UNIT 5 IMPACT OF MASS MEDIA

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5.0 OBJECTIVES

We have touched briefly on the effect of mass communication in the earlier units of this Block. After going through this unit, you would have a fair idea of the impact of mass media in the Indian context. Specifically, you should be able to:

- outline the development of journalism in India from a mission to an industry and explain its present impact on people;
- describe the reach of radio and its impact on the masses;
- explain the role of film as a mirror of social realities and its effects on the society;
- describe the role of TV among the Indian elite and masses; and
- describe the new technologies like Video, Cable, and Satellite, and identify their relevance to the Indian media scene.
Activity 1

Before you proceed further with this unit, undertake an exercise to find how much of your life is dependent on the instruments, and channels of communication.

1) In the space provided below, please list down all the instruments and channels of communication you have at home.

2) You must also write down what inconveniences these would make if you do not use them for a week.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Instruments/channels of communication</th>
<th>Inconveniences caused by the absence</th>
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5.1 INTRODUCTION

In the first three units of this Block, you were exposed to different aspects of communication: essential elements, different types of communication, the reach of different mass media and people’s access to them, and different theories and models of communication. In the last unit, we considered the need and importance of communication research and the various research methods. In all these units you have had brief exposure to the kinds of effect mass communication has on society.

In this unit, we shall have a thorough discussion on the issue of impact of mass media in the Indian context by taking each medium separately. We shall first take up the print medium, primarily because that happens to be the earliest type of mass media used in India. We shall then give an account of radio, film and TV as media of mass communication in India, their spread, reach, people’s access to these media and their impact on the society. New technologies made their entry during 1970s and 1980s. They are video, cable and satellite TV. We shall discuss the effect these new channels of mass communication have on the people.

With this unit, the first block comes to an end. The next block will focus attention on the elements of mass media. In Unit 1 of Block 2, we shall discuss the characteristics of the print media.

5.2 CHARACTERISTICS OF MASS MEDIA

By now you know that mass communication is a means whereby mass produced messages are transmitted to large, anonymous, and heterogeneous masses of people. (Mass Communication refers to the theoretical processes, whereas the term mass communications is used interchangeably with mass media which are the vehicles conveying communication). Most of the models described in Units 2 and 3 for mass communications are similar to the model for basic communication, except that the receivers are in a large number and the feedback is delayed. The experts dealing with the hardware, constantly try to improve upon channels which are used to transmit messages mechanically. Broadcast engineers are the examples of this category of personnel. On the other hand, media “gatekeepers” serve the important role of determining what is to be printed, broadcast, or telecast for people’s consumption. Editors, reporters, television programme and movie producers are examples of gatekeepers.
You would recall that among the various functions of mass media, the four primary ones are (1) to inform (2) to entertain (3) to educate, and (4) to promote culture, goods and ideas. These functions overlap at times. Each medium tends to emphasize one of these more than the others. The print media tend to emphasize information whereas the broadcast and film media stress entertainment. Advertising is the most blatant form of persuasion, but much of the persuasion in mass media is concealed, and some is passed off as news. Finally, the media preserve the culture by furnishing a record of events and by noting changes in the social structure.

Check Your Progress 1

Note: i) Write your answers in the space given below.

   ii) Compare your answers with the ones given at the end of the unit.

1) Mention 3 most important characteristics of radio as a mass medium.

2) What are the four important functions of mass media?

5.3 IMPACT OF MASS MEDIA

Earlier, in Unit 1, certain questions were raised about the impact of mass media: for instance, the question whether “mass media consumers were being manipulated or brainwashed”. Also, the positive and negative effects of mass media were explained to you. You would recall that in Unit 3, while explaining the theories and models of communication, you were told that earlier theories assumed that mass media had enormous effects on society, but later researchers denied any such direct “cause-and-effect” relationship. They underlined individual differences and personal influences on the transmission, acceptance, and retention of mass media messages.

Denis McQuail, as pointed out in Unit 3, proposed an interactive perspective. He held that mass media may equally mould, mirror, and follow social change. Consequently, the origin, development and ultimate use and influence of mass media are in conformity with the changing complexion of society.
Though the industrial and communication revolutions have changed the face of our country, it still remains largely an agriculture-based socio-economic entity. Thus, the impact of mass media in India has to be seen in the background of our tradition and value-bound social structure.

However, before we look into the impact of mass media in the Indian context, let us first examine the whole gamut of questions that are raised about the effects of mass media.

