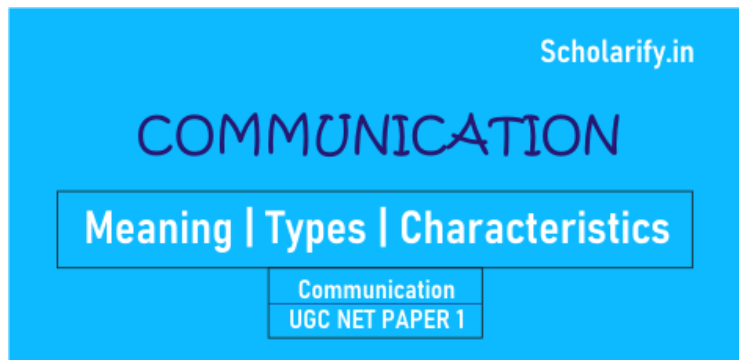


Communication: Meaning, Types and Characteristics | Paper 1

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Communication: Meaning, Types, and Characteristics

Communication Meaning & Types: Communication is a process of exchanging information, ideas, thoughts, feelings and emotions through speech, signals, writing, or behaviour.

“Any act by which one person gives to or receives from another person, the information about that person’s needs, desires, perceptions, knowledge, or affective states. **Communication may be intentional or unintentional**; it may involve conventional or unconventional signals, may take linguistic or non-linguistic forms and may occur through spoken or other modes.”

In simple words;

Communication is the exchange of ideas, opinions and information through written or spoken words, symbols or actions.

Communication is a dialogue, not a monologue. In fact, communication is more concerned with a dual listening process. For communication to be effective, the message must mean the same thing to both the sender and the receiver.

Characteristics of Communication:

- **Two-way communication:** Communication is a two-way process of understanding between two or more persons; sender and receiver. A person cannot communicate with himself or herself.
- **Continuous Process:** Exchanges of ideas and opinion amongst people is an ongoing process in business and non-business world. Continuous interaction promotes understanding and exchange of information relevant for decision-making.
- **Dynamic Process:** Communication between sender and receiver takes different forms and medium depending upon their moods and behaviour. It is, thus, a dynamic process that keeps changing in different situations.
- **Pervasive:** Communication is a pervasive activity. It takes place at all levels (top, middle, lower) in all functional areas (production, finance, personnel, sales etc.) of a business organisation.
- **Two People:** A minimum of two persons; sender and receiver, must be present for communication to take place. It may be between superior, subordinates and peer group.
- **Exchange:** Communication involves the exchange of ideas and opinions. People interact and develop an understanding of each other.
- **Mutual understanding:** Communication is effective when sender and receiver develop a mutual understanding of the subject. Messages conveyed should be understood by both parties.
- **Goal-Oriented:** Communication is goal-oriented. Unless the receiver and sender know the purpose, they intend to achieve through communication, it has little practical utility.

Types of Communication

People communicate with each other in a number of ways that depend upon the message and its context in which it is being sent. Choice of communication channel and your style of communicating also affect communication. So, there are varieties of types of communication.

Types of communication-based on the communication channels:

1. Verbal Communication
2. Nonverbal Communication

Verbal Communication

Verbal communication refers to the form of communication in which a message is transmitted verbally. Communication is done by word of mouth and a piece of writing.

Verbal Communication is further divided into:

1.
 - **Oral Communication**
 - **Written Communication**

Oral Communication

In oral communication, Spoken words are used. It includes face-to-face conversations, speech, telephonic conversation, video, radio, television, voice-over-internet. In oral communication, communication is influence by pitch, volume, speed and clarity of speaking.

Written Communication

In written communication, written signs or symbols are used to communicate. A written message may be printed or handwritten. In written communication message can be transmitted via email, letter, report, memo etc. The message, in written communication, is influenced by the vocabulary & grammar used, writing style, precision and clarity of the language used. Written Communication is the most common form of communication being used in business. So, it is considered the core of business skills.

Memos, reports, bulletins, job descriptions, employee manuals, and electronic mail are the types of written communication used for internal communication. For communicating with the external environment in writing, electronic mail, Internet Web sites, letters, proposals, telegrams, faxes, postcards, contracts, advertisements, brochures, and news releases are used.

