diversity of the real world and challenge harmful stereotypes.

It is important to recognise and challenge stereotypes in order to promote understanding and respect across different groups. This involves being aware of our biases and

assumptions, seeking out accurate information about different groups, and avoiding using labels or generalisations to describe individuals or groups. We can create a more equitable and just society by challenging stereotypes and promoting diversity and inclusion.

#### 14.5.3 Sensationalism

Sensationalism in the context of media representation refers to using shocking or exaggerated stories and images to attract and maintain audience attention, often at the expense of accuracy and objectivity. Sensationalism can take many forms in media, including:

- ***Tabloid journalism:*** This refers to the practice of sensationalising news stories, often with a focus on celebrity gossip, scandals, and other salacious details.
- ***Clickbait*** refers to using attention-grabbing headlines or images to entice people to click on articles or videos, often without providing meaningful or accurate content.
- ***Fear-mongering*** refers to using sensationalised stories to stoke fear and anxiety in the audience, often with a political or ideological agenda.
- ***Overdramatisation:*** This refers to the exaggeration of events or emotions in order to create a more compelling narrative, often at the expense of accuracy and nuance.

Sensationalism in media can have negative impacts on individuals, groups, and society as a whole. It can lead to the spread of misinformation, the perpetuation of stereotypes, and the exploitation of vulnerable people and communities. Additionally, it can contribute to a culture of fear and anxiety and undermine trust in journalism and media more broadly.

#### 14.5.4 Misrepresentation and Underrepresentation

Misrepresentation in media occurs when certain groups of people are portrayed inaccurately or negatively in media content, such as movies, television shows, news reports, and advertisements. This can include stereotypes, caricatures, and other harmful portrayals that perpetuate negative biases and prejudices.

Underrepresentation in media occurs when certain groups of people are not adequately represented in media content, such as movies, television shows, news reports, and advertisements. This can include groups such as women, people of colour, members of the LGBTQ+ community, people with disabilities, and other marginalised groups. Underrepresentation can lead to a lack of diverse perspectives and experiences in media, which can perpetuate stereotypes and biases.

Both misrepresentation and underrepresentation in media can have significant negative impacts on individuals and communities, including reinforcing harmful stereotypes, limiting opportunities for representation and visibility, and perpetuating systemic inequalities. Media creators need to strive for accurate and diverse representation in their content.

#### 14.5.5 Whitewashing

Whitewashing is a term used to describe the practice of casting white actors in roles that were originally intended for characters of colour or ethnic minorities. This can

occur in movies, television shows, and other forms of media. Whitewashing can also refer to the process of modifying or erasing the ethnic or cultural identity of a character in order to make them more palatable or relatable to a white audience.

The practice of whitewashing is often criticised for perpetuating systemic racism and reinforcing stereotypes and biases. It can also limit opportunities for actors and actresses of colour and contribute to a lack of diverse representation in media. In recent years, there has been increased awareness and activism around the issue of whitewashing, with calls for more diverse and accurate representation in the media.

#### **Check Your Progress: 4**

**Note:** 1) Use the space below for your answers.

2) Compare your answers with those given at the end of this unit.

1. What are some of the issues of gender portrayal in the media?

.....  
.....

2. How do you distinguish between misrepresentation and underrepresentation?

.....  
.....

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## **14.6 PEDAGOGICAL APPROACHES**

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*(Instructions for the course counsellors)*

Some of the pedagogical approaches that teachers and learners can adapt for this unit are:

- Collect ten news reports, 5 TV news reports and one film and analyse the following:
  1. Typical representations of the “other” in content often fall into particular categories, including the sexualised, the exotic, the dangerous, the humorous, and the pitiful. How common are these representations today? Are there other categories that appear in the content that are not listed here? Are these representations associated with particular gender groups (including women, men, and LGBTQI+)?
  2. How are these portrayals constructed? What are the technical elements that have been chosen? How do they reinforce content?
  3. What is the message that is conveyed through these representations? Who benefits if the message is accepted? Who loses?
  4. How easy is it to find mainstream or alternative media examples that break or go against a stereotype and provide more complex portraits of an individual or a group? Search for gender equality, minority groups, and other themes of interest to you. What do you find?
  5. To what extent are various voices present in the content you use or create? Why might this be the case? What impact do the voices that are present have on particular audiences? What is the impact of the absence of certain voices?

6. When deciding how to “represent” yourself online or in your media and digital content creations, what factors do you consider? How do you determine what factors are important?
7. Describe the characteristics of a media platform that embeds the principles of diversity, equity, inclusion and fair representations of our global village. What are the potential uses and effects of such a platform?
  - Research the codes of practice/ethical guidelines that exist in your region. They could relate to media, digital communications companies, libraries, archives, and museums. Identify who is responsible for creating these codes of practice. Summarise the key areas that are included and explain their purpose. How do they support the interests of citizens and consumers? What effect can these regulations have on the institutions involved?
  - Apply the code of practice to representations in news reporting, content development and dissemination from the previous exercise. Assess to what extent the regulations are being followed. Be sure to consider both the text and the context in your assessment. Give specific examples from the coverage to support your response. When content violates the regulations, what recourse is available to individuals?
  - Examine other areas of the various content providers covered by these codes (e.g. gender portrayal, including stereotypes and sexualisation in advertising). Assess to what extent the regulations are being followed. Outline the feedback you would give to these texts’ institutions and/or producers.

## 14.7 LET US SUM UP

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This unit has tried to highlight that media producers have the power to reach a mass audience. Along with this power to influence comes the responsibility to be conscious and careful of how they represent individuals and groups in the society in which we live.

In all its forms, media has immense power to shape ideas. Television, films and digital media can influence how we see others and ourselves. Accurate, authentic representation can break down barriers, open us to new ideas, create powerful role models, and even inspire us.

While the issues of representation persist in all media forms, the representation of marginalised and ‘othered’ communities can be handled sensitively by media producers. Moreover, the liability lies with the content creators and curators to consider all social identity markers and represent a diverse and wholesome picture of individuals and communities.

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## 14.8 KEYWORDS

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***Representation***

: Media representation refers to how various forms of media, such as television shows, films, news programs, and social media, depict or portray certain groups of people or events. Media representation can shape our perceptions, attitudes, and beliefs about individuals, communities, and social issues.

<b>Framing</b>	: Positioning subjects/stories in an intended way so that they may be understood in a particular way.	<b>Industry Codes on Diversity and Representation</b>
<b>Codes of Representation</b>	: Media representation refers to the techniques and conventions that media producers use to create meaning and convey messages to their audiences.	
<b>Stereotyping</b>	: Presenting the subject/event with one particular ‘fixed’ perspective.	

