Media and Society

COURSE CODE: M21SO01DE

Discipline Specific Elective Course
Postgraduate Programme in Sociology
Self Learning Material

SREENARAYANAGURU
OPEN UNIVERSITY

SREENARAYANAGURU OPEN UNIVERSITY

The State University for Education, Training and Research in Blended Format, Kerala

SREENARAYANAGURU OPEN UNIVERSITY

Vision

To increase access of potential learners of all categories to higher education, research and training, and ensure equity through delivery of high quality processes and outcomes fostering inclusive educational empowerment for social advancement.

Mission

To be benchmarked as a model for conservation and dissemination of knowledge and skill on blended and virtual mode in education, training and research for normal, continuing, and adult learners.

Pathway

Access and Quality define Equity.

Media and Society

Course Code: M21SO01DE

Semester - III

Discipline Specific Elective Course
Postgraduate Programme in Sociology
Self Learning Material

(With Model Question Paper Sets)

SGOU

SREENARAYANAGURU
OPEN UNIVERSITY

SREENARAYANAGURU OPEN UNIVERSITY

The State University for Education, Training and Research in Blended Format, Kerala

Media and Society

M21SO01DE

Semester - III

Discipline Specific Elective Course

MA Sociology

SREENARAYANAGURU OPEN UNIVERSITY

All rights reserved. No part of this work may be reproduced in any form, by mimeograph or any other means, without permission in writing from Sreenarayanaguru Open University.
Printed and published on behalf of Sreenarayanaguru Open University by Registrar, SGOU, Kollam.

www.sgou.ac.in

ISBN 978-81-972962-2-2

9 788197 296222

DOCUMENTATION

Academic Committee

Dr. T.T. Sreekumar
Dr. Swapnarani S.S.
L. Thara bhai
Dr. Bushra Beegom R.K.
Dr. Sandhya R.S.
Dr. Antony Palackal
S. Hakim
Dr. Shilujas M.
Dr. Pushpam M.

Development of the Content

Dr. Jan Elizabeth Joseph, Fousiya Shukoor, Surabhi Ghai

Review

Content : Dr. Abraham Vijayan
Format : Dr. I. G. Shibi
Linguistics : Dr. Aravind S.G.

Edit

Dr. Abraham Vijayan

Scrutiny

Dr. Abdul Razak Kunnathodi, Dr. Ahammadu Zirajuddeen, Dr. Jan Elizabeth Joseph, Fousiya Shukoor, Dr. Maya Ravindran

Co-ordination

Dr. I.G. Shibi and Team SLM

Design Control

Azeem Babu T.A.

Cover Design

Jobin J.

Production

September 2024

Copyright

© Sreenarayanaguru Open University 2024

YouTube

MESSAGE FROM VICE CHANCELLOR

Dear learner,

I extend my heartfelt greetings and profound enthusiasm as I warmly welcome you to Sreenarayanaguru Open University. Established in September 2020 as a state-led endeavour to promote higher education through open and distance learning modes, our institution was shaped by the guiding principle that access and quality are the cornerstones of equity. We have firmly resolved to uphold the highest standards of education, setting the benchmark and charting the course.

The courses offered by the Sreenarayanaguru Open University aim to strike a quality balance, ensuring students are equipped for both personal growth and professional excellence. The University embraces the widely acclaimed "blended format," a practical framework that harmoniously integrates Self-Learning Materials, Classroom Counseling, and Virtual modes, fostering a dynamic and enriching experience for both learners and instructors.

The university aims to offer you an engaging and thought-provoking educational journey. The Postgraduate Programme in Sociology naturally follows from the undergraduate programme. It mainly focuses on theories and practical applications. The programme uses vivid examples to make the subject interesting and relevant to learners. By combining academic content with empirical evidence, the programme becomes both unique and practical. The Self-Learning Material has been meticulously crafted, incorporating relevant examples to facilitate better comprehension.

Rest assured, the university's student support services will be at your disposal throughout your academic journey, readily available to address any concerns or grievances you may encounter. We encourage you to reach out to us freely regarding any matter about your academic programme. It is our sincere wish that you achieve the utmost success.

Regards,
Dr. Jagathy Raj V. P.

01-09-2024

Contents

Block 1	**Concepts and Types**	**1**
Unit 1	Communication: Basic Concepts	2
Unit 2	Media: Basic Concepts	19
Unit 3	Sociology of Media and Communication	35
Block 2	**Theories of Media and Communication**	**47**
Unit 1	Communication Theories of Harold Innis	48
Unit 2	Theories of McLuhan and Baudrillard	58
Unit 3	Cultural Materialism	74
Unit 4	Media and Modern Society	83
Block 3	**Media and Socio-Political System**	**94**
Unit 1	Aspects of Media	95
Unit 2	New Media and Alternative Identities	117
Unit 3	Mass Media and Globalisation	132
Block 4	**Media and Indian Society**	**152**
Unit 1	Media and Society	153
Unit 2	Media and Social Transformation	176
Unit 3	Issues of Surveillance	199
	Model Question Paper Sets	**215**

SGOU

Concepts and Types

BLOCK-01

SGOU

Communication: Basic Concepts

Learning Outcomes

After reading this unit, the learner will able to:

- understand the basics of communication
- analyse the nuances of communication, its processes and types
- describe the differences in several kinds of communication that take place

Background

Communication lays the foundation for all human activities. The first means of communication in the world was the human voice; later, human civilisation progressed to writing. Writing is believed to have been invented in China in 1500 BC, independently in Iran and Egypt around 3200 BC. Although primitive forms of writings were used by the Mayan civilization which predates all these. Alphabets were invented around 1600 BC in what is now Israel and Lebanon. The modes and means of communication later flourished at different intervals with different inventions and advancements. From the cave drawings to the sophisticated modes of communication at present, the way is paved with different means and methods.

Society would not function without communication. Without it, conveying or understanding meaning would be impossible. Communication facilitates a two-way process between a sender and a receiver, allowing a message to be conveyed between them. The message may take various forms, such as audio or visual. In this unit, we will learn about the basics of communication.

Keywords

Message, Media, Information Dissemination, Audience, Comprehension

Discussion

1.1.1 Communication

The word communicate literally means to 'share with' or 'divide among'. Communication allows the fundamental functioning of a society as without communication it would be impossible to share ideas and knowledge, express needs, convey interest or disinterest, facilitate actions etc. Life would be at a standstill without communication. Proper and efficient communication facilitates the smooth functioning of society. For communication to take place efficiently there must be active participants and a proper channel to facilitate communication. Communication is a dynamic process where individuals participate and take action by interacting through a medium of their choosing hoping to achieve a desired outcome. Ultimately, communication aims to transmit information. In communication three elements are of utmost importance: sender, message, and receiver. Communication occurs through modes, which are the mediums through which it is processed. There are three primary modes of communication: interpretive, interpersonal, and presentational.

♦ *Purposes of communication*

While learning about communication it is important to understand the distinction between 'communication' and 'communications'. The singular form, communication refers to the communication that takes place between individuals, groups or other parties whereas the plural form that is 'communications' refers to the various medias such as television, radio, mail etc. Communications also denotes the messages shared. Communication is often cited as a basic characteristic that differentiates humans from animals and is considered a key factor that defines human civilization. Communication is a natural process in society; without communication, there will be an imbalance in society. When learning about communication, we must be able to identify and distinguish the various types of communication.

1.1.1.1 Meaning and Definition of Communication

Given this context, how should we define communication? Communication is not merely an isolated act; it is a process

through which information, ideas, emotions, skills, and knowledge are transmitted using symbols, words, pictures, figures, graphs, or illustrations. This act of conveying information is referred to as 'transmission,' while the overall process is generally termed as communication. Carl Hovland defined communication as the process by which an individual transmits stimuli to modify the behaviour of other individuals. Some critics have challenged this definition, arguing that communication does not always aim to change others' behaviour. They point out that people often communicate with family or friends without intending to modify their behaviour. However, the fact remains that even if the intent is not to alter someone's behaviour, such modification can still occur unintentionally.

♦ *Transmission*

Communication is so versatile that it involves a multitude of experiences, actions and events which are now being mediated by various happenings, meanings and technology. Conferences and meetings are examples of communication events, newspapers and radio serve as communication media, and journalists and news readers are communication professionals. At its core, communication involves two or more people coming together to share and connect. Thus, dreaming, talking to someone, engaging in a discussion, public speaking, reading a newspaper are all different kinds of communication. Communication is not mrely an act but a social and cultural process of togetherness. It can occur with oneself, others, God, nature, or people in our environment. Any attempt to define communication involves interacting, exchanging, transacting, and sharing ideas. According to Dennis McQuail communication is a process which increases commonality but also requires elements of commonality for it to occur at all. McQuail sees a different and linear term of human communication where a meaningful message is sent from one person to another. These messages maybe olfactory, oral, written or visual. According to him even things and ideas such as flags, buildings, or even laws and customs can be considered as communication. So, communication can be defined as the interchange of thoughts and ideas.

♦ *Versatility*

Communication in layman's terms is a system through which messages are sent and feedback is received. Thus, it is transferring of details to a desired source. A critical element of communication is perception. A recipient will only perceive what they expect and understand. Communication makes a demand on the recipient in terms of his emotional preference or rejection. Communication is not to be confused with information. Communication is more than the transfer of ideas and thoughts; it is not static but dynamic with an interaction towards a desired goal. A culmination of these various definitions and interpretations can be brought together as a

♦ *Perception and response*

process where two or more persons are involved in the act: one is the sender (the one who gives the information) and the other is the receiver (who receives the information). The information may be shared or exchanged through certain signs or symbols, it could be oral or written.

1.1.1.2 Importance of Communication

Communication is important from the perspectives of a society and an individual. For a person, communication and the need to communicate are as important as the basic needs for survival. Communication is a social requirement, as it is essential for one's existence. Communication involves active interaction with our environment, be it physical, biological, or social. In the absence of communication, one will not be aware of their social standing. But most of the time it is taken for granted and only realise this in the absence of communication.

- *Social interaction*

The basic need for communication can be traced to the evolution of mankind from that of a lower species. Animals, for instance, are in sensory communication with their physical and biological surroundings for the purposes of finding food, protecting themselves, and reproduction. A loss or disruption to this would mean obstruction of the previously mentioned tasks. Thus, it is a biological need for human beings to depend on each other. This dependence leads to the need for human beings to live in groups. Society is, therefore, the result of human evolution, and humans are social animals not by choice but by necessity.

- *Need for communication*

Since communication is central to human sociality, let us take a look at the basic features of communication:

1. Communication is an unavoidable system
2. It is a two -way process
3. It is a social activity
4. It is a continuous process
5. It is universal
6. It maybe formal or informal.

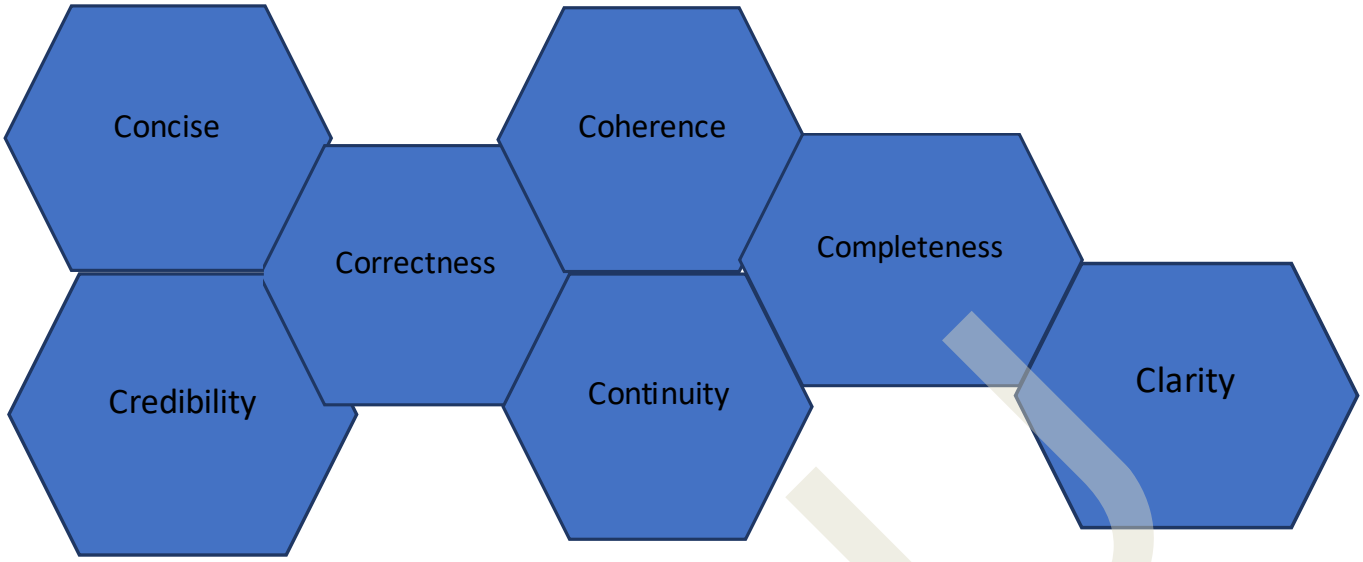


Fig No: 1.1.1 Seven C's of Communication

Communication includes the 7 C's, which are known as the principles of effective communication

1. **Clarity:** The content of communication should be sound and logical, organized in a clear and structured manner. It must be presented in such a way that people of varying levels of intellect can easily understand it.
2. **Completeness:** A message must be organized and include all the important ideas if the intended content or idea is omitted the message would be incomplete and it would result in the failure of conveying the intended message.
3. **Coherence:** This is important in exhibiting clarity, coherence is essential in written communication as the content must be put together in simple sentences that go together.
4. **Concise:** The focus here is on conveying the message in a precise manner without beating around the bush. Anything that doesn't convey the message must be left out of the content.
5. **Credibility:** A good message has the ability to bring about change the clarity of the message allows the masses to understand.

6. **Correctness:** The message must be without fault and discrepancies. The content of the message must be free of grammatical errors, as well as factual and statistical inaccuracies.
7. **Continuity:** The content of the message should not be overly complicated and should avoid the use of jargon whenever possible, as it can hinder the coherence of the content. However, jargon may be used when discussing topics related to science and technology.

♦ *Principles of communication*

1.1.1.3 Process of Communication

The process of communication involves deciding who will communicate what, using what tools, to whom, when and with what effect. When we answer these questions, we are focusing on when and with what effect.

1. When – what is the time we are setting for our communication?
2. With what effect – What is the outcome that we expect from our communication?

Deciding on when to communicate is critical. To understand the process of communication it is important to understand the elements involved in communication. Eight elements form the essential part of communication, they are senders, message, encoding, media, decoding, receiver, feedback and noise. Each element plays a critical role for communication to take place efficiently. Senders are those who begin the communication with the intention to convey their ideas to the receiver, it is the central source of the process. Message is the specific content which may be a diverse nature, whatever is being conveyed by the sender is the message. Encoding is the stage wherein the message is converted into transmittable syllables such as audio-visual forms of images, verbal or gestures even. Media or medium forms the vehicle for the encoded message to be transmitted to the receiver. The media could be of any form, verbal: face to face, calls or messages as in text messages, voice messages, email or any other method that the sender chooses. Decoding is the stage in which the opposite of the encoding process takes place here the receiver will convert the encoded syllables. Feedback entails the receiver indicating that they have received the message from the sender and has successfully understood the message that has been conveyed. Lastly, noise denotes the hindrances and obstructions in the due course of the communication process, this sort of interruption

♦ *Facilitating communication*

maybe caused by the sender, receiver or even the message itself. Thus, the process of communication involves the following steps:

1. Creating the message
2. Encoding of the message
3. Medium of transmission
4. Decoding of the message
5. Receiving and understanding the message
6. Feedback

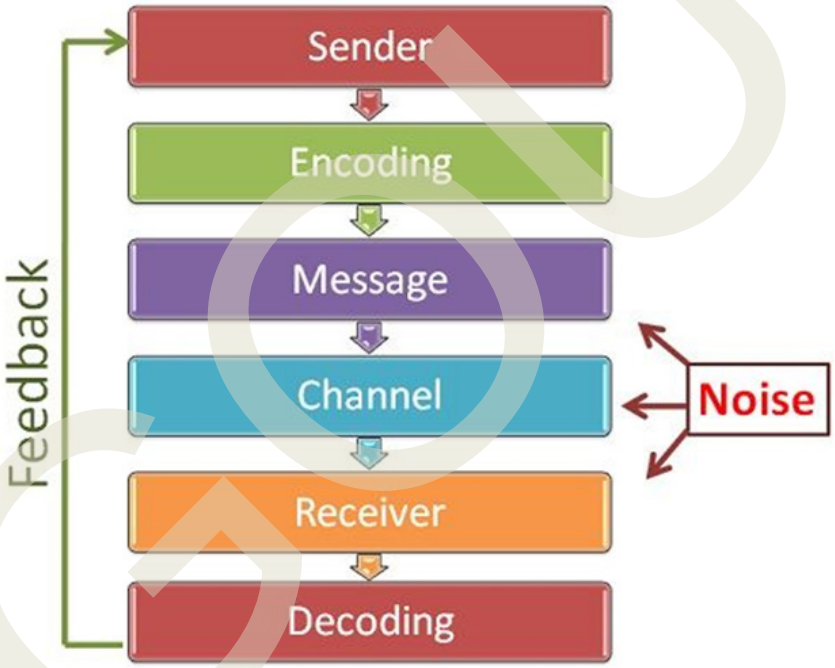


Fig. 1.1.2 Process of Communication

1.1.1.4 Functions of Communication

Broadly considering communication serves four important functions: it is informative, persuasive, integrative and instructive. The fundamental function of communication is to provide knowledge which is fulfilled by the informative function. Persuasive characteristics of communication allow one to make another do or believe in something that they wouldn't otherwise. The Integrative function is essential as it allows for everyone to be a part of the larger cohort and adhere to social norms and obligations. Let us explore the diversification of the four core functions of communication:

- ♦ *Versatility of communication*
- ♦ *Conveying a message*

- **Informing:** Dissemination of information and knowledge is the fundamental principle of communication. Informing thus implies the need to spread the information or message to another. Messages of this nature

will be either verbal or non-verbal. The verbal forms may include written or oral messages and non – verbal messages may be in the form of gestures, thoughts, body language etc.

♦ *Encouraging to pursue*

- **Persuading:** is also referred to as motivational because it refers to making someone do something by giving them the right reasons. This is found in all acts of communication that take place in a household, office, school etc.

♦ *Inclusiveness*

- **Integrating:** Communication facilitates networking and socialization. Communication enables different viewpoints to be raised and understood allowing for the plurality of ideas. Communication is thus effective in promoting unity in society by respecting the multiple voices and opinions raised. Man is after all a social being and essentially cannot function in seclusion.

♦ *Social relationships*

- **Forming Relationships:**Communication lays the foundation for socialisation, enabling individuals to create and maintain relationships in various social settings.

♦ *Choice*

- **Selection of Alternatives:** in situations where individuals have multiple choices they have to select an option in order to make the best selection, help may be required from others and help may be demanded only through communication. Through proper communication, individuals will be able to get the required help and make the best possible selection.

♦ *Networking*

- **Improving Connections:** Communication improves existing relationships and facilitates networking. Enabling individuals to build relationships within their family, community, places of learning, employment etc.

♦ *Transparency*

- **Reducing Misunderstanding:** Effective communication is of utmost importance to reduce misunderstanding. If there is some misunderstanding the involved parties can manage the situation by providing plausible explanations to clarify and avoid misunderstanding. Communication can thus clear misunderstandings and strengthen ties between human beings, groups, states and nations.

♦ *Finding solutions*

- **Solving Problems:** Problems may vary in scale, from minor to major, and solving them may require external participation and deliberation, which is only possible through effective communication. In this process, in-

formation is conveyed in a structured manner.

♦ *Appraisal and quality*

- **Evaluating:** Evaluation takes place with the objective to assess and determine the quality of performance. When evaluative measures are implemented the individuals need to communicate in order to identify the defects, rectification and improvement.

♦ *Deliberation*

- **Decision Making:** Those in power or authoritative positions have to take decisions which is only possible through consolidated deliberations and meetings where ideas ma ybe shared, accounted and taken into consideration while making a decision.

1.1.2 Types of Communication

Communication is classified into different types such as verbal – non verbal, participatory – non participatory. Mediated – non mediated, technological – non technological or computer or technology intermediated communication etc. But the prominent classification is based on the size of the social group or the number of people participating in the communication process. On the basis of this, communication is classified into inter-personal, intra-personal, mass communication, group communication and non-verbal communication. This division of communication is purely based on the size of the group or the number of participants. Each division or classification of communication can be seen as the diverse modes and methods of communication that exist in society, even though communication is simple this depicts the complexity of communication.

♦ *Number of persons dictates type of communication*

1.1.2.1 Intra-Personal Communication

Intra-personal communication forms the most basic form of communication, it occurs when an individual sends and receives messages internally. Intra-personal communication is the kind of communication that takes place within oneself, it may be in the form of self-reflection, meditation or self – talk. We are constantly engaged in some thought process this is intra-personal communication as well, here the sender and receiver are the same person. Intra-personal communication forms the basis of communication because as individuals participate in other forms of communication such as inter personalcommunication, mass communication or group communication at the same time they are engaged in intra-personal ,communication. In this process we make use of the Central nervous system (CNS) and Peripheral nervous system (PNS) which generates, transmits and receives the messages.

♦ *Sender and receiver are the same*

McLean explained intra-personal communication as communication with oneself which includes self – talk, acts

of imagination and visualization and even recall and memory. An individual is constantly interacting within themselves, and indulging in conflict resolution, judgement, evaluation, and even contemplation, all of these take place within the individual thus constantly part taking in intra-personal communication. This kind of communication does not take place in the external realm but internally in the mind, the content of it may be based on events or interactions taking place in the external world. For example, you have been invited to join a group of friends for a short trip here the intra-personal communication would be the internal thought process and reflection that one carries out internally sociologically one may consider the social and economic factors that would encourage or discourage one's decision to join the group.

♦ *Internal communication*

1.1.2.2 Inter Personal Communication

Inter personal communication is that which takes place between two individuals, it is a face to face communication. Communication of this nature will most likely be conversations or interactions taking place between two parties without the intervention of a third party or the mediation of a technology. This is considered to be the perfect form of communication. Communication of this nature is most effective as it appeals to all the senses, communication is not just limited to the exchange of words but rather gestures making it more persuasive and influential than any other form of communication. This type of conversation can be between anyone a buyer and a vendor, an employee and employer, between friends or even husband and wife. In this sort of communication besides the verbal nature of the conversation, body language, place, appearance and gestures are all taken into account. Only interaction between personal acquaintances will be unfiltered and without any guard, professional conversations or those between strangers will give precedence to safeguarding privacy.

♦ *Communication between two individuals*

Inter personal communication takes place on the basis of focused or unfocused interaction. Unfocused interactions are those we partake in without directly being a part of them for example conversations one may overhear while travelling on a bus or train, one will not take part in this conversation but will listen to it without letting the other person know and also end up making ones own inferences from it. Focused interaction on the other hand is the result of planned interaction between two individuals who are aware of the communication taking place.

♦ *Focused and unfocused interaction*

Three phases make up the inter personal communication, the Phatic stage, the Personal stage and the Intimate stage. In phatic stage the initial pleasantries are exchanged and a formal show of interest is exhibited. It is a form of verbal and non-verbal communication

with meaning not just grasped from the words exchanged but from the socio-cultural environment as well. Thus, this stage is based upon the social and cultural norms. The second stage is the personal stage as the name suggests in this stage the individual's social guards are lower and they are not apprehensive about showing their emotional response. In this stage, the conversation would range into personal matters such as profession, health, family etc. Professional conversations end at this stage. The last stage is the intimate stage, this stage includes all those individuals with whom they share a personal relationship with such as family and friends. In this stage, the individuals have no apprehension and their social guard is completely down. In this stage, the individuals will reveal their innermost thoughts and feelings. Due to intimate revelations, this stage is for individuals who have developed deep relationships on the grounds of love, respect and understanding.

♦ *Phases of communication*

1.1.2.3 Mass Communication

Mass communication is a type of communication in which the message is conveyed from one individual to many with the help of vehicles of media or elements of mass media such as television, newspapers, radio, films, magazines, books, social networking, internet, billboards and advertisement. Mass communication is the process of sending information, ideas, messages or opinions from a mass communicator to a complex audience. Through mass communication, the mass communicator employs the technological devices to disseminate information to a large heterogenous group that is diverse in social structure and spread geographically far and wide. Mass communicators are impersonal, the information that is put forth through a media of mass communication is not the responsibility of the individual communicator but rather the institution or organization they are a part of. Mass audience is an important aspect of mass communication, the mass audience has no common motivation and so do not act together. The message communicated is at large available to anyone in the masses given that they have access to and the ability to understand the given information. There is a system of feedback in mass communication, letters to editors phone programs, reviews etc. are forms of feedback in different mediums. Vil'Anilam states that, "mass communication is related to a large-scale society, that has atomized public, centralized media, one-way transmission, people's dependence on the media for identity and media use for manipulation and control."

♦ *Information dissemination for the masses*

Characteristics of Mass Communication:

1. Large scale production of messages
2. Messages are targeted at the masses

3. Messages are producers and receivers are heterogeneous and anonymous
4. Messages are tailored for specific target groups
5. All users do not access the messages broadcasted
6. Messages are presented objectively and impersonally
7. Contents of the message are standardized and simple to reach maximum

1.1.2.4 Group Communication

Group communication is an extension of interpersonal communication. In these more than two individuals are involved between whom an exchange of ideas, skills and interests takes place. A group consists of people who interact with one another, share a common goal, recognize each other's presence, and consider themselves part of the group. Groups facilitate a discussion or exchange of ideas between people who share a common interest.

♦ *More than two*

There are different types of groups it may be formal or informal, a group of friends hanging out and conversing with a team of colleagues conducting a formal meeting. A group may be small or big but it serves various purposes such as expression of self and collective decision making. Group communication also allows for direct communication among the members which will bring about changes in attitudes and beliefs. There are certain limitations to group communication as well because group communication may be time consuming and inefficient especially in case of emergency and disparity in status, role, skills and goals will all affect the outcome of the group communication.

♦ *Formal and informal*

Groups may be classified as small and large groups. A small group will comprise of three to seven members which may be informal and less structured. Large groups tend to be more formal and maintain order. In small groups, there is more chance for individual participation. Due to the size of the group, they are easy to manage and tend to be more efficient in decision making and accomplishing tasks. Small groups are of two types primary group and discussion group. Primary groups are more informal in nature with members coming together on a day to day basis, this group tends to be less goal oriented and generic in nature. They are not bound by any rules and tend to be highly flexible. On the contrary discussion groups are formal and are characterized by face to face interactions. This group will have more than one leader. Members of this group will have certain common characteristics such as geographic location, social class, economic level, lifestyle and education. Members of the discussion group are goal oriented.

♦ *Small and large*

1.1.2.5 Non-Verbal Communication

♦ *Gestures and sounds*

When we think of communication the first thing that we think of is verbal communication but communication is not limited to verbal nature alone, the kind of communication that one carries out without the usage of words is nonverbal communication. The following are different types of nonverbal communication:

1. Facial behaviour
2. Kinesics or body movement
3. Posture and gestures
4. Personal appearance
5. Clothing
6. Proxemics
7. Paralanguage

♦ *Methods*

Non-verbal communication includes everything from the simple shrug of the shoulder, the V-sign, the OK ring, the thumbs-up gesture, eye movements, facial expression, body postures, gestures, gait and clothing to the tone of voice, the accent. Non-verbal components of communication may also involve the use of space, touch, smell and paralanguage. Nonverbalcommunication plays an important role in any communication situation. It is often complementary to verbal communication and at other times non-verbal communication will convey on its own. Non-verbal communication serves the following functions:

1. Repeating verbal messages
2. Substituting verbal messages
3. Complementing verbal messages
4. Regulating or accenting verbal message
5. Deception.

1.1.2.6 Written Communication

♦ *Word based*

Any communication which makes use of written words maybe deemed as written communication. Written communication can take place either on the traditional print version or on the latest electronic devices. Those who wish to master the technique of written communication must be well trained and well versed in the use of writing tools.The tools of written communication include memory, imagination, observation, and study, as well as language units like words, phrases, and sentences. Additionally, it involves the ability to think critically, collect and analyze information, and write effectively.

The following are the advantages of written communication:

1. Permanent record – written messages can be kept in files

as permanent record

2. Legal evidence – written messages will provide tangible evidence.
3. Accuracy- written messages are more organized, thought out and expressed in a way that is without grammatical errors and may be understood with ease.
4. Lengthy messages – it is more appropriate and efficient to convey lengthy and complicated messages
5. Correspondence

Like advantages, written communication has its disadvantages as well:

1. Access to literates – accessibility is limited to those who are literate
2. Costly and time-consuming process – it involves the effort of many making it an expensive act
3. Delayed feedback – the communicator has to wait to receive feedback from the receiver. Instant feedback is not possible.

Summarised Overview

Communication and media are concepts that we are familiar with in terms of their usage, kinds and purposes but to technically distinguish and describe both would require more academic refinement and this unit does help with that. Communication forms an integral part of every individual's daily life where everyone is constantly partaking in some form of communication with the intent of realising their goal. It is an established fact that communication is fundamental to the functioning of society. The process of communication involves deciding who will communicate what, using what tools, to whom, when and with what effect. When we answer these questions, we are focusing on when and with what effect. The seven C's of communication rightly guides and ensures cohesiveness in the process. Communication may be of different forms such as verbal or nonverbal. Depending on the participants we can further classify communication into intra personal communication, inter personal communication and mass communication. These types of communication are based on the level of interaction, participation and medium. Intra personal communication refers to the kind of communication which takes place within the individual whereas inter personal communication is that which is most common, it may be communication between two individuals without the intervention of any technology or gadget. This may be conversations between friends, teacher and student or employer and employee. Mass communication is the communication that takes place with the intent to pass on information to a large audience.

Self Assessment Questions

1. What type of communication takes place within oneself?
2. What is an extension of Interpersonal communication?
3. Define communication.
4. What are the basic features of communication?
5. Diagrammatically present the process of communication.
6. Explain what is group communication and discuss the different types of group communication.
7. 'Communication forms the basis of all human activity', Justify.
8. 'Communication is classified on the basis of the size of the social group or the number of people participating in the communication process', based on this discuss the different types of communication in detail.

Assignments

1. Distinguish between interpersonal communication and intra personal communication.
2. Discuss in your own words as to why communication is a fundamental part of society.
3. Elaborate as to how the 7 C's of communication configure into the process of communication.
4. Examine the steps involved in the process of communication.
5. The functions of communication are versatile yet essential, examine and establish the importance of communication in society.

References

1. Haralambos, M. &Holborn, M. (2020). *Sociology Themes and Perspectives* 8th ed, Collins.
2. Hasan, S. (2021). *Mass Communication Principles and Concepts* 2nd Edition. New Delhi: CBS Publishers.
3. Shetty, K. (2012). *Process and Effects of Modern Communication.* Delhi: Pacific Publication.
4. Vil'Anilam, V.J. (2014). *Mass Communication Basics.* Kerala: Kerala Press Academy.

Suggested Readings

1. Kumar, J. K. (2021). *Mass Communication in India*. Mumbai: Jaico Publishing.
2. Rabindranath, M. & Sharma, M. (2018). *Mediascape in 21st Century: Emerging Perspectives*. New Delhi: Kanishka Publishers.
3. Singh, S. (2019). *Media of Communication*. New Delhi: Random Publications.

Space for Learner Engagement for Objective Questions

Learners are encouraged to develop objective questions based on the content in the paragraph as a sign of their comprehension of the content. The Learners may reflect on the recap bullets and relate their understanding with the narrative in order to frame objective questions from the given text. The University expects that 1 - 2 questions are developed for each paragraph. The space given below can be used for listing the questions.

SGOU

UNIT 2

Media: Basic Concepts

Learning Outcomes

After reading this unit, the learner will be able to:

- explain the new nuances in the media sector
- analyse and trace the development of media from print to digital media
- examine the dynamic nature of media

Background

In the previous unit, we discussed what communication is and the essential basics related to communication. Now we shall discuss media and its different aspects. Communication is the process that takes place through media or we can say media facilitates communication. India has been a treasure trove of history with its milestones, inventions and strides in philosophy, religion etc. How was all this documented in the past? In the beginning, information was passed on through word of mouth, shared as stories, folklores, myths, legends, and songs through ballads. In all this information dissemination or communication was mostly in the verbal form. Information was being communicated and circulated through the popular medium of that age, as time progressed the documentation process improved with matters of historical importance being noted down in palm leaves, scrolls, paper and now digitally.

In India modern communication in the form of print media took root with the arrival of the European tradesmen and colonists during the Mughal period. The first printing press was set up by the Portuguese missionaries in 1556 at St. Paul College, Goa. This later on expanded into other parts of India. The print media sector was not well received in India as the upper-class Indians or the socially elite classes propagated that the ink used was doused in animal fat and this made it a polluted element and so it had to be avoided. The first printed newspaper in India was the Bengal Gazette or Calcutta General Advertiser published by James Augustus Hicky in 1780 and it was in a foreign language. From this point, media developed rapidly around the globe with regional and international implications. The world went on to see the development of broadcasting media, televisions, cinema, radio, internet, social media and interactive media.

The development of media is intertwined with the developments made in society. As society grew and developed in terms of industrial development and technological advancement, transition occurred in the media as well. This has resulted in the current information phase of society, where new media is core to the society; media has become an integral part of life. This transition is historical and noteworthy as the traditional media platforms were all dominated and maintained by media houses and corporations where they dictated the form and content whereas in the new media age, anyone with access to the internet can be a content creator. The media has become more democratic. This goes to show the dynamic characteristics of media, in this unit, we shall explore the dynamic nature of media and the different types of media.

Keywords

Mass media, Message, Information dissemination, Analogue, Digital

Discussion

1.2.1 Media

- *Forms of media*

Media is a complex idea. Media sociologists while studying different media look to assess the media and its societal implications for the users. Media sociologists have identified a third category of media that is new media besides print media and audio-visual media.Media is of different forms and produces a variety of content. The output of media may be of different forms such as documents, visual content, public announcements, social media posts, trolls, and memes. Media can be of different forms and shapes, which may or may not be targeted. Media has a diverse role in society; it facilitates communication with the masses and allows for public participation by acting as a vehicle for social change. We are familiar with the term 'trial by media', where a case has appealed to the sentiments of the viewers, thus having creating a personal investment in the outcome; in such cases, even the judicial systems tend to adhere to the influence of public opinion. For example, the Delhi Nirbhaya case can be considered a classic example of the trial by the media.

- *Integrating and reflective*

Media has become an integral part of daily life. Media educates, informs, persuades and updates its users or audience. Media has made global access possible by transcending time and space as Manuel Castell would state in *The Network Society*. However, media ownership is a critical issue because those who control

a larger share of the media can influence its output, making it important to ensure that everyone's voices are heard.

♦ *Proprietors of media*

Media ownership in India reflects its diversity equally, the ownership is diverse in the national and regional level. Fig.1.2.1 holds testimony to this fact it showcases the number of registered publications, magazines, newspapers, channels and radio stations. Despite the multitude of media, the ownership of media is concentrated in the hands of a few companies and conglomerates. The versatile spread of media across the country does not translate into plurality this is mostly because there is an intersectionality between media, politics and business. The media monopolies have continued to exist and flourish due to the lack of regulations and non-existing laws.

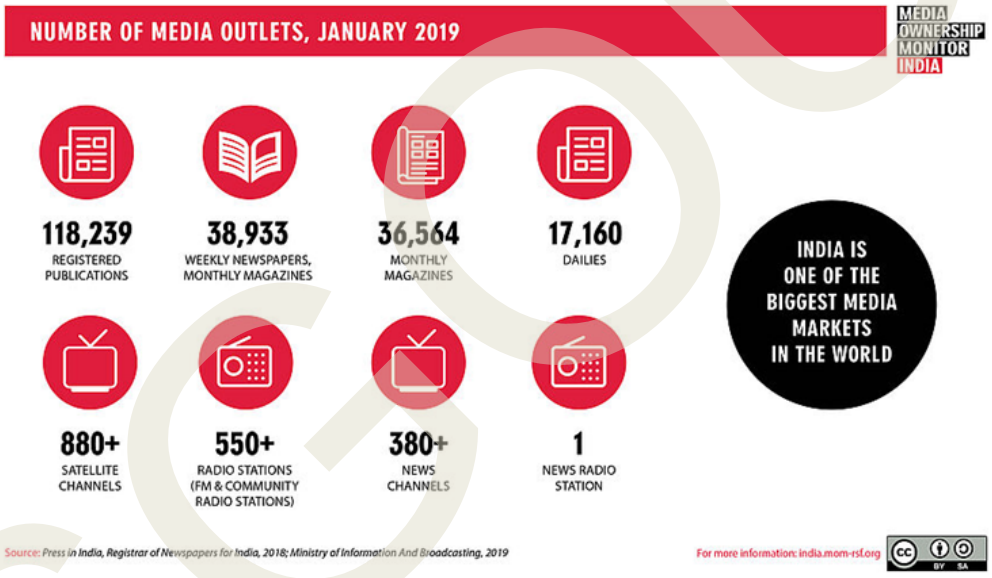


Fig 1.2.1 Number of Media Outlets in India as of 2019

1.2.1.1 Pluralist View on Media

♦ *Communicating to the masses*

Pluralism is a label applied to media theories that were popular in the 20th century. According to the pluralist, modern capitalist societies are democratic and the mass media is considered an essential component that can be used to persuade the masses as most people obtain their knowledge about politics from newspapers and television. Therefore pluralists argue that media owners are objective, responsible and impartial facilitators of this political process. The behaviour of the media owners is constrained by the market. They argue that in a free market economy, media owner compete against each other in order to attract people to their product. Readers, viewers and listeners are the real power holders because

they exercise the right to buy or not to buy. Power then, according to the pluralists lies with the audience rather than the media owners as they give the public what they want. Pluralist argue that the rationale for the concentration of media ownership is essentially economic rather than political or ideological. They also argue that it is practically impossible for owners to interfere in media content because businesses are economically far too complex.

1.2.1.2 Marxist View on Media

Marxist theories contradict the pluralist take on media. Karl Marx in *German Ideology* stated that 'the ruling ideas are the ideas of the ruling class', in the contemporary world the Marxists believe that the media is the means by which the ruling class's ideas remain dominant. According to the Marxists the capitalists use the mass media to assert influential ideas, values and norms in order to maintain that capitalism is not challenged. Thus, the role of these superstructures or ideological agencies is to transmit the ideology of the ruling class. These agencies therefore work to convince people that capitalism works for the benefit of people. This results in false consciousness among the working-class people as they believe that capitalism is a fair system that benefits all equally, thus failing to see that they are exploited by a powerful minority.

♦ *Ideology of the ruling class*

Marxists believe that conservative and conformist ideology is transmitted through media in the form of news and entertainment. They believe that the priority or mission of media is to convince the masses that the ruling classes ideological beliefs are the truth and fact. Marxists also argue that the media is happy to transmit ruling class ideology through television and newspapers as the media owners are part of the ruling class themselves. Miliband stated that the role of media is to shape how they think about the world they live in. Members of society are rarely informed about the reasons why they live in such poverty as they are never encouraged to be critical about the capitalist society. Tunstall and Palmer argue that regarding media regulation the government is not interested in regulating the media and media owners rather they are focused on regulatory favours and deregulation which aims to focus on dismantling state rules which prevent media owners from having too much power.

♦ *Utilization with a capitalist motive*

1.2.1.3 Neo-Marxist View on Media

The Neo – Marxists, unlike the Marxists stress ~~on~~ the idea that the culture of the dominant class is taken for granted and reproduced through mass media. This forms part of cultural hegemony where one set of ideas are dominant over others. This hegemonical model

♦ *Cultural hegemony*

is more sophisticated than the Marxist take on media. The Neo – Marxists believe that most media professionals produce and create media in a professional way in order to maximize audience but in the process, produce a culture industry which reflects their class position and which ideologically benefits the powerful.