Non-Verbal Communication

Nonverbal communication is the sending or receiving of wordless messages. We can say that communication other than oral and written, such as **gesture, body language, posture, tone of voice or facial expressions**, is called nonverbal communication. **Nonverbal communication is all about the body language of the speaker.**

Nonverbal communication helps the receiver in interpreting the message received. Often, nonverbal signals reflect the situation more accurately than verbal messages. **Sometimes nonverbal response contradicts verbal communication** and hence affects the effectiveness of the message.

Non-Verbal communication has the following three elements:

Appearance

Speaker: clothing, hairstyle, neatness, use of cosmetics

Surrounding: room size, lighting, decorations, furnishings

Body Language

facial expressions, gestures, postures

Sounds

Voice Tone, Volume, Speech rate

Types of Communication Based on Purpose and Style:

Based on style and purpose, there are two main categories of communication and they both bears their own characteristics. Communication types based on style and purpose are:

1. **Formal Communication**
2. **Informal Communication**

Formal Communication

In formal communication, certain rules, conventions and principles are followed while communicating a message. **Formal communication occurs in a formal and official style.** Usually, professional settings, corporate meetings, conferences undergo in formal pattern.

In formal communication, use of slang and foul language is avoided and correct pronunciation is required. Authority lines are needed to be followed in formal communication.

Informal Communication

Informal communication is done using channels that are in contrast with formal communication channels. It's just a casual talk. It is established for societal affiliations of members in an organization and face-to-face discussions. It happens among friends and family. **In informal communication use of slang words, foul language is not restricted.** Usually, informal communication is done orally and using gestures.

Informal communication, unlike formal communication, doesn't follow authority lines. In an organization, it helps in finding out staff grievances as people express more when talking informally. **Informal communication helps in building relationships.**

Types of Informal Communication

1. **Lateral/Horizontal**
2. **Diagonal**
3. **Grapevine**

Communication is the exchange of ideas, opinions and information through written or spoken words, symbols or actions. Communication is a dialogue, not a monologue. In fact, communication is more concerned with a dual listening process. For communication to be effective, the message must mean the same thing to both the sender and the receiver.

Types of Communication in an organization:

1. **Internal Communication**
2. **External Communication**

Internal Communication

Communication within an organization is called "**Internal Communication**". It includes all communication within an organization. It may be informal, formal function, or department providing communication in various forms to employees.

Under **Internal Communication**, types are:

Upward Communication

Upward communication is the flow of information from subordinates to superiors, or from employees to management. Without upward communication, management works in a vacuum, not knowing if the messages have been received properly, or if other problems

exist in the organization. By definition, communication is a two-way affair. Yet for effective two-way organizational communication to occur, it must begin from the bottom.

Upward Communication is a mean for the staff to:

- Exchange information
- Offer ideas
- Express enthusiasm
- Achieve job satisfaction
- Provide feedback

Downward Communication

Information flowing from the top of the organizational management hierarchy and telling people in the organization what is important (mission) and what is valued (policies).

Downward communication generally provides information – which allows a subordinate to do something. For example, instructions on how to complete a task. Downward communication comes after upward communications have been successfully established.

This type of communication is needed in an organization to:

- Transmit vital information
- Give instructions
- Encourage 2-way discussion
- Announce decisions
- Seek cooperation
- Provide motivation
- Boost morale
- Increase efficiency
- Obtain feedback

Both Downward & Upward Communications are collectively called “Vertical Communication”

Horizontal/ Lateral communication

In this communication, normally involves coordinating information, and allows people with the same or similar rank in an organization to cooperate or collaborate. Communication

among employees at the same level is crucial for the accomplishment of the assigned work.

Horizontal Communication is essential for:

- Solving problems
- Accomplishing tasks
- Improving teamwork
- Building goodwill
- Boosting efficiency

Diagonal communication

Diagonal communication includes the horizontal flow of information, among people on the same or similar organizational levels and the diagonal flow, among persons at different levels who have no direct reporting relationship with one another.

Grapevine

It is an informal, unofficial and personal communication channel or system that takes place within the organization as a result of rumour and gossip. It is a complex web of oral information flow linking all the members of the organization. The grapevine does not have any definite pattern or direction, though it is largely horizontal in nature. It can be effective horizontally, vertically and even diagonally.

External Communication

Communication with people outside the company is called “**external communication**”. Supervisors communicate with sources outside the organization, such as vendors and customers.

It leads to better:

- Sales volume
- Public credibility
- Operational efficiency
- Company profits

It should improve:

- Overall performance
- Public goodwill
- Corporate image

Ultimately, it helps to achieve:

- Organizational goals
- Customer satisfaction

Types of Communication based on Receivers:

It classifies communication according to the number of persons (receivers) to whom the message is addressed:

Intra-Personal Communication: It refers to talking to oneself in one's own mind. It is a communicator's internal use of language or thought. Examples: Asides or soliloquy in dramatic works.

