



Block**1****INTRODUCTION TO MASS COMMUNICATION**

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INTRODUCTION TO THE COURSE: MEDIA AND COMMUNICATION SKILLS

My dear Students,

We welcome you to this course on MEDIA AND COMMUNICATION SKILLS.

Through this course we propose to introduce you to the various channels of mass media such as the newspaper, magazine, radio, television and, last but not the least, the internet. The internet today, with things like blogs, message boards, podcasts, video sharing, etc., has given the ordinary man and woman more power than s/he ever enjoyed in the past and, which until recent times, was availed only by the mass media producers.

New technologies have transformed the world of media. They have shattered the social boundaries of the world. People now live in close proximity because of the new inventions in technology.

It is the media that creates the experience of global shared time by informing people about all events taking place around the world. Mass communication allows people to be in touch with people in far flung places across the globe. Newspapers, Radio, TV, Internet, Mobile phones are used to connect people everywhere. These also influence people to understand their social identities and their cultures in relation to others around the globe.

According to the definition of Mass Communication provided by Wikipedia, “Mass Communication is the study of how information is exchanged through Mass Media by large segments of the population at the same time. It is concerned with how the content of Mass Communication affects the behavior, attitude, opinion or emotions of the people receiving the information.

Globalization is the tendency of businesses, technologies or philosophies to spread throughout the world unhampered by time zones or national boundaries. It is the process by which businesses or other organizations develop international influence or start operating on an international scale. The proliferation of the McDonald chain of restaurants around the world is an example of globalization. The fact that they adapt their menus to suit local tastes is an example of glocalization.

Proponents of globalization believe that globalization has the potential to create greater opportunities for growth throughout the world by leveling the playing field. Opponents believe that it would prove beneficial for the rich nations to take advantage of the poorer ones and also by leading to a humanized world culture, we would lose out on regional diversity. These are issues that need to be discussed and debated and I leave it to your discretion to grapple with them and come up with your own justifications.

For the purpose of this course it is enough that we talk about the tremendous explosion that has taken place in the domain of technology and discuss how we can make optimum use of it for the betterment of our planet.

With these words I welcome you again to this course and wish you all the best.

INTRODUCTION TO BLOCK 1

(INTRODUCTION TO MASS COMMUNICATION)

This block proposes to survey the various mass media such as print (newspapers and magazines), radio, television and the Internet. Here you would get a glimpse of their history. This will help you appreciate them in their proper perspectives. You would discover the peculiar strengths and weaknesses of each medium. This will help you observe the various media in use more critically and thus learn from them for your own use. Finally, we also offer a few suggestions or techniques for the development of your script or media text.

The Unit- wise break up is as follows:

In Unit 1, entitled *The Concept of Communication*, we take up the functions, elements and kinds of communication.

Unit 2, *Mass Media and Communication*, speaks about the various types of Mass Media like journalism, broadcast and telecast media, films, internet, publishing and mobile phones. We talk about the impact and dangers of these mass media.

Unit 3 is entitled *Characteristics of Different Mass Media*. As the name implies this unit takes up the essential characteristics of the various mediums of Mass Communication.

Unit 4 is entitled *Writing for Mass Media* and gives you a bird's eye view of various strategies and rules about how to write for the different mediums of Mass Communication.

The idea of communication may be very simple but it leads to immensely interesting and sophisticated ramifications. Read the units but give yourself time to ruminate. