



**EIILM UNIVERSITY**  
SIKKIM

## **COMMUNICATION PRINCIPLES**

# COMMUNICATION PRINCIPLES

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## LESSON 1: WHAT IS COMMUNICATION?

Contents: Introduction, Definitions, Features of communication, Significance of communication in human life- personal life, professional life, civic life, need for communication and Speech and Language as foundation for society.

### **Learning Objectives**

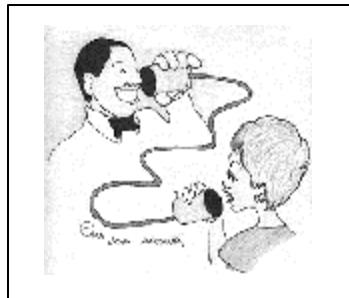
- To define communication
- To know the significance of communication in personal life and relationships
- To know the importance of communication in professional life
- To know the importance of communication in civic life
- To learn how speech and language is base for any society.

### **What is Communication?**

#### **Introduction**

You have been communicating all your life; you might wonder why you need to study communication? One answer is that formal study can improve skill. Some people have a natural talent for singing or cricket. Yet they could be even more effective if they took voice lessons or studied theories of offensive or defensive play. Likewise, even if you communicate well now, learning more can make you more effective. Theories and principles of communication also help us make sense of what happens in our everyday lives, and they help us to have influence.

You are born with the capacity to communicate. You are capable of making utterances and gestures that enable us to send messages to other people. Being able to communicate well is, however, a skill. You spend more time communicating than doing anything else. We talk, listen, think, share confidences with inmates, ask and answer questions, participate on teams, attend public presentations, exchange information with co-workers, watch television programmes and so forth. From birth to death communication is central to our personal, professional, and civic lives.



Communication is a truly remarkable process. Clearly the most complex form of behavior in which we engage, it sharply separates us from other members of the animal kingdom. Through the use of words and other signs and symbols for which we share meanings, we perceive, evaluate, and respond to the physical and social world around us.

Communication is not only the basis of human thought, it is the means by which each of us develops an individual pattern of beliefs, attitudes, and values—the personal attributes that bring us to understand, misunderstand, accept, or reject others who are like or unlike ourselves. In that sense, communication is the foundation of an effective democratic and multicultural society.

#### **Defining Communication**

A definition is a useful and logical place to start our exploration of communication. Definitions clarify concepts by indicating their boundaries. They focus attention on what is important about whatever it is we are defining. Unfortunately, no single definition of communication does this to everyone's satisfaction.

Communicating well or poorly can spell the difference between success and failure in human relationships of almost every kind. Most of us already have deeply established communication habits that serve us well or poorly and may be difficult to change. But whatever skill we may possess, we can always improve. Gaining in the ability to communicate with and influence other brings significant rewards.

Communication is the act of transmitting verbal and non-verbal information and understanding between seller and buyer. The process by which information and feelings are shared by people through an exchange of verbal and non-verbal messages.

In the context of medical education, its primary function is to establish understanding between patient and doctor. In an atmosphere of effective communication, patients improve faster, cope better with post-operative pain, require less psychotropic drugs, and experience numerous other health benefits.



The creation of shared understanding through interaction among two or more agents. Communication depends upon interpretation of some message by the listener. Shared understanding is constructed through the detection and repair of misunderstandings (as opposed to a one-way transmission of data). The understanding created through communication can never be absolute or complete, but instead is an interactive and ongoing process in which common ground, i.e., assumed mutual beliefs and mutual knowledge, is accumulated and updated.

The interchange of ideas across space. Its fullest definition is the consideration and action of impelling an impulse or particle from source-point across a distance to receipt-point, with the intention

of bringing into being at the receipt-point duplication and understanding of that which emanated from the source-point.

The process of transmitting and receiving messages. According to Roman Jakobson and others, an analysis of this process yields six factors: addresser, addressee, contact (or channel), context, code, and the message itself. Corresponding to these factors are six functions: emotive, conative, reference, metalinguistic (or metacommunicative), and aesthetic or poetic.



So far we've been using the word *communication* as if we agreed on what it means. Yet the word has many definitions. In 1970, communication theorist Frank Dance counted more than 100 distinct definitions of communication proposed by experts in the field. In the years since that survey, even more definitions have surfaced. By drawing from these multiple definitions, we can define communication as a systemic process in which people interact with and through symbols to create and interpret meanings.

### Features of Communication

'The definition of communication has three important facets. We'll discuss each of them.

**Process** - Communication is a process, which means that it is ongoing and always-in motion. It's hard to tell when communication starts and stops because

what happened before we talk with someone may influence our interaction, and what occurs in a particular encounter may affect the future. That communication is a process means it is always in motion, moving forward and changing continuously. We cannot freeze communication at anyone moment.

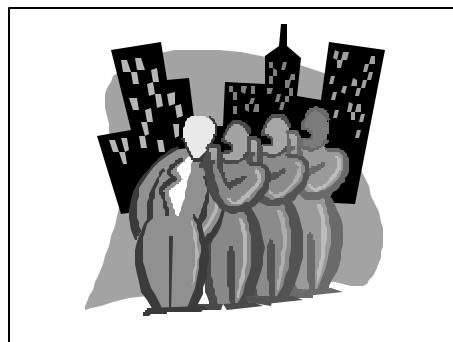
**Systemic** - Communication takes place within systems. A system consists of interrelated parts that affect one another. In family communication, for instance, each family member is part of the system. In addition, the physical environment and the time of day are elements of the system that affect interaction. People interact differently in a living room than they do on a beach, and we may be more alert at certain times of day than others. The history of a system also affects communication. If a family has a history of listening sensitively and working out problems constructively, when someone says, "There's something we need to talk about," the others are unlikely to become defensive. On the other hand, if the family has a record of nasty conflicts and internal strife, the same comment might arouse strong defensiveness. A lingering kiss might be an appropriate way to show affection in a private setting, but the same action would raise eyebrows in an office.



Communication is also affected by the larger systems within which it takes place. For example, different cultures have distinct understandings of appropriate verbal and nonverbal behaviors. Many Asian cultures place a high value on saving face, so Asians try not to cause personal embarrassment to others by disagreeing overtly. It would be inappropriate to perceive people from Asian cultures as passive simply because they don't assert themselves in the same ways that many Westerners do. Arab cultures consider it normal to be nearer to one another when talking than most Westerners find comfortable. And in Bulgaria, head nods mean no rather than yes (Munter, 1993). Thus, to interpret communication we have to consider the systems in which it takes place.

**Symbolic Communication** is symbolic. It relies symbols, which are abstract, arbitrary, and ambiguous representations of other things. We might symbolize love by giving a ring, saying "I love you," or closely embracing the other person. A new title and a larger office can symbolize a promotion. Remember that human communication involves interaction with and through symbols.

**Meanings** Finally, our definition focuses on meanings, which are at the heart of communication. Meanings are the significance we bestow on phenomenon, or what they signify to us. We do not find meanings in experience itself. Instead, we use symbols to create meanings.



### The Significance of Communication in Human Life

No field of study has more important implication for our lives in contemporary society than that which looks systematically at the process of human communication. Everything we do, from making friends to governing a nation, would be impossible if human beings were unable to communicate with speech and language. It is no exaggeration to say that communication *is at the heart of human existence*. Indeed, all of the great advances in civilization that have occurred since prehistoric times--in government, law, science, education, religion, the arts, and many others--depended on improved systems of communication. About 40,000 years ago our direct forbears, the Cro-Magnon, developed the ability to speak. Earlier hominids, such as the Neanderthal, were unable to do so because of the physiological

structure of their tongue, facial muscles, and voice box. Developing speech and language separated the Cro-Magnon from other hominids and from related animal species. With the ability to think, reason and communicate in complex ways, the human species went on to invent writing, then printing, and in modern times to develop our sophisticated electronic media. It was those long and often difficult changes—constantly extending our ability to communicate more swiftly, widely, and accurately—that enabled us to advance far beyond the level of our primitive forebears.



According to the social constructionist perspective, communication is the collective creation of meaning. It is not something that goes on between us but, rather, something that surrounds us and holds our world together. Communication is at the heart of our everyday lives. From the moment we wake in the morning, thinking about the challenges of the day ahead, to the moment we drift off to sleep last thing at night, we are constantly in the process of communicating. We do so either as senders or receivers of messages.

In some cases, such as our early morning thoughts, the communication is within and to our self. Just think how important the process of communication is in so many everyday situations: We speak to, listen to, and interact with other people. We do this face-to-face or on the telephone. We communicate in formal situations (such as sitting in class listening to a teacher) as well as in informal situations (chatting with friends and family).

We use written language to communicate. We read and write letters, notes, reports, essays, instructions and shopping lists. Many of us use electronic technology to send and receive e-mails or to surf the net.

Wherever we go we are the receivers of the messages. Newspaper headlines, billboards, street signs, shop windows, public announcements and traffic lights all send us messages. In a media-saturated society they compete for and demand our attention to the point where it is impossible to ignore them.

We use the mass media as a source of messages that offer us both information and entertainment. We listen to the radio, to CDs; we watch television and DVDs and read newspapers and magazines. The current revolution in our nation's communication processes is more than just replacing traditional paper based media with computer screens or other technological marvels. It is also a set of significant modifications in the way we collectively relate to each other. That is, the transition to new communication technologies has both personal and social consequences.



### The need for Communication

A human being's need for communication is as strong and as basic as the need to eat, sleep and love. It is both an individual and a social need. It is both a natural demand and a requirement of social existence to use communication resources in order to engage in the sharing of experiences, through symbol-mediated interaction. The severest punishment for a child is to be isolated, to be left alone, not to be spoken to. Grown ups too and especially the aged need company, need to communicate. Society punishes criminals by locking them up in solitary cells, thus starving them of basic need, and indeed the fundamental right to communicate. Communication involves active interactions with environments—physical, biological and social. Deprived of this interaction we would not be aware of whether we are safe or in danger, whether hated or loved, or satisfied or hungry. However, most of us take this interaction and this relationship for granted, unless, we experience some deprivation of it.



The basic human need for communication can perhaps be traced to the process of mankind's evolution from lower species. Animals for instance, have to be in sensory communication with their physical and biological surroundings to find food, protect themselves and reproduce their species. A loss of sensation—the inability to hear a predator, for instance—can mean loss of life. Similarly, to be lost from primitive social communication—from the pack, from the herd or the tribe—is to be condemned to death. Those who have been isolated for a period of time from human company are known to have experienced nightmarish hallucinations. Indeed, social isolation can also be hazardous to the heart as much as to the mind. It is estimated that single men

without close friends run two or three times the risk of developing heart disease as their more sociable counterparts.

However, lack of communication can be as disorienting an experience as too much of it. Indeed, the apparent effects of sensory deprivation and sensory overload are frequently similar: anxiety, apathy, impaired judgement, strange visions and something akin to schizophrenia. The information explosion brought about by satellite television, the Internet and other technologies is an instance of this sensory overload.

### Personal Life

Personal LGeorge Herbert Mead (1934) said that humans are talked into humanity. He meant that we gain personal identity by communicating with others. In our earliest years our parents told us who we were: "You're smart," "You're so strong," "You're such a funny one." We first see ourselves through the eyes of others, so their messages form important foundations of our self-concepts. Later we interact with teachers, friends, romantic partners, and coworkers who communicate their views of us. Thus, how we see ourselves reflects the views of us that others communicate.

The profound connection between communication and identity is dramatically evident in children who are deprived of human contact. Case studies of children who were isolated from others show that they have no concept of themselves as humans, and their mental and psychological development is severely hindered by lack of language.

Communication also directly influences our physical well-being. Research consistently shows that communicating with others promotes health, whereas social isolation is linked to stress, disease, and early death (Crowley, 1995). People who lack close friends have greater levels of anxiety and depression than people who are close to others (Hojat, 1982; Jones & Moore, 1989). Heart disease is also more common among people who lack strong interpersonal relationships (Ruberman, 1992).



### Personal Relationships

Communication is a key foundation of personal relationships. We build connections with others revealing our private identities, asking questions, listening to the answers, working out problems, remembering shared history, and planning a future. A primary distinction between relationships that endure and those that collapse is effective communication. People who learn how to discuss their thoughts and feelings, adapt to each other, and manage conflict constructively tend to sustain intimacy over time.

Communication is important for more than solving problems or making disclosures. For most of us, everyday talk and nonverbal

interaction are the essence of relationships. Although dramatic moments affect relationships, it is unremarkable, everyday interaction that sustains the daily rhythms of our intimate connections.

### Professional Life

Communication skills are critical for success in professional life. The importance of communication is obvious in professions such as teaching, law, sales, and counseling, where talking and listening are central to effectiveness. Many attorneys, counselors, and businesspeople major in communication before pursuing specialized training. Even highly technical jobs such as computer programming, accounting, and film editing require communication skills. Specialists have to be able to listen carefully to the needs of their clients and customers. They also need to be skilled in explaining technical ideas to people who lack their expertise. Developing communication skills is important no matter what your career goals are.



### Civic life

Communication skills are also important for the health of our society. From painting on the walls of caves to telling stories in village squares to interacting on the Internet, people have found ways to communicate with each other to build a common social world. To be effective, citizens in a democracy must be able to express ideas and evaluate the ethical and logical strength of claims other people advance. To make informed judgments, voters need to listen critically to candidates' arguments and responses to questions. We also need to listen critically to speakers who make proposals about goals for the institutions at which we work, as well as those on which we depend for services.

Communication skills are especially important for effective, healthy interaction in a socially diverse world. In pluralistic cultures such as ours, we need to understand and work with people who differ from us. Healthy civic and social engagements depend on our ability to listen thoughtfully to a range of perspectives and to adapt our communication to diverse people and contexts. Communication is important for personal, relationship, professional, and civic and cultural well-being. Because communication is a cornerstone of human life, your decision to study it will serve you well.

### Speech and Language as the Foundation for Thought and Society

The insight that speech and language provide the foundation of human thought and the basis of societal life is very old. As early as the 17<sup>th</sup> century it had become clear that the ability to use words to convey ideas from one person to another was what

separated human beings most sharply from animals. In 1690 the English philosopher John Locke published an analysis of these relationships in his famous *Essay Concerning Human Understanding*. Although his style of writing now seems old-fashioned by contemporary standards, what he said remains true:

God having designed Man for a sociable Creature made him not only with an inclination, and under a necessity to have fellowship with those of his own kind; but furnished him with language, which was to become the great Instrument, and common Type of Society. Man therefore had by Nature his Organs so fashioned, as to be fit to frame articulate sounds, which we shall call Words. But this was not enough to produce language; for Parrots, and several other Birds, will be taught to make articulate Sounds distinct enough, which yet, by no means are capable of Language.

In other words, Locke saw that human beings are social by nature and use language as a basis of their group life. In addition, while the sounds people use in communicating can sometimes be imitated, animals cannot use them to communicate in the way human beings do.

Locke went on to point out that the process of *thinking* also depends on the use of words because they “stand as Signs of Internal Conceptions,” that is, as “Marks for the Ideas within his own Mind.” Thus, Locke concluded that the use of speech and language is a necessary condition for organizing human society on the one hand, and for engaging in imagination and individual thought on the other. These remarkably accurate insights remain consistent with our knowledge today.

To create meaning with language and to interact with others, we follow rules of communication and we punctuate interaction. Regulative rules, as we have seen, specify when, where, with whom, and how we communicate. In addition, we follow constitutive rules that define the meaning of specific forms of communication within particular social groups. A final aspect of creating the meaning of communication is punctuating beginnings and endings of interaction. The ability to use language allows human to create meaning in their lives. By defining, evaluating, and classifying phenomenon, language allows us to order our experiences and feelings. We increase the effectiveness of our communication when we strive for accuracy and clarity in language, own our thoughts and feelings, and qualify language appropriately.

### Review questions

- Define Communication and explain its significance in human life?
- Describe how Language is integral part of communication process?

### Suggested Readings

- Sarah Trenholm: *Thinking Through Communication*, Second Edition, Allyn and Bacon
- Julia T Wood: *Communication Mosaics*, Second Edition, Wadsworth
- DeFleur/ Kearney/ Plax: *Fundamentals of Human Communication*, Mayfield Publishing Company
- Keval J kumar: *Mass Communication in India*, Jaico Publishing House

- C S Rayudu: *Communication*, Himalaya Publishing House



### Notes

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## LESSON 2:

### DIMENSIONS OF COMMUNICATION

#### **Dimensions of communication**

The human species is hard-wired for communication. There is literally nothing we can do to NOT communicate. Why? Because communication is the fundamental means by which humans have evolved into the dominant species on the planet. In other words, communication enhances, if not guarantees, our survival. By the age of four all normal children have acquired the rules of their native language with literally no formal instruction beyond day-to-day interaction. As a matter of fact, infants and toddlers in all cultures acquire language at the same rate, and no matter what the language, all of them make exactly the same grammatical mistakes.

Watch people interact at work, in the grocery store, at the bank. Start paying attention. Communication is always and everywhere occurring. There is literally nothing we can do, short of dying or dropping into a coma, to NOT communicate. Now consider how much of what you're observing about the communication in the world is absolutely unconscious, automatic and unintentional. Communication surrounds and pervades us, like water surrounds and pervades fish. And we don't even notice.



There is more to communication than just exchanging and sharing the ideas. Human communication processes are quite complex. We differentiate verbal and nonverbal, oral and written, formal and informal, and intentional and unintentional communication. In addition, there is human-animal communication and human-computer communication. That leaves me to wonder what might happen if we all started paying attention to how we communicate, instead of just babbling like four-year-olds. Could we, if we started communicating intentionally, impact violence in the world?

In today's society a command of effective communication is far more critical than at any previous time in history. Skills in communicating with others and managing human relationships have become more important than those related to working with one's hands. In fact, shortly after the mid 20th century, we emerged into what scholars call the "information society." That is, we now collectively spend more time and energy manipulating "symbols"—words and numbers—than we do manufacturing "things."

#### **Verbal and Nonverbal Communication**

When we think of communication, we usually think of spoken messages. However, experts usually divide communication into two primary categories: verbal and nonverbal communication. Verbal communication involves the use of symbols that generally have universal meanings for all who are taking part in the process.

such, verbal communication may be spoken or written. These spoken or written verbal symbols are known as words. For example our name is a symbol that represents us. Democracy is a symbol for a particular political system. Additionally, verbal communication is highly structured and uses formal rules of grammar. Nonverbal communication involves the use of symbols other than the written or spoken word, such as gestures, eye behavior, tone of voice, use of space, and touch. Although nonverbal symbols have socially shared meanings, they have no formal structure or rules of grammar.

#### **Non-verbal Communication**

##### **Meaning and Nature:**

Communicating a message without using arbitrary symbols i.e., words or meaning of words, is termed as non-verbal communication. In other words, non-verbal communication is word less communication. You can use many ways of communication, both verbal and non-verbal. Non-verbal languages consist of hidden messages; it is the cues, which convey message. These messages are necessarily wordless or non-verbal, conveyed through without resorting to words or meaning of words, but conveyed through other media like spatial, kinesics, oral cues, objective language action, etc. Kinesics is the most generally used medium of communication. Actions like stroking, hilling, holding, patting and hand shaking convey meaningful messages.



Behavioral expressions or cues that do not rely on words or word symbols are known as non-verbal communication. Words alone in many cases, not adequate to express our feelings and reactions. When someone remarks that he does not know how to express himself in words, it can be concluded that his feelings are too intense and complex to be expressed in words. Non-verbal messages express true feelings more accurately than the spoken or written language. Both kinds of data can be transmitted intentionally or unintentionally. Even smile symbolizes friendliness; in much the same way as cordially is expressed in words. Verbal and non-verbal behaviour may be duplication of one another. If a person says: "Please have a seat" and points towards chair, they can be complimentary. For example, a person smiles and explains "Come in, I am pleased to see you." The two codes, verbal and non-verbal- can be contradictory.

Nonverbal messages usually complement verbal messages, such as a service station attendant usually points and uses other gestures while giving directions to a stranger from out of town. At other times, nonverbal symbols completely replace verbal messages. Teachers with cold, fixed stares can easily tell students to be quiet without uttering a word. When nonverbal messages contradict what you say verbally, others usually believe the nonverbal message. For example, when a woman tells a man that she is interested in hearing about the motivational sales seminar he attended, but she continues reading her computer screen, she communicates a lack of interest.

### Forms or Media of Non-Verbal Communication:

Different experts and specialists have classified non-verbal communication into various categories. However, the media of non-verbal communication are discussed in the following paragraphs classified appropriately:

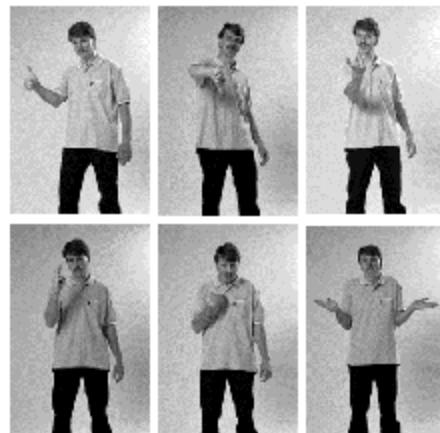
**Sign Language:** (sign lan·guage) NOUN: A language that uses a system of manual, facial, and other body movements as the means of communication, especially among deaf people. The manual communication used by people who have hearing impairments. The gestures or symbols in sign language are organized in a linguistic way, and each sign has three distinct parts: the hand shape, the position of the hands, and the movement of the hands. Sign language is not universal. American Sign Language (ASL or Ameslan) is not based on English or any other spoken language and is used by the majority of deaf in the United States. Two sign systems, which are based on English, are Signed Exact English (SEE sign) and Signed English (Siglish). Marks or symbols used to mean something is termed as signs of language. Language of hand shapes, facial expressions, and movements used as a form of communication. Method of communication for people who are deaf or hard of hearing in which hand movements, gestures, and facial expressions convey grammatical structure and meaning.

a	b	c	d	e
f	g	h	i	j
k	l	m	n	o
p	q	r	s	t
u	v	w	x	y
z	Sign Language (ASL)			

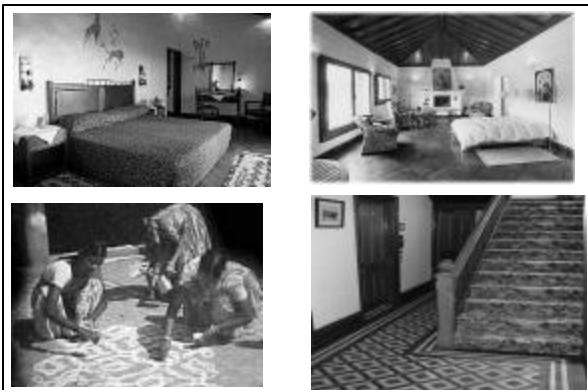
ZERO	ONE	TWO	THREE	FOUR
FIVE	SIX	SEVEN	EIGHT	NINE

**Action Language:** It is a language of movements. Action speaks louder than words. By action, one may knowingly or unknowingly be communicating with others. Included in the category of actions are general motions such as walking, as well as the specific gestures like shaking hands, namaste, facial expressions etc. The study of body movements including gestures, postures and facial expressions is called Kinesics. Gesture comprises an entire subset of behaviors involving movement. Some are cultural indicators and are specific to a particular group. Others may be connected to job or an occupation as in signals used at airports or the hand signal used on a noisy construction site or traffic signals etc.



Everyday, you may be using gestures constantly and without much thought- wrinkling your nose when discussing something unpleasant or shrugging your shoulders when a friend asks for your opinion and you are sure you have one. A persons' overall body orientation or posture typically communicates his or her level of interest, liking, and openness. Hand and body movements demonstrate and reinforce meanings intended by verbal messages. For example, pointing to your sweater on the chair while explaining that 'it is lying over there'. Others include stretching your arms over your head to emphasize your fatigue, slapping your hands against your head in effort to recall a thought etc. Unintentional hand, arm, leg or other bodily movements used to reduce stress or relieve boredom. For example, waiting endlessly for your turn at the doctor's office may elicit such actions such as pencil tapping, nail biting or chewing eyeglasses or frame or file etc.

**Objective language:** (Artifacts) Objective language medium of non-verbal communication indicate display and arrangement of material things. If you have the largest office in a building all to your self, and other people find themselves crowded four or five in a same size or smaller room, you can be sure that the status and power implications of your space are clear to everyone. Objective language with reference to silence or non-verbal communication refers to dress and decoration, which communicate a great deal about the speaker's feelings emotions, attitudes, opinions etc. Clocks, jewellery, hairstyle, they all communicate something especially about that person. Dress of army men differs from civilians, land army, air force and naval personnel according to their rank. The executive look is different between men and women.



This method may include intentional or unintentional communication of material things like clothing, ornaments, books, buildings, room furniture, interior decorations etc. Objective communication is non-verbal message communicated through appearance of objects. These objects exist in a particular cultural setting only.

**Spatial or Environmental:** It is relating to the place or environment in which the actual process of communication takes place. It may be physical or psychological. The environment for communication must be congenial and conducive to effective communication. For example, in group communication it is the responsibility of the group leader

**Silence:** In many circumstances, silence also is an effective medium of communication. Through silence, people evoke response from others. In a number of situations if no response or reply is received within a specific period or happening of a situation, the silence on the part of respondent signifies communication. The practice of silence is usually taken as approved in number of personal, business and social transactions as practice, custom, tradition or understanding. Sometimes, silence itself is considered equivalent to speech. In some cases, silence is considered as fraud and in some other cases it is not fraud. Thus silence is likely to affect the willingness and consent of another person also. However, silence as a medium of communication is considered as a dangerous mode of communication.

**Demonstration:** It is a process of showing how something works. It indicates a display or exhibition of how something works. It is a public expression of opinion by holding meetings and processions showing play cards. Demonstration is made and dramatised as a means of emphasis on the subject under consideration. Take for instance, a salesman giving a demonstration to a person or group of persons as to how to operate the product. Such demonstrations naturally work out to be more effective than providing written or oral description of the same. Demonstration as to how to use or operate a particular product provides a clear and better understanding of a product.

**Proxemics:** The distance that the people keep themselves between the speaker and the listener is termed as Proxemics. Generally, people are not conscious and aware about Proxemics but the distance affect interpersonal communication. Personal space is an invisible factor or rule. Space between persons indicates relations at the same time and is a dimension of interpersonal communication.

Cultural patterns regulate personal space and interpersonal communication. They are unspoken and invisible rules governing personal distance. People who stand too near when they are more intimate. When they are not so close, they should be at a distance.

**Time:** Use of time is also as chronemics as an important non-verbal method of communication. Time also conveys the message. Time speaks. Punctuality or delay speaks pleasant or unpleasant feelings and attitudes. Late arrival to attend a meeting conveys something. In certain circumstances, arriving at an appointed place on or before time communicate something. A telephone call at too early hours or late night conveys, significant message. For instance, a telephone call at 1.00am or 2.00 am, communicates something of urgency, unusual message to be attended to on a priority basis.

**Paralanguage:** Another important dimension is paralanguage. Sounds are the basis of paralanguage. It includes tone of voice, power or emphasis, pitch, rhythm, volume, pause or break in sentence, speed of delivery, loudness or softness, facial expressions, gestures, body movements, postures, eye contact, touch etc.

To sum up: Ray Birdwhistell is a notable authority on non-verbal communication. According to his estimate in face-to-face communication the words spoken account less than 35% of the total meaning produced while remaining 65% is obtained by non-verbal cues. A person's behaviour has a message potential. Thus non-verbal cues perform useful purposes to restate the verbal message, contradicting the spoken messages, complementing verbal messages, accenting and regulating the flow of conversation.

### Verbal communication

Whenever you communicate to yourself- listener, thinker, and person aware of nonverbal communication- has many of the tools that you need to be effective in a variety of situations. Even though you spend most of your communication time listening and thinking, your most frequent interaction with others will probably focus on verbal messages. To be complete, those interactions and messages will be carried in both non-verbal and verbal form. Earlier you learned about non-verbal communication. Now it is time to look closely at another component: verbal communication.

Verbal- the dictionary meaning 'of the word verbal is of words, in words, expresses in words, oral spoken, said, voiced, vocal, uttered, or written.' The way we use words- that is, verbal communication- is one of the distinguishing characteristics of our species. To create some meaning out of the words we need to follow certain rules of particular language. Language is first thing people think about when discussing communication.

To simplify matters, let us say that like non-verbal symbols we do use some verbal symbols to communicate. Verbal symbols are the words we speak or write. These words belong to one or more languages such as Bengali, Tamil, Japanese, French or English. There is a general belief that words have clear and specific meanings compared to non-verbal symbols. This belief is misplaced. Words are no better than non-verbal symbols in projecting specific meanings because words have no fixed meanings either. Dictionaries help us get a rough idea of what semantic areas they stand for. But what a word really means for an individual depends on several factors including his knowledge in general, background,

personal experiences and even the mood he is in. Vast differences in the perception of word-meanings are applicable not only to things and events specific to certain cultures or regions (e.g. oasis, snow, monsoon, bandh) but also to everyday things and events all over the world (e.g. food, mother, death, wedding, school). Each word triggers a large number of images in our minds. A few of them are the same as or comparable to the images triggered in other's minds; the rest are different. Take 'death' for example. For someone who hasn't lost a loved one, 'death' is 'cessation of life', a process all living beings have to go through. For someone who has lost a loved one, or for someone who knows he is suffering from a terminal illness, or for someone who has been sentenced to death, it has vastly different meanings.

It is not only common words that display variations in meaning. Even well defined scientific words are prone to this phenomenon, but to a smaller extent. Take 'molecule' or 'plasma'. A scientist's notion of these words is very different from and richer than that of an undergraduate student's although both follow the same definitions.

### **Verbal & Non- Verbal Constellation**

Most of our communication depends on a combination of verbal and non-verbal symbols. Of these, verbal symbols can be totally eliminated from certain acts of communication without any loss in the reconstruction of the intended message provided the non-verbal component is rich. Imagine, for example that you want to buy a railway platform ticket. You approach the exclusive counter for it. You push the exact price of one ticket through the counter. The counter clerk takes the cash and hands you a single platform ticket. The whole series of communication acts is accomplished without either party displaying

a single verbal symbol. Desirable aspects of politeness may, however, be missing in this process. For the usual verbal accompaniment, "A platform ticket, please", doesn't add any vital information here. All it does is to make the transaction a little polite.

The richer the non-verbal components, the less the need for verbal symbols. The weaker the nonverbal component the greater the need for elaborating the verbal symbols. We have already seen in the example above that verbal symbols can be totally eliminated if the non-verbal symbols can do the job on their own. Let us see what happens when the non-verbal symbols are progressively reduced. Imagine that you are at the "current booking" counter of a railway station- the counter from where you can get second class tickets for train journeys starting from that station within twenty-four hours of purchase. You want a second-class ticket to Bangalore. Handing in the exact fare will not be enough for the clerk to give you what you need. So you supply a few verbal symbols- "One ticket to Bangalore please." If you can get first *and* second-class tickets from the same counter, you elaborate the verbal symbols further- "One *second-class* ticket to Bangalore, please." The greater the need for elaborating verbal symbols, the more abstract, and therefore, the more difficult the process of communication. Of all forms of communication, writing is the most difficult and least liked because it generally demands the highest levels of elaboration. While writing the communicator has to systematically find words that will take the place of the absent non-verbal symbols.

The job is delicate because one wrong letter of the alphabet or one wrong punctuation mark and the message could be interpreted differently. To make matters worse, you won't be around to correct them if they misinterpret what you've put in.

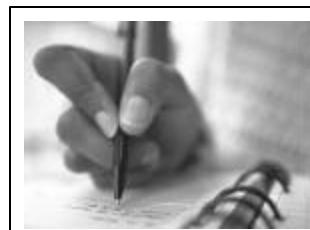
### **Oral and Written Communication**

Oral communication refers to messages that are transmitted aloud. Generally they involve both verbal and nonverbal messages. Written communication is taking place right now as you read this book. Although this type of communication is primarily verbal, it also has a nonverbal dimension. For example, you probably get a different feeling when you receive a personal, hand-written Christmas card than when you are given a mass-product printed one from your insurance company. Although oral and written communication involves the creation and sending of messages, they differ in a number of ways. Wallach (1990) argues that these two forms of communication have three primary differences: processing, style, and form.



Processing differences lie in the nature of the two types of messages themselves. Oral messages are continuous, with words and sounds spoken in a connected way. Thus, when we talk, we generally do not focus on individual words or sounds, unless (1) a communication breakdown occurs; (2) the speaker talks with an accent; or (3) the source or receiver stops and asks about a given sound or word. On the other hand, written communication involves the processing of segmented or discrete letter units, marked by boundaries of white space on the page. Thus, when we learn to read, we have to figure out how individual letters and words go together to reflect the continuous sounds we are used to hearing orally. This processing difference is one of the main reasons why we can't read just because we can talk. To read, we must become a linguist of sorts and bring our knowledge of spoken language to the surface in order to analyze and understand written language.

Written messages often use a more formal style of language, while oral messages are more conversational and informal, depending on our audience, however, oral and written communications are not mutually exclusive. Many television commercials use written reinforcement of an oral message, for example showing a graphic while stressing the effectiveness of a new toothbrush design.



Oral and written communication also differs in form. While oral messages are generally personal, spontaneous, and shred within some context, written message are less personal and more literate in form. In contrast, oral communication is participant and situation-oriented, while written communication generally is associated with the public sphere. If you think for a moment about these differences in form, you will understand why humans have difficulty putting their “feelings” on paper. By making the switch from a whispered thought or spoken dialogue to a letter or poem, indeed, we are able to preserve the moment for posterity. In almost every instance, however, the spontaneity and “life” associated with the message will be lost.

### Formal and Informal Communication

When we are involved in formal communication such as public speaking or mass communication, we pay more attention to both verbal and nonverbal messages. For instance, we use language more precisely and pay more attention to grammar. Additionally, we use language more precisely and pay more attention to grammar. Additionally, we are more concerned about the image that our dress, posture, and eye contact help convey. Formal communication usually occurs in the context of status differences. For example, during an appointment with a university dean, a student probably would avoid using slang, sit up straight, dress neatly, and make eye contact.



In informal communication, such as interpersonal and small-group communication, people are more at ease and can be themselves. Observers would notice more hesitations and slang in verbal messages and less attention to nonverbal messages such as clothing, posture, and eye contact. When going to a party at a friend’s house, you probably wouldn’t hesitate to sit on the floor, go to the refrigerator for something to eat, or use the telephone. At a party at your boss’s house, however, you probably would be hesitant about taking any of these actions.

### Intentional and Unintentional Communication

Intentional communication occurs when messages are sent with specific goals in mind. Comedians such as Rita Rudner and Sinbad tell jokes to get laughs and entertain audiences. Radio spots are designed to persuade people to vote for local candidates, buy products, or donate time and money.

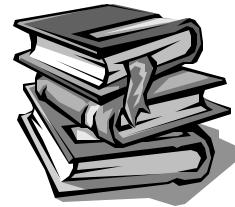
Unintentional communication takes place without the communicators being aware of it. The greatest number of unintentional messages is nonverbal. Our nonverbal behaviors often speak louder than words. Students or employees who are continually late for class or work might be communicating that they are moonlighting, are irresponsible, or have unreliable alarm clocks.

### Review questions

- What are the various dimensions of communication process?
- Describe how body language compliments verbal symbols?

### Suggested Readings

- Sarah Trenholm: Thinking Through Communication, Second Edition, Allyn and Bacon
- Julia T Wood: Communication Mosaics, Second Edition, Wadsworth
- DeFleur/ Kearney/ Plax: Fundamentals of Human Communication, Mayfield Publishing Company
- Keval J kumar: Mass Communication in India, Jaico Publishing House
- C S Rayudu: Communication, Himalaya Publishing House
- Matthukutty M Monipally: Business Communication Strategies,
- Barker/ Gaut: Communication,



### Notes

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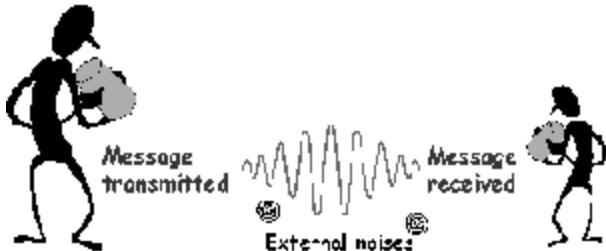
## LESSON 3:

### THE PROCESS OF COMMUNICATION

#### Communication Process

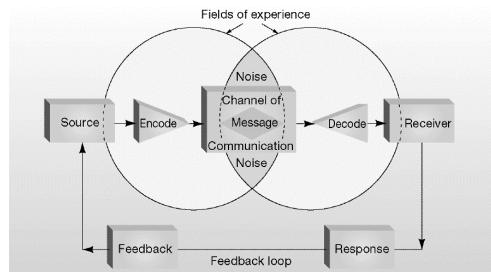
There have been several attempts by scholars to explain the process of communication. Depending on their background and objectives, different scholars have viewed the process of communication differently and have developed different models.

You may have formed the impression that communication is difficult, if not impossible, to study and understand. If it is ongoing, how do we stop it? If it has no beginning or end, how do we get hold of it? Although the task is difficult, it is possible.



Communication establishes relationships and makes organizing possible. Every message has a purpose or objective. The sender intends — whether consciously or unconsciously — to accomplish something by communicating. In organizational contexts, messages typically have a definite objective: to motivate, to inform, to teach, to persuade, to entertain, or to inspire. This definite purpose is, in fact, one of the principal differences between casual conversation and managerial communication. Effective communication in the organization centers on well-defined objectives that support the organization's goals and mission. Communication is the process of passing information and understanding from one person to another. The communication process is a system that involves an interrelated, interdependent group of elements working together as a whole to achieve a desired outcome or goal. We can study communication in much the same way we study biological systems within our own bodies.

We can determine the elements involved (circulatory and digestive systems, for example), analyze how those elements affect one another, and thus determine the nature of the process as a whole. Applying this approach to the communication process, we find eight elements (1) a **source**/encoder of communication, which sends (2) a **message** (3) through a **channel** to (4) a **receiver**/decoder, which (5) responds via **feedback** with (6) possibilities of communication breakdowns (**Barrier**) in each stage of communication. However, these elements must be understood and analyzed in relation to (7) the **situation** or context, and (8) the **system** (such as relationship), which is created and maintained at some level by the communicators.



#### The Source/Encoder

The sender begins the communication process by forming the ideas, intentions and feelings that will be transmitted. As the sender, you are required to filter out the details that are unimportant and focus your energy on the most relevant information. The source, or encoder, makes the decision to communicate. The source also determines what the purpose of the message will be to inform, persuade, or entertain. You may ask how the message gets from the source to the receiver. First, the source must encode, or create, a message. That is, the information that the source wishes to convey must be put into a form that can be sent to the receiver. The source generates a message through his or her past experiences, perceptions, thoughts, and feelings. Every ounce of your being may tell you that you are in love, but until you code those feelings into a form that can be sent to the person you love, communication cannot take place.

#### Message

The second element of the communication process is the message, or that information which is being communicated. The source encodes an idea and then determines whether or not to inform, persuade, or entertain. After deciding what message to send, the source uses symbols to get the message across to others. These symbols stand for other things. The eagle, the flag, and Uncle Sam are all symbols of the United States, for example. But the most important symbols are words, which can represent objects, ideas, and feelings. These words permit us to share our thoughts with other members of our species. Important as words are to us, they can be tricky. We must remember that words are symbols. They represent things, but are not the things themselves. That lanky, bearded old man we call Uncle Sam represents the United States, but he is not the United States—in fact, he doesn't even exist. The letters a-p-p-l-e p-i-e represents an All-American pastry, but they are not an apple pie.

To increase the likelihood of successful communication, the source must try to encode in a way that the receiver understands, so that the receiver can properly decode (interpret) the message. For example, many American tourists in Paris have discovered that even though their command of French is minimal, it is sometimes easier to communicate in halting French than in English. Some

Parisians, despite their fluent knowledge of English, refuse to decode an “inferior” tongue.

### Channel

Channels are the means (that is, pathways or devices) by which messages are communicated. Channels may be described and analyzed in two different ways. The first involves the form in which messages are sent to receivers. Forms include both verbal and nonverbal channels of communication. We use our five senses to receive messages from others. We may hear a call-in talk show on the radio, watch a soccer match on television, smell fresh bread baking as we drive past the local bread industry, taste the flavors in a fresh cappuccino, or hug a friend to console him when his dog died.

Channels may also be described according to the manner of presentation employed in communication. The source may speak face-to-face with the receiver, use a public address system to talk with a hundred listeners, or talk over radio or television to millions of receivers. Each of these examples would demand different manners of presentation. Depending on the situation, the source would concentrate on verbal and/or nonverbal channels of communication. If the speaker were on radio, physical appearance wouldn't matter, but if he or she were performing on a cable network program or before a live audience, personal appearance could easily influence the reception of the message. For example, when we go to watch a circus, we expect the clowns to have painted faces and appropriate costumes. If they were dressed in regular street clothes, their performance wouldn't be as effective. Whatever channels of communication are used, the source must learn to adapt the message to make use of the most appropriate channels available for the situation.

### Receiver/Decoder

The person (or persons) who attends to the source's message is the receiver. The act of interpreting messages is called decoding. Receivers decode messages based on past experiences, perceptions, thoughts, and feelings. We receive messages through all our senses, but most often we decode messages by listening or seeing. We first have a physiological reception of stimuli (a noise causes sound waves to hit our eardrum or a movement catches our eye). We then pay attention to both the verbal and nonverbal stimuli and reduce all the stimuli bombarding us to one or two we can cope with more easily. Next, we try to understand the stimuli and interpret them into messages (we decide that the noise is a telephone bell or that the movement is a friend waving to us across campus). Finally, we store this information for later use so that next time we will be able to respond to the stimuli more quickly. It is important to remember that receivers make immediate decisions about what they will respond to in a given situation. During a lecture, an audience member may decide to take a nap. During an argument with your boyfriend or spouse, you may listen only to negative comments. During a crowded party you may watch the nonverbal behaviors of your date (yawning, standing off in a corner alone, and so on) to decide when it's time to leave. As sources of communication, we need to learn to analyze our prospective receives to determine which communication messages will be most effective.

Of course, all of us are both encoders and decoders; that is, we are capable of both transmitting and receiving messages. When we

receive a message, we must interpret it and then encode a response. The response may be silent, noisy, or somewhere in between, depending upon the situation and the existence of any barriers to communication.

### Feedback

Another element in the communication process is feedback. Each party in an interaction continuously sends messages back to the other. This return process is called feedback. Feedback tells the source how the receiver has interpreted each message. For example, if at the airport you ask your departing friend about his itinerary, and he replies that he didn't pack one, you know your message has not been understood. This kind of feedback, which conveys lack of understanding, is known as negative feedback. Positive feedback, on the other hand, indicates that the receiver has understood the source's message. It does not necessarily mean that he or she agrees with the source, just that the message was interpreted accurately. Feedback can also be ambiguous, not clearly positive or negative. “I see” and “mm-hmm” can be examples of ambiguous feedback. The effective communicator is always sensitive to feedback and constantly modifies his or her messages as a result of the feedback received. After a discreet pause, for example, you might ask your friend not about his “itinerary” but about the cities he plans to visit.

Feedback doesn't have to come from others. We can and do get feedback from our own messages. The fact that we can hear the words we speak and see the sentences we write sometimes lets us correct our own mistakes.

### Barriers/Noise

The human communication system can be compared with a radio or telephone circuit. Just as in radio transmissions, where distortion can occur at any point along the circuit (channel), there can be similar barriers in human communication. The source's information may be insufficient or unclear. Or the message can be ineffectively or inaccurately encoded. The wrong channel of communication may be used. The message may not be decoded the way it was encoded. Finally, the receiver may not be equipped to handle the decoded message in such a way as to produce the response (feedback) expected by the source.

‘Barriers’ are any obstacles or difficulties that come in the way of communication. They may be physical, mechanical, psychological, cultural or linguistic in nature. In business communication, for instance, the major obstacles arise because of the set-up of an organisation - the organizational barriers. The size of an organisation, the physical distance between employees of an organisation, the specialization of jobs and activities, and the power and status relationships, are the main organizational barriers. Besides, then are the barriers, raised by interpersonal relationships between individual and groups, the prejudices of both individuals and groups and the channels they use to communicate. Barriers to communication also occur if the sender and receiver are not on the same “wavelength.” This is as true in human communication as it is in radio transmission. On the human level, being on the same wavelength involves shared experiences. That is, the source can encode only in terms of the experiences he or she has had. This is why two people from

completely different cultures may find it difficult, if not impossible, to communicate.

In the 'jargon' of communication, all barriers whatever their nature are clubbed under a common label- 'noise'. A term from modern physics it denotes not only atmospheric or channel disturbance, but all barriers that distort communications in any manner.

### **Physical Barriers**

Four main kinds of distractions act as 'physical barriers' to the communication process. These are:

1. The Competing Stimulus in the form of another conversation going on within hearing distance, or loud music or traffic noise in the background. The cawing of crows or a plane passing overhead can, for example, drown out messages altogether.
2. Environmental Stress: A high temperature and humidity, poor ventilation, vibrations felt, a strong glare - all can contribute to distortions in the sending and receiving of messages.
3. Subjective Stress: Sleeplessness, ill health, the effects of drugs and mood variations give rise to forms of subjective stress that often lead to great difficulties in listening and interpretation.
4. Ignorance of the Medium: The various media for communication are: oral, written, audio, visual and audiovisual. The use of a medium with which the communicators are not familiar would turn the medium itself into a barrier.

### **Psychological Barriers**

Each of us has a certain 'frame of reference', a kind of window through which we look out at the world, at people, and events and situations. A frame of reference is a system of standards and values, usually implicit, underlying and to some extent controlling an action, or the expression of any belief, attitude or idea. No two individuals possess exactly similar frames of reference, even if they are identical twins. To a large extent our experiences, particularly our childhood experiences, and the cultural environment we have grown up in influence our frames of reference.

### **Linguistics and Cultural Barriers**

A language is the expression of the thoughts and experiences of people in terms of their cultural environment. When the same language is made use of in a different culture, it takes on another colour, another meaning.

### **Mechanical Barriers**

Mechanical barriers are those raised by the channels employed for interpersonal, group or mass communication. Channels become barrier when the message is interfered with by some disturbance, which (1) increased the difficulty in reception or (2) prevented some elements of the message reaching its destination or both. The absence communication facilities too would be a mechanical barrier.

This type of barrier includes any disturbance, which interferes with the fidelity of the physical transmission of the message. A telephone that is in poor working order, making demands on the yelling ability of Sender and Receiver, is a mechanical barrier in interpersonal communication. So also is 'cross-talk' often heard over an 'intercom' link in an office, or during long-distance calls. In Group Communication, a rundown or 'whistling microphone,

and wrong placement of loudspeakers are disturbances which are mechanical in nature. (the communicator who stands too close or too far from the mike is another matter). In mass communication, mechanical barriers would include such disturbances as static on the radio, smeared ink in a newspaper, a rolling screen on television, a barely readable point-size, or a film projector or video that does not function perfectly.

### **Review questions**

- Identify and discuss the basic elements of communication process?
- Describe how the whole process of communication gets disturbed if any of the elements is changed or tampered?

### **Exercise**

- Construct a diagrammatic model of the essential elements and processes involved in one of the following communication situations. The model's primary function should be to describe what elements are involved and what processes are operative in the specific situation chosen. It may be useful to define the situation chosen in more detail before constructing the model.

### **Communication situation:**

- Sitting silently in a bus.
- Watching TV commercial
- Conversing with a very close friend.
- Delivering a lecture to a class.
- Persuading an angry crowd to disband.
- Reading a newspaper.
- Telephonic conversation with bank representative.
- Window Shopping.

### **Suggested Readings**

- Sarah Trenholm: Thinking Through Communication, Second Edition, Allyn and Bacon
- Julia T Wood: Communication Mosaics, Second Edition, Wadsworth
- DeFleur/ Kearney/ Plax: Fundamentals of Human Communication, Mayfield Publishing Company
- Keval J kumar: Mass Communication in India, Jaico Publishing House
- C S Rayudu: Communication, Himalaya Publishing House
- Matthukutty M Monipally: Business Communication Strategies,
- Barker/ Gaut: Communication,



## LESSON 4:

### INTRAPERSONAL COMMUNICATIONS

#### **Types of Communication**

Communication has been classified into several types: in terms of the verbal-nonverbal, oral-written, intentional-unintentional etc. One of the most common typology relates to the size of the social group or the number of people involved in the experience of communication. Such a typology ranges from the intrapersonal and interpersonal and transpersonal, to the group and the mass.

#### **Intrapersonal communication**

You can probably guess that this means communicating within yourself. When you think, daydream, solve problems, and image, you are in the realm of intrapersonal communication. Some investigators also include in this area all physical feedback mechanisms, such as the sensations of hunger, pain, and pleasure. Intrapersonal communication is individual reflection, contemplation and meditation. Transcendental meditation, for instance, is an example of such communication. Conversing with the divine, with spirits and ancestors, may be termed “transpersonal” communication. This is a vital experience in the religious and monastic life, in ashrams and places of prayer, and among aboriginal and tribal communities.

#### **Interpersonal communication**

This form of communication describes the interactions of two or more people. The most significant setting for interpersonal communication is direct face-to-face communication between two persons. An interview, a conversation, and intimate communications come under this heading. It is more persuasive and influential than any other type of communication, for it involves the interplay of words and gestures, the warmth of human closeness and in fact all the five senses. Feedback is the key word here. Feedback is instantaneous.

#### **Group communication**

Group communication shares all these qualities, though in a much less measure. The larger the group the less personal and intimate is the possibility of exchange. In fact, as the group grows in size communication tends to become more and more of monologue, for participation becomes problematic. The degree of directness and intimacy, therefore, depends upon the size of the group, the place where it meets, as also the relationship of the members of the group to one another, and to the group leader. Group communication requires the following conditions: leadership, equal sharing of ideas, peer pressure, roles and norms, and focus on a common goal.

#### **Mass Communication**

When a message needs help to get from its source to its destination, mass communication begins to function. Usually some form of medium- one meaning of which is ‘between’- is needed to connect the sender to receivers. These media may be print (newspapers or magazines) electrical (radio, TV or video), or even electronic (computer modems). Mass communication powerfully affects our

attitudes and beliefs, as well as our perspective on social life. Today mass communication is a major source of information, companionship, and entertainment. Yet mass communication does more than report information and entertain us. It also presents us with views of human beings, events, issues, and cultural life. Mass communication also grants a hearing and visibility to some people and points of views, whereas it mutes other voices and viewpoints. Thus mass communication affects our perceptions of issues, events, and people.

Communication is part of your social self. Because we are using a person-centered definition of communication, not one related to machine or animal communication, it is important to see how a person’s self is at the heart of all communication interactions. You think, you listen, you respond, and you speak and you do all of these things from your self-perspective. You need to look at the self- your self- to understand the key to any communication event. Intrapersonal communication is basis of the entire communication-taking place in variety of settings.

#### **Intrapersonal Communication- A Definition:**

Intrapersonal Communication is communication within your self. You engage in intrapersonal communication when you are thinking, listening, daydreaming, studying, creating, contemplating or dreaming. You are both source and destination of this type of communication. You use your brain waves as a channel; and the outcomes are thoughts or ideas, sometimes decisions, and sometimes actions or behaviors. You still communicate within the context or environment. Your language and other social considerations shape the environment.

Intrapersonal communication takes place whenever we evaluate and react to internal and external stimuli- and involves messages that are sent and received within ourselves. Thus it involves not only our intellect self but also our physical and emotional self. As you can see, intrapersonal communication is more far reaching than just “talking to yourself”. Intrapersonal messages reflect your habits, self-concept; self-related roles, and your attitudes, values, and beliefs. This type of communication takes place every moment that we live.

The most basic level of communication is intrapersonal communication. It is a function of the physical self, the intellectual self, habits, and private versus public situations. In addition, the need for a unified conceptual system and the picture that you have of yourself- your self-concept- also strongly influence these self-communications. Your past experiences, reference groups, and accustomed roles combine in ever-changing relationships to form this self concept. At the same time, internal and external stimuli affect the cognitive, emotional, and physiological processing of intrapersonal communication.

#### **The process of intrapersonal communication**

Intrapersonal communication is the foundation upon which interpersonal communication rests. Therefore, it is necessary to understand how you communicate with yourself before you approach the process of communicating with others. The elements that set the process in motion are called *stimuli*.

The brain is made aware of the state of the body by nerve impulses, internal stimuli that can prompt you to respond by communicating. Let's say you have the flu. Your muscles ache, your fever is high, and you are depressed. Such a miserable state may prompt you to call a doctor to relieve your physical ills and friend to relieve your depression. The internal stimuli in this situation have resulted in communication.

External stimuli, of course, those stimuli that originate in the environment outside of your body. There are two kinds of external stimuli. Over stimuli are received on the conscious level. They are picked up by the sensory organs and then sent to the brain. More than one overt stimulus usually affects a person at any given moment. For example, the pizza being advertised on TV and the sounds and aromas coming from the kitchen can prompt an eager, "What's for dinner?"

Cover stimuli are external stimuli that are received on the subconscious level. Let's say you are getting dressed for work. One of your favorite songs comes on the radio, so you turn the volume up. The song ends and the news begin, just as you discover a gaping hole in your sock. You find another pair and finish dressing, but you are running late. Is it too cold for your lightweight jacket? You suddenly realize that the weather report has just ended, but you have no idea what was said, despite the blaring volume.

The stimulus of the weather report was received and stored in your brain, but it was below the threshold of consciousness. Thus, you were not consciously aware of what was said, even though you recognized that you were hearing the weather report. Such covert stimuli have been shown to affect behavior and communication.

### **Reception**

The process by which the body receives stimuli is called reception. In intrapersonal communication, both external and internal receptors send information to the central nervous system. External receptors for the five senses—sight, sound, smell, taste, and touch—receive stimuli that are changed into nerve impulses and then sent to the brain. These external receptors are located on or near the body's surface and react to physical, chemical, and mechanical stimuli to provide you with information about the environment. Internal receptors such as nerve endings, on the other hand, convey information about your interior state—the dryness of your mouth or the fullness of your stomach, for example.

### **Processing**

Processing of internal and external communication occurs at three levels: cognitive, emotional, and physiological. At each level of processing, some stimuli receive more conscious attention than others. This attention is a function of the particular stimulus and of the context in which it is presented. Some stimuli are perceived with full awareness (traffic lights, sirens, TV programs), while others may not be consciously noticed (background noise during a lecture, the hum of fluorescent lights in a room). Stimuli that are perceived consciously, or at least with some awareness are the first

to be processed. Stimuli that are perceived subconsciously are usually "stored" in your memory for later processing.

**Cognitive Processing.** Cognitive processes are associated with the intellectual self and include the storage, retrieval, sorting, and assimilation of information. We don't know exactly how such processing occurs; our goal here is simply to describe these processes on both the conscious and subconscious cognitive levels.

**Memory** The storage of information that we choose to remember is called memory. There are three forms of memory: (1) sensory storage, in which the information is held for only an instant (2) short-term memory, in which the information is stored for several seconds; and (3) long-term memory, in which the information is stored indefinitely. Sensory storage refers to our ability to hold some information for a fraction of a second after the stimulus disappears. For example, you are not aware of the gaps between frames when you watch a movie because each frame is held in sensory storage until the next appears. The major difference between sensory storage and short-term memory is that in the latter, data are analyzed, identified, and simplified so that they can be conveniently stored and handled. Short-term memory is a kind of "holding device" in which you keep information until you are ready to use or discard it. If such information seems useful, you may transfer it to the permanent storage of long-term memory is that in the latter, data are analyzed, identified, and simplified so that they can be conveniently stored and handled. Short-term memory is a kind of "holding device" in which you keep information until you are ready to use or discard it. If such information seems useful, you may transfer it to the permanent storage of long-term memory for future reference.

**Retrieval** Information is stored so that it can be used to help establish the meaning of later incoming stimuli. However, stored information is relatively useless unless it can be retrieved from memory. Such retrieval takes the form of either recognition or recall. Recognition involves awareness that certain information is familiar, having been experienced previously. Recall is more difficult, in that it requires reconstruction of the information that has been stored. For example, while we may recognize a certain word whose meaning we looked up last week, we may be unable to recall its definition.

**Sorting** your mind contains countless bits and pieces of information. In any particular processing situation, you must first select or sort the most relevant information from your entire storehouse of knowledge. Here again we know very little about the actual workings of our individual selection systems. We do know, however, that such selection processes occur. For example, when we read, we sort the letters until we are able to make words of them.

**Assimilation** Cognitive processing is not simply the sum of memory storage, retrieval, and sorting functions. Rather, it involves assimilation, the process of incorporating some aspect of the environment into the whole set of mental functioning in order to make sense out of what goes on around us. To continue our reading example, your ability to read was first learned, then stored in long-term memory. Whenever you open a book, you retrieve this information, use it to sort the letters on the page into words, and then assimilate the words into sentences and ideas that have meaning for you.

**Emotional Processing.** As mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, intrapersonal processing also involves emotional processing, or the nonlogical response of an organism to a stimulus. Later in this chapter we will take a closer look at the different variables that operate in emotional processing. However, it is important to mention here that variables, ranging from attitudes, beliefs, and opinions at the subconscious level to emotions at the conscious level, all interact to determine our response to any particular communication.

**Physiological Processing.** The third type of processing occurs at the physiological level and is associated with the physical self. Although physiological processing is of obvious importance in staying alive, its significance to intrapersonal communication is only beginning to be recognized. Some of the subconscious variables in this process are heart rate, brain activity, muscle tension, blood pressure, and body temperature.

#### Transmission :

The process by which messages are sent from a source to a receiver is called transmission. In intrapersonal communication the source and the receiver are the same person. Thus, transmission takes place through nerve impulses in their brain rather than through sound waves in the air or words written on a page. The intrapersonal communication cycle is completed when the brain reacts to these nerve impulses by transmitting a message to smooth muscles, which regulate the movements of the body. Putting a hand on a hot pan causes the individual's touch receptors to send a neural transmission to the brain, saying, "It's hot," which causes the brain to transmit a message to the muscles in hand, ordering, "Move away from the pan immediately."

#### Feedback

We usually think of feedback as information from another person. In intrapersonal communication, however, there are two kinds of self-feedback—external and internal.

External self-feedback is the part of your message that you hear yourself. This kind of feedback enables you to correct your own mistakes. For example, you would surely backtrack if you heard yourself say something like "external self-feed – back."

Internal self-feedback is usually picked up through bone conduction, nerve endings, or muscular movement. For example, you might perceive an awkward facial gesture without actually seeing it—simply by feeling the muscle tension in your face. Again, perceiving this information enables you to correct yourself.

#### Interference

Interference is another important variable in the communication process. Interference refers to any factor that negatively affects communication. It can occur at any point along the communication network and at any level of communication. For example, the blast of your roommate's TV or a splitting headache might make it impossible for you to read.

A special form of interference occurs intrapersonally when stimuli are processed at one level, although another level is better suited to dealing with them. For example, many people react emotionally to information that should be processed on a cognitive level. Have you ever started crying or gotten angry in response to a teacher's comments on your paper, when if you had remained

calm, you might have been able to analyze and profit from the information? On the other hand, some individuals insist on processing information on the cognitive level when an emotional response would actually be more helpful. Often a good cry can relieve the pressure of a bad day better than a careful rehash of the day's events.