5.3.1 Nature of Mass Media Effects

While new media technology is sweeping across India, many questions about the precise impact of mass media remain unanswered. We know that the mass media have an impact, but the answers to questions such as what impact they have, why they have impact and how all that happens remain elusive. Behavioural scientists are examining the effects of mass media; we know that we can predict certain outcomes in certain situations. But the variables are numerous. Two social scientists, Bernard Berelson and Morris Janowitz, once summarised knowledge about the effects of mass media thus in Readers in Public Opinion and Communication (Free Press, P. 397).

"The effects of communication are many and diverse. They may be short-range or long run. They may be manifest or latent. They may be strong or weak. They may derive from any number of aspects of the communication content. They may be considered as psychological or political or economic or sociological. They may operate upon opinions, values, information levels, skills, taste, or over behaviour."

5.3.2 Questions on Media Effects

What are the effects of the mass media on our society? To what extent are we moulded and shaped by the media? Are we informed? Or are we manipulated? Are we in control? Or are we merely dancing at the end of strings pulled by mass communicators?

Then, there are allied questions. Should the mass media be as free as they are in our society? What rights should they have? And what limits should be placed on them? Should they be responsible to the government, the society, the audience or themselves?

Should there be any ethical guidelines or standards for mass media operations? Where do the mass media overstep the ethical boundaries? How can pressure be brought on the media to make them perform in accordance with norms acceptable
to the society? For instance, what about crime and violence depicted in the mass media? Have we become a violent society because we read about crime in our newspapers and see violence on television? Do news stories about terrorism inspire terrorists? Do stories about airplane hijacking inspire hijackers? What about stories relating to dowry-deaths and suicides? Do they inspire women to take such extreme steps? Do the mass media create violence in our society by reporting it, or do they merely reflect the violence that is already there?

Are mass media in any way responsible for the increase in sexual promiscuity? What have the mass media done to us politically? Can one be elected to a political office without the endorsement of mass media? And are media giving us an accurate picture of our politics and politicians? When going to the polling booth, can we rely on the information we have received from mass media?

To what extent does our government control the mass media and vice versa? To what extent do the media control business and vice-versa?

Do the mass media present a fair and accurate picture of women in our society? Are they adequately represented in the mass media? What are the results of the media’s distortions of the image of women in society or its version of women’s issues? And there are similar questions about other underprivileged and neglected segments of the society.

How have the mass media affected religion in our society? How have the mass media affected our culture as a whole? Are we becoming a classless or a class-conscious society as a result of what is served out by the mass media?

And finally, the media themselves are changing because of the new technologies. What impact will this have on our culture and our society? What will satellites, cable television, laser beams and computers do to us? And what can we do about them, if anything?

5.3.3 Mass Media Effects and Society

There are no clear-cut and final answers to most of these questions.

The growth of mass communication has made it possible for us to get far more information today than any time before. Information is indispensable in a complex, advanced society. We are an information-hungry society; we need an ever-increasing amount of facts in order to maintain and enhance our standard of living.

Information today is a commodity we are willing to pay for. The mass media today are not only entertaining the masses; they are selling information as well.

We have often been told that information is power. The question is, what do we have to do to ensure that the information we receive from the mass media will serve our needs, not the purposes of someone else?

Today, the mass media are very important for us and we have to know where we stand on the issues relating to mass communication. They are too essential to be ignored. The issues raised by mass media will no doubt continue to grow in importance in the future.

### Check Your Progress 2

**Note:**

i) Write your answers in the space given below.

ii) Compare your answers with the ones given at the end of the unit.

1) What are the possible positive and negative influences that the television programmes may have on school going children? Please mention 3 positive and 3 negative influences.
5.4 MASS MEDIA IN INDIA

We shall now discuss the situation of mass media in India and describe the possible impact of each one of these media - print journalism, radio, film, TV, video, cable and satellite TV has. However, you should keep one thing in mind while we are discussing mass media. India, towards the end of the 20th century, still largely remains an oral society. We spend more time communicating interpersonally rather than through the channels of mass communication. The situation in the West is different. There, an average person daily spends at least six hours “consuming” mass media products, mainly TV, radio, film, and newspapers.