1.2.1.4 Postmodernist View on Media

The postmodernists argue that power is not concentrated in the hands of a few but circulates in a fluid manner. For example, we saw women mobilize and speak out against sexual abuse through the MeToo campaign that started on Facebook. This led to many changes in the workplace, postmodernist would argue that this example shows that when issues arise a group will become active and mobilize their resources to act against it. The outcomes of these are not predetermined and the role of the media varies from one battle to another.

1.2.1.4 Definition

Media refers to outlets through which information, entertainment, news, music, movies, images, and advertisements are disseminated. Media is the plural form of medium, the term media can involve anything from print media to modern internet based digital media. Media vehicles communication can reach a large number of people with the use of television, newspaper and radio. Human communication has always evolved through various forms of media, beginning with cave paintings, which served a similar purpose to today's television or internet by conveying messages and information.

- *Means to engage with one another*

After this, a significant development in media came in the form of the postal system which was founded by the Persian empire. It was firstly envisioned as an intelligence gathering system, it was known as "Angariae" this was later used to indicate the tax system. The emergence of print media marked a significant advancement, laying the foundation for the modern media landscape we know today. Marshall McLuhan in his seminal manifesto called '*Counterblast*' said the following about new media, "media are not toys they should not be in the hands of Mother Goose and Peter Pan executives rather they can be entrusted only to new artists because they are the art forms." McLuhan calls the media "extensions of man" because they each increase the range and power of one part of the human body. In doing so, they effect a modification of consciousness by altering the ratio between the various senses and faculties. By the 1960's the term 'media', had spread to general use in the US, UK and Canada.

- *Media landscape*

Fig 1.2.2 Representation of Different Types of Media

1.2.2 Functions of Media

Media serves a multitude of functions, both major and minor. The six major functions include surveillance, correlation of different parts of society and the interpretation of events and issues, socialization, entertainment, mobilization, and democratic participation. Minor functions include publicity, public relations, advertising etc.

1. **Surveillance**: Harold Lasswell used the term surveillance for the first time in the 1940s. By surveilling one's surroundings we expect to have an idea about all the things that are going on around us, we prefer to know in order to avoid surprises and uncertainties. Everything will function smoothly if we are able to attain information about those who are important to us. Through the media we get a curated reality thus the important task of media users is to interpret correctly and make possible inferences from the curated reality. Events of all kinds, whether crises, wildfires, or political treaties, are reported to us through the media. These events become public knowledge because media outlets publicize them, highlighting the significant role of media in surveillance. When Harold Lasswell used the term, he used just the word for its natural meaning of surveillance purposes but today countries, agencies of government and private origins use media to spy rather than for surveillance purposes. But surveillance here only means to warn media users of the likely dangers that are lurking in their environment. It is expected that

the media will operate on honest grounds with the reporters also expected to keep the standards because if their functioning is not based upon service to humanity surveillance aspect of media will turn dangerous.

2. **Correlation of parts of society and interpretation of events and issues:** Media users can refer to different sources of media to understand events of cultural, political and economic significance. Media will often publish or broadcast interpretations of such significant events in the form of special features, editorials, articles, letters to the editor or through discussions on radio or tv. Internet plays a significant role as well through internet-based platforms people can gather and exchange their thoughts, ideas and interpretations. The facts that are reported must not be mixed up with the opinions of the reporter thus facts and opinions should not be mixed up. In order to demark both, there are designated sections, such facts are reported as such and opinions are stated in the editorial. If at all a reporter chooses to state their personal opinion, they must state so and indicate it as their own opinion.
3. **Socialisation**: The process of socialisation factors in moulding a child in the ways of the society, this is done through several agencies of socialisation such as family, peers, school, mass media etc. these agencies work in inculcating the values, norms and folklores of the society. Thus, a child is groomed in the ways of society and they learn the accepted behaviour. It is important for a child to go through the phases of socialisation because without it the child may remain unsocialised which will make them a pariah in the society. Media holds a vital role in the process of socialisation as it is an agency of socialisation it does so by transmitting culture, heritage and history of one to another thereby passing it on from generation to generation. The media is quick to report any violation of social norms. Future generations know of the past because of the various news, writings and

historical recordings that are circulated at large by different media, whatever is culturally relevant is transmitted through media.

4. **Entertainment:** Harold Lasswell identified three key functions of media: surveillance, correlation, and socialization. Charles Wright later added a fourth function: entertainment. Several media sources like television, radio, newspaper, and the internet all serve the entertainment function. The quality of entertainment may be questionable.

5. **Mobilisation:** Media helps to mobilize collective action by disseminating information and garnering support from a large number of people thus encouraging collective action. In the event of a natural calamity the mass media has the power to disseminate information about evacuation plans, relief centers, helpline numbers, and collection centers all this can be largely publicized to the masses within a short period of time using media. Media can also encourage people to contribute by volunteering or making donations, either through services or in-kind support.

6. **Democratic Participation**: Media can establish democracy and help the practice of democracy by providing people with the needed information, media may provide this information in various forms such as news, campaigns, ads etc.

1.2.3 Types of Media

Media can be classified into four types:

1. Print Media
2. Broadcast Media
3. Internet
4. Out of Home

1.2.3.1 Print Media

This includes newspapers, magazines, books and other printed material. The growth of print media was relatively slow but as the need for education and information increased so did

♦ *Traditional media*

the demand for the print media. Print media rapidly grew and flourished during the 20th century. Newspaper is the dominant print media it is a major source of information for a large number of people. Newspapers maybe of local, regional or national origin. Newspapers have a variety of sections which range from reports, editorials, advertisements, specials etc. it provide the readers a holistic coverage. It is rather an affordable medium. The first newspaper in India was that of the Englishmen, by them for them. It was first published in Calcutta, later on, every major language of India saw the emergence of newspapers. The 1980s there was a visible boom in the publication sector with many magazines being launched this was not limited to English alone but strides were seen in regional languages as well. Magazines are a specialised medium of advertising because they thrive on advertisements. Magazines mean store house; they have a variety of content but they have a target audience so their content is curated according to their reader base. Magazines may be categorized into two types, consumer magazines, and business magazines. Consumer magazines contain information regarding lifestyle, glamour, special interest and entertainment news. Consumer magazines are mostly published monthly. Business magazines on the other hand have business news and research information. Business magazines are published monthly or quarterly.

1.2.3.2 Electronic and Digital Media

♦ *Evolution of electronic media*

Scientific experiments in Europe pioneered by Michael Faraday in England and Alessandro Volta in Italy, Georg Ohm in Germany all showcased the possibilities of electricity being produced, transported and used to transmit signals carrying information through wired and wireless means. The broadcast media was thus influenced by three major revolutions such as the telegraph, telephone and wireless Radio. In 1840 Samuel F.B. Morse found the telegraphic system through which messages could be sent by electric wire using the Morse code. Morse's invention was seen as a boon to the daily operations of railways and business establishments but this was quickly replaced by the invention of the Telephone by Alexander Graham Bell in 1876. Bell and Guglielmo Marconi used the wireless method to transmit messages which later led to the establishment of the Marconi Company, this reduced the importance of the telegraph. Marconi then went on to discover the use of Hertz through which he was able to send electromagnetic waves and a receiver to detect the waves, he used this discovery to send -wireless signals over several hundred miles. This somewhat reduced the importance of Bell's Telephone. Marconi went on to establish the Wireless Telegraph and Signal Company in 1897.

Marconi's invention was first used by the *New York Herald* for news dissemination, later on, it flourished and grew to become the American Marconi Company. This set off ripples of different forms in broadcasting communication leading to several advancements that we make use of today.

> "What Hath God Wrought?", was the first telegraphic message to be sent from Baltimore to Washington D.C.

♦ *Electronic energy*

Electronic media: Electronic Media is a form of media that can be created and distributed among people via electronic mediums. It has a broad range of audiences and thus has a wider reach. In other words, electronic media is that which makes use of electrical energy and platforms. Electronic media is a kind of mass media that requires electronic energy to create and distribute content of various forms such as visual, written or audio – visual. Different forms of electronic media are radio, television, and the internet.

♦ *Analogue to digital*

Digital Media: Digital media usually refers to electronic media that works on digital codes. Through digital media digital audio, digital video and other digital content can be created and distributed through machines that can process digital information. Digital media represents a shift from traditional analogue media. Florida's Digital media industry association and Digital Media Alliance Florida define digital media as the creative convergence of digital arts, science, technology and business for human expression, communication, social interaction and education. The following maybe considered as different types of digital media: cellphones, compact discs, digital video, digital television, internet, e-book, world wide web and other forms of interactive media.

♦ *Sound wave transmission*

Radio: Using electromagnetic waves Marconi invented a way to transmit sound waves without the use of any wires. This venture later grew much larger with much infotainment such as talk shows, dramas, music, news transmission etc. being supplied at large to a mass audience. By the 1930s Radio broadcasting had become a prime electronic media. Radio broadcasting in India was introduced for the first time by amateur broadcasting clubs situated in Calcutta, Madras and Bombay. Radio programmes can be classified into two types: Spoken word programmes and Music programmes. Spoken word programmes include standard talk shows, discussions, news, interviews, educational and awareness programmes etc. Music programmes indulge a variety of musical performances in the form of call in programmes, disc jockey programmes, music teaching sessions etc.

♦ *Visual medium*

Television: Vladimir Zworykin, an American scientist developed the electronic television system in 1923 and perfected it in 1928. Experimental broadcasting took place only in 1938 after which televisions became a popular and stable electronic media in most households across the globe. Television made its appearance in India only in 1959 with small scale telecasting from Delhi. Till 1980's Doordarshan was the only channel available but this changed with the entry of private channels. Now there are many channels each specializing in different aspects such as sports, entertainment, educational, music, news, travel, lifestyle etc. Television stands out from radio in its possibilities to advertise, even though radio provides the same but at a smaller scale does not appeal to the franchises looking to advertise and make strides among the masses.

♦ *Global network*

The internet: It facilitates access to and use of internet-based web services. This includes different kinds of services such as social media, websites, blogs, etc. Digital media is an advancement of the electronic media. Electronic media are run by analogue signals but digital media is transmitted as digital data which involves digital cables or satellites sending signals in binary codes of 0 and 1.

1.2.3.3 Social Media: Social Networking Sites, Blog, Vlog, Trolls

♦ *Participatory media platform*

Social media is an internet-based media through which we may publish or broadcast digital content that the readers may interact with. The social component of social media is the fact that it is interactive. Social media is an open platform in which anyone can own a digital space and publish their content, from established media houses to ordinary layman can submit content of their choosing given that they have a social media account. Social networking is what takes place through social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn. Through these the users can join by taking up membership in the individual social media platform and thereby they can network by connecting with other individuals this is referred to social networking. Social media requires a social network for the content to be consumed by those who desire to interact with it. The most popular social networking sites today are Facebook, YouTube, WhatsApp, Instagram, WeChat, TikTok, Telegram, Snapchat etc., these form the most popular social networking sites at present. The coming of social media has revolutionized the media sector, previously the content of publications and broadcasts was dominated by the media houses this was at times misleading and with vested interest leading to the representation of only one sided reporting but with the coming of social media anyone can turn into a publisher and publish their

interpretation of events thus taking away from the monopoly of the publishing or media houses.

Characteristics of social networking:

1. Interactive platform, fulfilling entertainment and social needs of the users
2. Users can be content creators as opposed to traditional content consumers
3. Networking possibilities, allowing to establish and create personal and or business relationships globally
4. The social media platforms are free of charge to use allowing equitable accessibility.
5. Information dissemination has scaled largely through social media use.

♦ *Sociability online*

Any content that has a sociable quotient can be considered to be a form of social media, Blogs, Vlogs, and Trolls are internet-based inceptions of that social calling. These three figured as forms of personal interaction that had the capacity to engage with a larger crowd. Let us look at them in detail.

♦ *Online journal*

Blog: A blog is a type of website that provides information about a particular topic, the word blog was framed from a web log – blog. Even though a blog is similar in terminology and meaning it isn't the same as a website, because a website will have many more features and aspects to be used whereas a blog is more specialized and focused. A blog is an online journal which may be run by an individual, group or corporation that offers regular updates with blog entries, the content or information in the blog maybe written and presented in an information or conversational style. Blogs tend to be casual entries. Those who own a blog or write in blogs are typically known as bloggers. The topic of a blog can be of any variety ranging from personal, business focused, educational, informative, entertainment etc. A blog maybe created by any internet user for free of cost, if the blog is popular it can reap monetary benefits as well. Blogs can play an important role in establishing relationships and building an online community, as each blog post will have an interactive comment section which will allow its subscribers or readers to engage with the content and fellow readers/subscribers thus establishing the possibilities for creating a community.

Vlog: A vlog is otherwise known as video blog in which the

content is published in the form of a video format, people who are engaged in creating content for vlogs are known as vloggers. As vlogs are very popular, they have evolved to develop and published elaborate content pieces on various topics. YouTube, Instagram, X (formerly Twitter), and TikTok are among the most popular platforms for vlogging. As per 2022 reports, there are 51 million YouTube channels by vloggers, which is growing steadily. Every minute, vloggers upload 500 hours of video on the internet. By creating and sharing in these platforms and dedicated social media channels the vloggers are able to create a community of like-minded people and indulge in the social qualities of both the platform and content. Vloggers can take this up as a career and monetize it by availing sponsorships, paid partnerships, collaborations and advertisements. The content of Vlogs like blogs can range from personal to curated that is it can be a personal video narration of their day to day life, informative, educative, entertainment etc. A vlog may last anywhere between 7 mins to an hour.

♦ *Visual publication*

Trolls: A troll is internet slang for a person who intentionally tries to instigate conflict, hostility, or arguments in an online social community. Platforms targeted by trolls can include the comment sections of YouTube, forums, or chat rooms. Trolls often use provocative language to provoke emotional responses so as to disrupt rational and civic discussion. Trolling can occur in any place where social elements are present and people can gather and share their opinions and thoughts. Anyone with access to the internet can be a troll. A troll may have a higher level of negative social potency by which they like to engage in problematic behavior and enjoy the attention which they receive through it. Trolls often tend to attack based on the details one has shared online for instance in an open forum discussion one may have stated their stance in favor of something and the trolls will pick up on this and attack them persistently thus one can identify that they are being trolled or amongst a troll. The best method to overcome a troll is to avoid them or there are other measures such as reporting the particular profile to the platform or if it's a closed group one can have the curator of the group remove or ban the person.

♦ *Online bullying*

Summarised Overview

This unit explored different facets of media. The media is a versatile sector and the same versatility can be found in the different means and modes of media that exist at large in society. Traditionally media platforms were confined to print, audio and visual media such as newspapers, radio and television. These traditional and analogue based media have now transformed into digital as well. The pluralist view of media is that modern capitalist societies are democratic and the mass media is considered an essential component that can be used to persuade the masses as most people obtain their knowledge about politics from newspapers and television. The Marxists essentially see media promoting the interest of the capitalist as in the ideas and values propagated by the media will be that of the ruling class. The media functions in such a way that it doesn't promote the questioning of the plight of the working class nor does it correlate the same with the ways of capitalism. Neo-Marxists emphasize cultural hegemony, where one set of ideas dominates over others. This hegemonic perspective is more nuanced than the traditional Marxist view of media. As we view different theoretical takes on media it has a multitude of functions some that are major and some minor, there are 6 major functions and a few minor functions. The major functions include surveillance, co-relation of parts of society and interpretation of events and issues, socialization, entertainment, Mobilization and democratic participation. The minor functions include publicity, public relations, advertisements etc. when we first think of media, we first think of traditional media such as print media, radio or broadcast media. The new forms of media that are powered by the internet or as we refer to as digital media bring forth a new set of media platforms, here we have discussed social media and its certain subsidiaries like social networking sites, vlogs, blogs and trolls.

Self Assessment Questions

1. How did McLuhan address media ?
2. What is an internet slang for a person who intentionally tries to instigate conflict, hostility, or arguments in an online social community.
3. Define media.
4. List and briefly explain the different forms of social media.
5. Differentiate between electronic media and digital media.
6. 'The ruling ideas are the ideas of the ruling class', discuss this statement in view of media and society.
7. According to the Pluralist, the media is more for the capitalist than democracy, what is your take on this, justify your reasoning.
8. 'Internet based media hold an advantage over the traditional forms of media', do you agree? Justify your reasoning.

Assignments

1. Trace the evolution of media from the traditional media outlet to the newer internet-based media platforms.
2. 'Media as the fourth pillar of democracy', Justify.
3. Discuss the major and minor functions of media.
4. Discuss the different types of media.
5. Evaluate media ownership in view of the different theoretical take on media.

Reference

1. Haralambos, M. &Holborn, M. (2020). *Sociology Themes and Perspectives* 8th ed. UK: Collins.
2. Hasan, S. (2021). *Mass Communication Principles and Concepts* 2nd Edition. New Delhi: CBS Publishers.
3. Shetty, K. (2012). *Process and Effects of Modern Communication.* Delhi: Pacific Publication.
4. Vil'Anilam, V.J. (2014). *Mass Communication Basics.* Kerala: Kerala Press Academy.

Suggested Reading

1. Kumar, J. K. (2021). *Mass Communication in India*. Mumbai: Jaico Publishing.
2. Shetty, K. (2012). *Process and Effects of Modern Communication*. New Delhi: Pacific Publication.
3. Singh, S. (2019). *Media of Communication*. New Delhi: Random Publications.

Space for Learner Engagement for Objective Questions

Learners are encouraged to develop objective questions based on the content in the paragraph as a sign of their comprehension of the content. The Learners may reflect on the recap bullets and relate their understanding with the narrative in order to frame objective questions from the given text. The University expects that 1 - 2 questions are developed for each paragraph. The space given below can be used for listing the questions.

SGOU

UNIT 3

Sociology of Media and Communication

Learning Outcomes

After reading this unit, the learner will be able to:

- comprehend the sociological implication of communication
- narrate the influence of social institutions on communication
- explain the nuances of communication in society

Background

Media and communication are similar yet distinct. They are alike in terms of the functions and services they provide, but differ in that media is the medium through which communication occurs, while communication is the act itself. One facilitates the other. Various forms of communication, though primitive, have existed since the beginning of human civilization. Communication is a fundamental human activity, whether it involves conversation, listening to an audiovisual message, or any other method through which a message is conveyed from one person to another. Communication forms the basis of every human activity because without this conveyance there could be a possible breakdown. Communication thus facilitates every institution of society and the human interaction that takes place along with it. Since communication can be any means employed to convey a message the subject matter of communication is too versatile to describe as one particular concept. This dilemma has led many scholars to argue that communication is not a discipline in itself, but rather a multidisciplinary field of study. It may be stated that there are two schools of communication. The first school advocates that communication is the transmission of messages, it is concerned with how senders and receivers encode and decode and how transmitters use the channels and media of communication. The second school sees communication as the production and exchange of meanings. It is concerned with how messages, or texts, interact with people in order to produce meanings; that is, it is concerned with the role of texts in our culture. While exploring the sociological dimensions of communication in society we shall do an introspection into society and the role of communication shall be explored further in the following sub sections.

Keywords

Interactive, Social norms, Socialisation, Message, Behaviour

Discussion

1.3.1 Media and Communication in Society

In the previous units, we have explored what is communication, what is media, the different aspects of each and how each has progressed through civilization. In this unit, we shall explore how media and communication figures in a society, the implications of media and communication in society and Sociological implications of both.

Communication is the conveyance of a message and media is the method or device for a communication to be carried out through. Both facilitate the ways of society.

Fig 1.3.1 Relationship between media and communication

Media functions as the platform or instrument for communication to take place, media is of different types as discussed in the previous units. A message is conveyed through a medium, and successful communication is achieved when the message is delivered as intended by the communicator. Media has an important role in society as it communicates to the masses, holds precedence in forming opinions, shapes and influences culture, influences governments, policy making etc. The traditional forms of media such as print and broadcast media tend to present information with a vested interest that is information dissemination is done with a focus on the interest of the dominant class of society.

♦ *Versatality of media*

Media is an integral part of the social fabric. In a society, the accessibility to media and availability of information is important

- *Media in society*

as information is power. It is important to understand how media is placed in society. Traditionally media is thought to be a mirror to society but since it plays an important role in the development of society it becomes essential to understand how media is represented in that society. There are three important issues that drive the development of mass communication:

1. What potential is offered and what threats are posed by new forms of media technology?

- *Possibility of new technology*

As new forms of media such as new media or the internet based media have taken shape, debates surrounding the protection of children from indecency, control of offensive content, maintenance of privacy, copyright protection have all become more intense. When a new technology takes shape it is always argued that it interconnects people, bridges cultural differences and dissolves space and time. The new media will restructure the existing media industries to use their potential. A critic of this is that the new media will corrupt or undermine the existing social order.

2. What forms of media bureaucracies or industries should be created to control or regulate media technologies so that their potential is realized and their threats minimized?

- *Controllling of media*

The question of regulation of media is always a heated debate, even though the content is monitored it is important to ensure that there is freedom of speech without it we cannot state that media is the fourth pillar of democracy. Thus it is important to shape up media industries that serve our needs and minimize disruption to the smooth process of democracy, lives and the society that we live in.

3. How can media serve democratic and culturally pluralistic societies?

- *People's media*

In Indian society, it is important to consider how media can serve a multicultural set up in a democratic fashion. It is important that all cultures and religious groups have a fair and culturally appropriate representation in media. The content should always be non-provocative taking into consideration the sentiments of the people. This will help the media to remain an integral part of the democratic process.

Habermas used Marx's conception of humanity by adding language (communication) to work (labour) as a distinct feature of human beings, Antonio argued that Habermas's ideas about communication and languages are linked to his ideas of social evolution, his analysis of the role of language in social evolution rejected views which assign knowledge and values

pure epiphenomenal status. Habermas thus abandoned the base/ superstructure relation and its strict concept of material determinism. He stated that the evolutionary and structural differentiation of productive forces interacts with, establishes limits for, and creates possibilities for the development of communicative action, but does not strictly determine it. In order to be free from the philosophical historical materialism of Marxist thought, Habermas proposed that theory cannot be tied to concrete ideals of human life rather it must orient itself to a range of learning processes that are opened at any given time.

1.3.1.1 Effects of Media on Society

The effect media will have on society depends on the way media represents that society. Media can have positive or negative effects on society, let us explore further:

Positive effects:

1. Media exposes the crime and corruption in society and cautions against many malpractices
2. They help to uphold the freedom of speech and expression
3. They are a good source of entertainment as it allows people to relax and escape reality
4. They inform us of the latest events
5. They make the audience aware of the need for their social, cultural and economic development.

Negative effects:

1. Media is responsible for lowering people's cultural taste
2. They are responsible for increasing intolerance and violent behaviour in children
3. They are slow and generally responsible for the moral deterioration of society
4. They are also accused of promoting westernization in India.

1.3.1.2 Communication in Society

Communication is key in society because it influences social structures, relationships, identities and meaning within society. The following are some reasons as to why communication is important in society from a sociological perspective:

♦ *Building relationship*

a. Social Interaction – Communication forms the base of social interaction, it allows individuals to share experiences, connect and build relationships. Through communication individuals are able to build social bonds. It is through communication that social norms, values, beliefs, mores and folklore are transmitted.

♦ *Learning*

b. Socialisation and Culture - Socialisation is the process by which individuals learn of the ways to interact and participate in society in the accepted way. Communication is key for socialisation as it is through communication an individual can learn the accepted behaviour, cultural practices, traditions and norms. From generation to generation it is passed down through communication.

♦ *Hierarchial*

c. Power and Social Hierarchies – Communication helps to establish and reinforce power dynamics within a society. It can be used to exert, influence and establish hierarchies. Communication can pave the way for oppressive measures or progressive measures the means and conditions of communication will determine this. Those of whom have access and control of media will have an upper hand in forming the public opinion.

♦ *Progress*

d. Social Change and Transformation – Proper communication will be helpful in paving the way for social change and effecting transformation. Communication allows individuals to voice their concerns, advocate for their needs and even mobilize for collective action. Existing systems and social structures maybe challenged through communication.

1.3.2 Scope of Communication in the Society

The Scope of communication in society may be explored through different trajectories. Through scope we will explore the possibilities of communication in society. The scope of communication is wide and versatile. It is an important part of the day to day activities of every social being functioning in society.

1. Communication in Individual Life

♦ *Primary level of communication*

Communication is an inadmissible part of every individual's life. Communication plays an important role in determining the social behaviour of every being. Communication can be a means of transformation and instruction in a fast-paced society. Effective communication is essential to realize the basic needs of life. Communication facilitates the skill to negotiate and lead life in society. Communication is a basic requirement for survival. Speech is the most common and applied form of communication on a day to day basis. Communication of this nature is direct as the participating entities are present and the message can be conveyed and deciphered at the very same moment as it is expressed.

Other means of communication like writing are sought when the convenience of now and here are not met. Placing in the larger context of society, the society is made up of individuals and these individuals may adhere to different social norms and belong to different class with varied economic, religious, political and social statuses. These conditions may lead to conflict between individuals of different background during which communication can and will be the most effective key in resolving such issues. In order to have a healthy functional society it is essential to have proper communication at the personal level (individual) as well as at the public level.

2. Communication in Social Life

♦ *Communication for sociality*

Human beings are primarily social beings and as social beings they live in an integrated society where socialization is a requirement, through which people are able to build social bonds allowing them to communicate and thus share life. Communication helps to create and strengthen the social bond in society. Communication plays a vital role in social enlightenment as it is a major factor in determining and building the social behaviour of beings. Communication encourages growth and instills in the being the skill to recognize and differentiate between the good and ill effects in society.

3. Communication in State Affairs

♦ *Political dimension*

Communication forms the basis for society as well facilitating the functioning and coordination between every organ such as political parties, ministries, governmental departments and agencies that make up the political and administrative affairs of the state. The politics in society starts when two or more people come together for a common interest or some common ground in this aspect family may be considered as the most basic political unit in a society. Politics is all about power and power relation, in this dynamic, those who have an interest in holding office will negotiate with those who have the right to govern and instill social order in society. Due to this nature of politics, the major part of human communication is centered around political communication. Political communication is a major area of study because globally the political dynamics are astounding changing and being challenged. Freedom of speech can be considered to be one such issue.

♦ *Building state*

Freedom of Speech denotes the right to speak up in today's political climate this freedom is curbed either through governmental measures or through groups that hold their vested interest rather than the greater good. Here you can see the breakdown of communication, the communication that takes place through a curated medium will

not be an accurate dissemination of information. A government sustains and maintains all its functions through communication, without communication a state could no longer maintain the relationships within the state nor maintain or build relationships which could potentially lead to the collapse of the government or disruption of the existing social order. Globalization can be referred to as a display of effective communication, because through globalization the world has become more integrated and open - emphasis on the term global village which is testimonial to the fact that it has been made possible through communication.

Introspection of the scope of communication with a sociological eye, sociologically speaking communication forms a fundamental instrument to progress and uphold the structure of society which is put together by socialization and culture. Socialization familiarizes individuals with the way of social life and culture puts forward the accepted practices in society. The learned and practiced behaviour that is instilled upon individuals through socialization and culture appropriation is keyed in through communication. Communication propels the day to day activities and maintains order and structure in society, without proper communication there will be a breakdown in the functioning of society.

♦ *Maintaining order*

1.3.3 Sociological Dimension: Socio – Cultural Institutions

Aristotle stated that communication is the search for all the available means of persuasion. Festinger stated that communication is consummatory and instrumental whereas Berlo considered that the sole purpose of communication was to influence. Sociological examination of communication will highlight the importance it holds in terms of socialization and the cultural dimension holds precedence. Culture is a part of society; culture represents characters and habits that are learned however, it is through communication and interaction that individuals learn and develop the markers of culture. So, the role communication plays in culture is significant. The relationship between culture and communication is shared as it is interwoven and intertwined. As culture is manifested through practice from generation to generation it can only be passed on as such through different forms of communication. Both communication and media instill values and norms through repeated interaction and practice. As cultural practices are learned in this manner, communication makes it possible to educate individuals on how to behave in a social setting as well. Thus, culture influences group behaviour and interpersonal relationships. One of the primary features of communication is to define norms for interpersonal communication. It is valid to state that culture has

♦ *Role of communication*

a binding relationship with communication as firstly, it facilitates the learning of cultural habits and norms, secondly, it promotes the habit of deciphering messages in a social context and to behave accordingly. The entire depository of communicative behaviour is largely depended on the culture we were raised in. Culture is thus the foundation of communication.

♦ *Nature of institutions*

Individuals, as members of society, hold different roles that determine their positions within institutions. Socio – cultural institutions maybe macro or micro, government is a macro level institution and family a micro level institution. Institutions function by adhering to laws and customs that havebeen set in place through repetitive action and application. Institutions may be restrictive or liberal as they may constrain or encourage by giving opportunities. Social institutions maybe of formal or informal in nature each existing in its own rights to satisfy certain social needs.

♦ *Dissemination of culture*

Society as we see and know is built of many institutions, they may be of different nature. Social and cultural institutions such as family, kinship, marriage, and government organize society by instilling rules and accepted norms that have been practiced throughout the ages. These practices are upheld from generation to generation, this dissemination is made possible through communication. Socio – cultural institutions play an important role in communication but the functioning of these socio-cultural institutions varies from society to society, considering the social fabric of India, communication is influenced by factors such as gender, caste and social status.

♦ *Intersectionality in culture*

Everyone is not held in the same regard in society, in the Indian context a dominant group would be determined by their class, status, caste or gender and this dominance will be reflective in social institutions as well. The interest of this dominant group will be reflective in governance and matters of the state as well. This contradicts the nature of an ideal society. The most important social and cultural institutions in a society are family, kinship and marriage, these form the foundation of an individuals' social life. Culture includes all the social habits that are necessary for the sociality of an individual living in a society this includes language, norms, customs, laws, tradition, rules, art and music. Culture reiterates the do's and don'ts of society all the while upholding the accepted rules and customs of society. Linton defined culture as the sum total of behavior patterns, attitudes, values shared or transmitted by members of a given society. This behaviour is practiced by all the members of the society and this inadvertently helps everyone to respond and solve problems accordingly in situations. What culture ultimately does is it helps people to assess situations and react accordingly. Commonalities in a group can be explained through

culture and likewise the differences can be explained through subculture. Culture is operational through norms some written and unwritten. The habitual acceptance of these practices makes them powerful.

♦ *Social conditioning*

In order to satisfy the needs of the society and its members different arrangements are made which get institutionalized over time. This formulates the social behaviour as seen, members pick up social cues from others in the same social group and follow it as the common behaviour pattern. This is a way of socialization and it begins in infancy and continues throughout adulthood. This process instills in the individual the social ques, norms and cultural values practiced all around them. This may be picked up from social groups and institutions the individual is a part of or it may be learned or inculcated into them, this is facilitated by the process of communication.

1.3.3.1 Marshall McLuhan – 'Medium is the message'

♦ *Message and media*

Marshall McLuhan claimed in *Understanding Media*, all media has characteristics that engage the viewer in different ways, so the medium through which a person encounters a particular piece of content could have an effect on the individual's understanding of it. According to McLuhan medium itself is the message and such a message has an effect on individuals' attitudes, behaviour and entire lifestyles. The channel through which the message is transmitted to the receiver is as important as the message. According to him, media communications are vast social metaphors that not only transmit information but also shape our understanding of what constitutes knowledge. They orient us to the world and tell us what kind of world exists. He analyzed how media affected the individuals who encountered them. Media leads individual's to break down reality into discrete units logically and casually related and perceive linearly and abstracted wholeness.

♦ *Value of content*

Thus, in *Understanding Media*, McLuhan described content as a juicy piece of meat carried by the burglar to distract the watchdog of the mind. This largely means that people focus on the content rather than the structural changes brought about by it in their lives. As society's norms and values change due to technological advancements, we come to realize the social implications of the medium.

1.3.3.2 Socialisation and Learning

Socialisation and learning through mass media have been conceptualized in different contexts, a section of scholars believes that mass media assist in the process of socialisation and it is

- *Propagating rules of society*

a function of mass media. Media helps by providing a basic understanding about the common and accepted norms and values thus unifying the society. Media provides the viewers with an understanding of values, opinions and the rules that society accepts, this is a functional activity of media by which it assists the society. This act of media will lead to effect and this effect is known as socialisation.

Summarised Overview

Media provides the platform through which communication takes place and through this communication one can learn the accepted behaviour, cultural practices, values and norms. Thus media and communication play an important role in society. Apart from helping individuals become socialized beings, media has both negative and positive impacst on society. It conveys the social evils prevalent in society and inform people about cultural changes and the latest events. This showcases the freedom of speech, without this freedom media cannot truly be considered as the fourth pillar of democracy. The Sociological implication media and communication primarily have on society is with the role they play in socialization, social interaction, power dynamics, social hierarchies, social change and transformation. When McLuhan stated that 'Message is the medium', he stated that the channel through which the message is transmitted to the receiver is as important as the message. According to him media communication is vast social metaphors that not only transmit information but also determine what is knowledge that not only orient us to the world but tell us what kind of world exists. He analyzed how media affected the individuals who encountered them. Media leads individual to break down reality into discrete units logically and casually related and perceive linearly and abstracted wholeness.

Self Assessment Questions

1. McLuhan stated 'medium is the message', in which work?
2. Which is the fourth pillar of democracy.
3. Is freedom of speech integral for the functioning of media in a democracy? Justify your answer.
4. What are the effects of media on society?
5. What is the role of communication in society?
6. Discuss the scope of communication in society
7. Elaborate on the role of media and communication in establishing the socialization process.
8. Discuss McLuhan's 'Message is the medium'.

Assignments

1. Emphasise the scope of communication in establishing state affairs.
2. Aristotle stated that 'communication is the search for all the available means for persuasion' justify this statement in the light of communication for culture appropriation.
3. Describe in your own words how communication facilitates socialization.
4. Discuss the scope of communication in society.
5. Assess and elaborate on the three important issues that drive the development of mass communication.

Reference

1. Miller, J. G. (2002). *Bringing Culture to Basic Psychological Theory—Beyond Individualism and Collectivism: Comment on Oyserman et al.* Psychological Bulletin, 128, 89-96.
2. Samovar, L. A., Porter, R. E., & Jain, N. C. (1981). *Understanding Intercultural Communication*. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth.
3. Haralambos, M. &Holborn, M. (2020). *Sociology Themes and Perspectives 8th ed*. UK: Collins.
4. Hasan, S. (2021). *Mass Communication Principles and Concepts 2nd Edition.* New Delhi: CBS Publishers.
5. Delaney, T. (2008). *Contemporary Social Theory: Investigation and Application*. India: Pearson Education.

Suggested Reading

1. Shetty, K. (2012). *Process and Effects of Modern Communication*. New Delhi: Pacific Publication.
2. Rabindranath, M. & Sharma, M. (2018). *Mediascape in 21st Century: Emerging Perspectives*. New Delhi: Kanishka Publishers.

Space for Learner Engagement for Objective Questions

Learners are encouraged to develop objective questions based on the content in the paragraph as a sign of their comprehension of the content. The Learners may reflect on the recap bullets and relate their understanding with the narrative in order to frame objective questions from the given text. The University expects that 1 - 2 questions are developed for each paragraph. The space given below can be used for listing the questions.

SGOU

Theories of Media and Communication

BLOCK-02

Communication Theories of Harold Innis

Learning Outcomes

After reading this unit, the learner will be able to:

- describe the specificities of Innis's theory of communication
- explain the present facets of communication from a theoretical view point
- examine the sociological implications of communication

Background

Communication holds the key to society as it is an essential part of human activity and day to day activities. In sociology communication forms the basis for socialization it educates a biological being on the ways to become a social being. Communication, its methods and its medium have all had different effects upon society and these interests have been explored academically by different sociologists who have put forth various theories. Harold Innis's, *The Bias of Communication* is a must read for anyone who needs a better understanding of communication as he has condensed the evolution of communication in his work. In his work, he argues primarily about three points – new communication advancement changed society and culture, those who have a monopoly of knowledge have power and that bias not only lies in messaging but also within the communication channel itself. One of Harold Innis's primary contributions to the field of communications was to apply the dimensions of time and space to various media. He divided media into time-binding and space-binding types. Innis elaborated on his distinctions between time-binding and space-binding media in *Empire and Communications.* More of this shall be explored in detail in this unit.

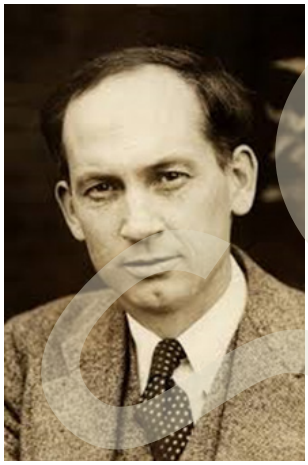
Keywords

Communication, Civilization, Media, Monarchy, Technology

Discussion

The application of time and space to various media by Harold Innis is considered one of the most important contributions to the field of communication. Innis in his work Empire and Communication classified media into time biased and space biased. Time biased included media such as clay, stone tablets, parchment, hand written manuscripts, scrolls and even orators. Even though these are intended to transfer and carry information for many generations it tends to have a limited reach and audience. Space biased media are even more short lived. Space biased would include media such as radio, television newspapers and even modern social media maybe considered a part of this. These medium even though they can transfer information far and long will not last a long time. Time biased media stands for stability, community, tradition and religion whereas space biased stands for rapid changing, materialism, secularism and empire.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH OF HAROLD ADAMS INNIS (1894-1952)



Harold Adams Innis was a Canadian economic historian who turned to communication theory where his research focused on the role of medium in communication processes. His work centralized how communication is core in social, political and cultural development. Marshall McLuhan his junior is widely considered to be the founding father of medium focused school of communication theory which is also known as 'Toronto School', 'Media Ecology', and 'Medium Theory'. His theories state that communication media is key to understanding the co-development of mind, culture and society. Primarily his focus was on Economics, his entire academic career was first spent as a professor of political economy, he is widely hailed as Canada's economic historian and political economist. He passed away while working on the 'History of Communication', which has been remarked as a monumental study that reimagined the world history as a story of civilization and their media. His study of communication was seen as an extension of the Canadian economic history also known as the Staple theory because in this due process, he traced the economy through the major staples of Canada. In his staples theory he found that the flow of staples created links of social, political and cultural nature, he thus shifted his focus on network.

Innis worked on the social history of communication where he learned of

the communication history of the past 4000 years. From the manuscript that he left behind in death came his two pioneering work Empire and Communication (1950) and The Bias of Communication (1951). Innis used technological events in history and traced how that in effect humans learned from it. In this unit we shall explore and learn of the theoretical contribution of Harold Innis in communication.

2.1.1 Time and Space Bias

♦ *Evolution of communication*

For Harold Innis, one of the primary drivers of societal change is communication technology. He states that each media holds within itself the bias in terms of information and organization. Every empire or civilization is concerned with long term survival and spatial expansion. Innis thus categorized the world into two categories based on this bias: Time Biased and Space Biased. Innis in his work, *The Bias of Communication* 1949 discussed the history of media and the evolution of communication. In his work, he emphasized three things primarily:

♦ *Innis's deduction*

1. New communication advancements change society – According to Innis, the shift from using stone tablets and hieroglyphics to papyrus resulted in a shift of power from the monarchy. The monarchy had control over the stone whereas the people had access to papyrus. This resulted in the shift in monarchy in ancient Egypt and Rome.

2. Those who have a monopoly over knowledge have a monopoly over power – As per Innis's devolution of stone tablets to papyrus virtually eliminated the monopoly of knowledge. Since papyrus was available to the masses the monarchy could no longer control knowledge and communication or the spread of knowledge.

3. Bias is not only present in messaging but in the media itself. – Innis saw media as the means to communicate and disseminate information. While considering bias we think of how one either favours or opposes a stance or simply put how personal prejudices may cloud the message. Innis insisted that bias could be found in the media as well and not in the message alone. According to him, each medium has its own bias which may be time based or spatial based.