#### The effects of intrapersonal variables on communication

Even though a particular communication may focus on the here and now, your personality and past experience influence your interpretation of it. Thus, it is important to consider the intrapersonal factors that influence the communicators. For example, the experiences of someone who has recently lost a close friend will no doubt affect that person's communication on the subject of death.

#### Personal Orientation

The way you react to the following situation will be determined by your personal orientation. Warren and Jerry are interviewing for the job of advertising copywriter in a large advertising agency. Neither of them has had any experience, but both come to the interview prepared to show samples of the kind of work they are capable of producing. Jerry's samples much talent but very little effort—he lifted them almost word for word from a textbook. How do you feel about Jerry and Warren? Do you respect Jerry for his honesty and hard work, or do you appreciate Warren's craftiness in trying to get the kind of job he wants? Your reaction to this situation reflects the values, attitudes, beliefs, and opinions that make up your personal orientation.

**Values.** Each of us maintains a set of values --moral or ethical judgments of things we consider important. Values can be a source of conflict within an individual as well as a barrier between people of opposing standards. Fearing a malpractice suit, for instance, a doctor who comes upon an accident victim may be reluctant to offer assistance. The doctor's values will determine what action is taken. Sometimes an individual will voice one set of values and be guided by another. For example, parents may scold their children for dishonesty but think nothing of cheating on their income tax.

**Attitudes.** An attitude is a learned tendency to react positively or negatively to an object or situation. It implies a positive or negative evaluation of someone or something. Attitudes operate at three different levels: (1) cognitive, (2) affective, and (3) instrumental. The cognitive level involves a particular belief, the affective level involves a particular feeling, and the instrumental level involves overt behavior or action.

Let's examine a specific situation. Carlotta Ramirez, a member of the state board of higher education, is a strong opponent of free tuition. Her negative attitude toward the topic can be broken down in this way:

**Cognitive (belief):** People who value a college education should be willing to pay for it, even if it means going to work to go enough money for tuition.

**Affective (feeling):** People who try to get something for nothing make me angry.

**Instrumental (action):** I vote no on the proposal for free tuition at state universities.

Beliefs, Opinions, and Prejudices. A Belief is anything accepted as true. Note that this definition does not imply either a positive or negative judgment. For example, you may believe that there is life on other planets, yet this belief does not indicate a positive or negative attitude toward that idea. However, if you were to take your belief one step further to say that since you believe there is life on other planets, it would be in our best interests to increase space exploration programs, you would then be voicing an opinion. An opinion lies somewhere between an attitude and a belief. It implies a positive or negative reaction.

Not all our beliefs and opinions are well founded. Sometimes they are based on preconceived ideas and not on our own actual experiences. In this case they are, in fact, prejudices—preformed judgments about a particular person, group, or thing. None of us is free from prejudice, but certain prejudices are more harmful than others. Think for a moment about your own experiences with prejudice, when you were either guilty of prejudice or were its victim. Or consider this example of how foolish our prejudices can be:

Although it was against her principles, Ruth had agreed to help a good friend out of a tight spot by accepting a blind date with the friend's uncle from Louisiana. Ruth, who had never been south of Philadelphia, just knew that an evening spent with this hick was going to be one of the most boring of her life.

He arrived, and, sure enough, his accent was unlike anything Ruth had ever heard. By evening's end, however, she had changed her mind. Full of admiration for the most interesting and beautifully mannered man she had ever met. Ruth eagerly awaited their next date.

He never called again. A few weeks later, Ruth learned from her friend that he had returned to New Orleans and, before leaving, had announced: "All Yankee women are alike--hard to please!"

Think about the groups toward which you may be prejudiced. Does this example suggest ways in which you may be oversimplifying to the point of prejudice?

#### Review questions

- What are different types of communication?
- Explain how intrapersonal communication is basis of all communication-taking place in variety of settings?

#### Suggested Readings

- Keval J kumar: Mass Communication in India, Jaico Publishing House
- Raymond Zeuschner: Communicating Today, Allyn and Bacon
- Barker/ Gaut: Communication, Allyn and Bacon



#### Notes

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## LESSON 5

### INTERPERSONAL COMMUNICATION

#### Introduction

The social self-meets another's self as you take your internal messages and send them out. When you turn from thinking, dreaming, and other internal forms of communication, its time to step out and face the world and connect with other people. Of course, you never leave the self behind, just as you can often recall your dreams during the day. Interpersonal communication is like breathing; it is requirement for life. And, like breathing, it is inescapable. Unless you like to live in isolation, you communicate interpersonally everyday. Listening to your roommate, talking to teacher, meeting for lunch with a friend, or talking to your father are all examples of interpersonal communication. Even before we are born, we respond to movement and sound. With are first cry we announce to others that we are here. Without interpersonal communication, a special form of human communication that occurs as we manage our relationships, people suffer and even die. Most people spend between 80-90% of their waking hours communicating with others. It is through these interactions with others that we develop interpersonal relationships. Because these relationships are so important in our lives, we develop, sustain and sometimes end them.

Interpersonal communication can be viewed in a variety of ways, each of which can help us to better understand the overall communication process. Interpersonal communication can occur in any environment, be it formal or informal. Most of the Interpersonal messages are informal, however, and stem from everyday, face-to face encounters. With the exception of telephone conversations, most of the Interpersonal communication involves people close enough to see and touch each other. This makes sending and receiving messages much easier and eliminates the need for the kind of formal rules followed in debates, news conferences, or other public speaking situations.

Interpersonal communication is the sharing of feelings and ideas with other people. Most interpersonal messages are informal exchanges. The potential of sending, receiving and evaluating messages is shared between the people. Managing interpersonal relationships involves a number of factors. For example, the people involved often bring personality and environmental factors into the interpersonal setting.

#### Defining Interpersonal Communication

Interpersonal communication is a special form of human communication that occurs when we interact simultaneously with another person and mutually influence each other, usually for the purpose of managing relationships. Four elements of this definition determine the unique nature of interpersonal communication apart from other forms of human communication.

Interpersonal communication is a special form of human communication. For several years many scholars defined interpersonal communication simply as communication that

occurs when two people interact face-to-face. This limited definition suggests that if two people are interacting, then they are interpersonally communicating. Today, interpersonal communication is defined not just by the number of people who today, not just the number of people who communicate but define interpersonal communication also by the quality of the communication. Interpersonal communication occurs not just when we interact with someone, but when we treat the other as a unique human being. It describes more intimate level of communication in which we disclose personal information that cannot be known by another unless we tell him or her. When to ask a waiter in a restaurant for a glass of water, you communicate. But you interact with the role not with the individual. You know nothing about personal about him, and he knows nothing personal about you. Although interpersonal communication is more intimate and includes revealing more of yourself than impersonal communication, not all-interpersonal communication involves sharing closely guarded personal information.

Interpersonal communication involves simultaneous interaction between individuals. When you communicate with someone interpersonally, both participants are acting on information that has originated with the other person at the same time. This simultaneous interaction may or may not involve words. The interaction may be fleeting or enduring. While you are talking and your mother is listening, you are also observing your mother's nonverbal expression. Just because she is not speaking does not mean she is not communicating. A simultaneous exchange occurs as you talk and she listens. She not only hears what you have to say, but also observes how you say it. Or, suppose you catch someone's eye in a crowded bus and you both smile at each other at the same time. Without exchanging words, you have communicated simultaneously. Interpersonal communication is not a one-way process of sending information to others back and forth in a linear fashion, but a process in which both individuals simultaneously affect each other. Affecting each other points to the third element in our definition of interpersonal communication, mutual influence.

Interpersonal communication involves mutual influence between individuals. Mutual influence means that both partners are affected by the interactions, not just one person. For example. Suppose your bus traveling companion doesn't see you smile. This is not really interpersonal, because there is no mutual interaction; only you have been affected by the communication. Interpersonal communication is that special circumstance in which both individuals are affecting the other. When both you and the other bus passenger see and respond to each other, there is mutual influence; each of you is changed as a result of the other person's action. Interpersonal communication has occurred. The degree of mutual influence varies a great deal from interaction to interaction. You probably would not be affected a great deal by a brief smile from a bus traveling companion, but would be greatly affected by

your lover telling you he or she is leaving you. Every interpersonal communication interaction influences us. Sometimes it changes our lives dramatically, sometimes in small ways. Long-lasting interpersonal relationships are sustained not by one person giving and another taking, but by mutually satisfying communication.

Interpersonal communication is the fundamental means we use to manage our relationships. An interpersonal relationship is the ongoing connection we make with others through interpersonal communication. Later in this chapter we describe fundamental principles of interpersonal relationships, and Chapters 9 and 10 more fully describe the nature and development of our relationships with others. It is through our interpersonal contacts with others that our relationships go through a series of developmental stages. The initial stages of a relationship often involve sharing less intimate or personal information. Later stages evolve to include more intimate conversations and behaviors. We initiate and form relationships by communicating with those whom we find attractive in some way. We seek to increase our interactions with those with whom we wish to further develop relationships, and we continually interpersonally communicate to maintain the relationship. We also use interpersonal communication to end relationships that we have decided are no longer viable. We can usually identify the stage of a relationship by simply observing the interpersonal communication we interact differently as we move toward or away from intimacy. Your interactions with a new acquaintance are different from those with a close friend. When interacting with a stranger you stand farther apart, use different words, are more likely to feel awkward, and are less certain about how to interpret body language than when you interact with a good friend.

### **The Importance of Interpersonal Communication to Our Lives**

Why learn about interpersonal communication? Because it touches every aspect of our lives. It is not only pleasant or desirable to develop quality interpersonal relationships with others; it is vital for our well-being. Learning how to understand and improve interpersonal communication can improve our relationships with family and loved ones; friends, and colleagues and can enhance the quality of our physical and emotional health.

Being skilled in interpersonal communication can improve relationships with our family. Learning principles and skills of interpersonal communication can give us insight as to why we relate to others as we do. Our interaction with our parents deeply affected our self-concept. Did they praise or ignore achievements and accomplishments? As we will learn in the next chapter, our self-concept plays a major role in determining how we interact with others.

Being skilled in interpersonal communication can improve relationships with our friends. We don't choose our biological families, but we do choose our friends. Friends are people we choose to be with because we like them and usually they like us. For unmarried people, developing friendships and falling in love are the top-rated sources of satisfaction and happiness in life.<sup>6</sup> Conversely, losing a relationship is among life's most stressful events. Most individuals between the ages of nineteen and twenty-four report that they have had from five to six romantic relationships and have been "in love" once or twice? Studying

interpersonal communication may not unravel all of the mysteries of romantic love and friendship, but it can offer insight into our behaviors.

Being skilled in interpersonal communication can improve our relationships with colleagues.

In many ways, our colleagues at work are like family members. Although we choose our friends and lovers, we don't always have the same flexibility in choosing those with whom or for whom we work. Understanding how relationships develop on the job can help us avoid conflict and stress and increase our sense of satisfaction. In addition, our success or failure in a job often hinges on how well we get along with supervisors and peers.

Being skilled in interpersonal communication can improve our physical and emotional health. Research has shown that the lack or loss of a close relationship can lead to ill health and even death. Physicians have long observed that patients who are widowed or divorced experience more medical problems such as heart disease, cancer, pneumonia, and diabetes than do married people.

### **How to Improve Interpersonal Communication?**

Now that we have previewed the study of interpersonal communication, you may be asking yourself, "Well, that's all well and good, but what do I have to do to improve my own interpersonal communication?" I suggest a five-part strategy.

#### **Be Knowledgeable**

Competent communicators are knowledgeable. They know how communication works. They understand the components, principles, and rules of the communication process. Understanding these things is a necessary prerequisite for enhancing your interpersonal effectiveness, but this kind of knowledge alone does not make you competent. You would not let someone fix your car's carburetor if he or she had only read a book. Knowledge must be coupled with skill. And we acquire skill through practice

#### **Be Skilled**

Competent communicators know how to translate knowledge into action. You can memorize the characteristics of a good listener but still not listen well. To develop skill requires practice and helpful feedback from others who can confirm the appropriateness of your actions. Learning a social skill is not that different from learning how to drive a car or operate a computer. To learn any skill, you must break it down into sub skills that you can learn and practice. "Hear it, see it, do it, correct it" is the formula that seems to work best for learning any new behaviors.

#### **Be Motivated**

Practicing skills requires work. You need to be motivated to use your information and skill. You must want to improve, and you must have a genuine desire to connect with others if you wish to become a competent communicator. You may know people who understand how to drive a car and have the skill to drive, yet are reluctant to get behind the wheel. Or maybe you know someone who took a course in public speaking but is still too frightened to stand in front of a crowd. Similarly, someone may pass a test about interpersonal communication principles with flying colors, but unless that person is motivated to use those newfound skills, his or her interactions with others m not improve.

## **Characteristics of Interpersonal Communication**

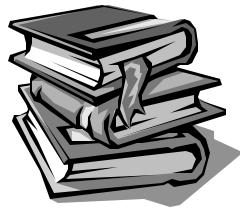
1. Interpersonal communication is fully transactional. As communicators, each party uses verbal and nonverbal symbols and signs to construct messages around his/her intended meanings. At the same time the receiver brings similar, or possibly different, meanings to task of receiving and interpreting that message. Information is sent back in the form of feedback and each communicator adjusts by role-taking for next phase of the process. Thus, each party simultaneously influences the other's behavior while being affected in return.
2. Interpersonal communicators share physical proximity. Interpersonal communication takes place with two individuals engaging in face-to-face interaction. This rules out all forms of impersonal exchanges or those in which interaction is carried on over longer distance. By being in close physical proximity, communicators are able to increase their chances for understanding each other accurately and efficiently.
3. Interpersonal communication is shaped by social roles. When people are engaging in interpersonal communication, what they are saying—that is, content—can be interpreted only within the context of the roles that define their overall relationship. One has to understand the nature of the relationship between the two people—the role that each is playing and the relation between them.
4. Interpersonal communication is uniquely irreversible. This is particularly significant feature of messages in an interpersonal context. There is no way to erase a regrettable message.
5. Interpersonal communication is unrepeatable.

### **Review Questions:**

- What are the three basic theories of Interpersonal communication? Discuss how the theories help us in understanding the functions of interpersonal communication?

### **Suggested Readings**

- Keval J kumar: Mass Communication in India, Jaico Publishing House
- Raymond Zeuschner: Communicating Today, Allyn and Bacon
- Barker/ Gaut: Communication, Allyn and Bacon



### **Notes**

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## LESSON 6

### GROUP COMMUNICATION

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#### **What is a group?**

Communication scholars have provided many answers to this deceptively simple question. Most groups consist of two or more people who repeatedly interact together, regulating their conduct and communication within some set of rules that they mutually recognize and follow.

#### **What is a Group ?**

A group is any number of people who have a common goal, interact with one another to accomplish their goal, recognize one another's existence, and see themselves as a part of group. To test our definition lets consider one example- people in que outside a theatre. Is this a group? Certainly these people have a common goal; they all are waiting to see a particular film. But these people need to interact with one another to accomplish their goal, although each may be very aware of the presence of other in line. Now, if someone were to try to sneak in at the front of the line and people made a unified effort to keep the crasher out, we could say during that period of time the random collection of people became a group. Looking at our definition, the unified effort to block the line crasher would call for group interaction and awareness of others.

Groups are collections of people we habitually communicate with, often limiting and specific contexts. Hartley identified three types of the groups' namely- family, friendship and work groups. Work groups tend to be rather more formal than the other types. Some groups are 'ascribed' (like our families) and some are 'achieved' (like the membership of clubs/teams). Some groups are large and others are small. Moreover, within friendship groups there is considerable variation of intensity and commitment, which may result partly from how well we established these groups are.

Group can be termed as descriptive term that can be applied to a wide variety of communication practices. In terms of personal communication, it is fair to say that we are mostly engaged in group communication, communication with or within groups. There is a significant amount of redundancy or predictability in personal communication in groups- established routines, patterns, even networks of communication that we occupy.

According to Burton and Dimbleby (1995) if there is no interaction between the individuals, then a group cannot be formed. Group shares common interests, goals and purposes. Groups share common values and norms. O'Sullivan et.al. (1994) define norms as those sets of social rules, standards and expectations that both generate and regulate social interaction and communication. In most of the groups these norms are unwritten and unspoken.

A social group is any number of people who share a consciousness of membership and of interaction. Thus we belong to social groups like family, the community, the caste, the trade union, the professional associations, political parties, student bodies, graduates, teachers and the like. Groups are vital reality from which

there is little escape. They, much more than mass media, are the agents of change as well as of resistance to change.

#### **Types of groups**

Clearly, a dimension of groups is their longevity, whether they are short term or long term. Another dimension is their significance to us and the resulting frequency of interaction that entails. Those groups that you spend most time with are referred to as primary groups, with secondary groups as those with which you have intermittent contact.

The group that is most intimate and close is known as the primary group. Such for instance are the family, the peer group, the gang or the clique. The three conditions that give rise to primary groups is: (1) a close physical proximity, (2) the small size of the group, which makes for face to face association and co-operation, and (3) the lasting nature of the bond or a relationship like that between, wife and children.

The secondary or peer group, on the other hand, is characterized by a less close relationship between members. Although secondary groups sometimes provide pleasant human relationships, sociability is ordinarily not their goal. So, while primary groups are relationship oriented, secondary groups are goal-oriented and much less cohesive. Examples of secondary groups are: the college, the school, the various organizations and unions among others.

#### **Why do people join a group?**

People join groups for a variety of reasons. Some group members are motivated by task concerns and others are motivated by interpersonal attraction to other group members.

#### **Group Synergy**

Group synergy refers to the idea that two heads (or more) are better than one. You may have also heard the phrase, "The whole is greater than the sum of its parts," which also refers to group synergy. Put simply, groups are often capable of producing higher quality work and better decisions than can an individual working alone.

#### **Support and Commitment**

A group may be more willing to take on a large project than would an individual. In addition to its increased ability to perform work, the group can provide encouragement and support to its members while working on a big project.

#### **Interpersonal Needs**

Individuals often join a group to meet their interpersonal needs. William Schutz<sup>2</sup> has identified three such needs: inclusion, control, and affection.

Inclusion is the need to establish identity with others.

Control is the need to exercise leadership and prove one's abilities. Groups provide outlets for this need. Some individuals do not want to be a leader. For them, groups provide the necessary control over aspects of their lives.

Affection is the need to develop relationships with people. Groups are an excellent way to make friends and establish relationships.

### **Features of group**

We need to understand influences on participation in groups as well as the influence of communication itself on group process and productivity. We'll consider five features of group that affect and are affected by participation.

#### **Cohesion**

Cohesion is the degree of closeness among members and sense of group spirit. In highly cohesive groups, members see themselves as tightly linked and committed to share goals. This results in satisfaction than members of non-cohesive units feel. High cohesion and satisfaction it generates tend to increase members commitment to a group and its goals. Cohesion grows out of communication that builds group identity and creates a climate of inclusion for all members. Cohesion and participation are reciprocal in their influence. Cohesion is promoted when all members are involved and communicating in the group. At the same time, because cohesiveness generates a feeling of identity and involvement, once established it fosters participation.

Although cohesion is important for effective group communication, excessive cohesion can actually undermine sound group work. When members are too close, they may be less critical of each other's ideas and less willing to engage in analysis and arguments that are necessary to develop the best outcomes. Members tend to perceive their group so positively that they assume it cannot take bad decisions. Consequently, members do not critically screen ideas generated in deliberations. The predictable result is group outcomes that are inferior and that often fail.

#### **Group size**

The number of people in-group affects the amount and quality of communication. In a group of five people, each idea must be received and interpreted by four others, each of whom may respond with comments that that four others must receive and interpret. As the group size increases, the contributions of each member tend to decrease. It can be hard to get your ideas in, and the sheer number of people contributing ideas can mean that no idea receives much feedback. Because participation is linked to commitment, larger groups may generate less commitment to group outcomes than smaller groups.

With too few members a group has limited resources, which diminishes a primary value of group decision-making.

#### **Power structure**

Power is the ability to influence others to reach their goals. People who empower others do not emphasize their status. Instead they act behind the scenes to enlarge others influence and visibility and to help others succeed. It builds team spirit so that group members are productive and satisfied. Within groups power may be earned and distributed in distinct ways. Power may result from position (CEO, president, professor, best friend of the boss etc), or it may be earned (demonstrated competence or expertise).

#### **Group Norms**

Norms are guidelines that regulate how members act, as well as how they interact with each other. Group norms control everything

from trivial to critical aspects of group's life. Norms grow directly out of interaction. More inconsequential norms may regulate meeting time and whether eating is allowed during meetings.

### **Potential Limitations and Strengths of Groups**

#### **Limitations**

The two most significant disadvantages of group are the time required for group process and the potential of conformity pressures to interfere with high-quality work from groups. In a group discussion, however, all members have an opportunity to voice their ideas and to respond to the ideas others put forward. It takes substantial time for each person to describe ideas, clarify misunderstandings, and respond to questions or criticisms. In addition, groups require time to deliberate about alternative courses of action. Groups also have the potential to suppress individuals and encourage conformity. Members have ethical responsibility to communicate in ways that encourage expression of diverse ideas and open debate about different viewpoints.

#### **Strengths**

The primary potential strengths of groups in comparison to individuals are greater resources, more thorough thought, heightened creativity, and enhanced commitment to decisions. A group exceeds any individual in the ideas, perspectives, experiences, and expertise it can bring to bear solving a problem. Groups also tend to be more thorough than individuals, probably because members check and balance each other.

### **Challenges of communicating in groups**

For groups to realize their potential strengths members must meet a number of communication challenges.

**Participating constructively-** There are four kinds of communication in groups- task, procedural, climate and egocentric. First three are constructive in nature because they foster good group climate and outcomes. Task communication focuses on the problem, issues, or information before a group. It provides ideas and information, clarifies members understanding, and critically evaluates ideas.

If you have ever participated in a disorganized group, you understand the importance of Procedural communication. It helps a group get organized and stay on track in its decision-making. Procedural contributions establish an agenda, coordinate comments of different members, and record group progress.

A group is more than a task unit. It is also people who are involved in a relationship that can be more or less pleasant and open. Climate communication focuses on creating and maintaining a constructive climate that encourages members to contribute freely and to evaluate ideas critically.

Egocentric communication or dysfunctional communication is used to block others or to call attention to one. It detracts from group progress because it is self-centered rather than group centered. It doesn't contribute to enjoyable group interaction or high-quality outcomes.

**Providing Leadership-** all groups need leadership in order to be effective. Leadership may be provided either by one member or by several members who contribute to guiding group process and ensuring effective outcomes. Leadership exists when one or more members communicate in order to establish a good working



## LESSON 7

### MASS COMMUNICATION

#### **Introduction**

Mass communication can be defined as the process of using a mass medium to send message to large audiences for the purpose of informing, entertaining or persuading.

The transmission of messages, which may be processed by gatekeepers prior to being sent to large audiences via a channel of broad diffusion.

Communication from one person or group of persons through a transmitting device (a medium) to a large audience or market. Includes journalism, programmes in radio and television broadcasting, public relations, communications arts, library science, programmes for technicians in museums and similar repositories, documentation techniques.

The term 'mass communication', which was coined at the end of the 1930's, has too many connotations to allow of a simple agreed definition. The word 'mass' is itself value laden and controversial, and the term 'communication' still has no agreed definition—although Gerbner's (1976) 'social interaction through messages' is hard to beat for succinctness. The term 'mass' denotes great volume, range, or extent (of people or production), while 'communication' refers to the giving and taking of meaning, the transmission and reception of messages.

One early definition (Janowitz, 1968) reads as follows: 'mass communications comprise the institutions and techniques by which specialized groups employ technological devices (press, radio, films, etc.) to disseminate symbolic content to large, heterogeneous and widely dispersed audiences.' In this and similar definitions, the word 'communication' is really equated with 'transmission', as viewed by the sender, rather than in the fuller meaning of the term, which includes the notions of response, sharing and interaction.

Everyday experience with mass communication is extremely varied. It is also voluntary and usually shaped by culture and by the requirements of one's way of the social environment. The diversity of technology-mediated communication relationships is increasing as a result of new technology and new applications.

Life in a modern society is impossible without constant exposure to mass communication.

#### **An Overview of Mass Communication**

Gaining a common understanding is the basis of all successful communication. To prepare us for a semester-long discussion of the impact and responsibility of media and mass communication, Professor Trotter gave a presentation that laid the foundation for our understanding and evaluation of media and mass communication. His presentation also provoked questions about these broad topics. Professor Trotter provided an overview of media and mass communication by introducing several concepts in communication. As a communication professor, he made sure to stress that "media" is not a collective noun; that the media take different

forms and convey multiple messages. He introduced the two types of communication content,

cognitive and affective, and discussed intrapersonal, interpersonal, and mass

communication as the three levels of communications. Professor Trotter described the

different functions of mass communication, including entertaining, informing,

persuading, providing economic support, and developing a common foundation. As he

explored these functions of media, Trotter raised several provocative historical and

philosophical issues.

The requirement of communication is to have a common understanding or

experience on the subject matter; and historically, it has been a role of the media to help

in developing this common understanding or experience. However, the media are in

threat of demassification. The messages that are being sent are becoming more

specialized, focusing on smaller groups and are no longer establishing that common

ground for large and diverse audiences to understand. Trotter expressed regret at this

trend, but he seemed to see it as inevitable. How will this affect media? Will it cause

media to become weaker and lose its influence on large groups?

The philosophical issue that he introduced without really intending to is the

existence or nonexistence of truth. The media that we are exposed to on a daily basis all

have a level of bias, whether it's from the motives of companies that are trying to

persuade us to buy their products or from the mindsets of reporters who are informing us

of current events. Professor Trotter made the comment that there is no such thing as truth.

He explained that the truth and meaning behind everything that is communicated to

audiences, from the intention of the sender(s) to the interpretation of the receiver(s) is

relative. He also mentioned that messages are delivered in a variety of social contexts,

and messages are interpreted differently depending on the social context they come out of

and become a part of.

Professor Trotter did a great job of developing that common understanding of media and mass communication to prepare us for the rest of the semester and the Townhall Meeting; however, his presentation did bring up some questions that we would like to see further discussed :

- Are the purveyors of mass communication aware of and adequately prepared for the growing role they are assuming in the child-rearing process, particularly in America?
- If the media (rather than actively involved parents) are responsible for “raising” many of our country’s youths, what types of morals and values do you think are being instilled?
- Do the media, the news in particular, focus too much on entertaining their audiences and not enough on actually informing them? Are the news stories we see guided by the importance of the situation, or are they simply after ratings? Would the American public remain engaged in the news if it were not as entertaining?
- Is it possible that the media is responsible for the deterioration of society’s morals and ethics by distorting the prevalence of crimes and violence, thereby causing the perpetuation of the perception that violence and crimes are more common than they really are?
- If big businesses and corporations primarily control media, does this imply that the information that the publics receive—even news and magazines—are adjusted to the motives of the CEOs and Board of Directors? New FCC regulations allow companies to own larger portions of media; how will these regulations affect the content and messages from the media?
- Why is it a bad thing that media’s function of developing a common basis of experience is fading away?

### **Components of mass communication**

Mass communication is the process that mass communicators use to send their mass messages to mass audiences. They do this through the mass media. Think of these as the five Ms: mass communicators, mass messages, mass media, mass communication and mass audience.

Mass communicators- the heart of mass communication is the people who produce the messages that are carried in the mass media. These people include journalists, public relation practitioners, and advertisers among others.

Mass communicators are unlike other communicators because they cannot see their audience. This communication with an unseen audience distinguishes mass communication from other forms of communication. Sales people do presentations of their stories face to face, and they could adjust their pacing and gestures and even their vocabulary to how they sensed they were being received. Mass communicators don’t have the advantage.

Mass messages a news item is a mass message, as are a movie, a novel, a recorded song and billboard advertisement. The message is the most apparent part relationship to the mass media. It is for the messages that we pay attention to the media. We don’t listen to the radio, for example, to marvel at the technology but to hear music.

**Mass audiences** The size and diversity of mass audiences add complexity to mass communication. Only indirectly do mass communicators learn whether their messages have been received. Mass communicators are never sure exactly of the size of audiences, let alone of the effect of their message. Mass audiences are fickle. The challenge of trying to communicate to a mass audience is even more complex because people are tuning in and tuning out all the time, and when they are tuned in, it is with varying degrees of attentiveness.

**Mass media** the mass media are the vehicles that carry mass messages. The primary mass media are, newspapers, television, radio, movies, web books and magazines. The people who are experts at media include technicians who keep the presses running and who keep the television transmitters on the air. Media experts also are tinkerers and inventors who come up with technical improvements, such as compact discs, AM stereo radio and newspaper among others.

Today there is no doubt the importance of mass communication in society. Both layman and social scientists typically document this by three forms of measurement: (1) the media as setters of public opinion and political agendas, (2) the place of media in everyday life, (3) the share of mass and telecommunication in the national economies. Each of these offers impressive data, and taken together they show how central a role mass communication indeed plays in society today.

### **Functions of mass communication**

Mass media usually are thought of as sources of news and entertainment. They also carry messages of persuasion. Important, though often overlooked, is how mass messages bind people into communities, even into nations. The mass media serves many functions for our society. The five elements the theorists put together describe the audience’s use for the media. Surveillance means that the media provides news and information. Correlation means that the media presents the information to us after they select, interpret, and criticize it. The cultural transmission function means that the media reflects our own beliefs, values, and norms. Media also entertains us in our free time and provides an escape from everyday life. Mobilization refers to the media function of promoting society’s interest especially in times of crisis.

#### **Surveillance & Information-**

Providing information about events and conditions in society and the world.

#### **Indicating relations of power**

Facilitating innovation, adaptation and progress.

Of all the media functions, this one is probably the most obvious. Surveillance to what we popularly call the news and information role of the media. The have taken the place of sentinels and lookouts. Correspondents for wire service networks, and newspapers are located across the globe. These individuals collect information for us that we couldn’t get for ourselves. Their reports are funneled back to mass media organizations that, in turn, produce a radio or TV newscast or newspaper or magazine.

The surveillance function can be divided further into two main types. Warning or beware surveillance occurs when the media inform us about threats from hurricanes, erupting volcanoes, depressed

economic conditions, increasing inflation military attack. These warnings can be about immediate threats (a television station interrupts programming to broadcast a tornado warning), or they can be about term or chronic threats (a newspaper series about air pollution or unemployment). There is, however, much information that is not particularly threatening to society that people might like to know about. The second type, called instrumental Surveillance, has to do with the transmission of information that is useful and helpful in everyday life. News about what films are playing at the local theaters, stock market prices, new products, fashion ideas, recipes, and so on, are examples of instrumental surveillance. Note also that not all examples of surveillance occur in what we traditionally label the news media. Reader's Digest performs a surveillance function (most of it instrumental).

#### **Interpretation & Correlation-**

Explaining, interpreting and commenting on the meaning of events and information.

Providing support for established authority and norms.

Closely allied with the surveillance function is the interpretation function. The mass communications do not supply just facts and data. They also provide information on the ultimate meaning and significance of those events. One form of interpretation is so obvious that many people overlook it. Not everything that happens in the world on any given day can be included in the newspaper or in a TV or radio newscast. Media organizations select those events that are to be given time or space and decide how much prominence they are to be given. Those stories that are given page-one space and eight-column headlines are obviously judged to be more important than those items that are given two paragraphs on page twelve. In a TV newscast, those stories that are given two minutes at the beginning of the show are deemed more newsworthy than the item that gets two minutes toward the end. Stories that ultimately make it into the paper or the newscast have been judged by the various gatekeepers involved to be more important than those that didn't make it.

Another example of this function can be found on the editorial pages of a newspaper. Interpretation, comment, and opinion are provided for the reader so that he or she gains an added perspective on the news stories carried on other pages. Perhaps an elected official has committed some impropriety. An editorial might call for that person's resignation, thus demonstrating that the management of the newspaper considers this impropriety to be serious. A newspaper might endorse one candidate for public office over another, thereby indicating that at least in the paper's opinion, the available information indicates that this individual is more qualified than the other.

Interpretation is not confined to editorials. Articles devoted to an analysis of the causes behind a particular event or a discussion of implications of a new government policy are also examples of the interpretation function. Why is the price of gasoline going up? What impact will a prolonged dry spell have on food prices? Treatment of these topics may deal with more than the factual information that might be contained in a straight news story. Radio and television also carry programs or segments of programs that fall under this heading. At special events such as political conventions, rocket launches, and elections, commentators are on

hand to interpret for us the meaning behind what is going on. During the Gulf War, CNN and the networks brought in dozens of experts on topics ranging from military hardware to oil field operation to interpret the meaning of the day's events. The interpretation function can also be found in media content that at first glance might appear to be purely entertainment. *Free Willy* contained a certain viewpoint about ecology and the ethics of keeping wild animals in captivity.

What are the consequences of the mass media's performing this function? First, the individual is exposed to a large number of different points of view, probably far more than he or she could come in contact with through personal channels. Because of this, a person (with some effort) can evaluate all sides of an issue before arriving at an opinion. Additionally, the media make available to the individual a wide range of expertise that he or she might not have access to through interpersonal communication. Should we change the funding structure of Social Security? Thanks to the media, a person can read or hear the views of various economists, political scientists, politicians, and government workers.

#### **Continuity & Socializing-**

Coordinating separate activities. Consensus building. Setting orders of priority and signaling relative status. Expressing the dominant culture and recognizing subcultures and new cultural developments. Forging and maintaining commonality of values. The transmission of the social heritage from one generation to the next. The function to perpetuate values and cultures of the society.

The transmission of values is a subtle but nonetheless important function of the mass media. It has also been called the socialization function. Socialization refers to the (ways in which an individual comes to adopt the behavior and values of a group. The (mass media present portrayals of our society, and by watching, listening, and reading we learn how people are supposed to act and what values are important. The mass media also teach us about people; they show us how they act and what is expected of them. In other words, the media present us with role models that we may observe and perhaps imitate. A study in America once indicated that many adolescents learned about dating behavior by watching films and television programs that featured this activity.

It is this function, which helps us in relating ourselves with our past and present. Our role in society, our country, its history and the most important cultural values. Indian culture is valued through out the world. Mythology based serials like Ramayana; Mahabhatta etc help us and our children to learn more and more about Indian history and culture. Also, such programme helps in clarifying the basic concepts of religion and customs.

#### **Linkage & Mobilization-**

Campaigning for societal objectives in the sphere of politics, war, economic development, work and sometimes religion.

The mass media are able to join together by interpersonal channels different elements of society that are not directly connected. For example, mass advertising attempts to link the needs of buyers with the products of sellers. Political leaders may try to keep in touch with common man through various media. Voters, in turn, learn about the doings of their elected officials through the same or other media. Mobilizing people for any social cause is also

comes under linkage function. For example, Times of India group, Indian Express and all other media houses raised charity fund when gujaratis lost their homes and belongings.

Another type of linkage occurs when geographically separated the media links groups that share a common interest. The outbreak of hostilities in the Persian Gulf linked together a whole nation concerned about the safety of their friends and relatives in the armed forces. Media usage reached record levels during the war as people turned to TV; radio, newspapers, and magazines to learn the latest war news. Similar function media performed on and after 9/11. Social campaigns like AIDS awareness, Pulse Polio, National Integration, Female infanticide are all examples of mobilizing function.

#### Entertainment-

Providing amusement, diversion, and the means of relaxation.

Reducing social tension.

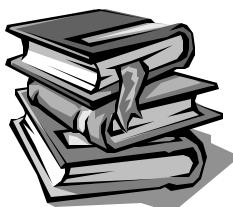
Another obvious media function is that of entertainment. Even though most of a newspaper is devoted to covering the events of the day, comics, puzzles, horoscopes, games, advice, gossip, humor, and general entertainment features are there to entertain us. Television is primarily devoted to entertainment, with about three-quarters of a typical broadcast day falling into this category. Now a day we do have complete 24-hour audiovisual channels devoted for entertainment purpose only. In television we have MTV, Channel V, B4U, Zee Music among others for music purpose only. Similarly we have specialized movie channels like- Zee Cinema, STAR movies, HBO, AXN etc. Even radio is not far behind. We have Radio Mirchi, Red FM, Vividh Bharti among others successfully and sincerely performing their function.

#### Review questions

- Discuss types of groups in detail. Explain why do people join groups?
- Explain what are the difficulties people normally face while communicating in a group?

#### Suggested Readings

- Keval J kumar: Mass Communication in India, Jaico Publishing House
- Raymond Zeuschner: Communicating Today, Allyn and Bacon
- Barker/ Gaut: Communication, Allyn and Bacon



#### Notes

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## LESSON 8

### ARISTOTLE'S MODEL & LASWELL'S MODEL

#### **Introduction :**

Technically communication is a process where a sender sends the message to a receiver through the various channels and with the same or the other channel sender gets the feedback from receiver. In our previous lessons we learned about the different types of communication, i.e., intrapersonal, interpersonal, group and mass communication. Each type of communication includes few basic elements namely- sender, receiver, message, channel, feedback and barrier. To simplify and understand the process of communication different models are interpreted. A model is a representation of real world phenomenon in more abstract terms, which can be applied to different forms.

Students of communication often use models to try to present a simplified version of communication, containing the essential 'ingredients' only. With a bit of luck, these models should help us to tease out the factors, which are common to all forms of communication. Communication theory models offer a convenient way to think about communication, providing a graphical checklist, which one can use to create anything from a speech to a major advertising campaign. Communication models are visualizations of communication process. They are basic theories concerning the elements of communication and how they operate and interact.

3 basic components that are part of all communication models:  
SOURCE MESSAGE RECEIVER

S —————> M —————> R (linear)

#### **Aristotle's model of communication**

Formal communication theory (rhetorical theory) goes back 2500 years ago to Classical Greece when Plato, Aristotle, and the Sophists were speech teachers. Classical Rhetoric . Early Greek society (Plato, Aristotle) began the study of communication. The social context, the society's structure leads to a certain picture of communication. The study of communication in Greek society was called RHETORIC, and this was how Greek philosophers thought about communication. Most politics then were based on the oral tradition, you had to defend yourself before a court of law, and nothing was really written. Public speaking was the basis of society and effective public speaking was important. The word SOPHIST (or applied communicator) comes from these times. These were clever people who were very effective debaters (nowadays it means someone who can trick you in a debate, someone sophisticated).

The Greek tradition was continued and improved upon by the Romans, after which it remained static until the twentieth century. Indeed, Classical Rhetoric was and still is being taught today. However, as a result of the proliferation of mass communications via radio, movies, and television, and of empirical scientific methods, communication theory changed in the latter part of the twentieth century.

The model proposed by Aristotle is a linear one. In his *Rhetoric*, Aristotle tells us that we must consider three elements in communication:

- The speaker
- The speech
- The audience



This is a model that focuses principally on public speaking; we will turn next to explore the Rhetorical Situation. This model will also provide a basis for judging how effectively a speaker responds to the requirements of a speaking situation. Aristotle's model has a Speaker, so the emphasis is on personal debate. Rhetoric or persuasive communication is based on the Greek model. Many models and theories of communication stem from this early one. If you just think for a moment about the variety of communication acts, you shouldn't have too much difficulty seeing those elements. In some cases, of course, Aristotle's vocabulary doesn't quite fit. In the example of you reading the newspaper, no one is actually 'speaking' as such, but if we use, say, the terms 'writer' and 'text', then Aristotle's elements can still be found.

The Audience includes those who are listening to your speech. Yet, not all audiences are the same. An astute speaker will carefully assess the nature of the audience at hand to determine the best ways to address the audience. In thinking about the audience who will be listening to your speech, consider some of the following audience demographics:

- age
- sex
- family affiliation
- sexual orientation
- cultural diversity
- racial background
- economic and social standing
- political identification
- religious or philosophical orientation

Depending on who makes up your audience, you will select and shape your topic. To be responsive to the unique audience gathered for your speech you will need to take into account how your audience is predisposed on an emotional and psychological level to respond to you or your topic.

It is also meaningful to consider the attitudes, beliefs and values of the audience that constitute the frame of reference members of the audience bring to the situation:

- An attitude is the predisposition to respond favorably or unfavorably toward a topic.

- A belief is a position or standard that audience members hold as valid or truthful.
- A value is a deeply seated attitude commonly rooted in core beliefs, usually about the intrinsic worth of something.

Aristotle speaks of a communication process composed of a speaker, a message and a listener. Note, he points out that the person at the end of the communication process holds the key to whether or not communication takes place. Our failure to recognize what Aristotle grasped thousands of years ago is a primary cause, if not the primary one, for communication failure. We fail to recognize the importance of the audience at the end of the communication chain. We tend to be more concerned about ourselves as the communications source, about our message, and even the channel we are going to use. Too often, the listener, viewer, reader fails to get any consideration at all. Aristotle's words underscore the long interest in communication. They also indicate that man has had a good grasp of what is involved in communication for a long while. So we might even wonder: If we know so much about the communication process, and if we've known it for so long, why do we still have communications problems? It's unlikely we will ever achieve perfect communication. The best we can hope for is to provide improved communication. Hopefully, we'll be more aware of the process and work harder to minimize problems with communications.



### Lasswell's model (1948)

Harold Lasswell a political scientist studied very carefully the American presidential Elections (1948). Based on his studies on the process of political campaigning and propagandas he introduced an important model, elements of which survive in more developed modern models.

- Who
- Says What
- In Which Channel
- To Whom
- To What Effect



As we see, Lasswell's communication model is similar to the other models we will discuss. The "Who" is the "Source;" "Says What", the message; and "To Whom", the destination. Communications have a source that communicates a message through a channel or

medium to a destination (audience) that, hopefully, creates the desired effect. Claude Shannon's model is similar, but more graphical.

Main characteristics of the model are:

It is based on effect of the sender's message on receiver.

There is no feedback for the message.

It is very linear in nature (researchers say communication is always in circular motion because of feedback element)

It presents communication as more of persuasive process rather than an informative.

Lasswell's model sees communication as the transmission of messages: it raises the issue of 'effect' rather than meaning. 'Effect' implies an observable and measurable change in the receiver that is caused by identifiable elements in the process. Changing one of these elements will change the effect: we change the sender, we change the message, we change the channel: each one of these changes should produce the appropriate change in the effect.

Lasswell's was primarily concerned with mass communication. In every form of communication, though, there must be someone (or something) that communicates.

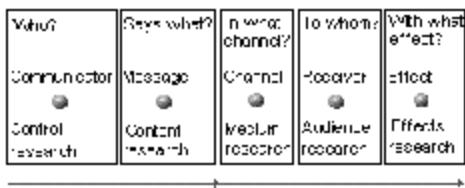
Being concerned with the mass media, Lasswell was particularly concerned with the messages present in the media. This relates to an area of study known as content research. Typically, content research is applied to questions of representation, for example: how are women represented in the tabloid press? or: how are blacks represented on television? Or: how is our society represented to us in the movies? Content research will often be a matter of counting the number of occurrences of a particular representation (for example, the housewife and mother who does not work outside the home) and comparing that with some kind of 'objective' measure, such as official statistics.

One of the earliest attempts to describe the communication process was Harold Lasswell's "Who says what to whom with what effect." (Given our definition of communication and the General Systems Theory, can you identify weakness in this model?). Lasswell was attempting to describe his observations about the process and effect of newspapers on readers. The newspaper reporter or editor is the "who," the story content is the "says what." The format and form of the newspaper item is the "in what way." The "to whom" is the reader and the "with what effect" refers to actions motivated in the reader from exposure to the newspaper item. Some people might say this model doesn't include any provision for feedback to determine the degree of understanding achieved in the process, an important component of our definition.

Think about this a minute. If someone were to stop you in the parking lot and ask you directions to the nearest restaurant, you might say, "Go down this street to the traffic light. Turn left for two blocks, then turn right." You have said something in a certain way to the person who asked you for directions. This is what Lasswell was describing. Then, he or she turns to leave. Can you determine the degree to which they understood your message?

You can, to some extent, as Lasswell suggested in the last component. If you observe the person beginning to follow your instructions, you might see him or her travel down the street to the traffic light. If he or she turns left, you can assume she or he

understood your directions to some degree. If he or she turns right at the traffic light, you can assume he or she didn't understand or chose to ignore your direction. So by observation, you can detect some level of understanding and compliance. The Lasswell Formula is typical of what are often referred to as transmission models of communication. For criticisms of such models, you should consult the section on criticisms of transmission models.



The sociologist, Harold Lasswell, tells us that in studying communication we should consider the elements in the graphic above.

Lasswell was primarily concerned with mass communication and propaganda, so his model is intended to direct us to the kinds of research we need to conduct to answer his questions ('control analysis', 'effects research' and so on). In fact, though, it is quite a useful model, whatever category of communication we are studying. Note, incidentally, that the Lasswell Formula consists of five major components, though this is by no means obligatory. You might be interested to look at the comments on Maletzke's model to see which components a selection of other researchers have considered essential.

### Lasswell: Communicator

Lasswell was primarily concerned with mass communication. In every form of communication, though, there must be someone (or something) that communicates.

How appropriate is the term *communicator*? You might say that you can't really talk about communication if the audience for the message don't respond appropriately. Maybe that's a reason that many communication specialists refer to the communicator as *source* or *transmitter* or *sender* of the message - at least that doesn't presuppose that communication does actually take place.

### Control analysis

Because of the application of Lasswell's Formula to the media, his question Who? has come to be associated mainly with *control analysis*:

- Who owns this newspaper?
  - What are their aims?
  - What are their political allegiances?
  - Do they attempt to set the editorial policy?
  - Does the fact that they are a republican account for the newspaper's repeated attacks on the Royal Family?
  - Are they subject to any kind of legal constraints?
  - How does the editor decide what to put in the paper?
- and so on.

Can you see, though, how that sort of question can be applied to, say, interpersonal communication? You're asking a similar

sort of question when, reflecting on a comment someone has just made.

### Lasswell: The Message

Being concerned with the mass media, Lasswell was particularly concerned with the messages present in the media. This relates to an area of study known as content research. Typically, content research is applied to questions of representation, for example: how are women represented in the tabloid press? or: how is lower caste represented on films? or: how is our society represented to us in the TV serials? Content research will often be a matter of counting the number of occurrences of a particular representation (for example, the housewife and mother who does not work outside the home) and comparing that with some kind of 'objective' measure, such as official statistics.

### Interpersonal communication

What about our everyday communication, though? Do you spend much time thinking about how best to formulate your messages? In much of our everyday interpersonal communication with our friends, we probably are not all that conscious of thinking much about our messages. Still, you can probably think of certain messages you are communicating now to anyone passing by as you read through this. Think about it for a minute -

- What clothes are you wearing?
- How is your hair done?
- Are you wearing specs?
- What about that deodorant?

The answers to those questions may not be the result of a lot of thought before you left home this morning, but they are the result of a variety of decisions about the image you want to project of yourself - the messages about you, your personality, your tastes in music etc.

No doubt also during the day, there'll be certain messages you will think about more carefully - that thank you letter you've got to send; that excuse you've got to find for not handing in your essay; that way of telling that person you wish they'd really leave you alone.

### Lasswell : Channel

The channel is what carries the message. If I speak to you my words are carried via the channel of airwaves, the radio news is carried by both airwaves and radio waves. I could tap out a message on the back of your head in Morse code, in which case the channel is touch. In simple terms, messages can be sent in channels corresponding to your five senses.

This use of the word 'channel' is similar to the use of the word medium when we talk about communication. The words are sometimes used interchangeably. However, strictly speaking, we often use the word medium to refer to a combination of different channels. Television for example uses both the auditory channel (sound) and visual channel (sight).

### Media analysis

The question of which channel or medium to use to carry the message is a vitally important one in all communication. Can you think of any examples of when you might have chosen the wrong channel to communicate with someone? An obvious

example of the possible pitfalls would be trying to use the telephone to communicate with a profoundly deaf person. For some time I taught a blind person how to use a computer. As you can probably imagine, it was incredibly difficult to use the auditory channel only.

#### The choice of medium for your practical work

You could, for example, produce very polished videotape for your practical work, but is it appropriate? Can you think why it might be the wrong medium? If you don't know how to distribute it to the intended audience, or if your audience can't afford to buy it, you could well have wasted your time. You might well have been better advised to produce a leaflet - less impressive perhaps, but cheaper and easier to distribute. Video is also a very linear medium - you start at the beginning and work your way through to the end - if you're communicating information which your audience already know a lot of, maybe they would have been better off with a booklet that they can skim through to find something they don't already know. Video isn't easily portable either - if your audience need to refer back to your information, then a booklet they can stuff in their pocket might be a better bet.

When you produce your practical work, you'll have to investigate the possible media available for the message you want to communicate, asking questions like:

- What are the conventions of this medium?
- Is this medium appropriate to my audience?
- Does it appeal to them?
- How will they get hold of it?
- Can they afford it?
- Is this medium appropriate to my message?
- Can it explain what I want it to explain?
- Do I need to show this in pictures or words?

and so on.

These are all questions of 'media analysis'. Advertising agencies employ Media Buyers who decide what is the most suitable medium, or combination of media (newspapers, billboards, flyers, TV ads etc.) for the type of message they want to communicate. They will also have decided on a particular target audience they want to communicate it to and so, using, say the TGI, the NRS etc., will decide what is the most appropriate magazine, newspaper to reach that audience.

A classic example of using the wrong channel is that of research conducted by an American newspaper on the eve of the Presidential elections in the 1940's. The message was simple: Who will you vote for? The audience was easy to define: a random sample of voters. The newspaper duly conducted a telephone poll of voters chosen at random from the phone book and announced that the Republicans would win. In fact the Democrats won with a massive victory. The reason they got it wrong was quite simple: at that time only the wealthier members of society would have telephones and the wealthier members of society would vote Republican.

You should also give some thought to the notion of channel capacity, which is quite clearly defined in information theory, but less clear in everyday communication. Certainly, though, it's clear that there are limits to the information which can be carried in a

single channel - hence the need to think about channel redundancy as a means of carrying more of the message of your practical work.

#### Lasswell: The Receiver

Many Communication scholars use the rather technological-sounding terms: *sender*, *source* or *transmitter* to refer to the Communicator. You'll also come across the technological *receiver* to refer to what we might ordinarily call audience or readership. This whole question of audience is vitally important to successful communication.

#### Audience research

Professional broadcasters use the ratings figures and other data from TRP and advertisers in the print media use information from IRS & NRS and a range of other sources to find out as much as they possibly can about their audiences.

#### Audience research and your practical work

When you come to do your practical work, you'll probably need to demonstrate that you have found out as much as you reasonably can about your audience, using the appropriate techniques. Because it's so important, we have a unit devoted entirely to Researching Your Audience.

#### Interpersonal communication

It's not only the mass media, though, where knowledge of our audience is vitally important. The same applies in everyday life in our contact with other people. In many cases, we don't have to know a lot about the person we're dealing with because we each act out the appropriate role. I don't have to know anything about the shop assistant who sells me a packet of fags - I ask for the fags, he gives me them, I give him the money, he gives me the change, we smile briefly, say 'Cheerio' and that's it. I don't need to know anything about him.

But there are numerous occasions when we do need to know more, or we make unjustified assumptions about what our audiences are like. Can you think of any examples from your everyday life where communication has broken down because you didn't know enough about your audience or because you made the wrong guess as to what they were like? What about the teacher who waffles on incomprehensibly because she makes the assumption that you know nearly as much about the subject as she does? Or that you actually remember what she told you last lesson? Or that you're actually interested in the subject?

#### Lasswell: Effects

Lasswell's model also introduces us to the question of media effects. We don't communicate in a vacuum. We normally communicate because we want to achieve something. Even if we just pass someone in the corridor and say 'hello' without really thinking about it, we want to have the effect of reassuring them that we're still friends, we are nice people, and so on.

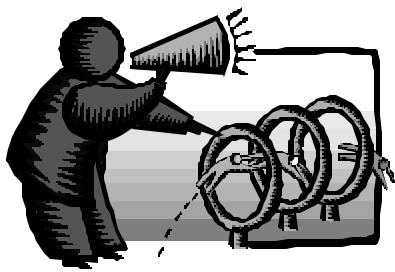
#### Practical work

Lasswell was concerned not with interpersonal communication, but with the effects of the mass media. The question of whether the media have any effect or not and, if so, how they affect their audiences, is not just a large chunk of most communication and media courses, it's also a question you have to answer about your

practical work and, of course, it's a constantly topical issue in society.

### Feedback

To find out what kind of effect our communication has, we need some kind of feedback. If I speak to you, I listen to your responses and watch for signs of interest, boredom etc. In other words, I use feedback from you to gauge the effect of my communication. If you give me *positive* feedback by showing interest, I'll continue in the same vein; if you give me *negative* feedback by showing boredom, I'll change the subject, or change my style, or stop speaking. When broadcasters transmit a programme, they use the services of research units to gain feedback in the form of ratings. Advertising agencies use a variety of services to find out whether their campaign has worked. These are all forms of feedback.



**The principle criticism** of the model is that it only describes one-way communication. The linear model is limited to explaining how messages are sent to a destination. While that may let us see how the speaker gets through to the listener, it does not account for the way that the listeners may affect the speaker. It thus does not deal in a realistic way with how communication is a two-way process of give and take between a speaker and an audience of listeners.

### Review Questions:

- Explain how do the models of communication help us in understanding the process of communication?
- What are salient features of Aristotle's model? Explain the drawbacks of the model.
- What is Laswell's model of communication?

### Suggested Readings

- Keval J kumar: *Mass Communication in India*, Jaico Publishing House
- Raymond Zeuschner: *Communicating Today*, Allyn and Bacon
- Barker/ Gaut: *Communication*, Allyn and Bacon



### Notes

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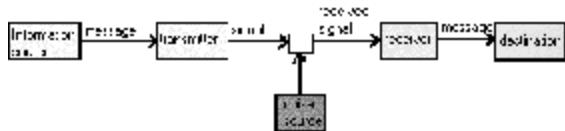
## LESSON 9

### SHANNON & WEAVER'S MODEL AND OSGOOD & SCHRAMM'S CIRCULAR MODEL.

#### The Shannon-Weaver Model (1949)

The Shannon-Weaver model is typical of what are often referred to as transmission models of communication. For criticisms of such models, you should consult the section on criticisms of transmission models. If you have looked through the examples of typical everyday forms of communication, you will have noticed that some of the examples refer to less immediate methods of communication than face-to-face interaction, e.g. using the radio, newspapers or the telephone. In these cases, technology is introduced. When, for instance, the telephone is used, you speak, the phone turns the sound waves into electrical impulses and those electrical impulses are turned back into sound waves by the phone at the other end of the line. Shannon and Weaver's mathematical model of communication is widely accepted as one of the main seeds out of which communication studies have grown. Their work developed during the Second World War in the Bell Telephone laboratories in the US; their main concern was to work out a way in which the channels of communication could be used most efficiently.

Claude Shannon and Warren Weaver produced a general model of communication:



This is now known after them as the Shannon-Weaver Model. Although they were principally concerned with communication technology, their model has become one, which is frequently introduced to students of human communication early in their study. However, despite the fact that it is frequently used early in the study of human communication, I think it's worth bearing in mind that information theory, or statistical communication theory was initially developed to separate noise from information-carrying signals. That involved breaking down an information system into sub-systems so as to evaluate the efficiency of various communication channels and codes. You might ask yourself how viable the transfer of Shannon's insights from information theory to human communication is likely to be. The concepts of information theory and cybernetics are essentially mathematical and are intended to be applied to technical problems under clearly defined conditions. After you've read this section, which, I think, is a reasonable attempt to loosely apply Shannon's ideas to human communication, ask yourself whether you feel enlightened.

The Shannon-Weaver Model (1947) proposes that all communication must include six elements:

- **a source**
- **an encoder**
- **a message**
- **a channel**

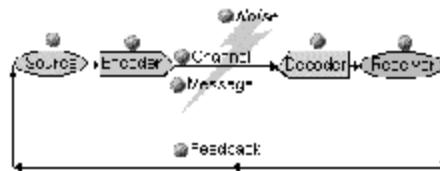
- **a decoder**

- **a receiver**

These six elements are shown graphically in the model. As Shannon was researching in the field of information theory, his model was initially very technology-oriented. The model was produced in 1949, a year after Lasswell's and you will immediately see the similarity to the Lasswell Formula.

The emphasis here is very much on the transmission and reception of information. 'Information' is understood rather differently from the way you and I would normally use the term, as well. This model is often referred to as an 'information model' of communication. (But you don't need to worry about that if you're just starting.)

Apart from its obvious technological bias, a drawback from our point of view is the model's obvious linearity. It looks at communication as a one-way process. That is remedied by the addition of the feedback loop, which you can see in the developed version of the model:



A further drawback with this kind of model is that the message is seen as relatively unproblematic.

#### Shannon-Weaver: The Source

All human communication has some source (*information source* in Shannon's terminology), some person or group of persons with a given purpose, a reason for engaging in communication. You'll also find the terms transmitter and communicator used. We have discussed sender in detail in our previous lessons.

#### Shannon-Weaver: The Encoder

When you communicate, you have a particular purpose in mind:

- You want to show that you're a friendly person
- You want to give them some information
- You want to get them to do something
- You want to persuade them of your point of view

and so on. You, as the source, have to express your purpose in the form of a message. That message has to be formulated in some kind of code. How do the source's purposes get translated into a code? This requires an encoder. The communication encoder is responsible for taking the ideas of the source and putting them in code, expressing the source's purpose in the form of a message.

It's fairly easy to think in terms of source and encoder when you are talking on the phone (*transmitter* in Shannon's terminology). You are the source of the message and the 'phone is the encoder

which does the job of turning your sounds into electrical impulses. The distinction is not quite so obvious when you think of yourself communicating face-to-face.

In person-to-person communication, the encoding process is performed by the motor skills of the source - vocal mechanisms (lip and tongue movements, the vocal cords, the lungs, face muscles etc.), muscles in the hand and so on. Some people's encoding systems are not as efficient as others'. So, for example, a disabled person might not be able to control movement of their limbs and so find it difficult to encode the intended non-verbal messages or they may communicate unintended messages. A person who has suffered throat cancer may have had their vocal cords removed. They can encode their messages verbally using an artificial aid, but much of the non-verbal messages most of us send via pitch, intonation, volume and so on cannot be encoded.

Shannon was not particularly concerned with the communication of meanings. The inclusion of the encoding and decoding processes is very helpful to us since it draws our attention to the possibility of a mismatch between the operation of the encoding and decoding devices, which can cause semantic noise to be set up. With good reason, the source of the message may wonder whether the picture in the receiver's head will bear any resemblance to what's in his/her own.

### **Shannon-Weaver: The Message**

The message of course is what communication is all about. Whatever is communicated is the message. Denis McQuail (1975) in his book Communication writes that the simplest way of regarding human communication is 'to consider it as the sending from one person to another of meaningful messages'.

The Shannon-Weaver Model, in common with many others separates the message from other components of the process of communication. In reality, though, you can only reasonably examine the message within the context of all the other interlinked elements. Whenever we are in contact with other people we and they are involved in sending and receiving messages. The crucial question for Communication Studies is: to what extent does the message received correspond to the message transmitted? That's where all the other factors in the communication process come into play. The Shannon-Weaver model and others like it tends to portray the message as a relatively uncomplicated matter. Note that this is not a criticism of Shannon since meanings were simply not his concern:

Frequently the messages have meaning that is they refer to or are correlated according to some system with certain physical or conceptual entities. These considerations are irrelevant to the engineering problem.