5.5 IMPACT OF JOURNALISM

In India, the Press has been closely associated with the freedom struggle. This association further intensified as the freedom struggle gathered momentum. In the nineteenth century, the press fought for the freedom of information and the right to criticise. But in the early twentieth century, the freedom struggle took a new turn. It was no longer petition-making and asking for small mercies from the British Government. When the press projected these changing attitudes, censorship and other restrictions were imposed on it. The revolutionary movement by the active Bengal youth and, particularly, by the intellectuals, led to the suppression of national aspirations and the beginning of distrust by the British. The seeds of Hindu-Muslim disunity were sown, leading to the division of the Indian Press into two categories, i.e. nationalist press, supported by the nationalists and the Anglo-Indian press, supported by the Government.

The Jallianwala Bagh massacre, Gandhiji’s Non-Co-operation movement, and Civil Disobedience movement soon spread all over the country through the press. The Gandhi-Irwin pact and the Government of India Act, 1935 made big headlines in the press. The national press also made people aware of the activities of the separatist Muslim League, started under the leadership of M. A. Jinnah, with the strong support of the British Government. During the Second World War, memorable and extraordinary events took place in India, starting with the Quit India Movement in 1942. The British Government tried to deal with the India problems by sending the Cripps Mission to India. The Mission was opposed by Lala Lajpat Rai and others. This incident convinced the British that it was no longer possible to keep India under subjugation, resulting in the historic announcement regarding the British withdrawal from India. An interim Government was formed which took over in 1946, and continued up to 15 August, 1947. In all these extraordinary events and developments, the press was a direct participant. The Nationalist press underwent the same kind suffering as the freedom-fighters.
5.5.1 Changing Face of the Press

Newspapers in India have undergone revolutionary changes, both in form and content, since the eighties. Today, there are hundreds of dailies and magazines crying for attention. Splashes of colour and slick typography based on computer technology, are making them brighter and visually more appealing. To keep up with TV, contemporary journalism has increasingly become more pictorial. While still clinging to the traditional news coverage formula with its emphasis on politics, they have also started discussing social economic, and environmental issues. This has resulted in a drastic jump in circulations and revenues. In 1985, there were 3,000 publications with a total circulation of over 26 million. In 1993, just six publications, namely, The Times of India, Indian Express, Malayala Manorama and Ananda Bazar Patrika (dailies) and Malayala Manorama Mangalam and Kumudam (weeklies) have a combined circulation of five million, while 150 other publications have a total circulation of 25 million.

Today, as compared to 1950, the number of publications has increased seven times and the circulation by ten times. The press occupies a commanding position in India despite the low level of literacy, (52.11%) and circulations remaining confined to metros, cities, major towns and district headquarters. There are over 30,000 newspapers (daily newspapers and journals of periodicity of different kinds) with over 60 million circulation. The press remains the principal information medium, in the private sector.

5.5.2 Effects of the Press

Newspaper readers, though numerically small in India, largely constitute the intelligentsia. The influence of the press is decidedly far wider than reflected by mere circulation statistics. It has a "multiplier effect", its message spreads far and wide, even into the villages. The Bofors-Sofma field gun controversy snow-balled in such a manner that even Rajiv Gandhi later admitted in an interview that the press was an important factor in turning public opinion against him.

The impact of the press can be judged only in the perspectives of current developments and pace of change in the country. Despite its predominantly urban and middle class moorings, the press has done a reasonably good job in highlighting the issues of poverty, corruption and unemployment, and has given the ruling class a sense of guilt. The power of the press is also seen to be mainly responsible for the major political developments in India during the nineties.

Devialal's weekly interview led to his eventual removal. So was an interview published in an obscure weekly which led to veteran C. Subramanian giving up his gubernatorial robes in Maharashtra, or the telephone tapping story which led to Ramakrishna Hegde's downfall. The Harshad Mehta and Goldstar scandals are all the contributions of the press. The capacity of the Indian press to generate a healthy debate on public issues has been only partially realised. But with increasing literacy, it holds out infinite possibilities in the future.

Barring a few instances of blatantly biased reporting, the Indian press has, by and large, shown a high degree of social responsibility during the recent communal outbursts over the Babri Masjid — Ram Janmabhoomi controversy and the Bombay blasts. However, we must add that with increasing competition, the press is increasingly being used as the battleground for political and corporate warfare. This has inevitably led to invasion of privacy, smearing of reputations and even practicing of deception.