2.1.1.1 Time Biased

The 'time' discussed in the context of time bias is different from what we traditionally understand about time. Time bias media relates to certain forms or objects of communication that

are durable but too heavy to move beyond their basic function at that particular time. Time biased media is associated with forms or objects of communication that are durable, heavy and have difficultly moving past its basic function in that particular set time. Thus, media experts label these forms of communication as part of more traditional, scared and or moral civilizations. These forms of media cannot go beyond the space in that particular civilization. For instance, if the media of the time is stone or clay it will only be observable to those of that time and space. Time showcases a set entity in which information present in the environment is rendered as important. Innis thought that mankind moved away from this type of media to a space based one to ensure democracy instead of monarchy.

- *Durable and heavy*

Societies that absolutely depend on time binding media are oral and tribal. Even though leadership tends to be hierarchical, time bound societies may also operate by consensus. In the purest form time bound cultures do not rely on written records rather they preserve their history and tradition in the form of stories, songs and myths that are passed on from generation to generation. For them, memory is crucial as they have high regard for the wisdom of the elders and favor concrete over abstract forms of thought.

- *Oral recollection*

2.1.1.3 Space Biased

Space, in its literal sense, refers to the physical area that something occupies or that is available. Space biased media refers to forms or objects of communication that are light, portable and possess the ability to be transported over vast distances making their possibilities limitless. Media experts consider this form to be light and portable thus it can express its command without being concerned with slow implementation over time. According to Harold Innis, Space biased media has the power to preserve and take over less advanced civilisations. He credited space biased media with the implementation of imperialism. When time is compared to space it is obsolete in comparison but it does provide the framework for future progression. With the use of space mankind has opted for a more transparent and accessible world where it is easy to transfer endless data by the click of a button. Societies that depend on space binding media like printed materials, newspapers, books, radio, television favour abstract thought and control over space. They do not place high regard on tradition as compared to time biased societies. Their way of thinking tends to be more in the line of impersonal, linear and rational.

- *Light and portable*

According to Harold Innis the time biased cultures are disadvantaged as their forms of communication do not evolve at

the same pace as culture evolves or changes. As human progress continued towards conquering space the focus on time biased became irrelevant and obsolete. Innis viewed orality as a time biased form of media where there would be an assigned person to go around and collect reports regarding deaths, births and causalities from town to town. This showed a significant distinction in transportation and communication which made it possible for an efficient means to transfer data from place to place or time to time. This set-in motion the idea to provide data from a different time to a different place. The opportunity for advancement of the mind would be missed if cultures forms of communication did not advance with the evolution of literacy. The medium through which communication is conveyed influences knowledge distribution and space over time. Innis says this type of communication is lightweight and can be easily transported.

♦ *Culture and communication*

As time paved the way for space obliteration and conquer, this allowed for the advancement towards the ease of media that we enjoy today. According to Innis, paper could be transported anywhere as it is light, it can also be formed into a collection of works of thoughts that foster various emotions (sympathy, revolution, rage, entertainmentIt led to the invention of the newspaper, which provided a solution for delivering information within a reliable timeframe. This development opened new avenues of thought, with people now writing letters to those far away. With the use of paper and later the advancement to telegraph it allowed the sense of space to become irrelevant in terms of communication, data transfer and information sharing. Because earlier there was a link between how information was sent, the physical dimension of sending and receiving became a new system that allowed information sharing from a distance. According to Innis, the major disadvantage of paper is that it can be easily destroyed whereas stone can exist even when the civilization that created it is destroyed.

♦ *Time – Space debilities*

2.1.2 Monopolies of Knowledge

According to Innis the shift from the use of tablet, stone and hieroglyphics to papyrus changed and shifted the power dynamics from the monarchy to the people. The monarchy had control over stone whereas the people had access to papyrus. This resulted in the evolution of the Egyptian society which led it past the monarchy. This shift from stone to papyrus eliminated the monopoly of knowledge with it eliminating their control over knowledge, communication channels and the spread of knowledge holding the power.

♦ *Replacing monarchy*

♦ *Revolution through paper*

With the use of papyrus and the masses having accessibility to it, knowledge spread and the monarchy could not control it or the society as a whole. Innis showed how the monopoly of knowledge had its effects in ancient Rome and the emergence of paper later led to the development of codex. 2,500 years after papyrus first appeared in Egypt, it became widespread but however it was limited and scarce. Paper was discovered and began to come from China and Rome developed the Codex – bound book, which replaced the scroll. This resulted in the establishment of libraries which led to the spread of knowledge at a faster pace.

♦ *Communication of civilizations*

Harold Innis in the presidential address to the Royal Society of Canada in 1947 remarked that, "I have attempted to suggest that Western Civilization has been profoundly influenced by communication and that marked changes in communications have had important implications." Innis in his formulation of a theory of communication traced the media structure in every civilization, he mapped the evolution of media from the cuneiform script inscribed on clay tablets in ancient Mesopotamia to the advent of radio in the 20th century. In doing so he attempted to understand the implications of media communication for knowledge and to suggest that a monopoly or oligopoly of knowledge is built up to the point that equilibrium in disturbed. To substantiate his argument of monopoly of knowledge he emphasized the cuneiform script which is a complex system of writing which can only result through the growth of a special class of scribes, who require intense training to master this craft of writing, this ensured that only relatively few people would belong to this privileged and aristocratic class.

♦ *Empires and communication*

In the beginning as Innis traced civilization and history, in Mesopotamia there was clay and the reed stylus used to write on it and the wedge-shaped cuneiform script. Thus, civilization arose along with an elite group of scribe priests who eventually codified laws. Egypt underwent a similar transformation as well with their use of the papyrus, brush and hieroglyphic writing. In Empire and Communication, Innis pointed out that ebb and flow of Egypt's ancient empire reflected weakness partly due to the "inflexibility of religious institutions supported by a monopoly over a complex system of writing." Writing was a difficult and specialized art which required intense training and apprenticeship, reading indicated a long period of instruction. The God of writing was closely related to the leading deities which reflected the power of the scribe over religion. A scribe was someone who had full qualifications of a special profession and was included in the upper class with kings, priests, nobles and generals. These factors of complexity favoured their increasing control under a monopoly of priests and thus the

confinement of knowledge to special classes. Innis argued that the monopoly of the priests and scribes disturbed the balance between the religious bias towards time and continuity and the political bias toward space and power.

- *Control of knowledge*

According to Innis monopolies of knowledge will eventually face challenges to their power particularly with the arrival of new media. To support his argument, he pointed out the monasteries that spread across Europe after the fall of the Roman Empire. Their monopoly of knowledge depended on their control of the time binding medium of parchment which was useful for the preservation of hand copied manuscripts written in Latin. Therefore, power was confided to the religious elite who were scribal and literate. The illiterate thus depended upon the priests to interpret and decipher the scriptures and other media of the time. The space binding medium of paper imported from China led to challenges from Islam and the rising commercial class. The spread of paper contributed to the growth of cities and education, which were no longer under the control of monasteries, the Church, or Cathedrals. The paper also supported the rise of vernacular languages which reduced Latin dominance.

- *Preservation vs Progress*

Innis observed that the Catholic Church sought to preserve its time-oriented monopoly on knowledge through the Inquisition. However, the invention of the printing press in the mid-15th century elevated the status of paper, shifting the balance of knowledge in favour of space over time. The Protestant reformation, European exploration, Empire, the rise of science and the evolution of the nation state soon followed suit. The far-reaching implication of the new medium of paper is summarized by Innis from the middle ages to the modern United States.

2.1.3 Balance, Bias and Empire

- *Empire or Civilization*

For Innis, the rise and fall of ancient empires was a way for tracing the effects of communication media. He analyzed media that led to the growth of an empire, ones which sustained it during its success and communication changes that fastened an empire's fall. He tried to showcase how media biases towards time and space affected the complex interrelationships needed to sustain an empire. The interrelationships include the partnership between knowledge needed to create and maintain the empire, and the power to expand and defend. Innis stated that it was important to understand the linkage between knowledge and power in order to understand empire. According to him "the sword and pen worked together, power remained in the hands of a few, specialization of function was enforced, scribes kept studying and contributing to the

advancement of knowledge and thought. The written record, signed, sealed and swiftly transmitted was indispensable to military power and extension of government." However, these generalizations according to Innis blurred the differences between empires. Thus, he sought to study civilizations of ancient Egypt, Babylonia, Mesopotamia, Greek Civilization and the written tradition of the Roman Empire.

♦ *Oral to writing*

Innis stated that a balance between the spoken word and writing contributed to the flourishing of ancient Greece in the time of Plato, Plato conveyed his ideas by recording the conversations of Socrates. It thus proved the power of spoken word on the written page. Plato's method of using poetic dialogues in prose enabled him to arrive at new philosophical positions. The balance between the time biased medium of speech and space biased medium of writing was troubled as Innis noted the oral tradition gave way to the dominance of writing. The torch of the empire then passed from Greece to Rome.

Summarised Overview

Harold Innis sought to construct a holistic theory of communication which he envisioned through the absolute analysis of the evolution of communication through each civilization. By venturing on this Innis divided communication technologies into time biased and space biased. Time biased which he termed as heavy and durable whereas space biased which is light, portable and has the ability to be transferred making its possibilities limitless. Time bias is constrained by the fact that it cannot keep pace with the changes that occur in culture which puts time biased technologies at a disadvantage. Moreover, the shift from time biased technology to space biased technology shifted the monopoly of knowledge from the monarchy to the common people. For Innis, media was an instrument to communicate and disseminate information. According to him, bias could be found in the media as well as in the message and each medium has its own bias which may be time or space based.

Self Assessment Questions

1. In which year was 'The Bias of Communication' published?
2. Give an example of a time biased media.
3. Briefly state Harold's classification of media.
4. Describe the monopolies of knowledge.
5. Why did Innis state that time biased cultures are disadvantaged?

6. State the three arguments put forth by Innis in 'The Bias of Communication'.
7. Explain how Innis sought to understand civilizations by tracing the evolution of communication?
8. Discuss Innis's theory of communication.

Assignments

1. Discuss Innis's division of time biased and space biased media.
2. The time biased cultures are disadvantaged as their forms of communication do not evolve at the same pace as culture evolve or change', Discuss.
3. How did the shift from time-based technology to space based technology eliminate the monopoly of knowledge?
4. Summarize how Innis envisioned, 'Balance, Bias and Empire'.

Reference

1. Stewart, W. (2013). *Innis Bias. Media, Culture and Society*. https://media-culturesociety.org/2013/09/22/innis-bias/
2. Fitten, K. (2013). *Time and Space Theory*. http://iwcmediaecology.pbworks.com/w/page/8480854/Time%20and%20Space%20Theory
3. Harold Innis's Communications Theories https://dmtlsd.tripod.com/Harold-Inniscommunicationstheories.html

Suggested Reading

1. Innis, H. A. (1964). *The Bias of Communication. Intro. Marshall McLuhan*. Toronto: Univerity of Toronto Press.
2. Comor, E. (2001).*Harold Innis and 'The Bias of Communication'*, Information, Communication & Society, 4:2, 274-294.
3. Upadhyay, A. (2014). *Theory of Communication by Harold Adams Innis*. Towards Excellence. Ahmedabad: India.

Space for Learner Engagement for Objective Questions

Learners are encouraged to develop objective questions based on the content in the paragraph as a sign of their comprehension of the content. The Learners may reflect on the recap bullets and relate their understanding with the narrative in order to frame objective questions from the given text. The University expects that 1 - 2 questions are developed for each paragraph. The space given below can be used for listing the questions.

SGOU

UNIT 2

Theories of McLuhan and Baudrillard

Learning Outcomes

After reading this unit, the learner will be able to:

- understand the concept of global village as proposed by Marshall McLuhan
- explain McLuhan's concept of "the medium is the message" and its implications for understanding communication
- analyse the concept of hyperreality as presented by Baudrillard

Background

Do you think a world without technology is possible? In our day to day life, we rely on technology for everything and everywhere so it has become integral in our everyday life. We use smart phones, computers, social media and the internet to communicate, to work, to learn, to entertain ourselves etc. Thus, technology is inevitable in our lives. Our electronic devices have redefined the boundaries of time and space and redefined our experiences beyond imagination. In this unit, you will learn about two theorists who discussed how media and technology influence human populations and how media shapes our experience. In today's world filled with social media, streaming services, and instant communication, their theories are more important than ever.

Marshall McLuhan, a pioneering theorist in media studies, introduced groundbreaking ideas about how media shapes human perception and society. One of his most famous concepts, "the medium is the message," suggests that the way information is delivered has a profound impact on how it is received and understood, often more so than the content itself. He saw the rise of electronic media (TV, radio) as shrinking the world. Information flowed freely, connecting people across vast distances and fostering a sense of shared experience. This interconnectedness created a "global village" where cultures could exchange ideas and information in real time.

Jean Baudrillard a French sociologist and cultural critic offered a more critical perspective on media's influence. He argued that the constant bombardment of images

and information creates a 'hyperreality' in a simulated world that overshadows the actual. In this hyper real world, Baudrillard saw a decline in meaning and authenticity. Culture becomes a cycle of 'recycling' past trends and styles, presented as new but lacking real innovation. Let us explain in detail about the contrasting perspectives of these two theorists.

Keywords

Technological determinism, Global village, Hyperreality, Simulation, Simulacra

Discussion

♦ *Communication*

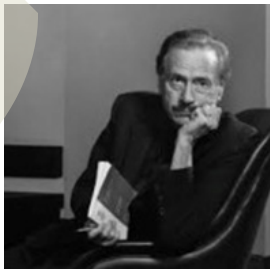
McLuhan is a technological determinist who proposed that technology causes changes in social structures, thought and culture. McLuhan's theories foresaw the interconnectedness of people across the world, predicting the way that electronic media would transform social interactions, cultural practices, and global communication. In his book, *The Gutenberg Galaxy: The Making of Typographic Man* he explained that before the invention of the alphabet, communication among humans involved all the senses simultaneously (speaking being accompanied by gestures and requiring both listening and looking). Before writing became widespread, McLuhan claims, humankind lived in acoustic space, the space of the spoken word. This space is boundless, directionless, horizon less, and charged with emotion. Writing transformed space into something bounded, linear, ordered, structured, and rational.

Technological determinism: Technological determinism is a theory that has long been debated within the field of media and communication studies. At its core, technological determinism posits that technology is the primary driver of social change, with technological innovations shaping the way individuals, societies, and cultures evolve.

According to McLuhan communication has evolved throughout history in 3 stages;

1. **The Pre literate or tribal era:** In this stage the spoken word was king and the ear was queen. Communication was primarily auditory, fostering a communal and collective culture where information and knowledge were shared through storytelling and direct verbal interaction.
2. **The Gutenberg age:** With the advent of the printing press, the printed word became the dominant medium, and the eye took precedence over the ear. This era brought about significant changes in society, including increased literacy, the spread of individualism, and the rise of linear, logical thinking.
3. **The Electronic age:** In the electronic age, media such as radio, television, and the internet promote full sensory engagement, retribalizing society in a new way. This era is characterized by the return to a more oral-like culture where information is instantaneously transmitted across vast distances, leading to the creation of what McLuhan termed the global village.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH OF MARSHALL MCLUHAN (1911-1980)



Herbert Marshall McLuhan was a Canadian scholar and philosopher who was born in Edmonton, Alberta in July 1911. He is a visionary who foresaw how popular culture and technology would affect the human race and their relations with one another. He earned a BA degree in arts and sciences and MA degree in English from the University of Manitoba in Winnipeg in 1933 and 1934 respectively. He later moved to the University of Cambridge where he earned his PhD in 1943. He began his teaching career as a professor of English at several universities in the United States and Canada before moving to the University of Toronto in 1946.

McLuhan is known as the father of media studies. He is a communication theorist who did an in-depth study of mass media, television and technology. McLuhan's work is viewed as one of the cornerstones of the study of media ecology. In 1964, Marshall McLuhan published his seminal work on media theory, *'Understanding Media: The Extensions of Man* in which he elaborated the expression "The medium is the message" and "Global Village". He warned that the Global Village would not be a peaceful place and also he described the effects of the coming Internet age and Virtual Reality as early as 1964. In September 1979 he suffered a stroke which affected his ability to speak. He died in his sleep on December 31st, 1980. In the years following his death, he continued to be a controversial figure in academic circles. However, with the arrival of the Internet and the World Wide Web, interest was renewed in his work and perspectives.

His important publications include

- *The Mechanical Bride (1951)*
- *The Gutenberg Galaxy: the making of Typographic Man (1962)*
- *The medium is the Massage: An Inventory of Effects (1967)*
- *War and Peace in the Global Village (1968)*
- *Counterblast (1969)*
- *Culture is our Business(1970)*

2.2.1 Global Village

♦ *Interconnectedness*

Marshall McLuhan was the first theorist who in 1964 spoke of the idea of the Global Village in his books '*The Gutenberg Galaxy: the making of Typographic Man'* (1962) and '*Understanding Media: The Extensions of Man*'. This idea encapsulates the profound impact that electronic media, especially television and the internet, have on human communication and society. The term global village describes the phenomenon where the entire world becomes increasingly interconnected due to the widespread dissemination of media technologies.

He used the Global village metaphor as a space of simultaneous and instantaneous happenings where time has ceased and space has vanished. In a global village the distance between things spatial, temporal, epistemological, social, linguistic, etc. is transformed

♦ *Instant connection*

through technology. A global village, as presented by McLuhan, is a situation where modern technologies would connect all people worldwide. This interconnectedness implies that people worldwide can connect and share information and experiences even when they are not physically close.

Important Features of the Global Village are:

Interconnectedness: McLuhan believed that electronic media would collapse the spatial and temporal distances that separate people, effectively turning the world into a "village" where information and communication flow instantaneously across vast distances.

Instant Communication: The global village is characterized by the ability of electronic media to transmit information in real-time. This has profound implications for news dissemination, cultural exchange, and social dynamics, making events happening in one part of the world immediately known and impactful elsewhere.

Cultural Integration and Homogenization: With the global village, cultures can be more easily shared and disseminated. While this facilitates greater understanding and cultural exchange, it can also lead to the homogenization of cultures, where dominant cultural norms overshadow local traditions and practices.

Socio political implications: The concept of the global village emphasizes the potential for media to influence political landscapes and social movements. It highlights how media can unite people for common causes, foster global awareness, and mobilize collective action.

Media as Extensions of Human Senses: McLuhan described media as extensions of human senses, expanding and altering the way we perceive the world. For example, the television extends the sense of sight and hearing, while the internet extends cognitive processes and information access.

2.2.2 The Medium is the Message

♦ *Importance of medium*

Consider watching a movie on a big screen in a theatre versus watching the same movie on your smart phone. In the theatre, the large screen, surround sound, and immersive atmosphere make the experience powerful and engaging. On a smart phone, the experience is much more personal and less immersive due to the small screen and limited sound quality. According to Marshall McLuhan's theory, 'The Medium is the Message' it's not just the movie's content that matters, but how the medium (the theatre or the smartphone) shapes your experience and perception. The theatre magnifies the movie's

impact through its immersive environment, while the smartphone changes the way you interact with and perceive the same content, illustrating how the medium itself influences and transforms the message.

Another example is when you receive a message via text versus a phone call. It's not just the content that matters; the medium through which the message is delivered affects how we perceive and respond to it. So Mcluhan's focus was on the medium itself. So if you don't understand the medium you don't fully understand the message.

♦ *Message*

> According to McLuhan "a medium is not something neutral - it does something to people it takes hold of them. It rubs them off, it massages them, it bumps them around".

Thus, the concept of The Medium is the Message is about how media, specifically electronic communication has changed society and how we view things. This fact merely underlines the point that it is the medium that shapes and controls the scale and form of human association and action. In other words, it's not the content of the medium that matters. In other words, the importance lies not in the content conveyed by the medium, but in the characteristics of the medium itself, which shape and define the content it delivers. It is impossible to understand social and cultural changes without knowledge of the workings of media.

♦ *Content is not important*

> The original title of the book **"*The medium is the Massage: An Inventory of Effects* (1967)"** was **'*The Medium is the Message'*.** But due to a printing error the word 'message' became 'massage'. McLuhan preferred the new title and kept it that way because according to him the term "Massage" implies the effect of media on the human psyche. It "massages" the senses and affects our perception and understanding.

2.2.2.1 Important Aspects of the Medium

The medium, not just the message it carries, holds immense power. From shaping how we perceive information (think book vs. film) to fundamentally restructuring societies (think printing press and the internet), media acts as an extension of our senses, influencing our experiences and interactions on a deep level. While content remains important, McLuhan argues that the medium itself plays a primary role, in framing and impacting how we understand the world around us. This power of media extends far beyond mere information delivery, driving cultural shifts and reshaping the very fabric of social life.

Influence of Medium on Perception: McLuhan argued that the characteristics of a medium affect how we perceive and interact with the content. For example, the experience of reading a book is different from watching a film or using the internet, and these differences shape our cognitive processes and social interactions.

Medium Shapes Society: Different media have the power to reorganize our experiences and societal norms. The printing press, for instance, revolutionized society by making information widely accessible, leading to the spread of literacy and the rise of individualism. Similarly, electronic media like television and the internet have transformed communication patterns and social dynamics.

Content is Secondary: While content is important, McLuhan emphasized that the medium itself plays a crucial role in framing and contextualizing that content. For instance, the content of a news story will be perceived differently depending on whether it is presented in a newspaper, on television, or via social media.

Extension of Human senses: McLuhan viewed media as extensions of human senses. Each medium amplifies certain aspects of sensory experience while diminishing others. For example, radio extends auditory perception, while television extends both auditory and visual senses.

Cultural and Social Impact: The introduction of new media technologies often leads to significant cultural and social changes. For instance, the advent of the internet has not only changed how we access information but has also altered social relationships, work patterns, and even political processes.

2.2.2.2 Hot and Cool Media

♦ *Sensory effects*

Each new form of media, according to the analysis of McLuhan, shapes messages differently thereby requiring new filters to be engaged in the experience of viewing and listening to those messages. Mc Luhan talked about hot and cool media in 'understanding media extensions of man' in 1967. He identified two types of media hot and cool according to different sensory effects associated with media. Hot and cool media refers to the degree of interaction between users of media.

♦ *Hot vs cool media*

A hot medium is one that extends one single sense in "high definition." High definition refers to astate of medium being highly informative by itself. Thus in hot media, users do not have to derive the meaning by themselves. For example, from a photograph, users can understand the medium without any deeper interaction. According to him every media has its characteristics and it decides how the audience will participate, interpret and comprehend the

media. Cool media, on the other hand, are usually, but not always, those that provide little involvement with substantial stimulus. They require more active participation on the part of the user, including the perception of abstract patterning and simultaneous comprehension of all parts.

♦ *Participation*

Hot media excludes participation from the audience and cool media requires participation. Hot media is high definition and requires less interaction from the user because it spoon feeds the content. So here audience is passive. Examples of hot media include photos film and radio because they engage one sense of media. In the case of radio, hearing sense dominates and excludes other senses. But the user's attention is focused on the content and their participation is minimal. Cool media uses low definition media that uses many senses that demand a great deal of interaction from the audience like phone conversation, comic books, cartoons, speech etc.

Hot media (high definition)	Cool media (low definition)
Radio	Telephone conversation
Photograph	Comics
Films	Cartoon
Lecture	seminar
Books	

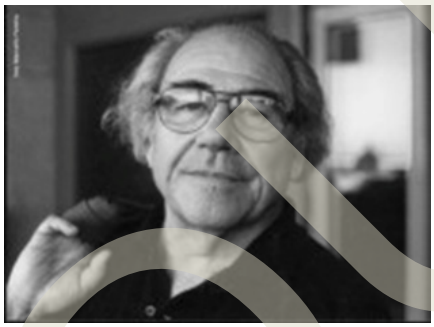
♦ *Media forms*

Marshal Mc Luhan argued that the media forms have distinct effects on society. In the medium message society is influenced much more by the type of media than by the content or message that it conveys. Everyday life is experienced differently in a society in which the internet and social media communicate easily from one side of the globe to the other. McLuhan forecasted that modern electronic media would lead to the creation of a global village in which a majority of people can witness major events unfolding globalization and information communication technology allow people of all continents to receive the same news music and TV programmes.

McLuhan's theories foresaw the interconnectedness of people across the world, predicting the way that electronic media would transform social interactions, cultural practices, and global communication. By using the phrase "the medium is the message", he argued that the way information is transmitted (the medium) is more influential in shaping society than the content

itself. McLuhan introduced the concept of the global village, predicting that electronic media would collapse space and time barriers, connecting people worldwide instantaneously. His work highlighted the profound effects of media on human perception and social organization. McLuhan's theories continue to influence discussions on media, technology, and culture.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH OF JEAN BAUDRILLARD (1929-2007)



Jean Baudrillard, French sociologist, cultural critic, and theorist of post modernity, was born in the northern town of Reims on the 27th of July 1929. He was the first in his family to attend university—eventually becoming a teacher of sociology at the Université de Paris X Nanterre and a leading intellectual figure of his time. He is best known for his analyses of media, contemporary culture, and technological communication, as well as his formulation of concepts such as hyperreality. Which he explained in his book simulacra and simulation published in 1981. When Baudrillard first posited the theory of the hyperreality in 1981, it was seen as a highly provocative and controversial idea. Today, hyper reality is a permanent fixture of modern life. Baudrillard wrote about diverse subjects, including consumerism, critique of the economy, social history, aesthetics, Western foreign policy, and popular culture. A sharp critic of contemporary society, culture, and thought, Baudrillard is often seen as a major guru of French postmodern theory. His early works involved a Marxian critique of the consumer society, but by 1970, Baudrillard had distinguished himself from the Marxist theory of revolution and instead postulated only the possibility of revolt against the consumer society in an "unforeseeable but certain" form. In 1986, he moved to IRIS (Institut de Recherche et d'Information Socio-Économique) at the Université de Paris-IX Dauphine, where he spent the latter part of his teaching career. An accomplished photographer, Baudrillard asserted that "every photographed object is merely

the trace left behind by the disappearance of all the rest." After a two year battle with cancer, he passed away in March 2007.

His major publications are

- *The System of Objects (1968)*
- *The Consumer Society: Myths and Structures (1970)*
- *The Mirror of Production (1973)*
- *Seduction (1979)*
- *Simulacra and Simulation (1981)*
- *Simulations (1983)*
- *America (1986)*
- *The Ecstasy of Communication (1987)*
- *The Gulf War Did Not Take Place (1991)*
- *The Conspiracy of Art (2005)*

2.2.3 Media as a Hyperreality

- *Information explosion*

Almost all of us use WhatsApp and Facebook for everyday communication. How many times have you received or shared fake news, fake photos, or messages? This likely happens to everyone because the widespread use of social media and digital devices has made the web feel like the real world, blurring the line between reality and imagery.This blurring of lines has a profound impact on our experience of the world. We are bombarded with images, information, and experiences that may not be grounded in reality like heavily filtered photos on social media or staged reality shows. In this section, we'll explore deeper into the ideas of Jean Baudrillard, a prominent post modern thinker and his views on media as a hyper reality and its influence on culture and society. So, let's first explain what hyperreality is

2.2.3.1 Hyperreality

The term Hyperreality was coined by Jean Baudrillard in his book '*simulacra and simulation'* in 1981. He describes this world as hyperreality. According to Baudrillard, we now inhabit a hyper real world, where simulations and representations have replaced genuine experiences and realities.

Simulation: Simulation refers to the process of imitating or replicating real-world processes, objects, or experiences. Simulations are not simply copies, but rather constructed realities that can be more vivid or believable than the original.

Simulacra: The process of simulation leads to the creation of a simulacra or reproduction of objects or events. Simulacra create a new reality that may replace or overshadow the original.

♦ *Blurred reality*

The hyperreal is a state of being where the distinction between what's real and what's not real is so blurred that we are unable to understand where one begins, and the other ends. Baudrillard defined hyperreality as the generation by models of a real without origin or reality. Social media platforms serve as breeding grounds for this hyperreality, where our lives are often meticulously curated and constructed to fit the idealized images we present to the world. Another example of hyperreality is "virtual reality", which is a world generated by computer languages and mathematical models which are abstract entities.

He explained about three levels of simulation

1. The first level is an obvious copy of reality
2. The second level is a copy so good that it blurs the boundaries between reality and representation.
3. The third level is one which produces a reality of its own without being based upon any particular bit of the real world or hyperreal that is the generation by models of a real without origin or reality. Here the original doesn't exist.

♦ *Third order simulation*

With first and second order simulation, the real still exists, and we measure the success of simulation against the real. Baudrillard's worry with third-order simulation is that the model now generates what he calls 'hyperreality' that is, a world without a real origin. So, with third order simulation we no longer even have the real as part of the equation. Baudrillard's worry with third order simulation is that the model now generates what he calls 'hyperreality' that is, a world without a real origin. So, with third order simulation we no longer even have the real as part of the equation.

The Gulf War Did Not Take Place

The book '*The Gulf war did not take Place'* is a collection of three short essays written by Baudrillard in 1991. Here Baudrillard used the third order of simulation of hyper reality and argued that the Gulf War of 1991 didn't exactly happen but it was a media spectacle or a virtual war. According to him, the Gulf War was hyperreal, and that war in the conventional sense never actually occurred.

♦ *Fake reality*

In the technological era, people highly depend on media as a source of truth and knowledge, but they promote hyperreality. For instance, we cannot trust TV for the real image or knowledge. Nowadays most TV shows, especially reality shows form pure simulacra and simulations. With modern technologies and graphic representation, reality shows always promote fake realities. News channels are also promoting exaggerated and fake news, and they endorse false realities. The cut zooms and editing always hide the reality and they promote hyperreality with technological advancements. Advertisements are also playing a major role in the order of hyper reality, they highly influence the sense of human minds and take them to the world of hyper reality, where they are not able to distinguish reality and its copies.

♦ *Media manipulation*

Modern technology and social media also contribute to hyperreality. This can be seen in the way photos are presented on platforms like Instagram. Photos are often heavily edited and manipulated using photo editing software creating idealized versions of reality. These edited images are then shared with followers who may mistake them for authentic representations of the world. This constant exposure to hyperreal content can make it difficult to distinguish between the real and the manipulated. People are living in a world where they are always confused with reality and blended reality, even the reality is suppressed under fantasies and illusions, and these imaginations often control the world.

2.2.3.2 Media and Culture

♦ *Hyperreal culture*

Baudrillard is considered a cultural theorist who explained that the mass media provide an inexhaustible supply of images of a pseudo reality that serves instead of experience and becomes hard to distinguish from reality itself. Media is a means for communication but for Baudrillard, media have nothing to do with communication, but rather 'fabricate non communication'. In Baudrillard's view modern culture has led to the erosion of traditional social structures and relationships. Media and technology

mediate human interactions to such an extent that genuine social connections become replaced by simulated ones. For him today's culture is composed of simulacra which taken together compose a new order of reality which he terms the hyperreal Culture consists of constructed realities, Disneyland, which are more real than the real they are supposed to refer back to.

- *Commodity fetishism*

Baudrillard critiques how consumer culture shapes our sense of identity and meaning. He argues that everything, even symbols and experiences, become commodities to be bought and sold. This creates a superficial and constantly changing cultural landscape where meaning is derived from consumption rather than from shared values or traditions. He describes how commodities are not just objects of utility but are imbued with symbolic meanings and status. People consume not just for practical needs but to signify identity, status, and social distinctions. The fetishism of commodities turns objects into symbols of desire and identity, shaping cultural norms and values.

- *Cultural recycling*

Baudrillard talks about the need for cultural recycling. According to him cultural recycling is part of the phenomenon of simulacra and hyperreality, where cultural elements are continually reused and repurposed in a way that strips them of their original context and meaning. In this process, symbols and signs from the past are endlessly replicated and reintroduced into the cultural landscape, creating a cycle where the distinction between the real and the representation blurs. This recycling leads to a culture saturated with references and images that no longer point to any authentic reality but exist in a self-referential loop.

- *Disappearance of meaning*

He argues that the need for constant updating in careers, knowledge, and skills is similar to the cyclical nature of fashion, imposing arbitrary changes and disuse. This recycling extends to other areas, like medicine, beauty, and even nature, where natural environments are carefully managed and commodified. Ultimately, Baudrillard asserts that all mass culture today is subject to this recycling. With the hyperreal and commodified nature of culture, Baudrillard suggests a loss of meaning and depth. Culture becomes fragmented and constantly changing, making it difficult to find lasting value or significance in anything. The media and current cultural trends have constructed such a false and unreal environment. People are always controlled by media and technology, under the influence of them; we often neglect the truths and realities.

Summarised Overview

In the 21st century communication technologies enable information to be shared instantaneously and simultaneously with many millions of people anywhere in the world. Baudrillard has developed a theory which says that there is nothing real in this world instead, there are simulations, that is, carbon copies of reality and worse enough, there is no original copy. Signs and images float through the media, we do not purchase commodities, we purchase OS and images and, interestingly enough, we consume these signs and images. According to Baudrillard postmodern world is characterized by simulations. When Baudrillard first introduced the theory of hyperreality in 1981, it was viewed as highly provocative and controversial. Now, hyperreality has become an integral part of modern life. While McLuhan envisioned a global village interconnected by media, Baudrillard saw a world increasingly simulated and fragmented, highlighting the contrasting perspectives on our hyper connected age.

Self Assessment Questions

1. Who introduced the concept of Global village?
2. Who wrote the book '*The Gulf war did not take Place"*?
3. What is hot media?
4. Define Hyperreality.
5. Explain the difference between hot and cool media.
6. Explain 'The medium is message'
7. Critically analyse Baudrillard's view on media and culture.
8. Discuss media as Hyperreality.

Assignments

1. Evaluate the relevance of McLuhan's and Baudrillard's theories in the context of digital media.
2. Explain McLuhan's concept of the medium is the message and how the medium itself shapes the way we receive information.
3. Differentiate between hot and cool media with examples.
4. Critically evaluate Baudrillard's theories on media and hyper reality and their relevance in today's world.

5. Analyse how different media types (e.g., print vs. television) shape the way we receive information and interact with the world. Provide specific examples to illustrate your points.

Reference

1. Kellner, D. (1994). *Baudrillard : A Critical Reader*. In Blackwell eBooks.
2. Marchessault, J. (2005). *Marshall McLuhan Core Cultural Theorists.* Sage Publications Ltd.
3. McQuail, D. (1987). *Mass Communication Theory: An Introduction*: Sage Publications Inc.
4. Pawlett, W. (2007). *Jean Baudrillard: Against Banality*.Routledge.
5. Wellman, B. (1999). *Networks in the Global Village: Life in Contemporary Communities*. Routledge.

Suggested Reading

1. Baudrillard, J. (1981). *Simulacra and Simulation*. The University of Michigan Press.
2. Baudrillard, J. (1998). *The Consumer Society: Myths and Structures*. Sage Publications Ltd.
3. Gordon, W. T. (2012). *McLuhan for Beginners*. Red Wheel/Weiser.
4. McLuhan, M., & Fiore, Q. (2005). *The Medium is the Massage*. Gingko Press.
5. McLuhan, M., & Lapham, L. H. (Eds.). (1994). *Understanding Media: The Extensions of Man.*The MIT Press.

Space for Learner Engagement for Objective Questions

Learners are encouraged to develop objective questions based on the content in the paragraph as a sign of their comprehension of the content. The Learners may reflect on the recap bullets and relate their understanding with the narrative in order to frame objective questions from the given text. The University expects that 1 - 2 questions are developed for each paragraph. The space given below can be used for listing the questions.

SGOU

UNIT 3

Cultural Materialism

Learning Outcomes

After reading this unit, the learner will be able to:

- understand the critique of Marshall McLuhan by Raymond Williams
- explore the contributions of Raymond Williams
- explain cultural materialism and its elements

Background

In the previous unit you have learned about Marshall McLuhan in detail and his contributions. Did you find McLuhan's theory interesting? Were you able to connect his theories to contemporary society? McLuhan is a visionary who foresaw how popular culture and technology would affect the human race and their relations with one another. He is a communication theorist who did an in depth study of mass media, television and technology. McLuhan's work is viewed as one of the cornerstones of the study of media ecology. While credited with laying the groundwork for the field, McLuhan's ideas faced criticism from Cultural Studies scholars especially Raymond Williams. Williams was among the first to argue that McLuhan's formalist analysis of media was insufficient, as it failed to consider the influences of power, political economy, institutional organization, and everyday life. Williams found McLuhan's metaphors of medium as message and massage as both ideological and offensive. In this unit, we will discuss in detail about the critique of Marshall McLuhan and also cultural materialism a term coined by Raymond Williams.

Keywords

Media, Technology, Culture, Technological determinism, Psychic functions

Discussion

♦ *Broadcasting*

Williams was among the first to argue that McLuhan's formalist analysis of media was insufficient, as it failed to consider the influences of power, political economy, institutional organization, and everyday life. His critique called for a more explicit discussion of ideology, which he believed was neglected in the modernist, apolitical approach of thinkers like McLuhan's. While technologies can impose limitations, they are not entirely deterministic. Their development unfolds through competing interests, struggles over meaning, and the unforeseen consequences of human actions. Williams saw broadcasting as an opportunity for alternative forms of expression and communication. This is because broadcasting, by its very nature, is a social activity integrated into the fabric of everyday life

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH OF RAYMOND WILLIAMS (1921-1988)

Raymond Williams born in Pandy, on the Welsh border was an author, academic, cultural theorist, literary critic, public intellectual and socialist. The son of a railway signalman Williams received his BA from Cambridge in 1946 and then served as a tutor in adult education at Oxford University's Delegacy for Extra-Mural Studies. On the strength of his books, Williams was invited to return to Cambridge in 1961, where he was elected a fellow of Jesus College, Cambridge. He eventually achieved an appointment in the Faculty of English, University of Cambridge, first as Reader in Drama (1967–1974), and then as the university's first Professor of Drama (1974–1983). His writings on politics, culture, the mass media and literature are a significant contribution to the Marxist critique of culture and art. His work laid the foundations for the field of cultural studies and the cultural materialist approach. Cultural materialism

is grounded in a concept of culture which identifies cultural practice as part of an active, dynamic, historical process. In 1946, he founded the review Politics and Letters, a journal which he edited with Clifford Collins and Wolf Mankowitz until 1948. Inspired by T.S. Eliot's 1948 publication Notes towards the Definition of Culture, Williams began exploring the concept of culture. He first outlined his argument that the concept emerged with the Industrial Revolution in the essay "The Idea of Culture", which resulted in the widely successful book *Culture and Society*, published in 1958. He was influenced by Antonio Gramsci and the concept of hegemony, writing in opposition to the methods of vulgar or mechanical Marxism which fail to place due emphasis on the dynamic nature of cultural production. In his later years, Raymond Williams continued to write and engage with social movements. He explored themes of class, gender, war, and environmentalism in his work. While his earlier writings were heavily influenced by Marxism, his perspective broadened over time.

Important works

- *Culture and Society (1958)*
- *Border Country (1960)*
- *The Long Revolution (1961)*
- *Modern Tragedy (1966)*
- *Television: Technology and Cultural Form (1974)*
- *Keywords: A Vocabulary of Culture and Society(1976)*
- *Culture and Materialism (1980)*
- *The Sociology of Culture (1982)*
- *Writing in Society (1983)*

2.3.1 Critique of Marshall McLuhan: Raymond Williams

Raymond Williams critiqued Marshall McLuhan's perspectives on technology and society. In his book *Television: Technology and Cultural Form (1974)*, particularly in the chapter "The Technology and the Society," Williams argued against technological determinism. He emphasized the importance of social factors over technological ones in shaping human development. Raymond Williams' criticism of technology stemmed from his firm belief in human agency. He argued that people have the power to disrupt and challenge the seemingly inevitable march of technology and history. In his view, humans are not simply passive consumers of technology, particularly television.

- *Against technological determinism*

Raymond Williams questions McLuhan's idea that different media types have unique effects on our minds. To Mc Luhan different media types (speech, print, TV, etc.) have unique qualities.