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## 14.9 FURTHER READINGS

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1. Dines, G., & Humez, J. M. (Eds.). (2014). Gender, race, and class in media: A critical reader. SAGE Publications.
2. Hall, S. (1997). Representation: Cultural representations and signifying practices. SAGE.
3. Louw, E., Carah, N. (2015). Media and Society: Production, Content and Participation. United Kingdom: SAGE Publications.
4. Metykova, M. (2017). Diversity and the Media. United Kingdom: Macmillan Education UK.

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## 14.10 CHECK YOUR PROGRESS: POSSIBLE ANSWERS

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### Check Your Progress: 1

1. Media representation refers to how various forms of media, such as television shows, films, news programs, and social media, depict or portray certain groups of people or events. Media representation can shape our perceptions, attitudes, and beliefs about individuals, communities, and social issues.

### Check Your Progress: 2

1. Some of the codes of media representation are:
  - Visual codes
  - Audio codes
  - Symbolic codes
  - Technical codes
  - Written codes
  - Cultural codes
  - Performance codes
2. In print, representation can be constructed based on:
  - Layout and Design
  - Language and Mode of Address

### **Representation in India**

- Camera shots and angles in any photographs
  - Visual codes
  - Anchorage
3. Some of the unconventional forms of representation are:
- Microblogging
  - Video-blogging
  - Animation
  - Gaming
  - Memes

### **Check Your Progress: 3**

1. Some of the social markers of identity representation are:
  - Race and ethnicity
  - Gender and sexuality
  - Class
  - Age
  - Religion
  - Disability
  - Nationality and citizenship
2. Marginalisation is relegating a group or individual to a lower or outer edge of society, often in the media.

### **Check Your Progress: 4**

1. Some of the issues of gender portrayal in the media are:
  - Gender stereotypes
  - Objectification
  - Toxic masculinity or hyper-masculinity
  - Gender binary
  - Lack of representation
  - Intersectionality
2. On the one hand, misrepresentation in media occurs when certain groups of people are portrayed inaccurately or negatively in media content, such as movies, television shows, news reports, and advertisements. On the other hand, underrepresentation in media occurs when certain groups of people are not adequately represented in media content, such as movies, television shows, news reports, and advertisements.

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# **UNIT 15 TELEVISION, FILMS, AND PRINT PUBLISHING**

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## **Structure**

- 15.0 Introduction
  - 15.1 Learning Outcomes
  - 15.2 Platforms of Mass Media
  - 15.3 Television as a Medium of Mass Communication
    - 15.3.1 Features of the Medium
    - 15.3.2 Television Industry of India
    - 15.3.3 Issues of Representation on Television
  - 15.4 Films as a Medium of Mass Communication
    - 15.4.1 Features of the Medium
    - 15.4.2 Film Industry of India
    - 15.4.3 Issues of Representation in Films
  - 15.5 Print Publishing as a Medium of Mass Communication
    - 15.5.1 Features of the Medium
    - 15.5.2 Publishing Industry of India
    - 15.5.3 Issues of Representation in Print
  - 15.6 Gender Representation in Advertising
  - 15.7 Technical Strategies in Representation
  - 15.8 Pedagogical Approaches
  - 15.9 Let Us Sum Up
  - 15.10 Keywords
  - 15.11 Further Readings
  - 15.12 Check Your Progress: Possible Answers
- 

## **15.0 INTRODUCTION**

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In this unit, you will be introduced to three different platforms of mass media: TV, Film, and print publishing. We will discuss their features one by one as ways of mass communication and explore the status of all three industries as existing in India. Owing to their popularity with the masses. We will also discuss their social impact through representations and inclusion of various segments of society based on gender, religion, sexuality, etc., in the narratives on these media. We will later cover gender representation in the advertising industry as well, as no media format today is untouched by advertising. Lastly, we will ponder upon a few of the technical strategies adopted by producers for creating content for representation.

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## **15.1 LEARNING OUTCOMES**

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After reading this unit, you will be able to:

- describe television, films and print publishing as media of mass communication;

- distinguish between their features;
- comment on their existing industries in India;
- discuss issues of representation exclusive to these media;
- observe gender representation in advertising, and
- analyse technical strategies in representation.

## 15.2 PLATFORMS OF MASS MEDIA

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Imagine if you had to communicate to a large section of the population simultaneously; what tools would you use? Announce a sale, inform about a health hazard, or invite people to vote; how would you do it? There are a multitude of mediums available to us, plurally called the media. You may use a telephone to call a friend and an email to write to your boss. Similarly, mass media are the tools for communicating to a large population, not a singular entity. These media are used to spread information, education, and entertainment. Earlier in the times of kings and queens, there used to be a drummer and an announcer who roamed around the streets of the cities, visiting village to village to spread the king's message.

Today's Mass media includes varied platforms suitable to different populations and customisable according to different messages. Print media relies on the written word and uses paper in the form of books, newspapers, magazines, etc., to disseminate information. Electronic media encapsulates Radio and Television, catering to many listeners and viewers, respectively. New media entails the medium of the Internet, accessible through computers, smartphones, tablets and laptops and opening the world of websites and apps.

In this unit, we will discuss the three most popular media of mass communication in India: Film, TV and Print.

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## 15.3 TELEVISIONS AS A MEDIUM OF MASS COMMUNICATION

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You might have heard from your parents or grandparents about the early days of television when the streets used to be deserted when *Ramayana* and *Mahabharata* aired on *Doordarshan*. You may also recall adjusting your meal times with your family during your childhood based on the schedule of a popular TV show. Even today, the living rooms of most households in India would have a television and more in bedrooms, depending on the economic stature of the family. According to numbers as well, Television has the highest penetration in India. But what is it that makes Television so popular? Is it the enchanting visuals that make it so captivating or the immediacy of the medium that makes it so fascinating? Or is the accompanying audio that transports a viewer to far corners of the world or instantly changes the mood? Let us discuss the features of the medium in detail.

### 15.3.1 Features of the Medium

1. Television is an audio-visual medium. It caters to two senses simultaneously, auditory and visual senses, thus engaging the audience in more ways than one.

Because of this, consuming television programming is an easy and effortless process for the viewers.

2. Television is a domestic medium. You are not leaving the comfort of your house to watch television like in the case of films, outdoor media and live events. You can enjoy it in the company of your family as well.
3. Television is a live medium. Whether the Olympics or the Republic Day parade, television can instantly transport you to another space with the help of its audio and visuals. People will opine that it is much better to watch a match on TV rather than in the stadium due to the availability of close-ups, replays and live commentary.
4. Television is a dynamic medium. While the newspaper is published once a day and radio news bulletins also run quickly, television news can be updated regularly. You may recall reporters stating that new facts have been gathered and are being added, popularly known as ‘Breaking news’.
5. Television is an expensive medium. While earning revenue from advertising primarily, Television production is more expensive than many other mass media formats. It takes cameras, sets, audio equipment and several skilled personnel to create a bit of programming.