Interpersonal Communication: It is the exchange of facts, information and messages between two persons. For example, a conversation, an interview, letter or dialogue, in which two persons interact (others may also be present as the audience). An author is also an example where he/she interacts messages with the reader, who is a silent audience in the author's mind.

Group Communication: It is an extension of interpersonal communication where more than two persons are involved in the exchange of ideas, messages, skills, and interests. Examples: Meeting in an organization, club or classroom, Committee meetings

Mass Communication: It refers to imparting and exchanging of information on a large scale to a wide range of people. It occurs when the information is shared with large groups of people. There are fewer chances of direct feedback as there is no personal contact between the senders and receivers. Examples: It can be done through various mediums such as newspaper, radio, or television, social networking etc. ***Click for [More detail on Mass Media](#)***

You can also refer to some textbooks and e-books for further study on this topic.

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Barriers to Effective Communication | UGC NET Paper 1

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Barriers to Effective Communication

Communication Barriers: There are many reasons why interpersonal communications may fail. In many communications, the message may not be received exactly the way the sender intended and hence it is important that the communicator seeks feedback to check that their message is clearly understood. There are many barriers to communication, and these may occur at any stage in the communication process. Barriers may lead to your message becoming distorted by causing confusion and misunderstanding.

Effective communication involves overcoming these barriers and conveying a clear and concise message.

Important Barriers to Effective Communication

There are some important barriers to effective communication.. they are categorised as follow:

Physical Barriers:

Communication is a two-way process, the distance between the sender and the receiver of the message is an important barrier to communication. Noise and environmental factors also block communication.

Personal Barriers:

Personal factors like difference in judgment, social values, inferiority complex, bias, attitude, the pressure of time, inability to communicate, etc. widen the psychological distance between the communicator and the communication. Credibility gap i.e., inconsistency between what one says and what one does, also, acts as a barrier to communication.

Semantic or Language Barriers:

Semantic is the science of meaning. The same words and symbols carry different meanings to different people. Difficulties in communication arise when the sender and the receiver of the message use words or symbols in different senses. The meaning intended by the sender may be quite different from the meaning followed by the receiver. People interpret the message in terms of their own behaviour and experience. Sometimes, the language used by the sender may not at all be followed by the receiver.

Status Barriers (Superior-Subordinate Relationship):

Status or position in the hierarchy of an organization is one of the fundamental barriers that obstruct the free flow of information. A superior may give only selected information to his subordinates so as to maintain status differences. Subordinates, usually, tend to convey only those things which the superiors would appreciate.

This creates distortion in upward communication. Such selective communication is also known as filtering. Sometimes, "the superior feels that he cannot fully admit to his subordinates those problems, conditions or results which may affect adversely on his ability and judgment. To do so would undermine his position as a superior being in the formal organization." This causes distortion in downward communication. A subordinate may also feel reluctant to report his shortcomings or may not seek clarification on instructions which are subject to different interpretations for fear of loss of prestige in the eyes of the superior.

Organizational Structure Barriers:

Effective communication largely depends upon the sound organizational structure. If the structure is complex involving several layers of management, the breakdown or distortion in communication will arise. It is an established fact that every layer cuts off a bit of information. Moreover, information travelling through formal structure introduces rigidity and causes delay because of long lines of communication. Similarly, lack of instructions for

further conveying information to the subordinates and heavy pressure of work at certain levels of authority also act as barriers to effective communication.

Barriers Due to Inadequate Attention:

Inadequate attention to the message makes communication less effective and the message is likely to be misunderstood. Inattention may arise because of over business of the communicate or because of the message being contrary to his expectations and beliefs. The simple failure to read notices, minutes and reports is also a common feature.

Whatever be the reason, communication remains only a one-way process and there is no understanding of the message if the receiver pays little attention to the message. In the words of Joseph Dooher. "Listening is the most neglected skill in communication." "half-listening is like racing your engine with the gears in neutral. You use gasoline but you get nowhere."

Premature Evaluation:

Some people have the tendency to form a judgment before listening to the entire message. This is known as premature evaluation. As discussed in the previous point, "half-listening is like racing your engine with the gears in neutral. You use gasoline but you get nowhere." Premature evaluation distorts understanding and acts as a barrier to effective communication.