This was particularly emphasized in Warren Weaver's introduction to Shannon's paper:

The word information, in this theory, is used in a special sense that must not be confused with its ordinary usage. In particular information must not be confused with meaning. In fact, two messages, one of which is heavily loaded with meaning and the other of which is pure nonsense, can be exactly equivalent, from the present viewpoint, as regards information.

It may however be a criticism of the application of Shannon's model to the more general area of human-to-human

communication. Meanings are assumed to be somehow contained within the signs used in the message and the receiver can, as it were, take them out again. Matters such as the social context in which the message is transmitted, the assumptions made by source and receiver, their past experiences and so on are simply disregarded. In this respect, models, which incorporate such factors, are probably more revealing of the complexity of the communication process.

### **Shannon-Weaver: The Channel**

You tap on a membrane suspended above a steadily flowing jet of water. The air under the membrane causes slight deflections in the jet of water. A laser is aimed at a receiver. The jet of water flows through the laser beam, deflecting it from its target. Every time the movement of the air deflects the water jet, the laser beam hits its target. The laser receiver is connected to a computer, which takes each 'hit' and turns it into a 1 and each miss and turns it into a 0. The computer sends this etc. etc....

You get the idea: the air waves, the jet of water and so on are all channels. The words channel and medium are often used interchangeably, if slightly inaccurately. The choice (a pretty stupid one above) of the appropriate channel is a vitally important choice in communication. It's obvious that you don't use the visual channel to communicate with the blind or the auditory channel with the deaf, but there are more subtle considerations to be taken into account as well. A colleague of mine was clearly much more responsive to visual communication than I. To elucidate his arguments he would inevitably grab a pencil and a piece of paper and sketch out complex diagrams of his arguments. Though they may have helped him to clarify his ideas, they merely served to confuse me, who would have preferred a verbal exposition. It's curious that in the college where I work many students who are dyslexic or have other learning difficulties end up studying information technology in so-called flexible learning centres. Bearing in mind the statement above that "the choice of the appropriate channel is a vitally important choice in communication", it's less than obvious how a student who has difficulty reading and writing can have their needs met by a learning model which boils down in essence to 'read this; it will tell you what to write'.

### **Shannon-Weaver: Physical noise**

Shannon is generally considered to have been primarily concerned with physical (or 'mechanical' or 'engineering') noise in the channel, i.e. unexplained variation in a communication channel or random error in the transmission of information. Everyday examples of physical noise are:

- A loud motorbike roaring down the road while you're trying to hold a conversation
- Your little brother standing in front of the TV set
- Mist on the inside of the car windscreen
- Smudges on a printed page
- 'Snow' on a TV set

It might seem odd to use the word noise in this way, unless perhaps you're a hi-fi buff, in which case you'll be familiar with looking up the claimed 'signal-to-noise ratio' for the various bits of equipment you buy. In this technical sense, 'noise' is not necessarily audible. Thus a TV technician might speak of a 'noisy picture'. Generally speaking, in this kind of everyday

communication, we're fairly good at avoiding physical noise: we shout when the motorbike goes past; you clout your little brother; cars have demisters.

However, it is possible for a message to be distorted by *channel overload*. Channel overload is not due to any noise source, but rather to the channel capacity being exceeded. You may come across that at a party where you are holding a conversation amidst lots of others going on around you or, perhaps, in a Communication lesson where everyone has split into small groups for discussion or simulations.

Shannon and Weaver were primarily involved with the investigation of technological communication. Their model is perhaps more accurately referred to as a model of *information theory* (rather than communication theory). Consequently, their main concern was with the kind of physical (or mechanical) noise discussed above.

### **Shannon-Weaver: The Decoder**

Just as a source needs an encoder to translate her purposes into a message, so the receiver needs a decoder to retranslate. The decoder (*receiver* in Shannon's paper) is an interesting and very useful development over, say, the Lasswell Formula.

If you take a look at our discussion of the receiver, you'll see that we considered how, for example, a blind person would not have the equipment to receive whatever non-verbal messages you send in the visual channel.

The notion of a decoder reminds us that it is quite possible for a person to have all the equipment required to receive the messages you send (all five senses, any necessary technology and so on) and yet be unable to decode your messages.

An obvious example would be :

**أنا أحمد حمدي و بلي في جنوب مدينة عمان.**

You can see it. You probably guess that it's a language, maybe even that it's Arabic. You probably don't understand it, though. In fact, it is Arabic and it does mean (but nothing very interesting). You cannot decode my message, encoded to you in that short sentence, by you. You have the appropriate receiving equipment, but no decoder. You don't understand the code. Can you think of where you might come across a similar inability to decode where the English language is concerned? Suppose you've been reading around Communication Studies and have come across a reference to the philosopher Immanuel Kant. So you ask your teacher about him. She replies, "Well, the Critique of Pure Reason is essentially all about answering the question: how are synthetic judgments a priori possible?" Eh? You probably have a meaning for every one of those words, except perhaps 'a priori'. You might perhaps guess that she is using the title of one of Kant's works in her answer. But the statement is incomprehensible unless you know the technical jargon of philosophy. You can't decode the message - and your teacher is a pretty lousy teacher for having failed to predict your inability to decode it (or for having accurately predicted your inability and using it as an excuse to show off!).

### **Shannon-Weaver: The Receiver**

For communication to occur, there must be somebody at the other end of the channel. This person or persons can be called the **receiver**. To put it in Shannon's terms, information transmitters

and receivers must be similar systems. If they are not, communication cannot occur. (Actually Shannon used the term *destination*, reserving the term *receiver* for what we have called *decoder*. However, I think the terminology I have been using is more common in the broader understanding of 'communication theory' as distinct from Shannon's information theory.)

What that probably meant as far as he was concerned was that you need a telephone at one end and a telephone at the other, not a telephone connected to a radio. In rather more obviously human terms, the receiver needs to have the equipment to receive the message. A totally blind person has the mental equipment to decode your gestures, but no system for receiving messages in the visual channel. So, your non-verbal messages are not received and you're wasting your energy. See also the Lasswell Formula for a more detailed discussion of 'receiver'.

### **Shannon-Weaver: Feedback**

Feedback is a vital part of communication. When we are talking to someone over the phone, if they don't give us the occasional 'mmmm', 'aaah', 'yes, I see' and so on, it can be very disconcerting. This lack of feedback explains why most of us don't like to answer phones. In face-to-face communication, we get feedback in the visual channel as well - head nods, smiles, frowns, changes in posture and orientation, gaze and so on. Advertisers need feedback, which they get in the form of market research from institutions like ORG MARG, IMRB and other individual research agencies.. How else would they know if their ads are on the right track? Broadcasters need feedback, which they get from TRP ratings. Politicians need feedback, which they get from public opinion polls and so on.

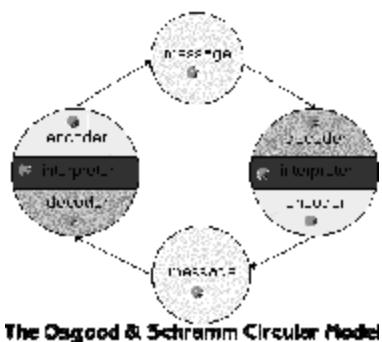
Why do people often have difficulty when using computers, when they find it perfectly easy to drive a car? You'd think it should be easier to operate a computer - after all there are only a few keys and a mouse, as against levers, pedals and a steering wheel. A computer's not likely to kill you, either. It could be due to the lack of feedback - in a car, you've the sound of the engine, the speed of the landscape rushing past, the force of gravity. Feedback is coming at you through sight, hearing and touch - overdo it and it might come through smell as well! With a computer, there's very little of that.

However, it has to be said that the model's separation of the communication process into discrete units has proved fruitful and has formed the basis of several other models, which provide some more insightful elaboration of the human communication process. However, in disregarding meaning it may well be downright misleading. Those researchers who take this model and simply slap meaning on top of it are probably even more misleading. Some models developed upon the basic constituents of the Shannon-Weaver model are linked to below under 'related articles'. I would refer you also to the article on criticism of transmission models.

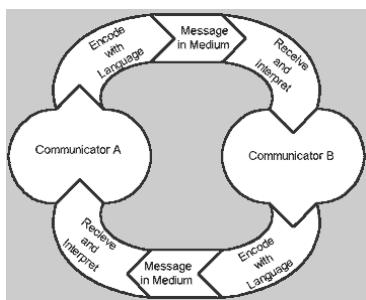
### **The Interactive Model of Communication**

#### **Osgood & Schramm Circular Model**

The Osgood and Schramm circular model is an attempt to remedy that deficiency: The model emphasizes the circular nature of communication. The participants swap between the roles of source/encoder and receiver/decoder.



OR



### Schramm stated:

In fact, it is misleading to think of the communication process as starting somewhere and ending somewhere. It is really endless. We are little switchboard centers handling and rerouting the great endless current of information....

(Schramm W. (1954) quoted in McQuail & Windahl (1981)

### Osgood & Schramm: Interpreting

The model is particularly helpful in reminding us of the process of interpretation, which takes place whenever a message is decoded. The more mechanical models, particularly those concerned primarily with machine communication, tend to suggest that fidelity will be high as long as physical noise is reduced to a minimum or strategies (such as increasing channel redundancy) are adopted to counter the noise. This circular model reminds us that receiving a message is not simply a matter of decoding, but also of interpreting the message.

Whenever we receive data from the world around us, even in, say, the apparently very simple act of seeing what's in front of us, we are engaged in an active process of interpretation, not simply taking in information, but actively making sense of it. An important question is: what criteria are we using to make sense of what we are receiving? Since the criteria we use will inevitably differ from one person to another, there will always be semantic noise. If we can answer that question about our audience, then we stand a chance of communicating successfully.



Human beings pay attention to incoming messages selectively, and base their responses on prior experience and anticipation of future events. Theorists who support the social relationships on communication say that communication only occurs through social interaction. Each person's definition of and experience with objects, events, other people, and even oneself, is determined through a network of interpersonal relationships. The meanings each person forms are products of social "negotiation" with other people and through these relationships the symbols we use to communicate and meanings of those symbols are determined. The key to this theory is that the symbols, objects, events, and self-images that make up our world are the creation of a shared meaning through social communication.

Osgood and Schramm provide a simple, but effective, graphical illustration of the importance of feedback in interpersonal communication. The Osgood and Schramm Circular Model emphasizes:

- The two-way flow of dyadic communication
- The active role of *interpreter* which each participant in the communication act plays
- That neither participant will be simply either encoder or decoder

Even a person who doesn't say anything will

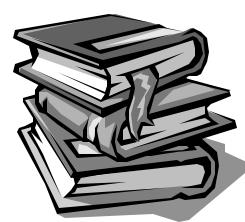
- Decode the message she receives according to her own, more or less highly developed, set of communication skills
- Interpret the message according to her own complex set of values, attitudes, beliefs etc.
- Then encode her reactions in the form of non-verbal signals, which provide feedback to the other participant
- That person then has to decode and interpret that non-verbal message... and so on.

### Review Questions :

- Explain the difference between linear and circular models of communication.
- What are salient features of Shannon and Weaver's mode?
- What is Osgood and Schramm's circular model of communication?

### Suggested Readings

- Keval J kumar: *Mass Communication in India*, Jaico Publishing House
- Raymond Zeuschner: *Communicating Today*, Allyn and Bacon
- Barker/ Gaut: *Communication*, Allyn and Bacon

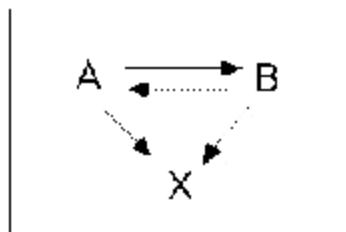


## LESSON 10

### NEWCOMB'S MODEL AND GERBNER'S MODEL

#### New comb's ABX model

Theodore Newcomb (1953) developed a *Co orientation Model* as a helpful tool in relational analysis of dyadic pairs. This simple yet insightful model consists of two communicators, A and B, and their "orientation" toward some "object of communication", X. The object of communication could be an actual physical object (such as a house which the couple is considering purchasing or a painting in a museum), an event (such as baseball, a rock concert or a christening), an activity (such as playing cards or watching football on television every Sunday), an attitude (such as loving action movies or being opposed to abortion), or a behavior (such as selling Aunt Molly's antique quilt without conferring about it first or donating uniforms to the local little league baseball team). Any subject, behavior, attitude, belief, event, or object, which is the focus of communication for the two participants, has the potential to be the "object of communication". Each communicator, A and B, has a simultaneous co orientation toward his or her communication partner (usually the level of attraction and feelings toward the partner) and toward the object of communication (the degree of positive or negative attitude about X).



Newcomb (1953) - ABX Model – is based on psychological view of communication. Newcomb saw communication as a way in which people orient to their environment and to each other. Base on the concept of balance between one's attitudes and beliefs and those that are important to an individual. If the balance is disturbed, communication is used to restore it.

Newcomb is the one that introduces us to fundamentally different shape. It is triangular. Its main significance, however, lies in the fact that it is the first of our models to introduce the role of communication in society or a social relationship. For Newcomb this role is simple – it is to maintain equilibrium within the social system. The way the model works is this, A and B are communicator and receiver; they may be individuals, or group. X is part of their social environment. ABX is a system, which means that its internal relations are interdependent: if A changes, B and X will change as well; or if A changes her/his relationship to X, B will have to change his/her relationship either with X or with A. If A and B are friends, and X is something or someone known to both of them, it will be more important that A and B will be under pressure to communicate until the two friends arrive at broadly similar attitudes to X. The more important a place X has in their social environment, the more urgent will be their drive to

share an orientation towards him or it. Of course, X may not be a thing or a [person: it may be any part of their shared environment. A May be the government, B the labour, and X pay policy: in this case we can see, to oversimplify for the sake of clarity, that a labour government (a) and the labour (B), who in theory 'like' each other, will be under pressure to hold frequent meetings to try and agree on X, the pay policy. But if A is Anti labour government who is not friendly with the b, the Labour, there will be less pressure for them to agree on x. If the AB relationship is not of liking they can differ over X: the system is till in equilibrium.

Another example of the way equilibrium increases the need to communicate can be seen when X changes. Immediately A and B need to communicate to establish their co-orientation to the new X. In time of war, people's dependence on the media is increased, and so too is the government's use of the media. This is because the war, X, is not only of crucial importance but is also constantly changing. So government and people (A and B) need to be in constant communication via the mass media.

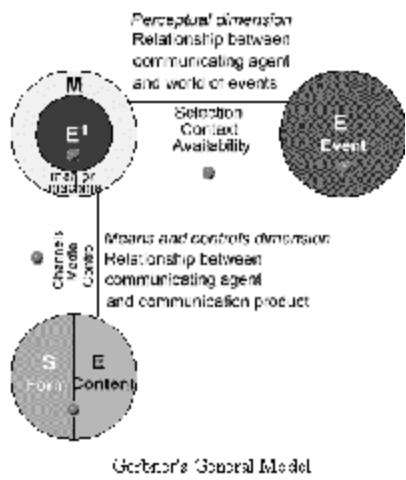
This model assumes, though does not explicitly state, that people need information. In a democracy information is usually regarded as a right, but it is not always realized that information is also a necessity. Without it we cannot feel part of the society. We must have adequate information about our social environment in order both to know how to react to it and to identify in our reaction factors that we can share with the fellow members of our peer group, subculture, or culture. In simpler terms this model suggests the interaction between sender and receiver for any common goal or cause. Both sender and receiver are at the same level but their interpretation for the common goal or cause may or may not differ.

Newcomb sees four basic components of this relational system: (1) A's attitude toward X, (2) A's attraction to B, (3) B's attitude toward X, and (4) B's attraction to A. According to the model, both A and B have a natural propensity toward balance in their coorientation toward X and their partner. If A has a negative attitude toward smoking (X) and a very positive attraction toward B, but B has a positive attitude toward smoking (X) and toward A, then A will experience an imbalance resulting in a push toward revision of attitudes to regain balance. This "strain toward balance" can be resolved by one or a combination of (1) A decreasing the amount of liking for B, (2) A changing his attitude toward X, and (3) A changing B's attitude about X to align with A's. A's actions are dependent on A's own orientations as well as A's perceptions of B's orientations, and vice versa for B. Thus, both communicators are continually making predictions or estimates of their partner's orientations. A has perceptions of what B is thinking and feeling, just as B has perceptions of what A is thinking and feeling. Based on this model, Wilmot (1987) concludes that at the very minimum, any thorough index of a dyadic relationship should include the following two items of information: (1) each person's orientation (that is, their attitude toward the object of communication and

their attraction toward their communication partner) and (2) what each person perceives their partner's orientations to be.

### Gerbner's General Model

Gerbner's General Model emphasizes the dynamic nature of human communication. It also, in common with other models, gives prominence to the factors, which may affect fidelity.



The model shown diagrammatically is to be read from left to right, beginning at E - Event. Please click on the model for further details.

#### Gerbner: E & Perceptual dimension

'E' is an event, which takes place in the 'reality'. The event (E) is perceived by M (the man (*sic*) or machine). The process of perception is not simply a matter of 'taking a picture' of event E. It is a process of active interpretation (as Schramm & Osgood emphasize in their circular model). The way that the E is perceived will be determined by a variety of factors, such as the assumptions, attitudes, point of view, and experience of M. It draws our attention to the way that attitudes, knowledge level, communication skills, culture and social position affect the encoding and decoding of messages. E can be a person talking, sending a letter, telephoning, or otherwise communicating with M. In other words, E could be what we conventionally call the Source or Transmitter. Equally, E can be an event - a car crash, rain, waves crashing on a beach, a natural disaster etc. In this case, we could be applying the model to mass media communication, say the reporting of news. It is this generality in the model, which makes it a useful starting point for the analysis of wide variety of communication acts. Note that the model, besides drawing our attention to those factors within E, which will determine perception or interpretation of E, also draws our attention to three important factors:

**Selection:** M, the perceiver of the event E (or receiver of the message, if you prefer) selects from the event, paying more attention to this aspect and less to that. This process of selecting, filtering is commonly known as gate keeping, particularly in discussion of the media's selection and discarding of events or aspects of them.

**Context:** a factor often omitted from communication models, but a vitally important factor. The sound represented by the spelling 'hair' means an animal in one context, something that's

not supposed to be in your soup in another. Shouting, ranting and raving means this man's very angry in one context, raving loony in another.

**Availability:** how many Es are there around? What difference does availability make? If there are fewer Es around, we are likely to pay more attention to the ones there are. They are likely to be perceived by us as more 'meaningful'. What sort of Es are there - for example, in the media house can be pro government or anti government.

#### Gerbner: E1 and M

E1 is the event-as-perceived (E) by the man (*sic*) or machine M. In terms of human communication, a person perceives an event. The perception (E1) they have of that event is more or less close to the 'real' event. The degree of correspondence between M's perception of event E (E1) will be a function of M's assumptions, point of view, experiences, social factors etc.

#### Gerbner: Means and Controls

In the next stage of the model, M becomes the Source of a message about E to someone else. M produces a statement about the event (SE). To send that message, M has to use channels (or media) over which he has a greater or lesser degree of control. [For comment on channels, see the Lasswell Formula.] The question of 'control' relates to M's degree of skill in using communication channels. If using a verbal channel, how good is he at using words? If using the Internet, how good is he at using new technology and words? And so on? 'Control' may also be a matter of access - does he own this medium? can he get to use this medium? Think of teachers in classrooms controlling the access to communication channels, parents at home, owners of newspapers, editors of letters pages etc.

#### Gerbner: SE

SE (statement about event) is what we would more normally call the 'message'. S stands for Signal in fact, so in principle an S can be present without an E, but in that case it would be noise only. The process can be extended ad infinitum by adding on other receivers (M2, M3etc.) who have further perceptions (SE1, SE2 etc.) of the statements about perceived events.

McQuail and Windahl (1981) suggest that the generality of the model makes it useful both for the analysis of interpersonal and mass communication. For example, on an individual-to-individual level,

it may.....be useful to illustrate communicative and perceptual problems in the psychology of witnessing before a court: How adequate is the perception of witness M of event E, and how well is E1 expressed in SE and to what degree does the perception of SE1 of judge M2 correspond to SE? Where the mass media are concerned, they suggest E could be potential news, M the mass media, SE media content and M2 the media audience. That then allows us to ask: 'How good is the correspondence between reality and the stories (between E and SE) about reality given by the media (M)?' and 'How well is media content (SE) understood by the media audience (M2)?'

Gerbner adds in the contextual elements of perception, culture, the medium, and power.

Person #1 perceives an event, "E". This perception is filtered: physical ability to experience the event, personal and cultural



## LESSON 11

### MEDIA IN CONTEMPORARY INDIA

#### **Mass Media**

Mass Media. Our window to the present world that we live in. We depend on it to know what happened yesterday, what's going on today and how events of the present could mould our tomorrow. Our perspective of the world around us depends greatly on what we see, hear and read. We look to radio, television and newspapers to provide us with news, entertainment, cricket scores, stock exchange figures and much more. We also expect this information to be accurate and unbiased. Most of the time we trust information that is gathered through these means. Any form of communication produced by a few people for the consumption by many people. Mass media are channels of communication through which messages flow. As the messages go through the channels, they are distorted. When people receive media messages they have no opportunity for immediate feedback with the producers of the messages. Means of communication that reach the mass public. The mass media include newspapers and magazines, radio, television, (broadcast, cable, and satellite) films, recordings, books, and electronic communication. In India, the major disseminators of information through electronic media are the All India Radio (AIR) and Doordarshan (DD). In the last decade, private companies have entered the arena but the state-run networks still retain significant control in many areas of broadcasting. For instance, the government still retains a monopoly on direct uplinking by satellite. The so-called invaders from the skies have to transmit their programmes from beyond India's boundaries. As of this writing they do not have permission to set up satellite uplink facilities from within Indian shores. FM rebroadcasting deals, which, in many countries, have allowed broadcasters to achieve a wider reach, are not yet permitted in India. All India Radio is the country's only radio network. Even though AIR has offered commercial broadcasters timeslots on its FM frequencies, with a few entrepreneurs taking up the offer, it still does not allow these private companies to provide a full news service. On the television side, though Doordarshan now allows private Indian companies to apply for programming slots on a first-come-first-served basis, there still is an insistence by the Information and Broadcasting ministry on running these channels itself. Every now and then, the government announces new plans on further opening up this sector. The truth is far from it. When nudged by Supreme Court directives and other such forces, it haltingly takes a step, apparently in the needed direction, by introducing new bills such as the Broadcasting Bill or Prasar Bharati. Needless to say, these are intended to maintain government control rather than to free up this huge market. Why shouldn't government have a monopoly over the airwaves? For one, non-governmental news radio and television helps citizens look through the "on-stage" political behaviour of inaugurations and speeches to the hidden "backstage" agendas of politicians and bureaucrats. It points out reasons behind failing policies and exposes motives behind actions of parties, especially those that often result in violent outcomes, thus weakening an inefficient government's authority. Another

good reason is that, more often than not, the State as a productive enterprise is inefficient. Heavy subsidising of AIR and DD by the government is a huge drain on the exchequer - the money ultimately coming from the taxpayer's pocket. A third reason is quality: governmental agencies offer very good job security, thus the incentive to perform, especially in the light of low wages, is minimal. Government appointed bureaucrats, who are accountable to almost no one, run these organisations. Result: bureaucratic red tape, unaccountability, corruption and siphoning of public funds. It is you, the consumer, who ends up getting a raw deal. Your tax money goes to support a behemoth that falls far short of your expectations and worse still, does not allow anyone else to provide you with an alternative means of quality information. Besides, the greater the government's control over mass media, the stronger the tendency to use it for purposes of propaganda. For decades, India has adopted a socialist attitude towards industry. In the beginning years after independence these policies were implemented by our well-meaning founding fathers. The public sector was intended to occupy "commanding heights" of the Indian economy. However, time has proved us wrong. Government interference, in areas that are best handled by the private sector, has been a disaster. The information and broadcasting arena is no different. In an age when all over the world, governments are moving to unleash the job creating potential of the broadcasting industry, India is being left behind. If we are to truly honour our Constitution and bestow upon ourselves real freedom of speech, we must unshackle our mass media from the clutches of the government.

#### **Characteristics of Mass Media Channels**

##### **Television**

Potentially largest range of audiences, but not always at times when public service announcements (PSAs) are most likely to be broadcast. Deregulation ended government oversight of station broadcast of PSAs, public affairs programming Opportunity to include health messages via news broadcasts, public affairs/interview shows, dramatic programming Visual as well as audio make emotional appeals possible; easier to demonstrate a behavior Can reach low — income and other audiences not as likely to turn to health sources for help. Passive consumption by viewer; viewers must be present when message is aired; less than full attention likely; message may be obscured by commercial "clutter". PSAs can be expensive to produce and distribute; feature placement requires contacts and may be time-consuming.

##### **Radio**

Various formats, offering potential for more audience targeting than television (e.g., teenagers via rock stations); may reach fewer people than TV. Deregulation ended government oversight of stations' broadcast of PSAs, public affairs programming Opportunity for direct audience involvement via call-in shows. Audio alone may make messages less intrusive Can

reach audiences who do not use the health care system. Generally passive consumption; exchange with audience possible, but target audience must be there when aired. Live copy is flexible and inexpensive; PSAs must fit station format. Feature placement requires contacts and may be time-consuming.

### **Magazines**

Can more specifically target to segments of public (young women people with an interest in health). No requirement for PSA use; PSAs more difficult to place. Can explain more complex health issues, behaviors. Print may lend itself to more factual, detailed, rational message delivery. Audience has chance to clip, reread, contemplate material. Permits active consultation; may pass on; can be read at reader's convenience. Public service ads are inexpensive to produce; ad or article placement may be time-consuming.

### **Newspapers**

Can reach broad audiences rapidly. PSAs virtually nonexistent. Can convey health news and breakthroughs more thoroughly than TV or radio and more quickly than magazines; feature placement possible. Easy audience access to in-depth issue coverage is possible. Short life of newspaper limits rereading, sharing with others. Small papers may take public service ads; coverage demands a newsworthy item.

### **A Range of Roles in Media**

The roles associated with personal media can be fairly simple. Dyadic face-to-face communication generally only entail participants who act as both creator and consumer of messages. It is easy to complicate the role mix of personal media, however. Mediations add the role of a director that controls the floor and structures interaction. Personal messengers add a intermediary who carries messages from one person to another. Public speaking formalizes the split between message creators and consumers while often adding such roles as director in the guise of a "master of ceremonies", a transcriber/recorder who records or transcribes the speeches, production support that set up chairs, lecterns, microphones, and other scenic elements, and critics who offer evaluations of or commentaries on what was said.

The roles associated with mass media, by contrast, is often more complex. Book publishing generally involves a series of roles including a writer who normally submits a book to a publisher, an acquisitions editor who evaluates it, and, if the decision is made to publish, a series of specialized roles, including editors, proofreaders, artists, contracts, marketing, layout, printers, transportation, wholesalers, retailers, and even critics, all of whom play a role in enabling a consumers acquisition of the published book. Motion pictures, magazines, newspapers, radio, music recording, and television all entail similarly complex participation.

It is possible to abstract many of the tasks that need to be accomplished within different media to a fairly small number of generic roles, each of which perform the same essential task. While these tasks often correspond to jobs in commercial media, they are simply tasks that have to be accomplished in order for the medium to work. There are some media in which no one is ever paid for what they do. There are others in which nearly every participant receives renumeration. The status of a role as a "job" changes neither the necessity nor the essential nature of the task. It simply

means that some media support professionals while others do not.

### **The Varieties of Transcriber/Recorder Role**

Similar roles in different media may differ in name, skills, tools, and even in the details of what they accomplish and how they accomplish it. A recording engineer (audio recording) and camera operator (motion pictures and television) obviously use different tools and different skills to accomplish the same task. The only real difference is the modality recorded. A courtroom stenographer uses very different tools to accomplish essentially the same task by translating verbal language into a written transcript that can be reviewed and edited. A recording secretary who takes and types up meeting minutes accomplishes the same task at a lower level of detail. Other transcriber/recorders include the police artist who turns a verbal description into a picture of a suspect, the roommate who writes down a telephone message and tacks it up next to the phone, the secretary who types up and mails out a letter based on dictation from an executive, the rewrite desk that takes an account of an event from a correspondent over the phone and turns it into a newspaper article, the tribal griot who turns a bit of tribal history into a rhythmic rhyme that will be easier to both remember exactly and teach to others, and the answering machine that records a message when a phone can't be answered.

This particular role, which might be referred to as transcriber/recorder, entails the creation of a record of a communication event that can be played back, reviewed, and even edited at a later time. As will be the case with other roles, the fundamental role can be elaborated in a wide variety of ways. Hence the record that is retained may be as limited and summary as "Joe called: 234-5678" or as graphic and detailed as a sound and video recording of a building collapse. The transcription/recording role may require training, as it would for the court stenographer, executive secretary, police artist, and camera operator, or require no training at all, as would be the case for the corresponding secretary. The role may require at least some measure of creativity, as would normally be the case for the rewrite desk, tribal griot, recording engineer, camera operator, and, in at least some cases, executive secretary, or require at least the appearance of a lack of creativity, as would be the case for the courtroom stenographer and answering machine. Indeed, as is the case with the answering machine, the role may not even be filled by a person. As will be seen, the dividing lines between roles in media will not always be clean. The director of a low budget film may also act as the scriptwriter, camera operator, and film editor. A photojournalist will often use their own photographs to illustrate the stories they write.

Transcriber/recorder is just one of a number of generic roles that occur across a variety of media. Other roles that are discussed below include creator, consumer, selector/gatekeeper, publisher/producer, director, performer, content editor, advertiser, content integrator, reproducer, distributor/carrier, retailer, representatives/advocate, critic, regulator, investor, financial management, and general production support. These roles are intended as abstractions of the responsibilities associated with the role name. Each name used is intended to be applied flexibly; more as a statement of function and general responsibility that the name represents than as a statement of specific responsibilities or activities that role represents in any

specific medium. Let us, then, consider the range and nature of these roles:

### **Creators**

All communication media include some variant of creator of messages. Common names associated with the creator role include writer, composer, artist, designer, journalist, and interactant. There are many media in which content is created by one person and performed by another (more on the performer role below). There are also a wide range of media in which the roles of creator, performer, and consumer are combined such that most or all participants take on all three roles. There are many possible variations in the combination of creator, performer, and consumer of messages, and different media will normally support some one of these combinations in preference to others. All performances entail some level of creation. All creations entail some level of performance. Hence while it may be desirable to separate creator characteristics from performer characteristics, it is also entirely reasonable to view them as a single cluster of related characteristics.

### **Consumers**

All communication media include some variant of consumer of messages. The consumer may be a reader, viewer, listener, audience, participant, or any one of a dozen other namings of people that describe modes of message consumption.

### **Selector/Gatekeepers**

Many media entail a generic role of content selector or gatekeeper. Specifically, there are buyers, content acquisition specialists, editors, phone screens, reviewers, or other selectors of message content who choose content for publication, performance, or other variant of storage and/or delivery through the medium. Such selection will, in general, reflect the editorial goals, preferences, and guidelines of specific media instances. The issues associated with these goals, guidelines, and preferences will include, in varying degree according to the medium and instance, such things as subject matter, entertainment value, fulfillment of submission requirements, and quality of content. This rooting of selection in instance-specific editorial policy is important in the definition of this generic role, as selection is specifically not about censorship, which seeks to prevent specific kinds of content from being selected for any instance within a medium or set of media. So long as every instance of a medium has a unique editorial policy based on the needs of the specific market niche it addresses, it can be reasonably presumed that all content has a potential home somewhere.

### **Publishers/producers**

Many media entail a role of producer or publisher. Where associated with a medium, producers and publishers take organizational responsibility for organizing, managing, and funding the process of producing and/or publishing content. The nature of this production/publishing role can and does vary by medium, as does the name applied. Indeed, some media may use entirely different names to describe people whose role is to find and/or provide the financing and organization required in order to enable the creation, manufacturing, promotion, and/or distribution of content. In some cases the role of publisher/producer is a very limited one in which a person or group decides to publish or produce a specific piece of content (a play or movie, for which this variation

is fairly common, or a book). In other cases the role will be an expansive one in which an organization builds a business on its publication or production of many content instances (e.g. a publishing house, a movie studio, a television network, etc.). In this latter case it is not unusual to see a layering of the role of publisher/producer, with the larger organization designating a set of executive producers or series editors who organize a series of related content instances and a more local set of producers or editors that take responsibility for one or a few content instances at a time. Real world namings can be confusing here, especially in publishing, where an editor's role may be akin to executive producer (e.g. managing editor), selector (e.g. acquisitions editor), or content editor depending on the exact nature of their responsibilities. The roles usually associated with real world namings in theatre, film, and broadcasting are, in general, cleaner in their divisions of responsibilities

### **Directors**

Many media entail the role of a performance director who takes specific responsibility for guiding and coordinating performers and other production staff in their coordinated effort to interpret content for an audience. Other names that can be associated with the role of director can, depending on the medium, include conductor, choreographer, managing editor, judge, moderator, and chairperson, among many others. Note that the role of director is clearly distinct from that of publisher/producer. Where a publisher/producer is concerned with organizing all of the details of a production, including preproduction issues like content selection and postproduction issues like duplication and distribution, a director is generally only responsible for coordinating the performance to its completion. Completion may take the form of an actual performance, a finished newspaper ready for layout and printing, director's cut film, a successfully completed meeting or proceeding, or other integrated content.

### **Performers**

Many media entail a separable role of performer (i.e. a person whose role within a medium is to perform message content that has been created by others). The performer often can and will exercise some level of creativity in interpreting content for an audience and/or in enhancing the performance with planned or improvised additions. The existence of the role generally implies a formal bifurcation of the roles of creator and performer, with the creative role composing all or most of the message and the performer enacting the message for consumption. The role of performer is common in dynamic art media like movies, theatre, and musical performance and broadcast media like television and radio. It is not normally associated with a wide variety of other media, including books, letters, newspapers, talk radio, and face-to-face interaction, among others. The name that is most often associated with the role of performer is actor, but such names as musician, dancer, anchor, and news reader may apply.

### **Transcriber/recorders**

Many media entail a transcription recording role in which people and/or organizations act as intermediaries in capturing a performance to a recording medium and either transmitted live or stored for later use (e.g. viewing, reference, editing, reproduction, etc.). Names associated with this role include stenographer, court reporter, camera operator, recording engineer, and recording secretary.

### **Content Editors**

Some media entail a content editing role in which people take specific responsibility for editing content after it has been created by the author, writer, or other creator or transcribed/recorded by a cameraman, recording engineer or other recording professional. Specific names for this role include copy editor, proofreader, and fact checker. The purposes associated with such editing can be varied, and include such issues as meeting content length objectives, managing content to meet editorial guidelines, correcting errors, and even combining parallel or related messages obtained from multiple sources into a single message. While content editors frequently have little role in the creation, direction, transcription, selection, or performance of content, they do sometimes have veto power, within the scope of a media instances editorial policy, over the final publication/distribution of content.

### **Advertisers**

Many media distribute advertising as part of the overall content of the medium. The advertising space is generally sold to people and/or organizations who provide and pay for advertising content that is presented in the medium. The relationship of advertising to other content within specific media is likely to vary considerably. Indeed, there may be generic differences in the nature of advertising content and presentation between different instances in the same medium. In some cases (public television, programs at school plays) the advertisers may not even be formally identified as advertisers, but as funders, sponsors, or grant sources. To the extent that a person, enterprise, or other organization stands to get business or otherwise achieve organizational goals as a result of exposure of its name and/or messages within the content of the medium, and such exposure is contingent on payments or other services, it can be regarded as an advertiser.

### **Content Integrators**

Many media entail a content integration role in which people and/or organizations function as intermediaries in combining diverse content into a cohesive whole. Names for people who play this role in various media include layout, paste-up, film editor, and others. Note that the role of content integrator differs from that of content editor even where the editors role is creating a single message out of multiple parallel message (see the description of content editor). The content integrator's role is to turn a content from a variety of sources into a finished composite performance (e.g. a publishable edition of a newspaper or a duplicable cut of a film) after the performance has been completed. The role of the content editor would normally precede this role. In some cases the finished product of an editors effort will be a performance that can be content integrated into a final integrated edition. In other cases, the role of the content editor will occur between initial creation and performance.

### **Reproducers**

Many media entail some form of formal content manufacturing in which people and/or organizations play an intermediate role in manufacturing copies of a stored performance. A name normally associated with this role, in publishing media, is printer. The name duplicator is more normally associated with film. Other names probably apply in other media.

### **Distributors/Carriers**

Almost all media involve some level of message transmission. For many media, however, this transmission is formalized through a maintained message distribution system. Specifically, there are people and/or organizations who take responsibility for transmitting, transporting, sorting, storing, distributing, and/or delivering messages without, in general, regard for the specific content carried. These distributors/carriers exist in a variety of forms, ranging from individual messengers and independent truck drivers through long distance telephone companies, Internet network service providers, overnight shipping companies, wholesale distributors, and postal systems, among others.

### **Retailers**

Many media involve the direct sale, via retailers, of access to the medium or to specific media content. Specifically, there are people and/or organizations who sell access to the medium and/or its content directly to participants in the medium, whether those participants act as net receivers of messages or as interactants within the medium. A variety of forms of retailing fall within this generic role, including those associated with ticket sales, equipment sales, subscription sales, network access charges, advertising sales, and direct sales of publications, copies of performances, and other manufactured content representations.

### **Collectors**

There are a variety of media for which people collect messages. The most obvious of these are individuals who collect messages from art media such as oil paintings or sculpture. Less obvious are collectors of publication messages like books, records, or comic books, dynamic art messages like movies, correspondence messages like letters, or broadcast messages like recorded radio or television shows. Many collectors maintain personal collections at their home or office, but at least some collectors make collections available for general viewing at museums, libraries, and web sites. Collection generally suggests a higher level of selectivity than would the role of consumer, a lower level of involvement in presentation than might normally be associated with a content editor or content integrator. Labels associated with formal variants of the collector role include archivist, librarian, and curator.

### **Representative/advocates**

Many media involve the participation of representatives or other advocates who, independent of a performance role, act in the interests of one or another of the various participants in the medium. This includes, in many cases, the production itself. Specifically, are there people associated with the medium whose job is to advocate and act as a representative for an individual or production associated with the medium. Names associated with the role of representative/advocate in different media when an individual is being represented include manager, agent, lawyer, publicist, receptionist, and promoter. Names associated with this role when a production is being represented include advertising, marketing, publicity, public relations, media relations, community relations, and merchandising. The job of the representative/advocate, in general, is to translate the performance of an individual or production in one medium into a favorable viewing in another. The marketing representatives for a motion picture, for instance, will seek to place advertising in newspapers and on television. The publicity function for the same picture will work to book the

movie's stars on talk shows and in interviews. The movie star's agent, in seeking to limit the number of such appearances while maximizing the star's salary, will almost certainly employ a lawyer to ensure that there are no surprises in the contract. If, in fact, there is a problem that requires litigation to resolve, a lawyer will represent the star, and perhaps the agent, in court. Note, in particular, the myriad media crossovers associated with this example.

### **Regulators**

Some media entail a regulative role in which people, agencies, or organizations act in a regulatory capacity relative to the medium. The nature of such agencies can vary, but would certainly include agencies like:

the Federal Communication Commission, which allocates and enforces restrictions on the use of radio frequency bandwidth under U.S. Law

voluntary organizations like the Motion Picture Association of America, through which the film and broadcast industries self-regulate in providing ratings of movie and television shows and agencies that enforce formal censorship of content. An example might be found in the post World War II Allied "Civil Censorship Office", which censored a wide range of information in Japan between 1945 and 1949.

### **Critics**

The critic or critical role acts specifically to critique and evaluate content within the medium. While there can be several variations on the critical role, including that of consultant, futurist, and (in theatre, at least) "fixer", the prototypic role of critic is to act as a independent public witness to media content who will, after viewing a performance, offer a considered evaluation of what they saw as a guide to other potential consumers of that performance or production. While critics sometimes create content for use within the medium they critique and evaluate, it will often be the case that the critiques and other evaluations they make of content within the medium will be distributed within another medium. Note that critics generally serve their critical role in one medium as a function of playing a creator role in another.

### **Investors**

Some media involve an explicit and separable role of investor. Investors are people or organizations whose sole or primary relationship to a medium is to provide the capital necessarily to produce content and/or distribute or enable the distribution of content. Investors may influence productions and performances through their interaction and agreements with producers, but they have no direct relationship to production, performance, or its management beyond their potential return on investment if the production is successful.

### **Financial management**

As productions become more complex and/or grow in number, the publisher/producer will inevitably need help in managing and tracking the financials associated with production. Management of the enterprise may entail such namings as company or studio president, vice president, director, manager, personnel, office manager, business manager, and account services. Tracking of financials will entail such namings as treasurer, controller, accountant, finance, payroll, and collections. None of these people will usually be directly associated with the production of messages within the

medium they support, but all play key roles in coordinating the efforts of others and ensuring the ongoing financial stability of the production, studio, publisher, or other media enterprise.

### **Production support**

A wide range of other people act to support the production of content in media in various ways.

Some production roles are fairly common in the production of messages. A number of such roles are broken out separately above. Others roles are more difficult to classify as a generic role in production, or occur in only one or a few media. These roles include such namings as set designer, set dresser, makeup, wardrobe, electrician, painter, plumber, carpenter, property masters, act development, artist development, touring department, engineering, maintenance, crane operator, caterer, first-aid, copyboy, news assistant, telephone operators, help desk, librarian, information retrieval specialist, polling, and research. The production support role is a critical one, but it is very much in the background. The efforts of production support may be visible in the set that the performance occurs on, the positioning of the camera, and the performers makeup, wardrobe and accessories. They may also be as invisible as the food the cast and crew ate between takes or the electricity that the lights, camera, and other equipment consumed during takes. Many media do not entail any level of formal production support. Others could not function without efforts of people in a wide variety of support roles.

### **Additional Roles?**

The twenty roles documented above should not be regarded as a comprehensive list of the generic roles in media. This is a voyage of discovery for the author and, one hopes, the reader. Indeed, it is already possible to identify roles that one might want to add to this list. There is, for instance, an engineering role in media that may or may not already be covered to some extent in the generic role of distributor/carrier. For the moment, the engineering role is identified with production support, but it may warrant a distinct listing. It remains to be considered how important it may be to distinguish the engineering, monitoring, and maintenance function from the distribution/carrier function it supports within the normal operation of media. It should be possible to identify other generic roles, and the interested reader is invited to suggest additions that are necessary to the operation of a variety of media and distinct from those outlined here.

### **Media in contemporary India**

The capacity of our common media system to service and support the democratic processes for the benefit of the people as a whole has strong validity even today. Printed newspapers and magazines, the broadcasting media and the Internet are vital players in India today. Quantitatively and qualitatively, the information being circulated has greatly increased. Progressive forces cannot dismiss some of these channels by simply stating them to be 'trash'. Popular does not imply irrational; entertainment can be informative, just as serious news can also be of great human interest.

As argued by Carl Bernstein, 'Good journalism is popular culture, but popular culture that stretches and informs its consumers rather than that which appeals to the ever descending lowest common denominator.' Today's media audiences are sociologically

sophisticated, active consumers, and interventions in all forms of media by progressive forces are a must to keep democracy ticking and check authoritarianism.

One would simultaneously like to emphasize that whatever the strengths, advantages and weaknesses of the media in contemporary India, history has played a critical role in it, which is the struggle for independence and democracy. A sketchy knowledge of it is vital for building a dynamic media in democratic India.

What are these strengths of history that are still valid for us? Let me elucidate this through the case of the press. First, there is an extraordinary close association between modern India's struggle for political and social emancipation and the origins and development of the Indian Press. A struggle between two groups with competing ideologies and goals marks the history of the press in India: one group engaged in a continuing struggle against authority, whether British or Indian, to gain and maintain independence; and the other characterized by loyalty to the regime in power.

While the press has displayed strong signs of assertion in post independence India, Indira Gandhi's 1975-77 repressive Emergency also revealed the vulnerability of newspapers to state coercion. But it learnt its lesson well and came out against the Anti-Defamation Bill and the Bihar Press Bill. Second, we have seen an impressive range of diverse opinions, interests and ideologies competing for space in the public discourse. There has been diversity in the ownership patterns and organizational forms of newspapers as business enterprises. Third, there have always been sharp ideological and political divides within the Indian press tradition. In a sense, the contemporary division between newspapers in various languages that take a secular-democratic stand and those that have come out increasingly in support of the politics of the Hindu Right can be said to be similar to the divide between the 'nationalist' and the 'loyalist' press during the freedom struggle.

### Broadcasting In India

Colonial politics and its variations in post-colonial India have structured the nature of media ownership and control. Broadcasting was deemed to be a privilege of the government, a tool to better the sensibilities of India's teeming masses. In the aftermath of independence, the press, given its close association with the nationalist struggle, was allowed to retain its essentially private status as long as it was not seen to be consistently anti-government. However, with its armoury of press and censorship laws, control over newsprint distribution, pricing and disbursement of public advertising, the government has a formidable hold over private sector media. After independence, broadcasting, particularly radio and television, came under state control, and was used as a tool of national policy. However, this scenario is fast changing with the emergence of satellite and cable.

The concerns regarding broadcasting in India have been contradictory. There is anxiety that state regulation of the broadcasting media may impinge upon the citizen's freedom of speech and that the Indian state may misuse broadcasting. At the same time, there is the fear that broadcasting freedom will get out of hand and destroy the country's culture and polity. The government is anxious to be able to retain control in times of emergency. What has been the history of broadcasting?

Radio, which started as a Raj supported private enterprise, was passed on from one bureaucratic department to another, until it came under the Department of Information and Broadcasting in 1941. It was expanded and exploited as a means of propaganda during the Second World War. Following independence, the Government of India kept broadcasting firmly in the hands of the central government. This opened the way for more political access by the government to the airwaves and a more vigorous use of radio as an instrument of public policy. What I mean to say is that the broadcast media tradition seems to represent the antithesis of the press tradition.

Television was first launched in India in the late 1950s, though it did not become a mass medium until the 1980s. Despite rapid Indian development in the '60s and '70s, Indian TV remained an urban phenomenon confined to the well to do. It did not become a mass medium until the 1980s, the fillip coming with the Asian Games held in Delhi in 1982. A decision was taken to go in for colour TV. By the mid-1980s, India had become a television society and thanks to the development of indigenous satellite technology, Doordarshan became capable of broadcasting national programmes for the first time.

Then came an expansion of television, the like of which has rarely been experienced in the developing world. Economic liberalization, particularly from the 1990s, gave an entirely new meaning and opportunity to television. The onslaught from the skies, in the form of international satellite-distributed television, radically transformed the country's broadcasting environment. Advertising agencies became the true midwives of satellite television. Television advertising helped to create new markets in India. Look at the increase in revenue through television – an increase from Rs 82 crore in 1982 to Rs 572 crore in 1996-97.

There was also a fresh context, shaped by the rising politics of communal mobilization. A significant study by Arvind Rajagopal, *Politics after Television: Religious Nationalism and the Reshaping of the Indian Public* (Cambridge University Press) shows how at one level the national television created a single visual regime, right across the country, for the first time. At another level, the Congress party wanted to seize this advantage. However, by playing the Hindu card, it was the Hindu Right that succeeded in changing the terms of political debate, entering into an era of authoritarian populism, more suited to the brave new world of economic liberalization.

### TV as a popular medium of Mass Communication

To return back to television, it has of course emerged as the premier mass medium. According to IRS 99, the reach of terrestrial television is close to 270 million; cable and satellite television reaches over 75 million. NRS 99 came up with an interesting finding that television has become the principal source of information and entertainment in a growing number of urban homes: typically on a week-day, an 'average' person spends 119 minutes watching television, whereas he/she spends 23 minutes reading newspapers and 32 minutes reading magazines.

Here also, there are many interesting developments taking place – cable and satellite are growing fast, and the state-controlled Doordarshan is lagging behind. The government's attempts to rule the airwaves have been dealt a severe blow. The nature of the new satellite media makes earlier notions of simple western

domination look oversimplified. Barriers of language and the political and economic empowerment of a growing middle class over the past 30 years have stood in the way of such a scenario.

### **Regional Channels**

The regional private satellite channels are marching ahead – in Tamil Nadu, in Karnataka and Kerala. Sun TV emerged as the satellite channel with the highest profit margin in India. There are other exciting things happening. For example, take the case of Zee TV, which is India's leading private Hindi channel. Between 1992 and 1999, it grew from the status of a small-time venture to a commanding position, successfully combining entertainment, infotainment and news operation. This is an example of how in the less developed world, local media can indigenise global products and achieve a significant presence in a U.S. dominated global media market.

### **New Media**

Globalization has further had a profound effect on India's media, particularly the growth of Internet and on-line media. India is one of the largest software producers in the world. It has an estimated 2.7 million computer users. While e-mail still accounts for the majority of Internet usage in India, Internet is fast becoming a means for political communication as well. Many Indian newspapers have gone on-line. The Indian Army web-site gives its version of events in Jammu and Kashmir. The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) set up India's first party website during the 1998 elections. This, I think, further complicates the discourse

The Indian press is still the most pluralistic, and the most independent among the developing world. In terms of the number of newspapers published as also total newspaper circulation, India is among the top four countries. While newspapers elsewhere struggle to hold readers, Indian daily circulation has increased by close to 500% in 20 years. Two all-India readership surveys conducted in 1999-2000, estimate that the press as a whole reaches something between 200 and 240 million persons. Roughly, about 60% of urban Indians and one-quarter of rural Indians read print media regularly.

Indian newspapers across a broad spectrum have been major winners due to economic liberalization; their growth rates have been remarkable in the 1990s. Robin Jeffrey's study of the language press highlights this dynamic development. He underlines some key factors behind this growth: improved technology, expanding literacy, better purchasing power, aggressive publishing and political excitement. Added to this is the fact that all the top ten dailies in urban and rural India are Indian language newspapers, their readership ranging from 4.88 million to 9.45 million.

### **Emerging trends**

Over the years the corporate sector has developed its own press and channels. The political parties have their own newspapers. The governments in this country have also promoted their own medium of mass communication. But the voluntary organizations, groups engaged in movements, associations of the oppressed castes and the citizens engaged in promoting alternative politics which have grown manifold in the post-independence era in terms of its sheer number and the area of operation, have not been able to develop their own press or television channels with a mass reach and sound credentials. It may be noted that

different civil society formations have developed and are running their own medium of communications, like small magazines or newsletters. But these do not have an impact on a macro level and have not been able to develop a professional form. The challenge to develop a reliable TV channel, a TV programme, a radio programme or at least a magazine is before all those who are engaged in various ways to promote and support alternative movements, alternative social groups and alternative models of development.

While it is true that a truly 'public' media is essential for a live democracy, media is only one of many institutions and practices of democratic life. No single institution can by itself bear the burden of furnishing democracy. Indeed, such centralization would be profoundly anti democratic. For a people's democracy, people's participation, panchayats, local governance, schools, civil liberties, forms of work life, freedom of faith and worship may be placed above the media. Civil society needs a variegated array of institutions and necessities – sanitation, electricity, water, neighborhoods, libraries, rule of law and above all a basic level of security and welfare. An informative and critical media is a necessary condition for democracy but not a sufficient one. Democracy can exist only when interwoven with the human and material condition of life.

### **The Global World of Internet**

#### **What is Internet?**

The Internet is a network of networks. It is a massive collection of computer networks that connect millions of computers, people, software programs, databases, and files. The parts and players are spread around the world and interact continuously. Any two connected computers can be considered a network. Any two connected networks become an **internet** (small "i"). Technological advancements over the last few years have enabled virtually all computers to be networked together, giving birth to today's internet (capital "i").

One way to describe the Internet is to say that it is the network formed by the cooperative interconnection of computing networks. In fact, the word "Internet" is built from the words "interconnection" and "network".

#### **Interconnection + networks = Internet**

Literally, it means the connecting of networks so that the parts appear to be a whole. These connected networks usually use the TCP/IP (transmission control protocol/Internet Protocol) communications suite. These protocols are the rules that all networks use to understand each other.

#### **What is Intranet**

(Internal Communication Networks based on the Internet Technologies)

Many Internet users find the Web frustrating because few locations provide complete indexes or effective search tools. Constantly expanding and improving Internet technologies, however, are showing that company-wide internets (called Intranet) can avoid these problems and offer significant benefits:

They make text, graphics, video, audio available widely and quickly (much faster than modem-based communications),

And

They allow employees to conduct usability tests, comment on works in progress, link work team materials – in a word communicate.

#### Benefits-

Intranets do not yet have the security or range features available in expensive groupware systems, but they do offer quick, easy, and inexpensive access to many types of information.

#### Quick Information

Companies are using intranets to provide employees with quick access to compelling, interactive information. For example, using a Web browser. Turner Broadcasting employees can access animated clips and sound bites of up-and-coming cartoons and then flame or praise animators in real-time-an in-house focus group. Using Web browsers to fill out personal profiles stored on a Web Server, employees can customize newspapers they receive in email.

#### Easy Setup and Use

To set up an intranet you need server and browsing software: Internet Explorer 2.0 & Microsoft's Web Brower. Using an Intranet is easy and intuitive. To access information with a Web Brower. Using an Intranet is easy and intuitive. To access information with a Web Brower you simply point and click hot spots on Web pages – you don't have to remember or type in server pathnames. Documents, graphics, and videos appear in the browser or in helper applications you designate. Users can also create and register Web pages on a corporate intranet as painlessly as they navigate for information.

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#### Low Cost

Setting up an intranet doesn't have to cost you much – or anything, you already have a network and you can download the software you need from the WWW.

#### Wide Compatibility

Intranets are appealing to corporation with multi-platform environments because browsers and server software are available for most systems. In addition. Intranets can connects PCs, Macintoshes, or Workstations, and allow users to access documents created with various applications.

#### Uncomplicated Management

Intranet management does not require specialized training. Anyone can update documents, modify uppages, and build Web database of information on a client or server computer.

#### History of Intranet

The Internet was created in 1973 by the U.S. Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA) to ensure that their communication systems would continue to work in the event of war. For

most of its existence the internet was primarily a research and academic network. In the mid-1980s, the National Science Foundation looked up to a form a shared resource of supercomputing centers (NSFNET) that could be used by researchers at multiple institutions.

The most recent development in the Internet's history is the rise of commercial service providers. Commercial Internet exchange (CIX) Association, Inc. is formed in 1991 by General Atomics (CERFnet). Performance Systems International, Inc. (PSInet) and UUNET Technologies, Inc. (AlterNet).

#### Who owns the Internet

Nobody "owns" the Internet just as no one own's world's telephone networks. Moving among networks of computers works much the same way (not surprising since the telephone networks are being used to connect the computers). Each component is owned by someone, but the network as a whole is not owned by anyone. The Internet is a system that hangs together through mutual interest.

#### How is the Internet Administered?

To surprise of many people, there really is not central administration to the Internet. There is a network Information Center (NIC) that is sponsored by the United States National Science Foundation (NSF) to register the domains, names, and addresses of new computers being added to the network. Internet Service Providers are encouraged to provide registration service and assistance for each new connected network. Each individually-connected network maintains its own user policies and procedures – who can be connected, what kind of traffic the network will carry, etc. Each manages its own network – engineering the network, choosing to provide particular services or not. And each network cooperatively carries the traffic from its connected networks to gateways and from gateways to its connected networks. The technical rules, protocols, are agreed upon after proposal, trial, and discussed in the networking community. No one person can "lay down the law" to the rest of the community because there is not law and there is no one person.

In addition, every computer- client or server – on the Internet has a unique IP (**Internet Protocol**) address to distinguish it from other computers on the Internet. The IP address is four sets of digits separated by dots, for example.

198.46.8.34

Since this string of numbers would be hard to remember and fraught with potential keying errors, the Domain Name System (DNS) was created so people wouldn't have to remember several confusing numbers. Domain names enable short, alphabetical nicknames to be assigned to IP addresses to describe where a computer is located. For the most part, domain names indicate who or what is located at this site and the type of the organization that owns or supports the site. In the URL example above. www.msn.com - domain name for the MSN Web Page.

Some common domain types with U.S. addresses are

<b>com</b>	Commercial organizations
<b>edu</b>	Educational Institutions
<b>gov</b>	Governmental Organizations (except the military)
<b>mil</b>	Military Organizations
<b>net</b>	Network Service Providers
<b>org</b>	Organizations other than those above

Some examples of international domains designations are

Au	Australia
Fr	France
Uk	United Kingdom
In	India
Us	United States

The **InterNIC (Internet National Information Center)** exists to issue IP address and domain names so that duplicate names or addresses do not proliferate. New users, or existing users requiring additional Internet addresses, need to apply to the InterNIC for these resources.

### So what's available?

The services available to you on Internet are

Electronic Mail (e-mail), Newsgroups, Gopher, File Transfer Protocol (FTP). Telnet, and

World Wide Web (WWW).

Table 1.1 Internet Services

E-mail and mailing lists	Send e-mail to anyone in the world having an Internet E-mail account. You can also subscribe to discussion groups
Newsgroups	Thousands of discussion groups, on almost any subject you can think of.
Gopher	A system that lets you wander through computers on the Internet, searching for documents.
File Transfer Protocol (FTP)	A system that lets you wander through computer. It's like a giant software library – millions of files – that contains programs, sound clips, music, pictures, video, and documents.
Telnet	A system that lets you log in to someone's else computer and run programs on it. Some people actually invite the public into their computers; you might get to play chess, view a government job listing, or search a NASA database.
World Wide Web	A giant hypertext system. While you are viewing a document, you can link, and another document appears. Travel around the world by pointing and clicking. Sound, pictures, video, even 3-D images enrich the World Wide Web and make it the hot Internet tool.

There are currently two basic ways to physically connect to the Internet.

The first, and most widely used method is through a modem which connects your computer to a normal analog telephone line, which in turn connects to a modem at the host computer.

**Indian media should gear up for technology impact**

By Alok Verma (14 January 2003)

The new technologies are accelerating a shift of power away from traditional voices of authority in journalism and politics. However, new media designers predict that the day-to-day mass audience will splinter further into niches, because people will want to create their own customized flows of information.

In politics, citizens already are treated as demographic niches, and our common values rarely are addressed. Candidates and political interest groups deepen our divisions by fashioning single-issue appeals to narrow voter populations. If we are looking for a national sense of citizenship, of shared interests and goals, we will have even more difficulty finding them in the niche media.

Technological trends are radically privatizing or individualizing how we spend our limited free time. The fundamental values of both journalism and politics are being challenged, in part because of the new technologies. Their problems—and their revitalization—are inextricably linked. The future of both depends on how effectively they can revive their core standards and regain the public's trust. Today, "news especially electronic media news," many times an artificial construct is under cloud. Unless journalists work now to save it, ethics of objectivity that developed in journalism in the seventies and eighties as both a reform effort and a response to market opportunities may be doomed.

"If the television news channels continue to cover the world cynically and assume that everybody is Machiavellian and motivated by their own self-interest, it might invite their viewers to reject journalism as a mode of communication"

The idea that these audiences simply have fled to television news is not an adequate explanation. Latest NRS (National Readership Survey) figures prove that in spite of television news penetration the newspaper readership has expanded. Indeed, the national television networks, which once enjoyed the attention of a captive nation, now compete with many alternative offerings on cable. Now that legal obstacles have been removed, the new telephone companies are laying fiber optic networks, enabling them to transmit their own news and classified services directly into the home. Ironically, we are losing our gatekeepers just when we need them most.

