

35

IMPACT OF MEDIA ON CULTURE

It is not always possible to visit relatives and friends living in far - off places. We want to send messages to them and also receive messages from them. The various means of communication like letters, telegrams and telephones help us to send written or spoken messages to people living in distant places.

We all watch TV, read newspapers and magazines, and we also go to see films. These are different means of communication with our fellow human beings. Beyond the physical requirements of food and shelter, man has now another fundamental need: that is the need to communicate. The urge for communication is a primal one and in our contemporary civilization, it has become a necessity for survival.



OBJECTIVES

After studying this lesson you will be able to:

- define media;
- describe forms of media;
- explain the role of media in diffusion of culture and to;
- describe the impact of media with special reference to (T.V) on Indian Society and Culture.

35.1 MEANING AND DEFINITION OF MASS MEDIA

Communication is the art of transmitting information, ideas and attitudes from one point or person to another. Each of us communicates with another individual by



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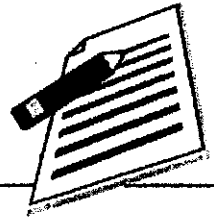
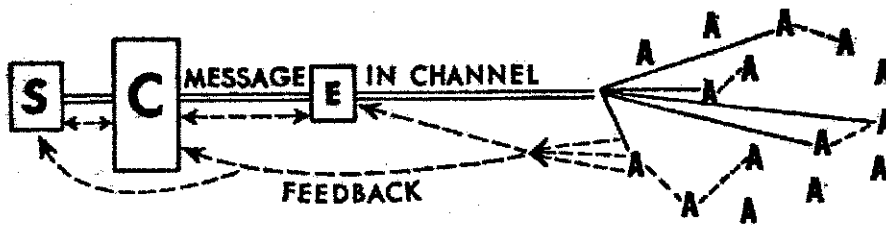
directing a message to one or more of his senses - sight, sound touch taste speech or smell. When we smile, we communicate a desire for friendliness; the tone in which we say 'good morning' can indicate feelings all the way from hostility to warm pleasure, and the words we choose in speaking or writing convey a message we want to put across to other person. The more effectively we select and deliver those words, the better is our communication with him or her.

Contemporary society is far too complex to function only through direct communication between one individual and another. Our important messages to be effective must reach many people at a time. For example - a housewife who is angry at the frequent load shedding of electricity may talk to half a dozen neighbours about organising a boycott. But if the editor of a local newspaper publishes a letter she writes, she communicates her idea to hundreds of women in a short time. We can take another example of a politician contesting for election, he spends much of his campaign time visiting people personally, holding meetings in the hope of winning their votes. Now, he hires time on television and radio, buys space in the newspapers, trying to deliver his message to thousands of voters simultaneously. This is mass communication - delivering information, ideas, attitudes to a sizeable and diversified audience through the use of the media developed for that purpose.



The communication process : Communicator (C) places his message in selected channel to reach audience (A)

Let us now define mass media. The mass media is defined as the technological means of sending information, ideas, opinions etc. through the mass communication device to a diverse audience. In one sense, words and pictures are the media by which thought and feelings are communicated but medium need not be restricted to this meaning. Medium means something intermediates, a middle state, something that intervenes. For example - money is a medium of exchange between a buyer and seller. Stone is a medium for sculptors' recreation. A medium of communication can be any such item for transmission or transference of thought and feeling. Thus we can say, communication is an act or process involving transmission of information, ideas, emotions, skills etc., by the use of verbal or non - verbal means (words, pictures, figures, graphs, gestures, facial expression etc.).



Notes

Mass communication for a given message of one moment in time is illustrated here: Source (S) has his message reported by communicator (C) in channel controlled by editor (E); some audience members (A) receive the message directly, others indirectly, but some are inattentive; feedback interactions may occur along the communication route.