### 15.3.2 Television Industry of India

The Indian Television industry comprises several television channels owned by government organisations and the private sector. From *Doordarshan* as the first Television channel in 1959, with a broadcast schedule that lasted only a few hours a day, to private channels today running 24\*7, which only focuses on telemarketing, the Indian TV industry has come a long way. The privatisation of broadcasting in 1991 brought several international players to the Indian market, such as Star and CNN, and slowly exposed the audience to global content.

Today, the country has around 900 television channels spanning multiple languages in various regions. It is one of the largest industries in India, with an estimated turnover of 1083 Billion Rupees in the year 2020-21 (Statista, 2021). But in recent times, the continued expansion of the television broadcast industry has been impeded by the rising popularity of the OTT (Over The Top) platforms since the COVID lockdown period. These platforms are accessible through the Internet, and a large audience moved towards them for easy consumption amidst a disrupted life.

#### Activity - 1

Search the Internet for the type of television channels in India. Then, list the five most-watched television channels and identify their historical publishing, content, ownership patterns and revenue models.

### 15.3.3 Issues of Representation on Television

Many of us would relate to the joy of finding a character whose mannerisms, beliefs or actions are personally relatable. We all have been excited to find someone from the same community or city on the hot seat of the popular television show *Kaun Banega Crorepati*. With the latitude of popularity of the medium, it becomes only natural to

emulate and idolise people you see on the screen. In this case, it can be easily concluded that television has been an influential part of life for a large population.

Many research studies in the area have concluded that a person's worldview is also affected by the television programming he or she is exposed to, either directly or indirectly. In this case, misrepresenting and underrepresenting characters from various sections of society can be a worrying matter. Stereotypes are a set of rules imposed upon certain communities or groups of people and thus result in a biased representation or misrepresentation of the community. For example, the daily soaps on TV channels have been showcasing female characters only as housewives. Exposure to the popular *saas-bahu* dramas has shaped the perception of women in the audience. They strive to be or to have women in the family who are as pious, religious, mild-mannered and good-looking as those seen on the screen. Watching these shows, one could also point out the vamp and the heroine with ease due to their stereotyped dressing style.

Underrepresentation would be a lack of certain characters on screen. For example, you could not recall a dark, more than average weighted character on any of the TV shows. Neither would you be able to recall a character who is transgender or homosexual. Even if you can think of an example, they are likely not the story's protagonist. Being an immensely popular medium, television programming underrepresents many communities and makes them feel side-lined.

### **Check Your Progress: 1**

**Note:** 1) Use the space below for your answers.

2) Compare your answers with those given at the end of this unit.

1. What are the features of Television as a medium of mass communication?

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.....

2. What are two primary issues in representation on Television?

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## **15.4 FILMS AS A MEDIUM OF MASS COMMUNICATION**

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Can you recall your favourite film star endorsing some brand in an advertisement? Or a popular song converted into a bhajan, played during religious festivities? Or actors beyond their prime joining politics and campaigning for other politicians? This is the power of cinema; it touches all walks of life in India and affects the masses in ways unimaginable. From fashion to lifestyle to travel destinations, films are responsible for effortlessly shaping the milieu's mindset. But looking closely, films are one art form highly dependent on technology. Ranging from film cameras to shoot, to edit bays to edit and lastly to the projection room to be screened in front of the audience, films are a sum of efforts of multiple technicians to create a piece of art. Derived from many

other media formats, such as script from literature, background score from music, performance from theatre, cinematography from photography or even painting, films not only provide an escape from daily life, they transport the audience into a fantasy world, taking them on a ride for next 3 hours.

#### 15.4.1 Features of the Medium

Following are a few features of the medium:

1. Film is a mass medium. Reaching out to all the people sitting in the theatre at the same time, films cater to the masses. Additionally, they are released on multiple screens across the country or even multiple devices through OTT platforms nowadays.
2. Films are a mechanical art form. They are shot on film strips that are exposed to light to generate chemical reactions using the lens's optics and are cut precisely to match the rhythm of the music.
3. Films are a collaborative medium. Have you ever seen a film's credits at the end of a show? The list consists of hundreds of names, people associated with acting, directing, choreographing dance or action sequences, and even providing lunch to the cast and crew.
4. Films are an impressive medium. They have been pivotal in igniting and supporting many social movements. Think *Rang De Basanti* (2006); you might be able to recall the series of protests and conversations in newsrooms that started across the country.
5. Films are an escapist medium. Sitting in a dark room, cut away from the world, engulfed in sound, pictures and emotion of a make-believe reality, films have always been an escape for the audience, enchanting them for a longer time, even after the screening.
6. Films are an expensive medium. High-selling actors, shooting on foreign locations, and including special effects involve large budgets.

#### 15.4.2 Film Industry of India

From the first feature film *Raja Harishchandra* produced in 1913 to OTT platforms overshadowing the industry today, more than a century later, India's film industry has seen many changes. On average, about 1800 films are produced in India in a year, which is the largest production number in the world. While often mistakenly taken as the Indian film industry, Hindi cinema constitutes a fraction of films produced in India, albeit a major one.

Films are also produced in multiple regional languages, such as Tamil and Bengali Bhojpuri. Apart from the films made in far corners of the country, imports from other countries are also released in India, making it a very important market owing to the population. There have been cases where regional actors have acted in mainstream Hindi cinema, or popular actors from India have also made a leap to foreign films. Since the past decade, major international producers, such as Disney and Fox, have entered the market as producers, thus bringing foreign capital as well.



*A still from the movie Raja Harishchandra, 1913 (Picture Courtesy: Wikimedia Commons)*

### 15.4.3 Issues of Representation in Films

Being an expensive and escapist medium, cinema largely has stuck to formulaic storytelling, which relies on select tropes to entertain the audience without risking the invested capital. The formula pertains to an accepted mix of codes that the audience has liked. So, if stories about a rich girl meeting a poor boy and falling in love have proven successful at the box office, filmmakers will add further elements to this and keep making films based on this formula. This will ensure that the audience will turn up in the theatres, and thus, the money spent by the producers will be recovered.

While seeming profitable to the producers, this method has caused a severe lack of deviation and, thus, experimentation in mainstream cinema. Stories would omit any type of deviance from normative sexuality or gender and stick to a certain caste or religion. Female characters would commonly be represented in a sexualised light through item songs or even the characterisation of the role through costumes, roles in the narrative and picturisation as well. The bias is not limited to only gender but extends to religion as well. Muslim and Christian characters would be identifiable from their costumes, and a transgender or a homosexual character would be the butt of jokes in the story. Can you recall a film where the protagonist was a person from the North Eastern region or even a Tamilian?

With the advent of digital filmmaking, film production costs have come down, easing the process and participation in film production. Thus, the amount of experimentation in cinema has increased. You would find characters belonging to all walks of life starting to get meatier roles than just comic sidekicks. Issues about Dalits, religious minorities, and people belonging to any point on the gender spectrum have stories based on them today. The parallel cinema movement has been instrumental in this, and now, OTT platforms also support such narratives.