♦ *Unique qualities of media*

Williams argues that McLuhan ignores the actual ways people use media and the specific intentions behind it. According to him, McLuhan doesn't view media as actual practices used by people. Instead, McLuhan focuses on how each medium supposedly affects our minds (psychic functions) in a predetermined way. This explanation is often criticized for being too broad and for ignoring the specific ways in which people actually use media. To Williams, by focusing on this broad 'psychic function' McLuhan overlooks the intentions of both the creators and the consumers of media and if media just affects our minds in a general way, then the specific message or content of the media becomes irrelevant.

♦ *Social changes*

A key criticism of Marshall McLuhan's work is that he ignores the social and historical aspects of media. He focuses solely on the physical properties of media (desocialised) and how they supposedly affect our senses. McLuhan then uses this limited view to predict social changes, like the return to tribalism (retribalisation) or a global community (global village). However, these predictions seem unrealistic. McLuhan ignores the fact that media content is chosen and controlled by powerful groups (existing social authorities). Just because instant communication is technically possible doesn't mean it leads to social change, especially if those in control limit what information is transmitted.

♦ *Consequences of media*

McLuhan excludes factors traditionally seen as consequences of media (social, cultural, psychological, and moral) because they seem insignificant compared to the direct, almost biological, effects media has on our minds. There seems to be a more complex understanding of cause and effect at play in McLuhan's work, particularly when it comes to the impact of media. However, this complexity masks a form of determinism, both social and cultural. This determinism essentially accepts the current social and cultural order, especially the dominant forces within it. If the medium itself (like print or TV) is seen as the sole cause, then everything else that we typically consider history becomes reduced to mere effects. This emphasis on a preset mental effect overlooks the specific goals and intentions people have when they use media, both the creators and the consumers.

Williams rejects any form of technological determinism. He rejects those arguments which insist that technologies have a life of their own, that they emerge from a process of research and development untarnished by social expectations or political and economic interests. He rejects just as forcefully the arguments that technologies, by themselves, can determine a social response, that they have determining effects and consequences which are just as equally resistant to the complications and uncertainties of society and history.

2.3.2 Cultural Materialism

Williams coined a new term called cultural materialism. Cultural materialism is one of the major anthropological perspectives for analysing human societies. According to him, culture is a dynamic process shaped by both social and material factors. It emphasises the social uses of material resources in creating cultural practices, including various forms of art. This includes everything from language, considered a material tool for building practical consciousness, to specific writing technologies and communication systems, both mechanical and electronic. Materialism contends that the physical world impacts and sets constraints on human behaviour.

2.3.2.1 The Changing Definition of Culture

♦ *Concept of culture*

Raymond Williams argues that the meaning of culture has undergone a significant shift over time. He points out in his book *Keywords* the word culture originally meant the tending or cultivation of something, in particular animals or crops – hence the noun 'agriculture'. From the eighteenth century onwards, this sense of culture as cultivation was particularly associated with the spiritual and moral progress of humanity. Involved in this meaning of culture was the idea of a process, unlike some meanings of the term, which suggest an end product. During 19th century the rise of nation-states and interest in folk art led to acknowledging cultures in the plural. This recognizes both national cultures and the diverse cultures within a nation. Anthropology, as a field of study, established the concept of culture as the entire way of life in a society.

In the analysis of culture, Williams outlines the three general categories in the definition of culture

- **Ideal**: is a state or process of human perfection, in terms of certain absolute or universal values.
- **Documentary**: culture as the body of intellectual and imaginative work in which human thought and experience are recorded
- **Social**: Culture is a description of a particular way of life which expresses certain meanings or values not only in art and learning but also in institutions and ordinary behaviour (culture as ordinary)

> Culture is one of the two or three most complicated words in the English language
>
> Raymond Williams

2.3.2.2 Levels of Culture

♦ *Productive process*

According to Raymond Williams culture is a very complicated word it can mean something like civilization (in the sense of being cultured), it can refer to creative output (whether elite, high culture or mass, popular culture), and it can mean ways of life. He saw culture as more than just art and traditions. He saw it as an active process (productive process) that shapes the way societies function just like factories and tools produce goods, culture produces ideas, beliefs, and social relationships.

Culture exists on three levels:

- **Lived culture**: Experienced by people in their day to day life in a specific place and at a particular time
- **Recorded culture**: It is the recorded culture which includes art to everyday facts or the culture of a period
- **Culture of the selective tradition**: It is the one that connects the lived culture and recorded culture.

♦ *Cultural materialism*

Cultural materialism is a comprehensive theoretical framework that posits culture as the primary determinant of social behavior and change. This perspective, rooted in the work of Karl Marx, holds that the material conditions of a society, its technology, economy, and social organization are the driving forces behind social transformation. While Marx emphasized economic factors as the key drivers of history, later Marxist theorists such as Antonio Gramsci and Raymond Williams expanded this view.

Cultural materialism identifies different elements within culture:

Residual: These are older cultural ideas and practices that may still exist in the present, even if they seem outdated.

Emergent: These are new cultural elements that are gaining popularity and may challenge existing norms.

Oppositional: These are cultural practices that directly challenge the dominant culture, often by those on the margins of society.

♦ *Cultural products*

Williams' theory of cultural materialism provides us with a way of looking at culture, materialism and communication systems specifically the mass media and the complex networks that are our society. By expanding on Marxist theory and incorporating elements of ideology, art, and lived experience, Williams has provided a powerful framework for analyzing the ways in which culture shapes and is shaped by social structures. His contributions

continue to influence contemporary cultural and sociological studies, highlighting the importance of culture as a central force in social life. Cultural materialism establishes a relation between culture and cultural products such as the mass media.

Summarised Overview

Both Marshall McLuhan and Raymond Williams were influential media theorists who worked in 1960s and 1970s. McLuhan's famous phrase "the medium is the message" suggests that technology itself dictates the social changes it brings. Williams argued against this view, suggesting that the impact of technology depends heavily on how it's used within a specific social and cultural context. Power dynamics, existing social structures, and the intentions behind using the technology all play a significant role in shaping its effects. However, the rise of the internet in the 1990s renewed interest in McLuhan's theories. His ideas about the nature of media found new relevance. Raymond Williams' critique of Marshall McLuhan's technological determinism, significantly shaped the reception of McLuhan in communication and cultural studies. Raymond Williams argued that culture is more than just art and traditions. His theory, called cultural materialism, emphasizes how culture is linked to social class and inequality. Cultural values, assumptions, and worldviews are often shaped by the dominant social class.

Self Assessment Questions

1. Who wrote the book '*Keywords: A Vocabulary of Culture and Society* in 1976?
2. Who coined the term cultural materialism?
3. Define culture.
4. What is cultural materialism?
5. Explain the three levels of culture.
6. Examine the elements of culture according to Raymond Williams.
7. Discuss Raymond Williams' critique of Marshall Mcluhan.
8. Discuss how cultural materialism can be used to analyse society.

Assignments

1. Discuss the main points of Raymond Williams' critique of Marshall McLuhan's media theory.
2. Explain the key elements of Raymond Williams' theory of cultural materialism.
3. Examine the relationship between media and culture.
4. Give your critique of Marshall McLuhan.
5. Elaborate cultural materialism and its relevance in our society.

Reference

1. Prendergast, C. (Ed.). (1995). *Cultural Materialism: On Raymond Williams* University of Minnesota.
2. Williams, R. (1980). *Culture and Materialism*. Routledge & Kegan Paul.
3. Inglis, F. (1995). *Raymond Williams*. Routledge.

Suggested Reading

1. Williams, R. (1995). *The Sociology of Culture*. University of Chicago Press.
2. Bell, David (2006). *Science, Technology and Culture.* New York: Open University Press.
3. Williams, R. (1976). *Keywords: A Vocabulary of Culture and Society.* Fontana.
4. Williams, R. (1958). *Culture and Society: 1780-1950*. Anchor Books.

Space for Learner Engagement for Objective Questions

Learners are encouraged to develop objective questions based on the content in the paragraph as a sign of their comprehension of the content. The Learners may reflect on the recap bullets and relate their understanding with the narrative in order to frame objective questions from the given text. The University expects that 1 - 2 questions are developed for each paragraph. The space given below can be used for listing the questions.

SGOU

UNIT 4

Media and Modern Society

Learning Outcomes

After reading this unit, the learner will be able to:

- comprehend John B Thompson's views on the development of media and modern society
- explain the characteristics of mass media
- examine different types of interaction

Background

In the previous units, you learned about McLuhan, Baudrillard, and Raymond Williams. Did you find any similarities among these theorists? They all discussed media and communication and its various dimensions. The theorist we'll be discussing in this unit is John B. Thompson, who also studied the influence of media in the formation and transformation of social life. John B. Thompson provides a comprehensive understanding of how media technologies shape social, cultural, and political life. One of the salient features of communication in the modern world is that it takes place on a scale that is increasingly global. Messages are transmitted across large distances with relative ease, so that individuals have access to information and communication which originates from distant sources. Moreover, with the uncoupling of space and time brought about by electronic media, access to messages stemming from spatially remote sources can be instantaneous (or virtually so). Distance has been eclipsed by proliferating networks of electronic communication. Thompson studied communication and its uses and linked it closely with social context. This unit will enable you to understand John B. Thompson's perspectives on communication.

Keywords

Mass communication, Public communication, Globalisation, Commodification

Discussion

Thompson in his work *The Media and Modernity: A Social Theory of the Media* offers a comprehensive analysis of the development and impact of media in modern society. His insights highlight the transformative role media plays in shaping cultural, social, and political landscapes. Communication as a distinctive kind of social activity involves the production, transmission and reception of symbolic forms, which involves the implementation of resources of various kinds. He argues that communication tools (like phones, the internet) have fundamentally altered how we experience time and space in our social lives. We can now interact and act in new ways, even without being physically present together. This shift has a big impact on everything from our personal lives to how power works in society. Before we look into John B. Thompson's views on communication, it's worth noting his discussion about the institutional transformation that shaped the societies of early modern Europe.

- *Communication*

In the first place, the emergence of modern societies involved a distinctive set of economic changes through which European feudalism was gradually transformed into a new system of capitalist production and exchange. Second, the development of modern societies was characterized by a distinctive process of political change through which the numerous political units of medieval Europe were gradually reduced in number and forged into an interlocking system of nation-states, each claiming sovereignty over a denned territory and possessing a centralized system of taxation and administration. Third, it seems clear that war and the preparation for war played a crucial role in this process of political change; with the development of modern societies, military power was increasingly concentrated in the hands of nation-states which laid claim, as Max Weber once put it, to a monopoly of the legitimate use of force within a given territory.

- *Stages of institutional transformation*

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH OF JOHN B. THOMPSON (1979-2021)

John B. Thompson was a Professor of Sociology at the University of Cambridge and fellow of Jesus College, Cambridge. He received a BA in Sociology and Philosophy (First Class) from the University of Keele in

1975 and a PhD from Cambridge in 1979. He was appointed as Lecturer in Sociology at the University of Cambridge in 1985, Reader in Sociology in 1994 and Professor of Sociology in 2001. He was Head of Department from 2004 to 2007.

His main areas of research are contemporary social and political theory; sociology of the media and modern culture; the social organization of the media industries; the social and political impact of information and communication technologies; and the changing forms of political communication. He has written widely on the role played by the media and publishing in the shaping of modern society. He was awarded the European Amalfi Prize for Sociology and the Social Sciences in 2001 for his work on *Political Scandal: Power and Visibility in the Media Age* (2000), One of the key themes of his work is the role of the media in the transformation of space and time in social life, and the creation of new forms of action and interaction beyond temporal and spatial frameworks. He also discussed the transformation of visibility, the media and tradition, and identity and the symbolic project.

His publications include:

- *Critical Hermeneutics (1981)*
- *Studies in the Theory of Ideology (1982)*
- *Ideology and Modern Culture (1990)*
- *The Media and Modernity: a Social Theory of The Media(1995)*
- *Political Scandal: Power and Visibility in the Media Age (2000)*
- *Books in The Digital Age: The Transformation Of Academic And Higher Education Publishing In Britain And The United States (2005)*
- *Merchants of Culture: The Publishing Business of 21st Century (2010)*
- *Book Wars: The Digital Revolution In Publishing(2021)*

2.4.1 Historical Development of Media

The media landscape we experience today is a product of a long and dynamic history. This section will explore three key historical developments that have fundamentally transformed how information is created, distributed, and consumed:

1. The Transformation of Media Institutions into Large Scale Commercial Concerns:

♦ *Commercialism*

The transformation of media institutions into large-scale commercial concerns is a process that began in the early nineteenth century. The scale of commercialization increased significantly. This was due partly to a series of technical innovations in the printing industry and partly to a gradual transformation in the financial basis of the media industries and their methods of economic valorization. Technical innovations, such as the development of Koenig's steam press and, subsequently, the rotary printing press increased the reproductive capacity of the printing industry.

2. The Globalisation of Communication

♦ *Emergence of global communication system*

The globalization of communication is a process whose origins can be traced back to the mid-nineteenth century. In earlier centuries, printed materials were commonly transported over large distances and across the boundaries of states, kingdoms and principalities. But in the course of the nineteenth century, the international flow of information and communication assumed a much more extensive and organized form. The development of international news agencies based in the major commercial cities of Europe, together with the expansion of communication networks linking the peripheral regions of empires with their European centres, established the beginnings of a global system of communication and information processing which has become increasingly ramified and complex.

3. The Development of Electronically Mediated Forms of Communication.

♦ *Technological innoviations*

The uses of electrical energy for the purposes of communication were among the great discoveries of the nineteenth century. The key technological innovations are well known. The first experiments with electromagnetic telegraphy were carried out in the 1830s in the United States, England and Germany, and the first viable telegraph systems were established in the 1840s.

2.4.2 Media as a Social Institution

Understanding media as a social institution involves recognizing the systematic structures, practices, and norms that shape media production, distribution, and consumption. Media organizations, such as newspapers, television networks, and online platforms, operate within specific institutional frameworks. These frameworks include:

Ownership and Control: Media ownership structures can range from state-owned entities to privately-owned conglomerates. The

concentration of media ownership often influences the content and perspectives presented to the public.

Regulatory Bodies: Government agencies and regulatory bodies set guidelines and standards for media operations, including content regulation, licensing, and broadcasting rights. These regulations can vary significantly across different countries and political systems.

Economic Models: Media institutions operate under various economic models, such as advertising-driven, subscription-based, or publicly funded models. These economic imperatives shape editorial decisions and the type of content produced.

2.4.3 Mass Media and its Characteristics

In Thompson's *'The Media and Modernity*, he deconstructs the term "mass communication" and questions its relevance in today's media setting. He argues that the use of the word 'mass' is particularly misleading, as most contemporary media is targeted at niche markets rather than a vast, undifferentiated audience. Thompson states, "The term 'mass' is especially misleading. It conjures up the image of a vast audience comprising many thousands, even millions of individuals. This may be an accurate image in the case of some media products, such as the most popular modern day newspapers, films and television programmes; but it is hardly an accurate representation of the circumstance of most media products, past or present". He also critiques how the term 'mass' categorizes audiences as "undifferentiated individuals".

♦ *Deconstruction of mass communication*

1. Technical and Institutional Means of Production and Diffusion

Mass communication is inherently linked to the development of media industries. The production and distribution of media content rely on advanced technical infrastructures and institutional frameworks, which shape how media is created and disseminated.

2. Commodification of Symbolic Forms

Media content is commodified in two significant ways:

- **Economic Value:** Media products are created and sold in the marketplace, contributing to the economic system.
- **Symbolic Value**: Media content carries symbolic meaning and cultural significance, influencing public perception and social norms.

3. Structured Break between Production and Reception

There is a distinct separation between the creation of media content and its consumption. Media producers and their audiences are often geographically and temporally separated. This characteristic means that the content is produced at one place and time but consumed at various other places and times.

4. Extended Availability of Media Products

Mass communication ensures that media products are available to a wide audience over an extended period. This extended availability allows for repeated consumption and enduring influence of media content.

5. Public Circulation of Symbolic Forms

Media content is circulated publicly, reaching a large and dispersed audience. This public circulation helps shape public discourse, influence social norms, and create a shared cultural experience among diverse groups of people.

2.4.4 Communication and Social Interaction

Communication is a distinctive kind of social activity which involves the production, transmission and reception of symbolic forms, and which involves the implementation of resources of various kinds. In producing symbolic forms and transmitting them to others, individuals generally employ a technical medium. The technical medium is the material substratum of symbolic forms that is, the material elements with which, and by means of which, information or symbolic content is fixed and transmitted from producer to receiver. Thompson in his work on media and modern society delineates three types of interaction that are fundamental to understanding how communication operates within different contexts. These interactions are critical for analyzing the nature of communication in contemporary media landscapes.

- *Symbolic forms*

2.4.4.1 Types of Interaction

Communication is key to our social world, weaving together individuals and shaping our experiences. But how we communicate can vary greatly. This section will delve into three fundamental types of interaction identified by John B. Thompson: face-to-face interaction, mediated interaction, and mediated quasi-interaction.

1. Face to Face Interaction

This is the most direct form of communication where participants are physically present and can engage with each other in real-time. Characteristics of face to face interaction include:

- **Immediate Feedback**: Participants can respond to each other instantly, allowing for a dynamic and interactive conversation.
- **Nonverbal Cues**: Body language, facial expressions, and other nonverbal signals play a crucial role in conveying meaning and emotions.
- **Contextual Richness**: The physical setting and social context can influence the interaction, providing additional layers of meaning.

2. Mediated Interaction

Mediated interaction occurs when communication is facilitated through a technological medium, such as a telephone, email, or social media platform. This type of interaction includes:

- **Separation by Time and Space**: Participants are not physically co-present and may communicate asynchronously (e.g., emails) or synchronously (e.g., video calls).
- **Reduced Nonverbal Cues**: While some mediated interactions, like video calls, can convey visual cues, others, like text messaging, rely heavily on verbal content.
- **Potential for Anonymity**: Participants may remain anonymous or use pseudonyms, which can influence the nature and tone of the interaction.

3. Mediated Quasi Interaction

This type of interaction is characterized by one-way or broadcast communication where a message is transmitted to a large audience, but direct feedback from the audience to the sender is limited or delayed. Key features include:

- **Public Communication**: Typically involves mass media, such as television, radio, newspapers, and online platforms, where a single sender addresses a broad audience.
- **Symbolic Distancing**: The interaction is mediated by symbolic content, and there is often a significant separation between the sender and the audience.
- **Limited Interaction**: While the audience can interpret and respond to the content in various ways, direct interaction with the sender is usually constrained.

Interactional characteristics	Face to face Interaction	Mediated Interaction	Mediated quasi Interaction
Space time constitution	Context of co presence; shared spatial – temporal reference system	Separation of contexts; extended availability in time and space	Separation of contexts; extended availability in time and space
Range of symbolic cues	Multiplicity of symbolic cues	Narrowing of the range of symbolic cues	Narrowing of the range of symbolic cues
Action orientation	Oriented towards specific others	Oriented towards specific others	Oriented towards an indefinite range of potential recipients
Dialogical/ Monological	Dialogical	Dialogical	Monological

Table 4.1 Types of Interactions

Summarised Overview

Thompson illuminates the diverse ways in which communication occurs in our technologically advanced world. The rise of mediated and mediated quasi interaction has transformed how we connect with one another. While face-to-face interaction remains essential for immediate and rich communication, mediated forms have introduced new possibilities and challenges for maintaining relationships across time and space. Media serves as a powerful cultural institution, shaping and reflecting societal values, norms, and ideologies. It facilitates the commodification of symbolic forms and plays a crucial role in the production and dissemination of cultural content. The interplay between media, culture, and society is dynamic, with each influencing and being influenced by the other.

Media has redefined the public sphere, offering platforms for public discourse, debate, and the exchange of ideas. The role of media in fostering an informed and engaged public is both critical and complex. Digital technologies have revolutionized communication, enabling interactions that are not bound by geographical limitations. Social media, in particular, has blurred the lines between private and public communication, creating spaces for both personal expression and public engagement. The integration of media into everyday life has significant implications for social behaviour, political processes, and economic activities. As media continues to evolve, it remains a central force in shaping our experiences, identities, and the very fabric of contemporary life.

Self Assessment Questions

1. Who is the author of *The Media and Modernity: A Social Theory of the Media?*
2. List the three key historical developments that have fundamentally transformed how information is created, distributed, and consumed.
3. Define mediate quasi interaction.
4. Explain Thompson's view on the usage of 'mass' in communication.
5. Discuss the characteristics of mass media.
6. Discuss the specific institutional frameworks within which a media operates.

Assignments

1. Analyse the three key historical stages in the development of media and briefly explain each development and its impact on the media setting.
2. Discuss media as a social institution.
3. Explain briefly about different types of interaction.
4. Compare and contrast face to face interaction with mediated interaction. Identify the key characteristics of each type of interaction and how they impact communication.
5. Explain his critique of the term mass media and how it inaccurately reflects contemporary media practices.

Reference

1. Thompson, J. B. (2013). *Ideology and Modern Culture: Critical Social Theory in the Era of Mass Communication.* John Wiley & Sons.
2. Thompson, J. B. (2013). *Media and Modernity: A Social Theory of the Media*. John Wiley & Sons.
3. Curran, J. P., & Gurevitch, M. (2005). *Mass Media and Society. 4th edition.* London: Hodder Education.
4. Rothenbuhler, E. W., Crowley, D., & Mitchell, D. (1995). *Communication Theory Today*. Contemporary Sociology, 24(2), 274. https://doi.org/10.2307/2076919

Suggested Reading

1. Thompson, J. B (1997). *The Media and Modernity: A Social Theory of the Media*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.
2. Thompson. J.B (2021). *Merchants of culture: the Publishing Business in the twenty First Century.*
3. Sharma, D. (2004). *Mass Communication: Theory and Practice in the 21st Century*. New Delhi: Deep and Deep Publications.
4. Knapp, M. L., & Daly, J. A. (2011). *The Sage handbook of interpersonal communication*. In *Sage eBooks*. https://ci.nii.ac.jp/ncid/BB07403662

Space for Learner Engagement for Objective Questions

Learners are encouraged to develop objective questions based on the content in the paragraph as a sign of their comprehension of the content. The Learners may reflect on the recap bullets and relate their understanding with the narrative in order to frame objective questions from the given text. The University expects that 1 - 2 questions are developed for each paragraph. The space given below can be used for listing the questions.

SGOU

Media and Socio-Political System

BLOCK-03

SGOU

UNIT 1

Aspects of Media

Learning Outcomes

After reading this unit, the learner will be able to:

- understand the role of media in surveillance and its impact
- analyse the challenges confronting the modern media landscape
- explore the emerging trends in the media industry

Background

Picture a bustling newsroom in New York City, where journalists are racing to cover breaking news about an international summit. A reporter is finalizing a story on climate change discussions, while another team is investigating the impact of new technology on privacy. Across the world, in New Delhi, a similar scene unfolds as journalists cover a major political rally. These snapshots highlight the crucial role of media in shaping our understanding of global events.

In all its forms—television, newspapers, radio, and digital platforms—media acts as a window to the world, influencing how we perceive and interact with it. Media organisations shape public discourse by selecting which stories to highlight, often determining what is essential. For example, during global elections, media coverage can significantly impact voter perceptions by emphasizing particular issues or candidates.The relationship between media and politics is complex and multifaceted. Media outlets inform the public and influence political agendas and public opinion. This influence is not unidirectional; political figures and governments also shape media narratives through ownership, regulatory frameworks, or strategic communication efforts.Take, for instance, the case of media in India during election season. News channels and newspapers extensively cover political campaigns, rallies, and debates, shaping voter perceptions and influencing electoral outcomes. At the same time, the ownership of media outlets by business magnates with political interests can affect the neutrality of news reporting.

The advent of the internet and social media has revolutionised the media landscape, making it possible for anyone to publish and share content. This democratization of information has led to a more diverse range of voices and perspectives. However, it has also spread misinformation and fake news,

complicating discerning fact from fiction.Understanding the dynamic interplay between media, society, and politics is essential for fostering a well-informed public. In this chapter, we will delve into the dual aspects of media: its role in surveillance and its function as an industry. We will examine how media monitors societal activities, sometimes infringing on privacy, and how it operates as a powerful economic entity influenced by ownership, advertising, and regulatory frameworks.By exploring these themes, learners will gain insights into media's significant impact on societal and political processes.

Keywords

Watchdog, Artificial intelligence, Media conglomerates, Virtual reality, Digtial infrastructure

Discussion

3.1.1 Media and Surveillance

♦ *Systematic watch*

Media and surveillance are intertwined in today's digital age. Media platforms, while designed for communication and entertainment, also serve as powerful tools for surveillance. Surveillance refers to the systematic gathering and organizing of information about individuals and their activities, opinions and values in order to exercise various types of control (e.g., political, economic or social) over the subjects and/or a certain social territory (e.g., the nation-state, commercial spaces or the private home). Surveillance has become an everyday social experience, from a serious security issue to an incessant demand for data from numerous organizations to a playful part of mediated relationships.

"Big Brother is watching you." - George Orwell, 1984

This famous quote from George Orwell's dystopian novel *1984* captures the essence of a surveillance society. It warns about the dangers of unchecked surveillance and the loss of personal freedom. Orwell's work remains a powerful reminder of the need to protect individual privacy in the face of growing surveillance capabilities.

The French word "Surveiller" – to watch over – is at the root of the concept of surveillance in the sense of

observation and control systems. Perhaps no surveillance system is more well-known than the panopticon, an idea for observing prisoners developed by eighteenth-century philosopher Jeremy Bentham (1791). David Lyon defined surveillance as 'the focused, systematic and routine attention to personal details for influence, management, protection or direction.' According to Shahbaz and Funk (2019), "Social media surveillance refers to the collection and processing of personal data pulled from digital communication platforms, often through automated technology that allows for real-time aggregation, organisation, and analysis of large amounts of metadata and content."

♦ *Meaning of surveillance*

The relationship between media and surveillance has become increasingly complex and significant in contemporary society. In its various forms, media serves as both a tool for surveillance and a subject of surveillance. This interplay between media and surveillance profoundly shapes individuals' perceptions, behaviours, and societal structures. This comprehensive study delves into the multifaceted nature of media and surveillance, exploring their intersections, implications, and socio-cultural dynamics.

♦ *Relationship between media and surveillance*

The convergence of media and surveillance traces back to the historical development of communication technologies and systems of control. From the invention of the printing press to the digital revolution, media has served as a means of disseminating information, shaping public discourse, and exerting influence. Concurrently, surveillance practices have evolved from early physical monitoring to sophisticated digital surveillance techniques enabled by technological advancements. Understanding this evolution provides insights into the current landscape of media-saturated surveillance societies.

♦ *Evolution of surveillance practices*

Surveillance in media manifests in various forms, ranging from state-sponsored surveillance to corporate data mining and algorithmic monitoring. State surveillance encompasses government initiatives such as CCTV networks, mass surveillance programs, and data interception practices, raising concerns about privacy, civil liberties, and the erosion of democratic principles. Corporate surveillance, conversely, involves collecting and analysing user data by tech giants and advertisers, fuelling debates over consumer rights, data privacy, and the commodification of personal information. Moreover, social media platforms serve as spaces of self-surveillance, where individuals willingly share personal

♦ *Forms of surveillance in media*

details and engage in performative acts under the gaze of a virtual audience.

Did You Know?

The Panopticon Concept: The concept of surveillance was famously illustrated by philosopher Jeremy Bentham's idea of the Panopticon in the late 18th century. The Panopticon was a circular prison design where a single guard could observe all inmates without knowing whether they were being watched. This created a sense of constant surveillance, encouraging self-regulation among prisoners.

Mass Surveillance Programs: In 2013, Edward Snowden, a former NSA contractor, leaked classified information revealing extensive global surveillance programs conducted by the U.S. government. These programs, such as PRISM, collected vast amounts of data from global internet communications, sparking widespread debates about privacy and government overreach.

Facial Recognition Technology: Modern surveillance often employs facial recognition technology. For instance, in cities like London and Beijing, extensive networks of CCTV cameras equipped with facial recognition software are used to monitor public spaces, raising significant concerns about privacy and civil liberties.

To conclude, media platforms not only facilitate surveillance but also function as instruments of surveillance themselves. News media, for instance, play a pivotal role in shaping public perceptions and agendas, framing issues, and constructing narratives that influence societal attitudes and behaviors. The rise of sensationalist journalism, clickbait culture, and partisan news outlets exacerbates the dissemination of misinformation and propaganda, undermining the credibility of journalistic integrity and fostering distrust in media institutions. Furthermore, social media platforms employ algorithmic surveillance to monitor user interactions, tailor content, and manipulate user experiences, reinforcing echo chambers, filter bubbles, and polarisation dynamics.

- *Sensationalist journalism*

3.1.1.1 Implications

The interplay between media and surveillance has profound implications for individuals, communities, and societies. It shapes power dynamics, influences social norms,

and redefines the digital era's notions of privacy, visibility, and agency. As technology advances, the boundaries between public and private spheres become increasingly blurred, raising questions about ethical responsibilities, regulatory frameworks, and the democratisation of information. Moving forward, interdisciplinary research, public dialogue, and grassroots activism are essential for addressing the ethical, social, and political challenges posed by media-saturated surveillance societies and fostering a more equitable, transparent, and participatory media ecosystem.Media surveillance, where governments and companies watch what we do, significantly affects our lives and society.

Let us look into both the negative and the positive implications of media surveillance:

Negative Impacts:

1. **Loss of Privacy and Rights:**Media surveillance infringes on individuals' privacy rights, making them feel constantly monitored and controlled.
2. **Social Inequality:** Surveillance disproportionately targets marginalised communities, reinforcing existing power imbalances and hindering social progress.
3. **Threats to Democracy:** Excessive surveillance undermines democratic principles by eroding trust in institutions and limiting citizens' ability to express themselves freely.
4. **Mental Health Strain:** Constant surveillance can lead to increased stress, anxiety, and paranoia, affecting individuals' mental well-being.
5. **Economic Exploitation:** Data collected through surveillance is often used for targeted advertising and price discrimination, exploiting consumers and perpetuating economic inequality.
6. **Freedom of Expression:** The fear of surveillance can stifle free speech and dissent, limiting public discourse and inhibiting social change.
7. **Loss of Individual Autonomy:** Surveillance undermines individuals' autonomy by shaping their behaviour and choices based on perceived scrutiny.
8. **Security Risks:**Surveillance systems are susceptible to abuse and hacking, posing risks to individuals' personal and digital security.
9. **Distrust and Alienation:** Surveillance breeds distrust

among citizens and alienates them from institutions, leading to social fragmentation and disengagement.

10. **Legal and Ethical Concerns:** The legality and ethicality of surveillance practices are often questioned, raising accountability issues and human rights violations.

Positive Impacts:

1. **Crime Prevention and Public Safety:** Surveillance can prevent criminal activity and enhance public safety by monitoring high-risk areas and identifying potential threats.
2. **Accountability and Transparency:** Surveillance systems can promote accountability among public officials and institutions, ensuring transparency in governance and decision-making processes.
3. **Emergency Response and Disaster Management:-** Surveillance technologies aid emergency response and disaster management by providing real-time data and facilitating coordinated efforts.
4. **Efficiency and Resource Allocation:** Surveillance systems optimise resource allocation and improve service delivery by identifying areas of need and streamlining operations.
5. **Scientific Research and Data Analysis:** Surveillance data can be valuable for scientific research and data analysis, informing public health initiatives and policy decisions.
6. **Environmental Monitoring and Conservation:** Surveillance technologies are crucial in environmental monitoring and conservation efforts, tracking ecosystem changes and protecting natural resources.
7. **Traffic Management and Urban Planning:** Surveillance systems contribute to efficient traffic management and urban planning by monitoring traffic flow and identifying infrastructure needs.

3.1.1.2 Social Media Surveillance

Social Media surveillance is not a new concept in the world. Surveillance activities have been practised for a long time in different countries. With the growth and rise of different social media platforms, the governments of both democratic and authoritarian countries have invested

♦ *Citizen surveillance*

heavily in deploying tools for tracking their citizens' online activities and behaviours. This is primarily done to track down hate speech, misinformation, and fake news; however, there have been numerous instances across the globe which speak otherwise. In the pretext of only combating fake news and false information, the governments of different countries track user details by prying on their online presence. In such a process, huge metadata of personal information is accumulated without their knowledge and consent. This is not only alarming but also scary, as this is a severe breach of not only some of the basic human rights but also fundamental rights.

Daniel Trottier and David Lyon argue that there are five key features of social media surveillance:

1. Collaborative identity construction: With the help of image tagging and wall comments, users contribute to the identity construction of others. Users monitor what others say about their friends, contacts and themselves.
2. Social media enable the monitoring of individuals' social networks.
3. Social media surveillance makes use of social ties that are visible, measurable and searchable.
4. Social media surveillance is confronted with continuously changing interfaces and contents.
5. Social media surveillance is surveillance of profiles that hold information from many different social contexts, that is, of 'social convergence'. Social media augments surveillance by sharing not only the same body of information but also the same interface used to access that information

Surveillance, particularly in the context of social media, offers significant advantages in maintaining public safety and security. Governments and law enforcement agencies utilize surveillance to monitor potential threats, detect criminal activities, and respond swiftly to emergencies. For instance, social media surveillance has played a crucial role in identifying and preventing acts of terrorism and organized crime. By analysing online behaviour and communication patterns, authorities can anticipate and mitigate risks before they manifest in real-world harm. Despite these advantages, the pervasive nature of media surveillance poses significant

♦ *Advantages and disadvantages of surveillance*

threats to individual privacy and civil liberties. Government and corporate entities' widespread collection and analysis of personal data can erode privacy. Individuals' online activities, personal communications, and even physical movements can be meticulously tracked and recorded, creating comprehensive profiles that reveal intimate details about their lives. This level of intrusion raises significant ethical questions about consent and the right to privacy.

3.1.1.3 Social Media Surveillance and Privacy

♦ *Social media and lack of privacy*

There is no denying the fact that despite using social media for our benefit, it has eroded our privacyto a great extent. For instance, when we log in to social media platforms, we reveal our personalinformation and data, which gets public almost instantly. Governments or marketing firms might use these datato know our behavioural and attitudinal patterns. What ismore worrying is that social media companies like Facebook, Foursquare, and even Google often sell these data to marketing firms. According to Hoofnagle, socialmedia firmsclaim they do not sell users' data. However, evidence confirms that Facebook and Google have paid developers with users' data. This selling of the users' data is central to "platform economics". Addressing a primary area here is essential: educating users about such issues.

♦ *Data breaches*

People accessing social media or websites must be enlightened about the scope of data breaches and how they might have negative consequences. Users must examine and re-examine privacy issues before putting personal data on social media platforms or websites, especially in digital technology.According to Woo Jisuk, privacy is how one's data and information are handled in social contexts, particularly in public settings. The "private" is shared only with close, trusted, face-to-face relations. Thus, privacy concerns protect sensitive data information and financial and medical records from unauthorised accessor view. Social media posts and comments that are being made public make privacy issues morecomplicated. The question of privacy, when users openly and intentionally decide what to post and when to post, needs further discussion. What users post or comment on social media is done with specific objectives. It can be to voice theirsupport or speak strongly against local, national, or international issues. Sometimes, social mediaposts are even benign and casual. However, in every instance, the posts are meant to reach somewhere (notphysically) and to be read by someone, even by whom

the users do not know personally. Users tend touse social media as a means of expression because these media are easily viable, cheap, user-friendly,and interactive.

The other side of social media

Not all Facebook friends or Twitter followers are trustworthy, and users' details are breached too often. There have been numerous instances when users' personal photographs have been downloaded and used for creating fake profiles or accounts without the user's prior permission and knowledge. For example, a news article published in The Times of India where an engineer named Ajay Galar created a fake profile and duped a Delhi law student of 30 lakhs after befriending her. Again, another news article appeared in The Times of India where a 37-year-old labourer of an automobile factory was arrested by the cyber cell for creating fake accounts of girls and morphing their faces with obscene pictures.

3.1.2 Media Industry

♦ *Role of the media industry*

The media industry refers to the sector of the economy involved in creating, producing, distributing, and consuming various forms of media content. The media industry consists of film, print, radio and television. These segments include movies, TV shows, radio shows, news, music, newspapers, magazines and books. The media industry encompasses various businesses and organisations, including media companies, broadcasting networks, film studios, publishing houses, advertising agencies, and digital content creators. These entities play crucial roles in shaping public discourse, influencing cultural trends, and disseminating information to audiences worldwide. The media industry is dynamic and constantly evolving, driven by technological advancements, consumer behaviour changes, and regulatory policy shifts. It is a highly competitive and diverse sector, with companies competing for audience attention, advertising revenue, and market share.

The media industry has unique features, making it probably the most famous industry of modern times. These features are developing with time, making them more prominent in the industrial market. Here, we will ponder the essentialfeatures of the media industry.

1. **Mass audience:** The essential feature of media is that it reaches a mass audience, unlike other industries, which have a particular number of audiences to influence.
2. **Creativity:** Media is all about creativity, and it rules the industry by making new and creative ideas to show in the market. This creativity tool has always been needed to survive in the media industry.
3. **Working speed:** Media is a fast-paced industry. The information given by the media should be the first source of news to the audience. The working speed is 24 hours, and the information can come anytime.
4. **Linkage:** The media industry bridges society's other institutions and industries where no industry claims to have such a feature as this one. This is something very positive about this industry due to its networking capabilities.
5. **Intangible information:** The media industry provides intangible information on different issues, whereas other industries deal with material source providers. People benefit from the media industry through intangible information.
6. **Advancement:** The media industry always moves to advanced technology to uphill its audience by changing features daily. The journey from radio to a smartphone is one of the examples of its advanced approach.
7. **Controlling the minds:** The media control the minds of the masses. This unique ability of media makes it prominent over other industries. This media qualityensures its effectiveness for people affected bythousands of issues.
8. **Alert and consciousness:** The person related to the media industry (journalist) is always alert and conscious about what is happening worldwide. They do not have limitations on time and place to do work. They are always in search of news and information.
9. **Centre of information:** In this 21st century, the media industry has become the information centre. Today, we largely depend upon media. Media provide information to every sector of society through promotion and advertising.

3.1.2.1 Critical Components of the Media Industry

1. **Broadcast Media:** Television and radio broadcasting networks, along with cable and satellite providers, form the backbone of the broadcast me-

dia sector. These platforms deliver a wide range of programming, including news, entertainment, sports, and educational content, to mass audiences worldwide.

2. **Print Media:** Newspapers, magazines, and other print publications play a vital role in the media landscape, providing in-depth analysis, investigative reporting, and editorial content on various topics, from current events to lifestyle and culture.

3. **Digital Media:** The rise of the internet and digital technologies has revolutionised the media industry, giving rise to many digital platforms and services. From online news websites and social media networks to streaming platforms and digital advertising, digital media has transformed how we consume, produce, and interact with media content.

4. **Advertising and Marketing:** Advertising agencies, marketing firms, and media buying agencies play a crucial role in the media industry by creating and disseminating promotional messages across various media channels. Advertising revenue is a primary income source for many media organisations, influencing content production and distribution strategies.

a. **Film and Entertainment:** The film and entertainment sector encompasses film studios, production companies, distribution networks, and exhibition venues, including theatres, streaming platforms, and home entertainment channels. This sector produces a wide range of content, including feature films, television shows, documentaries, and digital shorts, catering to diverse audience preferences and tastes.

3.1.2.2 Evolving Dynamics in the Media Industry

1. **Digital Transformation:** The advent of digital technologies has disrupted traditional media business models, leading to the digitisation of content production, distribution, and consumption processes. Digital platforms have democratised media creation, enabling individuals and organisations to produce and share content globally.

2. **Convergence and Cross-Platform Integration:** Convergence refers to merging different media technologies, platforms, and content formats into integrated systems. This trend has led to cross-platform integration, where media organisations leverage multiple channels and mediums to

reach audiences across various devices and environments.

3. **Audience Fragmentation and Personalization:** With the proliferation of media options and channels, audience behaviour has become increasingly fragmented and diverse. Media organisations must adapt to changing audience preferences and consumption habits by offering personalised content experiences tailored to individual interests and preferences.