INTEXT QUESTIONS 35.1

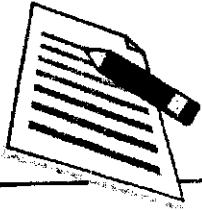
What do you understand by the following terms? Write each in one sentence.

- Mass Communication
- Intra Personal Communication
- Inter Personal Communication
- Mass Media.

35.2 FORMS OF MEDIA

A message can be communicated to a mass audience by many means. Hardly a day is spent without feeling the impact of at least one of the mass media. The various forms of mass media are:

- The oldest media are those of the printed word and picture, which carry their message through the sense of sight. These are the newspapers, magazines, books, pamphlets and direct mail circulars. These may be collectively called the print medium. In newspaper, the focus is upon the community, the nation and sometimes even the world of large. Magazines provide background information, entertainment, express opinions and display advertisements. Books offer a longer range and more detailed examination of subjects as well as entertainment. Pamphlets and direct mail pieces bring the views of commercial and civic organisations.



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2. Radio is the mass communication medium aimed at the sense of sound. Radio offers entertainment, news and opinions, discussions and advertising messages and can bring direct coverage of public events into the listener's home. This is an electronic medium.
3. Television and motion pictures are appealing to visual and auditory senses. Television programmes are educative, informative and also offer wide range of entertainment and advertising messages. Films may inform and persuade as well as entertain. This also comes under electronic medium.

There are important agencies of communication, which are adjuncts of the mass media. These are:

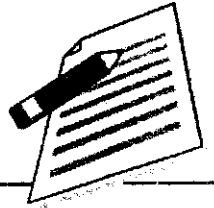
1. The press associations collect and distribute news to the newspapers, television channels radio stations and newsmagazines.
2. The syndicates offer background news and pictures, commentary and entertainment features to newspapers, television and radio and magazines.
3. The advertising agencies, serve their business clients on the one hand and the mass media on the other.
4. The advertising departments of companies and institutions play merchandising roles and the public relations departments, serve in disseminating image-building information
5. The public relations counseling firms and publicity organisations offer information on behalf of their clients and
6. Research individuals and groups help gauge the impact of the message and guide mass media for more effective paths.

Simple entertainment is not the sole purpose of mass media. Reporting the news and offering interpretation and opinions based on news are the two main functions of mass media. The functions of news, opinions and entertainment are closely related in mass media and the various media are heavily dependent upon each other.

INTEXT QUESTIONS 35.2

Match Column A with B.

- | A | B |
|---------------|--------------|
| a. Radio | audio-visual |
| b. News Paper | audio |
| c. Film | print medium |



Notes

35.3 IMPACT OF MASS MEDIA ON DIFFUSION OF CULTURE

Diffusion describes the spread of cultural trait from the point of origin throughout an area and into the neighbouring regions or to the neighbouring societies.

We have noted in lesson –1 that , the items of culture include food habits ,dress , religious beliefs, dance and language etc .

The spread of habits of aeriated drinks [soft drinks]' having tea coffee , smoking certain brands of cigarattes , using certain brands of toilet soaps , detergents ,hair oil , shampoo, tooth paste, tooth brush and hairdye is decidedly due to the impact of television in recent times . For example – scenes of revelry displayed in small screen in commercial breaks have definitely added to the widespread intake of aeriated drinks of different brands [i.e cocacola, pepsi, frooti etc] covering almost every walk of life. *Idli* and *dosa*, supposed to be a south Indian preparation of light food, have now become almost international, largely because of mass media . *Salwar – kameez* , a wamains wear of Punjab and north – west India have spread, every nook and corner of the country. During the middle of the last century, cinema played a very significant role in spreading a cult associated with the worship of 'Santoshi maa'. In the closing decades of the last century , the small screen played no less significant role in carrying messages of Ramayana and Mahabharata to almost every individual, irrespective of caste, religion, community, age and gender. Immense popularity of two dance forms viz Bharatnatyam and Odissi, beyond the centres of their origin , is definitely an impact firstly of the radio, then the large screen [cinema] , and ultimately the television. The spread of Hindi language in the leangth and breadth of the country is mainly due to Hindi cinema, particularly the songs associated with them which are regularly broadcast in the radio in certain specialized programmes like 'Vividh Bharati', and 'Binaca' .Later ,television influenced deeply the people of all categories . Today, we see that, even in our day –to –day activities , certain words of our mother tongue have been replaced by certain linguistic expressions of the television like 'break ke baad ' [after the break] . Our children behave in the same way children in television behave vis-a-vis their parents . These are all cases of cultural diffusion, greatly affected and influenced by mass media .