### Activity - 2

Use the Internet to research the success of recent major motion pictures. List five films that are box office successes, locally or internationally. If possible, view the online trailers for these five films. Describe who or what is represented as central to the storyline. Explain why this representation might be appealing to audiences.

### Check Your Progress: 2

**Note:** 1) Use the space below for your answers.

2) Compare your answers with those given at the end of this unit.

1. What are the different features of films as a medium of mass communication?

.....  
.....

2. What are various issues of representation in films?

.....  
.....

## 15.5 PRINT PUBLISHING AS A MEDIUM OF MASS COMMUNICATION

This book is one of the many you may have read while completing your education. As a communication process, you read the author's words, thus making sure that the message has been shared. The units in this book were written by different writers, edited by the editorial team and published by the university. It is one of many publications that are printed across the country every year. Thus, it can be summarised that print media uses the printed word to communicate with the audience. It encapsulates all the periodicals, flyers, catalogues, etc., published for communicating with the masses by wide circulation. It is one of the oldest media formats, as early men used to inscribe stone tablets, metal sheets, or palm leaves and circulate them for wider reading even before the paper was invented. It was after the invention of the typing press by Johannes Gutenberg in the 15<sup>th</sup> century that the publication of books began. The same press further evolved into mechanical, electronic and now digital publishing over time, allowing for faster printing and thus leading to printing newspapers, which could be circulated daily.

### 15.5.1 Features of the Medium

Following are a few features of print media:

1. Print media needs a literate audience. Unlike the audio and visual formats, it depends on the written word and thus needs the audience to be literate to consume it.
2. Print media works according to a deadline, i.e. it needs to be published periodically and thus needs to abide by the timelines strictly. One cannot print a midday edition of a morning newspaper if anything urgent arrives, nor can one stall the printing in wait for a late arrival news.

3. It can be reread and rechecked. Unlike the dynamic media formats, print does not return to its word after printing. TV broadcasts may keep updating the facts, but print needs to recheck and confirm before printing. Similarly, the audience can reread a sentence at its own pace for better understanding. For the same reason, print media is deemed more credible than any other media format.
4. Print media provides more scope and time for analysis. Depending on the audience's interest, one may read the editorial on a burning issue after consuming the story on the main page. TV and radio do not allow you to delve deeper into an issue. You may need to wait for another show for that.
5. Print does not have the aid of audio-visuals; it depends solely on the creative use of language. Not catering to the auditory and visual senses (apart from a few sparse photographs), print relies heavily on the written word to attract the readers' attention. You may recall some headlines relying on wordplay, puns and metaphors, all tools of literary art, to capture the audience's attention.

### 15.5.2 Publishing Industry of India

The first newspaper was published in India by James Augustus Hickey and named the *Bengal Gazette* in 1780. Leading the way, within a decade, newspapers in many indigenous languages were being printed across the country. These papers also played a pivotal role in motivating and uniting the public against the British Raj, thus paving the way to the freedom struggle.



Hickey's Bengal Gazette dated March 10, 1781

(Courtesy: James Augustus Hicky, Public domain, via Wikimedia Commons)

About 1000 dailies are being printed in Hindi, while the second most popular language is English, with a circulation of 250 dailies. *Dainik Jagran* is the most popular daily, with a total readership of over 70 lakh nationwide. While being the most popular medium at the time of independence, the popularity of print is overshadowed today due to the rise of radio, television, and now the Internet as media platforms.

### 15.5.3 Issues of Representation in Print

Have you ever visited a newspaper office? Publication houses that own and run editorial, printing and circulation of periodicals are huge organisations. A popular newspaper

needs a staff of thousands, spread across the country, to be kept up and running. Thus, it would need much capital to keep the organisation thriving. Therefore, the print media has been owned by large conglomerates which have wielded soft power over the masses. Depending on owners' inclination, the media, and thus the coverage, also leans. So, if the owners are influenced by a particular political party, religious ideology, or gender discourse, the effect would be seen in the content.

There has been a long-standing debate on the covers of magazines airbrushing and editing the images of the stars to fit into and further reinforce the stereotypical standards of beauty. Moreover, the writing and the headlines would associate women necessarily with their partners or the nearest male relative; for example, you would always read "Mother of two dies in a road accident" compared to "Businessman killed in a car crash". See the difference? It is how the writers define the characters in a news story. Moreover, stories about crimes of passion usually find more takers than other stories. Thus, you could see more space given to them in the papers.

### Check Your Progress: 3

**Note:** 1) Use the space below for your answers.

2) Compare your answers with those given at the end of this unit.

1. What are the features of print media?

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2. What is the most popular language for print media in India?

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## 15.6 GENDER REPRESENTATION IN ADVERTISING

We briefly discussed three media platforms, along with their features and impact. But one thing that is common to all media formats, including these three, is advertising. Advertising can be defined as a targeted communication for marketing a product or service. It employs one or more media platforms to reach the target audience. Advertisers buy Media space, which generates revenue for the platforms, for example, space in a newspaper or airtime on television. After that, advertisers create messages carefully suiting the features of different platforms and inducing the product's sale. These messages are called advertisements.

Advertisements are popular media products crafted and consumed with a specific purpose: sale. Advertisers use various types of narratives to relate to the audience and motivate the audience to become customers. These narratives would be relatable to connect the audience to the product. For example, think of a detergent ad, and you would recall a white sari-clad woman with her hair in a bun. She would invariably be occupied with household chores and tending to her family. This is a use of a stereotype, depicting a woman as a primary caregiver in a family. Compare this with an ad for toothpaste; you could recall a dentist recommending toothpaste to you, mostly male, dressed in clinical lab coats and many times with a stethoscope around their necks!

The attire emphasises the authority and credibility of a doctor to make a suggestion related to health, irrespective of the fact that dentists hardly use stethoscopes. These two examples elaborate on how gender is depicted in advertisements, thus exposing the audience to the stereotyped messages and reinforcing them further.

### Activity - 3

Obtain a collection of audio-visual advertisements from the Internet or television in your country. Try to ensure that these advertisements feature both women and men. Write down your observations on how women are represented in the advertisements vis-à-vis men. Identify the implications of these representations based on the following question:

- Are certain representations viewed differently by some members of the group? Why do you think so?

## 15.7 TECHNICAL STRATEGIES IN REPRESENTATION

Representation in media formats is created by three carefully crafted strategies: selection, omission and construction. Selection pertains to the selection of stories, perspectives, and characters to narrate the story, whether fictional or non-fictional. Omission is editing out the stereotypes by acquiring a fresh perspective. Lastly, construction is the creation of new codes or experimentation with the old ones.

One may think that the media merely reports objectively, but bias is induced as soon as a perspective is taken. For example, think of a news report of a sports tournament; if a reporter chooses to interview only the losing side to gather the facts, the report will have a very subdued and even sad undertone. At the same time, interviewing the winning side would give another lopsided version. In such a case, it is the media person's job to select facts from credible sources, omit the bias and construct the story further. The audience sees everything from the narrator's perspective, and the media holds an extremely powerful position in shaping its perspective. Thus, it becomes imperative for the media to be unbiased in representing all population segments.