4. **Monetisation Challenges:** As digital platforms have proliferated; traditional media organisations have faced challenges monetising their content and generating sustainable revenue streams. Adapting to new advertising models, subscription-based services, and alternative revenue sources has become essential for media organisations to remain competitive in a rapidly evolving landscape.

5. **New Information Technologies : (NITs)** refer to the advanced and emerging digital technologies that have revolutionized how information is created, processed, stored, and transmitted. These technologies are at the forefront of the ongoing digital transformation and have profoundly impacted various aspects of society, including communication, business, media, and surveillance. Some key components of New Information Technologies include:

b. **Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Machine Learning (ML):** These technologies involve the development of algorithms and systems that can learn from data and make decisions or predictions. AI and ML are used in a wide range of applications, from personalized recommendations on social media to autonomous vehicles and advanced data analytics.

c. **Big Data Analytics:** Big Data refers to the massive volumes of structured and unstructured data generated by various sources, such as social media, sensors, and online transactions. Big Data Analytics uses advanced tools and techniques to analyse this data, extract meaningful insights, and make informed decisions.

d. **Cloud Computing:** Cloud computing allows users to access computing resources, such as servers, storage, and applications, over the internet. This technology enables the efficient storage, processing, and sharing of large amounts of data and supports various digital services and applications.

e. **Blockchain Technology:** Blockchain is a decentralized and distributed ledger technology that ensures secure and transparent transactions without intermediaries. It is widely used in cryptocurrencies like Bitcoin, but its applications extend to supply chain management, digital identity verification, and smart contracts.

f. **Internet of Things (IoT):** IoT refers to the network of interconnected devices, sensors, and objects that can collect and exchange data over the Internet. IoT has applications in various fields, including smart homes, healthcare, transportation, and industrial automation.

g. **5G Technology:** 5G is the fifth generation of mobile network technology, offering significantly faster data speeds, lower latency, and the ability to connect many devices simultaneously. It is expected to drive advancements in IoT, autonomous vehicles, and augmented reality.

h. **Virtual Reality (VR) and Augmented Reality (AR):** VR and AR technologies create immersive digital experiences by overlaying virtual elements onto the real world (AR) or by creating entirely simulated environments (VR). These technologies are used in gaming, education, training, and marketing.

i. **Cybersecurity Technologies:** As the digital landscape expands, so does the need for robust cybersecurity measures. New cybersecurity technologies include advanced encryption methods, AI-driven threat detection, and biometric authentication to protect data and systems from cyber threats.

j. **Quantum Computing:** Though still in its early stages, quantum computing represents a significant leap in computational power. Quantum computers use the principles of quantum mechanics to perform complex calculations at speeds far beyond the capabilities of classical computers.

These new information technologies are transforming industries, enabling new forms of communication and interaction, and raising important ethical and societal questions, particularly around privacy, security, and the digital divide.

3.1.3 Media Technologies

Media technologies are tools, platforms, and systems that

create, store, distribute, and consume media content. These technologies encompass various devices, software, and networks that facilitate communication and information exchange, such as text, audio, video, and digital multimedia. The evolution of media technologies has profoundly impacted how information is disseminated and consumed, influencing everything from journalism and entertainment to education and social interaction. Some of the criticalaspects of media technologies are:

1. **Traditional Media Technologies:**
   - *a)* Print Media: Technologies like printing presses, typewriters, and photocopiers produce physical publications such as newspapers, books, and magazines.
   - *b)* Broadcast Media: Includes television and radio, which rely on technologies like transmitters, antennas, and satellite systems to broadcast audio-visual content to a broad audience.
   - *c)* Film and Photography: Cameras, projectors, film stock, and editing equipment used in the creation and distribution of movies, documentaries, and photographic content.
2. **Digital Media Technologies:**
   - *a)* Computers and Mobile Devices: The hardware (desktops, laptops, smartphones, tablets) used to create, edit, and consume digital content.
   - *b)* Internet and Web Technologies: The infrastructure (servers, routers, web browsers) that supports online media, enabling the distribution and access to content through websites, blogs, and streaming services.
   - *c)* Social Media Platforms: Digital tools and networks like Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and TikTok allow users to create and share real-time content, fostering global communication and interaction.
3. **Interactive Media Technologies:**
   - *a)* Video Games: Consoles, gaming PCs, virtual reality (VR) systems, and game development software that allow users to engage with interactive digital environments.
   - *b)* Augmented Reality (AR) and Virtual Reality (VR):

Technologies that overlay digital information onto the real world (AR) or create immersive digital environments (VR), expanding the possibilities for entertainment, education, and communication.

4. **Content Creation and Editing Technologies:**
   a) Software: Tools like Adobe Creative Suite, Canva, and Audacity are used to create and edit videos, audio, graphics, and content.
   b) Digital Cameras and Recording Equipment: Devices that capture high-quality digital content, including DSLR cameras, microphones, and soundboards.

5. **Distribution and Storage Technologies:**
   a) **Cloud Computing**: Platforms like Google Drive, Cloud and Dropboxallow storing and distributing large amounts of digital content, enabling easy access and collaboration.
   b) **Streaming Services:** Technologies used by platforms like Netflix, Amazon Prime, Spotify, and YouTube that allow users to access and consume media content in real-time without downloading files.

Media technologies have transformed the communication landscape, making it possible for individuals and organizations to reach global audiences instantly. They have democratized content creation, enabling anyone with access to essential tools to produce and share media. Additionally, the rapid evolution of these technologies continues to shape cultural, social, and economic practices, influencing everything from political discourse to entertainment consumption.As media technologies evolve, they raise important questions about privacy, information security, and the digital divide, highlighting the need for ongoing study and adaptation in media and communication.

♦ *Global audience*

3.1.3.1 Media Technologies Across Borders:

♦ *Global distribution of cultural content*

Media technologies like the internet, satellite broadcasting, and digital streaming platforms have revolutionized how cultural content is produced, distributed, and consumed globally. These technologies facilitate the cross-border flow of media content, enabling cultural products to reach audiences far beyond their countries of origin. The impact of

these technologies on global culture can be analysed through the lens of the Culture Industry:

A) **Standardization of Content:** The global reach of media technologies often leads to the standardization of cultural content. Streaming services and digital platforms, driven by algorithms and market demands, promote content that aligns with popular trends and audience preferences. This can result in the proliferation of similar cultural products across different regions, reinforcing the Culture Industry's tendency towards homogenisation.

B) **The commodification of Local Cultures:** As media technologies facilitate the international distribution of cultural products, local cultures are increasingly commodified for global consumption. Traditional and indigenous cultural expressions are adapted and repackaged to appeal to international audiences, potentially leading to a loss of cultural authenticity and context.

C) **Cultural Hybridization:** While media technologies contribute to standardization, they also enable cultural hybridization. The cross-border exchange of media content can lead to blending different cultural elements, creating new and innovative cultural forms. This hybridization reflects the influence of the Culture Industry and the potential for diverse cultural interactions.

D) **Economic Implications:** The global media market is driven by economic considerations, with media corporations seeking to maximize profits throughinternational sales and distribution. This economic motivation influences the types of cultural products produced and promoted, often prioritizing commercially viable content over culturally significant or diverse offerings.

3.1.4 Culture Industry

The term "Culture Industry" was coined by German scholars Theodor Adorno and Max Horkheimer in their influential work titled "*Dialectic of Enlightenment*". This book, published in 1944, explores the effects of Enlightenment rationality on culture and society, and it is a foundational

- *Mass production of cultural products*

text in critical theory.The culture industry, Adorno and Horkheimer argue, is the mass production of cultural products designed to give the illusion of art but presenting an ideology that, over time, lends itself to totalitarianism. It refers to commodifying and standardising cultural products in the global market. According to this theory, media technologies contribute to the homogenisation of culture, where diverse cultural expressions are streamlined into standardized, mass-produced formats that prioritise commercial interests over authentic cultural diversity.

- *Production-line mentality to produce cultural products*

Adorno and Horkheimer stress that the culture industry uses a production-line mentality to produce cultural products. Seemingly, all films and TV shows we watch are different, but they follow the same recycled formulas as in other consumer goods. Likeconsumer goods, it feels like "there is something for everyone" here, but it's all variations of the same thing. This is a prominent feature of the culture industry, for all products are produced under the same scheme, allowing them to be "readable"and effortlessly digested. This is how the culture industry imposes conformity with things that only seem to be different but are, in fact, all (slight) variations of the same thing.While media technologies enable the global spread of cultural products, they can also challenge cultural diversity. The focus on mass-market appeal and profitability may reduce the representation of diverse cultural voices. The Culture Industry critique underscores the need for media technologies to balance global reach with preserving and promoting cultural diversity.

- *Culture industry's impact across borders*

Media technologies across borders play a crucial role in the global dissemination of media content, fostering cross-cultural exchanges and interactions. However, the concept of the Culture Industry provides a critical lens through which to examine the impact of these technologies on cultural diversity and the commercialization of cultural products. Example, Hollywood and Global Cinema; the Hollywood film industry provides a pertinent example of the Culture Industry's impact across borders. Hollywood films, produced with advanced media technologies and extensive marketing strategies, are distributed worldwide and dominate global box offices. This dominance reflects the standardization and commodification of cinematic content and the influence of media technologies in shaping global cultural preferences.

3.1.5 Information Superhighway

The term "Information Superhighway" is most closely associated with Al Gore, who, as a U.S. Senator and later as Vice President, was a strong advocate for developing digital communication networks. While Gore did not technically "coin" the term—its origins are somewhat nebulous and have been attributed to various sources—he was instrumental in popularising it during the early 1990s as part of his broader efforts to promote the expansion of the internet and digital infrastructure. Gore's advocacy for the Information Superhighway was tied to his vision of a globally connected society where information would be readily accessible, fostering economic growth, innovation, and improved communication.Although the term has since fallen out of everyday use and has been replaced by more specific terminology like "internet" and "digital infrastructure," the Information Superhighway remains an essential concept in understanding the early aspirations and developments of the digital age. It played a crucial role in shaping the global media landscape, fosteringthe rapid growth of the internet, and driving significant changes in how people communicate and interact globally.

♦ *Connected society*

The "Information Superhighway" is a term that gained popularity in the early 1990s to describe the emerging global network of digital communication technologies, primarily the Internet. It symbolized the vision of a high-speed, interconnected system that wouldrevolutionise how information is accessed, shared, and distributed globally. This concept was rooted in creating a vast, efficient network of data pathways, enabling instant communication and breaking geographical barriers. The Information Superhighway also represented the convergence of various communication technologies, such as telecommunications, computing, and media, into a unified digital platform. This convergence allowed seamless voice, video, and data integration, transforming media content production and consumption.

♦ *Convergence of various communication technologies*

The media industry, encompassing traditional platforms and digital giants like social media and streaming services, is evolving. The shift from analogue to digital has democratized content creation and distribution, allowing smaller entities to compete with established companies. This digital revolution has also redefined business models, with advertising revenues moving online and subscription services becoming

- *Digital revolution*

more prevalent. While digital media offers vast opportunities, it also introduces challenges such as content regulation, misinformation, and user privacy. The rise of fake news and the need for credible content quality are critical issues the industry must address. Moreover, the regulatory environment is increasingly complex, requiring a balanced approach to oversight that fosters innovation without compromising ethical standards.Ethical considerations are paramount as media organizations significantly impact societal norms and values. Maintaining editorial independence while meeting market demands remains a delicate balance. Looking ahead, the industry must adapt to technological advancements, uphold ethical standards, and collaborate with policymakers and technology providers to navigate this complex landscape.

Summarised Overview

The media industry is central to modern society, serving as a channel for communication, culture, and commerce. Its diverse components, evolving dynamics, and far-reaching impact underscore the significance of understanding and critically engaging with the complexities of the media landscape. As the media industry continues to evolve in response to technological advancements, shifting consumer preferences, and regulatory changes, it remains essential for stakeholders to adapt, innovate, and uphold the principles of transparency, accountability, and ethical responsibility in serving the public interest. Its impact extends beyond economic considerations to encompass social, cultural, and political dimensions, making it a powerful force in shaping how we perceive and engage with the world.

Self Assesment Questions

1. What is known as decentralized and distributed ledger technology that ensures secure and transparent transactions without intermediaries?
2. Who introduced the concept of the Panopticon?
3. What is meant by Culture Industry?
4. Define surveillance.
5. Discuss the five features of social media surveillance given by Daniel Trottier and David Lyon.
6. What are the critical components of the media industry?
7. Discuss how social media surveillance affects privacy?
8. Critically analyse the evolution of the media industry?

Assignments

1. Describe the historical development of surveillance practices from physical monitoring to digital surveillance. What are the key technological advancements that facilitated this evolution.
2. Reflect on the impact of media technologies on cultural diversity. How do Adorno and Horkheimer's ideas about the Culture Industry apply today to the global media environment.
3. Discuss the rise of misinformation and fake news in the digital era. What challenges do they pose for media consumers.
4. Choose one of the New Information Technologies (e.g., Artificial Intelligence, Blockchain, or 5G) and critically assess its impact on the media industry. How is this technology transforming content creation, distribution, or consumption.
5. What are the implications of social media surveillance on marginalized communities? Discuss how it reinforces existing power imbalances.

Reference

1. Adorno, T. W. (2020). *The Culture Industry*. Routledge.
2. Curran, J. P., & Gurevitch, M. (2005). *Mass Media and Society*. 4th edition. London: Hodder Education.
3. Davis, D., Baran, S. (2008). *Mass Communication Theory: Foundations, Ferment, and Future*. Boston: Cengage Learning.
4. Fiske, J. et al. (2010). *Introduction to Communication Studies*. New York: Routledge.
5. Giddens, A., & Griffiths, S. (2006). *Sociology*. Boston: Polity Press.
6. O'shaughnessy, M., & Stadler, J. (2005). *Media and Society: An Introduction*. Oxford University Press.
7. Hasan, S. (2020). *Mass Communication*: *Principles and Concepts*. India: CBS Publishers & Distributors.

Suggested Reading

1. Croteau, D. R., & Hoynes, W. (2019). *Media Society: Industries,Images, and Audiences* (6th ed.). SAGE Publications.
2. Hasan, S. (2020). *Mass Communication: Principles and Concepts*. India: CBS Publishers & Distributors.
3. Lyon, D. (2007). *Surveillance Studies: An Overview*. Polity Press.
4. Thompson, J. B. (1995). *The Media and Modernity: A Social Theory of the Media*. Polity Press.

Space for Learner Engagement for Objective Questions

Learners are encouraged to develop objective questions based on the content in the paragraph as a sign of their comprehension of the content. The Learners may reflect on the recap bullets and relate their understanding with the narrative in order to frame objective questions from the given text. The University expects that 1 - 2 questions are developed for each paragraph. The space given below can be used for listing the questions.

SGOU

SGOU

UNIT 2

New Media and Alternative Identities

Learning Outcomes

After reading this unit, the learner will be able to:

- understand alternative media
- compare the business model of mainstream media with alternative media
- discuss different forms of alternative media
- examine the relationship between media and politics.

Background

Imagine you are living in the early 1990s. Your entertainment comes from a handful of television channels, accessed through bulky antennas perched atop your home. There are no smartphones orthe Internet; the closest thing to instant communication is a landline phone or a letter. This was the world before the rapid rise of new media – a landscape about to be revolutionised by technological advancements and socio-economic shifts. Nowadays we wake up and immediately check our social media notifications, browsing the latest news headlines on our smartphone, and stream music or a podcast during our commute.We seamlessly switch between various digital platforms for work, education, entertainment, and social interaction throughout our day. This transformation from the analogue to the digital realm has fundamentally altered how we live, communicate, and perceive the world.

The rise of social media in the 2000s further accelerated this transformation, enabling instant communication across geographical and socio-economic boundaries. Platforms like Whatsapp, Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram have become integral to daily life, influencing everything from personal relationships to global political movements.Despite its benefits, new media has also highlighted issues like the digital divide, where access to technology varies significantly based on age, income, and other factors. While younger generations seamlessly integrate digital tools into their lives, older adults and economically disadvantaged groups may be left behind.

Keywords

Internet, Accessibility, Digital technology, Democracy, Virtual identity

Discussion

3.2.1 New Media

♦ *Emergence of new media*

As a member of an increasingly globalised, technologically advanced world, you probably use new media daily to stay in touch with your loved ones, discover and engage in your interests, and keep up with the news. You may use it to study for school and work remotely once you graduate. The technological development and socio-economic, political and ideologicalcontext during the 1970s gave rise to "new media. The term became popular in the 1990s with the emergence of videos and new ways of delivering television viacable and satellite direct-to-home on a subscription basis. Communicationscholars described this phenomenon as the first wave. By the 1990s, homevideo rental became a very lucrative and popular business. Consequently, filmstudios began to release films simultaneously in cinema halls andon video. (Example: Big corporations like Fox, Warner, and ColumbiaTristar were prominent in video production and distribution).

♦ *Inception*

With the coming of the World Wide Web, followed by the popularity of socialmedia, the world has not been the same. Many feel that the Internet has facilitated the democratisation of information; anyone can post anything on the net and be heard. The Internet has cut across artificial boundaries created by geographical borders and socio-economic divides. It has helped create a worldcommunity, seamless markets and everyday consumers. In an era of instant connect, we cannot treat any issue as "local''. Anything happening anywhere in the world can ring a bell across continents. One finds that the Internet, especially social networking sites, including Facebook, microblogging sites, and Twitter, has become a virtual turf for gathering followers and putting forth one's ideology. Even thoughInternet penetration is lower when compared with television and print media, the various social media platforms have seen the medium grow exponentially in the last few years. The reach and access via

mobile phoneswill grow many folds shortly.

♦ *Two Key trends*

Whether it is our education, careers, hobbies, or personal lives, life in contemporary society is almost invariably shaped by media, particularly new media. New media is a term that encompasses two trends that have occurred over the past few decades: the evolution of existing media delivery systems and the development of new digital communication technologies.

Two key processes have created what we know as "new" media.

♦ *Traditional Vs Digital media*

1. **The evolution of existing media delivery systems:** The past 30 years have seen dramatic changes in how media content is delivered. In the 2000s, when traditional media was the norm, most people received television visuals through aerials, and only around five terrestrial television channels were available. High-definition (HD), flat-screen digital televisions and access to hundreds of digital satellite and cable TV channels are standard.

♦ *Innovative technology*

2. **The development of new communication technologies:** Novel forms of technology have enabled different types of communication to come into daily use. Affordable personal computers and mobile phones are relatively new technologies that have facilitated new types of communication, particularly text messaging. The internet is undoubtedly the most innovative technology in the last 20 years.

Examples of New Media

- Websites
- Social media networks such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, Snapchat and TikTok
- Email
- Blogs
- Music, film and television streaming services such as Netflix, Amazon Prime video Disney+, JioCinema, Zee5, SonyLiv.
- Virtual and Augmented Reality Games: Virtual Reality (VR) is a technology that creates immersive, computer-generated environments, allowing users to experience and interact with a simulated world as if they were physically present. By wearing VR

headsets, users are surrounded by a 360-degree view of the virtual environment, which responds to their head and body movements. Though often associated with gaming, VR is also used in education, healthcare, design, and social interaction, offering a new way to engage with digital content.

The advent of digital media has not affected everyone equally. Some sociologists suggest that there is a digital divide - unequal access to digital technology based on factors such as age, class and gender. New media is used for contact, work, gaming and shopping, but different age groups use it differently. Younger people now use it for gaming, and young adults are more varied in their social media use and likely to have profiles on most sites or apps. Older social media users heavily favour Face book. The middle and upper classes are more likely to use digital media technologies as they can afford them. People with low incomes are excluded because they generally lack the material resources to partake in this 'new media revolution', i.e. according to some sociologists, they are a digital underclass that cannot keep up with the middle-class technological elite.

♦ *Unequal access to digital technology*

3.2.2 Digital Divide

The digital divide refers to the gap between individuals, communities, and regions with access to modern information and communication technologies (ICTs) and those without. This divide encompasses various aspects, including access to the internet, digital literacy, availability of digital devices, and the quality of connectivity. It often reflects broader social inequalities, as those without access to digital resources are disadvantaged in areas such as education, employment, healthcare, and civic participation.The digital divide can be observed on multiple levels:

♦ *Gaps in accessing digital technology*

- **Global Divide:** Differences in access to ICTs between developed and developing countries. In many parts of the world, especially in low-income regions, limited infrastructure and high costs restrict access to the Internet and other digital tools.
- **Social Divide:** Within countries, disparities exist between different social groups based on income, education, age, and geographical location. Urban areas typically have better digital access than rural ones, and wealthier individuals often have more advanced

digital skills and resources.

- **Generational Divide:** Older generations may have less access to and familiarity with digital technologies than younger, more digitally native populations.
- **Gender Divide:** In some regions, there is a significant gap in digital access and literacy between men and women, often due to cultural, social, or economic barriers.

♦ *Addressing digital divide*

Bridging the digital divide is crucial for ensuring equal opportunities in a digital age. Efforts to close this gap include expanding internet infrastructure, promoting digital literacy programs, reducing the cost of digital devices and services, and implementing policies encouraging inclusive access to technology. Addressing the digital divide is essential for achieving social equity and enabling all individuals to participate fully in the increasingly digital global economy and society.

3.2.3 Differences between New and Traditional Media

Six significant characteristics of new media separate it from so-called "old" or traditional media. These are:

♦ *Digitalisation*

1. **Digital/convergent:** The growth of computerised technology in the 1990s led to what is known as digitalisation - the vast majority of information is now converted, stored and transmitted as binary code (a series of 1s and 0s). Sociologists such as Raymond Boyle (2005) observed that digitalisation has also resulted in technological convergence, i.e. merging different forms of information (text, audio and visual) into one single but entirely new converged system.

♦ *Active* audience

2. **Interactive:** 'Old media' was usually a one-way affair, with professionally produced content being broadcasted to audiences who, for the most part, could do little other than passively consume it. New media, however, is a much more interactive form of communication. People can engage and interact with the media as active audiences, customise it, and produce content (Jenkins, 2008). Many websites now rely almost entirely on user-generated content, e.g. YouTube.

♦ *Cultural globalisation*

3. **Hypertextual:** Hypertext, otherwise known as 'links,' is a common feature of the internet that allows users more ease and freedom over how they browse different sources of in-

formation. This contrasts with old media, which is much more inflexible.

4. **Globally networked:** New media has led to cultural globalisation – we can now interact with others globally and form connections virtually rather than locally. These wider networks enable 'collective intelligence' by allowing people to share and combine resources, data, skills and information for any given purpose.

♦ *Virtual environment*

5. **Virtual:** New media presents a very different reality than our everyday, face-to-face reality - a virtual environment constructed with computer graphics and digital video. Users have control over their experience in this world. However, they are also subject to many types of information, opinions, interactions and products they would not come across in real life.

♦ *Cultural globalisation*

6. **Simulated:** Simulations surpass the virtual nature of new media and create an immersive, artificial life. This is most obvious in computer games, which provide opportunities for users to experience a 'virtual life' that is simulated through digital technology.

The Rise and Fall of Blockbuster

Blockbuster was an American company founded in 1985 that became famous for its video rental stores. At its peak, Blockbuster had thousands of stores worldwide where customers could rent movies and video games. Founded by David Cook in Dallas, Texas, Blockbuster revolutionized the video rental industry with its wide selection of titles and efficient store organization. The stores were famous for their "Friday night" crowds, with families and friends renting movies to watch at home. In the 1990s, Blockbuster expanded rapidly, even entering international markets. However, the rise of digital streaming services like Netflix, which allowed people to watch movies online without leaving their homes, posed a significant challenge to Blockbuster's traditional business model. Despite attempts to adapt, such as introducing DVD rentals by mail and online streaming, Blockbuster could not compete with these new services' convenience and growing popularity. By 2010, the company filed for bankruptcy, and most of its stores were closed. Today, only one Blockbuster store remains in Bend, Oregon, as a nostalgic reminder of a bygone era in the video rental industry.

3.2.4 Alternative Media

In India, the concept of alternative media is still evolving and is seen more as an anti-establishment and radical media. The existence of alternative media in India can be traced back to our pre-independence days when Indian media acted as the alternative to the ruling British media. At that time, many underground press and radio stations were functional; many small regional language newspapers were regularly published supporting the nationalist movement to topple the British Raj. The states with high literacy rates, such as Kerala, were able to establish regional newspapers and presses, which contributed to the national awakening. This section will examine alternative media forms in India, such as folk media, street theatre, small newspapers, community video and radio.History of alternate media

♦ *Cultural globalisation*

1. **Folk Media** is the most essential alternative media in rural India. Street plays have evolved a lot in the past three decades and have become the voices of various radical groups. It is the oldest form of entertainment and information in our country. Folk media took its shape and form as per the culture of a region. For instance, Nautanki from UP, Bhavai of Gujarat, Tamasha of Maharashtra, Jatra from West Bengal, Rajasthan's famous Puppetry show, Ramleela and Rasleela are performed in various states. In modern India, in various cities and colleges, Nukkad Natak, or Street Play, became a prominent folk medium to reach people with social messages.

♦ *The oldest form of entertainment*

2. **Small-Scale Newspapers**: Initially, alternative media in India was primarily limited to the small newspapers and magazines circulated by some radical groups. Khabar Lahariya is one such newspaper started by a Delhi-based NGO –"Nirantar", in 2002. Women from the marginalised sections of society with little or no formal education are provided training to report, edit, design, illustrate, and take photographs for the newspaper. They even distribute newspapers via small shops, tea stalls and block headquarters.

♦ *Training in journalism*

3. **Community Video on similar lines**: In 2007, Appan Samachar, an all-women community news channel, was started by Mr Santosh Sarang in Ramlila Gachi, Muzaffarpur, Bihar. The village girls were trained to undertake various activities related to news production on their own. The 25-minute news capsule was exhibited in huts using a projector.

♦ *Participatory*

♦ *Regional and people-centric programmes*

4. **Community Radio**: All India Radio has a vast network of radio stations connecting the urban and rural parts of the country. Being a public service broadcaster, it incorporates regional and people-centric programmes. Meanwhile, private radio stations are entirely devoted to entertainment. Community Radio Stations (CRS) fill this gap created by public and private radio stations and emerge as an effective alternative broadcast medium.As the name suggests, the CRS serve a specific community.

5. **Citizen Journalism:** The Indian broadcasting sector is now dominated by private players and corporate houses. Government control has become less with the increase in 24X7 television news channels in the past few decades, but these private broadcasters also repress the alternative voices instead of articulating them.

3.2.5 Alternative Identities

♦ *Identity construction*

In the contemporary digital age, the intersection of new media and alternative identities has become a significant area of scholarly inquiry and societal discourse. With rapid advancements in digital technologies, individuals have novel opportunities to construct, negotiate, and perform their identities in mediated spaces. Social media platforms serve as virtual stages where individuals curate and present alternative personas, often driven by motivations such as self-affirmation, identity exploration, and impression management.

♦ *Transcending physical reality*

Through carefully crafted profiles, posts, and interactions, users project specific aspects of their identity to their online audience.Similarly, online communities and virtual worlds provide fertile grounds for cultivating alternative identities through avatars, pseudonyms, and role-playing. These digital spaces allow individuals to experiment with different personas and social roles, transcending the constraints of physical reality. Within these communities, users form bonds based on shared interests, identities, or experiences, fostering a sense of belonging and companionship. Moreover, digital artefacts such as memes, gifs, and emojis serve as symbolic resources for identity expression and communication in online spaces. Internet memes, in particular, play a significant role in shaping collective identities and cultural discourse, offering a platform for humour, satire, and social commentary. Through the circulation and remixing of digital artefacts, individuals participate in the co-creation of cultural meaning and identity narratives.

In the context of "alternative identities" within new media, it refers to the diverse expressions of selfhood, belonging, and affiliation that deviate from mainstream or dominant social norms and conventions. These alternative identities encompass various experiences, perspectives, and affiliations that may be marginalised or underrepresented in traditional media and societal discourse.Alternative identities can manifest in various forms, including but not limited to:

1. **Subcultures:** Groups of individuals who share distinctive cultural practices, values, and interests that differentiate them from mainstream culture. Examples include punk, goth, and hip-hop subcultures.
2. **Marginalized Communities:** Communities that experience systemic oppression, discrimination, or marginalisation based on race, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, disability, or socioeconomic status. These communities may use new media platforms to assert their identities, advocate for social justice, and build solidarity with like-minded individuals.
3. **Online Avatars and Personas:** Digital representations or personas created by individuals in virtual spaces, such as online gaming communities or virtual worlds. These avatars may embody aspects of the individual's identity that they may not feel comfortable expressing offline.
4. **LGBTQ+ Identities:** New media platforms provide LGBTQ+ individuals spaces to connect, share experiences, and advocate for LGBTQ+ rights and visibility.
5. **Identity Fluidity:** The fluidity and flexibility of identity expression, where individuals may explore and experiment with different aspects of their identity over time. New media platforms offer opportunities for individuals to present multiple facets of their identity and engage in ongoing identity exploration and negotiation.

3.2.6 Media and Politics

♦ *The link between government and people*

In a democratic system, mass media play a vital role as the very existence of the government depends on the people's support. This is where the media acquires centre stage in politics. To reach out to people, the government needs mass media, and the news media, on its part, works as a link between the government and the people, as a carrier of information and, at other times, with its agenda.

When the media writes positively, it is not uncommon to find politicians swearing by what is written and broadcast to deride their rivals. However, when the media is critical, politicians often blame the media for bias and trial against them.

In his book, *The Media Politics and Public Life*, communication academic Geoffrey Craig says, "The political system exerts a less formal kind of control over the media landscape through the personal influence of politicians and political actors on media owners and journalists." Craig maintains that the influence of political actors over media on a day-to-day basis can be readily observed and realised. Governments have the power to enact legislation to pressure the media considerably. Governments are often criticised for their power to manipulate and manoeuvre media by deciding on which information is to be released, when and how. Political management of the media also takes place through various types of political communication, such as media events, briefings, news conferences, interviews, photo opportunities, etc. Media, being information-hungry, often ends up publishing what it gets from the sources of authority.

♦ *Political system and media control*

In a democratic system, mass media play a vital role as the very existence ofthe government depends on the people's support. This is where the media acquires centre stage in politics. To reach out to people, thegovernment needs mass media, and the news media, on its part, works as alink between the government and the people, as a carrier of information and, at other times, with its agenda. When the media writes positively, it is not uncommon to find politicians swearing by what is written and broadcast to deride their rivals. However, when the media is critical, politicians often blame the mediafor bias and trial against them.

♦ *Reaching out to the public*

Positive Impact of Media on Politics:

1. **Setting the Political Agenda:** The media can set the political agenda by deciding which issues are essential and which are not. This can majorly impact elections, as politicians often focus on the issues that are getting the most media attention.

2. **Exposing Corruption:** The media has been instrumental in exposing corruption in Indian politics. Investigative

journalismhas helped uncover major corruption scandals, leading to public outrage and political change.

3. **Influencing Public Opinion:** The media can influence public opinion through reporting and commentary. This can sway voters in favour of a particular political party or candidate.

4. **Mobilizing Mass Protests:** Social media has significantly mobilised mass protests in India, such as the recent farmer protests. Digital media has made it easier for people to quickly organise and spread information and mobilise large numbers.

5. **Holding Politicians Accountable:** The media can hold politicians accountable for their actions. By reporting on their activities, the media can expose wrongdoing and force politicians to take responsibility for their actions.

6. **Shaping public opinion:** The media can shape public opinion and influence people's thoughts about political issues. The media can sway public opinion and perception about political leaders and parties by covering news and current events. The media has been crucial in shaping public opinion on various political issues. News channels, newspapers, and online platforms can influence people's views and perceptions about political parties and their leaders. This can impact electoral outcomes.

7. **Providing a platform for political discourse:** The media provides a platform for political discourse and debate, allowing different voices and perspectives to be heard. This can lead to the development of new ideas and policies.

8. **Exposing corruption and scandals:** The media plays a crucial role in exposing corruption and scandals in politics, which can lead to public outrage and demands for accountability.

Negative Impact of Media on Politics

1. **Sensationalism and Bias:** The media can sometimes prioritise sensational news and promote a biased or one-sided view of political events, leading to a distorted representation of the truth.

2. **Manipulation of public opinion:** The media can also manipulate public opinion by spreading false information or propaganda, hurting democratic processes. Exposing cor-

ruption: The media has also played an essential role in exposing corruption and malpractices in the Indian political system. Investigative journalism has led to the unearthing of many scams, bringing them to the public's attention.

3. **Sensationalism:** Unfortunately, some sections of the media tend to focus on sensational news stories rather than substantive political issues. This can distract people from necessary policy debates and undermine the quality of political discourse.

4. **Polarization:** The media's coverage of political events can also contribute to Indian society's polarisation. Some media outlets tend to take a partisan stance, which can further divide people based on their political beliefs.

5. **Amplifying social movements:** On the other hand, the media has also played a crucial role in amplifying the voices of social movements and marginalised groups. Through their coverage, they have brought attention to issues such as caste-based discrimination, gender-based violence, and minority rights.

6. **Overemphasis on personalities:** The media often focusses on personalities rather than policies, leading to a superficial understanding of political issues and a lack of substantive debate.

Overall, the impact of media on Indian politics is complex and multifaceted, with both positive and negative aspects. However, as long as the media is free and independent, it has the potential to play a vital role in promoting transparency, accountability, and democracy in India.

Summarised Overview

In new media, individuals craft diverse personas through social media and find community in various online groups. These platforms provide spaces for self-expression and connection, akin to creating characters in a game. However, alongside the benefits come challenges, including privacy concerns and instances of deceptive behaviour. Meanwhile, the intersection of media and politics profoundly shapes public opinion and mobilises social change. Media platforms, both traditional and social, serve as powerful tools in political discourse, influencing the agendas of politicians and sparking societal movements. However, the proliferation of misinformation threatens democratic processes, as it can distort public perception and undermine trust in institutions.

Navigating these digital landscapes requires a combination of critical thinking and ethical awareness. By promoting transparency, safeguarding privacy, and fostering inclusive dialogue, we can harness the transformative potential of new media while upholding democratic principles.

Self Assessment Questions

1. Give an example of new media.
2. What is the terminology used to refer to the gap between individuals, communities, and regions with access to modern information and communication technologies (ICTs) and those without.
3. Define alternate media.
4. What is new media?
5. Distinguish between new media and traditional media.
6. What are the different forms of alternate media in India?
7. Critically analyse the relationship between media and politics.
8. Examine the role of new media in shaping alternative identities in contemporary society.

Assignments

1. Explain the term "new media" and its evolution from traditional media delivery systems to digital communication technologies.
2. Analyse the concept of the digital divide. What factors contribute to this divide, and how does it affect different demographic groups?
3. How has the rise of social media platforms like Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram changed personal relationships and global political movements?
4. Provide examples of alternative media forms in India and discuss their historical significance and contemporary relevance.
5. Explore the role of media in amplifying social movements and advocating for marginalised groups. Provide examples of movements that have gained traction through media coverage.

References

1. Axford, B., & Huggins, R. (Eds.). (2000). *New Media and Politics*. Sage
2. Flew, T. (2008). *New Media: An Introduction*. Oxford University Press.
3. Lemke, J., & van Helden, C. (2009). *New Learning Cultures: Identities, Media and Networks*. *Learning Cultures in Online Education*, 151-169.
4. Lievrouw, L. A. (2023). *Alternative and Activist New Media*. John Wiley & Sons.
5. Strömberg, D. (2015). *Media and Politics*, *Economics*, *7*(1), 173-205.

Suggested Readings

1. Appadurai, A. (1996). *Modernity At Large: Cultural Dimensions of Globalization*. University of Minnesota Press.
2. Atton, C. (2002). *Alternative Media*. Sage Publications.
3. Castells, M. (2010). *The Rise of The Network Society* (2nd ed.). Wiley-Blackwell.

Space for Learner Engagement for Objective Questions

Learners are encouraged to develop objective questions based on the content in the paragraph as a sign of their comprehension of the content. The Learners may reflect on the recap bullets and relate their understanding with the narrative in order to frame objective questions from the given text. The University expects that 1 - 2 questions are developed for each paragraph. The space given below can be used for listing the questions.

SGOU

Mass Media and Globalisation

Learning Outcomes

After reading this unit, the learner will be able to:

- explain mass media in the context of globalisation
- understand the concept of media imperialism and media convergence
- discuss the emergence of media as a global entity
- analyse the complex dynamics of media in developing countries

Background

Imagine a bustling port city in the 16th century, where merchants from distant lands exchange exotic goods and tales of far-off places. This early form of globalisation, driven by sea routes and international trade, set the stage for a world increasingly interconnected by economic and cultural exchanges. Fast forward to the late 20th century, the fall of the Soviet Union marks a pivotal moment in modern globalisation. The world witnesses an unprecedented integration of markets and societies, catalysed by economic liberalisation policies that reshape global dynamics. Amidst this transformative era, media globalisation emerges as a powerful force, intricately weaving nations' economic and cultural fabrics.

Today, the influence of global media transcends borders, propelled by technological advancements that have collapsed the barriers of time and space. The rapid spread of communication technology and the rise of global media conglomerates have created a landscape where a few powerful entities dominate the flow of information and cultural narratives. Western television formats, such as "Who Wants to Be a Millionaire?" and "Big Brother," find their localised counterparts in India's "Kaun Banega Crorepati" and "Big Boss," reflecting a broader trend of cultural borrowing and adaptation. This scenario exemplifies media imperialism, where technologically advanced nations imprint their cultural values onto developing regions, shaping local cultures to align with global consumerist ideals.

Keywords

Interconnected, Public opinion, Cultural hegemony, Homogenisation, Information technology

Discussion

- *Two significant aspects of globalisation*

Globalisation has occurred since the discovery of sea routes and international mercantile trade. However, the economic liberalisation policies that were questioned after the fall of the Soviet Union were of great significance. Globalisation has two significant aspects in which it operates: cultural and economic, and both of them are not mutually exclusive. Regarding the cultural scenario, globalisation can be read in two ways: Firstly, the distance between time, space and place has shrunk due to giant leaps in communication technology with heavy investments in electronic media and instantaneous communication. Secondly, the ideologically motivated content of the cultural message or communication. It would be understandable if we could draw our attention to several films and television productions. These factors offer the possibility of expanding production and marketing strategies for multinationals and consumer culture.

3.3.1 Globalisation and Mass Media

- *Blending of cultures and increased global collaboration*

Globalisation is the process of increasing interconnectedness and interdependence among countries, economies, and cultures worldwide. It involves the exchange of goods, services, information, technology, and cultural practices across borders, leading to a more integrated global society. Globalisation impacts various aspects of life, including economics, politics, culture, and communication, often resulting in a blending of cultures and increased global collaboration but also raising concerns about cultural homogenisation and economic inequality. The story of globalisation and media convergence unfolds against the backdrop of an increasingly digital world. Media convergence, characterised by merging traditional and digital media platforms, offers opportunities and challenges. On one hand, it democratises content creation, allowing individuals to participate in the global media landscape. On the other hand, it amplifies the risk of information overload and erosion of journalistic integrity. As media theorist Noam Chomsky notes, the primary objective of these media giants

is to cultivate an audience addicted to consumerism, thereby fulfilling the goals of advertisers and media producers at the expense of genuine cultural diversity and critical discourse. In navigating this complex terrain, it is crucial to advocate for media plurality, ethical standards, and a commitment to preserving cultural identities amidst the relentless tide of globalisation.

- *Cultural globalisation*

In the age of globalisation, mass media has become a powerful force in shaping global culture, economy, and politics. The advent of advanced communication technologies, particularly the internet and satellite broadcasting, has transformed how media content is produced, distributed, and consumed, leading to a more interconnected and interdependent global media landscape. Globalisation has enabled mass media to reach audiences far beyond national borders. News, entertainment, and cultural products from one part of the world can be instantly accessed by people in another, creating a global flow of information and ideas. This has facilitated the spread of cultural values, social norms, and political ideologies on a global scale, contributing to the phenomenon of cultural globalisation. Media conglomerates, often based in Western countries, dominate global media networks, leading to the widespread influence of Western culture and values worldwide.