Emotional Attitude:

Barriers may also arise due to emotional attitude because when emotions are strong, it is difficult to know the frame of mind of another person or group. Emotional attitudes of both, the communicator as well as the communicate, obstruct the free flow of transmission and understanding of messages.

Resistance to Change:

It is a general tendency of human beings to stick to old and customary patterns of life. They may resist change to maintain the status quo. Thus, when new ideas are being communicated to introduce a change, it is likely to be overlooked or even opposed. This resistance to change creates an important obstacle to effective communication.

Barriers Due to Lack of Mutual Trust:

Communication means sharing of ideas in common. “When we communicate, we are trying to establish a commonness.” Thus, one will freely transfer information and understanding with another only when there is mutual trust between the two. When there is a lack of mutual trust between the communicator and the communication, the message is not followed. Credibility gaps, i.e., inconsistency in saying and doing, also causes a lack of mutual trust which acts as a basic obstacle to effective communication.

Other Barriers:

There may be many other barriers, such as un-clarified assumptions, lack of ability to communicate, a mirage of too much knowledge of closed minds, communication overload, shortage of time, etc., which cause distortion or obstruction in the free flow of communication and thus make it ineffective. Failure to retain or store information for future use becomes a barrier to communication when the information is needed in future.

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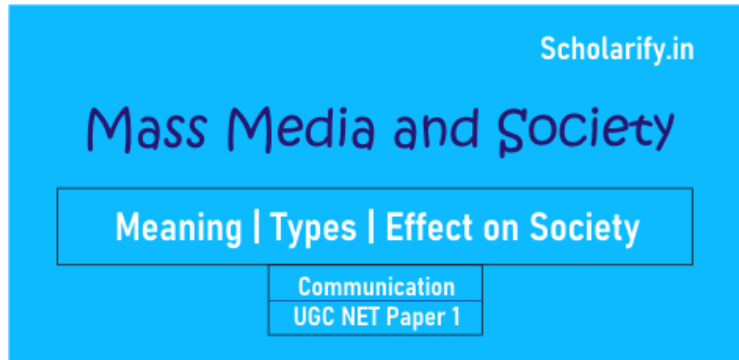
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Mass Media and Society | Communication | Paper 1

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Mass Media and Society

Mass media are the means of public communication reaching to the large, scattered, heterogeneous and anonymous audience at the same time. Mass media have been proved a boon to human society. Mass media is communication that is to a large group, or groups, of people in a short time. This can be written, spoken or broadcast communication. Some of the most popular forms of mass media are newspapers, magazines, radio, advertisements, social media, television, internet, and films/movies.

Mass communication refers to the technology that is used to communicate to a large group or groups of people in a short time frame.

Types of Mass Media

Mass media is not a new way of mass communication. Since starting of civilisation, messages or information used to convey through Dhol, Nagara, etc. Now, the medium has been changed but still, the functions are same i.e. convey the messages to masses. Mass Media can be classified according to their physical form, the technology involved and the nature of the communication process. They are:

1. **Traditional Media**
2. **Print Media**
3. **Electronic Broadcasting Media**
4. **Outdoor Media**

5. Transit Media

6. New Media (Digital Media)

Traditional Media:

Traditional Media is considered as the oldest forms of media, which transfers culture and tradition from generation to generation. Communication tools have been developed over some time from customs, rituals, beliefs and practices of society.

There are various forms of Traditional media:

- **Folk Arts and Music**
- **Theatres and Drama**
- **Fairs and Festivals**

Print Media

Print Media is the print form of information which is provided to the larger audience.

There are various forms of Print Media:

- **Newspapers**
- **Magazines, Periodicals and Journals**
- **Books, Novels and Comics**

Electronic Broadcasting Media

Distribution of content and information through audio and visuals using the electronic broadcasting medium is called Broadcast.

Broadcast media is a useful medium of the spread of news and information to even illiterate people and persons having a listening problem or eyesight problem as well.

There are various Electronic Broadcasting Medium:

Film: The Lumiere brothers made their first film *La sortie des usines Lumiere* (Workers Leaving the Lumiere Factory) using the camera patented by them in 1895 at the Eden Theatre in France.

The first feature film made on the Indian soil is Raja Harischandra, directed by Dhundiraj Govind Phalke in 1913. It was based on the story of King Harischandra.

Television: The word television literally means seeing things from distant places. In April 1925 John Logie Baird of London had set up his television apparatus in a London department store and demonstrated the first crude functioning of television.