## 15.8 PEDAGOGICAL APPROACHES

*(Instructions for the course counsellors)*

Some of the pedagogical approaches that can be applied to this unit are:

- Learners should identify various versions of the representation of historical events. For example, books published during and about the period, films created in various genres, artworks or pictures, and other visuals such as photos and music videos. Visit a museum or archive (if one exists in this subject area in your region), and based on this, collect material to prepare an essay about your observations.
- A popular feature film formula focuses on the archetypal myth of the 'heroic journey'. Myths represent implicit belief systems that express a culture's fears, desires and aspirations. In these stories, the hero (usually male)- unaware of his destiny- is called upon to take up an important quest. The hero usually passes through several stages as part of the quest, including his 'birth' or

beginning, becoming aware of his ‘calling’ or destiny, experiencing romance, encountering foes, receiving advice from a wise elder and, finally, returning home. Based on this:

- Develop a list of films that are based on this formula. Account for their appeal. Describe the hero, explaining to what extent the hero represents the desires and values of the individual in society.
- Describe the camera work as well as the use of sound and music. Assess how these technical elements reinforce the representations central to the story (i.e., the impression created of a villain or a romantic hero). Explain how the meaning of particular scenes in the film would change if, for example, the soundtrack were different.
- Visit the websites for mainstream, Indigenous or community media that represent alternatives to blockbusters. Browse the selection of stories being told through these companies or organisations. Compare these stories to those being produced by major film studios. Assess the value of these ‘independent’ organisations in giving representation or voice to alternative Indigenous stories.
- Discuss the accountability of the film and television industries to their viewers and their relationship to human progress. Why should all viewers be able to see themselves and their stories on the screen? Discuss the implications of mainstream stories and representations for various audiences. Explore how speciality channels, various Internet sites, blogs and new technologies influence storytelling and offer alternative representations to audiences.

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## 15.9 LET US SUM UP

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In this unit, we touched upon three different platforms of mass media: TV, film, and print publishing. We then discussed their features one by one as ways of mass communication and explored the status of their industrial setups in India. After this, we observed their social impact in the form of representations and inclusion of gender, religion, sexuality, etc., in the narratives of these media. We also covered the representation of gender in the advertising industry as well, mulling over its importance through other media formats. Lastly, we covered a few of the technical strategies adopted by producers for creating content for representation.

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## 15.10 KEYWORDS

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**Aspect Ratio** : Ratio between width and height of the screen. For standard definition, it is 4:3, while for HD, it is 16:9.

**Primary audience** : Category of audience specifically targeted by the program producers.

**Secondary audience** : Category of audience covered indirectly by the programmers, such as mothers watching kids’ channels along with the kids.

**B-roll** : Additional footage shot to support the narrative

**Close-up** : A shot which provides visual details of an object

**Editing** : Putting together a combination of shots to create a sequence

<b>Representation in India</b>	
<b>Cinematography</b>	: Art of shooting moving images on film
<b>Sound design</b>	: To create the audio track layered with music, dialogues and sound effects
<b>Advertisement</b>	: Content created to increase sales of goods or services. Occupies space in media and generates revenue.
<b>Headline</b>	: An explanatory title in a newspaper explaining the gist of the story

## 15.11 FURTHER READINGS

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## 15.12 CHECK YOUR PROGRESS: POSSIBLE ANSWERS

### Check Your Progress: 1

1. Features of Television as a medium of mass communication:
  - a. It is an audio-visual medium.
  - b. It is a domestic medium.
  - c. It is a live medium.
  - d. It is a dynamic medium.
  - e. It is an expensive medium.
2. Misrepresentation and underrepresentation of characters on TV are two primary concerns. Misrepresentation is when a community is wrongly portrayed, and underrepresentation is a lack of characters from a particular community.

### Check Your Progress: 2

1. The following are a few features of the film as a medium of mass communication:
  - a) Films are a mass medium.

- b) Films are a mechanical art form.
  - c) Films are a collaborative medium.
  - d) Films are an impressive medium.
  - e) Films are an escapist medium.
  - f) Films are an expensive medium.
2. Minorities based on gender, religion, region, etc., are underrepresented in cinema. Films, being formulaic, stick to a tried and tested storyline, with minor deviations, thus side-lining the minorities.

### Check Your Progress: 3

1. The features of print media are as follows:
  - a) Print media needs a literate audience.
  - b) Print media works according to a deadline.
  - c) Print media is deemed more credible than any other media format.
  - d) Print media provides more scope for in-depth analysis.
  - e) Print media does not have the aid of audio-visuals; it depends on the creative use of language to capture the audience's attention.
2. about 1000 dailies are being printed in Hindi, while the second most popular is English, with a circulation of 250 dailies. *Dainik Jagran* is the most popular daily, with a total readership of over 70 lakh.

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# **UNIT 16 REPRESENTATION AND MUSIC VIDEOS**

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## **Structure**

- 16.0 Introduction
  - 16.1 Learning Outcomes
  - 16.2 Music and Indian Society
  - 16.3 Reach and Popularity of Music Videos
  - 16.4 Elements of a Music Video
    - 16.4.1 Audio Elements
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  - 16.5 Representation of Various Segments
    - 16.5.1 Gender
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    - 16.5.3 Sexuality
  - 16.6 Impact of Music Videos
    - 16.6.1 On Producers
    - 16.6.2 On Consumers
  - 16.7 Alternative Music Industry
  - 16.8 Analysing Music Videos
  - 16.9 Pedagogical Approaches
  - 16.10 Let Us Sum Up
  - 16.11 Further Readings
  - 16.12 Keywords
  - 16.13 Check Your Progress: Possible Answers
- 

## **16.0 INTRODUCTION**

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In this unit, you will be introduced to the world of music videos, their reach and their impact on society. To begin with, you will learn about how music videos are produced and consumed. We will explore various music video elements and analyse how they impact the final product. Then, we will discuss the content of these videos and examine their representation of different segments of society. We will then analyse the impact of these videos on consumers and producers. Lastly, you will be introduced to analysing music videos by yourself and discover an alternate music industry.

## **16.1 LEARNING OUTCOMES**

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After reading this unit, you will be able to:

- discuss the expanse of the Indian music video industry;
- identify various elements of music video production;

- ascertain the representation of different social segments in music videos;
- distinguish between the mainstream and alternative music industry; and
- analyse music videos.