People are overwhelmed by news products and imitations: infotainment magazine shows, infomercials, docudramas, home videos, talk shows, and Internet gossip, all competing with traditional news stories in the old and new media. Citizens need a trustworthy guide not just for reports about what "officially happened" around the nation each day but for the enormous flow of information that is gushing into their homes.

News organizations have responded to the new media environment in several ways. Many journalists, instead of beating their entertainment and propaganda competitors, are joining them. The increased competition spawned by the new technologies has led some traditional news purveyors to "go tabloid"-increasing coverage of celebrity gossip, bizarre crime, and sex scandals to try to retain their mass audience. Television news and magazine programmes on Indian news channels, in particular, have loosened their standards and definitions of what makes news.

As news organizations react to these new technologies, many are concentrating on the look and feel of their delivery systems, trying to figure out how they will sell what is basically the same old content in new media formats. This may be the wrong focus. Digital technologies now free the news from any fixed delivery medium, enabling consumers to convert content instantly into video, audio, or text. The journalist's challenge isn't the medium but the message. As consumers start experimenting in cyberspace, journalists need to address more urgently not the delivery format but the quality of their core product: reliable and useful information on which citizens can act.

Many journalists would vehemently deny that their product is in trouble. Certainly some of the best journalism ever practiced is the work of the current generation of news professionals such as Rajdeep Sardeasi, Shikha Trivedi, Dibang, Deepak Chaurasiya,

Prabhat Shunglu, Nupur Basu, Rajesh Badal, Barkha Dutt in television and Sankarshan Thakur, Ritu Sarin, Shudhiranjan Sen, Rashmi Saxena, Basavi, Sreekant in newspapers. And some highly successful news offerings by NDTV on Star News, Aaj Tak, the Indian Express, India Today, The Hindu and Business Standard prove that audiences still appreciate high-quality journalism.

News is India's daily meal of politics and policy information. Instead of informing citizens in ways that might be useful to them, today's influential reporters often focus on interpreting political and public policy news as if they were professional wrestling referees. It is common on any television news channel that the reporters provide narrow, superficial, pseudo-insider coverage of the government's actual business or activities. The citizens are never provided the real news on policies, reforms and public welfare decisions. What you get to read or watch is nothing but neatly packaged infotainment where even the most sombre or poignant information is dramatized in the form of sensational revelation of innocuous information. Young journalists, taking cues from their more prominent colleagues, instead of asking a contesting political candidate, "Why are you contesting for this Assembly or Parliament seat?" the question is often asked, "How do you plan to win the election or how can you win?"

The journalist earlier used to gain status by dining yet not aligning with his subjects; now he gains status by just aligning with them. Instead of highlighting problems in a way that would corner the political system or administrative system, journalists now reward the politicians, by not letting any relation to serious political argument, let alone to grown-up ideas about conduct and morality. Instead of proving that journalists are unbiased guardians of the public trust, this perpetual negativity may one day backfire.

If the television news channels continue to cover the world cynically and assume that everybody is Machiavellian and motivated by their own self-interest, it might invite their viewers to reject journalism as a mode of communication because it must be cynical too. Increasingly, people see journalists as a special interest group, like any other, which manipulates them in order to throw its weight around or make a buck.

In the digital world, journalism is liberated not just from time but also from space constraints. The reporter's dream has come true: now there is a bottomless news hole, thanks to new technologies and the Internet. Online news customers become archaeologists; they can start at the surface with the headline, digest, or summary of the news, and then click on words or pictures to enter layer upon layer of longer stories, related features, analysis pieces, and sound and video clips. Finally, they will reach original documents and discussion groups on an issue.

The new technologies offer journalists not only the potential perils of competition and scrutiny but also the potential benefits of an expanded role: connecting citizens to information and to each other. To succeed, journalists cannot connect simply for the sake of connecting; they will have to deliver something of additional value to the customer. Interactivity is only one of the dramatic technologies now changing the television news. More significantly, the hot "scoop" loses its commercial value in this competitive environment. Reporters, who rate each other on who gets the news first, prize scoops. However, the value of the time-sensitive scoop is lost in the constant news marketplace. Even though

more and more television news channels "burn their brand" into each video frame to mark their scoops, the news consumer rarely remembers who had a news item first as she surfs through scores of channels.

A news organization will need something exclusive to offer if it is to occupy a distinct niche in the multichannel environment. A news channel with a trusted anchor and a newspaper with trusted editor will have an advantage in the new marketplace, and a different kind of exclusive scoop—a research or analysis piece that has been developed by the news organization alone—will sharpen the purveyor's competitive edge.

(The writer was editor of Zee News and Star TV Interactive and is currently working for the Community Media.)

#### Review Questions:

- Explain why TV is the most popular medium of mass communication?
- "Radio an dyeing medium", comment.
- Discuss the latest trends of the Indian media industry.

#### Suggested Readings

- Keval J kumar: *Mass Communication in India*, Jaico Publishing House



#### Notes

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## LESSON 12

### TRADITIONAL MEDIAS

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#### **Traditional and Alternate Media for Development**

The folk and traditional arts have been used for moral, religious and socio-political purposes. India has a long tradition of mass communication, especially oral communication and folk arts. The folk art, typical of the tribal and rural life all over the world, is the spontaneous expression of the people shaped by them, to suit their own needs. More than 2500 years back in India, the religious leaders like Buddha and Mahavir made use of the language of the people in order to preach their religion to the masses. Thereafter the art of telling stories of god (Harikatha) development so that the rural masses could be educated with respect to the subtle concepts of religion and social values. This is the reason why we have a unique phenomenon in India that the illiterate peasants are familiar with the fundamental tenets of Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism etc. In the following centuries throughout the country, there were such attempts through the 'Bhakti' movement by great leaders and philosophers. The great temples of India built through the ages were not only the places of worship but are also full of sculpture, which enlightened the masses about the episodes in the epics. The temples were also centres of learning where great scholars held their discourses in the afternoons and evenings.

In the present century, Mahatma Gandhi possibly the greatest mass communicator of all times aroused millions of illiterate people to participate in the freedom struggle against the mighty empire through oral communication. He inspired to use other traditional media of entertainment such as songs, dramas, puppets and other folk arts for spreading the messages especially in the rural areas.

Though there is a tendency of viewing the folk media as outmoded, unchanging and extremely rigid form of mass media, it is far from the truth. Although the basic form and the structure of the various folk art forms have changed very slightly over the centuries, the messages conveyed have always moved with the times or rather have been contemporary.

#### **As Used By The Indian Government**

There has been a phenomenal growth in media of mass communication after independence. However, at the time of crisis and national events like elections, the traditional ways and means of communication have proved their importance. The Indian government being aware of the fact always tried to make use of small and alternate media for the purpose of development. For publicising development schemes under the five-year plans, so as to motivate the people to participate, a programme called the Integrated Publicity Programme was launched in 1953. In the following years the sister organisation viz. Song and Drama Division was started for organising entertainment programmes with the help of local theatrical groups or parties of local or folk artists. The other popular media in other regions are also combined. They are printed words, exhibitions, photographs, puppet shows and dance

dramas. The selection of the media depends on the message and the characteristics of the audience. The occasions such as fairs and festivals are utilised to gather the people for the performances and displays.

The Song and Drama Division of Indian Government functions at the three levels, at its headquarter in New Delhi, at eight regional centres in various parts of the country and there are nine sub-centres at the district headquarters. The division has departmental troupes, sound and light units and more than 400 registered parties, which are made up of eminent performers in the folk arts. During 1991, it presented thousands of programmes all over the country as it is mentioned in the Annual report of 1991-92. The Directorate of Advertising and Visual Publicity (DAVP) is a multimedia agency, which produces material for macro as well as micro media. The specialised service is being offered in areas of exhibitions, designing and printing booklets, folders, posters, hoarding banners and kiosks etc. The important themes being covered are national integration, communal harmony, health and family welfare, girl child and prevention of drug abuse etc. The departments such as National Saving Organisation, Life Insurance Corporation, Health and Family Welfare etc use the traditional and alternate media. The field studies at the village level in two different states Maharashtra and Tamilnadu have concluded that the most effective method of communicating the message of the 'small family norm' is through personal contact, demonstration and interaction. These are the three important aspects of folk media.

#### **Drawbacks**

Though the government made wide use of traditional and alternate media there are several severe criticisms. The limitations are pertaining to the kind of message and the management of it. Too much emphasis on publicising their own achievements and intention has lowered the credibility of the government media. The structure of official media did not permit decentralisation in production of material; as a result the urban and middle class bias seriously hampered the development objectives.

The message is transmitted by the staff of the project (sender) to the people (receiver). Sometimes, their opinions are taken but always at prescribed stages and feedback are taken without major consequences. This type of limited or nil participation has proved incapable of bringing about social change. The process itself needs to aim at making people more responsible if the goal is that of development. It needs to promote a dynamic of knowledge creation for all the protagonists in question. Though the government has promoted folk media to some extent the mass media received much greater attention. They have been projected as if they are the only effective media in this society. In the process folk media have been systematically and subtly destroyed. The mass media is so violent and forceful that it has impaired the senses of common individuals to an extent they cannot receive any other mild form.

## Media As Used By The Activists And Non-Government Organization

Government is not the only agency working for the development and social change. The other even more committed sector is of activists and voluntary organisations. The rulers and capitalists control the mass media. Mass media without know how, the infrastructure and funds cannot be used effectively. The change agents though committed but working with limited funds have no reach to the mass media. They are left with the only option of using media, which is within their control. The alternate and traditional media have provided the answer. There are certain in built advantages. They are:

The know-how is simple and associated with the old Indian traditions hence expertise is available even in remote areas. It is not a gift of the western world.

The finance involved is less and infrastructure is easily available in the less developed areas.

The poor people in the remote areas have familiarity with the media hence the messages get across easily.

They do not create the sense of powerlessness among the common people which in turn hampers the growth and development

There are many traditional forms common through out the country and special to a particular region. The other small media which are not traditional but possess the elements common to that of the folk art, and they are within the control of the common people. These media which can be described as micro-media is divided into three categories

### Speech and meetings and Discussions

The country has rich traditions hence talk and speech is the life of rural India. This way of communication is totally in control of the poorest person. Indian society is not individualistic like the western world. It is more community and family oriented. As a result the art of interpersonal and group communication has flourished. People like and enjoy talking. The techniques like use of body, cultivation of voice and gestures are imbibed in the people through the cultural exposition.

### Meetings and Group Discussions

There is a tradition in the rural areas to have informal meetings where a lot of the information is shared, feelings are ventilated, doubts are raised, decisions are taken and problems are solved. Informal meeting have proved to be much more productive than the formal ones.

### Demonstrations and Exhibitions

The Department of Health and Family Planning extensively use these media. Simple charts paintings and models can be conveniently carried into the rural areas. They provide an easy way of informing the illiterate people about the symptoms, the causes, curing process and the prevention.

Though very little property is required a lot of preparation and different talents are being used. If the exhibition material is prepared with the local resources it is very useful for creating awareness and dissemination of information.

### Performing Arts

In the field of performing arts there are mainly two categories:

Traditional forms of art or folk art.

Indian adaptation of art forms of other culture.

The following forms have been widely used for development communication:

### Songs and Story telling

Every work, act, festival and incident has a song for the expression of feelings. These are sung in a group with each and every participating in it. The tunes are familiar as and when required for better expression and conveying desirable messages. The story telling is a form where various methods are observed. The mythological political and social themes are interwoven with the contemporary messages in an interesting way. Along with prose the poetry is also combined which makes the presentation more gripping. The musical equipment though used is limited in number and locally made.

### Dance, Drama and Dance-drama

There are different folk dances of different regions. There are festivals and occasions when the whole community - rich and poor, small and big, men and women come together and enjoy collectively. This provides an opportunity for better understanding of each other; especially women find a platform where they can express their feelings. (The known forms are Garaba of Gujarat, Bhangra of Punjab, Lavni of Maharashtra etc.)

### Folk Theatre

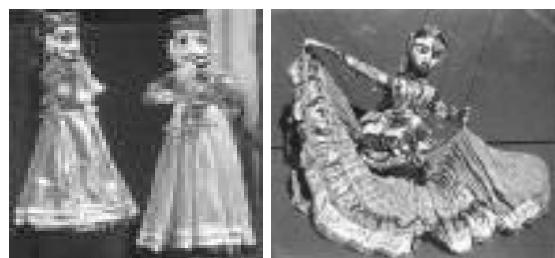
In India there are communities traditionally occupied in the folk theatre. It is a family profession for them. They move from one village to the other and arrange their performance. The format of the theatre is well - known but the messages of different kind are carried from place to place. They provide a link between different communities in different regions and integrate the different culture. The folk theatre has played major role in political and social changes. Through the form, messages are carried out and values are perpetuated along with the popular entertainment. Normally the form has a loose structure, which allows lot of innovations and improvisation. The use of satire and humorous presentation gets difficult messages across easily.

(The popular forms are Bhavai of Gujarat, Tamasha of Maharashtra, Nautanki and Ramlila of northern part, Jatra in Bengal, Yakshagan in Karnataka and Therukoothu in Tamilnadu.)

### Puppetry:

This is a very exciting media. It attracts anybody from a child to the aged. The content, which normally offends people in power, if delivered by the actors can be put in the mouth of the puppets. This is an indirect way of addressing the issues in question. There are four popular styles of puppetry flourishing in different regions.

String puppets or Sutradharika: This style is found in the states of Rajasthan, Gujarat, Orissa, Karnataka, Tamilnadu and Andhra Pradesh.



### Rod puppets:

These puppets are used in west Bengal. They are large in size and fixed to bamboo sticks, which are tied to the puppeteer's waist.

### Shadow puppets:

The shadow puppets are flat figures made from tanned hide and painted with vegetable dyes. They are illuminated from behind so that their shadows fall on a transparent cotton screen. The stories projected are taken from the epics Ramayan and Mahabharat. They are popular in Andhra Pradesh, Kerala and Orissa.



### Hand Puppets:

Hand puppets or glove puppets are simple to prepare and perform and hence they are very popular for educational use. This form has flourished in Orissa, Kerala and Tamilnadu.



There are other modern variations in the original forms, which do not require elaborate preparation and highly skilled performance. The voluntary organisations make wide use of puppet plays on alcoholism, unionization, environment and health education with manageable funds by using such adaptations.

### Street Theatres

Drama performed on the street or in the open grounds is termed as street theatre. It is a form of theatre, which goes to the people and is performance amongst them. It required minimum equipment yet provide two way communication by wiping out the line between the audience and the performers. Street theatre as it is known today can be traced back to its direct lineage with the Russian Revolution in 1917. In India it appeared in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, as the awareness of the freedom struggle. In 1944, Bijon Bhattacharya, a founder of Indian peoples Theatre Association (IPTA) gave momentum and spread the stories of the exploitation of peasants by the landowners. The street theatre is greatly influenced by Brecht's epic theatre, peter Brook's Rough theatre and Badal Sircar Third theatre.

As it is written by a well-known activist, Safdar Hashmi, "The history points out very clearly that the theatre development as agitation propaganda (Agit-Prop) on the streets, at factory gates, markets, dockyards, Playgrounds, Barnyard and so on. It is political in nature and became a voluntary instrument of the democratic temper of the people. It is also an interpreter of daily events and development. It has played a role in the process of national awakening in the countries like Spain, Vietnam, Japan, France, Cuba, USA and UK.

As it is discussed earlier folk dramas enacted in public squares as the street play. Folk media are intimate with masses, readily available at low cost. Also relished by different age groups and provides instant feedback and so do the street plays. Hence though influenced by the western theatre it is accepted by common people in India readily. Women's groups in cities and rural areas have used street theatre to raise social consciousness on the issues like dowry deaths, exploitative advertisement, legal rights etc. In Kerala State the Kerala Shastra Sahitya Parishad (KSSP) has employed street theatre to popularise science and literacy.

### Jatthas (A Group March)

When the goal is to mobilize people in large number of villages it is more effective to combine different media. This is done by organisation of Jatthas by walk. A group of people with relevant media moves from one place to the other, mobilizing people on the issue and building awareness. It is community effort where different groups join together and conducts Jatthas. This needs planning, public relation and publicity. But when entire community is involved organizing does not become difficult. The very fact of the involvement of the community ensures the success of the programme. The combination of powerful and attractive micro media assures the impact.

In 1990 Bharat Vignyan Jattha - a national movement was supported by the Ministry of Human Resource Development in which more than 500 villages were covered in the country. The objective of the march was to popularise science for cultivating scientific temper among the common mass of the country. The success of it initiated Jatthas on other issues in following the years.

### The changing face of traditional media business

The technology is changing fast. Take this. We can run our TV through the mobile phone in year 2003. Don't believe it? Check out the latest Internet enabled products launched by LG in the Indian market. That leads us to an interesting question where are we headed towards in the future and how it affects a traditional media company? The eTechnology Group of the premier market research company IMRB International has done a research on this subject and has come out with some interesting findings in its report released this year.



The study indicates that the control would shift more and more to customers. For example, today we use the remote to block ad breaks by shuffling channels. Tomorrow, we would use technology to block ads if we do not want them. This is not to say ads would not work, as people would still like to be passive in receiving info at some point of time. Secondly, the communication channels will be more complex and fragmented and consumers will be more difficult to reach with a single message. The mobile phone will be combined with the web access. One can have microwave with recipe download etc. So marketers can reach messages through alternate channels. We have already seen increasing use of SMS now in this context. Thirdly, the businesses will move to

wards targeted and interactive communications strategies. A few examples of these could be a call center by Asian Paints or the cross selling efforts of banks.

The finding indicates towards number of changes taking place in the urban India. In 2-3 years horizon which is going to be a technology comforting era, there will be experimentation of benefits/delivery for both users & providers. There would be a marked increase in Internet access at home and more specifically through affordable methods in public places like schools, cyber cafes etc. The mobile communication devices will be more mass with some part of web invading it (2.5G+ will start growing in 2-3 years). The support technologies like Bluetooth will happen in 3-4 years. The traditional PC will start morphing with several support devices (PDAs etc.) which will start blurring the line with mobile communication devices. The cable industry is also expected to grow dramatically aided by CAS but the latest in technology will start invading this cottage industry. Thus, TV channels will be significantly impacted.

If we look at 5-10 years period, which is going to be an interactive media era, the true fragmentation of media would begin to happen. With better penetration of the Net, further fragmentation of communication will happen with specific appliances taking on the special tasks. The audio devices could connect to your favourite channel and play songs of your selected singers. More interactive components will be added to TVs, refrigerator, microwave, and washing machines.... Even the traditional media like radio would grow more interactive. The interactive TVs, video on demand, education at home, telecommuting and other bandwidth hungry demands will begin to grow near the end of year 8-10.

We are also going to get a broad delineation of the new customer. But this will be a slow evolution which is already undergoing. There will be a growing information sophistication. One just needs to see the way young executives in office are handling multiple info channels to believe this. All this has been possible through higher education, mastery of process of gathering, analyzing, integration and dissemination. We are also going to see higher income levels. The new class of customers would have better disposable income, less guilt to spend and willing to bet more on their future capability to meet spends. They will be adept at using the new technology. They would also have greater control (read: privacy) and say on what they want. From the customer point of view, the new technologies are aimed at giving control and great say in what they want. So customers would have more choices, ease of access to choices and ease of assessing the right choices to make. Hence, communication channels have to be adapted to this reality.

All these trends signify the change of equations for the traditional media companies in the days to come. The IMRB study recommends that the traditional media companies need to be present in multiple channels to capitalize on changes. For example, India Today Group which has successfully gone beyond the print media to create a niche for itself in the TV channel business besides making its presence felt on the Internet platform. So they got to be more engaged with their audience and progress to interaction as we move on. The media spends (print will lose revenues the most!) will have to get further fragmented across media options and hence revenues

have to be collected wherever they happen. The growing media spends will be in interactive media (Internet, email, interactive TV/Radio when they happen, live events) & targeted media (direct mail, email, mobile devices etc.).

#### Review Questions:

- Explain the difference between traditional and modern mediums of mass communication.
- What are the different traditional or alternate media?
- What are the latest trends in traditional media?

#### Suggested Readings

- Keval J kumar: *Mass Communication in India*, Jaico Publishing House



#### Notes

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## LESSON 13

### EFFECTS OF MEDIA ON SOCIETY, DETERMINANTS OF MEDIA INFLUENCE

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#### **The Meaning of Effects**

Media effects mean different things to different people. A psychologist, for example, has 'psychological' effects in mind when talking about media effects; the sociologist, the social effects, the anthropologist, the cultural effects, the political scientist the political effects and so on. Parents too are concerned about the amount of time their children spend with television, music, comics, and films, and the effects this might have on their children's behavior and attitudes.

Effects are of various types and various gradations too. They may be short term, medium terms are long term; they may be deep or profound, or transient or superficial as in case of fashions, mannerisms, and life styles. Then there are influences of a passing nature or a more permanent nature.

Can influences be termed as effects? How are 'influences', 'effects' distinct from 'impacts', or are they mere synonyms for the same social phenomenon. Few media sociologists have subjected the inadequacy of everyday language to understand the complexity of media effects to any kind of critical scrutiny.

Social scientists and media professionals rarely consider the infinite variety of uses the different media and the different programmes are put to, in different contexts. In most cases, the use of term 'effect' is misleading because it suggests that the media 'do something' to people, as though people are inorganic creatures, who do not bring their own personalities to play in the communication process. It also implies that the media are active, audiences are unresponsive if not passive. These assumptions about media and audiences have their origin in Aristotelian linear models of communication where persuasion is seen as the primary goal of all communications.

The truth is that we have little precise knowledge or proven data about media effects since they invariably take place in combination with whole lot of social, economic and cultural variables. Do effects relate to change, however slight, in attitude and behavior? Perhaps. The extent of change depends on the variations in the desires and inclinations of individual members of an audience, and in the way they as individuals and as members of different social and cultural groups respond to various types of stimuli from the mass media. It has to be noted, moreover, that people can be influenced without paying attention and without changing at all, that there is often no relationship between what a person learned, knew or recalled on the one hand and what he did or how he felt on the other! It follows therefore that one can learn things without believing them, believe things without doing them, and do things without learning or believing them!

#### **Interaction, Not Effects**

The 'interaction' (a much more accurate term than 'effects') between media and human beings is an extremely complex phenomenon. It becomes even more complex when we realize that there are a great variety of media offering numerous programme genres, and

also the fact that there are a whole variety of people and group listening, viewing, reading in a countless number of socio-cultural environments. Perhaps, the only safe conclusion on effects (or interactions) of the media is that arrived at by Bernard Berelson several years ago: "Some kinds of communication on some kind of issues, brought to the attention of some kinds of people under some kinds of conditions have some kinds of effects."

#### **Determinants of Media Influence**

##### **Attitude**

One conception is that an attitude is how positive or negative, favorable or unfavorable, or pro or con a person feels toward an object. This definition views attitude as a feeling or an evaluative reaction to objects.

A second definition represents the thoughts of Allport, who views attitudes as learned predispositions to respond to an 'object or class of objects in a consistently favorable or unfavorable way. This definition is slightly more complicated than the first because It incorporates the notion of readiness to respond toward an object.

A third definition of attitude popularized by cognitively" oriented social-psychologists are: a enduring organization of motivational, emotional, perceptual, and cognitive process with respect to some aspect of the individual's world. This views attitudes as being made up of three components: (1) the cognitive, or knowledge, component, (2) the affective, or emotional, component, and (3) the cognitive, or behavioral-tendency, component. Attitudes have several important characteristics or properties; namely, they (1) have an object; (2) have direction, intensity, and degree; (3) have structure; and, (4) are learned.

Attitudes serve four major functions for the individual: (1) the adjustment function, (2) the ego-defensive function, (3) the value-expressive function, and (4) the knowledge function. Ultimately, these functions serve people's need to protect and enhance the image they hold of themselves. In more general terms, these functions are the motivational bases which shape and reinforce positive attitudes toward goal objects perceived as need-satisfying, and/or negative attitudes toward other objects perceived as punishing or threatening.

##### **Motives**

Various concepts have been offered to explain how motives exert their directional influences on audiences. Earlier views held that inborn instincts beyond the individual's control provided the direction for behavior. Later it was stressed that basic needs (hunger, thirst, and the like) impelled people toward action.

##### **Functions of Motives**

- Defining basic strivings- Motives influence audiences to develop and identify their basic strivings. They serve to guide behavior in a general way across a wide variety of decisions and activities.
- Identifying goal objectives.

- Influencing choice criteria- Motives also guide audiences in developing criteria for evaluating media and programmes.

### Learning

Very simply, learning can be viewed as a relatively permanent change in behavior occurring as a result of experience. The implications of this definition are fairly, subtle and, therefore, require some explanation. Elements of learning are motive, cues, response, and reinforcement.

### Memory

**Short-Term Memory** To a large extent, short-term memory can be viewed as the workspace for information processing. That is, it is a portion of memory activated to temporarily, store and process information in order to interpret it and comprehend its meaning. This is accomplished by combining incoming information with other information (past experiences, knowledge, and the like) stored in long term memory.

Although the duration of this memory register is considerably longer than the of sensory memory, it still is very brief, lasting less than one minute. In addition, the capacity of short-term memory is quite limited. Approximately seven items or groupings of items are all that can be sorted at anyone time.

Material residing in short-term memory does not bear a one-to-one correspondence with the real world. Instead, the process of coding is used to organize, information into a more easily handled and remembered format. The primary method of this coding is termed chunking, which can be defined as the method of assembling information into a type of organized unit having a more understandable.

**Long-Term Memory** This memory system can be thought of as the relatively permanent storehouse for information that has undergone sufficient processing. Material can be maintained in long-term memory for as little as a few minutes to as long as many years. In addition, this system has the capacity to store an almost unlimited amount of information. A predominant key to coding material for storage in long-term memory is meaningfulness; the personal understanding an individual can derive from the information. That is, through elaborative rehearsal the individual uses his existing knowledge to interpret incoming information and code it in a way that is consistent with his existing cognitive structure (knowledge base).

### Notes

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## LESSON 14

### TWO STEP FLOW THEORY, DIFFUSION OF INNOVATIONS, DEPENDENCY THEORY

#### Two-Step Flow of Information

##### Introduction

Man has forever fought against the forces of entropy, working very diligently at creating order and meaning, dissecting and perusing until order is achieved. For civilization this has been important. It has lent the world many fascinating theories about our surroundings and the effect human beings can have. As order driven beings, we seek to stretch and apply knowledge gained in all aspects of life to situations and experiences very different from the origin of the knowledge. It is through the stretching and manipulating of old thought that new insights are made, and new psychological mountains are tackled. It is through this stretching and manipulating of one socio-political based theory that the field of Advertising has defined some of its capabilities and constraints in the area of mass communication. This theory involves the two-step flow of communication.

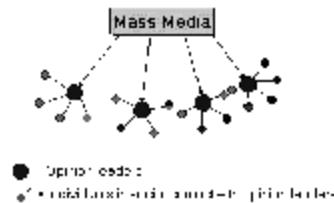
This paper will address insights to the history and development, the criticisms and praises, recent studies, and current applications of the two-step flow of communication theory. The ultimate goal is to answer one question: "What does a theory based on socio-political research have to do with advertising, anyway?"

##### Development of the

##### Two-step Flow of Communication theory

As with most theories now applied to Advertising, the Two-step flow of communication was first identified in a field somewhat removed from communications-sociology. In 1948, Paul Lazarsfeld, Bernard Berelson, and Hazel Gaudet published *The People's Choice*, a paper analyzing the voters' decision-making processes during a 1940 presidential election campaign. The study revealed evidence suggesting that the flow of mass communication is less direct than previously supposed.

Although the ability of mass media to reach a large audience, and in this case persuade individuals in one direction or another, had been a topic of much research since the 1920's, it was not until the *People's Choice* was published that society really began to understand the dynamics of the media-audience relationship. The study suggested that communication from the mass media first reaches "opinion leaders" who filter the information they gather to their associates, with whom they are influential. Previous theories assumed that media directly reached the target of the information. For the theorists, the opinion leader theory proved an interesting discovery considering the relationship between media and its target was not the focus of the research, but instead a small aspect of the study.



Lazarsfeld et al suggested "ideas often flow from radio and print to the opinion leaders and from them to the less active sections of the population." People tend to be much more affected in their decision making process by face-to-face encounters with influential peers than by the mass media (Lazarsfeld, Menzel, 1963). As Weiss described in his 1969 chapter on functional theory, "Media content can be a determining influence.... What is rejected is any conception that construes media experiences as alone sufficient for a wide variety of effects." The other piece in the communication process is the opinion leader with which the media information is discussed.

The studies by Lazarsfeld and his associates sparked interest in the exact qualities and characteristics that define the opinion leader. Is an opinion leader influential in all cases, on all topics? Or is the influence of an opinion leader constrained to certain topics? How does an opinion leader come to be influential?

##### The Opinion Leaders

##### Who are they? How have they come to be defined?

A study by Robert Merton revealed that opinion leadership is not a general characteristic of a person, but rather limited to specific issues. Individuals, who act as opinion leaders on one issue, may not be considered influentials in regard to other issues (Merton, 1949). A later study directed by Lazarsfeld and Katz further investigated the characteristics of opinion leaders. This study confirmed the earlier assertions that personal influence seems more important in decision making than media. Again, influential individuals seem constrained in their opinion leading to particular topics, non-overlapping among the individuals. The opinion leaders seem evenly distributed among the social, economical, and educational levels within their community, but very similar in these areas to those with whom they had influence.

Katz and Lazarsfeld did not identify any particular traits amongst opinion leaders that stand out. The traits that characterize each of the opinion leaders in their niche did have things in common, though. For one thing, the opinion leaders were identified as having the strongest interest in their particular niche. They hold positions within their community affording them special competence in their particular niches. They are generally gregarious, sociable individuals. Finally, they had/have contact with relevant information supplied from outside their immediate circle. Interestingly enough, Katz and Lazarsfeld observed that the opinion leaders receive a disproportionate amount of their external information from media appropriate to their niche.

Studies by Glock and Nicosia determined that opinion leaders act “as a source of social pressure toward a particular choice and as a source of social support to reinforce that choice once it has been made (1966).” Charles Glock explained that opinion leaders often develop leadership positions in their social circles. They achieve these positions based on their knowledge of situations outside their circles (1952).

### Criticisms

Although the theory of indirect flow of information from media to the target was quickly adopted, the original study performed by Lazarsfeld, Berelson, and Gaudet was not. It had a few faults. The panel method by which they attempted to better understand the influences reaching a voter was unfaulted. It very effectively allowed the researchers to notice changes in a voter’s feelings almost immediately. The resulting unit of change was an objective measurement that could easily be recorded and compared. The faults lie in the manner with which the researchers addressed the flow of influences.

Since the research was not designed to specifically test the flow of influence, the experiment was decidedly lacking in explanations. The first problem concerning the findings of the study were that the data had to be collected in a random sample, but subjects in a random sample can only speak for themselves. For these reasons, each person could only say whether or not they considered his/herself an advice giver.

Lazarsfeld and his associates in the 1940 election study were unable to determine the specific flow of influence. They determined there were a number of opinion leaders spread throughout the socio-economic groups; however, these leaders were not directly linked to particular groups within the socio-economic levels.

Even within studies specifically designed to determine who opinion leaders are and how they are different from the average populace, there have been problems born from experimental design. “The criticisms of the concept of opinion leaders has focused mainly on its methodological deficiencies (Weimann, 1991).” As Weimann suggested in his 1989 study of previous research, much of the design problems involved determining the opinion leaders while studying the flow of information. There seemed to be too many factors to control. Despite the difficulties in qualifying the influentials, the theory of a group of individuals that filter the flow of media information has lived on.

### Praises and Support

Although the empirical methods behind the two-step flow of communication were not perfect, the theory did provide a very believable explanation for information flow. The opinion leaders do not replace media, but rather guide discussions of media. Brosius explains the benefits of the opinion leader theory well in his 1996 study of agenda setting, “The opinion leaders should not be regarded as replacing the role of interpersonal networks but, in fact, as reemphasizing the role of the group and interpersonal contacts.”

Lazarsfeld and his associates detailed five characteristics of personal contact that give their theory more validity:

**Non-purposiveness/casualness** One must have a reason for tuning into a political speech on television, but political conversations can just “pop-up”. In this situation, the people are

less likely to have their defenses up in preparation, they are more likely open to the conversation.

**Flexibility to counter resistance** In a conversation, there is always opportunity to counter any resistance. This is not so in media, a one sided form of communication.

**Trust** Personal contact carries more trust than media. As people interact, they are better able through observation of body language and vocal cues to judge the honesty of the person in the discussion. Newspaper and radio do not offer these cues.

**Persuasion without conviction** The formal media is forced to persuade or change opinions. In personal communication, sometimes friendly insistence can cause action without affecting any comprehension of the issues.

Menzel introduced another strong point in favor of the two-step flow of information theory. First, there are an abundance of information channels “choked” with all types of journals, conferences, and commercial messages. These are distracting and confusing to their target. With the barrage of information humans are flooded with daily, it is not hard to understand why someone might turn to a peer for help evaluating all of it.

### Recent Studies Based on the Two-step Flow of Communication theory

The true test of a theory lies in its timelessness, its ability to spark interest and provoke thought years after its introduction. The two step flow of communication theory has been able to remain relevant throughout the years. This should not be difficult to believe considering it has fueled at least the past few pages this year, forty years after its debut. There have been several recent studies that have addressed issues arising from Lazarsfeld’s, Katz’s, and Merton’s studies from the 1940s. In two such studies Gabriel Weimann (1994) and Hans-Bernd Brosius (1996) addressed the setting of agendas as a two-step flow of communication.

In Weimann’s paper addressing the re-emergence of the opinion leader theory into modern day (1991), he addresses several problems that have been overcome sparking the new interest in the old theory. As is further discussed in the section on theory criticisms, the two-step flow of communication theory is difficult to witness in the field. Many researchers have attempted to design credible models for testing the theory, but with only minor success (Weimann, 1991). Brosius and Weimann set out to explain agenda setting using the basis of the two-step flow of communication theory determined by Lazarsfeld, Katz, and the many other researchers. To avoid the difficulties in studying the actual flow of communication, Weimann and Brosius separated the opinion leaders from their two-step flow of communication theory. Participants were studied against a scale to determine the “Strength of Personality”.

The Brosius-Weimann study attempts to describe the individuals whose personal communication has impact on agenda setting. These individuals are the archetypal opinion leaders, who still control the flow of information. Weimann and Brosius define agenda setting as a two-step flow, wherein certain individuals (influentials) “collect, diffuse, filter, and promote the flow of information” from media to the community. The difference between these influentials and the opinion leaders, as Weimann stresses, is that these influentials are usually elitists, not spread

throughout the community as the old theory suggested (Weimann, 1991). Are these influentials a new breed? Or is there really a difference between influentials and opinion leaders? This, as yet, has not been addressed. Weimann and Brosius suggest the influentials are a subsection of the opinion leaders.

### Applications of the Theory

To those who claim that there are no applications of a socio-political theory in advertising, exhibit A is the barrage of articles written daily on the very subject. No longer does the advertising industry doubt the existence or qualities of influentials, as they are most commonly referred to today. Instead, the discussion revolves around effectively targeting messages to reach these influentials.

For fifty years, the research organization Roper has considered the group of "influentials" important enough to track. Regularly, reports and studies are performed in an attempt to unlock the secret to reaching these influentials. Who are they? What has the term "influential" come to describe? According to Diane Crispell, these people are the "thought leaders" and "pioneer consumers". "Influentials are better educated and more affluent than the average American, but it is their interest in the world around them and their belief that they can make a difference that makes them influential (Crispell, 1989)."

The influentials today seem to be isolated in the upper class. They are the trend-setters. It is this group that is first to adopt new technology, and remains on the leading edge of trends (Poltrack, 1985). This is the group that advertising attempts to reach. Daily articles are published on maximizing the market by reaching these influentials. The idea remains that the most efficient media is word-of-mouth, and it is by reaching the influentials with other forms of media that this word-of-mouth is generated. It seems the opinion leaders of yesterday have been overlooked for the smaller subset of influentials.

### Dependency theory

#### History and Orientation

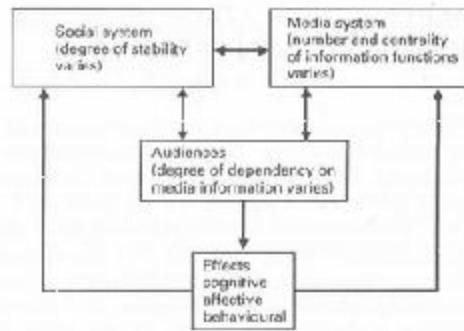
Dependency theory was originally proposed by Sandra Ball-Rokeach and Melvin DeFleur (1976). This theory merged out of the communication discipline.

Dependency theory integrates several perspectives: first, it combines perspectives from psychology with ingredients from social categories theory. Second, it integrates systems perspectives with elements from more causal approaches. Third, it combines elements of uses and gratifications research with those of media effects traditions, although its primary focus is less on effects per se than on rationales for why media effects typically are limited. Finally, a contextualist philosophy is incorporated into the theory, which also features traditional concerns with the content of media messages and their effects on audiences. Research generated by this model tends to be more descriptive than explanatory or predictive.

#### Core Assumptions and Statements

Dependency theory proposes an integral relationship among audiences, media and the larger social system. This theory predicts that you depend on media information to meet certain needs and achieve certain goals, like uses-and-gratifications theory. But you do not depend on all media equally. Two factors influence the degree of media dependence. First, you will become more dependent on media that meet a number of your needs than on media that provide just a few. The second source of dependency is social stability. When social change and conflict are high, established institutions, beliefs, and practices are challenged, forcing you to reevaluate and make new choices. At such times your reliance on the media for information will increase. At other, more stable times your dependency on media may go way down.

One's needs are not always strictly personal but may be shaped by the culture or by various social conditions. In other words, individuals' needs, motives, and uses of media are contingent on outside factors that may not be in the individuals' control. These outside factors act as constraints on what and how media can be used and on the availability of other non-media alternatives. Furthermore, the more alternatives and individual had for gratifying needs, the less dependent he or she will become on any single medium. The number of functional alternatives, however, is not just a matter of individual choice or even of psychological traits but is limited also by factors such as availability of certain media.



This theory states that the more dependent an individual is on the media for having his or her needs fulfilled, the more important the media will be to that person. People use the media for many reasons. Information, entertainment, and Para social relationships are just a few of them. The Dependency Theory says the more a person becomes dependent on the media to fulfill these needs; the media will become more important to that individual. The media will also have much more influence and power over that individual. If someone is so dependent on the media for information, and the media is that person's only source for information, then it is easy to set the agenda. The individual falls victim to Agenda Setting. As you can see, these three theories intertwine quite a bit.

#### Critique :

Media Dependency Theory is Relatively Scientific in nature. It predicts a correlation between media dependence and importance and influence of the media, but each person uses the media in different ways. Also, the media affects each person in different ways. According to Chaffee & Berger 's 1997 criteria for scientific theories, this theory is a pretty good one. It has explanatory power, but more of predictive power because it predicts how dependency on the media correlates with importance of the media to a certain person.

It is relatively simple to understand, so it is parsimonious.

It can be proven false. If a person is not dependent on the media, media will not be of great importance to that individual.

It is internally consistent, with meta-theoretical assumptions on the same side of the continuum.

It is a springboard to further research, especially so, since it came from other theories.

It helps to organize and relate other media effect theories.

An explanation of the relationship between the content of mass media, the nature of society, and the communication behavior of audiences. It states that people in urban industrial societies are dependent on mass communication for the information they need to make many kinds of decisions.

### Propositions

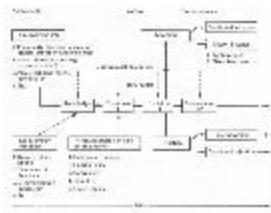
1. People in all societies need information in order to make decisions about such matters as food, shelter, employment, transportation, political issues, entertainment, and other aspects of family life.
2. In traditional societies, people tend to pursue similar ways of life and are linked by word-of-mouth networks of extended families, deeply established friendships, long-term neighbours, and other social ties from which they obtain the information that they need.
3. In urban-industrial societies, populations are composed of unlike people brought together through internal migrations and immigrations from outside. They are greatly differentiated by such factors as race, ethnicity, occupational specialization, and economic class.
4. Because of their far greater social differentiation, people in urban-industrial societies have fewer effective word-of-mouth channels based on deeply established networks of social ties through which they can obtain the information they need in daily life.
5. Thus, people in urban-industrial societies are dependent on mass communication for information needed to make many kinds of decisions. From the media they obtain a flow of information, advice, and role models in the news, entertainment, and advertising that they use as a basis for those decisions.

### Diffusion of Innovation

The process by which an innovation is communicated through different channels over time among members of a social system."

### History and Orientation

Diffusion research goes one step further than two-step flow theory. The original diffusion research was done as early as 1903 by the French sociologist Gabriel Tarde who plotted the original S-shaped diffusion curve. Tardes' 1903 S-shaped curve is of current importance because "most innovations have an S-shaped rate of adoption" (Rogers, 1995).



Theory is concerned with the manner in which a new technological idea, artifact or technique, or a new use of an old one, migrates from creation to use. According to the theory, **technological innovation is communicated through particular channels, over time, among the members of a social system.**

The **stages** through which a technological innovation passes are:

**knowledge** (exposure to its existence, and understanding of its functions);

**persuasion** (the forming of a favorable attitude to it);

**decision** (commitment to its adoption); and

**confirmation** (reinforcement based on positive outcomes from it).

Early knowers generally are more highly educated, have higher social status, are more open to both mass media and interpersonal channels of communication, and have more contact with change agents. **Mass media channels** are relatively more important at the knowledge stage, whereas **interpersonal channels** are relatively more important at the persuasion stage.

Innovation decisions may be optional (where the person or organisation has a real opportunity to adopt or reject the idea), collective (where a decision is reached by consensus among the members of a system), or authority-based (where a decision is imposed by another person or organisation which possesses requisite power, status or technical expertise).

Important **characteristics** of an innovation include:

**relative advantage** (the degree to which it is perceived to be better than what it supersedes);

**compatibility** (consistency with existing values, past experiences and needs);

**complexity** (difficulty of understanding and use);

**trialability** (the degree to which it can be experimented with on a limited basis);

**observability** (the visibility of its results).

Important **roles** in the innovation process include:

**opinion leaders** (who have relatively frequent informal influence over the behaviour of others);

**change agents** (who positively influence innovation decisions, by mediating between the change agency and the relevant social system);

**change aides** (who complement the change agent, by having more intensive contact with clients, and who have less competence credibility but more safety or trustworthiness credibility).

DoI Theory is at its best as a descriptive tool, less strong in its explanatory power, and less useful still in predicting outcomes, and providing guidance as to how to accelerate the rate of adoption. There is doubt about the extent to which it can give rise to readily refutable hypotheses. Many of its elements may be specific to the culture in which it was derived, and hence less relevant in, for example East Asian and African countries, and as time goes on.

### Scope and Application

Diffusion research has focused on five elements:

1. the characteristics of an innovation which may influence its adoption;

- 2 the decision-making process that occurs when individuals consider adopting a new idea, product or practice;
3. the characteristics of individuals that make them likely to adopt an innovation;
4. the consequences for individuals and society of adopting an innovation; and
5. communication channels used in the adoption process.

**Review Questions:**

- Explain the two-step Flow theory of mass communication. Give two real life examples.
- Explain how are society and media interdependent on each other?
- Explain the process of diffusion of innovation?

**Suggested Readings**

- Keval J kumar: Mass Communication in India, Jaico Publishing House
- Uma Narula: mass Communication Theory and Practices

**Notes**

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## LESSON 15

### USES AND GRATIFICATIONS THEORY, CULTIVATION THEORY

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#### **Uses and Gratifications**

Denis McQuail sociologist did research on basis of viewpoint of common man. Uses and Gratification is largely based on research that uses survey methods. This is an audience- centered theory placed the audience in a more central role in our understanding of mass communication.

Audiences have their own needs; to fulfill those needs people depend on various medias. Needs originally generate from psychological, physiological and social conditions.

#### **Gratifying needs**

The choices which people make are motivated by the desire to satisfy (or 'gratify') a range of needs. Hence the uses and gratifications approach is concerned to identify how people *use* the media to *gratify* their needs. Generally, the needs (examples), which audiences seek to gratify, are taken to be as summarized by Denis McQuail, namely:

Surveillance

Personal identity

Personal relationships

Diversion

As McQuail points out, it's very difficult to connect a particular need with a particular type of media content, 'since media use may be considered to supply at one time or another all the benefits named'. In the sections, which follow, you will find a brief discussion of each of the needs mentioned and some brief suggestions as to how the media might be used to gratify them. However, you should bear in mind that those are *only* suggestions.

#### **Surveillance**

Surveillance means the need to find out what's going on in the world around us. In terms of Maslow's hierarchy of needs, this can be seen as relating to the need for security, since knowledge brings security. The unknown is a source of danger. The more we know about our environment, the more secure it is likely to be for us. This is not to say that the most natural course of action would be to stay indoors all day so as to avoid any danger to ourselves; quite the contrary - since there is evidence that we are motivated by a natural curiosity about the world around us. There would appear to be a trade-off between the need to minimize the risks to ourselves by finding out about our environment and the risks, which we inevitably subject ourselves to in the process of finding out.

The need for knowledge suggests that we would probably be most likely to use such media output as newspapers, news programmes, specialist magazines, current affairs programmes, science programmes, the Internet, arts programmes and so on, as well as books, of course, in order to gratify this need.

However, it's worth bearing in mind that the media themselves are part of what's going on in the world (indeed some postmodern thinkers would be prepared to say that there's no distinction

between the world and the media). So, for example, watching a TV soap gratifies our need for surveillance, too. British soaps, of course, in the 'public service' tradition do generally give 'information' - on the latest social security developments, the availability of pensioners' Christmas bonuses and so on - but that's not the only kind of surveillance meant here. By watching soap, we learn about what is a major part of our and nineteen million other people's 'worlds'. This need is one we see reflected in the popular dailies, much of whose editorial space is given over to 'news' about the soaps and the actors in them.

#### **Personal identity**

By personal identity we refer to finding out who we are, what we're like and how we compare with others. We do this in our interactions with other people of course, but we can use the media to gratify that need as well.

Equally we could use the media to compare ourselves with valued others - a person in a soap, a sportsperson in our favorite sport etc. We could use the news in the same way. Maybe when we switched on the news, our main need seemed to us to be for surveillance, but we can soon get into commenting on the characters in the news, the newsreader's bushy moustache or dangly earrings etc. Again, here we see how the obvious use of the media texts is not necessarily our primary use. News broadcasters presumably see the news as imparting information.

#### **Personal relationships**

It might seem daft to talk about personal relationships in our use of the media, but we can certainly gratify those social needs via our media use:

We can find out how other people live.

We can identify with people in the media and thus gain a sense of belonging.

We can use the media as a source of things to talk to other people about - I can remember a highly intellectual colleague who refused to have a TV in his home while his children were little. As soon as they started school, though, he went out and bought one because they were isolated from other schoolchildren, as they hadn't a clue about any of the programmes the others talked about.

You might perhaps also think that television can serve as a focus for interaction between family members, who sit together in front of the television, making rude comments about the people on it, jointly engaging in criticism of the behaviour they see, swapping anecdotes that the TV action has reminded them of and so on.

#### **Diversion**

Diversion means escapism, entertainment, relaxing. Indeed, McQuail lists emotional release and sexual arousal as well.

Clearly we could use the most obviously relaxing and escapist media products such as glam soaps, game shows, gossip pages and so on, as well as, say, pornography for sexual arousal. But it would be quite possible to use other media products as well.

## Uses and Gratifications: Criticism

The highly influential modern researcher Ien Ang criticizes the uses and gratifications approach to the media on the following three grounds: it is highly individualistic, taking into account only the individual psychological gratifications derived from individual media use. The social context of the media use tends to be ignored. This overlooks the fact that some media use may have nothing to do with the pursuit of gratification - it may be forced upon us for example. There is relatively little attention paid to media content, researchers attending to why people use the media, but less to what meanings they actually get out of their media use. The uses and gratifications approach starts from the view that the media are always functional to people and may thus implicitly offer a justification for the way the media are currently organized.

## Uses and Gratifications

One influential tradition in media research is referred to as 'uses and gratifications' (occasionally 'needs and gratifications'). This approach focuses on why people use particular media rather than on content. In contrast to the concern of the 'media effects' tradition with 'what media do to people' (which assumes a homogeneous mass audience and a 'hypodermic' view of media), U & G can be seen as part of a broader trend amongst media researchers which is more concerned with 'what people do with media', allowing for a variety of responses and interpretations. However, some commentators have argued that gratifications could also be seen as effects: e.g. thrillers are likely to generate very similar responses amongst most viewers. And who could say that they never watch more TV than they had intended to? Watching TV helps to shape audience needs and expectations. U & G arose originally in the 1940s and underwent a revival in the 1970s and 1980s. The approach springs from a functionalist paradigm in the social sciences. It presents the use of media in terms of the gratification of social or psychological needs of the individual (Blumler & Katz 1974). The mass media compete with other sources of gratification, but gratifications can be obtained from a medium's content (e.g. watching a specific programme), from familiarity with a genre within the medium (e.g. watching soap operas), from general exposure to the medium (e.g. watching TV), and from the social context in which it is used (e.g. watching TV with the family).

U & G theorists argue that people's needs influence how they use and respond to a medium. Zillmann (cited by McQuail 1987: 236) has shown the influence of mood on media choice: boredom encourages the choice of exciting content and stress encourages a choice of relaxing content. The same TV programme may gratify different needs for different individuals. Different needs are associated with individual personalities, stages of maturation, backgrounds and social roles. Developmental factors seem to be related to some motives for purposeful viewing: e.g. Judith van Evra argues that young children may be particularly likely to watch TV in search of information and hence more susceptible to influence (Evra 1990: 177, 179). An empirical study in the U & G tradition might typically involve audience members completing a questionnaire about why they watch a TV programme. Denis McQuail offers (McQuail 1987: 73) the following typology of common reasons for media use:

### Information

finding out about relevant events and conditions in immediate surroundings, society and the world seeking advice on practical matters or opinion and decision choices satisfying curiosity and general interest learning; self-education gaining a sense of security through knowledge.

### Personal Identity

Finding reinforcement for personal valuesfinding models of behaviouridentifying with valued other (in the media) gaining insight into one's self.

### Integration and Social Interaction

Gaining insight into circumstances of others; social empathy-identifying with others and gaining a sense of belongingfinding a basis for conversation and social interactionhaving a substitute for real-life companionshiphelping to carry out social rolesenabling one to connect with family, friends and society

### Entertainment

Escaping, or being diverted, from problemsrelaxinggetting intrinsic cultural or aesthetic enjoymentfilling timeemotional releaseBlumler & Katz (1974) argued that audience needs have social and psychological origins which generate certain expectations about the mass media, leading to differential patterns of media exposure which result in both the gratification of needs and in other (often unintended) consequences. This does assume an active audience making motivated choices. However, McQuail suggests that the dominant stance of recent researchers in this tradition is now that: Personal social circumstances and psychological dispositions together influence both... general habits of media use and also... beliefs and expectations about the benefits offered by the media, which shape... specific acts of media choice and consumption, followed by.... assessments of the value of the experience (with consequences for further media use) and, possibly... applications of benefits acquired in other areas of experience and social activity.

### Watching TV Soap Operas

A major focus for research into why and how people watch TV has been the genre of soap opera. Adopting a U & G perspective, Richard Kilborn (1992: 75-84) offers the following common reasons for watching soaps: regular part of domestic routine and entertaining reward for worklaunchpad for social and personal interactionfulfilling individual needs: a way of choosing to be alone or of enduring enforced loneliness identification and involvement with characters (perhaps cathartic)escapist fantasy (American supersoaps more fantastical)focus of debate on topical issues a kind of critical game involving knowledge of the rules and conventions of the genre.

### Watching TV Quiz Programmes

McQuail, Blumler and Brown (1972) offered the following summary of clusters of 'uses' that people made of TV quizzes:

### Gratifications of TV Quiz Shows: Selected Responses

#### Self-Rating Appeal

I can compare myself with the experts

I like to imagine that I am on the programme and doing well

I feel pleased that the side I favour has actually won

I am reminded of when I was in school

I laugh at the contestants' mistakes

### Basis for Social Interaction

I look forward to talking about it with others  
 I like competing with other people watching with me  
 I like working together with the family on the answers  
 The children get a lot out of it  
 It brings the family together sharing the same interest  
 It is a topic of conversation afterwards

### Excitement Appeal

I like the excitement of a close finish  
 I like to forget my worries for a while  
 I like trying to guess the winner  
 Having got the answer right I feel really good  
 I get involved in the competition

### Educational Appeal

I find I know more than I thought  
 I find I have improved myself  
 I feel respect for the people on the programme  
 I think over some of the questions afterwards  
 It's educational  
 (McQuail, Blumler & Brown 1972)

Social class seemed to be related to gratifications here. McQuail et al. noted that most of those who watched quiz programmes for 'self-rating' gratifications lived in council houses and were working-class. 'Excitement' was most commonly reported as a gratification by working-class viewers who were not very sociable. And those who reported 'educational appeal' as the major gratification were those who had left school at the minimum age. John Fiske suggests that these could be seen as compensatory uses of the media 'to gratify needs that the rest of social life frustrates' (Fiske 1982: 136). In contrast, people who reported having many acquaintances in their neighbourhood tended to see the quizzes as a basis for social interaction.

### Criticisms of 'Uses and Gratifications'

The use of retrospective 'self-reports' has several limitations. Viewers may not know why they chose to watch what they did, or may not be able to explain fully. The reasons which can be articulated may be the least important. People may simply offer reasons which they have heard others mention. More promising might be the study of people's engagement with media as it happens.

Some degree of selectivity of media and content is clearly exercised by audiences (e.g. choice or avoidance of TV soap operas). However, instrumental (goal-directed) accounts assume a rational choice of appropriate media for predetermined purposes. Such accounts over-emphasize informational purposes and ignore a great deal in people's engagement with media: TV viewing can be an end in itself. There is evidence that media use is often habitual, ritualistic and unselective (Barwise & Ehrenberg 1988). But more positively, TV viewing can sometimes be seen as *aesthetic* experience in which *intrinsic motivation* is involved.

The U & G approach has been criticized as 'vulgar gratificationism'. It is *individualistic* and *psychologistic*, tending to ignore the socio-cultural context. As a theoretical stance it foregrounds individual psychological and personality factors and backgrounds sociological interpretations. For instance, David Morley (1992) acknowledges that individual differences in interpretation do exist, but he stresses

the importance of subcultural socio-economic differences in shaping the ways in which people interpret their experiences with TV (via shared 'cultural codes'). U & G theorists tend to exaggerate *active* and *conscious* choice, whereas media can be forced on some people rather than freely chosen. The stance can also lead to the exaggeration of *openness of interpretation*, implying that audiences may obtain almost any kind of gratification regardless of content or of 'preferred readings'. Its *functionalist* emphasis is politically conservative: if we insist that people will always find some gratifications from any use of media, we may adopt a complacently uncritical stance towards what the mass media currently offer.

U & G research has been concerned with *why* people use media. Whilst this approach sprang from 'mainstream' research in social science, an interpretive tradition has arisen primarily from the more arts-oriented 'cultural (and 'critical') studies'. The approach sometimes referred to as *reception theory* (or *reception analysis*) focuses on *what* people see in the media, on the meanings which people produce when they interpret media 'texts' (e.g. Hobson 1982, Ang 1985, Seiter, Borchers, Kreutzner & Warth 1989). This perspective tends to be associated with the use of interviews rather than questionnaires. Such interviews are often with small groups (e.g. with friends who watch the same TV programmes). The emphasis is on specific content (e.g. a particular soap opera) and on specific social contexts (e.g. a particular group of working-class women viewers).

### Cultivation Theory

Cultivation theory (sometimes referred to as the cultivation hypothesis or cultivation analysis) was an approach developed by Professor George Gerbner, dean of the Annenberg School of Communications at the University of Pennsylvania. He began the 'Cultural Indicators' research project in the mid-1960s, to study whether and how watching television may influence viewers' ideas of what the everyday world is like. Cultivation research is in the 'effects' tradition.

Cultivation theorists argue that television has long-term effects, which are small, gradual, indirect but cumulative and significant. They emphasize the effects of television viewing on the attitudes rather than the behaviour of viewers. Heavy watching of television is seen as 'cultivating' attitudes, which are more consistent with the world of television programmes than with the everyday world. Watching television may tend to induce a general mindset about violence in the world, quite apart from any effects it might have in inducing violent behaviour. Cultivation theorists distinguish between 'first order' effects (general beliefs about the everyday world, such as about the prevalence of violence) and 'second order' effects (specific attitudes, such as to law and order or to personal safety).

Gerbner argues that the mass media cultivate attitudes and values which are already present in a culture: the media maintain and propagate these values amongst members of a culture, thus binding it together. He has argued that television tends to cultivate middle-of-the-road political perspectives. And Gross considered that 'television is a cultural arm of the established industrial order and as such serves primarily to maintain, stabilize and reinforce rather than to alter, threaten or weaken conventional beliefs and behaviours' (1977, in Boyd-Barrett & Braham 1987, p. 100). Such

a function is conservative, but heavy viewers tend to regard themselves as 'moderate'.

Cultivation research looks at the mass media as a socializing agent and investigates whether television viewers come to believe the television version of reality the more they watch it. Gerbner and his colleagues contend that television drama has a small but significant influence on the attitudes, beliefs and judgements of viewers concerning the social world. The focus is on 'heavy viewers'. People who watch a lot of television are likely to be more influenced by the ways in which television programmes frame the world than are individuals who watch less, especially regarding topics of which the viewer has little first-hand experience. Light viewers may have more sources of information than heavy viewers. It may be that lone viewers are more open to a cultivation effect than those who view with others.

Gerbner sees television as dominating our 'symbolic environment'. As McQuail and Windahl note, cultivation theory presents television as 'not a window on or reflection of the world, but a world in itself'. Gerbner argued that the over-representation of violence on television constitutes a symbolic message about law and order rather than a simple cause of more aggressive behaviour by viewers. For instance, the action-adventure genre acts to reinforce a faith in law and order, the status quo and social justice (baddies usually get their just dessert).

Since 1967, Gerbner and his colleagues have been analyzing sample weeks of prime-time and daytime television programming. Cultivation analysis usually involves the correlation of data from content analysis (identifying prevailing images on television) with survey data from audience research (to assess any influence of such images on the attitudes of viewers). Content analysis by cultivation theorists seeks to characterize 'the TV world'. Such analysis shows not only that the TV world is far more violent than the everyday world, but also, for instance, that television is dominated by males and over-represents the professions and those involved in law enforcement.

Audience research by cultivation theorists involves asking large-scale public opinion poll organizations to include in their national surveys questions regarding such issues as the amount of violence in everyday life. Answers are interpreted as reflecting either the world of television or that of everyday life. Respondents are asked such questions as: 'What percentage of all males who have jobs work in law enforcement or crime detection? Is it 1 percent or 10 percent?'. On American TV, about 12 percent of all male characters hold such jobs, and about 1 percent of males are employed in the USA in these jobs, so 10 percent would be the 'TV answer' and 1 percent would be the 'real-world answer'.