5.6 Impact of Radio

Radio programmes are received by over three crore receiving sets in India. Radio is serving as an effective medium not only to inform and educate people, but also to provide healthy entertainment. AIR's home-service programmes are transmitted for 1,530 hours daily in 19 languages and 146 dialects and Vividh Bharati Programmes of 13 hours a day through 185 transmitters. There are external services broadcasts in 17 foreign languages and 8 Indian languages for about 75 hours daily. The external service is designed to give India's viewpoint on important issues to
listeners abroad, and project the cultural heritage of the country, its art, literature, music and socio-economic developments.

5.6.1 Radio : Medium for the Masses

Radio can justifiably be called the medium for the masses. In India, the three major hurdles to meaningful communication are mass illiteracy, lack of efficient means to reach the remote places and poverty which prevents access to mass media. Radio has the inherent advantage to overcome these barriers. Radio, unlike the print media, can overcome the obstacle of illiteracy. It also does not recognise the barrier of rivers and mountains can reach people in the farthest corners of the country. Thanks to the transistor revolution, this is perhaps the only mass medium which an average Indian can afford.

5.6.2 Local Broadcasting

Local broadcasting is a new concept in participative communication and focuses on the local community. Here, the barefoot broadcasters and the community together initiate the quest for a better life. Several local stations have been set up in remote locations in different states in India and some of them have succeeded in striking an immediate understanding with the local people.

Check Your Progress 3

Note:  
1) Mention two great qualities of Indian Journalists before Independence.

2) Are you satisfied with the way the present Indian Press is developing?

[ ] Yes  [ ] No.

If yes, why, if no, why not?

3) Should we have more of “local broadcasting” than “national broadcasting”?


5.7 IMPACT OF FILMS

In India, with its cultural and linguistic diversities and the problems of illiteracy, the film is the most powerful medium of mass communication. With its universal language, the film can, to a considerable extent, cut across the cultural and linguistic barriers.

Films can carry not merely information; they can even create a yearning for change and modernisation. By dexterously employing the mechanical tricks of photography and camera angles, by exploiting the ingenious use of close-ups, by building up of suspense and illusion, and by weaving human elements and story in appropriate sequences, films can create social awareness and even arouse strong emotions. Films can inform, inspire and express feelings and emotions most dramatically with lasting impact.

A film calls for creative collaboration between the film-maker and other performing and visual artists. Films fired the imaginations of people by the closing years of the nineteenth century. Fostered by Edison, Lumiere brothers and George Melies, the film grew rapidly in stature—with the work of Edwin S. Porter and Griffith. By the twenties, the film came to be recognised as an art form, a distinct mode of creative expression. It is also earned universal acclaim. It is a versatile means of communication. It can be produced on all subjects of human interest and includes, broadly speaking, feature films, documentaries and newsreels.

The Indian Cinema

The Indian film industry remains a paradox in many ways. India is going to enter the 21st century with the largest number of illiterates in the world. Therefore, there is an urgent need to have proper communication among these illiterate people. The films in many way meet this need. Because the only meaningful access to audio-visual entertainment for the poor people is the film. Films are extremely popular among the masses. And the Indian film industry continues to be the world’s largest producer of films, releasing on an average 750 films every year in 16 languages.

The Indian films followed the Hollywood model right from the start with heavy emphasis on entertainment. But individual film-makers, away from the mainstream, have always made socially purposeful films, even in the thirties. The Indian cinema discovered its native genius with the advent of Satyajit Ray, Ritwik Ghatak and Mrinal Sen in the fifties who have earned international acclaim. But it was Bhuvan Shome, made in 1969 by Mrinal Sen, which ushered in a new consciousness for the whole country. It paved the way for a bunch of talented film-makers to make their mark. There was meanwhile a southern wave, led by Gopalakrishnan, Vasudevan Nair, Girish Karnad and G. Aravindan. The dominant features of these films, made at low cost, outside the mainstream of commercial cinemas have been the social concern, predominance of realism and exclusion of familiar commercial devices.

5.8 IMPACT OF TELEVISION

Television is one of the greatest inventions of man. It has an edge over other forms of mass media like radio and newspapers. It is a multi-media system predominated by the visual medium. There is an urgent need for mass education and it has been accepted that communication media are needed for accelerating social change, for creating awareness and inculcating scientific temper among the masses. TV has the power to instil desired attitudes (necessary for national development) among the masses. It has greater influence on the perception, emotions and the outlook of the masses than any other medium.
5.8.1 Developmental Use of TV

An experimental television service was introduced in India with the inauguration of Delhi Kendra, with a UNESCO grant, on September 15, 1959. Entertainment and information programmes were introduced from August 1965. A number of other television centres (Bombay, Srinagar, Jalandhar, Calcutta, Madras and Lucknow) came into existence, from 1972 onwards in quick succession.