## 16.2 MUSIC AND INDIAN SOCIETY

Music has been an integral part of Indian culture. With classical Indian music devoting ragas to different times of the day and seasons, to musical narratives in folk tales, music is not only the thread and glue between the vast heterogeneous cultures in India, but it is also a meter for the cultural and language and religious diversity in the subcontinent. Music has been an inseparable part of life, from lullabies to newborn babies, songs sung during crop harvesting, and mourning songs accompanying funeral rites. *Bhakti* and *Sufi* movements utilised music to spread religion, and *nritya nations* were a popular form of entertainment before the advent of mass media. The films from the Indian subcontinent are uniformly classified under the musical genre due to the inseparable song and dance routine.

The music industry in India started in the early twentieth century with the production and sales of music records played on gramophones. You may recall seeing one in a period film. Gradually, the records were replaced by magnetic audio cassettes, which could be played on a tape recorder, and then compact discs (CDs), which needed a CD player to run. Today, the Internet has become the most popular medium for listening to music. With the rising popularity of song streaming services, the industry's value is estimated to be 23 billion INR by the end of 2023. The industry thrives 70 per cent on film music, 30 per cent on the Indi-pop genre, and a minuscule percentage on other formats.

Music videos are short videos, around 5 minutes long, featuring the picturisation of a song track. You may think of them as advertisements for the film or the artist, and like any other advertising method, they aim to increase film sales or the music album. On the Internet, music videos ensure hits and views on the songs.

## 16.3 REACH AND POPULARITY OF MUSIC VIDEOS

As Indian cinema thrives on music, it has been a practice in the film industry for the songs to be picturised elaborately and lavishly, packed with eye-catching choreography, opulent sets or picturesque locations and beautiful costumes. These videos may or may not have relevance to the story and plot. The origin of music videos can be traced to *Awara* (1951), which had a nine-minute-long song shot as a dream sequence. As discussed earlier, music videos are also seen as an excellent vehicle for film publicity. They efficiently give a brief peek into the film's lead pair's chemistry, are packed with catchy lyrics set to hummable tunes and are choreographed with imitable signature steps.

If you ask your parents, they would fondly remember the days of *Chitrahaar*, a program on the National Television Channel *Doordarshan* in the 80s that played videos of popular songs from films. Globalisation in the '90s saw the rise of channels explicitly dedicated to music and played music videos all day long, such as MTV and Channel V. These channels had programming catering to various genres of music videos and

were not only seen as platforms for film publicity but was also instrumental in promoting the Indi pop music, which otherwise had very few platforms for reaching to the target audience. Singers like Alisha Chenoy, Biddu, Daler Mehndi, etc., gained popularity due to these channels during this era. Coming to the public eye with their music videos, these artists made their way to the popular film industry in no time.



*Stills from the dream sequence of the movie Awaara (Courtesy: Shemaroo Youtube)*

Today, these music videos comprise a major portion of the media production industry. Budget allocations and, thus, production standards are high, and the videos are shot especially at foreign locations. At times, local artists and talents are also hired to give an exotic look to the video, and costumes, make-up, and hair also set trends across the country.

### Activity - 1

You must have seen short reels on social media of people, including celebrities, dancing to the tunes of a popular song. What do you think is the purpose of this? Why are people shooting and uploading these videos? What does this signify?

### Check Your Progress: 1

**Note:** 1) Use the space below for your answers.

2) Compare your answers with those given at the end of this unit.

1. What is a music video?

.....  
.....

2. How do you think globalisation affected the music industry in India?

## 16.4 ELEMENTS OF A MUSIC VIDEO

While enjoying a music video, one does not consider the elements used in its making. But the basic elements and their composition create an impactful music video. Music videos are also produced like any other audio-visual media production. While the audio track is the primary product, the video becomes inseparable as it makes them more engaging, entertaining, relatable and shareable across many social media platforms driven by visuals. Not only are these videos broadcast on television and shared on social media, but they also inspire a lot of dance routines. The following are the elements of a music video:

### 16.4.1 Audio Elements

The first and most important component is the audio track. The audio track comprises a lyrical song complimented by a combination of musical instruments. The songwriter first writes the song and then sings by a couple of singers, mostly a solo or a duet backed with a choir if needed. At times, the writer and singer are the same. Then, the music producer records the singing and the orchestra's instruments, simultaneously or separately, to be mixed during post-production.

Post-production of the track includes sweetening the audio, where the human voice is treated with various filters to sound better. Think of it as using photo editing software on photographs. After treating all sounds separately, they are mixed to form one track. Today, much music is also produced electronically or digitally and mixed along. Lastly, copies of the soundtrack are made and shared with the producers to create a supplementing video.

### 16.4.2 Visual Elements

The video production team listens to the song and decides on a storyline and treatment for the video. Sometimes, the song narrates a story, making it easier to picture it for the shoot. For example, a song about a sportsperson's struggle, time spent in practice, and gradual road to victory can be easily shot. Sometimes, the song is theme-based, but the video contains a storyline. For example, a romantic song can be pictured with a simple love story. Lastly, the song could be thematic, and the video could be a dance routine or a montage that does not necessarily narrate a story.

The video producers start looking for locations, actors and crew for the shoot. A video might be shot at a distant foreign location or in front of a green screen within an indoor studio. The green screen is replaced with graphics or required scenery in post-production. The indoor studio would facilitate ease of handling equipment and lighting, while location shoot poses challenges as one may need to lug the equipment to the top of the mountain or at a beach.

When the storyline and cast are finalised, a choreographer is hired to teach the actors or dancers the dance steps. If the song is of the hip-hop genre, one would need to hire a hip-hop-trained dancer as a choreographer, and if the song is a Rajasthani folk song,

one would need a dancer trained as a folk dance artist. The choreographer and director plan and rehearse the entire video before going to the location to save the rehearsing time. On the other hand, make-up artists, costume designers, art directors, etc., are also planned simultaneously. After all this planning, the team shoots at the location.

Post-production of a video involves editing the shot footage set to the audio track. While editing a music video, the editors need to keep the beats or flow of the music in mind to achieve a rhythm in the video edit. The edit could be fast and energetic or slow, depending on the mood of the music. Special effects and graphics are added to the video if necessary for the narrative.

### 16.4.3 Content

Music videos are generally of three types:

1. Performance-based: These types of music videos have the artist performing the song, and this includes singing, playing an instrument and, at times, dancing as well. The band or background dancers could support them. These videos are usually used to showcase the artists' skills.
2. Narrative-based: These music videos are based on a story performed by actors or, sometimes, with the artist. These are usually short stories based on the theme of romance. To add a bit of variety, these videos could be shot in exotic locations or with many close-ups.
3. Abstract: These videos are based on an idea and use abstract imagery and symbolism to show the concept. Philosophical in nature, these videos depend on the audience for interpretation.

Have you ever wondered why most of the popular songs and videos are focused on themes of romance?

While the target audience for any segment of the entertainment sector is vast, spanning a vast population, the youth has the buying capacity to spend on film tickets or music albums and time to devote to leisurely entertainment. Keeping this target audience in mind, the songwriters usually write songs about issues and themes popular with the youth. This is why romance is the most popular, ranging from love at first sight to heartbreak. Other popular genres are life struggle/ inspirational songs, patriotic songs, and songs based on other relationships, such as friendship, sibling love, etc.