- *Cultural homogenisation and hybridisation*

While mass media in the age of globalisation promotes the exchange of diverse cultural content, it also contributes to cultural homogenisation, where dominant global media overshadow distinct local cultures. Hollywood films, global music hits, and popular TV shows often reflect Western lifestyles and values, influencing audiences worldwide and sometimes eroding local traditions and identities. On the other hand, globalisation has also fostered cultural hybridisation, where media content blends elements from different cultures, creating new and innovative cultural forms. This interplay between homogenisation and hybridisation reflects the complex dynamics of mass media in a globalised world.

The global media industry is driven by economic considerations, with media corporations seeking to maximise profits through international markets. This has led to the commercialisation of media content, where entertainment value often takes precedence over cultural or informational significance. Additionally, the global reach of mass media has significant political implications. Media can influence public

opinion, shape political discourse, and impact international relations. In the age of globalisation, media is often used as a tool for soft power, where countries promote their cultural and political agendas to gain influence on the global stage.

3.3.1.1 Challenges and Opportunities

The globalisation of mass media presents both challenges and opportunities. On the one hand, it raises concerns about media ownership concentration, cultural imperialism, and the marginalization of local voices. On the other hand, it offers opportunities for cross-cultural dialogue, the spread of democratic values, and the empowerment of individuals and communities through access to global information networks.A few global organisations dominate the global media business; the cultural images of a few countries are sold to a worldwide audience. This gives way to cultural imperialism, wherein the (technologically and economically) more advanced country influences the culture of the backward country through their various media products.

♦ *Cultural imperialism*

TV programmes, sitcoms, movies, music, news, and websites all sell Western culture to developing countries. They enter the market aiming for higher profits but culturally exploit these territories and adapt them to an alien culture. Even most reality shows on Indian television are borrowed from the West and adapted to Indian tastes, including Kaun Banega Crorepati, Indian Idol, Big Boss, etc. The production and diffusion of the media by powerful countries to the detriment of third-world countries has led to the concept of media imperialism.Mass media in the age of globalisation is a double-edged sword. It has the potential to unite people across the globe, fostering understanding and collaboration, but it also poses risks to cultural diversity and media independence. As globalisation continues to evolve, the role of mass media will remain central to shaping the global narrative and influencing the world's cultural, economic, and political landscape.

♦ *Mass media in the age of globalisation is a double-edged sword*

3.3.2 Media Imperialism

Media Imperialism refers to the domination or influence of powerful media institutions, typically from economically advanced nations, over less developed or culturally diverse regions. This phenomenon is often characterised by the imposition of Western-centric values, ideologies, and cultural norms through mass media channels such as television, film, radio, and the Internet. Historically, media imperialism

♦ *Domination of powerful media institutions*

has been intertwined with colonialism and imperialism, as European powers used media to spread their influence and control over colonies and territories worldwide. With the advent of globalisation and the rapid expansion of media conglomerates, the reach and impact of media imperialism have only intensified.

One of the fundamental mechanisms through which media imperialism operates is the unequal flow of information and cultural products. Western media conglomerates, backed by significant financial resources and technological capabilities, often dominate global media markets, limiting the visibility and representation of local cultures and perspectives. This can lead to cultural homogenisation and the erosion of indigenous traditions and identities. Moreover, media imperialism can have profound political and economic implications. Western media often portray their own countries and values in a positive light while marginalising or demonising other cultures and nations. This can shape public opinion and perpetuate stereotypes and misconceptions about non-Western societies, contributing to geopolitical tensions and conflicts.Critics of media imperialism argue that it undermines cultural diversity, perpetuates inequality, and reinforces existing power structures. They advocate for greater media plurality and the promotion of local content and voices to counteract the dominance of Western media. Media literacy education and community media projects are essential for empowering individuals and communities to engage with media representations and critically challenge hegemonic narratives.

♦ *Cultural homogenisation and erosion of indigenous traditions*

According to Noam Chomsky, "Their first interest is profits, but broader than that, it is to construct an audience of a particular type…one that is addicted to a certain lifestyle with artificial wants". The audience is treated as consumers, and the media products as commodities. Chomsky observes that their primary objective is to create a homogenous audience base that either boasts of a particular lifestyle or aspires to possess one and juggle between the unwanted things the capitalists offer. These media products influence the audience for a luxurious lifestyle that indirectly fulfils the advertisers' goals. The media house and the advertisers are in a win-win situation, but the audience gets caught in the web they create. With media globalisation, many media platforms are available; big conglomerates fight each other for their market share. The competition is stiff, but the content diversity has not widened much. Media houses

♦ *Audiences are treated as consumers*

work on profit-building; even the news now comes in a standard platform set by the advertisers, lowering journalism standards. Earlier, journalism aimed to create awareness, undertake social reforms, and build national integration, but now, public service journalism has been replaced by hard-core commercialisation. Advertisers influence the editorial and decide what the audience will consume; the undue thrust on commercial gains has also led to various unethical trends.

3.3.3 Media Convergence

♦ *Three C's*

Media convergence involves the interconnection of information and communications technologies, computer networks, and media content. It brings together the "three C's"—computing, communication, and content—and is a direct consequence of the digitisation of media content and the popularisation of the Internet. Media convergence transforms established industries, services, and work practices and enables entirely new forms of content to emerge. It erodes the long-established media industry and content "silos" (meaning separate divisions or compartments within the media industry). It increasingly uncouples content from particular devices, which presents significant challenges for public policy and regulation. A cell phone that takes pictures and videos is an example of the convergence of digital photography, digital video, and cellular telephone technologies. An extreme and currently non-existent example of technological convergence would be the so-called black box, which would combine all the functions of previously distinct technology and be the device through which we would receive all our news, information, entertainment, and social interaction. Media convergence is an umbrella term defined in technological, industrial, social, textual, and political terms.

Media theorist Henry Jenkins argues that convergence is nota result (as is the hypothetical black box) but a process that changes how media is consumed and produced. Jenkins breaks convergence down into five categories:

1. **Economic Convergence** occurs when a company controls several products or services within the same industry. For example, in the entertainment industry, a single company may have interests across many kinds of media. For example, Rupert Murdoch's News Corporation is involved in book publishing (HarperCollins), newspapers (*New York*

Post, *The Wall Street Journal*), sports (Colorado Rockies), broadcast television (Fox), cable television (FX, National Geographic Channel), film (20th Century Fox), Internet (MySpace), and many other media.

2. **Organic Convergence** happens when someone watches a television show online while exchanging text messages with a friend and listens to music in the background—the "natural" outcome of a diverse media world.

3. **Cultural Convergence** has several aspects. Stories flowing across several media platforms are one component—for example, novels that become television series, radio dramas that become comic strips, and even amusement park rides that become film franchises. The character Harry Potter exists in books, films, toys, and amusement park rides. Another aspect of cultural convergence is participatory culture—how media consumers can annotate, comment on, remix, and otherwise influence culture in unprecedented ways. The video-sharing website YouTube is a prime example of participatory culture. YouTube allows anyone with a video camera and an Internet connection to communicate with people worldwide and create and shape cultural trends.

4. **Global Convergence** is the process of geographically distant cultures influencing one another despite the distance physically separating them. Nigeria's cinema industry, nicknamed Nollywood, takes its cues from India's Bollywood, which Hollywood inspired in the United States. *Tom and Jerry's* cartoons are famous on Arab satellite television channels. Successful American horror movies *The Ring* and *The Grudge* are remakes of Japanese hits.

5. **Technological Convergence** is the merging of technologies, such as watching TV shows online on sites like Netflix or playing video games on mobile phones like the Apple iPhone. As Jenkins notes, when more and more different kinds of media are transformed into digital content, "we expand the potential relationships between them and enable them to flow across platforms (Jenkins, 2001)."

♦ *Merging different types of mass media*

Media Convergence refers to the merging of different types of mass media, such as Traditional Media, Print Media, Broadcast Media, New Media and the Internet, as well as portable and highly interactive technologies through digital media platforms. This results in the combination of 3Cs, i.e. Communication, Computing and Content, as all three are

integrated through technology. The most relevant example of media convergence is a Smartphone that blends various media, i.e. print media (e-books, news apps), broadcast media (streaming websites, radio, music apps), as well as new media (the internet) into a single device that performs various functions from calling and texting to photography, videography, gaming and so much more.

Examples of Media Convergence

•Smart phones (converging camera, music, the internet, books, and all other media together)

•Online Radio (converging radio with the Internet)

•E-books (converging paperbacks with the digital technology)

•News Websites and Apps

♦ *Media content*

For most of the 20th century, media content was delivered through particular platforms, such as books, newspapers, magazines, radio, television, cinema, and video games. These different media were subject to different levels of regulation based upon whether they were distributed in public or consumed in private, whether children could access the content, whether a particular medium may have more impact on its audience, and so on. In the 21st century, content and platforms have separated, and content is now accessible digitally across multiple devices. Moreover, as noted above, users are not just content consumers but increasingly its producers and distributors.

♦ *Media policy and regulation*

The environment in which media policy and regulation are undertaken has been radically shifting as users more easily control their own media environment, and younger users ("digital natives") are often most familiar with convergent media technologies. The nature of media companies has also changed. For example, Apple, Inc.'s computer company has become the world's largest music distributor. Google, Inc.'s search enginemakes news and TV content available to global audiences. Achieving long-established principles of media policy, such as ensuring diversity of ownership and content, regulating access based on community standards, and meeting local content requirements in an age of global media, is a significant challenge for policymakers in the age of media convergence.

3.3.3.1 Advantages of Media Convergence

Media convergence has proved beneficial in the digital era,

filled with content continuously seeking our attention. Here are the most essential advantages of media convergence:

1. The instant availability of news and moment-based content is one of the top advantages of media convergence between traditional and new media.
2. The content producers can specifically target the best audience or group they aim for by publishing customised content.
3. With media convergence, the audience has also become the creators themselves. From memes to social media posts, media convergence has been beneficial in integrating audiences on a global level.
4. Another essential benefit of media convergence is that it has broadened traditional media's limitations by blending it with new media, thus providing instant and latest content on an international level.
5. With the media convergence between traditional media and new media, the cost of digital marketing has also become economical, thus making this process beneficial and affordable.

- *Domination of powerful media institutions*

3.3.3.2 Disadvantages of Media Convergence

While the advantages of this form of convergence focus on content integration, faster access and international reach, the disadvantages highlight the impact of convergence on consumers and technology. Here are the significant disadvantages of media convergence:

1. Difficulty in assessing consumer responses and reactions scattered across diverse converged platforms.
2. More competition for consumer's time and attention with various media platforms on one device.
3. Audiences often feel overwhelmed with massive amounts of information overload.
4. The older generation and the disabled sections of the community find it hard to learn the digital skills to use different types of media.
5. Highly relied on technology and the internet; thus, the areas deprived of these two aspects can face issues with using online information.

6. Prone to cyber-attacks and malfunctioning.

While media convergence presents advantages and disadvantages, its impact on society cannot be overstated. The instant availability of information, the empowerment of audiences as content creators, and the broadening of traditional media's reach are undeniable benefits. However, challenges such as information overload, competition for attention, and digital literacy gaps must be addressed to ensure that the benefits of media convergence are equitably distributed. Moreover, policymakers must grapple with the complexities of regulating convergent media environments to safeguard diversity, accessibility, and ethical standards. As we navigate the ever-evolving landscape of media convergence, it is essential to foster critical engagement, promote media literacy, and advocate for policies that uphold the principles of democracy, cultural diversity, and ethical responsibility in media production and consumption. Only through combined efforts we can harness the transformative potential of media convergence for the betterment of society.

♦ *Ensure the benefits of media convergence*

3.3.4 The Emergence of Global Media

Globalisation led to the emergence of new media structures of ownership and control. According to Bagdikian and Curran, the key trends were the emergence of global conglomerations, Horizontal and Vertical integration and diversification, synergy and technological convergence. Two media ownership patterns became more visible globally – vertical and horizontal. In vertical ownership, a media house is already in the business in any media vertical ventures into other media verticals. Vertical ownership is also known as a chain ownership pattern, where there is a logical relationship to the media industry in some way or another. The vertical ownership pattern has many positives. Under one flagship, they have control of many media platforms, can reach out to a broader audience and be with their audience 24/7. In such an ownership pattern, since the audience base is high, the media house can also provide the advertisers with more outreach opportunities.

♦ *Vertical media ownership*

The second type of ownership pattern is horizontal ownership; here, any company with any profile owns one or many media vertical(s), also known as cross-media ownership. Let us try to understand with an example. If a company is in the power sector and runs a daily newspaper, too, where there is no relationship between the two industries, such a type of ownership pattern is called horizontal ownership. Here,

there is a lack of logical relation with the media industry. For instance, Aditya Birla Group is involved in many businesses such as retail, telecommunication, etc., and owns Hindustan Times. The same is true with Reliance, which, apart from businesses like petroleum, retail, telecommunication, etc., also owns Reliance Adlabs and CNN-News18. Such ownership has boosted the commercialisation of the media industry, too; these corporations govern the media houses as they govern their other business. However, media cannot be sold like other products and has specific social responsibilities. The same business model for media will generate profit but may not be suitable for media and ruin it in the long run. Today, there is hardly any big Indian company that does not own a media outlet. On the other hand, such an ownership pattern has increased the competition among the media houses tremendously, but the stiff competition has failed to improve the quality of content.

♦ *Horizontal media ownership*

Both types of media structures export and import content. In global media structure, a centre-peripheral pattern exists. The core position is occupied by those countries that are rich, self-reliant, large in population, and have the most developed media. The peripheral positions are occupied by those countries that are not rich, do not have so much developed media, and have less population. There are intermediary positions too in between. Core countries export great media content, whereas peripheral countries do not export, but their capacity to import is also limited since they have limited resources. According to McQuail, during the Cold War, from 1960, the USA dominated the global media structure (mainly Hollywood and news agencies). It was counterbalanced by the core country - the Soviet Union, China, and other communist countries. The third world provided a large set of peripheral countries with some variations. Post-Cold War, with the demise of the Soviet Union and the emergence of America as the only superpower, the global media structure changed tremendously. America still dominates the global media structure, but the Asian countries where most of the population lives are China and India. Japan and others like Mexico, Brazil, Indonesia, and Nigeria have become self-sufficient in media. They might not be big media exporters, but are big media producers.

♦ *Global media structure*

McQuail identifies three global media structures:

a) National: where foreign (not home-produced) content is distributed in a national television system. The home media

distribute all the content, and only some (news, film, TV shows) will be of foreign origin.

b) Bilateral: content originating in and intended for one country is received directly in a neighbouring country. For instance, the USA, Canada, Britain, Ireland, Netherlands, and Belgium, they generally have language and culture in common.

c) Multilateral: where content is produced or disseminated without a specific national audience in mind like MTV and CNN. Concerning the Indian sub-continent, bilateral can be Indian media exported Globalisation and Media by Pakistan, Bangladesh, Nepal, Sri Lanka and others, but nowadays, reverse bilateral is also visible wherein a small country like Pakistan exports its music and TV soaps. In the case of reverse bilateral, the media content produced by the tiny neighbour should be exemplary; only then it gets imported

♦ *Global media ownership*

Media globalisation leads to global media ownership; the audience gets ample media choice. However, fewer diverse viewpoints are likely to be found in the media. Cultural homogenisation and westernisation surges, technology allows free flow of communication, and similar media products are found everywhere, increasing similar media systems worldwide.

Denis Mcquail (2010) highlights the following reasons for media globalisation:

1. More powerful technologies for long-distance transmission
2. Commercialisation
3. Colonisation and imperialism past and present
4. Economic dependency
5. Geopolitical Imbalances
6. Advertising
7. Expansion of telecommunications

Media globalisation has some positive effects as well. Since global media has made it easier for people worldwide to connect, they can now generate their content on the internet, providing impetus to alternative media. With an innovative idea, anyone can become an entrepreneur, as global media provides immense opportunities for innovators, and there is

always something unexplored in technology. According to urban sociologist Manuel Castell, communication technology has a significant role in networked societies. Specialised doctors from other countries are now easily accessible, people can easily keep a check on the stock market, and online education has emerged as a boon for many students. Technological determinists can be divided into two groups, and both groups believe in the "power of technology to shape human life". The first group comprises scholars and writers who believe technology is a boon to humankind and has transformed the human race for good. However, the second group dreads the ill effects of technology and argues that humanity has turned into a slave of technology. Lyons suggests that multinational corporations are the primary vehicle of media globalisation, and these corporations control global mass-media contentand distribution. Media consolidation has led to the emergence of'media oligopoly' or the control of the marketplace by a few firms who eliminatetheir competitors through various processes and maintain their monopoly todominate the media industry.

♦ *Positive impact of media globalisation*

3.3.5 Media and Developing Countries

Developing countries face a range of challenges that significantly influence their socio-economic growth. These challenges often include high levels of poverty, limited access to education and healthcare, inadequate infrastructure, political instability, and gender inequality. The economic conditions in these countries are typically marked by a heavy reliance on agriculture and low levels of industrialisation, which can hinder efforts toward modernisation and development. The role of mass media in these settings is both vital and complex. It is a critical tool for education and awareness but often struggles with issues like censorship, lack of infrastructure, and limited reach, particularly in rural areas. Media in developing countries plays a critical role in promoting education, health awareness, and social cohesion. However, the media often faces challenges such as limited financial resources, governmental censorship, and a lack of professional training for journalists. Community media initiatives, including radio stations and grassroots journalism, have effectively reached marginalised populations and addressed local issues.

♦ *Socio economic challenges of developing countries*

India, as one of the world's largest and most diverse nations, presents a complex picture of rapid economic growth alongside deep-seated social challenges. As a nation on the

rise, India faces both opportunities and obstacles in its path to becoming a global power. Here are some key aspects of India's present condition:

1. **Economic Growth and Inequality:** India has experienced significant economic growth, but this has been accompanied by rising income inequality and persistent poverty.
2. **Social and Cultural Diversity:** India's vast social and cultural diversity presents both opportunities for enrichment and challenges in terms of social cohesion.
3. **Digital Divide:** A significant digital divide persists in India, particularly between urban and rural areas, affecting access to education and economic opportunities.
4. **Press Freedom and Censorship:** Concerns about press freedom and censorship have grown in India, raising questions about the future of independent journalism.
5. **Role in Global Media:** India is a significant producer of global media content, particularly in the film and entertainment industries, influencing perceptions worldwide.

3.3.5.1 The Role of Media in Developing Countries

In any democratic country, the media plays a vital role in creating, moulding and reflecting public opinion. Over the years, the media became so powerful that it soon acquired the "Fourth Estate" status, as the British politician Edmund Burke aptly described. It also became so indispensable for democratic functioning that Thomas Jefferson, who was also the third US president (1801-1809), said, "Were it left to me to decide whether we should have a government without newspapers or newspapers without a government, I should not hesitate for a moment to prefer the latter". For the same reason, our first Prime Minister, Jawaharlal Nehru, declared, "I would rather have a completely free press with all the danger involved in the wrong use of that freedom than a suppressed or regulated press".

♦ *Media as the fourth estate*

In fact, the media touches almost every aspect of our public life. Media plays a crucial role in enlightening and educating the people, media can aid public involvement by advocating for issues and transferring knowledge, skills, and technologies to the public, creating awareness about various rural development programmes and the propagation of

♦ *Media enlightens and educates people*

family planning could be spread by using the media. It made farmers aware of the new and improved methods of agriculture and protection of the crops. Media serves as a bridge between the government and the public, informing citizens about vital issues, fostering cultural awareness, and promoting democratic values.

Following are some of the important responsibilities of media:

1. ***Informing and Educating the Public***
   - Public Health Campaigns: Mass media is vital in disseminating public health information, especially during health crises such as pandemics or outbreaks like the COVID-19 Pandemic. By broadcasting health advisories, vaccination drives, and hygiene practices, the media helps control the spread of diseases and improve public health outcomes.
   - Educational Access: Mass media is an alternative educational resource in remote and underserved areas where formal education may be limited. Educational radio and television programs and digital learning platforms provide access to knowledge and skills, helping bridge the educational gap.

2. ***Promoting Social and Cultural Awareness***
   - Cultural Exchange: Mass media facilitates cultural exchange by showcasing the traditions, languages, and arts of different communities within a country and across borders. This exchange fosters mutual respect and understanding, contributing to social harmony and unity.
   - Preservation of Indigenous Cultures: By highlighting the traditions and practices of indigenous communities, mass media helps preserve cultural heritage and raise awareness about the importance of protecting these cultures from extinction.

3. ***Fostering Democratic Governance***
   - Encouraging Civic Participation: Mass media encourages civic participation by informing citizens about their rights and responsibilities. It provides a platform for public debates, voter education, and discussions on governance, thereby strengthening the democratic process.

- Promoting Accountability: Beyond just exposing corruption, the media promotes transparency by monitoring the implementation of government policies and reporting on their effectiveness, thus ensuring that public officials are held accountable for their actions.

4. *Empowering Marginalised Communities*

- Social Advocacy: The media serves as a powerful tool for social advocacy, amplifying the voices of marginalized groups and bringing their issues to the forefront of public discourse. This advocacy can lead to policy changes and improved access to resources and opportunities for these communities.

- Gender Equality: Mass media promotes gender equality by highlighting the achievements of women and advocating for their rights. Campaigns on issues like education for girls, women's health, and violence against women are crucial in advancing gender equity in developing countries.

5. *Catalysing Socio-Economic Development*

- Promoting Financial Literacy: The media contributes to financial literacy by providing information on savings, investments, and financial management. This knowledge empowers individuals, especially in rural areas, to make informed financial decisions and improve their economic well-being.

- Supporting Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs): The media inspires entrepreneurship and innovation by showcasing successful small and medium enterprises. It also provides SMEs a platform to advertise their products and services, helping them reach a broader market.

6. *Addressing Development Challenges*

Environmental Awareness: Mass media raises awareness about environmental issues such as Landslides, deforestation, pollution, and climate change. By educating the public on sustainable practices and the importance of conservation, the media contributes to environmental protection efforts.

- Disaster Preparedness and Response: During natural disasters, the media provides timely information on evacuation plans, relief efforts, and safety measures. This information is crucial in minimising disasters' impact and aiding recovery efforts.

- Advancing Social Innovation: The media highlights innovative solutions to development challenges, such as new agricultural techniques or renewable energy projects. By showcasing these innovations, the media encourages their adoption and scaling, contributing to sustainable development.

Hence, media plays a crucial role in developing countries by informing and educating the public.By providing a platform for marginalised voices and driving socio-economic growth, media helps to shape public opinion, addresses pressing challenges, and supports the overall development of nations. Its influence extends across various sectors, making it an indispensable tool in the journey toward progress and equity.To maximize its potential, it is essential to ensure media freedom, promote ethical journalism, and invest in media literacy. By doing so, mass media can effectively contribute to achieving development goals and building more informed, equitable, and resilient societies.

Summarised Overview

The chapter digs into the dynamic interplay between globalisation, media imperialism, media convergence, the emergence of global media networks, and the role of media in developing countries. It highlights the transformative impact of these forces on mass media, offering insights into the opportunities and challenges they present for cultural diversity, power dynamics, and ethical accountability. While globalisation has facilitated the expansion of media markets and the emergence of global media conglomerates, it has also heightened concerns about cultural hegemony and unequal representation. Media convergence, driven by technological advancements, further reshapes the media landscape, offering promise and peril. Mass media promotes socio-economic development, democratic governance, and cultural transformation in developing countries. By harnessing the power of mass media, developing countries can accelerate progress towards achieving sustainable development goals and building a better future for all. As we navigate the complexities of global media ecosystems, it is imperative to critically engage with these issues and advocate for media diversity, pluralism, and ethical stewardship to pursue a more inclusive and equitable media environment.

Self Assesment Questions

1. What is termed **as** interconnection of information and communications technologies, computer networks, and media content?
2. Give an example of media convergence.
3. Define media imperialism.
4. What is globalisation?
5. What are the five categories of media convergence according to Jenkins?
6. Discuss the advantages and disadvantages of media convergence.
7. Examine the emergence of global media.
8. Critically analyse the role of media in developing countries.

Assignments

1. Explain the concept of cultural imperialism and provide examples of how it manifests in today's media landscape.
2. Analyse the role of global media conglomerates in shaping cultural narratives and perceptions worldwide.
3. Critically evaluate the impact of media imperialism on cultural diversity and local traditions.
4. Discuss the impact of mass media on shaping public opinion and influencing political processes in developing countries.
5. Analyse the role of mass media in bridging the information gap between urban and rural areas in developing countries.

Reference

1. Dwyer, T. (2010). *Media Convergence*. UK:McGraw-Hill Education (UK).
2. Fejes, F. (1981). *Media Imperialism: An Assessment. Media, Culture & Society*, *3*(3), 281-289.
3. Flew, T. (2018). *Understanding Global Media*. Bloomsbury Publishing.
4. Fuchs, C. (2010). *New Imperialism: Information and Media Imperialism?. Global Media and Communication*, *6*(1), 33-60.

5. Latzer, M. (2013). *Media Convergence. In Handbook on The Digital Creative Economy* (pp. 123-133). Edward Elgar Publishing.
6. McChesney, R. W. (2001). *Global Media, Neoliberalism, and Imperialism. Monthly Review-New York*, *52*(10), 1-19.
7. Wirth, M. O. (2006). *Issues in Media Convergence. In Handbook of Media Management and Economics* (pp. 448-465). Routledge.
8. Bhatia, S. (2015). *"Digital Media and Society in India: Challenges and Opportunities."* Sage Publications.
9. Goonasekera, A. (1987). *The Influence of Television on Cultural Values – With Special Reference To Third World Countries*. Media Asia, 14(1), 7-12.
10. Nair, R. (2007). *"The Impact of Media on Rural Development in India."* Sage Publications.

Suggested Reading

1. Ritzer, G., & Yagatich, W. (2012). 'Contemporary Sociological Theory.' *The Wiley Blackwell Companion to Sociology*. Wiley-Blackwell, 98-118.
2. Turner, B. S. (Eds.). (2016). *The New Blackwell Companion to Social Theory*. John Wiley & Sons.
3. Turner, J. H., & Giddens, A. (Eds.). (1987). *Social Theory Today*. Stanford University Press.

Space for Learner Engagement for Objective Questions

Learners are encouraged to develop objective questions based on the content in the paragraph as a sign of their comprehension of the content. The Learners may reflect on the recap bullets and relate their understanding with the narrative in order to frame objective questions from the given text. The University expects that 1 - 2 questions are developed for each paragraph. The space given below can be used for listing the questions.

SGOU

Media and Indian Society

BLOCK-04

SGOU

UNIT 1

Media and Society

Learning Outcomes

After reading this unit, the learner will be able to:

- analyse the role of media in entertainment.
- assess the role of media in education and development
- discuss the ethical challenges faced by the media and entertainment industry
- examine how media shapes and reflects trends in entertainment, education, and development.

Background

Picture yourself sitting in a bustling Indian café, the aroma of freshly brewed coffee mingling with the tantalising scent of spicy street food. The air is alive with chatter, and people are engrossed in their smartphones, tablets, and conversations. A cricket match blares from a TV in the corner, drawing a crowd of eager fans. Bollywood music plays softly in the background, a soundtrack to the vibrant scene. This café, a microcosm of Indian society, encapsulates the essence of the Indian media, entertainment, and education landscape. In this lively setting, it's easy to see how deeply intertwined media is with daily life in India. From the latest news updates to cricket scores, from blockbuster movies to trending social media posts, the media serves as a constant companion, shaping opinions, providing entertainment, and connecting people from all walks of life. The Indian media and entertainment industry is not just a business; it's a cultural phenomenon that reflects and influences the nation's diverse and dynamic society.

But media and entertainment are not the only forces at play here. Education, too, is undergoing a profound transformation driven by the same digital revolution. The traditional chalk-and-talk classrooms are making way for intelligent classes and online learning platforms. Educational content is now available at the fingertips of millions, democratising access to knowledge and opening new avenues for learning.

Digital technology has revolutionised these industries, transforming how content is created, distributed, and consumed. Streaming platforms have brought Bollywood and regional cinema to global audiences, while social media has turned ordinary individuals into influential voices. Similarly, e-learning platforms have made high-quality education accessible to students in the country's remotest corners. News channels and online portals are constantly at work, shaping public discourse and informing citizens in real time. At the same time, educational apps and websites empower students and educators with innovative tools and resources. In this unit let's discuss in detail about media and society.

Keywords

E-Learning, Ethics, Ethical Challenges, Digital Revolution, Social progress, Culture

Discussion

♦ *The role of media*

The Indian media and entertainment (M&E) industry is one of the fastest-growing industries in the country. Its various segments—film, television, advertising, print media, and music- have grown tremendously in the last few years. The digital medium has taken its shape and is one of the fastest-growing segments. Media is considered a "mirror" of modern society; it is the media which shapes our lives.The purpose of the media is to inform people about current and new affairs and to talk about the latest gossip and fashion.It tells about the people who are geographically divided. The role of media has become one way of trading and marketing products and prejudices.

The media serves several crucial societal functions, including providing information, shaping public opinion, and offering entertainment. Its role can be categorised into various dimensions:

- Information Dissemination: One of the primary roles of media is to inform the public. This includes reporting on current events, providing educational content, and offering in-depth analyses of complex issues. The media also acts as a watchdog, holding those in power accountable and ensuring transparency.
- Public Opinion Shaping: The media has a profound influence on shaping public opinion. Media outlets can influence the public's perception of events and issues by selecting stories, framing issues, and emphasising

certain aspects. Agenda-setting theory suggests that media doesn't tell people what to think but what to think about.

- **Entertainment:** Beyond information, media provides entertainment, a significant aspect of daily life. Entertainment media includes television shows, films, music, sports, and digital content. This media function caters to the human need for relaxation, diversion, and emotional connection.
- **Cultural Transmission:** Media is a powerful tool for cultural transmission. It reflects, reinforces, and sometimes challenges societal norms and values. Media can promote cultural heritage through various forms of content, expose audiences to diverse cultures, and contribute to cultural evolution.
- **Social Integration:** Media plays a role in social integration by bringing people together around shared experiences, whether through live broadcasts of events, popular television shows, or social media interactions. It fosters a sense of community and shared identity.

4.1.1 Entertainment and Media

- *Relationship between entertainment and media*

Entertainment and media are intertwined, representing a significant part of contemporary culture and daily life. They encompass various activities and formats, from traditional forms like theatre and literature to modern digital platforms and interactive experiences. Let us analyse the various facets of entertainment within the media landscape, examining its forms, impacts, and future trends. Entertainment media is diverse, spanning numerous genres and formats, each offering unique experiences. These media forms amuse and influence cultural trends, social behaviours, and economic activities.

Here, we explore the significant categories of entertainment media, focusing on television and its evolving landscape.

1. **Television:** Television has long been a cornerstone of entertainment media, evolving significantly since its inception. It remains a dominant medium offering various content that caters to different tastes and preferences. Today's two primary forms of television are broadcast and cable TV and streaming services.

   a. **Broadcast and Cable TV:** This includes free over-the-air channels for anyone with an appropriate antenna.These networks offer a mix of programming, including news, sports, scripted dramas, comedies, and reality shows. They are sub-

ject to federal content and advertising regulations, which ensurestandardisation and accessibility.Unlike broadcast TV, cable television requires a subscription and delivers content through coaxial or fibre-optic cables. Cable TV often provides higher-quality programming and exclusive shows unavailable on broadcast networks. However, it also involves monthly fees depending on the package and service provider. Advertising revenues and subscription fees have traditionally supported broadcast and cable TV. They follow a fixed programming schedule, which means viewers must tune in at specific times to watch their favourite shows. Despite the rise of digital platforms, many people still need to rely on these traditional forms of TV for their daily entertainment and information.

♦ *Traditional forms of TV*

b. Streaming Services: Streaming services have revolutionized how people consume television content, offering unparalleled convenience and a vast library of on-demand programming. These platforms have rapidly gained popularity, challenging the dominance of traditional TV Platforms like Netflix, Hulu, Amazon Prime, and Disney+ provide on-demand access to various shows and movies, often including original content exclusive to these services.The success of streaming services is primarily due to their flexibility and user-centric approach. They allow binge-watching, which means users can watch entire seasons of a show at their own pace. This on-demand model caters to modern viewing habits, where convenience and instant access are highly valued. Streaming services often provide personalised recommendations based on viewing history, enhancing the user experience.

♦ *On-demand access to programmes*

2. Film: Film is one of the most influential forms of entertainment media. It encompasses various genres and styles, providing audiences with diverse storytelling experiences. The film distribution landscape has evolved significantly, particularly with the advent of digital technology and streaming platforms. Here, we delve into the two primary methods of film distribution: Theatrical Releases and Direct-to-Digital.

c. Theatrical Releases: Movies released in cinemas con-

tinue to be a significant form of entertainment, offering a communal viewing experience.Theatrical releases refer to movies that are premiered in cinemas. This traditional method of film distribution has been a cornerstone of the film industry for over a century and continues to play a significant role in how audiences consume movies.

3. **Direct-to-Digital:** Increasingly, films are being released directly to streaming platforms, sometimes bypassing theatres entirely, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic.Direct-to-digital refers to films released directly to streaming platforms, bypassing traditional theatrical distribution. This model has gained traction, particularly in recent years, due to the rise of digital technology and changing viewing habits.

4. **Music:**

a. **Recorded Music:** Available through streaming services like Spotify and Apple Music, recorded music remains highly accessible, allowing users to curate personal playlists.

b. **Live Performances:** Concerts and music festivals provide immersive live experiences, which virtual concerts have complemented during times of social distancing.

3. **Video Games:**

a. **Console and PC Games:** High-definition gaming experiences dominate this segment, often with complex narratives and advanced graphics.

b. **Mobile Games:** Accessible and often free-to-play games on smartphones have broadened the demographic reach of gaming.

c. **Esports:** Competitive gaming has become a significant entertainment sector, with professional tournaments and leagues.

4. **Theatre and Performing Arts:**

a. **Live Theatre:** Plays, musicals, and dance performances offer unique live entertainment experiences.

b. **Digital Performances:** Recorded and live-streamed

performances have made theatre and dance more accessible to global audiences.

3. **Literature:**

a. **Printed Books:** Traditional books remain popular and supported by digital formats like e-books and audio-books.

b. **Literary Adaptations:** Books adapted into films and series continue to bring literary stories to wider audiences.

3. **Social Media and User-Generated Content:**

a. **Platforms:** YouTube, TikTok, and Instagram allow users to create and share content, from short videos to live streams, democratising media production.

b. **Influencers and Creators:** Individuals who gain large followings can significantly impact entertainment trends and consumer behaviour.

3. **Podcasts and Radio:**

a. **Audio Content:** Podcasts cover an extensive range of topics and formats, offering on-demand listening.

b. **Traditional Radio**: Despite the rise of digital formats, traditional radio remains a significant medium, especially for music and talk shows.

4.1.1.2 Impact of Entertainment Media

Entertainment media's impact is profound, influencing various aspects of personal and societal life.

Cultural Influence: Entertainment media serves as a mirror and a mould for culture, reflecting existing norms and values while simultaneously shaping and transmitting them to audiences. Media and culture interactdynamically and multifacetedly, influencing individual behaviours and societal trends.

- *Reflect cultural values and identities*

a. **Cultural Reflection**: Media content often reflects the cultural norms, values, and identities of the society in which it is produced. Television shows, films, music, and other entertainment media depict everyday life, social issues, and prevailing attitudes. This reflection can reinforce existing cultural narratives, providing audi-

ences with familiarity and validation. For instance, sitcoms and dramas portray family dynamics, friendships, and professional relationships that resonate with viewers' experiences, affirming their cultural identity.

b. **Shaping Cultural Norms**: Beyond reflecting culture, entertainment media actively shapes cultural norms and values. Through repetitive and widespread exposure, certain behaviours and attitudes portrayed in media can become normalised. For example, depicting gender roles, fashion trends, and lifestyle choices in movies and TV shows often sets standards that audiences aspire to or challenge. Media can also introduce new ideas and concepts, gradually influencing public opinion and social norms. The portrayal of LGBTQ+ characters and stories in mainstream media has played a significant role in increasing acceptance and understanding of diverse sexual orientations and gender identities.

♦ *Shapes cultural values*

c. **Cultural Transmission:** Media is a conduit for transmitting cultural heritage and traditions across generations. Historical dramas, documentaries, and biographical films educate audiences about significant events, figures, and cultural practices. These narratives help preserve cultural memory and promote a shared understanding of the past.

♦ *Transmitting cultural heritage*

d. **Promoting Social Change:** Entertainment media can challenge societal norms and inspire social change. By highlighting social issues and injustices, the media can raise awareness and mobilise audiences to take action. Movies, TV shows, and music that address topics such as racism, sexism, environmental conservation, and mental health can spark meaningful conversations and drive movements for change.

♦ *Raise awareness*

e. **Cross-Cultural Exchange:** The global media content distribution facilitates cross-cultural exchange by exposing audiences to diverse perspectives and traditions. In the age of digital media, content from different parts of the world is easily accessible, allowing viewers to ex-

♦ *Exposure to international media content*

plore cultures beyond their own. Streaming platforms like Netflix, Amazon Prime, and Disney+ offer a wide range of international films and TV shows, providing a window into other societies' lifestyles, customs, and values. Exposure to international media content fosters cultural appreciation and understanding. Media content highlighting global issues can inspire collective action and solidarity across cultures.

Psychological and Emotional Impact: Entertainment media vehemently affects our psychological and emotional well-being. Media consumption can have beneficial and detrimental effects by engaging our emotions and shaping our mental health.

a. **Emotional Engagement**: Entertainment media has a unique ability to engage viewers emotionally. Through compelling stories and relatable characters, media can evoke a wide range of emotions, from joy and excitement to sadness and fear.

b. **Mental Health**: While media can offer relaxation and escapism, excessive consumption, particularly of social media, can contribute to anxiety, depression, and other mental health issues.One of the positive aspects of media consumption is its ability to provide relaxation and escapism. Engaging with entertaining content allows individuals to unwind and momentarily escape the pressures of daily life. However, excessive consumption of entertainment media, particularly social media, can have detrimental effects on mental health. Prolonged exposure to screens and constant engagement with digital content can contribute to issues such as anxiety, depression, and sleep disturbances.

Social Connectivity: Entertainment media enhances social connectivity by creating shared experiences and fostering online communities. These aspects of media consumption help build social bonds and cultivate a sense of belonging among individuals, even when physically distant.

a. **Shared Experiences:** Popular media content creates

shared experiences and conversations, fostering social bonds and community.

b. **Online Communities**: Entertainment media also facilitates the formation of online communities, where fans and interest groups engage in discussions, create fan fiction, and participate in collaborative projects.

Economic Impact: The entertainment media industry significantly contributes to the global economy, impacting various sectors through job creation and revenue generation. The intricate web of production, distribution, marketing, and ancillary services provides numerous employment opportunities while monetising media content drives substantial revenue streams.

a. **Job Creation:** The entertainment industry is a vast and multifaceted sector that employs millions worldwide. The diversity of roles within this industry ensures that a wide range of skills and professions are involved, contributing to economic growth and stability.

b. **Revenue Generation:** The entertainment industry is a primary driver of economic activity, generating significant revenue through various channels. Media content monetisation involves multiple streams, each contributing to the industry's financial impact.

Educational Value: Entertainment media plays a crucial role in education by providing valuable content that complements formal learning and enhances skill development. Through informal learning opportunities and interactive experiences, media can engage audiences in ways that traditional educational methods may not.

a. **Informal Learning:** Informal learning through entertainment media refers to acquiring knowledge and insights outside the traditional classroom setting. This type of learning is often self-directed and can occur in various environments, offering flexibility and accessibility. Documentaries, educational shows, and informative podcasts offer educational content outside formal learning environments.

b. **Skill Development:** Interactive media, such as educational video games and apps, offer dynamic ways to develop various skills. These platforms engage users in activities that require problem-solving, critical thinking, and creativity, enhancing cognitive and practical abilities.