SITE: The most momentous development in Television in India was the one year Satellite Instructional Television Experiment (SITE) which was inaugurated on August 1, 1975. The SITE Programmes generated tremendous interest among the people of the six states in which it was launched.

5.8.2 Effects of TV

TV can transport the viewers to the actual scene of action to see things as they happen. But many have also come to hold TV responsible for inciting violence, corrupting the young and creating a make belief world of illusion to keep us away from the realities of life. But if TV can distract and distort, it can also instruct and inspire. The Joshi Committee (1982) expressed the view that Doordarshan was a faceless medium. It promoted cheap entertainment and cultural rootlessness and sadly neglected the myriad diversities of the Indian cultural tradition. Doordarshan, therefore, has come to represent the unusual case of growth without improvement.

As an instant medium, TV is ideal for news presentation. TV news is unsurpassed in its ability to transport viewers to the scene of action, giving the audience a sense of excitement and involvement that cannot be matched by any other medium. But Doordarshan news frequently suffers from undesirable tampering by politicians. It tends to present the news from the perspectives of the government, the ruling party and the urban well-to-do.

5.9 VIDEO, CABLE TV AND SATELLITE

Video burst on the Indian scene some time in the mid-eighties and immediately caught the fancy of the affluent section of the Indian society. It holds out infinite promises of entertainment and information. Its potential to enrich the lives of the people, both culturally and economically, has been so far realised only to a very limited extent.
Though better known as an entertainment medium, video has immense possibilities as an educator and commercial persuader. Video on a wide range of subjects, and with interest and appeal to specialised audiences, is increasingly being shown to the professional people, students, technical workers and other group. It also promotes interaction-based programme production. Its safe and easy facility for stop, go, forward and reverse viewing is invaluable for teaching and learning. Naturally its use as a tool for teaching in the classroom is catching. With improved technologies and reduced cost, video is fast becoming one of the most pervasive forms of communication in education, entertainment, business and industry.

According to a survey, (by the end of 1972) there were an estimated 50 lakh video cassette recorders (VCRs) and video cassette players (VCP) in the country.

Secondly, (by the beginning of the nineties) India had an estimated 15,000 video parlours, 60,000 video libraries, 15,000 video buses and about 15,000 hotels showing videos. Video libraries circulate 4.8 crore cassettes every month through more than 30 lakh VCRs. Renting of VCR is as common in India as watching a video in a community function or restaurant. Viewing a film on video is a usual feature in the long-distance buses.

The new audio-visual space that the video has created for itself will be the most deeply explored avenue in the coming years, possibly obviating the need for the costly conventional technology of broadcast television. But more importantly, the technological criteria may no longer be the only determining factor in the transmission of a programme. With the relative simplification of video production and the overall easy access to video technology, it will finally be the content rather than the electronic quality that will dictate matters. The video will wield immense political power and is likely to be transformed into a political weapon like none other in history.

5.9.1 Video Magazines

By the end of eighties, video had discovered an extremely enterprising and innovative mode for dissemination of information through a new genre called the video newsmagazines. Just as the early eighties had seen a boom in print magazines, the nineties witnessed an explosion of video magazines. The video news magazines, a totally new concept in the field of mass communication, have flourished and met with amazing success. Obviously, the coverage of contemporary affairs has taken a new dimension with the advent of the video newsmagazines. The most important reasons for their resounding popularity are their credibility, spot, coverage, comprehensive reporting and their extended focus on matters of immense public concern.
5.9.2 Video and Political Campaigns

Electioneering in India took a new turn with the appearance of video. The potential of video for rousing the masses and for political campaigning was first demonstrated in India during the Andhra Pradesh Assembly elections in 1983. Video was also used on a large scale (for political advertisement) in the eighth Lok Sabha elections in 1984. About 5,000 video prints of a 20-minute video film, entitled Ma, based on Indira Gandhi’s life, were extensively shown in the villages.

It was believed to be one of the major factors behind the sweeping victory of Congress (I). But it was only during the ninth Lok Sabha elections in 1989 that the full impact of the video as a medium of mass communication was first realised by most of the leading national parties.