INTEXT QUESTIONS 35.3

Write answer in one sentence:

- a. What is diffusion?



Notes

- b. Write briefly two items of culture .

- c . Name two brands of aeriated drinks you mostly see in television advertisement.

- d. Give an example of religious practice that is spread through film and television.

35.4 IMPACT OF TELEVISION

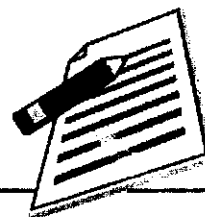
The influence of television in learning mechanism is considered to be very significant in an urban society, where a substantial portion of the population are compelled to communicate in a language other than their own. A visual medium like television is considered to be a more useful means of learning and communicating cultural ideas than the spoken or a written word . However, the impact of television may not always be positive. Now, let us discuss the types of influence this medium exerts on our ways of life.

Most of us take a cup of tea soon after we get up in the morning. If we look back, how we have acquired this habit, it can possibly be traced to ancient China . However, the extent to which this habit has now engulfed almost every part of the world, can be traced to its commercial display in the television.

Positive Aspect

Television programmes are most informative and educative if we watch programmes like UGC programmes, quiz programmes and also group discussions. Thus, we can say that it is a medium for acquiring information, knowledge and understanding.

Now-a-days, everywhere in our country, Hindi has become a household language . Every one starts speaking Hindi besides one's own mother tongue whether it is Oriya, Bengali or Telugu. This is only because of regular watching of television. We can mix freely with others, exchange our views and ideas with other people of other than our own group. Television is thus, the need for strengthening contacts with family, friends and others.



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It satisfies our need to know what is going on in and around the world. Television reveals dresses of different communities, food of people from south India to north India and also the rituals and religious practices of people from different corners of the country.

Television is the source of entertainment to people of all categories. It provides company for the lonely, aged, and housewives. It gives topics for conversation to members of the family staying at home. For the working people it's a tension-release mechanism, affording an easy diversion from problems and from routines of life.

Today, Television focuses on Indian family and marriage system, Indian culture and emphasize, a great deal of sharing and tolerance. Its Institutions of marriage and family have strengthened this notion. Joint family system nourished these values. Tele serials provide models and values that we can identify with or use as a point of comparison. Thus, we can say, television is a need for self-confidence, stability and reassurance.

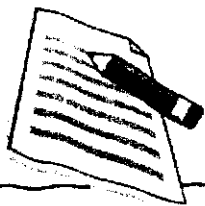
Negative aspect

In spite of all these, there are few areas where the influence of television is not positive. It is found that the naked exposures to sensuality, the criminal items and unfair bossism by anti-social elements of society exercise the most adverse impact on children in particular and the youths in general. Many of the scenes and themes shown on TV in films, serials, advertisements, interviews etc. often run down the values and ideals, and cultural themes, for which our traditional national culture stood. But it dehumanizes the viewers by naked exposure to sensuality, criminality, militancy, unfairness and several other negative aspects of it.

The sheer amount of time spent in watching TV by the children is often too large. Thus they have negative impact in terms of their studies, socialization and participation in other entertainment activities.