Answers are then related to the amount of television watched, other media habits and demographic data such as sex, age, income and education. The cultivation hypothesis involves predicting or expecting heavy television viewers to give more TV answers than light viewers. The responses of a large number of heavy viewers are compared with those of light viewers. A tendency of heavy viewers to choose TV answers is interpreted as evidence of a cultivation effect.

In a survey of about 450 New Jersey schoolchildren, 73 percent of heavy viewers compared to 62 percent of light viewers gave the TV answer to a question asking them to estimate the number of

people involved in violence in a typical week. The same survey showed that children who were heavy viewers were more fearful about walking alone in a city at night. They also overestimated the number of people who commit serious crimes. One controlled experiment addressed the issue of cause and effect, manipulating the viewing of American college students to create heavy- and light-viewing groups. After 6 weeks of controlled viewing, heavy viewers of action-adventure programmes were indeed found to be more fearful of life in the everyday world than were light viewers.

Cultivation theorists are best known for their study of television and viewers, and in particular for a focus on the topic of violence. However, some studies have also considered other mass media from this perspective, and have dealt with topics such as gender roles, age groups, ethnic groups and political attitudes. A study of American college students found that heavy soap opera viewers were more likely than light viewers to over-estimate the number of real-life married people who had affairs or who had been divorced and the number of women who had abortions.

The difference in the pattern of responses between light and heavy viewers (when other variables are controlled) is referred to as the 'cultivation differential', reflecting the extent to which an attitude seems to be shaped by watching television. Older people tend to be portrayed negatively on television and heavy viewers (especially younger ones) tend to hold more negative views about older people than lighter viewers. Most heavy viewers are unaware of any influence of television viewing on their attitudes and values.

Cultivation theorists argue that heavy viewing leads viewers (even among high educational/high income groups) to have more homogeneous or convergent opinions than light viewers (who tend to have more heterogeneous or divergent opinions). The cultivation effect of television viewing is one of 'levelling' or 'homogenizing' opinion. Gerbner and his associates argue that heavy viewers of violence on television come to believe that the incidence of violence in the everyday world is higher than do light viewers of similar backgrounds. They refer to this as a mainstreaming effect.

Misjudging the amount of violence in society is sometimes called the 'mean world syndrome'. Heavy viewers tend to believe that the world is a nastier place than do light viewers. Pingree and Hawkins (1981, cited in Condry 1989, p. 127) studied 1,280 primary schoolchildren (2nd-11th grade) in Australia using viewing diaries and questionnaires. They found that heavy viewing led to a 'television-biased' view of Australia as a 'mean and violent' place. The children with the bleakest picture of Australia were those who most watched American crime adventure programmes. Oddly, they did not judge the USA to the same extent by these programmes.

Gerbner reported evidence for 'resonance' - a 'double dose' effect that may boost cultivation. This is held to occur when the viewer's everyday life experiences are congruent with those depicted in the television world. For instance, since on television women are most likely to be victims of crime, women heavy viewers are influenced by the usual heavy viewer mainstreaming effect but are also led to feel especially fearful for themselves as women. The cultivation effect is also argued to be strongest when the viewer's neighborhood is similar to that shown on television. Crime on television is largely urban, so urban heavy viewers are subject to a

double dose, and cultivation theorists argue that violent content 'resonates' more for them. The strongest effects of heavy viewing on attitudes to violence are likely to be amongst those in the high crime areas of cities.

### Criticisms of cultivation theory

Cultivation theory offers a very plausible case, particularly in its emphasis on the importance of mediation and on the symbolic function of television in its cultural context. However, the theory is subject to a number of criticisms. Gerbner has been criticized for over-simplification. Denis McQuail argues that 'it is almost impossible to deal convincingly with the complexity of posited relationships between symbolic structures, audience behaviour and audience views, given the many intervening and powerful social background factors' (in Boyd-Barrett & Braham 1987, pp. 99-100). Our attitudes are likely to be influenced not only by TV, but also by other media, by direct experience, by other people, and so on.

A correlation between television exposure and the beliefs of viewers do not, of course, prove that there is a causal relationship, although it may suggest the possibility of one. There could be another common factor influencing the apparently associated ones. Hawkins and Pingree could not find conclusive proof of the direction of the relationship between television viewing and viewers' ideas about social reality. Rather than heavy TV viewing leading people to be more fearful, it may be that more fearful people are drawn to watching more television than other people. There might be a reciprocal relationship: 'television viewing causes a social reality to be constructed in a particular way, but this construction of social reality may also direct viewing behaviour' (Hawkins & Pingree 1983, cited in McQuail & Windahl). In any case, surveys cannot establish causation.

Cultivation research does avoid the artificiality of laboratory experiments - it is based on normal viewing over a long period - but it is subject to the usual criticisms of both content analysis and surveys.

Some studies have shown that careful controls of various variables tend to reduce or eliminate cultivation effects. In the study of the topic of violence, controls for neighborhood were more reliable than the controls for income used by Gerbner. Hirsch (1980, cited in Livingstone 1990, p. 16), argued that an apparent relationship between exposure to violence on television and fear of crime can be explained by the neighbourhood viewers live in. Those who live in high-crime areas are more likely to stay at home and watch television and also to believe that they have a greater chance of being attacked than are those in low-crime areas. Cultivation theorists do tend to underplay the point that heavy and light viewers do vary in other ways in addition to their TV viewing habits, such as in age, sex and education.

Pingree & Hawkins have argued that breakdowns by content type are more useful than measures of total viewing, because viewers are selective. More specifically content-based measures would show stronger correlations in cultivation analysis (Condry 1989, p. 128). Over-reliance on content analysis misses subtleties and assumes that meaning resides 'in' television programmes (although Gerbner does emphasize connotative rather than denotative meaning unlike many in 'effects' tradition). Also, different genres - and even different programmes - contribute to the shaping of different

realities, but cultivation analysis assumes too much homogeneity in television programmes (though some commentators would argue that there is increasing homogeneity in television programmes which may make the cultivation case stronger).

Asking viewers for their estimations of crime statistics is a crude measure of their beliefs about crime. Doob & MacDonald note that there is evidence of a cultivation effect with social questions (e.g. 'How many muggings were there in your neighborhood last year?') but less so with personal questions (e.g. 'Are you afraid of being mugged?'). Even in the context of a symbolic function, some critical theorists go further than cultivation theorists, arguing for instance that the relative absence of female characters on television is a symbolic statement about their lack of importance in current social reality: women are 'symbolically annihilated'.

Viewers don't usually use people on television for 'social comparison'. We are not worried by contrasts between how people on television look and live and the way we do. If we were, then the heaviest viewers would be most concerned about their appearance, health and weight because television actors and actresses tend to be young, thin and attractive. But the heaviest viewers are in fact least concerned about their health and weight.

There is relatively little evidence of cultivation effects outside the USA. Wober (1978, cited in Condry 1989, p. 130) found no British evidence of a link between heavy viewing and insecurity. But this may be because there is less violence on British television than in the USA, and Condry suggests that there may be a critical level of the televisual distortion of social reality before it is reflected in the attitudes of viewers. Or it may be that Britain has a more diverse media culture.

More recent theories stressing the active viewer downplay the power of television to influence viewers, which is assumed by cultivation theory. Cultivation theory focuses on the amount of television viewing or 'exposure', and does not allow for differences in the ways in which viewers interpret television realities. Viewers do not necessarily passively accept as 'real' what they see on television. Television programmes are open to varying interpretations. The degree of identification with characters by viewers may play a part. Motivations to view also vary greatly. Joseph Dominick comments that 'individuals who watch TV simply to pass time or because it becomes a habit appear to be more affected than people whose viewing is planned and motivated'.

Cultivation theorists tend to ignore the importance of the social dynamics of television use. Interacting factors such as developmental stages, viewing experience, general knowledge, gender, ethnicity, viewing contexts, family attitudes and socio-economic background all contribute to shaping the ways in which viewers interpret television. When the viewer has some direct lived experience of the subject matter this may tend to reduce any cultivation effect.

There is some evidence that lower socio-economic groups tend to watch television as a source of information more than other groups, but the viewer's framing of television 'reality' also needs to be considered here. It is often argued that cultivation may be enhanced when the viewer interprets the content of programmes to be realistic; sceptical viewers may be less likely to be affected. There is some evidence that ethnic minorities exhibit more sophistication in 'perceived reality' than others do

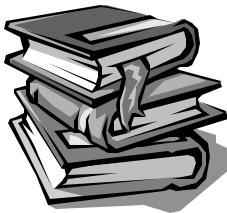
(van Evra 1990, p. 169). There is also evidence that working class mothers are more likely to confirm the realism of programmes offering negative depictions of undesirable behaviour to discourage such behaviour, whereas middle-class mothers may tend to make less directive comments.

#### **Review Questions:**

- Explain the Uses and Gratification theory. Give two real life examples.
- Explain how TV watching influences our minds?

#### **Suggested Readings**

- Keval J kumar: Mass Communication in India, Jaico Publishing House
- Uma Narula: mass Communication Theory and Practices



#### **Notes**

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## LESSON 16

### MASS AUDIENCES

#### **Introduction**

It is virtually impossible these days to go through a day without encountering the media in some form. You may wake up to the sound of the radio, play a walkman on your way into college, pass billboards in the street and watch television or go to a film in the evening. We are all therefore part of the audience for these different kinds of media products, but what does this rather obvious statement actually mean?

Since the early days of the media this question has been discussed widely throughout the world. Some people have seen media audiences as being easily manipulated masses of people who can be persuaded to buy products through advertising, or to follow corrupt leaders through propaganda. There have also been fears that the contents of media texts can make their audiences behave in different ways- become more violent for example. On the other hand there have been other critics who have seen the media as having much less influence and working in more subtle ways.

This lesson will attempt to explain the various different ways of looking at audiences and help you to come up with your own version of the relationship between the media and their audiences. As you read it, remember that there while the truth about the media is probably in here somewhere, it has so far been impossible for anyone to actually prove that any of these theories is right. What is important is that you should make up your own mind about all of this and then be able to back up your opinions with examples from media texts and possibly your own research.

#### **First a bit of history**

All of the different media that we think of as “The Media” are actually quite recent inventions. If you were living a hundred and fifty years ago photography, film, television, radio and computers as we know them would all have seemed like fantasies. The cliché about pre- media times is that people made their own entertainment and there is obviously some truth in this. The kinds of things that people did in their leisure time were either likely to be fairly independent things such as reading, or they would involve mixing with many other people such as going to a play or musical.

The arrival of the media changed a lot of this- while films are often watched in theatre-sized audiences. The vast majority of our times with the media are spent on our own or in small groups so in one sense the media can seem to split people up- you have probably heard the worry from parents that since the arrival of video games and portable televisions, children don’t go out as much as they used to. On the other hand, there is an opposite sense in which the media can be seen to bring us closer together- if you watch a soap or look at a picture in the paper of Mike Tyson, the chances are that millions of people across Britain or even the world will have experienced the same media event. This brings with it another fear- that because so many people are seeing the same things and because they are often experiencing them alone without anyone to explain what is good and bad about

them, the media has an unprecedented power to affect us in negative ways.

#### **The audience as mass**

The key ideas about media audiences that you should remember from the last section are these:

- People alone often experience the media. (Some critics have talked about media audiences as atomized- cut off from other people like separate atoms)
- Wherever they are in the world, the audiences for a media text are all receiving exactly the same thing.

As you will see from what follows, both of these ideas have been questioned.

These points led some early critics of the media to come up with the idea of media audiences as masses. According to many theorists, particularly in the early history of the subject, when we listen to our CDs or sit in the cinema, we become part of a mass audience in many ways like a crowd at a football match or a rock concert but at the same time very different because separated from all the other members of this mass by space and sometimes time.

In the rest of this section I will trace the history of this idea and attempt to question how well it works.

If you look at the early history off the media, it is fairly easy to see where the idea of a mass audience came from. Within less than a hundred years photography, Film, radio and television were all invented. Each one of them allowed works of art or pieces of entertainment that might once have been restricted to the number of people who could fit into an art gallery or a theatre to be transmitted in exactly the same form to enormous numbers of people in different parts of the world. It can be very easy, living in this media saturated world to forget how strange this might once have seemed. These media quickly became extremely popular and at the same time there was an important difference between them and older forms of entertainment. Whereas in the past, many forms of entertainment were only available to those who could afford them, now suddenly films and radio particularly were available to all. Early media theorists struggled to understand this and found it easiest to compare the media audiences with the kinds of crowds they were used to from the world before the media- they came up with the ideas of the mass audience. Here is how the sociologist Herbert Blumer described it in 1950:

First, its membership may come from all walks of life, and from all distinguishable social strata; it may include people of different class position, of different vocation, of different cultural attainment, and of different wealth. ... Secondly, the mass is an anonymous group, or more exactly is composed of anonymous individuals [Blumer means anonymous in the sense that unlike the citizens of earlier communities, the people who are members of the mass audience for the media do not know each other]. Third, there exists little interaction or change of experience between

members of the mass. They are usually physically separated from one another, and, being anonymous, do not have the opportunity to mill, as do members of the crowd. *Fourth*, the mass is very loosely organized and is not able to act with the concertedness or unity of a crowd.

### TASK

It is worth thinking about some of Blumer's ideas in more detail:

1. Do you think the audiences for most media texts do come "from all walks of life" or do different kinds of people watch very different kinds of programme. Are there any examples of media texts that you can think of that do seem to have audiences of all kinds of people?
2. How much of your media experience is when you are on your own and how much when you are with others
3. Are there any ways in which you share your experiences of the media with other people who weren't around when you experienced the text?

### Another history lesson

Blumer was writing bout the media in 1950, five years after the second world war. During the war and before it, Hitler in Germany and Stalin in Russia had attempted to use the media as propaganda- through films, radio and poster art they had attempted to persuade mass audiences to follow their policies- to the critics of the time it is not surprising that the media must have seemed like a dangerous weapon in the wrong hands, capable of persuading millions to follow evil men. In the recent general election, you will have found it difficult to avoid seeing similar, if less offensive propaganda. How much influence do you think the posters that covered Britain's roadsides might have had on the final outcome of the election? It is impossible to give a certain answer to this, but the different political parties obviously believe in their power, if you consider the millions of pounds they spend on them.

### The hypodermic syringe

There have been a number of theories over the years about how exactly the media work on the mass audience. Perhaps the simplest to understand is the hypodermic syringe this has been very popular down the years with many people who fear the effects of the media

According to the theory the media is like a syringe which injects ideas, attitudes and beliefs into the audience who as a powerless mass have little choice but to be influenced- in other words, you watch something violent, you may go and do something violent, you see a woman washing up on T.V. and you will want to do the same yourself if you are a woman and if you are a man you will expect women to do the washing up for you.

This theory has been particularly popular when people have been considering violence in films and indeed you will be spending longer later in the course considering this question. There have been films such as The Exorcist and A Clockwork Orange which have been banned partly because of a belief that they might encourage people to copy the crimes within them but on the other hand no-one has ever really claimed that every-one will be affected by these texts in the same way. Many people have therefore seen the theory as simplistic because it doesn't take any account of

people's individuality and yet it is still very popular in society particularly for politicians looking for reasons why society has become more violent, which can't be blamed on them. A good example of this is Dumblane- there has never been a real suggestion that Thomas Hamilton watched a lot of violent films but a kind of woolly thinking has allowed newspapers and MPs to link his dreadful crime to video violence.

Another interesting example of the theory in action is the serial killer Jeffrey Dahmer. Before every one of his murders, he watched a clip from his favorite film in order to get himself excited. This is the kind of fact that might seem to prove the hypodermic syringe theory but the film was Star Wars and no-one has ever suggested that that should be banned- clearly the film meant very different things to him to what it means for you or me.

### TASK

It is obviously easy to find reasons why the hypodermic syringe theory could never apply to everyone equally. But do you think it could work sometimes? What about you- can you think of any media texts, which you feel, have had a big effect on you and made you behave in any way differently?

### The Cultivation theory

Because of the difficulty of proving the effects of individual media texts on their audience a more refined version of the theory has been created called the cultivation model:

According to this, while any one media text does not have too much effect, years and years of watching more violence will make you less sensitive to violence, years and years of watching women being mistreated in soaps will make you less bothered about it in real life.

### TASK

What do you think about this as an idea- can you think of anything that upset you the first time you saw it on television which you now take for granted? It might be interesting to ask your parents their opinion on this one.

One difficulty with both of these ways of looking at the media is that they are very difficult to prove either way. Many people have a general sense that the media do affect our behaviour and advertisers certainly justify their fees by working on this assumption, but it can be extraordinarily difficult to actually prove how much effect if any a text might have on an audience. In fact researchers have spent enormous amounts of time and effort trying to prove the validity of the cultivation theory with no success- this of course does not mean that there is no truth in it as an idea.

### Criticisms of mass audience theory

Some critics of these kinds of theory have argued that the problem is not just with the idea that the media has such obvious effects, but also about the assumptions that mass audience theory makes about the members of the audience. If you have discussed this earlier, you may have come up with some possible problems with it as a way of analyzing people's behaviour. Critics of the idea often claim that it is **elitist**- in other words that it suggests a value judgement about these masses- that they are easily led and not so perceptive and self-aware as the theorists who are analyzing them. Here for example is a 1930's advertising executive talking about the radio audience of his day:

"The typical listening audience for a radio program is a tired, bored, middle-aged man and woman whose lives are empty and who have exhausted their sources of outside amusement when they have taken a quick look at an evening paper.... Radio provides a vast source of delight and entertainment for the barren lives of the millions."

The chances are that you have heard similar comments about the viewers of soaps or quiz shows or even that you have made them yourself. The phrase couch potato has this kind of idea behind it- that watching the television is in some way brain numbing compared with other possible forms of entertainment.

### TASK

Think about this for yourself- are there any forms of media that you think society gives greater status to. For example which do people see as "better": films or television, soaps or detective dramas. Do you have any feelings about the kinds of audience these different forms of media attract- are some likely to be more thoughtful and more intelligent than others?

One problem that people have suggested with mass audience theory is that it relies on the assumptions of the people analyzing the masses. The early theorists who came up with the idea were generally lovers of classical music and hated television and so they tended to look down at the viewers of television who they saw as "the mass."

To try to make a final judgement about mass audience theory, you really need to carefully question its main assumptions. If you remember from earlier- these key ideas are that

- People alone often experience the media. (Some critics have talked about media audiences as atomized- cut off from other people like separate atoms)
- Wherever they are in the world, the audience for a media text are all receiving exactly the same thing.

Lets look at these in turn. The first idea seems to be suggesting that because we often watch the media independently, it has more chance of affecting us. Certainly many parents think this is true and will make a point of sitting with their young children while they watch potentially disturbing programmes so that they can have some influence on the way the children take in the messages and explain confusing issues, but do you feel adults need to be protected in the same ways. Some of the critics of the idea of the mass audience have pointed out the many ways that individuals who watch programmes alone will then share their experience with others in conversations about what they have seen. One argument is that these kinds of conversations have much more influence on potential behaviour than the programme from which they may have sprung.

### The two-step flow

A theory that springs from this idea is called the two-step flow. The idea of this is that whatever our experience of the media we will be likely to discuss it with others and if we respect their opinion, the chances are that we will be more likely to be affected by it. (The theory calls these people opinion leaders.)

### TASK

Think about this honestly- are your opinions about television, films or groups ever influenced by other people?

Bearing in mind the fact that reception analysis works best with methods like the interview rather than a questionnaire, do a small bit of research into how true the two-step flow model is. Choose a media text and try to find out how much members of your family's views of it have been mediated by "opinion leaders."

Note that even though you cannot spend time working out questionnaire type questions, you need to plan what you are going to ask beforehand.

### The Mass Market

Before going on to look at some more recent approaches to audiences, it is worth considering one last use of mass audience theory. The idea of the mass market. It wasn't just academic theorists who were interested in audiences and their relationship with the media texts they encountered. The producers of media texts and the advertisers who used them were if anything even more interested in these audiences who they could contact through the new media. To investigate exactly how large their share of the mass market was, television companies and advertisers pioneered new techniques of market research which involved quantitative surveys where they attempted to count how many people they reached. The most obvious example of this is the system of television ratings which still has enormous effect on the workings of TV stations. You may be able to think of a show that you enjoyed which was taken off because it did not achieve high enough ratings. If so you may agree with the thinking of Todd Gitlin:

"The numbers only sample sets tuned in, not necessarily shows watched, let alone grasped, remembered, loved, learned from, deeply anticipated, or mildly tolerated"

### Quantitative and qualitative research

Many of the people who use mass audience theory tend to back it up with quantitative research. This kind of research is based around counting the number of people who watch certain kinds of programmes and making simple judgements about these quantities. The criticisms of mass audience theory are made equally about quantitative research- that it fails to take into account the differences in peoples' experiences of the same texts. The opposite of quantitative research is qualitative research. This involves the researchers looking not just at the numbers of people watching a certain programme but also at the ways that they watch it and what they are doing while it is on. The idea of this is that it gives them a clearer idea of what exactly the programme means to its audience and how important it is to them.

In the remainder of the booklet, I will attempt to look at some theories of audiences that have used qualitative research to look for a more subtle view of the audience and I will then look at the ways the advertisers and media producers themselves have changed their methods to go beyond the idea of a mass audience.

### Uses and Gratifications

This is probably the most important theory for you to know. According to uses and gratification theory, we all have different uses for the media and we make choices over what we want to watch. In other words, when we encounter a media text, it is not just some kind of mindless entertainment- we are expecting to get something from it: some kind of ratification.

But what does this actually mean? What kinds of gratification can we be getting? In general researchers have found four:

**1 Information**- we want to find out about society and the world- we want to satisfy our curiosity. This would fit the news and documentaries which both give us a sense that we are learning about the world.

**2 Personal Identity**- we may watch the television in order to look for models for our behaviour. So, for example, we may identify with characters that we see in a soap. The characters help us to decide what feel about ourselves and if we agree with their actions and they succeed we feel better about ourselves- think of the warm feeling you get when your favourite character triumphs at the end of a programme.

**3 Integration and Social Interaction**- we use the media in order to find out more about the circumstances of other people. Watching a show helps us to empathise and sympathise with the lives of others so that we may even end up thinking of the characters in programme as friends even though we might feel a bit sad admitting it! At the same time television may help us to get on with our real friends as we are able to talk about the media with them.

**4 Entertainment**- sometimes we simply use the media for enjoyment, relaxation or just to fill time.

You can probably recognise yourself in some of these descriptions and not surprisingly uses and gratification theory has become quite popular amongst media critics. It is important to remember with this theory that it is likely that with any media text you enjoy, you will be getting a number of Gratifications from it and not just one

However, despite this popularity amongst critics, there have also been criticisms made of some features of the theory. First of all, it ignores the fact that we do not always have complete choice as to what we receive from the media. Think, for example, about your family who may end up having to listen to the same music as you sometimes. Similarly, you don't have that much choice about the posters that you see on your way to college however objectionable you may find some of them.

a second problem relates to this last example. The poster that you see on a billboard, may be extremely sexist. However, you clearly cannot choose a different poster that you want to see that you might find more pleasant. If you think about it, this problem also affects us in our other encounters with the media- we are generally having to choose the media that we consume from what is available. This undermines the idea of uses and gratifications- we may not all have the same potential to use and enjoy the media products that we want. in society there are in fact plenty of minorities who feel that the media does not provide for them the texts that they want to use.

## TASK

Fill in this chart for your own use of the media and compare it with others in the class. For the last column use the list of uses that I have given above

Programme	How often watched	Why watched	Do people I know watch it?	Type of use
News				
Neighbours				
Quiz				
Soap				
Adverts				

One of the difficulties of assessing uses and gratifications like this is that people won't often be aware of the real uses of a text in their lives- how many people would admit for example that they watched a certain program because they were lonely even if that were the truth

## Reception Analysis

In a sense, this is an extension of uses and gratifications theory. Once you have come up with the idea that people are using the media in different ways, it is just one stage on to actually look in more detail at how this happens. Reception analysis does this and it concentrates on the audience themselves and how they come to a three or the text.

The most important thing about this that you should bear in mind is that reception analysis is based on the idea that no text has one simple meaning. Instead, reception analysis suggests that the audience themselves help to create the meaning of the text. We all decode the texts that we encounter in individual ways which may be a result of our upbringing, the mood that we are in, the place where we are at the time or in fact any combination of these and all kinds of other factors. So I may watch a television programme and enjoy every minute of it and you may hate the same show. But of course, it goes way beyond just how much we enjoy the text. We will actually create a different meaning for it as well.

Reception analysis is all about trying to look at these kinds of differences and to understand them. What reception analysts have found is that factors such as a gender, our place inside society, and the context of the time we are living in can be enormously important when we make the meaning of a text.

Take the example of a performance by the Spice Girls on top of the pops. A 12 years old girl watching this may find it very meaningful for her personally - she may feel that the image of "Girl Power" that the group project has important things to say to her about how she might behave. Her father, on the other hand, may create different meanings for the text - he may disapprove of their clothing or behaviour and so the same performance that the girl finds so inspiring may be disgusting to him.

Often when our views of the media differ, it can say as much about us as it does about the media text itself. In this example, the most important factor is probably how the Spice Girls trigger off in the two people's minds ideas that they have about their own lives. The girl may relate to the group because they are of the same gender as her and because, while they are not the same age as she is, they are probably more like the age she would like to be. For the father, his views of the group are probably influenced by the fact that his daughter likes them so much - the idea that she might want to become like them, may make their performance seem more frightening.

Of course this kind of thing is often closer to psychology- the study of personality- than media studies and can be very difficult to research. While quantitative researchers simply count the number of people watching a programme, reception analysts have to make use of interviews in order to get some kind of idea of the meanings that people attach to texts. This can be very time consuming- a simple questionnaire is rarely enough and often the researchers will have to ask quite detailed and spontaneous questions.

The ideas that reception theorists come up with are also not so neat and straightforward as those of other approaches. If you remember, Uses and Gratifications made up a simple list of four types of use for the media. Because reception theory concentrates on the individual it can never do this - we are all different and no one theory can comprehend that.

This can be seen as a strength of the theory - that it takes into account the complexity of our response to the media. At the same time the theory has a weakness which has been pointed out. This will be clearer if we return to our example of the Spice Girls. The girl's reaction to the programme may also have been affected by the day that she had had at school - the way that her teacher shouted at her may have made her particularly excited about the idea of girl power. Similarly, an encounter with a strong woman who he was not keen on, may have affected the father's reactions to the programme. Reception analysis takes none of this into account it ignores the context of everyday life, something which we will turn to in the final theory concerning audiences.

This is possibly a good time to think about what you are doing on the other side of the course in your study of film. As you may have discussed, going to a film in the cinema is such a different experience to watching the same film at home that the meaning can virtually change so that reception analysts would suggest that it is as good as being a different film. However, the theory does not explain all of the things that make cinema so different from television which are to do with the environment that you are in when you experience each kind of media- these are explained better by the next theory- the media in everyday life.

Uses and gratifications theory looked at **why** we make use of the media, Reception analysis looked at what we see when we watch a media text- what both of them leave out is the question of **how** the media fits in with our everyday lives - how do we live with the media?

One researcher who has looked at this is David Morley. He has come up with the idea of the "politics of the living room" - the idea that the media is just part of all the different things that may be going on in your home, that a television can become more than just a form of entertainment but in a typical family can be a subject of argument or a symbol of power. This may be a concept that you will find quite familiar. Imagine a situation where a man comes home from a terrible day at work. He is in a bad mood and does not want to talk to anybody in his family so he switches on the TV. Anyone doing quantitative research would simply see him as the another viewer of whatever programme is on but in fact he is probably barely watching it - the television is simply a way of shutting the rest of the world out. This is one simple example of the media in everyday life - here are some more general principles

We can never consider one example of the media on its own- we are always choosing from many different alternatives and more confusingly our understanding of one text may be affected by our knowledge of another - to go back to the earlier example the man watching the Spice Girls may have read about them in that morning's Daily Mail.

It is very rare for us to concentrate fully on any media text- we may skim read through a magazine or glance at various different channels while using the remote. Once

again, quantitative research cannot cope with this - it simply counts the number of texts encountered but doesn't consider whether the audience have taken them in.

The media can become an important part of the routines of our lives - you may want to watch Neighbours when you get in from college or listen to the Chart Show every Sunday when you do your homework. In these examples, the exact time and the way that the media text fits in with the pattern of your day are almost as important as what the media text actually is.

It is very rare for us to be completely alone when we encounter a media text. If you think back to the mass audience theorists, they talked about the media audience being isolated like atoms, but in fact, even when you are reading a newspaper, you are often surrounded by other people - even when you are in your room watching the TV, your family are close at hand.

### Gender differences

One interesting thing that Morley found in his research was that there were clear differences in the uses that people made of the media in their everyday lives depending on their gender. He found that men tended to prefer factual programmes eg News and sports while women preferred fiction Soaps and other drama series. Also, men preferred watching the programmes extensively while women tended to be doing something else at the same time. Another thing that he found was that if someone had control over what the family was watching, it was more likely to be the man - often with the remote control in his hand.

Of course, this does not necessarily mean that there are fundamental differences men and women. What it does relate to is the kinds of lives they are often leading - for a man, working during the day outside of the home, television is seen as a form of relaxation. For women, on the other hand, the home is often a place of work and so it is likely that that work will have to continue during the evening's television as well. Of course, the account I have given of typical lifestyles of men and women is now becoming quite out of date and so it is very likely that research such as Morley's, if carried out today, would come up with quite different conclusions. What do you think? How does it relate to your family?

### TASK

The idea that the relationship between the media and audiences can only be truly understood if we look at the way the texts are received in everyday life is worth considering in your own research task. In preparation for the kind of thinking you will have to do for that- spend a bit of time considering here how Morley's ideas of gender differences in viewing patterns are reflected in your own families. You can include in the space below your own experiences and also anything that you find out of the opinions of others in your family through interviews.

### Choose a research task

Choose from this list a research task that you think you will be able to follow successfully. In many cases you may want to change the text referred to to something more current or interesting- you can negotiate with your teacher an alternative.

How much do audiences remember of adverts?  
 How does a teenage audience use and perceive the Sun?  
 Where do audiences get their ideas about style from?  
 How do teenagers read American and British T.V. differently?  
 Why did audiences go to see Trainspotting?  
 The viewing of horror and violence by children aged between 8-13  
 Viewers response to the incest in Brookside  
 Attitudes towards violence on T.V.  
 How important are film posters in determining what people go to see?  
 What do audiences do while adverts are on T.V?  
 Is there a demand for an indie music radio station?  
 Football magazines- for men only?  
 What do boys really think of Just Seventeen?

It may well be that you can think of a good topic on your own, if so you can again negotiate this with your teacher.

### Stage one planning your methodology

On the following pages you will see a brief summary of various different forms of methodology for research. You now need to decide what will work best for your task- write a proposal for how you wish to carry out the research including any questions that you plan to ask.

Note that you must have some quantitative questions even if the majority of what you will do is less formal.

Stage two- carry out the research

Stage three- Analyse your results

You need to write an analysis of your results.

This must include graphs on Excel of all quantitative work- your teacher will show you how to do this.

### New ideas about the audience

What you have been reading about up to now are very much the classic ideas about audiences. You need to be familiar with these theories if you are to answer questions in the media studies exam successfully. However, there are other ways of looking at the audience which are a bit stranger, but maybe even more up to date. The rest of the booklet will cover these weirder ideas.

A lot of what follows deals with the relationship between advertisers and the programmes that you watch on the television. Obviously, the vast majority of the programmes that you watch (with the single exception of those produced by the B.B.C) is made with money raised from advertising but it can be easy to ignore the effect that this might have on what you end up seeing. The theories that follow look at the relationship between advertisers, media producers and audiences in more detail.

### Audience Surveillance

While you were reading about Morley's ideas about the politics of the living room, you may well have thought that it was all very different from your own family life at home. The truth is that the traditional idea of a family sitting down together to watch the same programmes on the TV is very much out of date. Many of you will have your own televisions, stereos and game consoles in your bedrooms. The result of this is that the mass audience is even more divided than ever before. This is a problem for us when we try to analyse the media, but it is even more difficult for the people who produce media texts. It has always been very

important for media producers to have some kind of idea about the people who are consuming their texts. This was confusing enough in the old days when they might have been trying to analyse a cinema audience - it is well nigh impossible today.

But advertisers do not give up easily and their need to find out exactly who is consuming what and how is resulting in some new techniques of surveillance. Our media use is being watched more than ever before. One recent example can demonstrate how easy this kind of thing is becoming - your parents may have recently got a loyalty card from the supermarket, the idea of this is not just to give away lots of free goodies, but it also allows the supermarkets to keep an exact track of what you are buying week by week. They can build up a profile of you as a consumer and then, by buying up advertising space in the magazines which they sell and which they can see from your receipts that you buy, target you more directly. As Cable, and the Internet become more commonplace, this kind of direct individual advertising will become much more common and will affect us all as audiences.

Of course all of this is only possible now because of computers. In the past it might have been feasible to look in detail at the buying behaviour of people, but it would have been impossible to come to any useful conclusions. Today, on the other hand, a simple computer program could be written which would analyse your shopping receipts in detail and then produce a list of suitable adverts which could be sent to you alone during your evening's T V viewing. This would mean that in the future, you could end up watching the same programme as your friends, but seeing different adverts in the middle of it.

### Audiences as products

Audience surveillance in extreme form is probably still a few years away, but something that is very much very much with us already is the idea of audiences being the products of television companies. This is a strange way of looking at the media - but quite a useful one. It is usual to think of media texts as being made all the audience - so, for example, match of the day is a show that has been made for football fans - a group of people who already exists. The idea of the audiences as products theory is that the process works the opposite way round: the media producers will create a text in such a way that it will produce an audience which they can then sell to advertisers.

A good example of how this works is Friends. It might be normal to think of this as just being a funny program that happens to be on on a Friday night. According to the theory, though, Friends is actually a way of selling beauty products. In America where the series started, the producers would have been looking for advertising revenue and so they came up with the idea of a show which would feature beautiful people in funny situations with happy endings. They would have seen this as a great way of selling beauty products as the show would attract an audience of young people who would want to follow the fashions of the main characters particularly as the feel good endings would make this audience want to lead the same lives as the beautifully manicured main characters. To help them to attract this audience they would have scheduled the programme at a time when they could catch these people.

I have been talking about the producers attracting this audience as if the bunch of people who watch the show were already there

beforehand as a recognisable group in society, but in fact, by assembling such a group of people to watch the show, in a very real sense they have produced this audience, and the same pattern has been repeated in Britain where the programme is now sponsored by a hair products manufacturer.

You can probably think of almost any media text in the same way. It is rare today for texts to be created just for fun - much more often, commercial companies are trying to produce a certain audience. This would be fine if we were all as attractive to the advertisers - we would all get the programmes that we want. Unfortunately, some types of people have more money and are therefore more attractive to advertisers- they therefore will get more programmes tailored for them. Strangely enough, as teenagers, you are one of these groups. You may not feel as if you have a lot of money, but as a group, compared to older people who have their money tied up in mortgages and buying essentials, you spend a much higher proportion of your money on consumer products.. This has meant that in recent years, media producers have been bending over backwards in order to try to produce teenage audiences. The most recent example of this has been Channel 5 who have geared a lot of their programmes around the kinds of things they pink you are interested in - with not much success so far!

#### **TASK**

Think of a programme that you watch regularly on a commercial channel and try to think of what kind of audience it has produced for advertisers to market to. Watch the programme and note down what kinds of adverts surround it- does the theory fit?

#### **Niche marketing**

Number of different media products available to us is increasing constantly. So we have a situation where there are more and more media texts and they are being targeted more and more precisely at certain groups. This process can involve something called niche marketing. A niche is a small part of the market and advertisers have found that they can get a greater return on their investment if they produce an audience who although smaller can more easily be targeted. Another good example of this is computer magazines: one company, Data Quest, produce dozens of different magazines each aimed at one particular niche of computer users - there are magazines for people who use the Internet, for those who are new to computers, or those who are experts and for those who just play games on them. Once again, no single one of these magazines has a large enough niche to make lots of money, but the company has become very successful with all the magazines combined.

#### **TASK**

Do any of the texts that you consume put you into a niche audience?

All off this might help to explain why programmes with quite high ratings can be inexplicably taken off the air and why at the same time a minority show might flourish. The high rating texts might well have been popular with a part of society with little buying power- for example the elderly, while the niche for the minority show might be much more attractive to the advertisers.

An example of this is the enormous success of the various types of Star Trek over the years. The American producers of these programmes discovered a long time ago that although they did not produce large audiences, the particular niche they attracted included a high proportion of intelligent single men in quite well paid jobs- a niche that was very attractive to advertisers.

#### **A warped Indian media?**

While there is no doubt that the ghastly murder of Graham Stewart Staines, the Australian missionary, and his two innocent sons, should be universally condemned and that the culprits should be severely punished, the massive outcry has evoked in the Indian Press raises several important questions, which can only be answered by a Westerner, as any Indian who would dare utter the following statements would immediately be identified with the Sangh parivar:

1. Is the life of a white man more important and dear to the Indian media than the lives of a hundred Indians? Or to put it differently: Is the life of a Christian more sacred than the lives of many Hindus? It would seem so. Because we all remember not so long ago, whether in Punjab or in Kashmir, how militants would stop buses and kill all the Hindus, men, women and children. It even happened recently, when a few of the last courageous Hindus to dare remain in Kashmir were savagely slaughtered in a village, as were the labourers in Himachal Pradesh. Yet, very few voices were raised in the Indian Press condemning it; at least there never was such an outrage as provoked by the murder of Staines. When Hindus are killed in pogroms in Pakistan or Bangladesh, we never witness in the Indian media the like of the tear jerking, posthumous "interview" of Staines in Star News.
2. This massive outcry on the atrocities against the minorities raises also doubts about the quality and integrity of Indian journalism. Take for instance the rape of the four nuns in Jhabua. Today the Indian Press (and the foreign correspondents—witness Tony Clifton's piece in the last issue of Newsweek) are still reporting that it was a religious rape. Yet I went to Jhabua and met the four adorable nuns, who themselves admitted, along with their bishop George Anatal, that it had nothing to do with religion. It was the doing of a gang of Bhil tribals, known to perpetrate this kind of hateful acts on their own women. Yet today, the Indian Press, the Christian hierarchy and the politicians continue to include the Jhabua rape in the list of atrocities against the Christians. In Wyanad in northern Kerala, it was reported that a priest and four women were beaten up and a Bible was stolen by "fanatical" Hindus. An FIR was lodged, the communists took out processions all over Kerala to protest against the atrocities and the Press went gaga. Yet as an intrepid reporter from the Calicut office of The Indian Express found out, nobody was beaten up and the Bible was safe. Too late; the damage was done and it still is being made use of by the enemies of India. Finally, even if Dara Singh does belong to the Bajrang Dal, it is doubtful if the 100 others accused do. What is more probable is that like in Wyanad, it is a case of converted tribals versus non-converted tribals, of pent-up jealousies, of old village feuds and land disputes. It is also an outcome of what it should be said are the aggressive methods of the Pentecost and Seventh Adventists

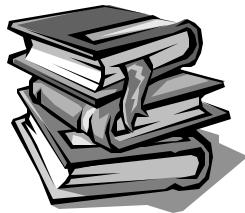
missionaries, known for their muscular ways of converting. Why does the Indian Press always reflect a Westernised point of view? Why does India's intellectual "elite", the majority of which happens to be Hindu, always come down so hard on their own culture, their own religion, their own brothers and sisters? Is it because of an eternal feeling of inferiority, which itself is a legacy of British colonisation? Is it because they consider Hindus to be inferior beings? Remember the words of Claudius Buchanan, a chaplain attached to the East India Company: "...Neither truth, nor honesty, honour, gratitude, nor charity, is to be found in the breast of a Hindoo"! Is it because the Indian Press is still deeply influenced by Marxist and communist thoughts like it is in Kerala, where the communists have shamelessly and dangerously exploited the Christians issue for their own selfish purpose? Whatever it is, the harm is done. Because, even though it is not the truth which has been reported from Jhabua, from Wyanad or from the Keonjhar district in Orissa, it has been passed off as the truth and it has been believed to be so by the masses. And the result is that it has split India a little more along religious and castes lines. And finally, Christianity has always striven on martyrdom, on being persecuted. Before the murder of Staines, the Christian story was slowly dying; the culprits of the Jhabua rape would have been condemned and the Wyanad fraud exposed. In one stroke the burning of Staines has insured that it does not die for a long time. Was the joy of martyrdom for the cause he fought for 34 years his last thought before dying?

#### Review Questions:

- Explain the concept of mass audiences.
- Explain the role of mass audience in mass communication?

#### Suggested Readings

- Keval J Kumar: Mass Communication in India, Jaico Publishing House
- Uma Narula: Mass Communication Theory and Practices



#### Notes

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## LESSON 17

### COMMUNICATIONS FOR DEVELOPMENT

#### **Introduction:**

#### **Concept of Development:**

[n] act of improving by expanding or enlarging or refining; Concept of development is used here in a wide sense so as to include, not merely the definition or explanation, but also the theory, experience and problems. We hope you will be able to have a broad understanding of the concept of development.

'Development' is perhaps one of the most fiercely debated concepts in the contemporary social sciences. The concept is often equated with 'modernisation', 'industrialisation', 'social change', 'progress' and 'growth', and like these other terms is invariably seen as something desirable and positive for society in general, and for the community in particular. Also, 'development' as a socio economic phenomenon is seen as necessary, even inevitable; as good and salutary. Rarely is development discussed as possibly hazardous and destructive of the environment, or of social values and cultures. Development is in the main seen as absolute, inevitable, and universal; it is promoted as a laudable goal no matter what the society, the culture, the people and their resources and traditions.

We welcome economic development but our development programmes should not pave ways for the long-run dangers. If economic transformation processes start paving ways for the social dangers, the wave of development must be checked and be turned into right direction. Of course commercial considerations are important to survival and prosperity but in no case, the commercial motives should be successful in establishing an edge over the social, cultural and ethical values.

In an age of environmental disaster, population explosion, socio-cultural confrontation, tension and dissension, we need to review the present philosophy of transformation of the industrial economy. We cannot deny the fact that the present system of economic development, standing on the pillars of mechanized industrial economy, has helped sensing, serving and satisfying customers fantastically but at the same time have also been instrumental in inviting a number of social evils.

Do we feel that the development activities channelised during the 20<sup>th</sup> century would open doors for social interests in the 21<sup>st</sup> century?

Do we feel that the industrial development process of today is not to engineer a sound foundation for slow murder of the coming generations?

Do we feel planet earth will remain safe tomorrow?

In no case, the answer is to be positive.

We do not find any justification for promoting the fast food industry, especially when researches reveal that most of the food items served by them are harmful. The hamburger, fried chickens are found gaining popularity the world over though these are found injuring consumer health considerably. The service gener-

ating industries are also found actively involved in the process. To be more specific the communication services have been found invading on social and cultural values. All of us witness the movies and TV serials very much instrumental in promoting the social evils. The educational institutes, hospitals are also in queue. The financial institutions in general and public sector banks and insurance corporations in particular are not contributing substantially to the process of motivating low-income group and mobilizing small savings. The social organizations, religious organizations and even Red Cross society often fail in creating public awareness and sub serving social interests.

Do we find any justification for endangering social interests just for generating profits?

Today or tomorrow, we have no option but to change our attitudes. Whatever we think is for society, whatever we plan is for society, whatever we produce is for the society and whatsoever we market is for the society. This makes it essential that we are well aware of the multi-dimensional changes found in the society.

Development, understood as widening the range of people's choices, has to consider three interrelated and crucial dimensions: human, or "people-centred" development, global development and sustainable development. Together they imply a radical change to the current development paradigm. If one or more of these factors is missing in decision-making, then conflicts between people and nations are inevitable. These three dimensions represent the conceptual base and necessary focus of action for people's movements, for policy making and for the missions of any private initiative.

Human development of people, for people and by people means investing in human capabilities to empower individuals to take charge of their own destiny. People are the end goal. Therefore, the benefits of development are to be directed toward them and it should serve them. It means that economic growth is distributed fairly and widely, that people benefit from their contributions to work and social life, and people are given the chance to participate in the process.

Global development has three dimensions: spatial, time and holistic. The spatial dimension refers to ensuring that actions have applicability to the rest of the world. The time dimension provides for a perspective of the continuity of events and facts. The holistic dimension ensures that development is not fragmented, but analysed from an integrated viewpoint and as a part of the same system.

Sustainable development utilizes resources to satisfy present needs without compromising the satisfaction of the needs of future generations. Until the last quarter of this century, we have not considered the world's resources limited. Decision-making needs to take greater responsibility for the implications in the lives of others, including future generations.

Development, therefore, is a whole; it is an integral value loaded, cultural process; it takes in the natural environment, social relations, education, production, consumption and welfare. The approach to development depends upon the local cultural or national situations, not on any outside model. In other words, development springs from the heart of each society, relying on its history and traditions, as also its own strengths and resources as far as possible.

### **Concept of Development Communication:**

Sociologists, psychologists, economists and communication experts agree that the proper use of communication can foster the pace and process of development. In general terms, communication means interaction between two individuals or within a group or a community or a nation. In communication, the four principle elements are communication source, a message, a channel or medium and a receiver or audience. But in development communication it becomes the process of affecting or influencing behaviour of individuals or groups towards -certain desired goals and objectives, necessarily for the benefit of the entire society. Thus, the receiver is expected to show the behaviour desired by the source of communication.

Development communication is a relatively new field of study within the discipline of communication. Like the science of communication, development communication has come to stay. However, we should always remember that development communication is only one of the elements or inputs for speedy progress and development. Development communication is mainly concerned with the role of information and communication in social and economic development of an individual, society and nation. It identifies what mass media can do directly or indirectly to improve the quality of life to both urban and rural masses.

This describes an approach to communication, which provides communities with information they can use in bettering their lives, which aims at making public programmes and policies real, meaningful and sustainable. Such information must be applied in some way as part of community development but it must also address information needs which communities themselves identified. The outcome of this approach, in short, is to make a difference in the quality of life of communities.

Nora Quebral, a leading academic in this field defines Development communication as the art and science of human communication applied to the speedy transformation of a country and the mass of its people from poverty to a dynamic state of economic growth that makes possible greater social equality and the larger fulfillment of the human potential. (Quoted in Development Communication - rhetoric and reality by Pete Habermann and Guy de Fontagalland.)

F. Rosario Braid is of the opinion that development communication is “an element of the management process in -the overall planning and implementation of development programs”. Development communication is, in a broad sense “The identification and utilization and utilization appropriate expertise in the development process that will assist in the increasing participation of intended beneficiaries the grassroots level.”

Rogers says, “development communication refers to the uses to which communication is put in order to further devel-

opment. Such applications are intended to either further development in a general way, such as by increasing level of the mass media exposure among a nation’s citizens, in order to create a favorable ‘climate’, for development, or to support a specific development programme or project this type of development communication is often termed as ‘development-support communication’ DSC”.

The practice of Development Support Communication, DSC, is a multi-sectoral process of information sharing about development agendas and planned actions. It links planners, beneficiaries and implementers of development action, including the donor community. It obligates planners and implementers to provide clear, explicit and intelligible data and information about their goals and roles in development, and explicitly provides opportunities for beneficiaries to participate in shaping development outcomes. It ensures that the donor community is kept constantly aware of the achievements and constraints of development efforts in the field.

Development Support Communication makes use of all available structures and means of information sharing. Therefore it is not limited to mass media alone. It also uses both formal group and non-formal channels of communication, such as women’s and youth associations, as well as places where people gather.... markets, churches, festivals, and meetings. But its contribution is in using these in a systemic, continuous, co-ordinated and planned manner, to perform linkage and enabling functions. It requires analysis of the communication environment, of the available and needed communication competencies and resources (hardware, software, financial and human), and clearly indicates expected results from specific resource inputs, so as to maintain accountability.

In short, DSC is a legitimate function of development planning and implementation. DSC therefore needs to be examined as a valuable «technology» for using the social communication process to foster and strengthen sustainable development at local and national levels. It should be taken more seriously in programs of social change, and should be reflected explicitly in development policy and strategy. One way of doing so is through the enunciation of a national information and communication policy, which can be explicitly integrated into national development thinking and practice.

### **Development communication has two primary roles:**

- a) A transforming role, as it seeks social change in the direction of the higher quality of life. The higher quality of life can be achieved in various ways. Might be by adopting all the required vaccines for the infants of each family of the society. Some countries might adopt techniques of producing enough food for the citizen. Some countries might systematically and scientifically break all the myths surrounding various religious and social customs. And communication could be a marvelous instrument to achieve these objectives.
- b) A socializing role, by seeking to maintain some of the established values of the society.

In playing these roles, development communication seeks to create an atmosphere for change as well as providing innovation through which society may change. Each and every society has some traditional values. These values give the people of each

society an identity and a sense of belonging. The aspirations of a society sometimes are embedded in these values. Now, the values, customs and beliefs of other societies might make inroads into other societies. If, the people are not careful, they might be taken off their grounds by the new incoming sets of values. Communication can play a very vital role by making the people aware about this pitfall. It can also help immensely by drawing the attention of the members of a society to the richness of their own values, customs, beliefs and, above all, aspirations.

### **Key elements of the development communication approach:**

*It is responsive* - it does not provide 'useless' information - that which people did not want to know, but which central planners deemed as crucial. People understand their own needs better and through this approach communication becomes a tool in the planning and development process, not a mechanism to persuade communities once unpalatable decisions have been made ('in their best interests!')

It hinges on feedback - it is not a one-way process but involves dialogue mechanisms about the information, which was transferred. It is also fundamentally about consultative processes being managed at community level.

Innovation and creativity - the message must not be dull and boring but show clearly how the information transmitted will make a difference in the life of the recipient - it must not instill doubt or disbelief, but trust and confidence (look for local adopters). Development Communication workers should, however, balance creativity with an understanding of what communities would be prepared to accept and where consideration has been given to the norms and prevailing values of that community.

Independent validation - it is not about 'government speak'. This approach builds participatory mechanisms and functional networks involving NGOs, CBOs, Traditional Leadership structures while also encouraging links with networks from across the country and indeed all over the world. These can either prove or disprove the validity of the information transmitted.

It's about sustainability and continuity - it is not about dumping information in a community and never going back for months.

It's about establishing common ground with communities who are to be the recipients of the information/message - it is not about the public servant who swoops in and out of a community in his or her GG like some 'phantom expert' to 'educate and uplift' communities. The standards, norms, values, habits of the community are paramount. (This may mean that those accustomed to a liaison style hinging on comfortable hotels with prepared meals and warm fluffy duvets will need to make some adjustments to their style!)

It's about community participation - development programmes which plan for communities or supply information which planners feel communities need, fail to be relevant initiatives and more often than not fail to be sustainable. A primary emphasis of this approach is to plan with communities, create structures which offer communities and developers equal power, and use communication methods which are fundamentally participatory in nature. This often requires that government planners, developers or com-

munity workers have to listen to the advice of communities and change the views they themselves hold.

It's about access and visibility of government where government is no longer a distant and unknown entity in community development experiences. This approach reverses the practice of communities having to travel long distances and at relatively great cost to access government services and information. This is made worse when government is not clearly and properly identifiable and access is difficult because of inaccessible buildings, unfriendly and unprofessional staff etc. The development communication approach brings government employees face to face with communities so promoting accountability at local level. This is not possible when civil servants are remote and impersonal.

It's about the use of simple and relevant language where concepts are packaged in the experiences of communities, in their own language and where communities themselves have played a major role in the development of material for development communication programmes.

It is purposive one looks for specific behavioral objectives, such as getting farmers to go in for a specific variety of seed, pesticide, etc.

It is positive - positive value is attached to what one communicates about. Take the example of the high yielding -variety of seed. Once adopted, the farmers can increase their harvest manifold. This means more income, which can be utilised to buy land, cattle or equipments. This is what we mean by positive value attached to development communication.

It is pragmatic In this context we might define pragmatic as practical and purposeful. In development communication, the purpose of communication is important. Let us assume that we want the farmers to plant a particular rice variety or the so-called miracle rice. The judgement or evaluation of communication does not rest on the mere invention of communication activities performed, such as the number of the press releases issued or the number of farm visits made. Findings have showed that mere increase in the flow of information does not necessarily result in those behavioral changes, which are desired to be achieved.

Development communication is a tool, and not a product. Development communication is goal-oriented. The ultimate goal of development communication is a higher quality of life for the people of a society. The role of the media also changes in development communication. It plays the following four responsibilities:

- Circulate knowledge that will inform people of significant events, opportunities, dangers and changes in their community, country and the world.
- Provide a forum where issues affecting the national or community life may be aired.
- Teach those ideas, skills and attitudes that people need to achieve for a better life.
- Create and maintain a base of consensus that is needed for the stability of the state.

To perform these roles, the media keeps the development orientation in its perspective. Three approaches have been identified in relating communication to development. These are empathy, diffusion, and multiplying of information. We shall discuss each separately, individually.

**1. Empathy:** Daniel Lerner in his book, *Passing of Traditional society*, saw the problem of 'modernizing' traditional societies. He saw the spread of literacy resulting from urbanisation as a necessary precondition to more complete modernisation that would include participatory political precondition to more complete modernisation that would include participatory political institutions. Development was largely a matter of increasing productivity.

According to D. Lerner, development failed to occur because peasants were unable to 'empathise' or imaginatively identify with the new role, and a changed and better way of life and so remained fatalistic-unambitious and resistant to change. Every change in society must originate and begin in the hearts of the people. If the people would like to change, only then the development would begin. What is required is that some means of providing such people with clues as to what better things in life might be. Lerner saw the media as filling this need of promoting interest among the people for a better life. Not only that, he saw the media as machines, inspiring people for better things in life. He said 'empathy' endows a person with the capacity to imagine himself as proprietor of a big grocery store in a city, to wear nice cloths and live in a nice house, to be interested in "what is going on in the world" and to get out of his hole."

**2. Diffusion:** Everett M. Rogers approached this with a perspective that had much in common with Lerner, but different with him somewhat in emphasis. He saw the diffusion of the new ideas and their practice as a crucial component of the modernisation process. He found that his home community less than impressed with his stock of innovations in agriculture; outside his country he had marked influence in the field of agricultural extension, through his textbook on the diffusion of Innovations, which over the years has been expanded and updated into the second and third editions.

Rogers developed his concepts and theories of the diffusion of innovations from a synthesis of diffusion research studies in United States, and in later editions, of diffusion studies in the developing world as well. Rogers defined 'innovation' as 'an idea perceived as new by the individual'. 'It really matters little, as far as human behaviour is concerned', he added, 'whether or not an idea is 'objectively' new as measured by the amount of time elapsed since its first use or discovery. It is the newness of the idea to the individual that determines his reaction to it'. By the third edition, Rogers begins to use 'technology' as a synonym for 'innovation', and to urge the adoption of a 'convergence model' that stresses the intricacy of 'interpersonal communication networks' that are in operation during the process of diffusion.

People must be informed, persuaded, educated. Information must flow, not only to them but also from them, so that their

needs can be known, and they might participate in the acts and decisions of the nation-building; and information must also flow vertically so that decisions may be made.

### 3. Magic Multipliers

Wilbur Schramm extended the arguments of Lerner and Rogers in favour of 'modernization' through the mass media - which he termed 'the magic multipliers'. His work was part of the efforts of the United Nations and UNESCO for 'a programme of concrete action to build up press, radio broadcasting, film and television facilities in countries in the process of economic and social development. UNESCO carried out the survey itself on which the book was based, during a series of meetings in Bangkok, Santiago and Paris.

To Schramm, as to mainstream social scientists of the time, the mass media were 'agents of social change', 'almost miraculous' in their power to bring about that change. Schramm argued that 'the mass media could help accomplish the transitions to new-customs and practices (the 'innovations' of Rogers) and, in some cases, to different social relationships. Behind such changes in behaviour must necessarily lay substantial changes in attitudes, beliefs, skills and social norms'. The process, he elaborated was simple: first, the awareness of a need, which is not, satisfied by- present customs and behaviour; second, the need to invent or borrow behaviour that comes close to meeting the need. Hence a nation -that wants to accelerate the process of development will try to make its people more widely and quickly aware of needs and of the opportunities for meeting them will facilitate the decision process, and will help the people put the new practices smoothly and swiftly into effect. Schramm went further than Rogers in taking account of cultural linkages, in acknowledging 'resistance to change' and in urging 'an understanding participation'. However, his model of communication was still manipulative of behaviour towards the desired end of innovation adoption; it still cited as empirical evidence a strong correlation between high media exposure and development. Schramm argued forcefully that the mass media had the potential to widen horizons, to focus attention, to raise aspirations and to create a climate for development. They also had the potential to confer status to enforce social norms, to help form tastes, and could affect a: lightly held. He was optimistic about the potential of the mass media (and also the educational media such as programmed instruction, language laboratories, electronic digital computers) in all types of education and training. Unlike Rogers, he conceded though that 'the mass media can help only indirectly to change strongly attitudes and valued practices'. He therefore recommended that 'a developing country should review its restrictions on the importing of informational materials, should not hesitate to make use of new technical developments in communication, in cases where these new developments fit its needs and capabilities'. The challenge, he concluded, was to put resources and the power of modern communication skillfully and fully behind economic and social development.

### Role of Non-Governmental Organisations

The role of non-governmental organizations and voluntary agencies in India has been very important. In situations of widespread

poverty and deprivation, exploitation and discrimination, the State has not been in a position to ameliorate everything. The Non Governmental Organizations (NGOs) have stepped in to provide basic health and child care services, running home for the destitute and distressed and providing education and training opportunities. At the same time, these NGOs have also been working towards building a more humane society free from exploitation and want. The partnership between NGOs and the government has been of mutual benefit.

### **Some Major NGOs**

**Self Employed Women's Association (SEWA)**, Ahmedabad, Gujarat

**Society for Participatory Research in Asia (PRIA)**, New Delhi

**Church's Auxiliary for Social Action (CASA)**, New Delhi

**SAHELI**, New Delhi

**NIRANTAR**, New Delhi

**Voluntary Action Network, India (VANI)**, New Delhi

**ANKUR**, New Delhi

**People's Rural Education Movement (PREM)**, Mandiapally, Orissa

**LOK SHAKTI**, Balasore, Orissa

**UNNATI**, Ahmedabad, Gujarat

**Society for Promotion of Area Resources Centre (SPARC)**,

Bombay

**PREPARE**, Madras

**ASMITA** (Resource Centre for Women), Hyderabad

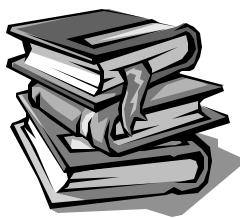
**Child In Need Institute (CINI)**, Calcutta

### **Review Questions:**

- Explain the concept of development communication.
- Explain the role of NGO's in development communication?

### **Suggested Readings**

- Keval J kumar: *Mass Communication in India*, Jaico Publishing House
- Uma Narula: *mass Communication Theory and Practices*



### **Notes**

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## LESSON 18

### MEDIA AND SOCIAL ISSUES

#### **Media and Social issues**

##### **Introduction**



India's process of development since 1947 has been accompanied by significant social changes and an increasing awareness about issues affecting the poor, the women and the children in India. This period has also seen the burgeoning of the voluntary movement in India and the establishment of several non-governmental organisations to protect and promote the interests of women and children.

The Government has made constant attempts to promote values like democracy, freedom from discrimination, self-reliance and independence of thought. It has also tried to improve the lot of the poor and weaker sections of society. Women and children have figured prominently in the government's agenda of social reforms and initiatives.