Behavioural Influence: Entertainment media wields significant power in shaping societal behaviour and individual actions. Media influences audience preferences and everyday choices by portraying lifestyles, fashion, and behaviours. Additionally, media can reinforce or challenge societal norms and values, which are crucial in maintaining the status quo or driving social change.

a. **Lifestyle and Fashion Trends**:Media portrayals of lifestyles and fashion have a significant impact on audience preferences and behaviours, shaping how people dress, behave, and make lifestyle choices.

b. **Social Norms and Values:** Media not only reflects societal norms and values but also has the power to challenge and transform them, contributing to social change. Media can challenge societal norms, fostering social change by presenting alternative viewpoints and narratives. Documentaries, news programs, and socially conscious films often highlight racial inequality, gender discrimination, and environmental concerns, raising awareness and prompting public discourse.

4.1.1.2 Ethical Considerations in Media and Entertainment

♦ *Principles and standards of conduct*

Media ethics refers to the principles and standards of conduct that guide the behaviour and decision-making of professionals in the media industry, including journalists, broadcasters, filmmakers, advertisers, and digital content creators. It encompasses a wide range of issues related to the production, dissemination, and consumption of media content, ensuring that the media operates in a manner that is responsible, fair, and respectful of the public interest.

4.1.1.2.1 Critical aspects of media ethics.

The following are the critical aspects of media either:

♦ **Accuracy and Truthfulness:** Media professionals are expected to provide accurate and truthful in-

formation, avoiding the spread of misinformation or falsehoods. This includes rigorous fact-checking, source verification, and correcting errors when they occur.

- **Objectivity and Impartiality:** Ethical media practices involve maintaining objectivity and avoiding bias. Media professionals should present information fairly without favouritism, providing a balanced view of events and issues.
- **Accountability and Transparency:** Media organizations and professionals should be accountable for their work. This includes being transparent about their processes, sources, and potential conflicts of interest being open to criticism and willing to correct mistakes.
- **Respect for Privacy:** Media ethics involves respecting the privacy of individuals, especially in sensitive situations. This means avoiding unnecessary intrusion into people's personal lives and being cautious when reporting on private matters.
- **Representation and Diversity:** Ethical media practices require fair and accurate representation of all groups in society. This involves avoiding stereotypes, ensuring diversity in voices and perspectives, and giving marginalised groups a platform.
- **Harm Minimisation:** Media professionals should consider the potential harm their work may cause individuals or society. This includes being mindful of the impact of graphic content, the potential for inciting violence, or the perpetuation of harmful stereotypes.
- **Respect for Intellectual Property:** Media ethics also includes respecting intellectual property rights, ensuring that content creators are credited and compensated for their work, and avoiding plagiarism and unauthorized use of content.
- **Ethical Advertising:** Media advertising practices should be truthful, non-deceptive, and clearly distinguishable from editorial content. Advertisers should not manipulate or exploit vulnerable audiences.
- **Public Interest:** Media professionals are often guided by the principle of serving the public interest. This means providing critical informationto the public, even when it is uncomfortable or challenging for those in power.

- **Freedom of Expression vs. Responsibility:** While freedom of expression is a fundamental right, it comes with the responsibility to use that freedom ethically. Media professionals must balance the right to free speech with the potential consequences of their content.

Media ethics serves as a framework for responsible media practice, ensuring that the media contributes positively to society while respecting the rights and dignity of individuals. It helps maintain public trust in the media and supports the role of the media as a key pillar of democracy and social discourse.With significant influence comes great responsibility. The media and entertainment industries face numerous ethical challenges including:

a. **Representation and Diversity:** Media represents diverse voices and perspectives. Historically, marginalised groups have been underrepresented or misrepresented in the media. Efforts to improve diversity and inclusion are ongoing, but challenges remain.

b. **Privacy Concerns:** The digital age has raised significant privacy issues. Media companies' collection and use of personal data for targeted advertising and content personalisation have led to concerns about user privacy and data security.

c. **Misinformation and Fake** News: The spread of misinformation and fake news is a primary ethical concern. Media companies and platforms must balance the need for freedom of expression with the responsibility to prevent spreading false information.

d. **Intellectual Property Rights:** The rise of digital media has complicated intellectual property rights issues. Piracy and unauthorised distribution of content pose challenges to creators and the industry.

e. **Commercialization and Advertising:** Media commercialisation can lead to conflicts of interest. Advertising revenue is a primary source of income for many media outlets, but it can influence editorial decisions and content.

f. **Content Sensitivity and Harmful Stereotypes:** Media content can perpetuate harmful stereotypes and promote negative portrayals of certain groups. Ethical media production involves being mindful of the impact of content on public perception and striving to avoid reinforcing prejudiced views.

g. **Exploitation of Vulnerable Populations**: The media industry often exploits vulnerable populations, such as children and marginalized communities, for profit or sensationalism. Ethical considerations involve ensuring these groups' protection and fair representation, avoiding exploitation and ensuring informed consent.

h. **Accuracy and Fact-Checking:** Information accuracy is crucial in media. Ethical media practices include rigorous fact-checking to prevent the spread of false or misleading information that could influence public opinion and behaviour.

i. **Conflict of Interest:** Media outlets and entertainment companies can face conflicts of interest, especially when reporting on issues related to their business interests or sponsors. Media organizations need to disclose any potential conflicts and maintain journalistic integrity.

j. **Ethical Advertising Practices:** The ethical implications of advertising extend beyond content to include transparency about sponsored content, disclosures, and avoiding deceptive practices that may mislead consumers.

k. **Impact of Media on Mental Health:** The portrayal of unrealistic standards of beauty, success, and lifestyle in media can have adverse effects on mental health. Ethical media practices involve awareness of these impacts and promoting positive, realistic representations.

l. **Data Ownership and Control:** There are ethical concerns about data ownership and control with the increasing collection of user data. Users should have explicit

and informed choices about how their data is used, and media companies should handle data responsibly and transparently.

Media and entertainment reflect societal values and norms and have the power to shape them. As technological advancements and globalisation transform the media landscape, the industry must navigate ethical challenges and adapt to changing audience expectations.The future of media and entertainment lies in its ability to innovate while maintaining a commitment to diversity, inclusion, and ethical practices. By fostering a media environment that is both reflective and forward-thinking, society can harness the power of media to inform, entertain, and connect people across the globe.

♦ *Adapt to changing audience expectations*

4.1.2 Media and Education

The influence of media in education is substantial. John Dewey stated that education should not be limited to the teacher and should be taught without a social environment. So,the media is one of the potent forces in the educational and social environment. Through modern electronic techniques and gadgets, media prove that education is comprehensive and not confined to the four walls of the classroom. The impact of media on education can be categorised into two parts: learning from media and learning with media. Learning from media refers to using electronic resources in learning, and learning with media refers to the role of media in assisting the learning process. Media offers a significant number ofnew possibilities. Most teachers and professors highly appreciate the power of these tools, which lies in the ability to engage, motivate, and involve the students in deep contemplation and sensible discussion. Media brings people together to discover and share information, interests, and ideas.Mass media are the educational medium for the mass and mass education. Irrespective of caste, colour, geographical, sociological, or economic diversities, mass media proves to be an essential means of education for all. It is estimated that mass media may substitute foractual classroom teaching in future.

♦ *Learning from media vs Learning with media*

4.1.2.1 Educational Functions of Media

Media plays a pivotal role in modern society, performing numerous essential functions influencing various aspects of our lives. Beyond entertainment, mass media serves as a powerful tool for disseminating information, providing vocational guidance, and delivering educational content. It acts as a non-formal educational agency, often supplementing and sometimes even substituting

traditional classroom teaching. Mass media also plays a critical role in promoting equality by providing access to information and education regardless of social or cultural differences. Additionally, media can motivate and engage children, enhancing their learning experiences through visually and audibly stimulating content.

Important educational functions include

1. **Providing Information:** Media help's to disseminate information to the masses. Media is a reservoir of knowledge that can be attained with a single click.
2. **Providing vocational information:** Media help in providing vocational and professional information to a larger community.
3. **Educational programmes:** Mass media provides various educational programs through television channels, YouTube, and other platforms, such as Victors Channel,or Animal Planet etc.
4. **Role as a non-formal agency:**They are called non-formal agencies due to theirsystematic, comprehensive coverage of educational items. It is viewed that these media can substitute classroom teaching in future.
5. **Wipe out various disparities:** Media disregards various discriminations and provides education to all irrespective of caste, colour, creed, etc.
6. **Motivates Children:** Media provides a novel experience to the children. It is a visual as well as auditory treat for the children. It enhances learning.

4.1.2.2 Positive Impact of Media on Education

1. **Connecting people**: Media enables us to connect with people world wide. Thus, we can access all the needed information from anyone worldwide at our convenience.For example, Online lectures,Online discussions, blogs, etc, make it possible to contact people from various regions.

2. **Immediate solution:**We can quickly solve the problems with increased accuracy with proper media. Media could be used to clarify doubts and solve problems more reliably. For example, Google Chrome is a great reservoir of knowledge; answers to everything under and beyond the sky are available with a click.

3. **Increase technical literacy:**Media use in education promotes technical literacy. Because our present world is a technological era and all things in daily life are done electronically, an individual must have a minimum knowledge of how to use various media. Knowledge of machines thus has become the need of the hour.

4. **Attention seeking:** If a teacher teaches with appropriate media, the teacher can catch students' attention. Utilising media provides variety in learning. As it combines visual and auditory aids, learning becomes more effective and retained.

5. **Act as a non-formal agency:**In modern society, media is not treated as an informal education agency. They are called non-formal agencies because of theircomprehensive coverage of education in an appropriate way. It provides flexibility in time, space, etc. Anybody, by being anywhere, can access knowledge even from a corner of the world.

6. **Variety of information:** Media will provide various information for proper and convenient learning. As the amount of information available in the media is enormous and ensures variety, it allows the learners to select the most appropriate piece of information necessary for them.

7. **Promote creative activity:** Learning information through media will enhance students' creative activity. In addition to books, media provides a platform to enhance the creativity and imagination of individuals. Online platforms like YouTube, Amazon Prime, and Netflix offer users various visual experiences that could

enhance the learners' creative thinking. Also, through blogs, learners could express their creativity.

4.1.2.3 Negative Impact of Media on Education

♦ *Disadvantagesof media on education*

The proliferation of media in contemporary society has brought about significant changes in education. While media offers valuable educational resources, it poses several challenges that negatively impact students' academic performance, cognitive development, and social skills. Excessive use of smart phones and social media can distract from study time, leading to lower academic achievement. Exposure to inappropriate content can distort understanding and propagate misconceptions. The addictive nature of media often results in excessive screen time, causing health issues like sleep deprivation and eye strain. Moreover, the reliance on digital communication can hinder the development of essential interpersonal skills.

The negative impacts of media can be summarised as:

1. **Addiction:** The continuous use of Mediacreates addiction among the users. Addiction may lead to physiological as well as psychological imbalances in the individuals. Low powers of vision, depression, anxiety, etc., are consequences of addiction to media.
2. **Time Consuming:** Time is precious. If we cannot use time properly, we can't recover the time at any cost. So, a proper schedule is needed to use media; otherwise, it will waste our valuable time. Children are tricking their parents as if they are learning while playing games or scrolling on social media.
3. **Over-dependence:** The use of media in educationwill lead to dependency on mediaall the time in learning information. So, automatically, we need to remember basic or traditional learning. Overdependence only gives out a lazy generation.
4. **Increase spending habits:** Media use will lead to unlimited money spending for our satisfaction. So many attractive ads are available in media, so careful media use is needed to control spending habits.
5. **Leads to misuse:** Inappropriate media use will lead

to media misuse. Watching porn sites, overuse of social media, gaming etc., are more recognisable among teenagers as well as among the youth today.Nothing is good or bad in itself. It is the users who make it better or worse. This statement applies to the use of media in education as well. Media provides enormous opportunities for its consumers to gain knowledge. However, the learners should be appropriately guided to consume it better. The appropriate and systematic use of media in education enhances learning.

6. **Digital Divide:** The growing reliance on media in education highlights the issue of the digital divide, where access to and use of technology are not equally distributed among all students. This divide can exacerbate educational inequalities, as students without adequate access to digital resources may struggle to keep up with their peers. The lack of access to technology and the internet can hinder their ability to benefit from media-based learning opportunities, further entrenching disparities in educational outcomes.

♦ *Promoting social, economic, and cultural progress*

When we consider the negative impacts of media on education, improper usage may take the learners to undesired paths. Media could make them addicted. Overuse and over-dependence on media leave the learners lazy. So, proper guidance should be provided to the learners on how to use media conveniently. Certain awareness classes should be provided so that they can utilise electronic resources efficiently and effectively. Parents should assist the learners while they learn with the assistance of media and technology. Thus, through proper guidance, media can be utilised to the fullest.

♦ *Importance of proper guidance*

4.1.3 Media and Development

Media plays a crucial role in development by promoting social, economic, and cultural progress within societies. The role of media in development is multifaceted and significant. Media, in its various forms such as print, broadcast, digital, and social media, plays a crucial role in shaping and influencing the development process of societies and individuals. Development is a complex and multifaceted concept that encompasses various aspects of human progress and well-being. It refers to the process

of positive change and improvement in the economic, social, political, cultural, and environmental conditions of individuals, communities, and societies. Development involves advancements in various dimensions of human life and aims to enhance the overall quality of life for people. Development is not purely an economic phenomenon but rather a multi-dimensional process involving recognition and reorientation of the entire economic and social system.

Following are some of the important roles played by media in development:

a. **Information Dissemination:** Media serves as a primary source of information. It provides news, updates, and educational content that can raise awareness about critical issues, such as health, education, economics, and politics. Access to information is essential for informed decision-making at both the individual and societal levels.

b. **Awareness Raising:** Media can raise awareness of social and economic problems, mobilizing public support for development initiatives. It also helps in creating positive behaviour change

c. Advocacy and Empowerment: Media can amplify the voices of marginalized communities, advocating for their rights and empowering them to participate in development processes.

d. **Economic Development:** Media, especially the advertising industry, contributes significantly to economic development by promoting products and services, attracting investments, and creating job opportunities within the media sector itself.

e. **Education and Capacity Building:** Media can provide educational content, improving literacy and knowledge levels, which are essential for development.

f. **Cultural Preservation and Promotion:** Media can help preserve and promote cultural heritage and diversity. It can showcase art, music, literature, and traditions, contributing to a sense of identity and belonging within

communities.

g. **Innovation and Technological Development:** Media and technology are closely intertwined. The media industry often drives technological innovation, and advancements in technology, such as the internet and social media, have transformed the way information is disseminated and accessed, further facilitating the development

h. **Community Engagement:** Media can create platforms for dialogue and discussion, fostering community engagement and participation in development activities.

Media plays a pivotal role in development by shaping public opinion, influencing policy decisions, and fostering social change. Through news coverage, documentaries, and investigative journalism, the media can highlight critical issues such as poverty, education, and healthcare, bringing them to the forefront of public discourse. This visibility often leads to increased awareness and advocacy, prompting governments and organizations to take action.

Summarised Overview

Media integration with entertainment and education has significantly transformed with the rise of digital technologies, reshaping our information consumption and learning methods. Traditionally viewed as sources of leisure and cultural expression, media and entertainment have evolved into powerful educational tools and agents of societal development. The digital revolution, marked by the proliferation of the internet and smart devices, has democratised access to information, eliminating geographical and socioeconomic barriers and giving rise to e-learning platforms that enable learners from diverse backgrounds to access quality education and skill development resources.

The influence of media extends beyond mere entertainment; it plays a crucial role in shaping cultural narratives and educational experiences. Bollywood, as a prominent example, not only entertains but also educates and addresses social issues, promoting cultural values. Similarly, Hollywood and other international media platforms contribute to global cultural exchange, influencing perceptions and fostering a shared global culture. Social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram have revolutionised communication and information sharing, becoming integral to knowledge dissemination and public discourse. However, the digital age also introduces challenges such as the digital divide, where unequal access to technology exacerbates existing inequalities, along with

ethical issues like privacy concerns, misinformation, and digital addiction.

In the realm of education, media and entertainment technologies have introduced innovative methodologies that enhance learning. Interactive content, virtual classrooms, and educational videos make learning more engaging and accessible. E-learning platforms like Coursera and Khan Academy provide opportunities to pursue education at one's own pace and convenience, particularly benefiting areas with limited traditional educational resources. Furthermore, integrating entertainment elements into educational content, known as edutainment, has proven effective in capturing students' attention and fostering deeper understanding.By exploring these intersections, we understand how media and entertainment not only reflect but also shape societal values and educational practices, highlighting the importance of ethical considerations and the need to address challenges in an evolving media landscape.

Self Assessment Questions

1. Give an example of an E- learning platform.
2. Which are the two primary methods of film distribution?
3. What is media ethics?
4. What is podcast?
5. Explain different categories of entertainment media.
6. Discuss the relationship between media and entertainment.
7. Evaluate the role of media in education.
8. Discuss how media aids in development.

Assignments

1. Analyse the role of media in shaping consumer culture and consumption patterns in India. Consider the impact of advertising, product placement, and celebrity endorsements on consumer choices.
2. Evaluate the benefits and challenges of e-learning platforms. How do these platforms democratise access to education ?
3. Compare and contrast traditional classroom learning with digital learning environments. What are the strengths and weaknesses of each approach?
4. Analyse the role of media in the development of society and discuss the impact of media on public awareness, policy-making, and social change, providing examples from recent initiatives or campaigns in India or globally.

References

1. Curran, J. P., & Gurevitch, M. (2005). *Mass Media and Society*. 4th edition. London: Hodder Education.
2. Dixit, A. K. (2006). *Press Laws and Media Ethics*. Reference Press.
3. Ferguson &Robert *The Mass Media and The Education of Students In A Democracy.* The Social Studies, pp.257-261.
4. Raju, R. (2019). *Role of Media in Educatio*n. Think India Journal, 22(10), 9499-9506.

Suggested Readings

1. Buckingham, D. (2013). *Media Education: Literacy, Learning and Contemporary Culture*. Polity Press.
2. Collins, A., & Halverson, R. (2009). *Rethinking Education in the age of Technology: The Digital Revolution and Schooling in America*. Teachers College Press.
3. Jenkins, H. (2008). *Convergence Culture: Where Old and New Media Collide*. NYU Press.

Space for Learner Engagement for Objective Questions

Learners are encouraged to develop objective questions based on the content in the paragraph as a sign of their comprehension of the content. The Learners may reflect on the recap bullets and relate their understanding with the narrative in order to frame objective questions from the given text. The University expects that 1 - 2 questions are developed for each paragraph. The space given below can be used for listing the questions.

SGOU

UNIT 2

Media and Social Transformation

Learning Outcomes

After reading this unit, the learner will be able to:

- identify the impact of media on women's portrayal and societal norms.
- understand the concept of objectification of women in media.
- comprehened the multifaceted impact of media on youth.
- evaluate the positive and negative effects of media on children.
- assess the role of media in rural and urban development.

Background

For centuries, the media has been a silent witness to the ebb and flow of society, chronicling its triumphs and tribulations with the stroke of a pen or the click of a camera. From the humble beginnings of the printing press to the digital revolution of the 21st century, the media has evolved into a formidable force. This bridge connects individuals, communities, and nations. But beyond its surface allure lies a more interesting tale—a narrative of power, responsibility, and impact. Within the pages of newspapers, the pixels of screens, and the airwaves of radio lies the power to shape perceptions, influence opinions, and ignite change. Within this intricate web of communication, the fourth pillar of society resides—which bears the weight of truth, accountability, and transparency.

In this unit, we are discussing the role of media, exploring its multifaceted impact on society, with a keen focus on its influence on women, youth, and children. From the soaring heights of empowerment to the shadowy depths of exploitation, we delve into the complexities of media portrayal, dissecting its nuances and unravelling its implications.

Keywords

Gender, Media representation, Objectification, Cyber bullying, Digital addiction, Media literacy

Discussion

Media is the fourth pillar in society, and it regularly gives news and information to the people. It is a technical tool comprising print, electronic, and other versions. Media is also a communication channel. People in society get connected through communication, and they regularly get information about the happenings of society through media. It is the responsibility of the press/media to report authentically and objectively. Any misreporting may lead to undesirable problems in society. Social media plays a significant role in the 21st century. Social media comes first when we consider how people spend their leisure time. A considerable percentage of the population accessess social media through devices like smartphones. They always carry smartphones wherever they go. Social media includes social networks, blogs, blogging, gaming, video and picture-sharing, iPods, iPhones, iPods, YouTube, Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, video editing or sharing apps, LinkedIn, etc. It has become widespread and has become part of everyone's life in the 21st century.

3.2.1 Media and Women

The media can play a significant role in either perpetuating or challenging social norms and behaviours that condone violence against women. There have been several studies of the media concerning how they present women. These studies have found the media guilty of sexism, distortion of the image of women and propagation of sex stereotypes. Usually, women are shown as playing a secondary and passive role in various programmes, episodes and films.They are depicted as mothers, housewives, sisters, sisters-in-law, etc., always serving and caring for the other family or community members.The reality reconstructed by the media does not match the one women encounter daily. There is a significant difference between the reality of day-to-day life and the so-called reality recreated by the media. In media, most realities have happy endings and desired reconciliations, which unfortunately do not occur often enough.

♦ *Propagation of stereotypes*

3.2.1.1 Impact of Media on Women

1.**Enhanced Visibility and Representation:** The increased presence of strong, independent female characters in television, cinema, and digital media has contributed to a more diverse portrayal of women. This representation portrays women as professionals, leaders, and independent individuals, moving beyond traditional domestic roles.

2.**Role Models and Inspiration**: The media has introduced numerous role models for women and girls. Characters in various media formats exemplify strength, independence, and resilience. These portrayals inspire women and young girls to aspire to more significant achievements by showcasing diverse career paths, personal growth, and leadership abilities.

3.**Democratisation of Content Creation:** Social media platforms like Instagram, YouTube, and Twitter have democratised content creation and consumption, allowing women from various backgrounds to share their stories and perspectives. Digital campaigns like #MeToo and #SheSays have highlighted issues of sexual harassment and gender inequality, empowering women to voice their experiences and advocate for change.

4. **Education and Awareness:** Documentaries, news programs, and talk shows have raised awareness about women's rights and gender equality. Educational content and public service announcements have played a crucial role in shifting societal attitudes, addressing issues such as domestic violence, female education, and health, fostering greater awareness and prompting societal change.

5.**Cultural Shifts and Norms**: Media portrayals of women breaking traditional roles and engaging in non-conventional careers have begun to shift cultural norms. This change encourages more families to support female education and career aspirations, increasing gender equality.

6.**Advocacy and Mobilization:** Media has facilitated the mobilisation of support for women's rights and gender equality movements. Campaigns and initiatives that start on social media often gain traction and influence public policy and societal attitudes, contributing to tangible changes in women's lives.

7.**Economic Empowerment:** Positive media portrayals of successful women in business and entrepreneurship inspire economic empowerment. Stories of female entrepreneurs and professionals serve as examples that motivate other women to pursue economic independence

3.2.1.2 Portrayal of Women in Indian Media

♦ *Ideal women*

Television shows often portrays the 'ideal woman' as caring, concerned, maternal, and supportive, someone who helps her husband achieve his goals while lacking much personal ambition of her own. She is sacrificing, unquestioning, submissive, pretty, charming and devoted to her husband. If we look at the ideal male figure, the man of the house is always diligent, loyal, courageous, wise, dignified, professional in work, and devoted to duty. He cared for elders, challenged authority when necessary, defendedhis family's honour, and fought for a just cause, say, the freedom of one's country, etc.

♦ *Beauty standards*

Commercials often depict women using products such as soap and shampoo to enhance their appeal so as to be rewarded with male approval. The maleconcept of an ideal woman as one who is young, fair, slim and beautiful is propagated through commercials. There is a possibility that these idealised norms make a woman with ordinary looks feel insecure and inferior. A market for these products is cultivated by encashing the anxieties and insecurities of young women. As viewers of such advertisements, we are constantly trained to identify with the"male gaze" and internalize the male view of women. Various techniques like camera - angles, special lighting, composition, framing and music are used to produce theeffect of a coherent and complete world where the "real woman" is created for us.

3.2.1.3 Current Situation of Women's Portrayal in Indian Media

♦ *Indian media and women's representation*

1. **Diverse and Empowered Roles**: In recent years, Indian media has increasingly showcased women in roles that reflect their growing participation in various sectors of society. Women are portrayed as professionals, leaders, and independent individuals in television shows, films, and advertisements. This shift reflects the broader societal changes where women take on more active and diverse roles in the workforce, politics, and other public spheres. The rise of female-centric narratives in cinema, where women are shown as the central characters driving the plot, is also a positive trend.
2. **Social Awareness Campaigns:** Indian media has also played a role in raising awareness about gender issues,

such as domestic violence, gender equality, and women's rights. Campaigns and advertisements that challenge traditional gender roles and promote women's empowerment have gained prominence.

3. **Objectification and Stereotyping:** Despite these positive developments, objectification remains a significant issue. In many advertisements, films, and music videos, women are still often portrayed in a manner that reduces them to mere objects of sexual desire. This objectification is evident in the way women's bodies are fragmented on screen, with close-ups focusing on body parts rather than the person as a whole. Such portrayals contribute to the ongoing fetishization of women, where their worth is tied to their physical appearance rather than their capabilities or achievements.

♦ *Objects of sexual desire*

4. **Traditional Stereotypes:** While modern roles are increasingly visible, traditional stereotypes continue to coexist, particularly in television serials and films. Women are often depicted as being in domestic roles, where their primary identity is tied to being a wife, mother, or caregiver. These portrayals reinforce gender norms and the idea that a woman's ultimate fulfilment is found in her domestic responsibilities.

♦ *Women as care givers*

5. **Under representation in Leadership Roles:** Behind the scenes, women remain underrepresented in leadership roles within the media industry, such as directors, producers, and executives. This lack of representation can influence the types of stories and how women are portrayed on screen.

♦ *Underrepresentation of women media*

While Indian media has made significant strides in the portrayal of women, reflecting the broader social changes and increasing empowerment of women in various aspects of life, objectification and stereotypical depictions remain pervasive. The coexistence of progressive and regressive portrayals of women highlights the ongoing struggle between modernity and tradition within Indian society. As media continues to be a powerful tool in shaping societal norms and attitudes, there is a continued need for vigilance and advocacy to ensure that women are portrayed in ways that

♦ *Portrayals of women*

respect their full humanity and contribute to gender equality. Thus, the current situation is mixed, with advancements and persistent challenges that must be addressed.

The media wields immense power in shaping societal attitudes and norms. In India, its impact on women has been both transformative and challenging. While progress has been made in representation and empowerment, persistent issues of stereotyping and objectification must be addressed. A concerted effort involving media professionals, regulators, and civil society is essential to ensure that the media becomes a faithful ally in the quest for gender equality and women's empowerment. By fostering a media landscape that values and respects women's diverse experiences and contributions, India can move closer to achieving a more inclusive and equitable society.

♦ *Gender equality and women's empowerment*

3.2.2 The Impact of Media on Youth

The pervasive influence of media on the youth is a subject of significant concern and analysis in contemporary society. With the rapid advancement of technology and the proliferation of various media platforms, young people today are more exposed to media content than ever before. Let us examine the multifaceted impact of media on the youth, highlighting both the positive contributions and the potential drawbacks.

Positive Impacts:

1. **Educational Opportunities:** Media is a valuable educational tool, offering various resources and content across various platforms. Educational programs, documentaries, and online tutorials provide youth access to information on diverse subjects, supplementing formal education and fostering a culture of lifelong learning.
2. **Global Awareness and Cultural Exposure:** Through media, youth are exposed to diverse cultures, perspectives, and worldviews. This exposure promotes global awareness and cultural sensitivity, fostering empathy, tolerance, and cross-cultural understanding among young people.
3. **Skill Development:** Interactive media, such as video games and educational apps, can facilitate the development of various skills among youth. Video games,

for instance, often require problem-solving, strategic thinking, and teamwork, while educational apps offer opportunities for language learning, STEM education, and creativity.

4. **Health Promotion:** Media can play a vital role in promoting health and well-being among young people. Public health campaigns, fitness programs, and informational content raise awareness about important health issues, encourage healthy behaviours, and provide resources for mental health support.

5. **Social Connectivity:** Social media platforms enable youth to connect with peers, share experiences, and build social networks. These platforms provide opportunities for self-expression, friendship formation, and community engagement, fostering young people's sense of belonging and social support.

6. **Political and Social Engagement:** Media serves as a platform for youth to engage in political discourse, social activism, and civic participation. Through social media, young people can access news, discuss current events, and mobilise support for causes they believe in, amplifying their voices and driving social change.

7. **Creativity and Expression:** Media platforms offer avenues for creative expression and artistic exploration among youth. From photography and videography to music production and digital art, young people can showcase their talents, express their ideas, and connect with like-minded individuals in online communities.

Negative Impacts:

1. E**xposure to Inappropriate Content:** Despite its educational value, media exposure can sometimes include inappropriate or harmful content to young viewers. Graphic violence, explicit language, and sexual content can desensitise youth, normalise risky behaviours, and contribute to negative attitudes and behaviours.

2. **Mental Health Issue**s: The pervasive nature of social media and digital technology can have detrimental effects on youth mental health. Excessive screen time, cyberbullying, and comparison-based behaviours can lead to anxiety, depression, and low self-esteem among young people, impacting their overall well-being.

3. **Addiction and Screen Dependency:** Excessive use of media, particularly digital devices and social media platforms, can lead to addiction and screen dependency among youth. This addiction can interfere with academic performance, sleep patterns, and real-life social interactions, posing long-term risks to physical and mental health.

4. **Distortion of Reality:** Media often presents an idealized and distorted reality, promoting unrealistic beauty standards, lifestyles, and values. This distortion can lead to feelings of inadequacy, insecurity, and body image issues among young people as they strive to meet unattainable standards portrayed in media content.

5. **Privacy and Security Risk**s: Engaging with media platforms exposes youth to privacy and security risks, including data breaches, online predators, and identity theft. Sharing personal information online without adequate privacy settings or precautions can compromise their safety and well-being.

6. **Misinformation and Fake News**: The proliferation of misinformation and fake news on digital media platforms can mislead and manipulate young audiences. Without critical media literacy skills, youth may fall victim to false information, conspiracy theories, and propaganda, undermining their ability to make informed decisions and participate in democratic processes.

7. **Academic Distraction and Impairment:** Excessive media consumption can be a significant distraction from academic responsibilities and tasks. Spending excessive time on social media, gaming, or entertainment can de-

tract from study time, concentration, and cognitive abilities, leading to academic underachievement and poor performance.

The impact of media on youth is multifaceted, influencing their attitudes, behaviours, and perceptions in significant ways. Society can implement strategies to promote responsible media use and support youth well-being by recognising the potential benefits and challenges associated with media consumption. This involves fostering critical media literacy skills, providing guidance and supervision, promoting positive content creation, and advocating for regulatory measures. Empowering young people to navigate the media landscape effectively equips them with the tools and resilience needed to thrive in an increasingly digital world while mitigating the potential risks of media exposure.

3.2.3 Impact of Media on Children

The influence of media on children is profound and far-reaching, shaping their perceptions, behaviours, and development from an early age. In today's digital age, children are exposed to various media content, from educational programs to commercial advertisements and online interactions. Let us explore the diverse impact of media on children, highlighting its positive contributions, such as educational opportunities and cultural exposure, and its potential drawbacks, including exposure to inappropriate content and health concerns.

Positive Impacts:

1. **Educational Content**: Media offers many educational resources and content tailored to children's learning needs. Educational television programs, interactive apps, and online platforms provide engaging opportunities for children to explore subjects like math, science, language, and social skills in entertaining and accessible ways.
2. **Cultural Exposure and Diversity:** Through media, children gain exposure to diverse cultures, traditions, and perspectives worldwide. Animated films, storybooks, and documentaries introduce children to different languages, customs, and lifestyles, fostering cultural awareness, empathy, and appreciation for diversity.

3. **Imagination and Creativity**: Media content, such as storytelling, animation, and imaginative play, stimulates children's imagination and creativity. Fictional narratives, fantasy worlds, and creative characters inspire children to explore their ideas, express themselves artistically, and engage in imaginative play scenarios.

4. **Social Skills and Relationships:** Media platforms allow children to interact with peers, build friendships, and develop social skills. Online gaming communities, social networking sites, and virtual playdates offer avenues for communication, collaboration, and socialisation in a digital environment.

5. **Parental Engagement and Bonding:** Co-viewing and co-engagement with media content can facilitate parent-child bonding and interaction. Watching educational programs together, discussing storylines, and playing interactive games as a family foster positive parent-child relationships and create shared experiences that strengthen family connections.

Negative Impacts:

1. **Exposure to Inappropriate Content:** Despite efforts to regulate children's media content, exposure to inappropriate or harmful material remains a concern. Violent imagery, explicit language, and age-inappropriate themes can negatively impact children's emotional well-being, desensitise them to violence, and instil misconceptions about the world.

2. **Health and Developmental Concerns:** Excessive screen time and sedentary media consumption have been linked to various health and developmental issues in children. Prolonged exposure to screens can contribute to obesity, sleep disturbances, attention problems, and delayed social and language development, posing long-term risks to children's physical and cognitive health.

3. **Advertising and Consumerism:** Advertisers and marketers often target children through media, promoting consumerist attitudes and materialistic values. Commercial advertisements, product placements, and branded content can influence children's preferences, desires, and purchasing habits, fostering a culture of consumption and materialism from a young age.
4. **Cyberbullying and Online Safety:** The digital landscape exposes children to risks such as cyberbullying, online predators, and inappropriate interactions. Social media platforms, online gaming communities, and messaging apps can become breeding grounds for bullying, harassment, and exploitation, jeopardising children's safety, self-esteem, and mental well-being.
5. **Digital Addiction and Dependency:** Excessive use of digital media can lead to addiction and dependency among children, affecting their behaviour, mood, and academic performance. Compulsive gaming, social media obsession, and internet overuse can interfere with real-life activities, social relationships, and overall well-being, exacerbating feelings of isolation and withdrawal.
6. **Lack of Interaction with the Natural Environment:** The rise in media consumption has led to children spending less time outdoors, resulting in a disconnection from the natural environment. Limited exposure to nature can hinder the development of a child's sensory experiences, physical fitness, and appreciation for the environment, affecting their overall well-being.
7. **Substitution of Traditional Play with Digital Devices:** The increasing use of mobile phones and tablets as substitutes for traditional toys can be harmful. Digital devices do not provide the same tactile and imaginative experiences that physical toys offer, potentially stunting the development of motor skills, creativity, and problem-solving abilities in children.

8. **Stunted Creativity and Imagination:** Overreliance on digital media can suppress creativity and imagination in children. Constant exposure to pre-structured content limits opportunities for open-ended play and creative thinking, essential for cognitive and emotional development.

9. **Reduced Awareness of the Surrounding Environment:** Media consumption can lead to a lack of awareness and engagement with the immediate physical environment. Children engrossed in screens may miss out on the sensory and social experiences of interacting with the world around them, resulting in a limited understanding of their surroundings.

The impact of media on children is a complex issue that requires careful attention and proactive measures. While media offers valuable educational resources and opportunities for cultural enrichment, it also poses risks such as exposure to inappropriate content, health concerns, and digital dependency. By promoting media literacy, parental guidance, regulatory oversight, positive content creation, and community support, society can empower children to navigate the media landscape responsibly and foster their well-being in an increasingly digital world.

3.2.4 Impact of Media on Rural and Urban Transformation

- *Rural and urban*

Mass media, encompassing various forms such as television, radio, newspapers, and digital platforms, is influential in shaping public perceptions, influencing behaviours, and disseminating information across diverse populations. While its impact on urban centres is well-documented, its role and consequences in rural areas are equally noteworthy but less explored. Through mass media, rural residents gain access to crucial information about governmentpolicies, agricultural practices, healthcare services, and educational opportunities. This accessempowers them to make informed decisions and engage in development initiativeseffectively. Furthermore, the media can spotlight local issues, shedding light on rural communities' challenges and advocating for solutions.

The influence of media on urban societies is profound and pervasive, shaping the way people interact, consume information, and perceive the world around them. Media plays a central role

♦ *Social commitment*

in shaping social dynamics, cultural trends, and public discourse in urban environments characterised by dense populations, technological infrastructure, and diverse cultural landscapes. Let us explore the multifaceted impact of media on rural and urban societies, examining its positive contributions and the challenges it presents.

3.2.4.1 Rural Transformation through Media

In the evolving landscape of rural India, media has emerged as a powerful agent of transformation, revolutionizing how rural communities access information, engage with their environment and participate in societal development. Historically, rural areas were often isolated from the rapid advancements of modern society, with limited access to educational resources, health services, and economic opportunities. However, the proliferation of media technologies such as television, radio, and digital platforms has bridged these gaps, bringing knowledge and connectivity to even the most remote villages.

Positive Impacts:

Media has become pivotal in transforming rural societies by bridging information gaps and fostering community development. Through diverse platforms such as television, radio, and digital media, rural areas now experience enhanced access to educational resources, health information, and economic opportunities. This introduction highlights how media contributes positively to rural development by improving access to crucial information, promoting cultural understanding, supporting economic growth, raising health awareness, and encouraging civic engagement. Some notable positive impacts of media on rural society are:

1. **Access to Information and Education:** Media platforms provide rural communities with access to information and educational resources that were previously inaccessible. Radio broadcasts, television programs, and online content offer opportunities for learning about agricultural techniques, health practices, government schemes, and educational opportunities, empowering rural residents with knowledge and skills to improve their livelihoods.
2. **Cultural Exchange and Awareness:** Media facilitates cultural exchange and awareness among rural commu-

nities, fostering appreciation for diverse cultures, traditions, and perspectives. Television programs, films, and music channels showcase regional languages, folk art, and indigenous practices, preserving cultural heritage and promoting intercultural understanding among rural residents.

3. **Economic Opportunities:** Media platforms serve as a gateway to economic opportunities for rural entrepreneurs and businesses. Digital marketing, e-commerce platforms, and online marketplaces enable rural artisans, craftsmen, and farmers to showcase their products to a broader audience, expand their customer base, and enhance their economic prospects.

4. **Health Awareness and Services:** Media is crucial in raising awareness about health issues and disseminating information about healthcare services in rural areas. Radio programs, television commercials, and mobile health applications educate rural residents about preventive measures, vaccination campaigns, maternal care, and disease management, improving overall health outcomes and reducing healthcare disparities.

5. **Political Participation and Civic Engagement:** Media empowers rural communities to participate in political processes and civic engagement. Radio talk shows, community radio stations, and social media platforms allow rural residents to voice their concerns, engage in public discourse, and hold elected representatives accountable, strengthening democratic participation and governance at the grassroots level.

6. **Emergency Response and Disaster Management:** Media is crucial in rural areas' emergency response and disaster management. Media platforms disseminate timely information about safety measures, relief efforts, and evacuation plans during natural disasters or crises. This prompt communication helps rural com-

munities respond effectively and access necessary emergency resources.

7. **Social Connectivity:** Media helps bridge social gaps in rural areas by connecting individuals and communities. Social media platforms and digital communication tools enable people in remote locations to stay connected with family, friends, and the broader world. This connectivity fosters social support networks and reduces feelings of isolation.

8. **Advocacy and Social Change:** Media is a platform for advocating social change and addressing social issues in rural communities. Documentaries, news reports, and social media campaigns raise awareness about issues such as gender equality, environmental conservation, and human rights. This advocacy contributes to positive social change and empowers rural residents to address local challenges.

Negative Impacts:

While media holds significant potential to benefit rural societies, it also poses several challenges. The pervasive nature of media can lead to exposure to inappropriate content, health concerns related to excessive screen time, and the promotion of consumerism among children. Additionally, issues such as cyberbullying and digital addiction further exacerbate the adverse effects. Understanding these challenges is crucial for mitigating their impact and ensuring that media continues to serve as a positive force for rural development.