5.9.3 Cable Television

Cable TV has literally brought the world to our parlour and made a viewer truly an international citizen without any frontiers. Sitting in a remote corner of India, one was able to experience all the horrors of the Gulf War beamed by the Cable News Network (CNN), the 24-hour global television news and feature service. Besides, the viewers can also tune into Worldnet, Arabsat, Intelsat, BBC Sports, Japansat and TV stations in China, the USSR, Saudi Arabia, Pakistan, Singapore and Hongkong, thanks to the dish antenna of the cable operators.

The growth of cable TV is directly related to the inadequacies of Doordarshan programmes — the same factor which is behind the mushrooming of video magazines. Doordarshan is no longer being accepted as the primary source of TV viewing and its role may be further marginalised unless it infuses a new air of vitality in all its programmes. Another reason for the growth of Cable TV is that the cost of having access to a dish antenna what has been steadily coming down. Cable TV has emerged as an important medium for advertisements as well.

Activity 2

Do you subscribe to a cable network?

[ ] Yes [ ] No

In your area/locality/village, there must be some cable TV networks operating to satisfy the communication needs of a large number of people. Probably, you are aware of the degree of popularity of the cable TV network there. Undertake an exercise to find some empirical data of the popularity of the cable TV in your locality.

1) Conduct a survey in 30 houses/homes/family in your locality.

2) Use the following questionnaire to collect data.

Questionnaire
(To be filled in by you)

A) House No. ..................................................

B) Does it subscribe to a cable TV network?

[ ] Yes [ ] No
5.10 IMPACT OF MASS MEDIA: AREAS OF DANGER

The developments on the mass media scene in India which we have described above are having an intense impact on the society. The behaviour, thinking, and expectations of people everywhere have been altered and will be moulded even more extensively as the full influence of the information flood is felt. It is claimed that this proliferation of information and the swiftness of its distribution would certainly improve the human condition. However, along with the positive values it fosters, the communication explosion has created areas of danger that must be recognized and controlled.

C) Why does it subscribe to a cable TV network? You may have more than one answer.

3) Tabulate the data and write a summary report.

Among them are these five major concerns:

- Perversion of the truth by electronic trickery
- Invasion of privacy
- Violation of security, both governmental and institutional
- Impact on the democratic process
- Isolation of people.

Manipulation: Clever users of electronic devices can alter the meaning of recorded visual and audio material, making it appear to be what it really isn't.

Privacy: There have been innumerable complaints about the invasion of privacy. The whole question of co-relating the right to privacy with public interest has become a vexed problem for policy planners and social scientists alike.

Security: Protection of secret government information, private financial transactions, and institutional records in computer systems has become a matter of concern.
Democratic Process: It is axiomatic that democracy functions best when voters are widely informed on all problems and issues. Given power to select the information they desire with the aid of new technologies, will citizens be exposing themselves to a sufficiently broad range of knowledge? By choosing to see and hear only what interests them most — for example, sports, stock market quotations, and entertainment — will they be able to vote intelligently?

This power of selectivity might actually serve, under some circumstances, as a limiting factor (rather than as a broadening one) in the education of the citizenry.

Isolation: While the communication revolution has the power to draw the global community closer together, simultaneously, it also isolates individuals and small groups. Instead of mingling with crowds at movie theatres, couples and families stay home to watch television and video on their TV screens. Both adults and children sit for hours, aware only of what appears on the small screen. Often they seem visually drugged, almost bewitched. A growing number of workers do their jobs at home, linked to their offices by personal computer. This isolation from comrades, this loss of the group dynamics, has forced some intense media users to seek psychiatric help. The negative influence of such aloneness of a large number of people has not been felt yet in our country.

Obviously, the society had a long way to go in comprehending and controlling the communication explosion. A little awed by these feats of electronic wizardry and new marvels just coming into use, we the people of India, are still struggling to harness the media potentialities to improve the human condition all over the world. More than ever before, responsible citizens need to learn how the mass communication system works and how to deal intelligently with the deluge of information it delivers.

Check Your Progress 4

Note:  i) Write your answers in the space given below.
ii) Compare your answers with those given at the end of the unit.

1) Name one positive and one negative impact that films might have on the Indian population.

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<th>Negative</th>
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2) Give two reasons for the failure of Doordarshan programmes in general.

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<th>Reason 2</th>
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3) Give three points of negative impact the satellite TV may have on Indian children.