Today, India is working towards a society where the poor, marginalized and underprivileged have equal opportunities in all spheres of life. Partnership and collective action by the voluntary agencies, government and other like-minded institutions and individuals has been the key to a meaningful thrust in this direction.

##### **Social Issues**

In Bihar there is widespread poverty, illiteracy, inequality and oppression. Despite this, over the past two decades there has been rapid politicisation of poor people in the garb of social justice. Land issues and social injustice have created a lot of disturbance. Even then there is a lack of broader public opinion at the state level and the society at large for a better and more equitable society and good governance.

Although here also different forms of media are growing rapidly, and people are interested to learn more about contemporary issues, the media is behaving like a market product. It attempts to satisfy people's thirst for 'news' but basically keeps in focus its profitability and market sentiments. It is clear that in the contemporary context the media cannot become a mission towards the goal of social transformation on a large scale. It is doubtful whether it can even become a leading agent in the process of establishing a people based governance.

The implication is important for the rest of India. The formation of an authentic public opinion will not be possible in the absence of a newspaper, magazine reading culture, which

has to become a mass habit in both town and country. We will have to see the link between political excitement and media expansion. The dramatic expansion of the language press over the last 15 years has a lot to do with political and social upheavals generated in many states of our country.

The designer suits of today's politicians may be sharp, but so are the interviews, commentaries and editorials, which debunk them. News management may be more intense than before, but so is its journalistic deconstruction. There is populist excess, but the democratic sphere should be dynamic enough to take it in its stride. There are ethical lapses and resource constraints, which constantly threaten the quality of journalism.

It is also true that politics driven growth can be for better or for worse. How to make it better? How to go against the 'manufacture of consent', a role that is now widely understood as something built into its character? How to build a culture of public service broadcasting? How to invest hope in the new media, especially in the Internet? How to deal with national and transnational media monopolies, which will come sooner or later? How to build a socially conscious media? How to realize constantly the classic 'watchdog' role of the media in liberal democracy?

In order for the public to renew their stake in media, it is essential that media ownership and control be regulated so as to prevent existing media monopolies from increasing their stake in the media industry. The government should increase its commitment for community radio and television at district and local levels. Citizens' movements that are committed towards reforms in the media industry should be encouraged. It is a fact that the press, television channels and the entire media could be a business. But the journalists per se are not for trade or business. Journalism is a social responsibility. It is a struggle to gain public space within the private sphere.

Media education supports the creation of an informed media public, a public that is able to critically judge between good and bad media content. Simultaneously however, for a true democracy, we also have to ensure that there is a strong stream of media free of any government control, with free speech and free press.

##### **Media shaping the society**

It is clear that in the present Indian context, media plays an important role in the exertion of power and distribution of values. Media affects the overall quality of public life and also shapes people's engagement in the specific policy decisions in the Indian democracy. To make greater impact within the broad socio-political context, media needs to create a 'space' to effectively carry out its functions. The attempt by civil society organizations to assert the importance of issues like, 'governance for the people' vis-à-vis media is an attempt to search for its own public space and its own means.

There must exist a relevant political consciousness so that a democratic impact is possible. Media to be effective must form part of an ideological and political context -of attitude, feeling, hope and critical democratic values and practice.

### **Development Communication Intervention Programme**

Television, like the radio, was introduced in India ostensibly for the purpose of information, education and entertainment and in that order. Television was introduced as an experimental service for school education in 1959. The scope was expanded to include non-formal education for agricultural development. Television sets were specially provided in selected villages for the farmers.

It was only in 1965 that the regular service of television was started. 'Doordarshan' is the television authority in the country. It is responsible for all television broadcasts in the country. Doordarshan has been under the control of Ministry of Information and Broadcasting of the Central or Federal Government. It was only in 1997 that it has been given autonomy and it now functions under an independent autonomous board called Prasar Bharati.

The objectives of Doordarshan have been very well precisely stated and have come to be known as the social objective of Doordarshan. Some of the important social objectives of Doordarshan are: create national integration, stimulate scientific temper, aid development and social change, transmit programmes related to development activities in different facets like agricultural extension, education, health and family welfare, promote social change and welfare of the weaker sections of the society. These objectives make the role of the television authority very clear.

In order that television is able to fulfil its assigned role, it is necessary that the people be provided access to television sets. The access can be increased in two ways: (1) facilitating increased television production and also increasing purchasing facilities and capabilities utilising the market forces and (2) intervention of the state by providing television sets at community places like the schools or local self-government offices in villages. Both these modes of expansion have been used in India. The growth of the number of television sets in the country has been phenomenal since the operationalisation of Indian Space Research Organisation's INSAT satellite system in 1982. From a mere 84000 television sets in 1972, the figure had gone beyond the one Million mark by 1980. A significant growth indeed but it picked up speed even more after 1982. In 1985 there were 6.8 Million television sets and the 1997 estimates are that there are about 60 Million television sets. Assuming that most of the houses are one TV-set houses, out of the total 150 Million households in the country, nearly 40% are television households. But this will mean that over 60% of the households do not have a television sets. A closer look also indicates that the distribution of the sets is skewed. Nearly 70 per cent of India's population lives in the rural areas, but only about 30 per cent of the TV sets are located in these areas. This in turn means that even if the TV signals through satellite cover the entire country, the actual access is denied to an overwhelming majority of the people. According to Doordarshan 1995, there were 64,600

'community sets' in the country. These sets are located in a commonly accessible place like the school and provide viewership to persons who do not have TV sets at home. But obviously this number is very small.

Considering the economic profile of the country, where the per capita income is approximately Rs.2400/- (US \$ 1 = Rs.40/-) and the per capita GDP is Rs.14000/- Even the cheapest television set costing about Rs.3000/- would be well beyond the means of a very large population of the country. This also means that the access to television programmes cannot be left to market forces alone.

The market forces combined with satellite communication technology have given impetus to the television industry in a different way. Before the onset of the foreign satellite network companies since 1992 onwards, the only available channel for the Indian people was the Doordarshan's primary channel or at most one more channel in some cities. Today, the situation is quite different. It is possible to watch nearly 40 channels from different satellite networks both Indian and foreign. Approximately 15 Million households are satellite television households. This forms about 25 per cent of television households. Of these 15 Million, 11 Million households are urban and only 4 Million households are rural. Considering the average urban-rural proportion of the Indian population, it is obvious that a very large number of the rural population is deprived of watching any of the satellite networks and they can watch only Doordarshan's primary channel. As explained earlier even this facility is restricted to only 40 per cent households.

A review of different channels transmitted from foreign satellite networks, it is obvious that the major thrust is on entertainment followed by news and current affairs and least for education. Majority niche channels like music channels, sports channels, movie channels or even general mixed-fare channels, the emphasis is on entertainment. There are special 24-hour news and current affairs channels. Admittedly there are a few channels solely directed towards non-formal education in the field of environment, wildlife, culture, etc. but there is hardly any special channel for education or development. Similar is the situation on Doordarshan. Though Doordarshan is one of the few channels to provide a very significant part of its programming time for education and development programmes, substantial portion of the prime time is devoted to entertainment, news and current affairs programmes.

Clearly market forces alone will not be in a position to fulfil the educational and development needs. Intervention other than by the market forces becomes necessary. Such intervention can come through either the State or institutes and organisations of public good. This may include institutes of higher learning like universities, the open learning systems or through some non-government organisations. It is not as if the market forces do not provide any scope for educational and development broadcasting. They certainly do. But the role is limited to some specific types of education and training needs. A more sustained effort can come only from the state. The state intervention can come in several different ways. One mode of intervention is to facilitate the market forces to develop technologies so that the TV sets are made more affordable

through appropriate policy decisions; so that the number of transmitters in the country are increased and through devising a suitable communication and broadcasting policy to facilitate educational and development programmes. Another mode of intervention is through appropriate legislation and policy guidelines that make transmission of such programmes mandatory for Doordarshan. This will involve appropriate time allocation for these types of programmes.

Another major and more important mode of intervention is through starting of specific development or educational programme experiments or projects. The earliest phase of Doordarshan of school educational programmes or 'krishi darshan' - agricultural programmes -for rural farmers were really attempts in that direction. Another very significant intervention is exemplified by the Satellite Instructional Television Experiment (SITE) by Indian Space Research Organisation in 1975-76. SITE, described as the world's largest socio-technical communication experiment, covered 2400 villages of six states through Direct Reception Sets (DRS) transmitting educational and development programmes on a daily basis.

It is in the overall context of the above that this paper looks at an intervention programme called Jhabua Development Communications Project (JDGP) of Development and Educational Communication Unit (DECU), Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO). As a backgrounder to it, it is pertinent to quote (Bhatia; Pursuit; DECU-ISRO, Ahmedabad; 1997):

"The Indian Space Programme was propelled by the dream of taking the benefits of space technology to Indian villages. It was a statement of a vision when Dr. Vikram Sarabhai said " We must be second to none in the application of advanced technologies to the real problems of man and society which we find in our country.

It was in pursuit of this vision that ISRO undertook the Satellite Instructional Television Experiment (SITE) in 1975-76. Through this experiment Satellite TV signal was received in 2400 Indian villages for the first time. The experiences of SITE led to the development of the INSAT system and also to substantial education television effort in the form of University Grants Commission (UGC), National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) and Central Institute of Educational Technology (CIET) telecasts.

The Kheda Communications Project (KCP) was started as part of SITE, and over the years evolved into a model rural oriented local TV station. It demonstrated how participatory, and people oriented can a local TV system become. Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) shared these experiences with the operational agency through a series of training programmes. These efforts were followed by the application of one way video two way audio teleconferencing for Education and Development Training. This network has found very effective application in training of Panchayati Raj (Village Local Self-government) elected representatives, Aanganwadi (crèche) workers, Primary School Teachers, Daais (mid-wives), etc.

The Network is currently operational as the Training and Development Communication Channel (TDCC) and is spreading out to several states and distance education agencies

like Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU), All India Management Association (AIMA), Non-Government Organisations (NGOs) like Self Employed Women's Association (SEWA) and Ahmedabad Women's Action Group (AWAG).

The Jhabua Development Communications Project (JDGP) of ISRO combines the features of all the above and builds upon the experiences further. It has the feature of Direct Reception like SITE; it has localisation like Kheda and the interactive training component like TDCC. However, the operational features are adjusted to the changed technological and socio-economic context. A much higher degree of involvement of private agencies, in maintenance, programme production and research is attempted. It is proposed to try out new features like Telemedicine, Data Broadcasts, access to databases, etc. and study the viability and effectiveness of these systems. It is also proposed to try this in a few more States".

Jhabua is a district of the state of Madhya Pradesh in India. It has an area of about 6782 sq. kms. The population is 1.2 Million. It has a predominantly tribal (86%) and rural (91%) population. The growth rate is very high at 42.65 as compared to India's growth rate of 23.79. It is one of the most backward districts of the country. Agriculture is near primitive. It has a very low literacy rate of 14.54 compared to India's literacy rate of 52.19 and the female literacy is even lower. It presents a rather depressing health profile with a very high infant mortality rate and low average life expectancy. The transport and communication facilities are very inadequate, many of the villages become unapproachable during monsoon. The conditions in Jhabua make development communication a very necessary, but at the same time, a very challenging task. The situation is all the more compounded by the fact that the village habitation pattern is typically tribal. A village actually consists of a group of about 5 to 6 scattered hamlets. Each hamlet may be distanced from each other by as much as 1 or 2 kms. The overall communication profile is extremely backward. High illiteracy practically rules out the print medium. The ownership of radio is also very small and the ownership of television is about 6 per cent of the households predominantly located in the bigger and comparatively more developed villages.

It was in such a district that DECU initiated JDGP. The main objective was to provide quality development programmes to the deprived. This meant that Direct Reception Sets had to be installed at a central place in the village accessible to majority villagers. This was done in 150 villages and plans are afoot to expand it to the rest of 450 villages. The software objectives of the project were to provide communication support to development activities in the following subjects:

**Watershed Management** including agriculture, forestry, animal husbandry, etc.

**Health** covering child and women's health, family welfare and prevention of various diseases.

**Panchayati Raj** (Local Self-government Administration) including the role of women and its function.

**Education** including non-formal and adult education.

**Socio Economic issues** covering employment, government development schemes, etc.

**Culture** covering folk and traditional aspects.

The other objective was to organise intensive interactive educational programmes through a one way video and two way audio talk back system from 12 block headquarters where development functionaries gather on specified days in the afternoons.

The challenge was not only in installing the DRS but also making sure that proper electricity connections were available, that there was an appropriate seating place, that there was a custodian who will operate the TV set everyday and the maintenance of the satellite dish antenna as well as the TV sets had to be ensured. The greater challenge was to make the programmes need-based and entertaining. The JDPC brochure (1996) aptly states the software approach:

"An innovative, and imaginative software approach using the sophisticated modern tools and yet rooted in the cultural ethos of the tribal people is the hallmark of TV programmes. The programmes are entertaining, enjoyable and educative. The information flow is two way: upwards as well as downwards. The programmes are made with the active participation of the local population".

In order to make the programmes need based and useful, a detailed formative research plan was put into action. Apart from developing profile of the district and the audience, detailed needs assessment studies in all the selected subjects were initiated. This was done through involvement of the social scientists from Madhya Pradesh State and others in the country. The needs assessment studies formed the basis to develop over 400 communication briefs that in turn were the basis of the programmes.

There is a transmission of two hours every weekday. It covers the programme subject described earlier and uses a variety of formats like drama, docu-drama, documentary, puppetry, animation, etc. An important feature of the programming has been that almost all the programmes are produced in Jhabua district with active involvement of the local artists, script writers, subject experts, etc. This makes the programmes participatory and gives a strong sense of identification.

Detailed benchmark survey was carried out in 60 villages and this was followed up with three during-transmission surveys at equal time intervals. Detailed feedback studies have also been conducted regularly. Several knowledge gain studies have also been conducted. The results indicate a very satisfactory level of effectiveness. The project was supposed to be a two year project and was to end in November 1998, but has been extended by another year. There are now plans to initiate similar projects in several other districts of different states of the country.

The example of the Jhabua Development Communications Project clearly brings out not only the need but also the effectiveness of an intervention programme that too in a difficult communication terrain. It also demonstrates that one cannot leave development communication activities to market forces alone. A participatory, need-based, educative and

enjoyable television is possible provided one sees the need for it and has the will to start such an intervention programme.

**Media spreading awareness** through newspaper articles, print and web magazines, documentaries, films, TV programmes, radio programmes. For example the following article highlights the darker side of development projects.

#### Chased by development

**CHIKAPAR** (Koraput): Mukta Kadam wept as she herded her five children in front of her, luggage on their heads, leading them through a jungle in darkness and rain. Her village, Chikapar, had been acquired for the MiG project of the Hindustan Aeronautics Ltd. (HAL) and her family was evicted on an angry monsoon night.

"We didn't know where to go. We just went because the saab log told us to go. It was terrifying. I was so frightened for the children on that night," she recalls. That was in 1968. Mukta, a Gadaba tribal, didn't know then that she, along with her entire village of 400-500 large joint families, would have to go through the same experience two more times.

When the villagers of Chikapar village found that they were to be evicted for a record third time, they weren't quite sure what to do. "What can we do?" asks Pammia Das, a Gadaba tribal, in despair, "Wherever we go, some project will come up and we will have to move again."

Chikapar is like almost any other village on the Koraput map. Almost. Perhaps no other village anywhere has the dubious distinction of being targeted for displacement three times. In the late '60s, it was the MiG project. In 1987, Chikapar residents, many of whom had not even received the compensation due from the first eviction, were dishoused from their second location - which, too, they had nostalgically named Chikapar.



This time, Mukta wended her way down the road to nowhere with a grandchild. "Once again, it was raining, we took shelter under a bridge and stayed there for some days," says she. "This time (in 1987)," says Arjan Pamja, also from the same tribe, "we had to make way for the Upper Kolab multipurpose project and the naval ammunition depot."

And now, the villagers, who have reorganised Chikapar once more in several little pockets in yet another area after the

second uprooting, have received eviction notices for the third time. Chikapar is being chased by development.

Jagannath Kadam, one of the village's few educated members, is a school teacher who works in another village (there has been no proper school in Chikapar for years). He says, "The reasons being given for the third eviction vary. Minister Harish Chandra Bakshi Patra, said at a public meeting here that we had to make way for a poultry farm. Another explanation is that the present set-up of the village poses problems for the Military Engineering Service (MES) in the area. We don't know. We only know that the villagers are receiving eviction notices."

If the latter reason is true, says one official, "Little Chikapar will have, in succession, taken on the air force, the navy and the army. If it weren't so tragic, it would be almost comical. And all in the name of development."

Jagannath Kadam stayed on in what might be called Chikapar-2, the village's location after it was evicted the first time to facilitate the MiG project, but before its eviction for the Upper Kolab project. The waters of the Kolab did not quite reach his house, so he defied orders and stayed put. "Since my family has been alone here, we've had to face dacoities, but I'm not leaving again," he says firmly.

Chikapar was not a village of very poor people. They comprised Gadaba and Paroja tribals, some Doms (Harijans) and a few OBCs. Originally located in Sunabeda (literally translated as golden land), the villagers owned big tracts of land. "My joint family of seven owned 129 acres in 1963," says Balram Patro. "Of these, we were compensated for 95 acres only and got a total of Rs 28,000 many, many years later. But there was no help with house sites, materials or any kind of rehabilitation," he says.

"My family owned 60 acres of land," say Jyotirmoy Khora, "and we got Rs 15,000 - Rs 150 per acre of hilly land and Rs 450 per acre of Class I land. Again, the money came much later. And that was it: not a single paisa towards rehabilitation, not even a home site."

"They promised us one job per house, one home for each displaced family," says Narendra Patro, speaking to us at what can be called Chikapar-3. "People did not even resist on either occasion, but the authorities went back on every assurance."

Less than 15 people found employment, at very menial levels, in HAL. Another group made it, with some difficulty, as casual labourers with no security of tenure. Khora, despite being the village's first matriculate in 1970, and obtaining a diploma of proficiency from a technical training school, remained unemployed for eight years before finding a placement with HAL. Even for casual labour, "the contractors always bring people from outside," says Madan Khasla, a Harijan, "and the recruiting agents want payments from us for other jobs, but what money do we have? We have lost our homes twice, but they want us to go yet again."

The revenue inspector of Sunabeda, Purnachandra Parida, confirmed that eviction notices had been issued for the third time. "They are encroachers and must go," he said.

Khora laughed when told of the inspector's assertion: "Each time this village has been shifted we have moved, mostly, to our own lands. Remember, we owned a lot of acres in this region. They have made us encroachers on our own land by declaring it the property of the state. If the government declared your house as its property tomorrow, you would be an encroacher in your own home, too."

When the villagers of Chikapar village found that they were to be evicted for a record third time, they weren't quite sure what to do. "What can we do?" asks Pammia Das, a Gadaba

tribal, in despair, "Wherever we go, some project will come up and we will have to move again."

Actually, the problem is even more complex. This twice-evicted village is unlikely to receive any compensation at all when it is uprooted for a third time to make way for either a poultry farm or a Military Engineering Service depot.

"Even in our second location," says Pakalu Kadam, also a Gadaba tribal, "We have been told we are occupying land illegally. Actually, this is our land. But they want us to vacate in 60 days. Our ownership was never recognised on record. So we have no rights, no domicile certificate, not even caste certificates."

But, asks Jyotirmoy Khora, "What happened to the over 400 hectares they took from Chikapar in the '60s and the thousands of acres from 17 other villages?" In the '60s too, Mr Biju Patnaik was chief minister and he had this grand idea that all the units of HAL would come to Koraput. So huge tracts of land were acquired towards that project.

In fact, nothing of the sort happened. The other units came up in Bangalore and elsewhere. As a result, much of the land forcibly taken over from the 18 villages remains unutilised to this day. "They are neither returning the land, nor leasing it for cultivation. We are prepared to pay such 'compensation' as we received if we get back our land," says Khora.

That, however, seems unlikely to happen. "I can't move again, let them do what they like," says Mukta Kadam, the oldest woman in the village and one of the first to be evicted in 1968. "Why does this always have to happen to us?"

Possibly because they are Adivasis and Harijans and because this is Koraput, which includes some of the poorest parts of the country (two of which have emerged as new districts).

When the National Aluminium Company Ltd. (NALCO) came up in 1981 in Koraput, more than 47.7 per cent of the 2,500 displaced families were tribals and 9.3 per cent were Harijans, points out Prof LK Mahapatra, former vice-chancellor of Utkal and Sambalpur Universities. Over 55 per cent of the 3,067 families displaced by the upper Kolab project belonged to either Scheduled Tribes or Scheduled Castes.

The Machkund hydro-electric project in Koraput district had displaced almost 3,000 families by 1960. Of these, 51.1 per cent were adivasis and 10.2 per cent were Dalits. "It is a pity," notes Prof Mahapatra in a major study on the subject, that "out of 2938 families displaced, only 600 were rehabilitated, including 450 tribal families. Not a single Scheduled Caste family was rehabilitated." The list of such victims in Orissa is endless. Of nearly 22 million people across the country estimated to have been direct victims of displacement since independence, over 40 per cent are tribals. In Orissa, that figure is probably much higher, though clear estimates are hard to come by.

At the national level, less than 25 per cent of those displaced by development have been rehabilitated in the past four decades. Again, the scenario in Orissa is probably worse.

Within this depressing picture, Koraput plumbs the depths. In a study funded by the Union ministry of welfare, Walter Fernandes and Anthony S Raj, of the Indian Social Institute, New Delhi, note that in Koraput, "around one lakh tribals have been deprived of their land, including 1.6 lakh hectares of forests on which they had till then depended for their livelihood.

"More than six per cent of the district population, a majority of them tribals, have been displaced (by projects). This trend seems to continue even today."

### Exercise

Discuss with your class mates various development programmes and media's role in them.

## LESSON 19

### MEDIA AND EDUCATION

#### **Media and Education.**

##### **Introduction**

In December 1993, India hosted the Education for All summit, which was attended by nine high population countries: Bangladesh, Brazil, China, Egypt, India, Indonesia, Mexico, Nigeria and Pakistan. Together these countries account for more than the world's population. The summit adopted the Delhi Declaration and Framework for Action, which called for education for all children.



Earlier on the National Policy of Education (1986) and the Programme of Action (1992) had resolved to ensure free and compulsory education to all children upto the age of 14 years before the beginning of the next century. In 1988, the National Literacy Mission was launched by the late Shri Rajiv Gandhi, which saw Kerala become the first state to achieve 100% literacy.

The National Policy on Education was updated in 1992 to include several key strategies which have two aims: universal access to education by opening new schools in unserved habitations and improved school environment.

The Total Literacy Campaign, which is the major component of the programme for universal adult literacy, is operational in 338 districts, either partially or fully, spread over the states of Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Gujarat, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Karnataka, Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Orissa, Punjab, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal.

About five million volunteers are engaged in teaching the alphabets to about 50 million people in the 9-45 age group. It is estimated that 15 million of them have become functionally literate. Post-Literacy and continuing education programmes are also being launched. The objective is to make 100 million people literate. Special attention is being paid to the four low-literacy and high-population states of Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh, which account for 48% of the illiterate population of the country.



#### **Technology For Innovation In Education**

Information technology facilitates sharing and influencing those who are within a cultural and linguistic boundary. The electronic media have high replicability and multiplying capacity. This has attracted the attention of educational planners. UNESCO has stated conclusively that the broadcast media have made significant contributions to the cause of education in many nations, both the developing as well as developed. Many countries and a number of educational institutions, particularly open universities in the developed countries have adopted new communication technology in a big way. Telidon, which is a Canadian video system, is a powerful educational tool. Cyclops another good innovation, of television, was developed by open universities in England. The British open universities also make wide use of television time over BBC to beam its various television programmes. Similarly Japan and us too have well-developed ETV service. The US public television school programmes serve teachers and students in classrooms as well as at residences. These universities of developed countries have embarked on aggressive marketing of their product of education and are searching markets for their programmes particularly in developing countries by employing communication technologies (Takwale).

Many commercial houses in India are venturing into the field of education and are offering professional and technological courses by using communication technologies, prominent among these in India being NIIT, APTECH and Zee Education. They are using television, computer communication, e-mail and networks - the Internet for reaching their students.

##### **Television**

Television has been considered to be an effective medium for spreading education. That explains why some of the universities of the world, such as Chinese, are named as TV Universities. The medium of television is extremely rich, expressive and powerful. The teacher can be seen and heard and his demonstrations and examples can be assimilated more quickly and more easily through television. Television has democratised education. The disadvantaged group of learners living in remote and rural areas of the country gets the same quality of education as their counterparts in urban areas. In the UK, the Open University uses TV for 35 hours a week. In China, it is used for 32 hours and Canada; it is used for 12 hours a week. In Japan it is used on a large scale. (Haider 1998).

##### **Doordarshan**

The television was introduced in India for educational and developmental purposes by the government but the situation today is different. As Ms. Smith said "what matters now to Doordarshan is survival, which means revenue, social relevance no longer hold the place it did", and this resulted in adopting a new format. However better approach is as put it by the CBA secretary-general; the answer to the problem could be to impose "regulation" as it was done in Britain. The commercial broadcasting organisations

in Britain supply educational material not because it was central to their core function (which is making money), but because they were required to do so by regulation, it being a condition of their licence. (Countrywide Class Room 1997). However in spite of having severe competition from the private TV, Doordarshan devotes quite a bit of time to educational programming.

### School Telecast

Based on the previous experiences, satellite based programmes were initiated for school children in 1982-1983. At present regular school television programmes are produced and telecast from Bombay and Madras Kendras. Educational programmes are also telecast from a number of states in different languages covering both formal and non-formal education. The software for these programmes are produced by central Institute of education Technology (CIET) in Delhi and state Institute of education Technology (SIET'S) in various states.

### Transmission for Higher Education

On the higher education front, the country-wide classroom of UGC was launched on 15<sup>th</sup> of August, 1984 with the objectives of putting out quality education within the reach of students in small villages and towns by acquainting teachers and students with latest developments in different disciplines. (UGC Credo for CWCR).

The centres opened in the universities of the various states produce the programmes. Initially, it was broadcast 1-2 p.m. 6 days a week (excluding Sunday) and from 4-5 p.m. 6 days a week only in English. The study, carried out in February 1993, covered 27 cities and towns, spread across 6 regions with a sample size of 15,422 persons. The study had indicated a viewership estimated at 194 Lakhs.

Since February 1994, the timing of the programme was changed and additional slots including Hindi transmission was introduced. The recent study (in 1997) was carried out in 50 cities and towns. CWCR viewers account for 11.5% of the population of these towns/cities i.e. the urban CWCR audience can be estimated at 218 Lakhs. Though many of them are 'casual' viewers, frequent or dedicated viewers (4 or more days a week) number around 18 Lakhs. A Large majority of CWCR viewers are students from non-metropolitan towns, which is the primary target audience as defined by CEC. Apart from the students, viewership among academicians, senior citizens and young adults is quite significant. (CEC 1997).

The telecast also includes the University Video Lecture Courses (UVLC), besides the Countrywide Classroom (CWCR). These lectures were recorded in the 1980's for narrowcasting rather than broadcasting. It was hoped that these lectures, in form of VHS cassettes, would help undergraduates (Madhu 1998).

Though many claims are being made about the success of the use of television in education, many educationists have disputed them vigorously on the count of it being a one way channel. Unless it is combined with correspondence or some special arrangement in classroom, it is impossible to tell how much the student has got out of the lesson. The student cannot control the pace of lesson to suit his needs, which is formidable handicap. Experience so far suggests that TV stimulate teachers more than students do and hence can be of immense help in improving a teacher's performance.

### Teleconference

Teleconferencing allows interactive television with one way video and two-way audio communication by using telephone lines. This interactive talkback technology for distance education is used since 1991. Indian Space Research Organisation has pioneered by conducting series of experiments for different applications with different partners. The main thrust has been to add an interactive dimension reducing the limitations of one way mode inherent in broadcasting.

CWCR carried out teleconferencing in broadcast situation first in 1991, later in 1994 it was repeated. The entire country was connected through telephone lines. The students and learners from all over the places including remote areas enthusiastically participated with the help of organised viewing and individually (Reddy 1995).

### Open University

The continuous and rapid expansion in all spheres calls for the need for updating professional knowledge and skills of the human power. This can be referred as renewing intellectual passport. (Panday 1996). For the purpose Indira Gandhi National Open University was established.

On May 20<sup>th</sup>, 1991, programmes for students enrolled in IGNOU were also introduced thereby opening new vistas in the field of distance education. Programmes on subjects in the syllabus of various courses including management programmes are being telecast in Hindi and English. IGNOU has developed a network of open universities in India called OPENET- Open Education Network. It offers teleconferencing facility, which is based on analogue technology.

Though TV has several advantages over print materials and Radio, it is not within the reach of common man as the sets are very expensive. Further, lack of adequate transmission facilities and dissatisfaction with the time slot available is some of the factors responsible for using the television sparingly.

### Non-Formal Education

But television definitely has an important role to play in education, not only television have helped many students to pass high-school and university exams without attending school or college, it can also impart vocational training, technical agricultural skill and of a great help in the field of 'Adult literacy'. (Bhatia 1980).

Recently in 1996 an ambitious project called Jhabua Development communication project has been launched by Indian space Research Organisation, which is planning to improve literacy rate, motivate for school enrolment, adult education, female literacy and functional literacy in tribal area. (DECU 1996).

### Efforts by Commercial Sector

With the rising number of channels and concept of cable TV and Pay-TV the use of television for educational purpose has achieved new dimensions. Today, even separate channels are being proposed for exclusive telecast of educational programmes. One such example is of Discovery channel. Some non-government channels as ZEE TV, which has already entered into the field of education at different, levels with its, channel of ZED (Zee Education).

## Problem Area

The production of software (programmes) for educational purposes is a very costly affair, if it is not commercial in nature, and with limited amount of funds available it becomes very difficult to produce quality programmes.

The other impediments in the success of ETV in India have been those of technical nature. The television sets can be operated in electrified areas and large parts of the country having irregular or no supply of electricity; the use of television is restricted. Moreover, there have been problems of proper maintenance of television receiver and the unsatisfactory reception of the programme, apart from the cost factor of buying the television set.

Moreover, due to the pressure of time on transmission, the organisation of the programmes is always tight. Learning through satellite is basically 'learning by Guidance' and hence satellite has much less to offer by way of learning than by doing and personal exploration.

## Audio-Video Cassettes

Mobile audio-visual media including cassettes and films have come into increasing use in development projects, because of their versatility, mobility and adaptability. Further such media are becoming less and less expensive as technologies become more and more sophisticated. Mobile media are specifically targeted to local situations and are easily reproduced and distributed. They lend themselves well to discussion groups, investigation forums and to repetition, yet carry the credibility of the electronic media and the excitement and liveliness of oral communication.

In the field of education, audio/video cassettes have an edge over radio or television, which can be played and replayed at home by the learner at his/her will. A learner can stop a particular tape at a point where more details are necessary and can play on slow motion to understand a difficult point. He need not get up early in the morning or wake up late in the night for Radio and TV broadcasts. "The use of video enabled a good lecturer to be seen and heard all over the country, without having to repeat his performance..." (M. Tyrell and R. Davies, 1980). At the moment, the video equipment is costly in India and even in other developing countries and they are not within the reach of most of the students. That is why audio/video cassettes produced for each course by IGNOU are kept at all study centres and regional centres. Students are advised to go to the nearest study centre to avail of audio/video programmes facilities when they visit study centre for counselling (Haider 1998).

## Computers

Computers today, are used not only for mathematical purposes, but are also emerging in the new role of communication and education. Computer as a tool is available to improve the process of teaching and learning. Students of advanced nations are of the opinion that the computer is best suited for revision of the course, which had already been studied. It also stores student information required for distance education management.

Use of computers in education has resulted in computer Assisted Learning (CAC) and Computer Assisted Instruction (CAI). A variety of computer languages, are designed for accounting, scientific calculation, mathematical calculations etc. Computers can be

immensely useful in providing individualised, repetitive or analogous practice to learner in problem solving exercises as well as activities for developing a variety of skills in a training programme. Computers today not only assist some of the functions of education but also emerged as a rapidly growing field known as educational computing. Computers can play a vital role in educational management. Educational computing is going to be part of educational management in the twenty first centuries. Computer helps in planning; organising, leading and controlling to achieve educational goals and also promotes process of meeting educational needs (Rajyaguru1998) Educational computing applications are classified into 1.Knowledge generation 2. Knowledge dissemination 3. Information management (Knezek and others 1988).

1. Knowledge generation: Digital revolution has very much facilitated the job of an author. So far he had to write the text in long hand or get it typed from a professional typist who would commit a number of typographical mistakes to the annoyance of the author. Now an author can prepare his manuscript himself on a personal computer without anybody's help and make additions and alterations in the text as necessary. Computers have also given birth to digital or electronic publishing called DTP, dispensing with hand and machine compositors.
2. Knowledge dissemination: The sector, which is greatly influenced by the development of the computers, is libraries. We have been witnessing a transition from library and information service to data processing - the computing of the past to what is currently called 'Knowledge processing'. The key tool of this speciality is the digital computer.
3. Information management: Now most of the popular encyclopaedias, dictionaries, bibliographies, multi-media presentations, abstracting and indexing journals and their back volumes are coming in the handy CD-ROM format, available at one fourth the price of a hard cover copy. One CD-ROM of 550-MB storage capacity can store upped 2 million A4-size pages of the text besides sound and graphics (Gupta1998).

The uses of telecommunications along with computers have completely changed the scene in the field of information and education. Globally, the most important superhighway is 'Internet'. Established in the United States in 1969, it today has over 40 million members spread over about 130 countries. It allows the individual to access 20,000 networks and thus link up with organisations, academic institutions and research groups the world over. Indian computers can hook-up groups with 'Internet' through NICNET of the National Informatics Centre or ERNET of the Department of Electronics, and other networks in operation (Kaula1997).

These technological developments, and those, which are in the pipeline, are going to change the very complexion of libraries of all categories. These will be called electronic libraries. Electronic libraries will become realities only after all the books likely to be in demand are available on optical disks.

In India the important development in this line is an addition of Information Library Network (INFLIBNET), which provides various universities the know-how of commissioning computers,

installing application software, providing training and extending all possible help to start computerised operations and networking. The OPENET provides server-based classroom. The students and teacher communicate amongst themselves through computer connectivity by using e-mail with audio, video or print material exchange.

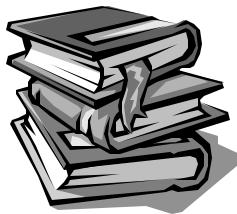
The information super highways have revolutionised life in many western countries and Japan, bringing work place to the home and making 'Virtual Office', 'Virtual Class Room' and 'Virtual Library' possible. This has been achieved because of the availability of high-class technology. The question is whether it is possible to duplicate this in developing countries. The outdated telecom facilities, high cost of connection, a waiting list that never ends, low technological awareness are serious problems faced by most of the developing countries.

#### Review Questions:

- Explain the role of Indian TV in spreading literacy.
- Give highlights of efforts made by commercial sector in education awareness.
- What is Non Formal Education?

#### Suggested Readings

- Keval J kumar: Mass Communication in India, Jaico Publishing House



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## LESSON 20

### ROLE OF MEDIA IN SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

#### **Introduction**

When India attained Independence, people faced gigantic problems of poverty, unemployment, social and economic backwardness and vast inequalities. Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, founder Prime Minister of India, opined that forward movement possible only on the basis of science and technology. The credit for revitalizing and scientific tradition goes to Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru. He said:

Science alone can solve the problems of hunger and poverty, insanitation and illiteracy, of superstition and deadening customs and traditions, of vast resources running to waste, of a rich country inhabited by starving people.

Nehru saw science not just as a toll for economic development but also as a means for emancipation of humankind. Considerable progress has been achieved in the field of science and technology. Important studies have also been made. in the space programme, which is linked with the developmental needs of the country. Space technology, when put to use in various kinds of development, touches virtually every fact of human life-communication, meteorology, agriculture, education, industrial, growth, resource management, environment, disaster mitigation, health and entertainment. More important still, the benefits flowing from science and technology became available to both urban and rural areas, as well as to developing and under developed regions. The basic objective of our policies is to bring about a broad based improvement in the living conditions of our people breaking through the bonds of poverty, which still afflict majority of our population, and to put the economy on the path of accelerated growth, technological change and modernisation which is necessary, if India is to occupy her rightful place in the world.

People in India are privileged as they are able to produce scientists and technologists and India is ahead in human development side, and produced more able people than we need. The Government of India have increased the budgetary allocation for expansion and strengthening research and development of science and technology. The comparative figures of amount allotted during the last two years are given below, which indicates how the government is keen on developing the science and technology.

Now we have big and prestigious National Laboratories and Institutes under the aegis of CSIR, ICAR, ICMR, ISRO, Non-Conventional Energy Dept., ICTER and in addition we have research projects funded by FAO, WHO, UNICEF etc. It is also happy to note that from 15th August, 1993 India has six channels on Doordarshan. This is not a small achievement and our scientists have performed a miracle in space. The INSAT 2B satellite designed and fabricated by our scientists has been stationed in the geocentric orbit and is working quite perfectly. Consequently, from 15th August 1993, six channels are in operation and more channels on Doordarshan are sure to come in due course. This satellite is one of the examples of our glorified reliance in the realm of science and technology.

In spite of several achievements and gains made in the field of science and technology in the national laboratories, institutes and industries, it is necessary to create awareness among the public and disseminate the knowledge to them through mass media utilising electronic, print and traditional media. Unless and until the people are educated and influenced with the fruits of research, communication of science and technology findings has no immense social and developmental value. Even after five decades of Independence, there is no change in the livelihood in relation to the basic needs of the greater majority of population living in rural areas. Though the second most populous country in the world with over 86 crores of people, the literacy rate here is just over 52 per cent. Thirty per cent of population is below the poverty line without any exposure to modern media communication. People belonging to different races, following diverse faiths, wearing clothes in different styles, with different food habits and life patterns represent India. Such diversity is a challenge to communicators of science and technology results.

Further, majority of rural people are still illiterate and require awareness about the benefits of science and technology which is useful to the society for day to day life but not for destruction purposes. Even in metropolitan cities and towns, illiterates are still taking shelter of bridges, Railway track sides, banks of canals etc. for survival. The government has to educate, motivate and influence them properly and provide basic needs like, food and cloth and rehabilitate them in low cost houses. They must also educate them to be free from contagious diseases, polluted water, air and environmental deficiencies, malnutrition etc. Research on science and technology is a continuous process and meant for survival of men, animals and plants. Survival of animals and plants is to be made a prerequisite for protecting the global environment, so that people can live in healthy atmosphere.

Therefore, the results and benefits have to be carried through a suitable medium to disseminate the knowledge including interpersonal communication keeping in view the common man.

According to Rogers and Shoemaker (1971) "nothing is more important for India's development today than the transfer of ideas from person to person. It is essential to discover effective channels of communication in rural India." A combination of media is the most effective way of reaching people with new ideas." Communication bridges the gap between what we know and what to know. It will bring change in the human mind towards better prosperity. Media will play a vital role to exchange message from laboratories to the homes. We are in changing situation in the field of economy and industry for which liberalisation policies have been made for the benefit of people for providing employment opportunities and better living conditions.

#### **Unhealthy Practice**

The habit or tradition of establishing number of laboratories, institutes and industries at a place, where already majority of

industries or institutes are located, is not a healthy practice and not advisable in dumping industries in a particular place which will create over population, congestion, imbalances in supply of essential commodities, pollution and environmental problems. It will be better, if the institutes/ laboratories/industries are spread in different places where there is no such organisation which would provide employment, development in all aspects, better community relations so that it could bring a change and new look in the life style of people living in that particular area leading to overall development of all the regions.

### Agents of Change

Our scientists and technologists are the agents of change. It is their ideas, findings in various fields that they work in, that help the people in removing poverty. These scientists should come out of their laboratories through an extension agency and go to the people to interact with them about the benefits of science and technology. The opinion expressed by the people on the results and its advantages should work as feedback to the executive of the organisation, so that they can rectify the defects and problems, if any noticed by the majority of people. Opinion of the public is necessary in a democratic country and its role will play a greater attention of the planners in designing the research programmes in their laboratories to meet the needs of people. So much for our public relations and so much for our contact with the people. Panditji told "that science is meant for the poor millions of India. So how do we really interact, with whom do we interact while doing the work in laboratories and institutes." This aspect is very important to reconsider.

### Role of Public Relations

The main tool of Public Relations is communication which has to be handled -by a professionally qualified public relations person. P.R. person is a link between the management and media to communicate messages to target group of public and bring opinion from them as a feedback. The main objective of the public relations process is to establish mutual understanding between an organisation and its publics. This understanding is possible only when appropriate messages or ideas or results of science and technology are transmitted skilfully to the target people. The relevance of media is linked to the message. Message and media are integral parts of public relations. In fact, they are inseparables. The media have great relevance to public relations in creating positive feelings for the organisation or whose behalf they are used.

It may not be of place here to stress the role of public relations, which is now regarded as the estate of Democracy after Press. The ambit of public relations is wider and covers various aspects ranging from individual progress to national development in all walks of life.

In order to achieve the desired goals set by government and the planners, it is the primary responsibility of the organisation to communicate the research benefits through a selective media to the public by utilising the expertise of public relations personnel and obtain feedback from the public about the organisation and its policies.

### Media Scene

Many changes have been taken place in electronic and print media during the past 45 years. The following data will indicate how the

Central Government initiated the development and expansion of electronic and print media for mass communication.

Another important role of PR is communication planning and information dissemination. It involves the identification of target audiences, careful planning of dissemination of research results aimed at bringing about positive responses and to dispel misunderstandings. Information dissemination, we have seen being carried out through various media viz., electronic, print and traditional media.

### Media's Role in Awareness

#### 1. Electronic Media

- a. **Doordarshan:** Doordarshan is a very powerful and popular medium particularly a colour TV which attracts the attention of the illiterate, but they are not affordable position to some extent, as it is costlier. Though the TV is a relatively more expensive medium as compared to Radio, its visual impact makes it much effective. Hence the government has to provide Community TV Centres in each Panchayat and see that it is in working condition. The programme on the TV relating to the science and technology should be telecast through regional centres frequently. Frequent repetition of these programmes would yield good and useful results in bringing positive response in the minds of the public. Six channels provided from 15th August this year can be utilised for effective communication.

It is better to avoid telecasting the commercial cinemas which mostly covers violence, decoitry, rape scenes, vulgarity in language etc. Instead of these unwanted and unethical cinemas, the TV can take up the science and technology programmes useful to the womenfolk and children through satellite channels in afternoon session in regional languages. The present day conditions prevailed in the country requires change in the society for the good cause but not polluting their minds through unethical cinemas.

- b. **Radio :** Radio is another powerful medium and it covers almost all the places including villages in the country. The Radio stations have also been increased to 185 to cover remote areas, to educate and influence the illiterates. Time allotted for broadcast timing the programmes is inadequate and it has to be increased. Keeping in view the common people, time should be increased in afternoon session for the benefit of women particularly housewives. Woman, as a mother, is the best suitable guiding force to bring change in the family, being the first Guru (teacher) to her children to mould their future with good health and habits from their childhood. In this medium also, repetition and timely broadcasting such programmes may attract the attention of the listeners, if the programme is considered as beneficial and Yield tangible results.

- c. **Documentary Films:** The documentary film is an aid of public education and enlightenment. Documentary films are produced by government, industries and other organisations for educating the people. The Films

Division and scientific organisations have to plan and produce on each theme for effective communication to the public for better awareness about-nutrition, sanitation, child care, agriculture, non-conventional energy programmes, pollution control, environmental awareness, prenatal and post-natal care of pregnant women, eye and kidney diseases, AIDS, contagious diseases etc. Prevention is better than cure should be basal theme while producing documentaries on some subjects. These programmes can be screened in local Cinema Halls, through Field Publicity Department of Central Government and State Government and telecasting them also through Doordarshan in regional languages. Frequent screening of these documentaries with periodical intervals would attract the viewers for memory touching the mind strongly. Screening these films should be made compulsory in Cinema Halls. Periodical inspection is necessary by the Field Publicity Department in this direction.

d. **Video-Films:** Producing/Video-films is less expensive and easy to carry the material viz., Cassette, VCP etc. Video-film can be played with the help of a house owner of a village/town by utilising his TV set so that communication could reach door step of the people.

## 2. Print Media

There is a tradition in any organisation, whenever the scientific results achieved will be released to the Press by organising Press Conference by the top Executive of the organisation. These results will appear in newspapers of one day and that too these will be useful to the literate people only, who in turn convey to the illiterates if occasion arises. This is a proverb to mention, which may not be out of place, that "Today's Newspaper is Tomorrow's Waste Paper." Hence, public may not keep this

as a reference for future guidance. Therefore, it is necessary to publish the results/benefits in a form of leaflet/booklet/pamphlet with photographs for distribution among the various target group of public. This informative material will be a permanent one and it has immense value for reference.

## 3. Traditional Media

Theatre, music and dance are the three traditional art forms which have been part of Indian culture. They are called performing arts which made great impact on the minds of the people. Traditional media were the only means of entertainment for the people in rural India. Even in towns and cities the people are enthusiastic to this mode. These media are still alive in the villages and continue to provide entertainment for people in remote villages who are not otherwise exposed to other media of communication.

The Traditional media are the most appropriate channels for changing the additional mind towards modernisation. Hence, the achievements made for common people may be planned and designed in such a manner to suit the traditional media to convey the above achievements/results etc. This work can be entrusted to the Field Publicity Wing of the Government of

India and States for effective implementation ... consultation with the scientific organisations.

## 4. Open Houses

Each scientific organisation/laboratory has to organise open houses for general public, periodically once in two years. People living in neighbouring villages should be involved by providing free transport so that they will be in touch with the achievements of science and technology.

The achievements/benefits derived by them can be shown and explained in the Laboratory itself, which would enhance the value of the research findings and importance of the organisation. During this period, a leaflet/booklet/pamphlet in regional languages incorporating the scientific tips which are mostly useful for day-to-day life, may be distributed to the public at free of cost.

## 5. Communication Centres

As in the case of Extension Education Institutes established by the Indian Council of Agricultural Research for disseminating the latest agricultural technology and also to train the agricultural scientists, it is also equally important to establish Communication Centres for Science and Technology for each State/region to take care of scientific information and to communicate the same to the public. Scientists and technologists should also be trained at these Centres in such a befitting manner in disseminating scientific achievements and also to acquire the skills of communication. The scientist or technologist must involve himself actively in the process of two way communication.

Communication plays a key role for advancement whether it is of individual or of nation.

## 6. Development of Human Resource

As the scientists and technologists are professionally qualified in their respective disciplines, it is necessary to train these scientists in acquiring skills and techniques in the areas of communication and public relations.

The professionally qualified public relations personnel should function in these research establishments to look after the matters connected to communication and public relations. He should be made responsible in planning communication methods and in disseminating research findings to the target group of public after identifying their needs. He is to be made responsible directly to the top executive of the organisation to have feedback from public. Finally, it is suggested that the Central/State Governments and Scientific organisations should evolve a combined communication policy in planning and preparing communication methods through various media to disseminate the achievements of science and technology, so that a desired goal can be achieved. This policy would reach the diversified population to bring change in the minds of people to achieve the object of Healthy People and Healthy Nation.

### Exercise

Discuss the various programmes broadcasted in Television or the films which helped in creating awareness for science and technology.

## LESSON 21

### MEDIA AND WOMEN

#### **Media and Women**



Since Independence, the Government of India has enacted a constitutional and legal framework and has developed institutional mechanisms to enable improvement in the living conditions of women and children in India.

#### **The Constitution and the Law**

The basic provisions of the Indian Constitution that guarantee justice, liberty and equality to all citizens and the specific articles and amendments that have been enacted to ensure that women and children enjoy the constitutional rights that assure their participation in society as equal partners provide the framework for women and child development in India.



#### **Institutional Mechanisms**

A separate Department of Women and Child development has been established by the government to give due emphasis to this area and to ensure convergence of services and formulation of policies. There are other bodies like the Central Social Welfare Board and the Indian Council of Child Welfare, which are apex bodies, concerned with the development of women and children. Supported by the efforts of NGOs and international organizations like UNICEF these form the core of programs and initiatives in this field.

#### **National Commission for Women**

The National Commission for Women was set up by the Government in 1992 with the mandate to study and monitor all matters relating to the constitutional and legal safeguards provided for women, reviewing existing legislation and suggesting amendments where necessary and looking into complaints involving deprivation of the rights of women. Since its inception, the Commission has taken up many issues and incidents.

#### **Local Self Government**

With the enactment of the 73rd Amendment to the Constitution of India, the third tier of the government in the federal structure of government becomes enforceable. The provision of a 33 percent reservation of seats for women in the Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRI) will ensure the participation of women in the self-governance of districts in larger measure.

According to Jawaharlal Nehru, "If our nation is to rise, how can it do so if half the nation, if your woman kind, lag behind and remain ignorant and uneducated?"

Women are slowly emerging out of their centuries old darkness, shaking off their shackles of tradition and man determined and man imposed roles and are increasingly raising their voice to demand their rightful place in the society and their due from it. Today women have become one of the potent forces of change.

The ongoing communication revolution has opened up new possibilities of accelerating development especially for the upliftment of women and children. But if it remains uncontrolled unguided, this revolution will have adverse effects on the bite of women. This danger is still not very adequately perceived or appreciated by the promoters of the communication revolution. It is necessary to focus on modern communication and development. This is because when we reflect on the human conditions in general, we miss the aspects affecting specially women. Thus we may go on discussing the general problems of development without even touching on questions relating to women.

The focus on women implies identifying the structural constraints which inhibit their fullest growth and development. There are major issues related to women in media and the other about the image of women projected through these media. The contents of communication are reflective of the values of society, which, in turn, are uttered and sustained through communication.

#### **Construction of Feminity on Indian T.V.**

The role of television in Indian Society is that of 'Structured Subordination to the primary definers. (Woollacott, 1982). Being wholly state-controlled the primary definer is the state itself. Our findings have shown that the medium's output is biased in favour of male elites. Further, masculine and feminine genders are constructed as polar opposites. We are able to endorse through our findings the five basic characteristics of television output identified as Gallagher (1981) as common to all cultures:

- Women are under-represented in general, and occupy less central roles than men in television programmes,
- Marriage and parenthood are considered more important to women than to men; the traditional division of labour is shown as typical in marriage,
- Employed women are shown in traditionally female occupations, as subordinates to men, with little status or power,
- Women on television are more passive than men,
- Television ignores or distorts the women's movement.

Such representation was the consequence of the development of a national-popular will, aided through centuries of religious and cultural indoctrination. The television medium, now expanding to reach the whole country, has immense possibility for

strengthening hegemony: in the context of the developing countries which are oriented towards a communal outdoor culture, the institutionalization of studio based television is unleashing a corrosive, coercive force.

The projection of a pan-Indian culture, which our findings support, will as the Joshi Committee Report (1985) notes, taint communities hitherto isolated from the hedonism and consumerism of urban life.

The recent trend towards commercialization greatly expands the hegemonic grip of the medium; on the one hand it consistently devalues women, on the other it holds up as desirable the values of bourgeois liberalism, individual gain and subsequent consumerism. Thus, educated articulate persons view their own and the country's progress and development in terms of the goods and services available to the elite. Consumerism arouses desires, which distort economic priorities and lure people into artificial consumption patterns. Significant too is our finding that in the case of fiction programmes and some sectorals, the text of the sponsoring commercial is an echo of the text of the programme itself. At the time of writing, an exceptionally pernicious example is also available' of the mutual contradiction of these two texts. . A television serial *Swayamsiddha*, which purports to deal with the empowerment of a divorced woman, is sponsored by a commercial for Garden textiles. The woman in the commercial is completely objectified; other than displaying her body and the fabrics, she does nothing at all. Her face is barely registered, nothing of her personality and achievements is known. The textiles themselves are extremely luxurious. So in the current climate of commercialization, even feminist centred texts cannot be telecast without sponsorship, which effectively denigrates and demeans women. Since these commercials are the norm, and feminist texts are rare, it is likely that the message of the text is processed as aberrant, and that of the commercial validated.

Whether or not this correspondence is accurate it is undeniable that in our context serials such as *HumLog*, *Khandaan*, *Karamchand* and *Buniyaad* have massive following in metropolitan areas. Doordarshan's total gross revenue from its commercial services was Rs. 31.43 crores during 1984-85; of this, sponsorship of the serial *Hum Log* accounted for Rs. 363.63 lakhs (Information given by the Information and Broadcasting Minister to the Rajya Sabha).

The coercive values we have discerned within programmes of television fiction appear to be presented to viewers through the feneotogy of pleasure associated with the 'narrative' or 'story'. In this context, we have to take note of the numbing boredom generated by most of Doordarshan's on-house programmes; particularly those in the non-fiction category. Though boredom is essentially a subjective response, certain factors pre-dispose programmes to turgidity. Thus, heavy dependency on government functionaries for expert comments, near-total emphasis on studio-based programmes, unimaginative choice of comedies and participants static camera-work, near-total absence of visuals and worst of all, unwillingness to give time and space to divergent points of view can all add up to very boring programmes indeed. The most hackneyed feature film or serial can attract more viewers than non-fiction programmes, a trend which helps to inscribe values, which are far from empowering to women.

India is ideologically highly developed, and the sophistication of its ideological apparatuses goes a long way towards explaining why its, gross socioeconomic inequalities continue to persist. She notes that welfare schemes secure hegemony, because the state is viewed as beneficial. Thus a large part of the impact of the welfare state is ideological. Through programmes of news, enrichment, and sectorals, the medium consistently projects India as a welfare state, with the government as the lead player, benevolently in command of every situation. Another disturbing trend: the sidestepping of local governments and bureaucracies in favour of one ° individual. Development is presented as taking place therefore not as a planned, ongoing, long-term process, but in order to please one enlightened compassionate being. The basic needs of the people are fulfilled through administrative fiat, a process that subverts democratic structures; the people obtain that is justly theirs only through the intervention of the highest in the land. This throwback to feudalism not only concentrates power in one individual, but generates further dependency in the people and cripples their ability to 'fight justice. Such a trend bodes nothing but ill for women, who are struggling both as women and as the poor. Are 'alternate' media the only alternative? While the outreach of such forms feminist journals, street theatre groups, activist groups is cited, these media play an important role in awareness. They assist in the process of arriving at a different decoding of the message. Eco (1972) notes how crucial this activity is, pointing out that it is not indispensable to change given message; it would be enough if not better to change the attitude of the audience, so as to induce a different decoding of the message. Such decoding can isolate the intentions of the transmitter, and is the first step in the process of denying consent to the hegemonic order. Without such consent and complicity the order can only collapse. However important the movement media is, the struggle to alter the face of the mainstream media is equally important for three reasons.

First, since most of these are State-owned, the citizens, whether women or the poor, have a right to equitable representation on these media. Second, the relentless negative representation has the effect, as we have seen, of validating women's inferiority 'as real and natural. Under such conditions the messages of the movement media are likely to be decoded as aberrant.

### **Gender Consciousness**

We have noted, in the context of the production of feminist self-consciousness, that women communicators do not necessarily succeed in breaking away from the stranglehold of patriarchy. Thus, the demand for associating more women at every level of policy making and programming will bear fruit, only if these women are themselves enabled to develop and exercise a more equitable gender consciousness. Only the development of such consciousness can enable these women to ask crucial questions about the country's development, instead of working to integrate women into the existing socio-political paradigm. Such activity will assist in infusing a feminist consciousness into all areas of human endeavor. Harold Lasswell has described political behaviour as the displacement of personal problems into public objects (Mackinnon, 1982). Women's distinctive experience as women occurs, as we have seen, largely in the private realm. Hence there is need to demystify the sanctity of this realm. Women's programmes assist in the

depoliticisation of the inhabitants of the private realm. In terms of content and adequacy of treatment they are a historical and succeed in representing women as a construct that is everywhere and eternally the same.

The representation of heroic women whether they are the Rani of Jhansi or the Super-Mum does nothing to counter this trend, for we have noted that such women are usually structured as redeemers of "the patriarchy. Instead, the medium should present women as compares and experts in all categories of programmes, as well as focus on the struggles of women in diverse fields. The infantilism "that pervades most women's programmes, where 'easy' ways are found to tackle 'everyday' problems should be eschewed in favour of mature, incisive analyses into social problems. Many feminists such as Phyllis Mach (1986) suggest that 'feminine' domestic habits of thought and activity may be transposed into the public sphere and transformed into highly effective forms of activism by both women and men. Based on her study of Francis of Assissi and Gandhi; Mach further speculates that these feminine modes of behaviour gained moral and political credibility for Francis and Gandhi because they were being used creatively by men.

Thus the rigid straitjacketing of the public and private realms respectively coupled with the projection of a handful of heroic women subverts the women's struggle for empowerment. Equality can obtain only from the integration of women on equal terms in the productive realm and the integration of men into the active care of the next generation (O'Brien, 1982).

### **The Schizophrenic Representation of Women In Indian Television**

The emerging new woman on Indian television and on the satellite channels had broken out of the straitjacket Hindi popular cinema had trapped her in for ages. The Svetlana Banerjee of Swabhimaan, Tara and her friends in Tara, Radha of Dard, Savi of Hasratein, and others of their ilk were not in the least interested in playing "the chaste wife whose suffering can only be made virtuous, the nurturing mother who denies her own self, the avenging Kali or the titillating strumpet." But, the tremendous success of Kyonki Saas Bhi Kabhi Bahu Thi seems to have upset the apple cart completely. Along with its launch, every satellite channel and Doordarshan seem to have gone all out to flood the small screen with serials whose names are themselves giveaways of this sudden and fanatic obsession for "the ideal bahu" theme. Kalash, Shagun, Dulhan, Bahuraniyan, Mehendi Tere Naam Ki, Shehnai, Kabhi Sautan Kabhi Saheli, Ghar Ek Mandir, Kahani Ghar Ghar Ki, are some of the serials currently running on the idiot box. This clearly underscores a conscious resurgence and upholding of the sati-savitri mode so faithfully perpetuated for all these years, by mainstream cinema.

"In a variety of ways helped make us the schizophrenics we are who rebel against yet prevailing images about worthwhile woman mass media has many women a kind of cultural identity crisis. We are ambivalent towards femininity on the one hand and feminism in the other".



the mass media cultural today, women submit to what a desirable, should be. The engendered

Though this was written with reference to images of women on television in the US, it applies equally, at this point of time, to the plethora of soaps and serials we are being bombarded with.

For long, it was believed that women characters on cinema and television, much like women in real life would, with time, defy cultural expectations by insisting on relationships with men who want to only flatter them and flirt with them. It was also believed that arrogance and toughness in a woman would somehow make her unfeminine and unattractive. These myths appeared to have been exploded by the tremendous initial audience-pull of serials like Junoon, Banegi Apni Baat, Tara and Parampara. But if the popularity of KSBKBT is anything to go by, if the mass hysteria created by the sudden death of Mihir, Tulsi's husband, in the serial are anything to go by, then one can well bid goodbye to the New Woman on Indian television. This is dangerous because with a woman like Manisha in Saans or Mihir's earlier fiancé in KSBKBT, or the diabolic, avenging daughter-in-law in KGGK on the one hand and all the Tulsi's put together on the other, this could lead to a lot of confusion among the viewing audience comprised of men, women and children.