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## 16.5 REPRESENTATION OF VARIOUS SEGMENTS

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We have discussed the content of the music videos and their broad categories. Like any other media text, music videos are also a way of representing various segments of society. Representation is basically how these segments are portrayed on screen vis-a-vis their counterparts. Let us see how music videos in India represent gender, race and sexuality.

### 16.5.1 Gender

Picture this: a peppy song about the beauty of a woman, how the boy/man is mesmerised seeing her for the first time and falls in love with her. Towards the end, they dance their way into the sunset. Sounds familiar? Do you see the stereotypical roles associated

with gender? How is a man supposed to woo, and a woman is supposed to be so beautiful that she needs to be wooed? Music videos pick this formula and rehash it with many permutations and combinations by adding more narrative elements.



*Examples of hypersexualisation and de-individualisation (Source: YRF Youtube)*

The videos usually hypersexualise, de-individualise and show women as the subordinates of men. You would wonder, but you would easily recall seeing a male singer crooning away in an exotic location and female dancers prancing around skimpily clothed. There would be more women than men, all synchronised to the lyrics and beats. The female background dancers don't have individual identities, nor is their presence in any way important for the narrative in the video. Thus, women appear as a mass, and men appear as individuals. Also, the men would lead the dance or the narrative, and women would be the aides to the plot. They are usually shown as passive participants. Of course, exceptions exist, but they would touch upon these themes, even if distantly.

All actors would be shown in a sexualised light with skimpy clothing, erotic dance steps and lascivious expressions. Moreover, the camera would also shoot their bodies in close-up shots, emphasising certain body parts to entice the audience further. While this applies to men, it is more commonly the women who have to bear the brunt of catering to the male gaze (Mulvey, 1989). This makes the actors on the screen appear highly sexualised. At times, music videos from films are also known as Item songs. The term 'item' is associated with a beautiful woman in Mumbai slang, thus underlining the objectification of women. These songs rarely directly relate to the film's story or plot.

Several researchers doing a content analysis of music videos from the West or regional Indian music industries throw further light on this matter.

### 16.5.2 Race

The issue of race in India is not upfront like in the West. There is no clear distinction between the population, like the Black and the White communities. But our colonial past affects our perception of race to a great extent. Being ruled by the British for over two centuries has instilled in our society an awe of white skin or fairness. So much so that fairness creams found a huge market in the South Asian subcontinent.

Society accepts the Western standards of beauty, that is, light skin, brown eyes, and straight brown hair, and these standards find reinforcement in the popular media. Try to picture a male or female actor from your favourite music videos. You would recall them as having an almost Caucasian complexion, regardless of the language the video is in.

But moving ahead, the representation of communities is a huge issue in films, music videos and other popular media platforms. The year was 2007, and one of the most prominent actresses of her heyday, Madhuri Dikshit, was returning with the film '*Aaja Nachle*' after a hiatus of several years. Film publicity began with a music video for a song with the same name, as Dikshit is a renowned dancer. The lyrics mentioned the word '*teli*' (Hindu caste which makes/sells oil) in a line. A considerable uproar followed as protests erupted nationwide against using this word. A particular community that felt the song was portraying them poorly objected to the film's release altogether. The song had to be rerecorded by editing out that specific word and was rereleased following the furore. This is one of the many examples where a community in India has been hurt or offended by their representation in the lyrics/video of a song. Several songs must be re-edited and reshot to appease the hurt communities.

### 16.5.3 Sexuality

Following the Supreme Court's landmark judgement of decriminalising homosexuality in 2018, much popular media started seeing depictions of the third gender. The OTT industry has further created niches of audiences that can access specific content, and the inclusion of homosexual characters in narratives on the web has increased quite a manifold over the years. But music videos have yet to witness this revolution. About 100 per cent of videos have narratives focused on heterosexual romance.

Yet, surprisingly, in the background dancers, one may see women touching each other provocatively, signifying a nod to lesbian relationships. Still, the opposite, that is, gay or male-to-male inclination, is rarely ever seen in the video. This could be because most producers are male and create content to cater to the male gaze. Popular content, especially music videos, has a long way to go to attain a fair representation of people from all sexualities on screen.

#### Activity - 2

Pick up a popular music video in your native language. Watch it and check if the points mentioned above regarding the depiction of gender, race, and sexuality hold in its case.

## 16.6 IMPACT OF MUSIC VIDEOS

### 16.6.1 On Producers

As discussed earlier, music videos also act as a vehicle for publicity. When a part of a film, these videos help publicise the film, and when shot for a pop artist, these videos become a method of carrying the audio track to the television screens and thus to a larger audience. A video has a far greater capacity to hook the audience than an audio track as it interacts with the sense of sight and hearing. The producers spend a lot of money shooting these songs, which are often credited with the film's success.

The popularity of these music videos has always led to a steep rise in ticket sales or album sales for the songs, translating today to YouTube hits. Such has been the success of these music videos. T Series, a company that used to be in the music production business and later into music video production, is the YouTube channel with the most significant number of subscribers worldwide. Several singers who could not find opportunities to sing in films started their careers with independent music albums, e.g., Sonu Nigam, Sona Mohapatra, Kailash Kher, etc. Moving ahead of the singers, many dancers have made their careers by dancing in these music videos, starting from Helen to Nora Fatehi.

These music videos help make money by attracting viewers to films or YouTube channels and brand placements. Brands associated with luxury items are seen endorsed by celebrities in these music videos, and thus, they also manage to reach their target audience base. The companies very selectively associate with artists who make music related to the mood/theme of the brand. Many tourist resorts allow shooting these music videos on their premises to attract more tourists yearly.

### 16.6.2 On Consumers

When one media product can be used to advertise so many other products, it won't be far-reaching to say that its impact would also be multipronged. To begin with, it is a common sight to see family members and friends dancing away to popular music tracks during weddings and other social events. A few years ago, parents used to enrol their kids in dance classes to learn dance steps so that they could perform on stage, in social gatherings, and, if lucky, on a TV talent show. Today, several YouTube channels host video tutorials of dance or teach Zumba, thus institutionalising the acceptance and popularity of these music videos. Parents videotape their kids, upload them on social media platforms, and share them in family groups. Thus it would not be a long shot to say that the audience interacts with these music videos much beyond just watching them or humming later. But how this affects the audience subliminally has been a matter of research in the past decade.

Studies suggest that music plays a vital role in identity formation in young people. Adolescents choose their music based on age, culture, peer exposure and mental status. Many people have reported listening to music to elevate their mood and create an ambience. These facts highlight the importance of music and music videos on the psychology of individuals. We have now discussed the music videos' content in earlier segments. What do you think happens when youth are exposed to such content?