Television was started as a modest affair in India on September 15, 1959, when the AIR set up an experimental television service in Delhi. Later, it was converted into full-fledged TV station. In 1993, **Asianet**, the first private television channel in India began telecasting.

Radio: Guglielmo Marconi of Italy invented the mode of transmitting sound signals without using wires. By 1901, Marconi succeeded in creating a wireless communication link between Europe and North America. Later in 1906, Lee Forest and John Fleming invented a vacuum tube, which made clear transmission of voice possible. This led to the first-ever radio broadcast in 1906 in the USA.

In India, radio broadcasting was started by amateur radio clubs. In June 1923, the Radio Club of Bombay made the first-ever broadcast in the country. In 1927, the Indian Broadcasting Company (IBC) was formed. In 1930, the government took over their transmitters and formed the Indian State Broadcasting Service (ISBS). In 1935, Lionel Fielden of BBC assumed charge as the first Controller of Broadcasting in India. In 1936, the Delhi station started functioning. The same year the company was renamed as All India Radio (AIR). From 1956 onwards AIR got another name 'Akashvani'. The Sanskrit word 'Akashvani' meaning 'celestial announcement' was coined by M.V.Gopalaswamy

Media Convergence is the process where several media channels or formats come together to exist and operate in synergy in a single device. It is a merger of different mass media. The convergence of media is visible in everyone's life. For example, now we use mobile phones to talk to friends, listen to music, watch movies, send emails, surf the web, read newspapers, take photographs or videos and to do more. Earlier we used separate devices like a tape recorder, radio, newspapers, television, still cameras and video cameras for these activities

Outdoor Media

Transmitting information and news when the public is outside their homes are also known as Outdoor Media or Out of Home Media. The importance of outside media is that it

provides information related to new products, social information or advertisement purposes to the masses.

Various forms of Outdoor Media are:

- **Signs and Placards**
- **Posters**
- **Banners and Wallspace**

Transit Media

Transit media revolve around the concept of advertising when customers are out of home and are going through any transport or on the go to public places. Advertisements are displayed on the public transport and vehicles on which brand promotion of a product and services take place.

Forms of Transit media are:

- **Bus Advertising**
- **Taxi Advertising**
- **Rail Advertising**

New Media (Digital Media)

The invention of the Internet and the World Wide Web opened up several new avenues for mass communication which include e-mail, websites, podcasts, e-books, blogging, social networking sites, Internet Protocol Television, Internet radio and the like. These kinds of online and digital means of producing, transmitting and receiving messages are called new media.

With speed and higher digital technology, the Internet has taken over all mediums of communications. Digital media is a two-way communication as users being active producers of content and consumers of content and information.

Digital or new media can be text, audio, graphics and video. This media is increasingly getting popular medium of exchange of information due to ease of accessibility with a computer and Internet Connection.

Digital Media (New Media) forms are:

- **Emails**
- **Websites**
- **Social Media and Networking sites like Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, etc.**
- **Blogging and Vlogging**
- **E-forums and E-books**
- **IPTV (Internet Protocol TV)**
- **Digital Videos**
- **Virtual world and Reality**
- **Webcast and Podcast**
- **Internet Radio**

Mass Media and Society

In a society like ours, mass media have a responsible role to play in fostering democracy, plurality and communal harmony through the functions listed below.

- **Information and Education.**
- **Socialisation**
- **Entertainment**
- **Political awareness**
- **Cultural transmission**
- **Catalyst to development**

After having a discussion on these ideal functions of mass media in any society, you will be able to analyse how our mass media perform their functions in our own society.

Information and Education functions

Mass media carry a lot of information which are essential for our daily life. We get benefited through examination results, weather forecasts, current affairs, traffic regulations, alerts, precautions, government policies etc. from mass media. The core of the media's information function is performed by the media content called news. Good media try to carry accurate, objective and complete information since biased or incomplete reports will keep the audience away from the media.

Media provide education and information side by side. It provides education in different subjects to people of all levels. They try to educate people directly or indirectly using different forms of content. Distance education program, for example, is a direct approach.

Dramas, documentaries, interviews, feature stories and many other programs are prepared to educate people indirectly. Especially in the developing country, mass media is used as effective tools for mass awareness.

Socialization

Mass media function as an agency for socialization. Socialization means empowering people to acquire norms and experiences of the group as a whole, to maintain cultural consensus and communal harmony. It is through mass media that we know the cultural and social norms of various groups in our society. Based on this information, individuals honour others and behave according to the common values and thus create an integrated society.