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<th>Impact 2</th>
<th>Impact 3</th>
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5.11 LET US SUM UP

In this unit, you have exposed to the major mass media channels available in India, their evolution, growth and their uses in the Indian context. We also discussed some of the effects these mass media have on their audiences. Because they form a primary channel through which the various units of the society communicate, the mass media illuminate and interpret the constantly changing societal relationships. Some critics contend that the media, or at least some of the national electronic and print-media, try to mould society to their own design by seeking to influence the attitudes, habits, and political beliefs of those who make the society. Other observers see the media role as more passive, reflecting rather than promoting change.

On balance, it seems fair to conclude that the bulk of the print, electronic, and film media do not consciously try to shape society, although a small minority of them vigorously and openly plead causes dear to them.

The media as a whole are concerned with reporting and interpreting society’s conduct (information and education angles); by presenting material that pleases audiences and earns profit (entertainment angle); and with marketing goods and services through advertising to make a profit for themselves (commercial angle).

5.12 GLOSSARY

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Entropy</td>
<td>The tendency of communication system to move from a state of order to disorder or chaos.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gatekeepers</td>
<td>Persons working in different mass media, having the responsibility of deciding what should get printed, broadcast or produced.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interactive Process</td>
<td>Where one element interacts with another to achieve certain goals; for example, mass media interact with society to achieve the goals of providing people with information, education, entertainment, persuasion and motivation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mass Communication</td>
<td>The process of transmitting messages through media to a large number of individuals and to diversified groups, usually not known to each other; “Mass Communication” is often used as a synonym for mass media.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mass Media</td>
<td>Forms, means or channels through which it is possible to transmit identical information to a large number of people at different places; mass media are generally Press, TV, Radio, Film, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Wave</td>
<td>An experimental style of film-making, popularised first in France in the fifties; it is without any elaborate plot and chronological continuity and is generally free from theatricalities but there is an originality of treatment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prime Time</td>
<td>The time during which the media have their largest audience.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Semantic Noise</td>
<td>Noise in communication process refers to any disturbance in the reception of a message resulting in the message received not being the same as message sent. Semantic noise occurs between people speaking different languages or by the speaker’s use of technical or complex terms not understood by the listener.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Software: Programmes prepared for television or computer use.

Traditional media or Folk Media: Indigenous forms of communication which have their roots in the cultural tradition of the country like Jatra, Nautanki, Burrakatha, Yas khagana, Tarja, Kabigan, Puppetry, etc.

Yellow journalism: A sensationalized story, often bordering on a kind of scurrilous writing or a personal slander.

5.13 FURTHER READING


5.14 CHECK YOUR PROGRESS: MODEL ANSWERS

Check Your Progress 1

1) a) It is one of the simplest media to communicate with a large audience.
   b) Only the audio part is used to communicate.
   c) The radio programmes are less expensive to produce than the television programmes etc.

2) a) inform
   b) entertain
   c) educate
   d) promote culture/goods/ideas etc.

Check Your Progress 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Positive</th>
<th>Negative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1) a) Will be able to see many places which otherwise will never be seen by them</td>
<td>a) may lesser the sharpness of their capacity to imagine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b) the children may be informed more about various aspects of social life</td>
<td>b) too much of television watching may kill the interest of reading and listening</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c) television programmes educate the children</td>
<td>c) excessive violence in television programmes may dehumanise the children.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2) The two important issues are a) ownership of media and b) purpose of the media establishment. I consider these as the two most important issues because the ownership would definitely determine the freedom of mass media and the purpose of the mass media establishments would determine the character of these establishments.
Check Your Progress 3

1) a) honesty
   b) patriotism

2) Yes, the press, specially the newspapers, do not suffer from want of capital. The establishment is equipped with latest technologies. However, there are occasions, when the dedication and desire to reach the heart of the truth are missing in the reporting.

3) Yes, India should have more of 'local broadcasting' than 'national broadcasting'. Through local broadcasting, the needs of the people could be addressed adequately using the local language, culture and background of the audience.

Check Your Progress 4

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Positive</th>
<th>Negative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1) Indians may come to know from films many stories from the literature written in our various vernacular languages.</td>
<td>People may like to live in the dream world created by films.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2) a) The Doordarshan programmes are urban based.
   b) The programmes reflect the culture of the people with whom our rural people are not familiar with.

3) a) They may indicate the actions of foreign idols.
   b) They may start copying the language spoken by foreign artists.
   c) They may not have time to learn their own culture, values, literature etc.