Research on the impact of music videos establishes that the youth is more likely to pick up habits of smoking, drinking and indulging in substance abuse if they are exposed to music videos showing the same. You would easily recall songs and videos about alcohol, partying and getting 'high'. More often than not, these songs and videos advocate indulging in 'risky' behaviour to appear cool.

Moving further, young people are also likely to view gender in the manner showcased in the video. This implies that men view women in a sexualised, subordinate light, while women have reported lesser self-esteem in the case of higher exposure to music videos. Self-esteem is directly related to them comparing their bodies with the ones shown in these videos. These videos build up a lot of expectations in teenagers about their romantic lives and personas. When these expectations are not met, it results in low self-confidence and, at times, other related mental health issues.

Lastly, with due research, these videos have also been held responsible for sexualising children from a very young age due to their reach through TV channels, the Internet on Smartphones and last but not least, endorsement by elders in family gatherings. Most research has been conducted in Western countries with few Indian counterparts, but the effects have resounded everywhere.

### Check Your Progress: 2

**Note:** 1) Use the space below for your answers.

2) Compare your answers with those given at the end of this unit.

1. Name the audio-visual elements of a music video.

.....  
.....

2. How is the female gender represented in the music videos?

.....  
.....

## 16.7 ALTERNATIVE MUSIC INDUSTRY

While film music has always comprised the famous school of music in India, Independent music artists have always coexisted on the fringes of the mainstream music industry. Artists who could not get enough funding to produce the music they like, or those who did not cater to the mass audience, lie in this segment. Many genres of music, ranging from *Ghazal* classical to devotional music, belong to this alternative music industry. With time, technology has simplified music recording and made the process less expensive, helping the Alternative music industry. The decade of the 90s brought many indie pop bands to the limelight. A few *Gazhal* artists, such as Jagjit Singh and Pankaj Udhas, have also made their way to the parallel film movement. In contrast, Indie pop singers such as Mohit Chauhan and Hariharan also made a name for themselves in mainstream cinema.



Ghazal maestro: Jagjit Singh



Indie pop Singer: Hariharan

*Artists from the alternative music industry (Courtesy: IMDb, Rakeshkonni, CC BY-SA 3.0 <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/3.0>, via Wikimedia Commons)*

Technologies like Bluetooth file sharing, seen as a threat to piracy by the mainstream industry, became responsible for spreading the popularity of alternate music. Many

singers who lacked methods to reach a mass audience became popular with the help of discreet file sharing. Today, song streaming services and low-budget OTT or YouTube productions have become excellent launch vehicles for independent music artists. With internet penetration rising by the day, indie artists like Prateek Kuhad and Shirley Setia are also becoming household names and breaking the hegemony of the popular music industry.

## 16.8 ANALYSING MUSIC VIDEOS

Having discussed the wide usage of music videos by music producers and the heavy impact on consumers, viewing them wisely becomes a matter of great concern. Like any other media content, music videos must be analysed before consumption. When the impact is profound, it implies the importance of the content.

To analyse a music video, start by watching the video track and listening to the audio track separately. Here are a few questions that you might want to raise by yourself while analysing the music videos:

- Are the song and video based on the same theme? When you first heard the song, how did you picture its video would be?
- What is the narrative of the video? Can you describe it in one line?
- Is the narrative biased or uses any stereotypes?
- Does the narrative occur in the real world or a make-believe fantasy world? Why did the director choose this setting?
- Look at the way people are dressed, the actors and the singer. Do they dress up similarly in real life?
- Observe their actions. Would they be doing these things in actuality?
- If their dress and behaviour are not life-like, why or to what benefit has it been portrayed?
- How has it been shot? Do you see a lot of close-ups? If yes, of what?
- What emotions does the music video induce in you? Would you want to see the video again?
- Who do you think the video is targeted at? How are they catering to that particular audience group?

### Activity - 3

Think of your favourite music video. Analyse it with the help of factors and processes shared in this segment. Discuss the results with your family and friends.

### Check Your Progress: 3

**Note:** 1) Use the space below for your answers.

2) Compare your answers with those given at the end of this unit.

1. What is the alternative music industry?

- 
- 
2. What is the need for analysing music videos?
- 
- 

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## 16.9 PEDAGOGICAL APPROACHES

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*(Instructions for the course counsellors)*

This unit has emphasised music videos from the vantage point of the elements as well as the impact of the elements on users and producers. The pedagogical interventions for learners can be determined on three levels- production, representation and interpretation. Some approaches are:

1. Production and Representation
  - Examine the content of the lyrics, including a description of how the images in the video relate to the lyrics and melody of the song and the teacher's interpretation of the lyrics.
  - Examine the technical components of the video, considering the use of colour, lighting, editing (pace, juxtaposition, cutting on the beat), special effects, and the connection between audio and video components.
  - Examine the social issues dealt with in the video, with consideration given to how those messages might change if people of a different social class or race were included or if the male and female characters switched roles.
2. Interpretation: Interpret the ideological and value messages being presented in a video using the following questions as a guide:
  - Does the video present the beliefs of one particular group?
  - Describe the representations of men and women in the video. Are any stereotypes used? If so, to what effect?
  - Who is in a position of power? Who is not? Who benefits as a result?
  - Does the video exclude any groups of people or their beliefs?
  - What definitions of happiness, success, or morality are applied?

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## 16.10 LET US SUM UP

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In this unit, you were introduced to music videos in a new light. You were taken through various elements comprising these videos, their uses and their impacts on consumers and producers. We also discussed the representation and inclusion of multiple sectors of society in these music videos and explored their repercussions on consumers and producers. We also learned to analyse these music videos for better consumption and understanding. Finally, we explored India's music industry, including alternative music.

## 16.11 KEYWORDS

- Nritya Natika** : Traditional theatre format with music and dance
- Chitrahar** : A weekly program on *Doordarshan* in the 1980s–90s, which played videos of songs from popular films.
- Hypersexualised** : A person whose mannerisms, costume, and picturisation are all in a very sexual light.
- Bluetooth** : A technology that allows for the short-range wireless exchange of files
- Sufi and Bhakti Movements** : Religious movements in Islam and Hinduism that preached through music.

## 16.12 FURTHER READINGS

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## 16.13 CHECK YOUR PROGRESS: POSSIBLE ANSWERS

### Check Your Progress: 1

1. Music videos are audio-visual productions based on a song. They usually have a song and dance routine.
2. Globalisation in the '90s saw the rise of channels explicitly dedicated to music videos, such as MTV and Channel V, which had programming catering to various genres of music videos.

### Check Your Progress: 2

1. Lyrics, human voices, and music tracks (accompaniment of various instruments) are audio elements of a music video.

**Representation in India**

2. The videos usually hypersexualise, de-individualise and make women the subordinates of men.

**Check Your Progress: 3**

1. The alternative music industry consists of independent artists who still need to produce music that would become popular with many people.
2. Given the impact of music videos on people's psychology and personal development, one should analyse music videos like any other media message.