Entertainment

We all need the entertainment to break the monotony of our hectic, stressful life and divert our attention from the troubles and tensions. All media have entertainment content. Newspapers publish cartoons, comics, puzzles and special weekend supplements. The lion's share of magazine content such as short stories, novels, satires and comics are also intended to entertain the audience. Movies are another big stock for entertainment. Broadcast media such as television and radio primarily concentrate on entertainment function through their programmes based on sports, film, serials, music, dance, comedy, animation and fashion shows. Nowadays, entertainment has become a big industry comprising motion picture companies, music firms, theatre groups and game developers.

Political (Persuasion) functions

In television or newspapers, most of their content, especially news, is centred on politics in our society. We notice on a regular basis that panel discussions, reporting, editorials etc. focus on some issues for better living conditions, pro citizen policies, inflations, corruptions etc. Journalists also expose corruption, show up developments, and condemn or praise political activities considering their merits. These actions of the media make our democracy vibrant. Thus, mass media assume a key role in setting the agenda for the entire political system and policymaking by forming public opinion on various issues. This process is called the agenda-setting function. Mass media do this by highlighting some issues and avoiding others.

There are instances in which business tycoons and political leaders misuse this agenda-setting ability of media to keep their vested interests. Likewise, the media keep themselves

alert about misdoings and violations. We call the mass media as watchdog or guardian angel of a democratic society. This function is as important as that of other estates of democracy – the legislature, the bureaucracy and the judiciary. Thus, the **media is regarded as the Fourth Estate of Democracy.**

Cultural Transmission

Mass media are the bridge between our past and present. They report day to day affairs which will become the history of tomorrow. The best records of modern history are newspapers of yesteryears. We get our cultural tradition from history and we follow the best of them. In keeping our culture flowing, the media play a vital role. It focuses on the genuine aspects of our culture and points out the undesirable trends.

Media have a role in introducing new lifestyles and values. We all imbibe new fashions from films and fashion magazines and television programmes. You might have watched various programmes that introduce fashions, gadgets, food items, vehicles and the like. In short, media enrich our culture in two ways:

1. **transmitting culture and heritage from generation to generation and**
2. **introducing and spreading cultural values across various segments of society.**

Catalyst for Development

Mass media report problems faced by people in different walks of life and make the administrators aware of them. Media also make people aware of their rights, the details of government subsidies, development policies etc. They point out the merits and demerits of certain projects. In short, the media support development either being the advocates of government-sponsored development or critics of development projects which needs to be amended. This development-oriented function of media is termed as Development Communication. Thus, mass media work as a catalyst for the development of the society.

Effect on Society

If mass media function in a perfect manner, socially desirable acts like cooperation, tolerance, sharing, communal harmony and patriotism will bloom in the society. But there are criticisms that mass media can provoke behaviours that violate the prevailing desirable social norms. For example, some communication media carry contents featuring pornography and violence.

- Research studies show that overexposure to media contents, especially visual media contents, featuring violence and criminality can provoke violent behaviour in viewers, particularly among youths and children.
- Media can reinforce sex-role and communal stereotypes that lead to sexism and communalism.
- Excessive advertising may manipulate people into buying things they don't really want.
- Overexposure to media can have an impact on our most intimate and valued relationships since it consumes more and more of our available free time. Excessive use of television may reduce community involvement in various day to day issues and too much of social networking may displace face-to-face relationships. Communication media may affect physical health also.
- Over watching of television is associated with obesity in children. Cartoons with rapidly changing images and extreme colours may cause damages to the brain and eyes.

Media literacy

Media literacy is the ability to understand how mass media work, how they produce meanings, how they are organized and how to use them wisely. The goal of media literacy is to develop a literate person, who can read, analyse and evaluate communications in a variety of media.

Media Literacy involves:

- learning to use media wisely and effectively
- engaging in critical thinking while evaluating media messages
- evaluating the credibility of information from various sources
- recognizing media's influences on beliefs, attitudes, values, behaviours and the democratic process
- achieving greater understanding and appreciating multiple perspectives
- learning to express one's ideas using different forms of media.

Reputed media analyst, **James Potter** says that in this media-rich world we live in two worlds: **the real world and the media world**. The media world bombards us with messages, often with sublimity, that invade our real-world space. Media messages are multi-layered and not always what they seem to be. A media literate is able to unwrap these layers and choose what he/she wants to believe, reclaiming the ability to perceive the real world.

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