1. **Digital Divide and Access Disparities:** Despite the increasing penetration of media in rural areas, disparities in access and digital divide persist. Limited infrastructure, poor connectivity, and affordability constraints hinder rural residents' access to reliable internet services and digital technologies, exacerbating social and economic inequalities and perpetuating rural-urban disparities.

2. **Cultural Homogenization and Identity Loss:** The influx of mainstream media content into rural communities can lead to cultural homogenisation and identity

loss. Westernised values, lifestyles, and consumerist ideals depicted in television programs, films, and advertisements may erode traditional cultural practices, languages, and indigenous knowledge systems, undermining cultural diversity and heritage preservation.

3. **Misinformation and Sensationalism:** Rural communities are susceptible to misinformation and sensationalism propagated by mainstream media outlets and social media platforms. False rumours, sensational headlines, and inflammatory content disseminated through digital channels can fuel social tensions, communal conflicts, and political polarisation, undermining social cohesion and trust within rural societies.

4. **Dependency on External Narratives:** The dominance of external media narratives and representations can shape rural residents' perceptions and aspirations, often at the expense of their lived experiences and realities. Mainstream media portrayals of rural life may perpetuate stereotypes, stigmatise rural communities, and marginalise their voices, reinforcing urban-centric perspectives and power dynamics.

5. **Privacy and Security Risks:** The digitalisation of media poses privacy and security risks for rural residents, particularly concerning data privacy, online harassment, and cyber-attacks. Limited digital literacy, inadequate data protection measures, and privacy breaches may leave rural populations vulnerable to exploitation, identity theft, and online scams, compromising their safety and well-being.

3.2.4.2 Urban Transformation through Media:

Positive Impacts:

1. **Information Access and Connectivity:** Media platforms provide urban residents instant access to a vast array of information, news, and entertainment content. Digital media channels, social networking sites, and

mobile applications enable urbanites to stay informed and engaged with real-time global events, trends, and conversations.

2. **Cultural Exchange and Diversity:** Media facilitates cultural exchange and diversity in urban societies, bringing together people from different backgrounds, ethnicities, and cultures. Television programs, films, music, and digital content reflect urban diversity and promote intercultural understanding, fostering a sense of unity and inclusivity among urban residents.

3. **Economic Opportunities and Innovation:** Media catalyses economic growth and innovation in urban areas. Digital media industries, creative sectors, and technology startups drive urban economies, generating employment opportunities, fostering entrepreneurship, and fuelling innovation hubs contributing to urban development and prosperity.

4. **Community Engagement and Activism:** Media platforms allow urban residents to engage in civic activism, advocacy, and social movements. Social media campaigns, online petitions, and digital advocacy platforms mobilise urbanites to raise awareness about social issues, demand accountability from authorities, and effect change through collective action and grassroots organising. For example,

1. during the 2018 Kerala floods, urban-based NGOs and activists used social media and digital platforms to support relief efforts under the #KeralaFloodRelief campaign. Urban communities organized fundraising and coordinated disaster response through digital tools, reflecting the role of media in facilitating community mobilization and effective crisis management. In the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, urban areas across India witnessed a surge in digital activism and community engagement. The #MaskIndia campaign, for instance, promoted awareness about the importance of

wearing masks and adhering to health guidelines. Urban residents utilized social media to share information, debunk myths, and encourage compliance with safety measures, showcasing the role of media in public health advocacy during a global crisis. (iii) Most recently, the #WayanadLandslide campaign highlights the role of social media in addressing natural disasters. Following the devastating landslides in Wayanad, urban residents and activists used digital platforms to raise awareness, coordinate relief efforts, and advocate for government support for affected communities. This response demonstrates how media can drive swift collective action and support during emergencies.

2. **Civic Participation and Governance:** Media promotes civic participation and democratic governance in urban societies. Local news outlets, public service announcements, and community radio programs inform urban residents about civic affairs, government policies, and public services, empowering them to make informed decisions and participate in democratic processes.

Negative Impacts:

1. **Information Overload and Misinformation:** The abundance of media content in urban environments can lead to information overload and exposure to misinformation. Urban residents may encounter conflicting narratives, biased reporting, and sensationalised news coverage that undermine trust in media sources and contribute to public confusion, polarisation, and disengagement.

2. **Social Isolation and Digital Disconnect**: Despite the connectivity facilitated by media platforms, urban residents may experience social isolation and digital disconnect in their daily lives. Excessive screen time, online interactions, and virtual relationships can detract

from face-to-face interactions, interpersonal connections, and community engagement, leading to feelings of loneliness and alienation in urban environments.

3. **Privacy Concerns and Surveillance:** The digitisation of urban life raises concerns about privacy, surveillance, and data security. Urban residents may face privacy breaches, data leaks, and online surveillance by governments, corporations, and malicious actors, compromising their personal information, digital autonomy, and civil liberties in the digital age.

4. **Digital Divide and Inequality:** While urban societies often benefit from widespread access to digital technologies, there remains a significant digital divide between urban and rural areas. Urban populations generally have greater access to high-speed internet, advanced digital devices, and media literacy resources. In contrast, rural communities frequently face barriers to accessing these technologies, leading to disparities in digital resources and opportunities.

Summarised Overview

The impact of media on society is multifaceted and far-reaching. Media plays a significant role in shaping societal norms, perceptions, and behaviours through various platforms. It serves as a reflection of cultural values and ideologies, influencing how individuals view themselves and others. However, the portrayal of women in media often perpetuates harmful stereotypes and objectification, hindering progress towards gender equality.Moreover, the influence of media extends to the youth, who are increasingly exposed to a wide range of content from an early age. While media offers educational opportunities, cultural exposure, and social connectivity, it also poses risks, such as exposure to inappropriate content, cyberbullying, and digital addiction. Therefore, promoting media literacy and providing guidance to youth and parents are crucial for navigating the digital landscape responsibly.

Similarly, the impact of media on children must be considered. Children are bombarded with media messages that shape their perceptions and behaviours, from

educational programs to commercial advertisements. While media can enhance learning and creativity, it also presents health concerns, exposure to advertising, and privacy risks. Thus, safeguarding children from harmful media content and promoting positive media experiences are essential for their well-being. The impact of mass media on social transformation is profound and multifaceted, significantly influencing both rural and urban societies. Through various forms such as television, radio, newspapers, and digital platforms, media provides essential access to information on government policies, agricultural practices, healthcare services, and educational opportunities. The media landscape is complex and ever-changing, presenting societal opportunities and challenges. By fostering critical thinking, promoting responsible media practices, and advocating for regulatory measures, we can harness the power of media for positive social change while mitigating its negative impacts. We can create a media environment that empowers individuals, promotes diversity, and fosters a more equitable and inclusive society.

Self Assessment Questions

1. What is #MeToo campaign?
2. What is cyberbullying?
3. Define Digital Addiction.
4. What is meant by objectification of women?
5. Examine the impact of media on youth?
6. Explain how media affects children.
7. Critically analyse the portrayal of women in Indian media.
8. Assess the transformation of rural and urban areas through media.

Assignments

1. How does objectification of women in media contribute to the perpetuation of harmful stereotypes? Provide examples.
2. Analyse the role of social media in perpetuating or challenging stereotypes and behaviours that condone violence against women.
3. Discuss the role of parental guidance in mitigating the adverse effects of media exposure on children and youth.
4. Discuss the role of media regulation in protecting children from harmful content and promoting positive media experiences.

5. Describe the impact of media on rural societies, highlighting its positive contributions.
6. Analyse the influence of media on social dynamics and cultural trends in urban environments.

References

1. Curran, J. P., & Gurevitch, M. (2005). *Mass Media and Society.* 4th edition. London: Hodder Education.
2. Giddens, A., & Griffiths, S. (2006). *Sociology*. Boston: Polity Press.
3. Johnson, K. (2000). *Television and Social Change in Rural India*. New Delhi: SAGE Publications.
4. Kang, K. S. (2002). *Women and Media in the Indian Subcontinent: Consistency and Change*. South Asian Publishers.
5. Rajadhyaksha, A. (2009). *Entertainment Media in India: Glitz, Grit, and Glamour*. Harper Collins India.
6. Sinha, N., & Harish, R. (2012). *Gender, Media, and Popular Culture in India*: Tracking Change and Continuity. Rawat Publications.
7. Jain, A., & Sharma, S. (2018). *Digital Divide and Its Impact on Socio-Economic Inequality in India*. Springer India.

Suggested Readings

1. Banet-Weiser, S. (2018). *Empowered: Popular Feminism and Popular Misogyny*. Duke University Press.
2. Dasgupta, S., & Sinha, D. (2018). *Media, Gender, and Popular Culture in India: Tracking Change and Continuity*. SAGE Publications India.
3. Dines, G., & Humez, J. M. (Eds.). (2015). *Gender, Race, and Class in Media: A Critical Reader*. SAGE Publications.
4. Gauntlett, D. (2008). *Media, Gender and Identity: An Introduction*. Routledge.

5. Roy, A. (2014). *Women in Indian Media: Voices from the Field*. Routledge India.
6. Dewan, R. (2019). *Rural Development Through Media: A Case Study of India*. Sage Publications India.
7. Singh, M. (2017). *Urban-Rural Media Dynamics: Bridging the Gap*. Sage Publications India.

Space for Learner Engagement for Objective Questions

Learners are encouraged to develop objective questions based on the content in the paragraph as a sign of their comprehension of the content. The Learners may reflect on the recap bullets and relate their understanding with the narrative in order to frame objective questions from the given text. The University expects that 1 - 2 questions are developed for each paragraph. The space given below can be used for listing the questions.

SGOU

UNIT 3

Issues of Surveillance

Learning Outcomes

After reading this unit, the learner will be able to:

- analyse the issues of surveillance in India
- evaluate the social implications of surveillance
- identify fundamental laws relevant to surveillance in India
- understand the concept of cultural policing

Background

Surveillance, the systematic observation and tracking of individuals or groups, has become an increasingly pervasive aspect of our daily lives. From CCTV cameras on street corners to facial recognition software on smartphones, surveillance technologies are seamlessly integrated into our environment. While these technologies can serve legitimate purposes like crime prevention and public safety, they also raise concerns about privacy, civil liberties, and the potential for misuse. For example, the widespread deployment of CCTV cameras in public spaces has led to debates about whether they violate individual privacy rights. Facial recognition technology has raised concerns about its accuracy, potential for bias, and the risk of mass surveillance. Additionally, the collection and analysis of vast amounts of personal data by governments, corporations, and other entities have fueled concerns about government overreach and the erosion of individual autonomy. Thus the proliferation of surveillance technologies has created a complex landscape with both benefits and risks. While these technologies can serve legitimate purposes, it is essential to carefully consider the potential implications for privacy, civil liberties, and individual autonomy. Striking a balance between security and individual rights is a critical challenge for policymakers and society at large. In this unit we will discuss in detail the legal and social regulations of media in India and cultural policing.

Keywords

Freedom, Privacy, Media regulation, Legal frameworks, Cultural policing

Discussion

The convergence of surveillance, media, and regulatory frameworks presents a complex landscape in India, raising significant legal, ethical, and social challenges. As technology advances and media platforms evolve, questions surrounding privacy, freedom of expression, and state surveillance have become increasingly pertinent. Surveillance practices in India have deep historical roots, dating back to the colonial era when the British employed surveillance tactics to monitor dissent and maintain control over the population. Post-independence, surveillance continued under the guise of national security and governance, with state agencies employing various surveillance methods to monitor individuals and groups perceived as threats to the state.The advent of technology, mainly digital surveillance, has transformed surveillance methodologies, ushering in an era of pervasive monitoring and data collection. The proliferation of digital communication channels, social media platforms, and biometric identification systems has further expanded the scope and reach of surveillance in India, raising concerns about privacy rights and civil liberties.

♦ *Emergence of surveillance practices*

4.3.1 Legal Frameworks Governing Surveillance

India's legal framework governing surveillance is primarily enshrined in the Information Technology Act of 2000 and subsequent amendments. Section 69 of the Act grants the government broad powers to intercept, monitor, and decrypt electronic communication in the interest of national security. However, concerns have been raised about the lack of transparency and oversight in implementing these provisions, leading to potential misuse and violations of privacy rights.Additionally, the Aadhaar Act of 2016 introduced the Aadhaar biometric identity system, which has been criticised for its implications on privacy and surveillance. While proponents argue that Aadhaar facilitates the efficient delivery of welfare services, critics contend that it poses significant privacy risks, with the potential for mass surveillance and data breaches.

♦ *Information Technology Act of 2000*

♦ *Right to Privacy*

The Right to Privacy, recognised as a fundamental right by the Supreme Court of India in the landmark judgment of Justice K.S. Puttaswamy (Retd.) vs. Union of India (2017), has added a new dimension to the discourse on surveillance. The judgment affirmed the right to privacy as an intrinsic part of individual liberty and dignity, setting a precedent for stricter scrutiny of surveillance practices by the state.

4.3.1.1 Social Implications of Surveillance

♦ *Privacy concerns*

The proliferation of surveillance technologies and practices has far-reaching social implications in India. The pervasive surveillance apparatus, coupled with the lack of accountability and transparency, engenders a culture of fear and self-censorship among citizens, inhibiting free speech and dissent. Journalists, activists, and dissenting voices are often targeted and surveilled by state agencies, leading to for reading effects on democratic discourse.

Critical social issues related to surveillance include:

1. **Privacy Invasion:**Surveillance systems often collect vast amounts of personal data, including sensitive information about individuals' daily activities, communications, and behaviour. This invasion of privacy can lead to constant monitoring, impacting individuals' freedom to act and communicate without fear of scrutiny.
2. **Data Security and Misuse:**The collection and storage of personal data increase the risk of data breaches and misuse. Unauthorized access to surveillance data can lead to identity theft, blackmail, and other forms of exploitation. Additionally, the aggregation of personal data from various sources can result in comprehensive profiles that can be misused.
3. **Issues in Freedom of Expression:** Knowledge of being surveilled can lead individuals to self-censor and restrict their freedom of expression. People might avoid discussing controversial or sensitive topics online or in public forums due to fear of being monitored, thus undermining democratic discourse and free speech.
4. **Discrimination and Profiling:**Surveillance systems using advanced algorithms and artificial intelligence can

lead to discriminatory practices and profiling. Certain groups may be disproportionately targeted or monitored based on race, ethnicity, gender, or socio-economic status, exacerbating existing social inequalities.

5. **Erosion of Trust:**The pervasive nature of surveillance can erode trust between individuals and institutions. When people feel that their activities are constantly being monitored, it can lead to a breakdown in trust between governmental and private organizations, impacting social cohesion and cooperation.

6. **Lack of Accountability and Transparency:**Surveillance practices are often implemented without sufficient oversight or transparency. This lack of accountability can lead to abuses of power, where surveillance is used beyond its intended purpose or to suppress dissent and monitor political opponents.

7. **Psychological Impact:**Constant surveillance can have psychological effects, such as increased anxiety, stress, and paranoia. The awareness of being watched can impact mental well-being and contribute to a sense of vulnerability and helplessness.

8. **Impact on Social Behavior:**The presence of surveillance can alter social behaviours and interactions. People may modify their behaviour to avoid detection, leading to changes in how they interact with others and engage in social activities. This can impact the authenticity of social interactions and relationships.

9. **Ethical Concerns:**The ethical implications of surveillance include questions about the balance between security and individual rights. Determining the appropriate limits and justification for surveillance activities involves complex ethical considerations, including the right to privacy and the need for public safety.

10. **Surveillance Capitalism:**In the digital age, companies often collect and analyse personal data for profit, lead-

ing to the phenomenon of surveillance capitalism. This practice involves commodifying personal information, affecting consumer behaviour and autonomy.

Furthermore, marginalised communities, including religious minorities, Dalits, and indigenous people, are disproportionately subjected to surveillance and monitoring, exacerbating social inequalities and reinforcing power dynamics. The intersectionality of surveillance with caste, religion, gender, and ethnicity underscores its discriminatory nature and its potential to perpetuate social injustices.

4.3.1.2 Challenges in Regulatory Oversight

Regulatory oversight of surveillance practices in India faces significant challenges due to the lack of comprehensive legislation and accountability mechanisms. The absence of robust safeguards against abuse of surveillance powers by state agencies aggravates concerns about violations of privacy rights and civil liberties.

- *Lack of comprehensive legislation*

4.3.1.3 Laws Relevant to Surveillance in India

1. **Information Technology (Intermediary Guidelines and Digital Media Ethics Code) Rules, 2021:** These rules impose obligations on digital media platforms to implement mechanisms for identifying the "first originator" of information deemed to be against the sovereignty, integrity, and security of India. Critics argue that this provision could lead to mass surveillance and infringe privacy rights.
2. **Telegraph Act, 1885:** This colonial-era legislation grants the government sweeping powers to intercept and monitor telegraphic messages for public safety or in the interest of the sovereignty and integrity of India. While the Act predates digital communication, its provisions have been applied to modern communication technologies, raising concerns about its compatibility with contemporary privacy standards.
3. **Indian Telegraph Rules, 1951:** These rules, made under the Telegraph Act, outline procedures for interception, monitoring, and surveillance of telegraphic messages by designated government authorities. The rules

provide guidelines for obtaining warrants and maintaining records of intercepted communications, but critics argue that they lack adequate safeguards against abuse of surveillance powers.

4. **Official Secrets Act, 1923:** This legislation criminalises the disclosure of official information deemed prejudicial to the state's security or interests. The Act has been used to suppress whistleblowers and journalists reporting on sensitive government matters, raising concerns about its impact on freedom of expression and investigative journalism.

4.3.2 Legal and Social Regulations of Media in India

In India, legal and social media regulations encompass a complex network of laws, policies, and societal norms that govern the conduct, content, and impact of media outlets within the country. These regulations aim to balance the principles of freedom of expression, accountability, and public interest while addressing concerns related to media ethics, misinformation, and the protection of individual rights. Let us explore the legal and social frameworks that shape the media landscape in India, examining key regulations and their implications for media practitioners and society.

♦ *Aim to balance the principles of freedom of expression*

4.3.2.1 Legal Regulations

1. **Constitutional Framework:** The Constitution of India guarantees the freedom of speech and expression under Article 19(1)(a), subject to reasonable restrictions in the interest of sovereignty, security, public order, decency, or morality. This fundamental right forms the bedrock of media freedom in India and provides a basis for challenging any laws or regulations that infringe upon it.

2. **Press Laws and Regulations:** India has several laws and regulations explicitly governing the print media, such as the Press Council Act of 1978, which establishes the Press Council of India to promote ethical standards in journalism and adjudicate complaints against newspapers and journalists. Additionally, the Press and Registration of Books Act of 1867 mandates the regis-

tration of newspapers with the government.

3. **Broadcasting Regulations:** The broadcast media in India is regulated by the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting (MIB) and governed by laws such as the Cable Television Networks (Regulation) Act, 1995, and the Prasar Bharati Act, 1990. These laws prescribe licensing requirements, content standards, and regulations for cable television networks, satellite television channels, and public broadcasting services.

4. **Online Media Regulations:** With the rise of digital media platforms, the Indian government has introduced regulations to govern online content. The Information Technology Act, 2000, and the subsequent amendments, along with rules such as the Information Technology (Intermediary Guidelines and Digital Media Ethics Code) Rules, 2021, impose obligations on digital media intermediaries to regulate content and address concerns related to misinformation, harmful content, and user privacy.

5. **Defamation and Libel Laws:** Defamation and libel laws in India, governed by civil and criminal statutes, provide recourse for individuals or entities aggrieved by defamatory statements published or broadcast by the media. While these laws aim to protect reputation and dignity, they also have the potential to stifle investigative journalism and free speech if misused to suppress dissent or criticism.

4.3.2.2 Social Regulations

1. **Media Ethics and Professional Standards:** Media organisations in India adhere to self-regulatory mechanisms and codes of conduct to uphold ethical standards and professional integrity. Bodies such as the Press Council of India and the News Broadcasting Standards Authority (NBSA) formulate guidelines and norms for responsible journalism, including accuracy, fairness, and impartiality.

2. **Public Perception and Accountability:** The media in India is subject to public scrutiny and accountability, with citizens, civil society groups, and watchdog organisations playing a crucial role in monitoring media practices and holding journalists and media outlets accountable for their actions. Social media platforms also serve as avenues for public discourse, feedback, and criticism of media content and conduct.

3. **Cultural and Social Sensitivities:** Media regulations in India are influenced by cultural and social sensitivities, with considerations for diversity, pluralism, and communal harmony. Media content that incites religious or communal tensions promotes hate speech or perpetuates stereotypes may face public backlash and regulatory scrutiny, highlighting the importance of responsible and culturally sensitive journalism.

4. **Media Ownership and Plurality:** Concerns about media ownership concentration and editorial independence persist in India, with debates surrounding the influence of corporate interests, political affiliations, and vested agendas on media content and narratives

5. **Civil Society and Advocacy:** Civil society organisations, media watchdogs, and advocacy groups are vital in promoting media freedom, transparency, and accountability in India. Through research, advocacy campaigns, and legal interventions, these organisations raise awareness about media-related issues, advocate for policy reforms, and support initiatives to strengthen media freedoms and democratic values.

The legal and social regulations of media in India are integral to shaping the media landscape and ensuring the responsible conduct of media practitioners. While legal frameworks provide the formal structure for regulating media activities, social regulations, including ethical norms, public accountability, and cultural sensitivities, complement legal provisions and contribute to a vibrant and democratic media ecosystem. Balancing the imperatives of media freedom, social responsibility, and public

interest is essential for fostering a media environment that serves the needs of a diverse and democratic society.

4.3.2.3 Social Issues Related to Media Regulations:

Social issues related to media regulations in India involve the delicate balance between ensuring media freedom and addressing concerns like media bias, misinformation, and cultural sensitivities. These issues highlight the challenge of maintaining media integrity while navigating societal expectations and ethical standards.

1. **Media Bias and Ownership Concentration:** The concentration of media ownership in India has led to concerns about media bias and the undue influence of corporate and political interests on media content.
2. **Misinformation and Fake News:** The rise of digital media has also given rise to the proliferation of misinformation and fake news. While regulations like the Information Technology Act, 2000 aim to address these issues, there is an ongoing challenge in effectively managing and curbing the spread of false information without infringing on free speech.
3. **Cultural Sensitivities and Content Regulation:** Media content in India is subject to scrutiny based on cultural and social sensitivities. Content that is perceived to be offensive or inflammatory can lead to public backlash and regulatory actions. This sensitivity can sometimes lead to censorship or self-censorship, where media outlets may avoid discussing controversial topics to avoid backlash, thereby impacting the diversity of viewpoints presented to the public.
4. **Accountability and Ethical Standards:** Ensuring media accountability and adherence to ethical standards is a significant social issue. While bodies like the Press Council of India and the News Broadcasting Standards Authority (NBSA) aim to regulate media practices, there are ongoing debates about the effectiveness and impartiality of these self-regulatory mechanisms. Ensuring that media organizations adhere to high standards of ac-

curacy, fairness, and integrity is crucial for maintaining public trust and credibility.

5. **Public Perception and Engagement:** The interaction between media practices and public perception is a key social issue.

Famous Quotes Related to Freedom of Press in India

Former Supreme Court Justice Rohinton Fali Nariman has urged the top court to strike down Section 124A of the Indian Penal Code, which criminalises sedition and offensive parts of the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, 1967 (UAPA). Speaking at a function organised by the Viswanath Pasayat Memorial Committee, Justice Nariman said, *"I would exhort the Supreme Court to not send sedition law cases pending before it back to the Centre. Governments will come and go (but) the court needs to use its power and strike down Section 124A and the offensive portions of UAPA. Then Journalists here would breathe more freely."* He firmly said India's rank in the world press freedom index is 142 because of the existing draconian and colonial laws.

It is ironic that in the biggest democracy of the world, the press and media enjoy less freedom. Media should have enough freedom and must be neutral in airing views. If the media is honest and accessible, democracy is bound to function more efficiently. If the media is biased and corrupt and favours only a particular party or few individuals, it can be hazardous for the smooth functioning of democracy. In the interest of democracy, the exchange of ideas must take place in an uninhibited manner, and all citizens must have access to information free of bias and prejudice.

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru called the media the "watchdog of our democracy". Democracy and freedom are meaningless until people can freely express their opinions. Media is the medium of expressing our views and opinions freely. This is why Nehru called the media a watchdog of democracy."One of the objects of a newspaper is to understand the popular feeling and give expression to it, another is to arouse among the people certain desirable sentiments, and the third is the fearlessness to expose popular defects." — Mahatma Gandhi.

4.3.3 Cultural Policing

Cultural policing refers to enforcing societal norms, values, and traditions through informal means, often by self-appointed individuals or groups who seek to regulate behaviour, dress, language, and other aspects of cultural expression. This form of social control extends beyond legal statutes and institutional regulations, relying instead on peer pressure, social ostracisation, and moral judgment to enforce conformity to perceived cultural standards.The term "cultural policing" derives from the concept of traditional law enforcement, where authorities uphold legal statutes and maintain social order. However, cultural policing operates within cultural norms and expectations, often transcending legal boundaries and exerting influence in public spaces, communities, and social interactions. At its core, cultural policing involves surveilling and regulating behaviour deemed deviant or non-conforming to prevailing cultural norms. This can manifest in various ways, including dress codes. Individuals or groups may impose dress codes based on religious, cultural, or moral beliefs, dictating appropriate attire for different genders, occasions, or settings. Deviating from these dress codes may result in social stigma, shaming, or exclusion from social circles.

- *Enforcing societal norms, values, and traditions*

In the media, cultural policing manifests as imposing norms, values, and narratives that reflect dominant cultural perspectives while marginalising or censoring alternative voices and expressions. Media platforms, including television, film, print, and digital media, play a decisive role in shaping cultural norms, perceptions, and identities. Cultural policing in media occurs through various mechanisms, influencing content production, distribution, and consumption:

1. **Stereotypical Representations:** Cultural policing in media often perpetuates stereotypes and tropes that reinforce dominant cultural narratives while marginalising minority groups or alternative perspectives. Stereotypical portrayals based on race, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, religion, or socioeconomic status can perpetuate prejudice, discrimination, and social inequality.

2. **Censorship and Self-Censorship:** Media outlets may engage in self-censorship or face external pressure to adhere to cultural norms and values, resulting in the suppression or censorship of content deemed controversial, subversive, or offensive. This can limit creative freedom, diversity of viewpoints, and critical discourse, undermin-

ing the media's role as a watchdog and catalyst for social change.

3. **Dress Codes and Body Image:** Cultural policing in media extends to representations of body image, beauty standards, and attire, with certain body types, appearances, and styles valorised while others are stigmatised or marginalised. Adherence to narrow beauty ideals and gendered dress codes can perpetuate unrealistic standards and contribute to body shaming, eating disorders, and low self-esteem among audiences.

4. **Language and Linguistic Bias:** Media content may reflect linguistic biases and preferences, privileging dominant languages or dialects while marginalising or stigmatising minority languages or accents. Language policing in media can reinforce linguistic hierarchies, cultural hegemony, and exclusionary practices, limiting linguistic diversity and inclusion in media representations.

5. **Cultural Appropriation and Misrepresentation**: Cultural policing in media involves appropriating or misrepresenting cultural symbols, practices, and identities without proper acknowledgement or respect for their origins and significance.

6. **Religious and Moral Sensitivities:** Media content may be subject to scrutiny and censorship based on religious or moral sensitivities, with specific themes, symbols, or narratives deemed blasphemous, offensive, or indecent. Religious and moral policing in media can restrict artistic freedom, diversity of religious expression, and critical engagement with religious and ethical issues.

7. **Normalisation of Heteronormativity:** Cultural policing in media often reinforces heteronormative standards, privileging heterosexual relationships and identities while marginalising or stigmatising LGBTQ+ individuals and experiences. LGBTQ+ characters may be depicted stereotypically, and their stories may be

sidelined or sensationalised, perpetuating discrimination and erasure within media representations.

8. **Colourism and Beauty Standards:** Media representations frequently uphold Eurocentric beauty standards, privileging lighter skin tones and Western features over darker and non-Western skin tones. This perpetuates colourism, reinforcing social hierarchies based on skin colour and marginalising individuals with darker complexions. Additionally, the underrepresentation of diverse body types, abilities, and ages reinforces narrow beauty ideals and exclusionary norms.

9. **Cultural Hegemony and Globalisation**: Cultural policing in media intersects with processes of globalisation, wherein dominant cultural narratives from Western societies are disseminated globally, often at the expense of indigenous cultures and local traditions. The homogenisation of media content can marginalise diverse cultural expressions, languages, and identities, eroding cultural diversity and fostering cultural imperialism.

10. **Political and Ideological Bias:** Media outlets may be subject to political or ideological bias, with news coverage and commentary reflecting partisan agendas or corporate interests. Political and ideological policing in media can distort public discourse, undermine democratic values, and perpetuate polarisation, hindering the media's role as a watchdog and facilitator of informed citizenship.

11. **Colonial Legacies and Postcolonial Realitie**s: Cultural policing in media is deeply intertwined with colonial legacies and postcolonial power dynamics, wherein Western-centric perspectives and narratives continue to dominate global media discourse. Postcolonial societies grapple with the legacy of colonialism, including cultural appropriation, the erasure of indigenous knowledge, and the commodification of cultural heritage, perpetuating inequalities and injustices in media representations.

Summarised Overview

Rooted in historical precedents from the colonial era, surveillance practices have evolved significantly with technological advancements, sparking debates on privacy, freedom of expression, and state oversight. Legal frameworks, including the Information Technology Act and the Aadhaar biometric system, grant broad surveillance powers, raising concerns about transparency and accountability. This unit explained the social implications of pervasive surveillance, which engenders fear and self-censorship among citizens, particularly journalists and activists. Regulatory oversight faces hurdles due to fragmented legislation and opaque operations undermining public trust. Additionally, media regulations are explored, covering constitutional guarantees, press laws, broadcasting regulations, and online media governance. Media ethics and cultural policing further shape the media landscape, influencing content production, distribution, and societal norms. The overview underscores the importance of balancing security imperatives and civil liberties, advocating for comprehensive legislation, transparency, and accountability in the digital age.

Self Assessment Questions

1. In which year IT act was passed?
2. Which article guarantees the freedom of speech and expression?
3. Explain cultural policing.
4. What is the importance of section 69 of IT act?
5. Examine the social issues related to surveillance.
6. Discuss the important laws relevant to surveillance in India.
7. Evaluate legal and social regulations of media in India.
8. Critically analyse the concept of cultural policing in contemporary society.

Assignments

1. Discuss the key provisions of the Information Technology Act regarding surveillance, and how are they implemented.
2. Evaluate the Aadhaar biometric identity system regarding its benefits and concerns regarding privacy and surveillance.
3. How has recognising the Right to Privacy as a fundamental right influenced surveillance practices in India?
4. Discuss the impact of cultural policing on representations of gender, sexuality, and identity in Indian media.
5. Critically assess the adequacy of existing laws in safeguarding privacy rights amidst technological advancements.

References

1. Chandrasekharan, S., & Sharma, S. K. (Eds.). (2018). *Surveillance, Transparency, and Democracy: Public Administration in the Information Age*. Springer.
2. Mukherjee, S., & Dutta, A. (Eds.). (2018). *Cultural Policing and Media Regulation: The Politics of Public Discourse in Contemporary India*. Springer.
3. Narula, U. (Ed.). (2020). *Media Ethics in India: Contexts and Concerns*. Routledge.
4. Roy, A., & Mukherjee, A. (2019). *Cultural Policing: Surveillance, Power, and Identity in India*. Routledge India.

Suggested Readings

1. Bhatia, S. (2020). *Media Law in India*. Oxford University Press.
2. Roy, S., & Choudhury, N. (Eds.). (2021). *Surveillance, Society, and Law*. Springer.
3. Sharma, N. (2019). *Surveillance and Democracy in India*. Palgrave Macmillan.

Space for Learner Engagement for Objective Questions

Learners are encouraged to develop objective questions based on the content in the paragraph as a sign of their comprehension of the content. The Learners may reflect on the recap bullets and relate their understanding with the narrative in order to frame objective questions from the given text. The University expects that 1 - 2 questions are developed for each paragraph. The space given below can be used for listing the questions.

SGOU

SREENARAYANAGURU OPEN UNIVERSITY

QP CODE: ……

Reg. No : …….....
Name : ……...

THIRD SEMESTER MA SOCIOLOGY EXAMINATION
DISCIPLINE SPECIFIC ELECTIVE
M21SO01DE- MEDIA AND SOCIETY
(CBCS - PG)
2023-24 - Admission Onwards

Time: 3 Hours Max Marks: 70

Section A

Objective Type Questions

Answer any ten of the following, Each question carries 1 mark.

1. The book 'The Bias of Communication 1949' was authored by whom?
2. This concept symbolizes high speed connectivity and an interconnected system that would revolutionize how information is accessed, shared and distributed globally, identify the concept?
3. State a negative impact of the media?
4. What is the form of communication that takes place when an individual send and receive messages internally?
5. Critical Hermeneutics was written by whom?
6. Who stated that communication technology has a significant role in networked society?
7. What refers to the process of imitating or replicating real-world processes, objects, or experiences?
8. What is terminology used for a person who intentionally tries to instigate conflict, hostility, or arguments in an online social community?
9. Identify the concept of dominance or influence of powerful media institutions of economically advanced nations over less developed nations?
10. State a positive effect of the media?

11. Give an example for community engagement and activism through social media?

12. State any regulatory body sanctioned by the government of India for ensuring media ethics and maintaining professional standards?

13. What refers to sending information, ideas, messages or opinions from a mass communicator to a complex audience.

14. State a positive impact of media surveillance?

15. Which school of theorist's state that the modern capitalist societies are democratic and mass media is considered an essential component that can be used to persuade the masses?

Section B

Very Short Answers

Answer any five of the following, Each question carries 2 marks.

16. Describe Mediated quasi Interaction?

17. Briefly describe in your own words Innis, monopoly of knowledge?

18. Define Nonverbal communication.

19. What do you mean by Hyper reality?

20. Write a note on digital addiction?

21. Define media imperialism.

22. In your own words, what is the role of surveillance in the media?

23. List any two social regulation imposed upon media in India.

24. Does media objectify women? Justify your reasoning?

25. What are the steps involved in the process of communication?

Section C

Short Answers

Answer any five of the following, Each question carries 4 marks.

26. What are the three levels of simulation?

27. Discuss the functions of communication?

28. Examine the changing definition of culture by Raymond William?

29. Assess the effects of media on society?

30. Discuss the role of media in India in view with the importance of media in developing countries?

31. Analyse the impact of entertainment media on society?

32. Differentiate between new media and traditional media?

33. Explain cultural policing?

Section D

Long Answer/Essay

Answer any three of the following, Each question carries 10 marks.

34. Discuss how Innis sought to understand civilizations by tracing the evolution of communication?

35. Alternative media is considered to be an anti-establishment and radical media' do you agree? Justify your reasoning?

36. Evaluate three types of interaction put forward by John B. Thompson and discuss how they are fundamental in understanding communication and social interaction?

37. Elucidate 'Media is the fourth pillar of democracy', how does this fact hold in the democracy of India?

38. Discuss the scope of communication with emphasis on the socio – cultural institutions?

39. Assess the role of media in education and discuss how media helps in education in the present digital world?

SGOU

SREENARAYANAGURU OPEN UNIVERSITY

QP CODE: ……

Reg. No : …….....
Name : ……...

THIRD SEMESTER MA SOCIOLOGY EXAMINATION
DISCIPLINE SPECIFIC ELECTIVE
M21SO01DE- MEDIA AND SOCIETY
(CBCS - PG)
2023-24 - Admission Onwards

Time: 3 Hours Max Marks: 70

Section A

Objective Type Questions

Answer any ten of the following, Each question carries 1 mark.

1. Who used the term surveillance for the first time in relation to the media?
2. Which type of communication takes place between two individuals?
3. Give an example of a streaming service?
4. Which is a popular alternative media in rural India?
5. Who wrote the book Counterblast?
6. Who coined the term Hyper reality?
7. What refers to the outlet through which one proceeds with information dissemination, entertainment, news, music, movies, images, billboards etc.?
8. State a negative impact of media surveillance?
9. What is the systematic observation and tracking of individuals or groups?
10. IT Act was passed in which year?
11. Identify the concept of dominance or influence of powerful media institutions of economically advanced nations over less developed nations?
12. Who wrote the book ‘Mechanical Bride’ in 1951?
13. Expand UAPA act?
14. Who authored the book ‘The Media Politics and Public Life’?
15. What is the literal meaning of the word communicate?

Section B

Very Short Answers

Answer any five of the following, Each question carries 2 marks.

16. Briefly describe E Learning?
17. Define Digital Divide.
18. What is Mass communication?
19. What is citizen journalism?
20. What do you mean by Global Village?
21. In your own words describe Intrapersonal Communication?
22. What is Cultural Materialism?
23. Define Cyber bullying.
24. List any two reasons for media globalization put forth by Denis McQuail?
25. Define communication.

Section C

Short Answers

Answer any five of the following, Each question carries 4 marks.

26. Explain the difference between electronic and digital media?
27. Discuss the stages of communication according to Marshall McLuhan?
28. Explain the characteristics of Mass media?
29. Discuss culture industry as envisioned by Theodor Adorno?
30. Explain the major categories of entertainment media?
31. Explain 7 c's of communication?
32. Examine the different manifestations of alternative identities in new media?
33. Discuss how cultural policing is done through media?

Section D

Long Answer/Essay

Answer any three of the following, Each question carries 10 marks.

34. Critically analyze Marshall McLuhan's concept of "the medium is the message." How does this theory help us understand the ways in which media technologies shape our perception of reality?
35. Assess the role of Social Media, Social Networking Sites, Blog, Vlog, Trolls and their impact in present society?

36. Critically analyze the portrayal of women and Objectification of women in Indian media?
37. Elucidate the concept of surveillance in social media, how does it affect the privacy of the users?
38. Evaluate how Jean Baudrillard's concept of hyperreality and simulacra challenge traditional understandings of media and culture in contemporary society?
39. Critically analyse the functions and types of communication in contemporary society?

SGOU

സർവ്വകലാശാലാഗീതം

വിദ്യയാൽ സ്വതന്ത്രരാകണം
വിശ്വപൗരരായി മാറണം
ഗ്രഹപ്രസാദമായ് വിളങ്ങണം
ഗുരുപ്രകാശമേ നയിക്കണേ

കൂരിരുട്ടിൽ നിന്നു ഞങ്ങളെ
സൂര്യവീഥിയിൽ തെളിക്കണം
സ്നേഹദീപ്തിയായ് വിളങ്ങണം
നീതിവൈജയന്തി പാറണം

ശാസ്ത്രവ്യാപ്തിയെന്നുമേകണം
ജാതിഭേദമാകെ മാറണം
ബോധരശ്മിയിൽ തിളങ്ങുവാൻ
ജ്ഞാനകേന്ദ്രമേ ജ്വലിക്കണേ

കുരീപ്പുഴ ശ്രീകുമാർ

SREENARAYANAGURU OPEN UNIVERSITY

Regional Centres

Kozhikode
Govt. Arts and Science College
Meenchantha, Kozhikode,
Kerala, Pin: 673002
Ph: 04952920228
email: rckdirector@sgou.ac.in

Thalassery
Govt. Brennen College
Dharmadam, Thalassery,
Kannur, Pin: 670106
Ph: 04902990494
email: rctdirector@sgou.ac.in

Tripunithura
Govt. College
Tripunithura, Ernakulam,
Kerala, Pin: 682301
Ph: 04842927436
email: rcedirector@sgou.ac.in

Pattambi
Sree Neelakanta Govt. Sanskrit College
Pattambi, Palakkad,
Kerala, Pin: 679303
Ph: 04662912009
email: rcpdirector@sgou.ac.in

Media and Society

COURSE CODE: M21SO01DE

SGOU

ISBN 978-81-972962-2-2

Sreenarayanaguru Open University
Kollam, Kerala Pin- 691601, email: info@sgou.ac.in, www.sgou.ac.in Ph: +91 474 2966841