The motion-picture industry has recently witnessed a rise of "strong-chick flicks" where women are the ones initiating all the action and men play a secondary role. Some examples include Gulzar's Maachis, the Karisma Kapoor-starrer Zubeida and Mahesh Manjrekar's Astitva.



Even mainstream films are coming out with the strong-woman type. The women in these films place their relationships with women as central to their lives, and they often blatantly reject current gender expectations for women.

These films seem to be a cautionary tale for feminists though : Aditi of "Astitva" leaves home and husband with the strong backing of the huge inheritance she has been bestowed with. Whether she keeps this or rejects it, is ambivalent till the end. Zubeida breaks every rule in the Islamic book, only to end up as the convenient and marginalized second wife of a feudal lord, her ambitions to turn into a film star sacrificed for nothing. She dies a violent and premature death, effectively reducing to zero all the rebellion that went before.

Do we find the portrayal of women in today's media wrought with the "schizoid" messages of the 1980s media? The 90's therefore, are not without their own collection of "split personalities about the roles and place of women" writes Douglas.. Her analysis of contemporary mass media is on the mark. Although there are certainly more powerful women in film, news, television, and music, it seems that these women are either tokens, some sort of exception, or their presence has been used as a means of criticizing feminism. This applies to Tulsi, her mother-in-law, her aunts-in-law and almost every female character in KSBKBT. Sociologist Yogendra Singh believes that viewer identification is linked to the basic question of human identity and the search for a role model in the larger context. "It has to do with the ideals, character, style we would want ideally to have. So all those urban middle-class women whose husbands are fooling around would actually want

to be a Priya (of Saans)" he says. This somewhat explains the cult-fan following small screen stars like Neena Gupta have. This contradiction, sanctioning the notion of women as autonomous and equal citizens while also endorsing the idea that women are around to be gazed at, is the contradiction that lessened our potential during the days of *Hum Log*, *Buniyaad* followed by *Junoon* and *Swabhimaan*. It has the same effect today.



The television media does foster the spread of the liberation movement through its vast amount of coverage of women through seemingly 'progressive' talk shows, discussions, debate and detailed news reports. But it is also true that television has done more harm than good to the women's movement's potential and women's potential as individuals by putting female conformity to convention and tradition at the forefront.

Television is a powerful tool. Its influence in shaping the Indian woman's sense of herself and her future is more than significant. The media's ability to convey mixed messages to women that fragment their identities makes it extremely difficult for the women to become unified selves. Schizophrenic methods that the media has adopted to portray the roles of women in our society has just that effect on us: we are each an unorganized mixture of different women who have learnt that we are always being watched.

There is a need for women to re-define themselves in order to begin the reversal of gender oppression. We cannot accept patriarchal definitions of our bodies and ourselves. We need a new goddess, a new woman, and a new cultural female icon that does not limit women. As Kim Chernin has written in *Reinventing Eve: Modern Woman in Search of Herself*, we need to reflect on the "Woman Who Is Not Yet"

## **The Image of Women in Indian Television**

by Chitra Radhakrishnan

"One is not born a woman but made."—Simone de Beauvoir  
This article is an attempt to analyse the construction of gender and nation in Indian television channels and thereby to highlight the ideological beliefs and assumptions underlying and reinforcing these stereotypical definitions of Indian womanhood.

Prahlad Kakkar, owner of an advertising agency in North India, has observed, "The household image of woman is truly exploitative; showing women as dowdy, unattractive housewives who slave for their families without any personal ambition is enslaving." While this observation is perfectly true the latter part of his argument is convoluted. He proceeds to proclaim, "Lalitha (a woman character made popular by the advertisement for "Surf," a detergent, where she is depicted as the smart housewife getting the best soap powder for her family even while saving money) is far more exploitative than a deadly bikini-clad woman on top of a Porsche. I truly believe that an ad that shows a woman as a sex object is not exploitative, it is just blatant and obvious. Yes, I exploit women because they are far more aesthetically beautiful than men. Since men are the main purchasing power of India

today, the image of a scantily-clad woman will make them buy anything." (Savvy, August 2000).

This unashamed confession sums up the attitude of men behind the Indian television screen. In what way is "blatant and obvious" better than "exploitative?" And how could scantily-clad women models who lie idly (and supposedly sensuously) on male power symbols like cars become better role models for women than the newly constructed smart Indian woman who steps outside her domestic domain only to add a convenient (for men of course) dimension to her role of housewife? Both are stereotypes. The modern housewife (modern in the sense that she dares/is permitted to argue with the shop owner since a woman talking to a stranger is not appreciated in traditional Indian households) perpetuates the traditional roles allotted to women. The skimpily dressed model creeps into many vulnerable heads as the ideal dream woman. The beauty queens mushrooming all over India (thanks to the large international markets opening for cosmetics manufacturers in developing countries) have already mesmerised the minds of thousands of young women as to what should be the size and weight of an ultimate woman.

To the Indian mass media a woman's body is not only a locale for violence, exclusion and abuse but also the site for the construction of modernity and an upper-caste (Brahminical) Hindu nation. There is the prevalent perception of India and women as "culture" and history is denied to both through deliberate decontextualisation. The "new" woman is intrinsically related to the "true" identity of the nation and hence it becomes necessary for the oppressive patriarchal tradition to patrol and monitor the woman's body and sexuality. A brief scrutiny of a few advertisements and pop albums reveals the popular conception of the Indian woman as the lone bearer of Indian tradition and the sign of the "modern" Hindu nation-state.

An advertisement for Parry candy begins with a shot focusing on a modern young Indian male and a Western woman with blonde hair, both of whom are engaged in a romantic interlude. The young man approaches her with a string of flowers (a cultural commodity carried by an Indian male during his mission of proposing to a woman). When he attempts to place it in her hair he is interrupted by an Indian woman dressed in the traditional Hindu sari and with vermillion on her forehead, carrying a plate of Parry candies. Seeing the candy and more importantly, her, the Son of Hindustan gets a radiant glow in his face. He offers the flowers to her instead, spurning the non-Indian. This alien cultural product stands alone with an expression of lament at having lost an invaluable prize catch.

The blurb for the softdrink "Asli Mango" (meaning "original mango" in Hindi) presents a young man in Western attire who boasts, in an American accent, of his female conquests abroad. When his mother appears on the scene with the "Asli" i.e., "true" mango drink, multimedia techniques transform him into a standing symbol of Indian heritage. He then expresses his unquenchable thirst for Indianism by imploring his mother to get a native fruit, a "true good Hindustani" bride for him. The fervent nationalist motto, "Be Indian, buy Indian goods" is extended by the male-centred media as "Be Indian, buy Indian women."

The advertisement for "Harpic," a toilet cleaning liquid, begins with a grand sequence of shots showing a group of masked commandos wearing thick protective attire. They land from a plane and search the entire locality with modern equipment. When they reach the toilet they find the place swarming with germs. At this point their chief removes her facemask and we see an attractive woman tossing her hair and smiling at the audience victoriously. Then comes the caption with the declaration "Here comes the expert in cleaning toilets." After zooming in on the smiling face of the woman, the Harpic container is shown on the screen.

In the commercial for "Axe," a shaving lotion for men, a black woman in a skin-tight dress dances before the sharp gaze of a man. When she comes near him she turns into the wick of a huge candle. His face is now enlarged and covers the entire screen. He looks down at the candle in which the woman-turned-wick keeps flickering in a dance of its own. The word "Voodoo" appears on the screen along with the flame. With a look of contempt, he blows out the candle and as the candle smoke dissolves in the air, smiles smugly at the audience. He is satisfied at having put an end to a tempting woman, and the award for such a manly achievement is "Axe," and now the conqueror from time immemorial grabs a bottle of the lotion with a celebratory look.

The advertisement for "Anandham" (meaning happiness) gingelly oil starts with a conversation between two women. One asks the other what real happiness is like, and the latter replies that it is to interview her suitor before consenting to marry him. (This is an important ritual in the life of an Indian woman. Accompanied by his parents and other relatives, the prospective bridegroom comes to see the bride to ask for her approval. The bride would be asked to sing and her parents list her feminine skills such as embroidery, creating designs with coloured powder and cooking, while praising her docility and thus her eligibility to be an ideal daughter-in-law.) The woman in the advertisement adds that she would derive happiness from asking "daring" questions such as whether he would drink liquor, if he would demand dowry and whether he would beat her. Aspiring to put such questions to a man, by itself, is an act of revolution in the traditional Tamil context. The woman who is listening puts an end to this attempt at puncturing tradition and says with rapture that happiness does not lie in these but in buying the particular brand of cooking oil. So, it is the feminine act of cooking that will bless an Indian woman with happiness, and not her forthrightness or her courage to question male prejudices. The advertiser was clever indeed to choose a woman to snub the impertinence of another woman. This strategy would prove effective in placing the responsibility or blame for women's oppression on women themselves as has been the habit of men whenever they wish to hit back at the idea of women's liberation.

"Mystic Rhythms," a pop album oft-telecast on Zee TV, visualises a set of Indian men dressed in Western attire claiming to descend from America and a group of women draped in half-saris (a typical South Indian attire). The young men chase the young women and sing teasing songs, expressing their desire to possess them. This "East meets West" encounter is presented as an essentially Hindu national experience when the Westernised modern male's claim upon the female is legitimised with the approval of the Hindu religion. One of the men approaches a Brahmin priest and points out the Hindu woman (carrying religious marks such as

vermillion and sacred ash on her forehead, after which the religious agent looks the woman over, assessing her suitability for the male. Fully satisfied, the priest cheerfully allows the obedient young man to claim his stake and to institutionalise his desire (through a Hindu marriage). It is interesting to note that, cutting across boundaries of age and species, the women in this visual become the objects of the gaze not only of the male protagonist but also of an old man, a male child, a goat and a dog.

The pop video album "Hum Hain Indian" was produced by the Mumbai BJP (Bharatiya Janata Party) legislator Abhiram Singh to celebrate India's nuclear status (Pokhran tests) in May 1998. During the launch he remarked, "This is to initiate the national celebration of our Shakti." Shakti, the Hindu postulate, is fascinatingly politicised to highlight Hindu superiority. This timely invocation of the seemingly ahistorical Shakti, a Sanskrit term meaning strength, always represented in India by a Hindu female figure, is undoubtedly an attempt to mobilise all Indian women by fabricating a classless, casteless homogenous Hindu category that would be worthy of the respect of every Indian citizen, Hindu, Christian and Muslim alike.

The television serials are no better. Good women do not raise their voices against ill-treatment and men take second wives only because the first wife is a shrew (hence the sentiment that "what else can the man do?"). The husband and the mangalsutra (the holy thread tied around the bride's neck during the wedding ceremony) are to be worshipped; the educated girl in jeans has loose morals and symbolises the corrupted youth who turn their back on Indian culture. The producers and directors of these serials, which capture the undivided attention of women who stay at home, ignore the care that has to be exercised by them because they have the power to shape public opinion. And the tragedy is that women allow themselves to be deceived and demeaned by those who exploit them in the name of art or freedom of expression.

#### I end my analysis with a few observations:

1. It is interesting to note that whenever non-Indians prefer to exalt Indian culture they focus only on the "high culture," i.e., the upper-caste Hindu culture with its Sanskrit leanings and not on the "other," supposedly "low" culture. And more significantly, whenever the patriots attempt to resist Western cultural invasions they repeatedly invoke the superiority of "Bharat Mata" (Mother India) and the antiquity of Sanskrit and Brahminical culture (including their gods and prayer rituals) thereby pushing once again "low culture" to the dark recesses of history. The problem lies in "what and whose ancient heritage" becomes the focal point of all pride and admiration.
2. The middle/upper-middle-class Hindu patriarchal morality is viewed as "normalcy" and any deviation is castigated. Commercials in Indian television channels claim to redefine the discourses of women's liberation and modernity but end up highlighting and reinforcing the prejudices of upper-caste males. The advertiser does not question the privilege of male domination but recasts it into the mainstream Hindu mould to secure approval from the "majority."
3. There is allowance, however grudging, for appropriation of Western culture, however corruptive, by Indian men.

4. Upper-caste/class Hinduism is repeatedly presented as “the only good” and “the powerful” way of living in order to be a decent and patriotic Indian citizen. Indian women thus become the “nation” to be conquered and retained.

The difference between the advertisements of the 1960s and the 1990s lies only in the portrayal of the “modern” woman. The woman in the 1950s was either docile or a vamp—the former with a shy expression on a down-turned face, fully clad in sari, with big vermillion and flowers; the latter in short “indecent” attire, with a sensuous gaze and pouting smile and without vermillion and flowers. Since the 1990s the modern woman is one who no longer wears the sari; she appears without vermillion, a Hindu marker, thus affirming her secularity, and she does not necessarily sport a shy look (though it is the preferred pose). But her societal status has not changed in any drastic way as her roles are defined even now by men. Washing machines and microwave ovens “liberate” Indian women by moulding them into “perfect homemakers” (as the advertisement for a washing machine says, “You and Videocon, the perfect homemakers”).

This seemingly “modern, liberated” image is more dangerous since every woman aspiring to be “modern” identifies herself with these willing carriers of nationalist, religious and feminine sensibilities and ends up transforming herself accordingly. Women models thus become models for women. Doesn’t it remind us of what Chinua Achebe has said, “Stories define Us?”

#### **Exercise**

Discuss in class both portrayals of women in Indian media as well as role of media in upliftment of women.

#### **Notes**

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## LESSON 22

### MEDIA AND VIOLENCE (ESPECIALLY TELEVISION)

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#### **Introduction**

When it comes to it, what does television provide? One of the most debilitating forms of narcotic addiction yet devised. A daily dose of hypnosis containing an abundance of direct and indirect suggestion, much of it negative and all of it absorbed subconsciously, with unpredictable consequences.... An artificial substitute for everything real. The ultimate magic show in which nothing is what it appears to be. The modern equivalent of the Evil Eye, which, in the words of a historian of witchcraft, 'could harm children simply by looking at them'. The most pernicious and pervasive of all threats to the environment - and yet the only such threat that can be eliminated by the touch of a button.

It is not possible to disentangle the influence of the experimental stimulus itself from all the other interactive influences occurring during an experiment. It is thus not possible to specify the extent to which the behaviour of research subjects is the result of the intended manipulation of the experimenter, or the result of unintended interactions generated during the experiment. Any experimental study, which claims to have found scientific evidence in support of TV viewing as a cause of specified effects is misleading, to say the least.

The two polarized views on the powers of television are indicative of the intensity of the discussion that the issue has generated. In general, the effects of mass media, especially portrayals of violence in them, have been the subjects of worldwide public and academic discussion for several decades now. But at the center of this discussion, almost invariably, is television as it has taken a significant place in our lives more than any other mass medium. TV watching in today's household is as much basic in nature as is eating or sleeping. Its immediateness increases its effectiveness more than any other media - how common is our experience of switching on TV without any particular purpose of watching any specific programme and watching it without giving any particular attention to what is playing on the screen, even while carrying out routine household chores. And this is how normally TV exists in our lives: occupying most of our subconscious most of the time when we are awake.

The reach of television is today almost universal. Unesco conducted a worldwide study on media violence between 1996 and 1997, the largest ever- intercultural study on this subject. The study, which involved more than 5,000 12-year-old pupils from 23 countries, found that 97 per cent of the school areas in its sample could be reached at least by one TV broadcast channel. Ninety-one per cent of the children have access to a TV set, primarily at home.

While accuracy in measurements of television penetration is not easy, available estimates show that television has had an equally phenomenal growth in India too. The latest report of the international investment bankers Saloman Smith Barney, "Asia-Pacific Television - the Big Picture", put television penetration in India at about 31 per cent, "not as high as in China". The report, however, displayed optimism about the future growth, saying

that, "while we do not expect the Indian economy to grow as fast as China through to 2005, there will be sufficient growth in at least two components of the television industry growth equation - penetration and income - and through it, ad revenue and subscriber revenue." The report estimated that the number of television households would grow from 65 millions in 1999 to 80 million in 2001, to 98 million in 2003 and would reach 120 millions in 2005. *The Times of India*, however, recently reported that the number of households owning TV has already crossed 82 million, out of which about 70 per cent are connected through cable. The growth has been outstanding, considering the fact that in 1980, the number of TV sets in India was approximately 1.6 million, which then increased to 6 million in 1986, and to 32 million by 1994.

#### **Changing audience habits**

Parallel to increase in television's reach, there have been changes in audiences' watching habit. More and more people are today spending more time watching TV today. As the worldwide study by Unesco showed, children all over the world spend an average of 3 hours daily in front of the TV screen. That is at least 50 per cent more time spent with this medium than with any other out-of-school activity, like home-work, being with family or friends, or reading. The Second World Summit on Television for Children, held in London in March 1998, was told that watching TV is now the number one after-school-activity for 6-17 years olds. According to Washington-based TV-Free America Group, American children spend an average of 4 hours a day watching TV; they spend only 39 minutes a week in meaningful conversation with parents. According to the BBC's research department, the national average for 1989 among the British was 3 hours 46 minutes a day.

In India, the National Readership Survey 1997 shows that the time spent on watching television has increased to more than 13 hours a week amongst all television viewers. This is a 12 per cent increase since 1995. Audiences of households with access to satellite and cable channels spend 25 per cent more time - 16.5 hours in an average week - watching TV. The audiences in the top eight metros watch more television than those in smaller towns.

The amount of time today's audiences spends watching TV shows how important a place television has come to occupy in our lives. Not only it is the most important means of communication among the mass media, crucial to viewers' need for information and entertainment, but also it casts significant influence on their behaviour, attitude and lifestyle. As Nilanjana Gupta points out, Much of our knowledge, many of our attitudes, the topics of conversation at work the next day, the brand of soap we pick up at the grocery store, the cartoon characters on our children's clothes, our aspirations - almost every conceivable aspect of our lives is touched by this medium: yet, like eating or sleeping, we accept it as just another part of our daily routine, uncritically and unknowingly.

It is this "subliminal communication" that television is capable of which has worried social scientists and psychologists. Commenting on research into subliminal communication, Norman Dixon has written: 'The most striking finding to date ... is that subliminal effects appear negatively correlated with stimulus energy. The further below threshold, the weaker or briefer the stimulus, the stronger its effect.' Which means, the viewers' "state of half-attention" during the time they spend before or around TV is ideal for "insertion of suggestions" into their subconscious. This fact is behind the commercials being shown in between programs by advertisers who know very well that viewers use "breaks" for brief work like going to toilet or fetching something from kitchen or refrigerator. Playfair explains the process of "indirect suggestion" that works here.

## Faces of Violence

Violence obtains attention. Perhaps this is because attention is part of an old mechanism dating back to the early development of human beings. Early man learnt how to look closely at dangerous situations so as to be able to defend him and survive. Television uses this for its own end. There is a danger that television, battling for the attention of the viewers, may place more value on showing unusual pictures than pictures providing information. Violence is a demonstration of power. Its principal lesson is to show quickly and dramatically who can get away with what against whom. That exercise defines majority might and minority risk. It shows one's place in what Gerbner calls the societal 'pecking order'. Most television and movie producers, who export their products, need a dramatic ingredient that requires no translation, "speaks action" in any language, and fits any culture. That ingredient is violence. As Gerbner points out,

Formula-driven media violence is not an expression of freedom, popularity, or crime statistics. It is a de facto censorship that chills originality and extends the dynamics of domination, intimidation, and repression domestically and globally. The media violence overkill is an ingredient in a global marketing formula imposed on media professionals and foisted on the children of the world.

Violence is a stable and integral part of the world seen on today's television. Even programmes targeted at children are not free of violence. In the United States, violent scenes occur about 5 times per hour in prime time, and between 20 and 25 per hour in Saturday morning children's programmes. The depictions of violence are camouflaged in humor, so it is difficult for uncritical viewers - especially children — to realize what they are consuming. The commercial mechanism of violence - this is one of the two most important ingredients used in almost all forms of television broadcasting for attracting viewers, the other being sex - leads to manipulated use of scenes depicting violence. The exploitation of violence occurs in many different forms - only some explicit and the others not so.

However, perceptions of violence can differ as widely as their forms, depending on social and cultural contexts, viewers' personality, age and environment, among other things. For instance, a study carried out in Germany by Werner Fruh on violence perception also arrives at large perception differences such as in the case of age groups when differing types of violence and the form in which it is shown are included.

- Direct violence portrayed on the screen is more clearly identified as having a violent content than verbal violence.
- Physical violence is more strongly experienced than psychic violence.
- Violence directed at people contains a higher violence content for the viewing public than say violence directed at property and things.
- Real violence, as shown in the news and in documentaries, is perceived by the viewers as containing more violence than the same violence shown in a fictional form.

Most of the violence we see in films and television programmes are crude not only in nature, but also in form also. The depictions include a wide spectrum of violence from direct physical assaults on humans, animals and inanimate things to domestic violence and verbal assaults, which may not be construed by many viewers as violence per se. Depictions of sex in otherwise non-violent programmes too can be frightening for children for whom the act is beyond comprehension.

The other less obvious forms of violence are: reality violence seen in news, documentaries and real-life-based programmes; the aggressiveness of production techniques used in sound, camerawork and editing; interactive video games that encourage users to shoot and kill "enemies"; and internet sites that offer demo versions of such games and do-it-yourself information on assemble of bombs and weapons.

There is a vast array of approaches to presenting violent material, as there is to its perception. In terms of its visual presentation, the violence may occur in front of the camera and be shown with graphic details. Or it may occur off-screen but be clearly implied. Violent acts may be shown in clinical manner in close-up shots, or they may be shown from a distance, in long shots. Characters involving themselves in violent acts may be presented - through various scripting tools - in many different ways and there may be different reasons for different characters being violent. So also, the results of violence shown may be widely different, including both the pain and suffering of victims as well as the outcomes for the perpetrator or perpetrators.

## Animation Films

Animation films - or cartoons, as they are popularly known - and televised shows of the World Wrestling Federation (WWF) are the leaders in violent content and sponsorship value in this genre. Along with cartoons and WWF show, there are two major areas that have recently turned into virtual battlefields: violent computer games and the live coverage of violence.

In depiction of actual physical and behavioural violence, WWF shows perhaps outclass the rest of programmes. A detailed Indiana University investigation of 50 WWF Raw episodes telecast in 1998 on the USA Network found a staggering amount of profane or risqué incidents. Researchers counted 1,658 instances of a character grabbing or pointing to their own crotch - roughly eight every 30 minutes, not counting the slow-motion instant replays. On an average, there was less than 36 minutes of wrestling in a two-hour show. There were 609 instances of wrestlers or others being struck by objects like garbage cans or nightsticks. "Somehow they managed not to hurt each other," said Walter Gantz, a professor at the Indiana's Department of Telecommunications.

"I am not certain that a 10-year-old realizes that they are skilled at doing this.

Contrary to the parents' conception, cartoon films can be equally violent. And several studies have established that most cartoon programmes today seen on television contain violence in quantity that may be unsafe for regular viewing by children. According to a study conducted by Quebec's Laval University, cartoons have 68 per cent more violence than any adult show.

At their impressionable age, children love to watch the slapstick humour, the fantasies and the actions in animation films. Watching cartoon characters being blown to pieces or run over by a bulldozer make children laugh because they know after all these hazardous attacks by the antagonists their favourite characters are going to return to life, as active and violent as ever.

Mickey Mouse was a cute, well-mannered, little mouse that had very mild mannerisms and gestures. Mickey Mouse was the epitome of peace and goodness. He was the protagonist to the core and there were no shades of gray in him. People adored Mickey Mouse for being such a gentleperson. Walt Disney's philosophy was to have characters as black and white with very few traces of gray. The themes that he chose for his subsequent feature films, Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs, Pinocchio, Bambi and other short films just reiterated that fact as these films had characters which represented in black or white. The prince and the princess had to be good all through and the witch was an evil person with absolutely no goodness in her soul. Disney condemned the blacks and glorified the whites in all his films. Violence did exist, but an acceptable level.

The success of Bugs Bunny and Tom and Jerry led to rapid growth in animation films production. Fifty years after Bugs Bunny appeared, cartoon programmes are a popular ingredient of television channels around the world. While the Cartoon Network shows 14 hours of the stuff, Doordarshan and other channels like Zee, Star Plus, Sony and MTV too have their own slots. On their menu are various kinds of cartoons - some of them with mindless violence - such as Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles, G. I. Joe, Batman, Spiderman, Superman, He Man, Alladin, Flash Gordon, Defenders of the Earth, and Duck Tales. Two cartoon shows — The Simpsons, and The Flintstones - are of a different class, with good stories told in interesting manner through good clean humour and clever ideas, without resorting to violence to capture its audience. But these two cartoons use typical American humour, because of which children in other countries less watch them.

## **Reality programmes**

Reality programmes, like news bulletins, documentaries and real-life crime-based programmes, often show real-life violence. Violence used in news for the most part do not have any link with crime: rather politically motivated violence - such as demonstrations, arsons, riots, clashes with police etc. - are more likely to be featured. Because violence has more news and visual value, often political and extremist groups resort to violence to get noticed by mass media. Personal crimes and violence are reported by media more than any other form of violence, but what is shown in news bulletins is mostly the effect of such crime and violence on victims.

Television coverage of wars by implication contains a lot of violence. How violent it can get was obvious during the Gulf War when

television worldwide for the first time carried live war pictures. Filmmaker Shyam Benegal condemns such coverage pointing out that it leads to desensitisation of the viewer.

I would say the most reprehensible thing that happened recently was the air attacks on Iraq, and Clinton was watching it like it was a performance. Hundreds of thousands of people were suffering, thousands of tonnes of dynamite was exploding all around them. While we were sitting in front of our television sets, impatiently waiting for the bombings to begin. Now, that is the worst kind of pornography of violence, and we've not stopped it, we're not even capable of stopping it, are we?

Documentaries and real-life crime-based programmes, on the other hand, show personal violence and crimes, re-constructing events of the past. In these depictions, violence is predominantly physical and shown in graphic detail. Indian television has recently produced such programmes on almost all leading channels. India's Most Wanted on Zee (which was later withdrawn by the channel), Bhanwar on Sony and Apraadhi on Star Plus are all based on real-life criminal cases, though they vary in treatment and focus. India's Most Wanted has often been compared to America's Most Wanted, which mostly concentrates on actual police raids. But producer and director Suhaib Ilyasi points out that his serial is closer to BBC's crime feature of the early 90s, Crime Stopper.

It is not just programmes that contain violence, but many of the programmes' promos and commercials utilize violence too. There are logical reasons why so many promotions feature scenes of violence. Promos have only a very short time to show something interesting enough to attract the viewer. Most promos contain several scenes thus complicating efforts to explain the plot in 10 or 20 seconds. With so little time, the easiest things to feature are those that require little explanation: violence and sex.

## **Computer & Video Games**

But now with violent video games we have entered a realm where instead of being the passive receivers of images of human death and suffering, we are pushing the button that inflicts human death and suffering on another human being. The growing threat to our children - and their parents - from violent video games is not just an extension of violent television and movies, it is a whole new world, and a quantum leap in danger.

Violent video games are the mental equivalent of putting an assault rifle in the hands of every child - a friend of mine refers to them as "murder trainers". By sitting and mindlessly killing countless thousands of fellow members of our own species without any ramification or repercussions, we are teaching skills and concepts and values that transfer immediately anytime they get a real weapon in their hand.

Typical of the standard violent genres are: mythical adventure (Dark Vengeance), war (Total Annihilation) and "point and shoot" - the most dehumanising kind - (Damage Incorporated and Blood Bath). There is a rating system, akin to the one for movies, maintained by the Entertainment Software Rating Board. Dark Vengeance and Total Annihilation are 'Teen 13+' for animated violence; Blood Bath is 'Mature 17+' for realistic blood and violence. Damage Incorporated is not rated.

Games where the death wish spills over in no measured proportions and could very well overflow into real life.

Psychologists say that with the increasing addiction of computer games, the bombshell of violence has already started to explode. Teenage violence is expressing itself in the increased suicide rates and the preponderance of school bullies and instances of actual physical violence in the campus.

Some internet sites that offer game demonstration programmes do not use ratings and do little to block children's access to violent games. This added to weak adult supervision and poorly enforced or displayed violence ratings bolster children's access to such games.

### **Community violence**

Several films today, notable among which are *Tezaab* (1989), *Angaar* (1993) and *Gardish* (1993), show the community participating in the fights between the hero and the villain as mute spectators. This is an absolutely new and frightening aspect of 'mass' culture that cinema has internalised. The spectators are mute and will not interfere or intervene, or even give evidence later. They watch within the frame and magnify the terror of the violence that is being experienced. Their very passivity is a background against which physical violence stands out in stark contrast. One of the most devastating of such mass scenes in recent times has been in *Jigar* (1993) where the protagonist's sister is raped publicly in a square to teach the brother a lesson. The mother runs from pillar to post and even tries to enlist the help of a policeman nearby, but to no avail. The girl then publicly commits suicide. Rape has always been a staple ingredient of the villain's villainy, but it has always been committed as an act away from public gaze: in the privacy of a room, in the jungle but always in a lonely, isolated spot. The voyeuristic gaze in this particular instance also includes an incestuous one, since the brother is tied up at a height and has perforce to witness the rape and death of his sister.

Today's hero moves around in a group (Anil Kapoor is the quintessential mob-hero - refer, for example, to his role in *Ram Lakhan*, 1990), in the way the underprivileged instinctively move in a clannish group. It is not as if Amitabh Bachchan as the persona par excellence of the seventies and eighties did not have friendship with other male characters - as, for example, in *Sholay* where he and Dharmendra are partners in petty crimes. However, an aspect of the personality that he always cultivated was that of a loner, and a nonchalant one at that.

Acts of violation committed against the father, sister or mother are what are responsible for the rebirth in violence of today's hero. The storyline in the films of the fifties and sixties, whether they dealt with romance or gangsterism, often rested on a tension between familial and social relationships. In the films of the 70s, the family showed signs of breaking up, with the father getting lost either morally or physically. This loss defined the hero's being. Today it is the family and by extension the community, as territorial notions, that are to be defended at all cost by the hero.

It is in this context that the hit of the late 1980s *Phool aur Kaante* is interesting. It deals with the 'lost father' returning very decisively to reinstate himself emotionally and physically into the 'family'. This inversion of the popular 70s theme possibly was as much a factor in the film's success as the new type of violence it ushered in. Nageshwar Rao, the city's leading underworld don, kidnaps his own grandson to force his estranged son and daughter-in-law to come and live with him. He is finally killed in an encounter with a rival gangster and his 'surrogate' son, who has been with him

through thick and thin and expects to inherit the 'empire', is now incensed at Rao's affection for his biological son. In the gangster films of the 1970s, it is the hero who, estranged from his real father, gravitates towards a surrogate one from the underworld.

After the long spate of violence-oriented films upto the mid nineties, melodies, interspersed with stories of teen romance, have made a comeback in commercial films. It was *Maine Pyar Kiya* that initiated the return to melodies in films. A record number of audiocassettes of this film were sold and the popularity of the songs outdid hits of the preceding decade. The film was produced by Rajshri Productions who were known for their small-budget, modest-return films based on rural, non-violent themes and featured new stars and a new director. The film became a superhit, surpassing *Sholay*, mainly because of the popularity of the songs. But even in these successful comedies, the use of violence is mandatory at least in resolving the conflict between the rich and the poor.

### **Different types of violence**

One of the biggest concentrations of violence is on Sony's sister pay channel AXN Action TV, which depicts nothing but mindless violence 24 hours a day. Some of the films aired on the channel are B-grade action movies. WWF fights also contained a large quantity of mindless violence: men and women throwing each other around all over the place with gay abandon, kicking, punching, hitting "where you like it".

In fact, even Discovery Channel, which is considered by many parents to be harmless for children, shows violence in the form of animals chasing each other and killing them.

Research monitored programmes on five channels over nine days. It found 759 distinct incidents of violence across the channels, which included Doordarshan National and Metro, Zee, Sony and Star Plus. Zee led the channels with 365 incidents, while Doordarshan Metro was last with 62.

The study identified as many as 59 types of violence - audio and visual, physical and psychological - were identified by the study. Threats, slapping, screaming, shooting, assaulting, uttering expletives, pushing, clobbering, stabbing, mental torture, eerie sound-tracks, threatening music were de riguer on all programmes on all channels. A good many were unnecessarily long depictions of violence. Over one-third of the "violence-types" appeared in 25 per cent of the episodes monitored. The episodes were in the genre of horror, murder, mystery and suspense thrillers.

One shocking finding was that serials like *Shapath*, *Aahat*, *Shaktimaan*, *Anhonee*, *Kohra*, — all horror or violence-ridden serials — had sponsors in Cadbury's (confectioners), Johnsons' (baby products), Kissan (jams, squashes and ketchups), Parle-G, Chyawanprash, Horlicks, Complan and other health drink makers. All these advertisements targeted children as consumers, making it obvious that children constitute a major part of these programmes' viewership. In fact, most serials made no effort to conceal the fact that they regarded children as the prime viewer of horror and crime-based programmes. The study noted that *Aahat*, *Anhonee*, *Bhanwar*, *India's Most Wanted* and *X-Zone* received top ratings, for audio effects among the four to six years age group.

However, there were a few positive trends as well: On certain days there was a low degree of violence in serials. Occasionally, there

were a few programmes - such as Just Mohabbat, Amanat, Saans and some of Doordarshan's soaps which had no violence, but appealed to the intelligence of the viewers.

But such serials are not able to counter the popularity of thriller serials. A survey conducted by IMRB has revealed that there is a growing class of viewers being weaned away from the never-ending soaps to detective serials. The reason, according to the survey, is that detective serials are far more action-packed than soap operas. The list of the "action-packed" serials included Mohandas B.A.L.L.B., India's Most Wanted and Saturday Suspense on Zee; CID and Bhanwar on Sony; Bullet and Vakeel Jasoos on DD Metro; Saboot, Kohraa and Yeh Hai Raaz on Star TV.

In a separate study, the Centre for Advocacy and Research found controversial and popular Shaktimaan to be replete with violence. In one episode there were 17 acts of violence within a span of 25 minutes, including assaulting, slapping, punching, shooting, strangulating, burning, pushing and stabbing.

### Effects of violence

Hundreds of studies of the effects of TV violence on children and teenagers have found that children may:

- Become "immune" to the horror of violence;
- Gradually accept violence as a way to solve problems;
- Imitate the violence they observe on television; and
- Identify with certain characters, victims and/or victimizers.

Extensive viewing of television violence by children causes greater aggressiveness. Sometimes, watching a single violent programme can increase aggressiveness. Children who view shows in which violence is very realistic, frequently repeated or unpunished, are more likely to imitate what they see. The impact of TV violence may be immediately evident in the child's behaviour or may surface years later, and young people can even be affected when the family atmosphere shows no tendency toward violence.

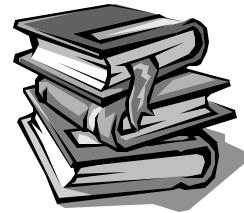
This does not mean that violence on television is the only source for aggressive or violent behaviour, but it is a significant contributor. Factors which can be mentioned as being able to influence the effects of television violence alongside the general cultural system and the sub-system one lives in are the imbedding (or better the lack of imbedding) in peer groups as well as personality traits such as self-esteem, intelligence and gender. All in all, the children's aggressive behaviour patterns and perceptions are a mirror of what they experience in their real environment: frustration, aggression, and problematic circumstances. Peer influences, family role models, social and economic status, educational level and the availability of weapons can each significantly alter the likelihood of a particular reaction to viewing violence on television.

### Review Questions:

- Discuss in detail the kind of violence shown in Indian media.
- What impact according to you media creates on a child's mind?
- What measures can be taken to minimize the violent impact of media?

### Suggested Readings

- Keval J kumar: Mass Communication in India, Jaico Publishing House



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## LESSON 23

### MEDIA AND CHILDREN

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#### **Media and Children**

Violent programs on television lead to aggressive behavior by children and teenagers who watch those programs.

That's the word from a 1982 report by the National Institute of Mental Health, a report that confirmed and extended an earlier study done by the Surgeon General. As a result of these and other research findings, the American Psychological Association passed a resolution in February 1985 informing broadcasters and the public of the potential dangers that viewing violence on television can have for children.

Psychological research has shown three major effects of seeing violence on television:

- Children may become less sensitive to the pain and suffering of others
- Children may be more fearful of the world around them . Children may be more likely to behave in aggressive or harmful ways toward others.
- Children who watch a lot of TV are less aroused by violent scenes than are those who only watch a little; in other words, they're less bothered by violence in general, and less likely to see anything wrong with it. One example: in several studies, those who watched a violent program instead of a nonviolent one were slower to intervene or to call for help when, a little later, they saw younger children fighting or playing destructively.

Studies by George Gerbner, Ph.D., at the University of Pennsylvania, have shown that children's TV shows contain about 20 violent acts each hour and also that children who watch a lot of television are more likely to think that the world is a mean and dangerous place.

Children often behave differently after they've been watching violent programs on TV. In one study done at Pennsylvania State University, about 100 preschool children were observed both before and after watching television; some watched cartoons that had a lot of aggressive and violent acts in them, and others watched shows that didn't have any kind of violence. The researchers noticed real differences between the kids who watched the violent shows and those who watched nonviolent ones.

#### **Understanding the Impact of Media on Children and Teens**

In a matter of seconds, most children can mimic a movie or TV character, sing an advertising jingle, or give other examples of what they have learned from media. Sadly, these examples may include naming a popular brand of beer, striking a "sexy" pose, or play fighting. Children only have to put a movie into the VCR, open a magazine, click on a Web site, or watch TV to experience all kinds of messages. It really is that easy.

Media offer entertainment, culture, news, sports, and education. They are an important part of our lives and have much to teach.

But some of what they teach may not be what we want children to learn. This brochure gives an overview of some of the messages media send young people that could be negative or harmful to their health. You will learn how you can teach your children to better understand the media messages they see and hear in print, over airwaves, on networks, and on-line.

#### **The power of media messages**

Sometimes you can see the impact of media right away, such as when your child watches superheroes fighting and then copies their moves during play. But most of the time the impact is not so immediate or obvious. It occurs slowly as children see and hear certain messages over and over, such as the following:

- Fighting and other violence used as a way to "handle" conflict
- Cigarettes and alcohol shown as cool and attractive, not unhealthy and deadly
- Sexual action with no negative results, such as disease or unintended pregnancy

#### **Media messages : Good or Bad?**

Whatever form they take (ads, movies, computer games, music videos), messages can be good or bad for your child. Just as you would limit certain foods in your child's diet that may be unhealthy, you also should limit her media diet of messages. Some examples of these follow.

#### **Use of cigarettes and alcohol**

Messages about tobacco and alcohol are everywhere in media. Kids see characters on screen smoking and drinking. They see signs for tobacco and alcohol products at concerts and sporting events. Advertising and movies send kids the message that smoking and drinking make a person sexy or cool and that "everyone does it." Advertising also sways teens to smoke and drink. Teens who see a lot of ads for beer, wine, liquor, and cigarettes admit that it influences them to want to drink and smoke. It is not by chance that the three most advertised cigarette brands are also the most popular ones smoked by teens.

Advertisers of tobacco and alcohol purposely leave out the negative information about their products. As a result, young people often do not know what the health risks are when they use these products. Sometimes TV broadcasts and print articles do the same thing. For example, a magazine might do a story about the common causes of cancer but not mention smoking as a top cause. Does your child know why? The answer may be that the magazine publisher takes money to publish tobacco ads or even owns another company that makes cigarettes.

#### **Fatty foods and thin bodies**

Media heavily promote unhealthy foods while at the same time telling people they need to lose weight and be thin. Heavy media use can also take time away from physical activity.

Studies show that girls of all ages worry about their weight. Many of them are starting to diet at early ages. Media can promote an unrealistic image of how people look. Often, the thin and perfect-looking person on screen or in print is not even one whole person but parts of several people! Using body doubles, airbrushing, and computer-graphics techniques creates this “person”.

### Violence

Children learn their attitudes about violence at a very young age and these attitudes tend to last. Although TV violence has been studied the most, researchers are finding that violence in other media impacts children and teens in many of the same harmful ways.

- From media violence children learn to behave aggressively toward others. They are taught to use violence instead of self-control to take care of problems or conflicts.
- Violence in the “media world” may make children more accepting of real-world violence and less caring toward others. Children who see a lot of violence from movies, TV shows, or video games may become more fearful and look at the real world as a mean and scary place.

Although the effects of media on children might not be apparent right away, children are being negatively affected. Sometimes children may not act out violently until their teen or young-adult years.

### Media education basics

Parents need to set limits and be actively involved with the TV shows, computer games, magazines, and other media that children use. But this is only one step in helping media play a positive role in children’s lives. Because media surround us and cannot always be avoided, one way to filter their messages is to develop the skills to question, analyze, and evaluate them. This is called media literacy or media education.

Just as a print-literate child learns to be critical of the things he reads, he should also be able to do the same with moving pictures and sounds. Your child can learn to understand both the obvious and hidden messages in all media. Once children learn media education skills, they will begin to ask questions and think about the media messages they watch, read, and hear. And they usually will enjoy doing it!

Following are basic media education points a child should know:

- **People create media messages.** A team of people, whether it’s a magazine article or a TV talk show, creates any media message. Those people write it, decide what pictures to use, and what to leave out. All of these things give the message a purpose.
- **Each media form uses its own language.** Newspapers make headlines large to attract readers to certain stories. Media with sound may use music to make people feel a range of emotions. When children learn about these techniques they are able to understand how a message is delivered instead of only being affected by it.
- **No two people experience the same media message in exactly the same way.** How a person interprets a message depends on things unique to that person’s life. These can include age, values, memories, and education.

- **Media messages have their own values and points of view.**

These are built into the message itself. Children should compare the promoted values against their own values. It is important for children to learn that they have a *choice* in whether to accept the values that are being promoted in any media message.

### Review Questions:

- Discuss in detail the kind of violence shown in Indian media.
- What impact according to you media creates on a child’s mind?
- What measures can be taken to minimize the violent impact of media?

### Suggested Readings

- Keval J kumar: Mass Communication in India, Jaico Publishing House



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## LESSON 24

### MEDIA AND POLITICS

#### **Introduction**

MODERN politics is largely a mediated politics, experienced by most citizens through their broadcast and print media of choice. Any study of democracy in contemporary conditions is, therefore, also a study of how the media report and interpret political events and issues, and how media itself influences the political processes and shapes public opinion. Thus, media has become central to politics and public life in contemporary democracy.

Access to media is one of the key measures of power and equality. Media can shape power and participation in society in negative ways, by obscuring the motives and interests behind political decisions, or in positive ways, by promoting the involvement of people in those decisions. In this respect the media and governance equation becomes important.

Media occupies a space that is constantly contested, which is subject to organizational and technological restructuring, to economic, cultural and political constraints, to commercial pressures and to changing professional practices. The changing contours of this space can lead to different patterns of domination and agenda-setting and to different degrees of openness and closure in terms of access, patterns of ownership, available genres, types of disclosure and range of opinions represented.

Although it is intrinsically difficult to theorize about the complexities implied in this formulation, the implications of the empirical outcomes of the struggle over this terrain are crucial for the ways in which they help or hinder democratic governance. For this reason journalists and their audiences, when they first read, hear or see news, should always ask the irreverent question: 'Says who?' This may be bad news for the official managers of society, but it will be good news for democracy.

In a democratic society, therefore, the role of the media assumes seminal importance. Democracy implies participative governance, and it is the media that informs people about various problems of society, which makes those wielding power on their behalf answerable to them. That the actions of the government and the state, and the efforts of competing parties and interests to exercise political power should be underpinned and legitimized by critical scrutiny and informed debate facilitated by the institutions of the media is a normative assumption uniting the political spectrum.

It has been further remarked by Davis Merritt, in his work *Public Journalism and Public Life* that what journalists should bring to the arena of public life is knowledge of the rules – how the public has decided a democracy should work – and the ability and willingness to provide relevant information and a place for that information to be discussed and turned into democratic consent. They must exhibit no partisan interest in the specific outcome other than it is arrived at under the democratic process.

#### **The Relationship**

There exists an intimate relationship between the political processes and the mass media. The functions of mass communication in

the sphere of politics are of grave importance to India, since more than anything else, the mass media are fully exploited by our leaders for political propaganda, but the truth is that even the largely private-owned press is charged with political news, biased frequently in favour of one party or another.

In the first place, mass communication should provide the citizen the means to understand the substance of policies. Secondly, they should perform an 'amplifying function', by giving wide publicity to the actions and views of important individuals.

Thirdly, they should provide the common fund of information necessary for the formation of public opinion and the conduct of the political process. Further, the mass media should attempt to provide standards, by which political actions can be judged, the common frame of reference which must unite rulers and ruled in a democratic political structure. The media, therefore, could help, considerably in public participation in national and regional policies. However, the reality is that the coverage of politics by the mass media is often fragmented and superficial. The sensational and the transient are given predominance over the kind of information relevant to political education about political leaders and parties, which are of great significance to the political outcome.

#### **Propaganda and Persuasion**

Persuasion is the art of winning friends and influencing people. It's an art that does not employ force or deliberate manipulation of people's minds. Its success depends on rather on attention to and comprehension of the persuader's message, and acceptance of involuntarily, as well as on the content of the message, the manner of presentation, and other crucial situation/cultural factors.

Propaganda is the deliberate manipulation by means of symbols such as words, gestures, flags, images, monuments, music and the like, of people's thoughts or actions with respect to their beliefs, values and behaviors. Propaganda, therefore, is not casual or instructional communication. It is opposed to any free exchange of ideas, for the propagandist never doubts his own beliefs and value system and the necessity of propagating them to others.

#### **The Political 'Campaigns'**

**Ramesh Narayan**



Elections are here; it's time to reach out. THE world's most populous democracy is getting ready to cast its mandate. And the country is slowly getting into the election mood.

The elections in India are probably the largest getting-together of people with a single purpose. And anyone who talks about illiteracy here should see how Governments are voted in or out with total unpredictability. They could also notice the increasing role of communication in this mega jamboree.

Years ago, communication meant cut-outs, banners, buttons, flags and all the in-stadia sound and light that could be mopped up when a leader comes to address a rally. Ramshackle jeeps fitted with loudspeakers roamed the countryside broadcasting little doggerels penned by aspiring poets to anyone who would listen to them.

Technology has changed all this. Systematic advertising, with the help of professional advertising agencies, came into effect sometime in the '70s. Ulka was probably the first agency to handle a national political party's advertising campaign. R. K. Swamy Associates was also active, and so were other agencies at the regional level. Probably the only professional thing about that first campaign was the advertising. The experience of the aftermath would make the present multinational avatar of Ulka think twice before jumping in where angels fear to tread.

Meanwhile, the world was awakening to the joys of professional advertising in political campaigns. The US was miles ahead. Television made or marred the political fortunes of Presidential aspirants there. The Saatchi brothers were making history in the UK with their famous campaign for the Conservative party: 'Labour isn't working.'

In India, a shy young man was stepping into the blood-stained shoes of his slain mother, and he seemed committed to a new professional way of functioning. For the first time, an Indian advertising agency had total access to the leader of a great national party. And his confidence! Rediffusion had firmly demonstrated what an advertising agency could do for a political party. However, the 'once more with feeling' did not work. Post mortems are dirty work, but it seemed that the 'professional' work of an Indian advertising agency had not worked, and it was back to the old days where local satraps pushed agencies of their choice, and meritocracy gave way to autocracy.

Yet, advertising agencies are now very much a part and parcel of the hurly burly of political campaigning. The media has stepped in wisely and insisted on advance payment for campaign advertising. This has proved to be a boon for the advertising agencies.

As the great Indian political circus gets set to roll, the stakes are high and the jury seems to be still out on who are the winners in the advertising sweepstakes. The 'India Shining' campaign, which is seen as the Government-sponsored election advertising campaign, has set the tone for what lies ahead. No "government-looking" advertising. Big, bold, glossy, well-made advertising. It augurs well for the advertising agencies, and most certainly for the media.

The TV campaign has been hailed as the second most frequently telecast brand on TV during December '03 and January '04. An Adex analysis claims there were about 9,472 advertisements telecast

on about 100 channels monitored. In terms of advertising duration, the campaign, with its preponderance of generous 60-second advertisements, took the numero uno position. An interesting feature that has emerged in the analysis is that about 75 per cent of the duration share went to Doordarshan channels. Firstly, it means that good old DD gets the thumbs up when it comes to sheer reach and viewership. Secondly, in a lighter vein, the huge amount of Government money that has been spent on this campaign, which has made a lot of people upset, has largely flowed back into Government coffers after all. So why complain?

The die is being cast before the votes are cast. Very soon the names of the advertising agencies who will be the spin doctors of these elections will be announced. The Maharashtra Government has already fired the first tentative salvo at the India Shining campaign with its own 'Maharashtra Leading' campaign. Other States will follow.

Then the major political parties will open up with the heavy artillery. The last quarter of this financial year will certainly end with a flourish for the media houses. Whoever wins, they do.

And this time around, the jury will be the great Indian electorate. Lets see what they feel about all this noise.

(The author heads Canco Advertising.)

**February 10, 2004**

### India Shining...Feel Good vs Fail Good

The "India Shining" blitz launched by the NDA Government to showcase their achievements in the run up to the Lok Sabha polls is sure to have caught the eye of most Indians. Be it the print or electronic media, the 'voters' have been given a fair dose of 'India Shining'.

One person's medicine could be another's poison. Obviously, the media campaign has not gone down well with the opposition parties, and political commentators. They have repeatedly slammed the Vajpayee Government for the campaign, saying that taxpayers' money should not be misused for partisan electoral gains.

Fortunately for the opposition, their view is being echoed by none other than the Election Commission (EC), one of the country's highly regarded democratic and autonomous body. Within hours of taking charge at Nirvachan Sadan, the newly elected Chief Election Commissioner T.S. Krishnamurthy cautioned the NDA Government against using taxpayers' money to fund its advertisement blitz before the Lok Sabha polls. This statement is personal and has no legal binding, said Krishnamurthy.

He made it clear that the CEC did not have the authority at present to restrain the Vajpayee Government but indicated that that the Centre was violating the "spirit" of the code of conduct since the 13th Lok Sabha had already been dissolved. The model code of conduct comes into effect only after the elections are formally announced by the EC.

But, despite a word of caution from the CEC, the Government is determined to go ahead with its high-profile publicity drive. Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee on Monday joined the debate on "India Shining". He made it clear that the campaign would be on till the model code of conduct comes into effect. "Government money is not being misused. Every government highlights its

achievements, when the model of code of conduct comes into effect. We will also go by the rules," said Vajpayee.

Though the BJP insists that the media blitz is not an extension of its pre-poll campaign, top party leaders are getting directly involved in its formation and implementation. Finance Minister Jaswant Singh is said to have held a meeting with advertising professionals and top government officers to discuss the second phase of the "India Shining" campaign.

But, the Government's lavish "India Shining" campaign has caused resentment among opposition parties and political experts because it is perceived as being expended for partisan ends. "Taxpayers' money is used to promote BJP and NDA agenda. This is totally unacceptable to us," said senior Congress leader Kapil Sibal.

The NDA Government has reportedly spent over Rs2bn on the ongoing "India Shining" campaign on television. Apart from this, different ministries and departments are putting out their own advertisements in the print media. The total cost of all this is estimated at Rs4.5bn. It is also said that the Government is now focussing on schemes like rural housing and healthcare in the second phase of the "India Shining" drive. A conservative estimate for the still to be launched "India on the Move" campaign is pegged at Rs2.5bn

If the NDA Government is indeed misusing the taxpayers' money for electoral gains, which appears to be the case, there is no reason why the citizens of this country should foot the bill for the sales pitch. Analysts also question the Vajpayee Government's attempt to publicize its achievements now, just when the Lok Sabha elections are round the corner. They also point out that public money should not be used for projecting the BJP's political leadership in a positive light.

But while criticizing the NDA Government for violating the "spirit" of the yet to be announced election code, one must remember that all Governments, including the caretaker ones, have to carry on with the business of governance. In certain circumstances, they even have to take decisions that may seem like electorally expedient. There is then some virtue in the argument offered by BJP top brass that Governments also have to convey to citizens the work they have done or are doing.

But this argument does not hold water in this particular instance. That is because the "India Shining" campaign does not appear to be aimed at informing readers/viewers about what the Government hopes to do or has done. It is more a marketing blitz that portrays the NDA Government as having done a great job of handling the country's economy. Against this backdrop, one has only to second Krishnamurthy's proposal - that political parties and Governments observe the spirit of the moral code of conduct even before it becomes formally operational.

Whether the PR stunt leads to the NDA Government coming back to power at the Centre only time will tell. But one thing is sure, the publicity stunt has snowballed into a major poll issue at a time when the NDA Government is all geared to take advantage of the "feel good factor".

### **Review Questions:**

- Discuss in detail the interdependence of politics and Indian media.
- What kind of coverage according you is given to the political issues?
- What is propaganda and how is it different from persuasion?

### **Suggested Readings**

- Keval J kumar: Mass Communication in India, Jaico Publishing House



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**- Heman Maradia**

## LESSON 25

### ENVIRONMENTAL JOURNALISM

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#### **Environmental journalism in India**

Environmental journalism in India began in the 1920s, but that valuable phase is forgotten. What is remembered and lauded is the environmental journalism of the '80s, when academics, NGOs and social scientists took on the cause. But this was the period during which the debate on the environment actually receded from the mainstream into technical and esoteric journals.

When we speak of environmental journalism in India, we have to see it against the backdrop of the environmental movement as a whole. The environmental movement in India has gone through two phases. The first phase starts around 1920 and continues till the 1940s. This is the forgotten, or undocumented, phase and foregrounds the ideas and opinions of a variety of thinkers, mostly nationalist. There were a number of environmental thinkers and writers all through that period. Some were Gandhians, like the great Tamil economist JC Kumarappa. Some like Radhakamal Mukherjee were social scientists. Mukherjee pioneered an interdisciplinary brand of knowledge, which he termed social ecology and which sought to bring together the Natural Sciences and the Social Sciences. Some were dissident colonial scientists. There was, for example, Albert Howard, who was in the Indian Agricultural Service, and is now revered in the West as a prophet of organic agriculture. He developed a method of composting known as the Indore method, which is used by organic farmers in the West. But in India he is forgotten.

What we really see in this period is a debate between the ecologically responsible and the modernisers. The former wanted co-existence with nature while the latter felt that the concern for the environment was a deviation from the task of building an economically robust, industrially advanced India.

Beginning in 1947, we have what we could call "the age of innocence". The Gandhians are defeated. The modernisers win the debate. Environmental considerations flee to the margins. They will re-emerge much later in the 1970s — not in the form of intellectual critiques as in the first phase, but in the form of people's movements and struggles like the Chipko Andolan, the fisherfolks' struggle in Kerala, the forest movement in Jharkhand and Madhya Pradesh, the anti-dam movement in the Narmada valley, the Koel Karo and the Tehri projects and so on.

Against the backdrop of this broad historical canvas, let us look at the specific history of environmental journalism in India. Where are its origins? Here are some glimpses. In 1920, the Tatas were building a dam on one of the rivers in the Western Ghats, near Lonavla. It was going to displace some 15 to 20 villages. There was a satyagraha against it led by a brave socialist from Pune known as Senapati Bapat. This satyagraha was reported right through its course in both The Times of India and the Bombay Chronicle. These were articles that took into account the wider argument meditating on issues like electricity for Bombay versus land for

peasants, rights of displacement, large technology versus small technology, etc.

In 1937, Congress governments came to power in the local legislature bodies of the provinces. There was limited autonomous rule by Indians. A man by the name of SG Warty writes in the Bombay Chronicle on a number of environment-related matters. He argues: "Now we have our own government. We must undo the colonial forest policy. We must make forest management more responsible to the peasants of this country." Warty's work is thus one of several isolated instances of early environmental journalism in India.

Then there was M Krishnan, who wrote a fortnightly column for The Statesman from 1952 to 1996. I consider him India's greatest naturalist. He has a deep knowledge of India's biodiversity and he could write in a precise, evocative style wonderful descriptions of nature all around us — a lizard on a wall, a sparrow being taught to fly, which he observed from his window. He also wrote polemical pieces. Such as on the need to preserve indigenous breeds of cattle. He made original observations of conservation at work, as in Madras, where peasants protected the trees where the herons came to roost (they found the droppings useful as fertiliser). As early as the 1960s we find him writing on the vital significance of Neem. His range, depth and the fact that he went on fortnight after fortnight highlighting the wonders of India's natural wealth is truly admirable. His work needs to be re-discovered. I am currently working on a compilation of Krishnan's writing which is due for publication soon. Krishnan, then, is a pioneering environmental journalist, and his work is all the more valuable for its advocacy of environmental concerns in the Nehruvian era which was hostile to such issues.

By the time we come to the early '70s we find that various struggles by grassroots people to protect the natural resources around them begin to take shape in hundreds of places all over India. Soon we see journalists (not scientists or scholars or academics, mind you) stepping into the picture and reporting and documenting these movements. The Chipko movement, for example, gets wide coverage in the local Hindi newspapers in Garhwal, thanks to journalists like Kunwar Prasun and Shekhar Pathak. Bharat Dogra, who also wrote in English, is another important journalist of the time. In English there were people like Darryl D'Monte, Usha Rai and Anil Agarwal. Between them, these journalists created a body of fine writing on environmental issues, and this included not just reportage and documentation but also analysis and larger, theoretical reflection. This period (roughly 1975-1985) was a very vibrant one for environmental journalism in India. These journalists successfully challenged the conventional notion entertained by the votaries of large-scale development, who held with Indira Gandhi that "poverty was the greatest polluter". They showed that when environmental resources were recklessly mishandled, the poor were the direct sufferers.

In the next phase social scientists, academics, NGOs and even government bodies took up the cause of the environment and the professionalisation of environmental writing begins with this. However, this came at a cost, as the discussion of matters of vital public interest (forests, energy, urbanisation) moved away from the newspapers and other public spheres and into esoteric, technical publications.

Starting with 1991, the fourth phase gets underway. This is when we witness a backlash from the proponents of the unbridled liberalisation of the Indian economy. Those who advocate environmental causes are branded as the people who want to keep India backward, who keep it from becoming another Singapore. Significant initiatives in social forestry, soil management, resource management, alternative energy, etc, undertaken by voluntary organisations throughout the country begin to go largely unreported. This is by and large where we are today.

One last point: The fundamental truth that responsible management of our natural endowments is in fact more important in a poor and heavily populated country than it is in the West is something that neither the right nor the orthodox left in India has ever understood.

#### **Code Of Ethics For Environmental Journalists**

The following Code of Ethics was ratified at the 6th World Congress of Environmental Journalists held in Colombo, Sri Lanka, on October 19 - 23, 1998.

1. The right to a clean environment and sustainable development is fundamental and is closely connected to the right to life and good health and well being. The environmental journalist should inform the public about the threats to the environment - whether it is at the global, regional, national or local level.
2. Often the media is the only source of information on the environment. The journalist's duty is to heighten the awareness of the public on environmental issues. The journalist should strive to report a plurality of views on the environment.
3. By informing the public, the journalist plays a vital role in enabling people to resort to action in protecting their environment. The journalist's duty is not only in alerting people about their endangered environment at the outset, but also in following up such threats and keeping them posted about developments. Journalists should also attempt to write on possible solutions to environmental problems.
4. The journalists should not be influenced on these issues by vested interests - whether they are commercial, political, and government or non-governmental. The journalist ought to keep a distance from such interests and not ally with them. As a rule journalists should report all sides in any environmental controversy.
5. The journalist should as far as possible cite sources of information and avoid alarmist or speculative reportage and tendentious comment. He or she should crosscheck the authenticity of a source, whether commercial, official or non-governmental.
6. The environmental journalist should foster equity in access to such information and help organizations and individuals to gain it. Electronic retrieval of data can provide a useful and egalitarian tool in this regard.