In our present day society, with an increasing wave of crime and violence we are beginning to look at the relationship between television programmes and cultural values more clearly. In a recent study of T.V. programmes, in three metros of India, the following results were found.

Out of 3,500 children, 79 percent prefer to watch cartoon Network as entertainment rather than any educational programme; 11% prefer National Geography channel, only 8 percent prefer family serials and 2 percent have no specification for any programme..



Notes

A maximum number of children prefer cartoon network as the main channel of entertainment. It is now time to telecast Indian cultural values through cartoon channels. Epics like Ramayana, Mahabharata, Bhagvat Geeta and stories of Panchatantra should come up in cartoon channels. Stories with strong historical background like that of Tipu Sultan, Shivajee and Bhagat Singh should reach children through entertainment channels. Television is becoming increasingly important as an Institution for socialising the younger members of Indian society. The role of TV in moulding their minds and teaching them Indian values and Indian way of life is growing at startling rate.

INTEXT QUESTIONS 35.4

Write T for true and F for false

1. Television programmes are informative and educative.
2. Simple entertainment is the main purpose of television.
3. Television has both positive and negative impact.
4. Through television we can know what is going on in and around the world.



WHAT YOU HAVE LEARNT

- Modern men have built multi faceted mechanism for delivering their messages.
- Mass communication is the way of delivering information, ideas, attitudes to a diversified audience through the use of media developed for that purpose.
- Mass media, is the technological means of sending information, ideas, opinions etc. from the mass communicator to an audience.
- The media therefore consist of newspapers, magazines and books (which collectively called the print medium), radio and television (the electronic medium) and motion pictures.
- The most important role played by mass media is in diffusion of culture.
- The work and beliefs of religious groups and a hundred others pertaining to the way human beings behave are constantly reported and discussed in the press, in books and on television and radio programmes.
- The methods of presentation of information and other contents vary widely.

- Media are the means for bringing different cultures together.
- National and local media play significant roles in the development of cultural unity.
- TV has both positive and negative impact. But the positive impact always overweighs the negative impact.
- The fact is that the impact can be bad or good depends upon what we watch and why we watch.



TERMINAL EXERCISE

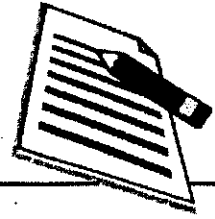
1. Define mass media and describe its different forms.
2. Write a brief note on the role of mass media in diffusion of culture
3. The impact of television both positive and negative. Explain and elucidate.
4. Write short notes:
 - a. Print medium
 - b. Electronic medium.

GLOSSORY

| | | |
|---------------|---|------------------------------------|
| adjunct | : | associated with |
| antecedent | : | prior or before. |
| campaign | : | to gain publicity. |
| sculpture | : | art of stone carving. |
| pamphlets | : | leaf let, small unbound booklet. |
| persuade | : | to believe, to convince |
| diffusion | : | act of diffusing or to spread out. |
| crude | : | in natural state, unpolished. |
| Revelry | : | merry making |
| Merchandising | : | commercial trade |



Notes



Notes



ANSWER TO INTEXT QUESTIONS

35.1

- a. Mass communication is the way of delivering information, ideas, attitudes to a diversified audience through the use of media developed for that purpose.
- b. If the communication is internal to an individual, it's called intra-personal communication.
- c. If the act or process concerns two or more persons in a face to face relationship, it is interpersonal communication.
- d. It is that technological means of sending information, ideas, opinions etc. from the mass communicator to an audience which consist of newspapers, magazines and books (print medium, radio and television (the electronic medium) and motion pictures.

35.2

- a. Radio - audio.
- b. Newspaper - print medium.
- c. Film - audio-visual

35.3

- a. Diffusion describes the spread of a cultural trait from the point of origin throughout an area and into the neighbouring regions and or to the neighbouring societies.
- b. food, dress.
- c. pepsi, cocacola
- d. Santoshi maa.

35.4

- a. T
- b. F