7. The journalist should respect the right of privacy of individuals who have been affected by environmental catastrophes, natural disasters and the like.

8. The environmental journalist should not hesitate to correct information that he or she previously believed was correct, or to tilt the balance of public opinion by analysis in the light of subsequent developments.

The original draft for this code of ethics was prepared by a committee of three senior International Federation of Environmental Journalist (IFEJ) members.

#### **Strategies for Reporting on Environment**

Environmental journalists often go wrong when they highlight flagship species to emphasize the need for protection of biological habitats. The people may just refuse to go by when you argue that the lion tailed monkey ought to be protected in preference to a power project.

This happened in the case of the campaign against Silent Valley hydroelectric project in Kerala (India) that focused too much on the monkeys. Yet Silent Valley was saved owing to multi-faced campaigns launched by Non-Governmental Organisations and The Hindu, India's National Newspaper. However, politicians still raise the debate whether monkeys or human beings were important. They manage with these kinds of argument because the public are not fully aware of the biological wealth of Silent Valley and how that wealth relates to them and the future generations. (Silent Valley is now a World Heritage site).

A few years ago, a newspaper report on the proposed Vamanapuram Irrigation Project in Thiruvananthapuram spoke of the harm the project would cause to the Nilgiri tahr (ibex) on the Ponmudi Mountains. Such reports can even be counter-productive not only because it projected a flagship species but also because the argument was far fetched.

The Kallar Valley, and the river on which the dam of the Vamanapuram Project was to be built, is lying at an elevation of less than 300 metres whereas the ibex lived at an elevation of about 900 metres. There was little chance of the tahr being directly affected by the project. Moreover, ibex has almost ceased to be an endangered species on account of conservation measures undertaken in the past. The population at Ponmudi was not that critical. All that one could say was that some forests would be lost on the lower elevation and this would have some effect on their habitat at the top of the mountains.

Loss of forests and its distant effects, unfortunately, are not arguments that would be fully appreciated by many readers. However, in the case of the forests of Kallar Valley, there was a something more to say. The Valley was one of the few remaining forested low lying valleys in Kerala. The State has more than 30 valleys that lie at an elevation of less than 300 metres above the mean sea level. Almost all of them were forested over a century ago. But, people have cleared them for farming. The import would still be obvious only to a trained scientist unless the reporter adds a few scientific facts in plain language. Different types of plants grow at different elevations. Plants found at low elevation would not grow at higher elevations, say, the Ponmudi mountains.

## Relate the issue to people

The reporter has to add something more that would relate the issue to daily lives of people. One fact is that many of our medicinal plants grow at this elevation and many medicinal herbs are now found only in the forests. Well, our ancestors were conscious of these things when they colonised the valleys. So, they preserved some areas as sacred groves and gave a religious aura to it so that none would destroy them. Even in those groves, sacred trees like Koovamal, which has medicinal value, have become rare.

For the man on the street, the ayurvedic medicines would be important, but not necessarily for the policy maker. Here, economics may be an area they would understand better than environment. Kerala had invested over Rs. 1000 crores on major irrigation projects during the past forty years. The rate of return has not been even one per cent. So, why invest on another project? The project was conceived years ago to irrigate paddy fields. These fields have since been converted into garden lands...

So, if you are writing about the impact of the proposed hydro-electric project at Pooyamkutty in Idukki district, the impact on the reed economy based on the Pooyamkutty forests would be a better argument than the species diversity of the forests. The locals may be concerned about the earthquakes and over two dozen dams spotting the district. The cause of tribals too cannot be ignored anymore. The fact that the forest that will be submerged by the reservoir is a corridor for the elephants may concern the environmentalists. But that may not carry conviction with many others.

## Listen to the people first

The most important thing is that the journalist, who wishes to communicate environmental issues to the people, should hear the people first. The people of Kallar had been agitating against the project for long. What were their arguments? Was there something deeper than the environmental arguments they projected in their leaflets?

Frequent contacts with the affected people are a must for anyone covering environmental issues. This also means that the reporter visits the areas involved including forests before shooting off conclusions based on known arguments in favour of protecting the environment. Each case can have something more than that meets the eye. These days, even vested interests pose as nature lovers. Some commercial interests cleverly promote the cause of environment with hidden objectives. Sometimes this would be to hide their own sins or to put down competitors. Some environmental organisations raise a bogey of protest over every issue just to keep themselves afloat.

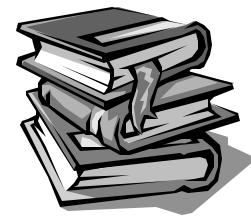
When reporters cannot visit, sincere activists with a sense of proportion can be source to learn about field level developments. The leaders of mainstream environmental organisations should not be depended upon for this, as their own information would be secondary. They are better when you need a few quotes.

### Review Questions:

- What role is media playing in spreading awareness for environment?
- What are the basic strategies involved in reporting environmental issues?

## Suggested Readings

- Keval J kumar: Mass Communication in India, Jaico Publishing House



## Notes

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## ANNEXURE - I

### **Indian Television in the Era of Globalisation: Unity, Diversity or Disparity?**

Mira Kapil Desai

With globalisation, privatisation and liberalisation, transnational media flow and content have increased enormously, especially in the third world countries leading to the threat to local communication-media industry.

With the GAT/WTO agreements, the issue of "cultural exception"/protection of the audio-visual sector is a main concern to many governments including India.

This paper elaborates about the Government response to developments of transnational/transborder-satellite television in the country and examines the issues of diversity in the Indian television scene. The paper examines the role of the Indian state in the times of cultural homogenisation and assesses whether Indian television in the era of globalisation projects cultural unity, diversity or disparity. The paper discusses unity, diversity or disparity in terms of language, religion, access and division in Indian media environment in the era of globalisation.

#### **Background**

Last decade refers to global connectivity, compression of time and space and market ruling over the State. All over the world remarkable changes and challenges marked the end of the twentieth century. The changes mainly in technology of communication and transportation, deregulation of capital, liberalisation and desire of cultural exchanges and challenges to regulate for the reluctant State, global competition, market driven economy and increasing interdependence of global economy are realities of the nineties. Globalisation increasingly brought the realisation that the State is losing power and freedom of action and an unprecedented movement of cultural homogenisation is taking place across the globe.

UNESCO comments that as the globalisation of markets, technology and information sweeps the world, growing homogenisation is countered by accelerating fragmentation: people are brought increasingly together at the same time they are driven apart. The twentieth century has been the most disastrous in human history in social and political terms. 'Emergence of culture is an important factor in determining the status of an individual in society or of a nation in the world is a matter of great significance' Singh (1998).

Audiovisual landscapes encompassing television, radio, cinema, video game and multimedia sectors in respect of both production and distribution/broadcasting (including cable and satellite) and other areas of culture (publishing, the arts, cultural institutes and heritage) have a special role to play in any society. These sectors often referred to as 'cultural industry' face the threat of 'imperialism' all the more in the era of globalisation. Public policies of legislative, regulatory or financial measures put in place by the State in co-operation with other parties are of special importance

in such a circumstance. These cultural goods are different from other goods and services, and deserve different and/or exceptional treatment. This differential treatment has to reflect even in the international trade agreements and in the demands for effective and strong regulatory frameworks to redefine cultural policies focusing on the promotion and development of cultural industries.

As tariffs, quotas, import licensing, and other long visible trade barriers come down, other concerns become more obvious. The "cultural exception" is just one of the possible means for achieving this objective of promoting cultural diversity ([http://www.unesco.org/culture/industries/trade/html\\_eng/question18.shtml#18](http://www.unesco.org/culture/industries/trade/html_eng/question18.shtml#18)). Government regulations, quotas, exemption and concessions, subsidies, supply restrictions, and intellectual property protections are few of the responses for cultural protection-exception to counter fears of cultural homogenisation. Sinclair (1997) comments that the STAR's strategy of 'going local' shows how much language and culture have emerged as 'tangible markets'. Hamelink (1994: 111) commented, "A basic ingredient is missing for global culture. Culture provides people with a sense of identity, a past, destiny and dignity. Culture is bound to time and space. Global culture is inherently weak as it has no historical and spatial location...but there undoubtedly is a process of cultural globalisation". The trends of localisation, cultural adaptation of global products and the role of language in regionalisation support Hamelink's comment.

From the audience perspective, younger generations are growing up watching the western content values and understand little of their indigenous media (Varma, 2000). Commercialisation, the diminishing role of the State, the threats to public service broadcasters and the impact of western contents on domestic productions in form of 'genres, formats or production values' (Serebny- Mohammadi 1991, Richards, 2000) are all facts indicating that protection measures are required. Canada, China, Australia and France are few examples where parameters exist to ensure local content on television to restrict different types of foreign programmes. Against this trend, India, Philippines, Thailand, Hong Kong and Japan are few of the countries that have opted for an 'open sky' policy.

This paper examines the post-1990 developments in India on the television front. It elaborates on the Government response to the development of transnational-transborder-satellite television in the country and examines the issues of unity, diversity and disparities in the Indian television scene.

#### **India - A case in Point**

India has a pluralistic character in terms of ideas, languages, forms of worship, architecture, agricultural practices, dress, handicrafts, medicine, industry, science and instruments of production and consumption. Apart from more than six religious orientations, the language scenario in India is very complex. There are 1562 mother tongues, 10 writing systems, 76 languages in the school

system out of 2000 codified languages. The Indian constitution recognises 18 languages in its schedule eighth spoken by 98% population. Vijayanunni (1999) reports that nearly 20 per cent of the population in India is bilingual while just over seven percent is trilingual.

The Indian media mosaic is diverse yet unified. Folk forms of dance, music, oral traditions, story telling and Government control from newsprint to telecommunication unite Indian media. Another common factor is the Indian film industry that started in the country almost at the same time as it did in the world. Since 1912, India has indigenously developed a culturally rooted film industry, which makes the largest number of films in the world. Indian film industry has been a strong influence on the rest of the media. Radio, television and music industry rely heavily on Indian film industry. The American hegemony of Hollywood has never bothered the Indian audio-visual market. Interestingly enough, Indian film industry is further divided into two broad categories—a northern one (mainly Hindi, the Indian national language) and a southern (languages of the southern states).

India is one of the few nations with capabilities in satellite technology having influenced developments on the television front. Table-1 in the Annexes notes the satellite launches by the Government of India. Post-1990 satellite television in India has become transnational in nature. It coincided with the entry of multinational companies in the Indian markets under the Government policy of privatisation. The implications were private ownership in disguised forms, absence of censorship or any such controls, autonomy and 61 Monographic: Indian Television in the Era of Globalisation: Unity, Diversity or Disparity? commercialisation of the medium and economic, political and cultural implications of transnational messages. The concept of television as an intimate and family medium is being utilized to its fullest to influence the rapidly expanding middle class in India (estimated to be 222-250 million of the 535 million people with access to television). Today 535.4 million people have access to television in a country of 100 million people.

Nowadays Indian television means regional television networks, language channels, country/language approach by commercial broadcasters and preference for public service broadcaster due to economic and other considerations by Indian audiences. Indian television also means confusion for national identity, lack of language representation, division of urban-rural areas, co-existence of private and public systems, dilemmas of prioritisation of education upon entertainment, development over market and so on. India is in this context a very interesting case in point for cultural diversity debate as the diversity inherently brings complexities.

### **Television in India**

Television was initiated in most developing countries including India mainly due to a 'political will' (UNESCO 1953 and 1964, Katz & Wedell 1977). It accomplished technical efficiency over the years (from black and white to colour, portable television sets, television broadcasting by satellites, development of cable television), establishing itself in the society due to private investment in television sets and finally strengthening its presence because of advertisers' interest in the medium since 1976, when the first advertisement was aired on Indian television.

History of television in India dates back to 15th September 1959, when experimental telecasts from radio stations began due to a grant from UNESCO (UNESCO 1953, Bhatt 1994). A one-hour transmission service became regular exactly after six years with a daily news bulletin in 1965. SITE was the first step in the direction of satellite television in India. Little happened in Indian television prior to Satellite Instructional Television Experiment (SITE), an experimental six-state initiative in television-based communication for social and development communication. Indian television was separated from Indian radio in 1976.

### **Television sets :**

In 1962 there were only 41 sets in the country that rose to 2,75,424 in 1974 and boomed to 4,76,026 (173%) in the next two years. The last official figure of television sets in the country by 1984 was 36,32,328 since the policy of licensing of television sets was called off in 1985. Table-2 in the Annexes notes the developments thereafter with a total of 74.71 million sets in the country today, 57.72 million of which are black & white and 16.99 million are colour sets. Prior to 1983, 28 per cent of the Indian population mainly in metropolis (except SITE areas) had access to television. The proportion increased to 53 per cent in 1985, 62 per cent by 1988 and today it covers almost 90 per cent of the country's population.

### **Video & Cable boom:**

Video boom, cable television and dish antennas in five-star hotels were few of the factors facilitating the change of face of satellite television in India in the early eighties. In less than five years, from 1984 to 1989, the penetration of video moved from the capital down to the districts and villages (Shah 1997, Agrawal 1991). Enterprising individuals in apartment blocks placed a video in their homes or their garages and started offering a cable TV service to people in their vicinity. Cable television appeared in the United States in late 1940's and grew by 1967 for a different purpose, to deliver over-the-air television signals to areas where reception was inadequate because of topography or distance. Even in most western European countries it was limited to relay transmission of broadcast signals in the eighties. In India it appears in the early eighties for altogether different purpose, to deliver mass entertainment needs of audiences who can afford cable connection (Jehoram, 1983). The growth of cable television homes in urban India indicates a rise from 0.41 million in 1992 to 40 million in 2002 as noted in the Table-3.

Cable operators are an important link in Indian television distribution. A cable operator using dish antennas receives programmes and redistributes them to individual household subscribers through a cable network. The costs are distributed to such a great extent that the subscriber can receive an average of 40 channels for a monthly subscription fee of about 1.25 Euros to 8.50 Euros after paying some installation charges.

India opted for the British model of broadcasting. Parallel to the entertainment-driven market model of television, India 62 Quaderns del CAC: Issue 14 has also a number of ongoing educational and social communication experiments mainly through the Development and Educational Communication Unit, Indian Space Research Association. The notable ones are GRAMSAT (Gramin Satellite- Accelerating the pace of Rural

Development), Jhabua Development Communication Project, Training and Development Communication Channel, GyanVani—educational radio and television services.

### **Response of the Indian Government**

Up to 1991 the television broadcasting in India meant that the Indian State controlled the nation-wide network, DoorDarshan. By 1991 satellite television took the form of 'transnational television' with telecast of Gulf war by CNN. McDowell (1997: 168) notes that more channels, cable television distribution regulation, together with some programming changes highlight the Government of India's response and policy choices in 1990s. According to India Today dated 31st March 1992, an internal report of the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting had predicated as early as February 1991 that 'Programmes specifically targeted at Indian audiences are likely to be beamed from foreign satellites in the near future'. The reactions of the Government of India in the print media during that time were that 'there is no threat' (Indian Express 1992, The Times of India 1992). As Reddi (1996: 243) notes, 'inaction is the best condition for private enterprises to flourish, and they are now unstoppable'.

DoorDarshan underwent major changes in the period from 1993 to 1998. Tracey (1998) notes, "...the shift of emphasis on DoorDarshan...within the overall context of growing commercialisation of media in India (and even many other developing countries across globe)". The historic judgement of the Indian Supreme Court on airwaves in 1995 stated: "air waves or frequencies are public property. Their use had to be controlled and regulated by a public authority in the interest of the public and to prevent invasion of their rights". Laws, rules and regulations do exist in India, but on the whole they facilitate the reception of foreign satellite programmes; the Indian state actually 'actively mediated the process' (McDowell, 1997: 155). Prasar Bharati Act of 1990 provided 'for the establishment of a Broadcasting Corporation for India, to be known as Prasar Bharati, to define its composition, functions and powers and to provide for matters connected therewith or incidental thereto'. In 1991, the government of the Congress (political party then in power) re-examined the Prasar Bharati Act of 1990 to fight the fear of competition from private television channels.

After the initial licensing of dish antennas to restrict satellite television, the Government came up with distribution regulation in form of Cable Television Network Regulation Bill (1994) and the Act was passed in 1995. The Government started taxing cable operators in a bid to generate revenues. The rates rose by 35 percent in 26 states of India. The Act made it mandatory for the Cable operators, who must register their companies in the Post Office and pay entertainment taxes. More significantly, the Act made transmission of at least two DoorDarshan channels obligatory, and drew up a programming and advertising code, the adherence to which would be the responsibility of the operator.

Indian government's stand to technological developments is clear from the New Telecom Policy 1999 of BJP Government which reads, 'The Indian telecommunications system continues to be governed by the provisions of the Indian Telegraph Act, 1885 (ITA 1885) and the Indian Wireless Act, 1933. Substantial changes have taken place in the telecommunications sector since 1992. ITA 1885 needs to be replaced with a more forward looking Act'. In 2001

the Communication Convergence bill was introduced by the Department of Telecommunications to promote, facilitate and develop in an orderly manner the carriage and content of communications (including broadcasting, telecommunication, and multimedia), for the establishment of an autonomous Commission to regulate all forms of communications, and for the establishment of an Appellate Tribunal and to provide for matters connected therewith or incidental thereto. On December 1, 2002, the Communications Minister reported that the Government is not in a hurry and the decision will be taken by May 2003.

### **Unity, Disparity or Diversity? The Complexities**

#### **Language:**

The language landscape in India is very 63 Monographic: Indian Television in the Era of Globalisation: Unity, Diversity or Disparity? complex. There is a large number of population, which knows English. At the same time, the southern part of India was always marginalized in the process to promote national language 'Hindi-centric, Delhi-centric' programming (Singhal & Rogers, 2001: 98). With their great success, private satellite channels created history in southern India due to 'a preference for the language, quality of programme content, availability of preferred programming types or through identification with the socio-cultural context' (Muppiddi, 1999). DoorDarshan has regional language channels in 15 languages but they are available through cable. Only nine languages are represented through private satellite channels. Many satellite channels in India today are bilingual. Thus, taking a case of 'Hinglish' (Hindi + English) comments that its use 'has been the contributory factor in the expansion of Indian television outside the borders of the country' and expresses his concern because an 'increasing emphasis on entertainment-led Hinglish television may be cause of celebration for post-modern view of a culturally hybrid, globalised world resulting in a linguistic and intellectual confusion that may trivialise the vital public concerns' (2000: 308).

#### **Religion:**

Culture in Indian television is still framed under the mainstream of 'Hindu' identity with a high rate of mythological features. Mostly Hindu, highly urbanized upper middle class representations and stereotyping of religious identity is the core content of the television programming. Myths like Ramayana and Mahabharat played a significant role in promoting Hindu-centric national identity (Mitra 1993, Rajagopal 2000). DoorDarshan as per the programming code never named any community but international broadcasters do not follow that code. Shield & Muppiddi (1996: 19) conclude, "The plurality of representations (post-1990)...would render ineffective any attempts at propagating a highly selective version of national identity and culture".

#### **Access:**

The television landscape of four Asian countries (Senstrup & Goonasekera, 1994) revealed that of the four countries under study compared to Korea and Australia where 99.9 and 99 percent households have television sets, India has only 20 per cent households with one television. Seventy percent of the television sets in India are black & white and the disparity across and within the states range from 86 per cent B&W (in Bihar) to 32 percent B&W

(in Kerala). The issue of B&W is crucial in the sense that the set has limited capability to tune in channels and so inherent limitation to access 100+ private satellite channels. Krishnan (2001: 48) rightly remarks, "a lot of time and energy in television channels is spent on the programming aspect without sufficient emphasis being placed on the distribution aspect". Besides, many Indian households who cannot afford other things, own a television set and at times cable connection. This leads to a lot of pressure to conform to the norms projected on television without having resources to do so. And with the social development education agenda displaced with the marketing messages, the disparity and diversity in the scenario can lead to social unrest and conflicts.

#### **Divisions:**

After 1992, Indian television advertising invariably targets to urban upper middle class, Satellite Hindi channels are 'unashamedly urban north Indian' (Bajpai, 1999: 54). Salwar Kameez (Indian female clothing) is a sign of liberated woman in the southern language private channel Sun while for Hindi channels it is a sign of tradition or conservatism. Door Darshan's figures report that 73.8 per cent of urban households has television sets while 23.7 per cent of rural homes has television and the ratio of urban and rural C&STV households is 40.6 to 6.5. There is a disparity of access, projection and representation. The diversity that 'pays' gets 'space' in present media environment.

Ninan (2002) comments that the press censorship in India means 'censorship imposed by the market, by political correctness, by militancy and extremism, by the political connections of the editor/ owner, by the inability to substantiate, and generally on account of laziness accompanied by fear of libel (Can't get proof or the other side's version? Just drop the name.)'. Indian television has more or less the same players.

#### **Conclusion**

"I do not want my house to be walled in on all sides and my windows to be stuffed. I want the culture of all the lands to be blown about my house as freely as possible. But I refuse to be blown off my feet by any". This most frequently cited quote by Mahatma Gandhi, Father of the Nation, becomes most relevant when it comes to culture and globalisation. Today Indian television has become the mirror of cultural diversity present in the Indian society; it unites Indian society mainly through dependence on respective film industries while disparity still exists in terms of representation of identity and access.

What happened in Indian markets is a clear indication of collision of culture and commerce. The legal frameworks may be sound on paper but that does not ensure implementation. 'Unity in Diversity' the catch slogan of the Government of India appears to be in disparity with the ground reality. Indian consumers have multiple choices and the Indian Government is working hard to cope with the changes in the media environment in its own tortoise style. Indian television in the era of globalisation is witnessing 'the elimination of the government monopoly and the attempt at broadcasting regulation (as) mere reactions' (Mehta, 1998) due to technological developments and market forces.

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## Annexes

**Table 1. Milestones of INSAT launches by the Government of India**

Satellite	Launch Date
INSAT 1A	April 19, 1982
INSAT 1B	August 30, 1983
INSAT 1C	July 21, 1988
INSAT 1D	June 12, 1990
INSAT 2A (First indigenously built second generation satellite)	July 10, 1992
INSAT 2B	July 23, 1993
INSAT 2C	December 7, 1995
INSAT 2D	June 4, 1997
INSAT 2E (last multi-purpose satellite in INSAT 2 series)	April 1999
INSAT 3A	February 2000

Source: DECU, 2000

**Table 2. Television Households in India**

Year	1985	1990	1995	1997	2002
No. of sets (in millions)	6.8	6.8	6.8	6.8	6.8

**Table 3. Cable Television Homes in India**

Year	Jan 1992	Feb 1993	Oct 1993	Jun 1995	Dec 1996	Sept 1998	1999	2002
Estimated households (in millions)	0.41	3.30	7.23	9.30	11.0	18.5	29 (NPS) 40 (MPS)	25 (NPS)

Source: Doordarshan 1997, The Economic Times 1998, IRS and NRS Figures

**Table 4. Transnational Television on Indian Sky**

Paramount 4	Asiasat 1	Asiasat 2	Intelsat 703	Intelsat 704	Thaicom 2B
BBC	StarSports	CNBC	TV1	Eenadu	PunjabiWorld
CNN	Star Plus	TV 5	BunMeek	VijayTV	RajTV
Discovery	Star Movies	Star News	Asianet	Comini TV	Asianet
ESPN	Zee Cinema	Star TV	Sun TV	MTV	ATN
Home TV	ZeeTV	TVE	UdayaTV	SunTV	ATN Bangla
MTV	Star World	Sky News			ATN Hindi
Bony TV	Zee India	CCTV			
TNT		TVSN			
Music Asia					

Source: India Infoline Sector Reports Media Sector Update, Thu, 15-Mar-2001

<http://www.indiainfoline.com/sect/medi/up03.html>

**Table 5. Milestones of Television in India**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Event</b>
1959	TV was introduced in Delhi as experimental service under UNESCO grant
1965	Daily broadcast of an hour was regularized as a service
1966	Vergheese Committee recommends autonomous National Broadcast Trust.
1969	Agreement for SITE experiment with NASA, USA
1968	Increase in the duration of Television service
1975	SITE was launched in 2400 villages of six states for a year
1976	DoorDarshan- national broadcaster of India, separated from All Indian Radio
1980	First Television commercial was telecast
1982	INSAT-1A launched, TV go Colour, National telecast of Asiad games
1984	First sponsored serial Called 'Hum Log' telecast, UGC CWCR began
1987/ 89	Morning transmission began, Afternoon transmission began
1990	<b>Prasar Bharati</b> Bill was passed by Indian Parliament after many amendments
1991	STAR beamed its satellite channels to India in May
1992	Zee started Hindi channel as a part of STAR network
1993	Four additional satellite channels & regional channels in 10 languages by DD
1995	DD launched international channel, Supreme Court's landmark judgement on 'air wave as public property', Ram Vilas Paswan Committee on National Media Policy, Cable (Television Network) Regulation Act promulgated
1997	Broadcast Bill was introduced in LokSabha under which <b>Prasar Bharati</b> Board (Broadcasting Corporation of India) was constituted in September
2001	Communication Convergence Bill of Department of Telecommunication was introduced in LokSabha
2002	DD has 1242 TV transmitters reaches 40 million of the 75 million TV households have C&S connection. CATV Networks (Regulation) Amendment Bill was introduced with a view to mandating an addressable system for pay channels through cable networks Conditional Access System Bill awaits Rajyasabha approval to become Act

**Table 6. Acts & Regulations for cable & television in India**

<b>The Cable Television Networks (Regulation) Amendment Bill (2002):</b> The new policy permits to link up with any television channel from India. It also allows the Indian news agencies to have their own connection facilities for purposes of newsgathering and its further distribution. This Bill includes the Conditional Access System provision for households to choose satellite channels. The Bill is under Parliamentary discussion.
<b>The Broadcasting Bill (1997):</b> The Bill is to provide for an independent authority to be known as the Broadcasting Authority of India, which is for the purpose of facilitating and regulating broadcasting services in India. It made it mandatory for all the channels to transmit programmes from Indian territory and kept cap on foreign equity.
<b>Cable (Television Network) Regulation Act (1995):</b> There has been a haphazard mushrooming of cable television networks all over the country due to the availability of signals of foreign television networks via satellites. To check the screening of undesirable programmes and advertisements which are screened on these channels and to regulate the operation of the cable television networks in the country, so as to bring uniformity in their functioning, the Cable Television Networks (Regulation) Act was passed in both Houses of the Parliament.
<b>The Prasar Bharati Act (1990):</b> This Act was passed to provide for the establishment of a Broadcasting Corporation for India, to be known as Prasar Bharati. It says that it shall be the primary duty of the Corporation to organise and conduct public broadcasting services to inform, educate and entertain the public and to ensure a balanced development of broadcasting on radio and television.
<b>The Copyright Act (1914):</b> The importance of copyright was recognized after the invention of the printing press which enabled the reproduction of books in large quantities. The Indian Copyright Act was thus passed in 1914. But, during the last four decades, modern and advanced means of communications like broadcasting, litho-photography, television, etc made inroads in the Indian economy. It necessitated the fulfillment of international obligations in the field of Copyright. A comprehensive legislation had to be introduced to completely revise the Copyright law. This was achieved by the introduction of a Copyright Bill, 1957 in the Parliament."
<b>The Indian Telegraph Act (1885):</b> The Indian Telegraph Act 1885 came into force on 1st October 1885. "Telegraph" means any appliance, instrument, material or apparatus used or capable of use for transmission or reception of signs, signals, writing, images, and sounds or intelligence of any nature by wire, visual or other electro-magnetic emissions, Radio waves or Hertzian waves, galvanic, electric or magnetic means. The Indian Telegraphic Act, 1885 was an Act to amend the law relating to Telegraphs in India.

## ANNEXURE - II

### **Media & Violence**

#### **Role of Indian TV news channels in Gujarat violence**

How fair is the role of Media on sensitive issues? TV News channels need deeper understanding.

The media mirrors the society. No one will differ on this. Perhaps this is the logic, which is at work in most of the news organizations. But what does Society mean to media —— presumably the world around Politicians, Bureaucrats, Mafia and Tycoons. So, where does the rest of the populace fit in? Possibly nowhere. Rightly so. If the national political agenda is not committed to the country's saner and less privileged class, how could this class be on the agenda of the media too.

The existing political class or the bureaucracy or the mafia or even the tycoons are seen hands in glove and what they signify is nothing but the crass degeneration in their conduct, dealings and lifestyle. And since the media also functions around them it also reflects only degeneration in the values and the society as a whole.

Perhaps what the media has forgotten is, that besides mirroring the realities in the name of bringing forth the truth, it also has its responsibility towards shaping up the society. This is possible only when the media realizes the significance and prefer good examples over bad examples, which co-exist in the society.

At no stage it is being suggested that the media should stop playing its role of a watchdog. But the role of just being a watchdog is not sufficient when the country is under attack from all corners by the divisive forces. But in the frenzy of browbeating each other, the television channels fork out reports with sensitive visuals in the name of factual reporting without realizing that they also carry streaks of interpretation, provocation and perception.

One such example is the recent telecast of exit polls. The way the exit poll telecast was heaped on the nation so irresponsibly by the news channels made only mockery of the electoral process. Worst still, instead of accepting the folly for being so wide off the mark each channel tried to earn laurels by claiming to be close to that "wide off the mark" denouement.

It is in this background the recent coverage of the Gujarat carnage by the news channels needs to be debated and dissected. The coverage of tragic events in Gujarat has undoubtedly raised some very fundamental questions with regard to ethical standards. Ostensibly, the fierce competition to stay ahead in the race of "first with the news" seems to have taken away the sense of responsibility towards the community, society and the nation as a whole.

Knowing the challenges of meeting on air deadlines and the pressures in the newsroom, it is virtually impossible to plug gaping holes in the functioning of the news channels. The first causality in the process is the objectivity of the report. Any major event or incident always grabs the focus of all the news channels. Mostly tragic events or incidents take everyone including the news

organizations by surprise. However, they become events for the news channels to garner more viewers or establish their supremacy over their rivals. Consequently, passions run high than the logic in deciding over the content of the reports. Some of the best examples to prove it included events such as Musharraf's visit to India, or terrorist attack in New York or the US attack on Taliban or attack on parliament, or exit polls or the four-state election coverage or lastly the violence in Gujarat. In each case if we saw some semblance of balanced reporting, there were also innumerable instances of irresponsible discussions in the studio, exaggerated reporting and often stretched out biased coverage.

The striking example of intemperate coverage was the recent violence in Gujarat. For days all the news channels irrespective of the content of the story chose to show the same provocative visuals of burning shops, petrified citizens and above all the genesis of the cause—the gutted railway compartment. Even now the television reports on returning bonhomie in Gujarat carry opening visuals of torched vehicles, gutted shops or houses and mob violence. As said earlier perhaps those working in the news channels do not realize that their provocative selection of visuals even in a positive story only perpetuate hatred and animosity as a grim reminder of the haunting past.

Undeniably, the impact of television is enormous. The viewers' view all the visuals on the screen as of high integrity. They do not distinguish them as stock or fresh visuals. Any visual in the report is seen as a visual of that moment. And they are subject to interpretation, provocation and perception. With this background if the coverage of Gujarat violence is seen, most of the news channels may have succeeded in reporting facts but all of them failed in their other role of restoring sanity.

There is no doubt that the Gujarat government earned its indefensible criticism from the newspapers and the news channels for its inappropriate and inefficient handling of the mob frenzy. Worst, the Narendra Modi government tried to dismiss the entire holocaust as an outcome of flared up passions. But in its overzealousness to corner the state government for its laxity, the news channels did not exercise any restraint either. If the truth cannot be a subject to negotiation so is the national interest. Objectivity is perhaps incomplete without responsibility.

Therefore, the responsibility of the news channels was not merely to report what happened in Gujarat from all angles but also to play the role of a catalyst by uniting saner but strong voices against the mindless carnage. Television news channels have an unquestionable power of swaying opinions and it should be used to shape up the public opinion on matters of great national significance rather than adding fuel to fire that serves the interest of the power mongers only, not of the people at large. The news channels therefore needed to tread the path carefully.

Most of the news channels somehow survive event to event. They only await events to arrive and then go whole hog on covering them. But once the event dies down it also vanishes from the

priority of the news channels. As if the issue is settled or resolved. No channel so far has done any in depth report on the causes that led them to predict wrong opinion polls. I think people were quite sure of their decision so far as their vote was concerned. If at all anything proved wrong it was pollsters' predictions and whatever methodology in judging the mood of the people. Perhaps what the news channels should understand that unlike the newspapers their audience is far and wide and they need to establish realistic relationship with the real issues of the people.

Newspapers even with their limited reach have been playing the role of setting up people's agenda in the larger interest of the society. Some of the recent examples are vigorous campaigns run by some newspapers against pollution, human rights violation, civil liberties, law and order, drought, child sale in Kalahandi etc.

But the television news channels which have far greater potential to play much more critical role besides just airing day-to-day happenings, have still to go deeper into the issues, in order to protect the interest of the society.

Gujarat violence is not just another case of communal disharmony. It has caused serious fissures in the social fabric of our country. It will emerge into far serious implications in the future. The nation must be made aware of this. Perhaps, the news channels must elicit support of people in arresting the likely damage by creating the larger awareness through the positive and saner voices.

Too much of attention on Ram Janambhoomi and Babri Masjid as part of the traditional obsession of the news channels has been responsible for vitiating the atmosphere. Crude rhetorics by people in colourful robes on one hand make a very interesting television story. While on the other people in white or in saffron make a mileage out of it. The news channels are used and the nation or the society pays the cost.

The time has come when the television news channels must understand the power of the medium and shift their attention on those people and issues, who are agents of positive change and development. If politics is a necessary evil for the democratic functioning, evils like economic, social and cultural disparity also need to be addressed with strong grit and determination. The focus of news channels, therefore, should also shift to issues like poverty, livelihood, education, health, technology, employment, efficiency, discipline, values etc.

It is important that the television news channels must think over it to arrive at some definite code of ethics and standards. There is need for consensus at least on those sensitive matters, which concern the national stability, unity, security, communal harmony and above all national development. Moreover to keep the credibility and integrity intact the news channels must also evolve standard and practices while covering events and issues such as communal violence, ethnic conflicts and public morality.

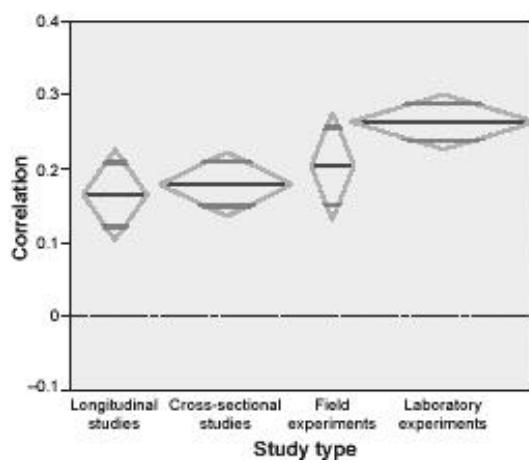
(The writer, who was editor of Zee News and Star TV Interactive, is currently Managing Editor, Media4Community.Com)

**The Effects of Media Violence on Society**  
Craig A. Anderson and Brad J. Bushman

Concerns about the negative effects of prolonged exposure to violent television programming emerged shortly after broadcasting began in 1946. By 1972 sufficient empirical evidence had accumulated for the U.S. Surgeon General to comment that

"...televised violence, indeed, does have an adverse effect on certain members of our society" (1) Other scientific bodies have come to similar conclusions. Six major professional societies in the United States—the American Psychological Association, the American Academy of Pediatrics, the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry, the American Medical Association, the American Academy of Family Physicians, and the American Psychiatric Association—recently concluded that "the data point overwhelmingly to a causal connection between media violence and aggressive behavior in some children" (2) In a report on page 2468 of this issue, Johnson and colleagues (3) present important evidence showing that extensive TV viewing among adolescents and young adults is associated with subsequent aggressive acts. Despite the consensus among experts, lay people do not seem to be getting the message from the popular press that media violence contributes to a more violent society. We recently demonstrated that even as the scientific evidence linking media violence to aggression has accumulated, news reports about the effects of media violence have shifted to weaker statements, implying that there is little evidence for such effects (4) This inaccurate reporting in the popular press may account for continuing controversy long after the debate should have been over, much as the cigarette smoking/cancer controversy persisted long after the scientific community knew that smoking causes cancer.

Aggression researchers have adopted a triangulation strategy to examine the effects of violence in the media. Specifically, divergent research methods have been applied in the belief that using several unique methodological approaches yields a clearer picture than would be possible with any single method. Results of a meta-analysis of all available studies investigating the hypothesis that exposure to media violence increases aggression are displayed in the figure (4). A positive link between media violence and aggression regardless of research method is clearly shown (see the figure). Experimental studies demonstrate a causal link. Laboratory experiments yield slightly larger effects than other studies, presumably because of greater control over irrelevant factors (see the figure).



## Media violence and aggression

Effects of media violence on aggression for different types of studies. Diamond widths are proportional to the number of independent samples. There were 46 longitudinal samples involving 4975 participants, 86 cross-sectional samples involving 37,341 participants, 28 field experiment samples involving 1976 participants, and 124 laboratory experiment samples involving 7305 participants. Red lines indicate the mean effect sizes. Blue lines indicate a 95% confidence interval. Note that zero (dashed line, indicating no effect) is excluded from all confidence intervals.

Field experiments demonstrate causal effects in naturalistic settings. Cross-sectional studies demonstrate a positive association between media violence and types of real-world aggression (for example, assault) that cannot be studied ethically in experimental settings. Longitudinal studies reveal long-term effects of early media violence exposure on later aggressive acts. These effects are not trivial in magnitude. For example, they are larger than the effects of calcium intake on bone mass or of lead exposure on IQ in children (4). Interestingly, recent work demonstrates similar-sized effects of violent video games on aggression (5). The longitudinal study by Johnson and colleagues (3) is important for at least three reasons. It is the first published longitudinal study to link television exposure during adolescence and young adulthood to subsequent aggression, contradicting the common assumption that media violence affects only children. It therefore adds to extant research linking childhood TV habits to adult aggression and violence (6, 7). Second, its relatively large sample size (707 families) and time span (17 years) allowed a meaningful test of television exposure on severe aggressive behaviors (such as assault and robbery). Third, by statistically controlling for key childhood factors known to affect aggression (including childhood neglect, family income, neighborhood violence, parental education, and psychiatric disorders) the investigators were able to rule out numerous alternative explanations. One potential problem with the Johnson et al. study is the use of hours of TV viewing, rather than hours of viewing violent TV. This is somewhat problematic because the primary source of TV viewing effects on aggression is believed to be violent content. However, about 60% of TV programs contain violence, so the number of TV hours correlates closely with the number of violent TV hours (8). Thus, the use of TV viewing hours in this study probably underestimates the effects of TV violence. Recent theory about human aggression suggests at least two approaches to reducing media-related aggression (9). One involves reducing exposure to violent media. Robinson and colleagues reported one such intervention that significantly reduced aggression among third and fourth graders over a 6-month period (10). The other approach involves changing children's attitudes toward media violence. Huesmann successfully used this approach to reduce aggression in first and third graders over a 2-year period (11). The study by Johnson and colleagues suggests that media violence affects a larger group of people than previously believed, and that interventions for adolescents might also be beneficial. Such approaches are needed because a heavy diet of media violence contributes to a societal violence rate that is unnecessarily obese.

## ANNEXURE - III

### **YOUTH, RADIO AND SOCIAL TRANSFORMATION**

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#### **Abstract**

The core of this paper is that radio remains an important communication tool for tribal communities living in remote hill areas of South India. Some of the more salient findings relate to media uses and preferences of people, suggesting that sophisticated negotiations take place between audiences and media. These include suspicion of television and its impact upon work practices and education, the organization of time and space to accommodate radio and television into people's busy daily lives, and the recognition that radio may be a more innovative medium than television. These conclusions have been reached from an in-depth qualitative audience ethnographic study of three tribal communities in Southern India. The Toda, Kota and Kannikaran are tribal communities living in Tamil Nadu, South India. The Toda and Kota live in the Nilgiri Hills. The Kannikaran live in Kanyakumari district, the most Southern tip of India.

This paper critically analyses how tribal audiences use the neighboring low power radiostations, Ooty Radio Station (ORS), and Nagercoil Radio Station (NRS) of state-funded All India Radio (AIR). It also explores how these stations ensure audience participation. Introduced in 1993, ORS is the only radio station located near the tribal communities in the Nilgiris hill area and serves distinctively like a community radio. ORS serves an empowering role to the tribal communities by encouraging innovative 'feedback' and audience participation. Its remit also includes cultural development and democratization of tribal communities living in the Nilgiris.

This paper explores how remote hill audiences use radio in their everyday lives. All communities have access to national, regional, local and international radio. The study demonstrates that tribal people are not just passive listeners but actively engage with radio for a variety of reasons, especially for agricultural information, news, entertainment and cultural activities. In a changing mediascape, where television assumes greater importance as a cultural tool, radio still remains the medium of first choice for most tribal communities. This is especially true of women who use the radio in quite different ways to men. Moreover, age is an increasing factor in media consumption in these communities. The young are more familiar with their communication options than their elders and are increasingly turning to television. Nevertheless the young still acknowledge that radio is an important medium in tribal communities.

#### **Introduction**

In this paper I will aim to show how age, in particular youth, and the possession of radio sets influences listening patterns amongst

tribal audiences in South India. The level of access to different forms of electronic media such as radio, terrestrial television, cable and satellite television, is further determined by a number of factors, as discussed below.

However, it is important to say why I am focussing on the young rather than other age groups. It is clear that the young tribal audiences of today had grown up in a media environment completely different to that of their parents. They are, for example, much more confident than their mothers in handling media technology. Moreover, they are more discriminating in their media consumption in that they listen or watch what they want to hear or see rather for some social, economic purpose. Thus, entertainment is the principle genre of the young. However, in the context of remote tribal communities this behavior may be regarded as quite radical. It is for these reasons that I focus on the young and their media consumption.

The data was collected using in-depth interviews, participant observation, field notes, focus groups and from secondary documents. A total of 37 children have been interviewed for this project.

My analysis of the media usage of tribal children is largely based on the patterns of television and radio set ownership within the Toda community. The data reveals there are four categories of audiences among the Toda children:

1. Children whose families do not own a radio or television set;
2. Children whose families own only a radio set;
3. Children whose families own both a radio and a television set;
4. Children whose families own only a television set;

The focus on the place of radio and television in the life of children, teenagers and the elderly, the three neglected groups of audience studies in Southern India is important, as it broadens the scope of this study, making its findings more reliable.



#### **Toda Children**

There is a massive amount of literature about the relationship of children to television in the West or developed countries, much of it highly contentious (Buckingham, 1998; Dorr, 1986). Basically, the huge number of studies conducted into the perceived effects

of television on children has been directed at the issue of violence. Whether this continued exposure to violence on television makes children more violent is the focus of such studies. Studies conducted in India often neglected the children living in remote areas and concentrated on urban children, largely for reasons of access to these communities but also because tribal children do not figure in the Indian researcher's agenda (CFAR, 2001; Unnikrishnan & Bajpai, 1996). This material has little direct relevance to the radio listening and television viewing habits of tribal children in the remote rural areas of South India. There are very limited overseas studies conducted on radio and how age influences radio listening (ABA, 1995; Brown, 1990; Carroll, Silbergeld, Beachum, Perry, & Pluscht, 1993; Christenson, 1985).

### Tribal Children

Toda children's exposure to the media is different from the adult exposure. They listen to the radio at different times of the day compared to their parents and grandparents. More significantly, children use media principally for entertainment, unlike adult Toda men, who mainly use radio for information especially agricultural information. Further, children are faced with the concerns of their parents about what impact radio listening and television viewing will have on their schoolwork and the inability to assist in the house and in the preparation of food. Finally, there is the fact that AIR radio produces programs specifically for children, but they fail to attract the Toda children as an audience. The reasons for this are complex, as I will show, but one of the main reasons for the failure of AIR to capture its target child audience is because the Toda children prefer to listen to entertainment programs like film songs and drama on the radio.

### Children whose family do not possess radio or television

Children who do not have a radio or television set at home go to their neighbors' houses to listen to a tape recorder, or to the radio or to watch television. When there are no television households in their own settlements, they listen to radio at their neighbor's house. During school holidays and weekends they also go to neighboring settlements who have television sets. When they go, they mainly watch drama, feature films, and film-based programs. Occasionally, when they visit their relatives from town mounds (settlements) they get to watch television and also listen to film songs on radio. Power supply is not the only factor that prevents them having access to television. Even in settlements, which have power supply, we can find houses that do not have television sets because of economic reasons. A 12-year-old Toda boy, Pratheesh Kuttan, who lives in Atha mund, does not own a radio or television set, because they are poor. He goes to his friend's house to listen to a tape recorder.

Since it is not always feasible for Toda boys to visit whenever they want to, the exposure to electronic media is very limited. Considering the limited availability of radio and television amongst Toda settlements, the Toda children still listen to radio in their neighbor's house. The distance between one house to another also determines the way children use the media in their everyday lives. Often, in Toda and Kannikaran settlements, the dwellings are not closely co-located, unlike Kota settlements, where the dwellings are located in close proximity to each other. Consequently it is hard for the Toda and Kannikaran children to listen to radio broadcasts in

their neighborhood while they stay within their own houses. Conversely, the Kota children could listen to radio broadcasts which come from neighboring houses, because the Kota houses are located close to one another.



### A Kota Settlement

Interestingly, the access to radio by the children of Toda Christian families is limited during the weekends because these children go to churches located in Ooty town. They also spend some of their spare time during weekends listening to Christian radio broadcasts and Christian songs from tape recorders.

While answering a question as to who listens to more radio and watches television in his household, Satheesh Kumar replied quickly 'we don't have radio so we don't listen to radio, we don't watch television also'. Similarly, cable/satellite television exposure is also very limited amongst Toda children. Most of the Toda children said they did not have access to cable television in their settlements. Importantly, the non-availability of a radio set at home, denied children the opportunity to listen to their own traditional tribal music and songs programs on ORS, which are very popular amongst the adults. An 11-year-old Toda girl from Koil mund said, 'we don't have radio at home so we don't listen to radio'. In contrast a 10-year-old Toda girl from Apar mund who has a radio at home told me that she listens to tribal songs from ORS everyday. Ownership of a radio set helps these tribal children to be very close to their own tribal culture. ORS is the first radio station to broadcast tribal cultural songs 'malai aruvi' in Tamil Nadu and all tribal communities in the Nilgiri hills irrespective of their age listen to this program. In this way, ORS really helps children to learn and be close to their culture and custom. It does not mean they have no access to their culture without ORS. Radio stations are a channel of communication and empowerment to these communities.

An 11-year-old Toda girl, who does not have radio or television, who lives in a settlement close to Ooty town, does not listen to tribal songs or any other entertainment programs like film songs or drama. On the other hand, she chooses to visit a neighbor's house that has a television set, to watch film-based entertainment programs. This is interesting, because the location of a settlement, also determines what type of exposure children have to media. In this case, since this settlement is located near Ooty town, where they have access to television sets, the children have an option of viewing television programs, whereas the remote settlement children do not have easy access to television. Although in a few remote settlements, children walk a long way to another settlement

who have television sets, the frequency of viewing television is understandably limited. Vannila, a 10-year-old Toda girl, from the Kuruthukkuli Toda settlement, is studying in primary five. She does not have a radio set at home, and listens to the radio at her neighbors' house. Although she goes to Attakor mund to watch film-based programs and drama on television, she likes radio and listens to songs, drama and news.

Children visit families other than their own communities to listen to radio. Tamil people from the plain work on Toda land and also live in Toda settlements near the fields. Toda children go to Tamil peoples' houses as well to listen to radio. A six-year-old Toda girl, Banu Priya, said she goes to her Tamil neighbor's house to listen to radio. Children go to their neighbor's house just to listen and at other times their purpose is just to visit their relatives and they will incidentally use that opportunity to listen to radio programs. An 11-year-old boy from Kadi mund, who is at primary school, does not have radio at home. He visits his uncle's place and listens to radio. The main point here is that children consider radio-listening a main activity, like playing with their friends.

### **Children whose family own only radio**

Obviously children, who only have access to the radio at home, use radio more than any other medium. Most of the children interviewed also felt that their fathers are fond of agricultural programs on radio. Those children who only had a radio set at home rarely watched television, and only when they visited their relatives at town mounds. When they go to their relative's house they mainly prefer to watch film songs and feature films on television. The Toda and Kota parents feel that excessive viewing of television will affect their children's education. Hence, parents control their children's viewing to avoid excessive television.

When compared to the Toda children, the Kota children have better access to television, because a limited number of houses have cable/ satellite television.



Kota children (along with elders) watching television at their neighbor's house

Although an 11-year-old Kota boy, Angara Kambattan, has only radio at home, he said, "I go to my neighbors house to watch television". Seeniji, a 12 year-old Kota girl, who mainly listens to radio, said:

My mother likes radio I like television. Since there are pictures on television news, I watch television news.

Toda children who have access to only radio at home said, 'no one has got television in our settlement so I don't get to watch television'. Children in this category also realized the importance of radio, especially during power failures.

Increasingly, children hesitate to visit their neighbors' houses to watch television, giving priority to their schoolwork. Whilst visiting the houses of close relatives, especially during school holidays, the children tended to stay indoors for a few days to watch television. Devi Sree, a 12-year-old Toda girl, studying primary six in the tribal school, listened to the radio in the morning and evening. She tuned to ORS in the evening and listened to film songs. Tribal song programs on ORS are not very popular amongst the children. Though ORS encourages adults and youth to participate **in the cultural programs, such as alai aruvi**, children did not seem to participate in these programs.

Again, children's programs are very limited on ORS, hence are not popular amongst children. Whilst talking about the other members of the family, Devisree added that her father also listens to radio and concentrates on agricultural programs and news. Children also observed that their mothers who follow Christianity restrict other family members from listening to film songs. By contrast, Moses, from the Muthunadu settlement, watches television because this mund is one of the most prominent settlements of the Todas, having a power supply and proper road facilities. Every year the Toda people from all the settlements come to celebrate their cultural festival. This settlement has few television households. I asked Moses, when he switched on the radio at home did his parents object?

Moses : No, when my father switches on the radio set, my mother yells at him.

Researcher: Why?

Toda Boy: My mother is a Christian, therefore she does not like it. Among the Toda Christians, radio listening is largely confined to informative and Christian programs. Nevertheless, the majority of the children enjoy film songs on radio. A 10-year-old Toda boy who is studying primary four in the Ooty town HPF (Hindustan Photo Limited) school, lives in 'Thalapatheri mund' which does not have a power supply.

He said he has a radio set at home and tunes into the radio at 6.45 am and mainly listens to film songs. His father, who is an agricultural laborer, switches on the radio set in the morning. All the family members listen to the radio. His three elder sisters, their two children and his parents listen to radio together as a family. The main point here is that radio is increasingly considered as a family medium for certain type of programs such as drama and also used as an individual medium. For example, the boy in this family listens to radio drama in the evening along with other family members and he narrated the whole story-line of a drama that was broadcast on the previous day. It was very obvious from this boy's response that radio really mattered to him and entertained him and his family in the absence of television.

Loneliness is one important factor that has increased the amount of radio listening. Brown et al. (1990, p.65) argues, based on a survey conducted among 12 to 14 year-olds from Southeastern U.S. cities, that the presence of parents at home has direct influence on teenagers' media use. 'Lack of access to parents, either because the mother was employed or because no father was in the home, generally increased the time that adolescents spent with radio and television'. Tribal children in Southern India think that radio is a good companion when they are alone at home. A 10-year-old Toda girl,

Samya, was listening to radio in a public open place. It was hot, the sun was bright, but she had a bed sheet for a sunshade, and the radio. When I asked her the reason for her to listen this way, she said,

My mother had gone to my grandmas place, I am all-alone, so I took the radio to the "Mattam" [open space in the settlement] and listening to radio.

My field notes, observation and interview data reveal that the limited exposure to other mass media like television, cinema (theatres) and newspapers is an important reason for tribal children to rely on radio for information and entertainment.

### **Children whose family own both radio and television**

Children who had both radio and television sets at home, said they use more television than radio. My observation of media use in the field revealed that they used both radio and television. Although television's visual impact attracted children, ORS and its community – based radio programs induced tribal families to keep abreast of local events. Since ORS broadcasts radio programs that are highly relevant to the tribal audiences of this region, radio is still in use amongst television-owning households as well. Children from this category mainly listen to the radio and prefer mostly film songs and drama.

They largely tune into the radio in the morning, in the evening they mostly watch television. On television they watch feature films, drama, serials, other film-based entertainment programs and sport.

One important factor that motivates children to tune to ORS is the participation of their own community in producing and broadcasting programs. One Toda boy tuned into the radio regularly when his family members participated in radio programs. In the same manner, many audience members tend to tune into ORS when the people from their settlement also participated in the programs. Whilst talking about news programs, he said that he would watch news on television (Tamil news) at 8.30 PM but before that, in the evening, he listens to film songs on Ooty radio between 5.30 and 6 pm. Then he would study for a while and watch television after dinner. He set aside time for radio listening as well as television viewing and the radio was still in use even though they have owned a television set for the past two years. During an interview with a 12- year-old boy, Ratheesh Singh, he was listening to film songs on Ooty radio. Singh's household has owned a radio and television set for the past twelve years. He mainly watches television at home. However, he said that he would tune to Ooty radio for film songs and listen to programs related to their community, Malai Aruvi, a tribal song program and radio news. Singh does not consciously tune to Malai Aruvi, but when the family and community at large tune to this program, children in the settlements also listen to this popular program.

I asked if he would switch the radio off once the film songs were over. He said, ' 'No', and pointed to the other members of the family saying 'they would continue listening to radio'. Radio listening in a family may be selective as well as non-selective. When a radio set is on in a household, it does not mean that all members of that family listen to the program. Some may show interest whereas some may not show any interest at all. However, there are some program formats such as drama and film songs programs,

where the whole family listens at the same time. There were instances where a family sat together to listen to radio dramas. Regarding participation in radio programs, Ratheesh Singh informed me that he had not participated in the Ooty programs. Nevertheless, other members of this Toda settlement had participated in producing and presenting Ooty radio programs.

Although children from both radio and television households listen to radio it is clear that children largely watch television. An eleven-year-old Toda boy Sinal Kutttan, who lives in Tharnadu mund, has access to radio and television at home. There were twelve houses in this settlement, which is a relatively high number when compared to the other smaller Toda settlements.



### **A Toda Settlement**

Some of the remote Toda settlements have only four to six houses. This is one of the reasons why these settlements are not connected to electricity and cable television. Two houses in this settlement had television and I selected them to see how they used radio in their everyday lives, especially the children. All twelve houses had radio at home. Sinal Kutttan lives at his grandma's place, his native mund is 'Kavakkadu mund' which is located about ten km from Ooty town. He listens to radio occasionally. When it comes to television, he watches cinema, drama and serials. On Fridays he watches 'Oliyum Oliyum' (film songs from the Tamil cinema). On Sundays he watches 'Sakthimaan' (a children's serial), Jai Anuman (a mythological serial), and football. When I asked him how often the other members of his family listened to radio, he said they mainly use the radio for news and secondly for drama. In his family they tune into all the radio stations. When one station ends their broadcast they tune into other stations.

However, there are instances where children enjoyed both radio and television at home. There are only two houses in 'Pagal Kodu' mund, but this settlement has a power supply. I interviewed a 12- year-old boy, who is studying seventh standard, in Tamil medium. They have access to an Onida black and white television and radio at home. He said he switches the radio on during holidays and listens to radio news, film songs and radio dramas. On television he watches Tamil films on Fridays, Saturdays, and Sundays. He also watches Tamil news on Doordarshan at 8.30 p.m. He also has limited exposure to cable television, when he visits his aunt's place, near Ooty town at HPF [Hindustan Photo Limited]. He goes there on a weekly basis to watch cable television. He said he loves listening to Tamil film songs on the radio. He also listens to Ooty radio for drama at night.

Shyamari Kuttan is an eleven year-old boy, who lives in a Toda settlement called 'Attakormund'. This mund has electricity and there are three Toda houses in this settlement. He has a television set at home. Shyamari Kuttan informed me in an interview that he watched television only in the evening for dramas or serials after 7 p.m., but emphasized that on Sundays he tunes into the radio at 3 p.m. for 'olichithiram' (film stories and dialogue). Radio drama is invariably popular, not only among tribal children, but also among adults. However, children who come from families who have television tend to opt for television drama and serials. Radio is used in the morning and during noon-time, whereas the evening is considered television time. Women and children largely sit together to watch and enjoy television serials and popular film-based entertainment programs. While the radio has children's programs every Sunday from AIR Chennai, the children's programs on regional and low-power radio stations are in the infancy stage.

### **Children Whose Family Own Only Television**

It is rare to find households who have only television sets in Toda settlements. However, since tribal families own television sets, sometimes they fail to maintain their radio sets at home. Hence, children from these households mainly watch television and ignore radio.

A seven year-old boy from Kandhal mund or Karsh mund [in Toda language] said 'I watch English news in the morning from DD'. His uncle ['mama'] is a central bank employee and they have a black and white television set at home. Everyday he wakes up at 6 am and has rice for breakfast. He also prays to Jesus in the morning as they are Toda Christians. They do not have a cable subscription and have access only to Doordarshan. He watches DD serials such as 'Sakthimaan', Jai Anuman and Sri Krishna with elders in the family. Sakthimaan is a very popular television serial in India. Its main target audience is children. In the evening he watches television (DD) between 7 pm and 10 pm and does his homework.

It is clear from the interviews that those households who own television sets tend to ignore radio, this is especially true of the children in these households. This is similar to households that own neither radio nor television sets, because they go to their neighboring houses to watch television. If they cannot access television in their own settlement, they may occasionally watch it when visiting relatives. Awasthi, an eleven-year-old Kota girl does not have radio at her home, but she has a television set, as well as access to cable/satellite television. She watches film-based entertainment programs on Sun TV, Raj TV and so on. While talking about radio listening habits she simply said, 'we don't listen to radio'. Many responses like this show that television entertains and informs them, so children who own only television sets do not bother with the radio and its programs.

### **Conclusion**

The observation and analysis of interviews and focus groups amongst young audiences reveal that radio is widely preferred by young audiences, though children in television households tend to ignore radio. Children who only have access to radio at home use more radio than any other medium. Teenage girls seem to be more active listeners of radio programs. They write letters to the

radio stations and express their feedback on programs. Boys, apart from sports and informative programs, are more inclined towards television and visiting their neighboring households and settlements to watch television.

Christianity has led to less exposure of entertainment programs both on radio and television. Since children are not given much opportunity to participate in the cultural programs of ORS, programs such as malai aruvi and yengal giramam are not very popular among children. Parents control their children's television viewing for a better education. Kota children who own only radio at home have the opportunity to visit their neighbor's house to watch television. In contrast, children from Toda and Kannikaran settlements are often deprived of television sets, so do not get to watch television, hence radio is the main source of information and entertainment.

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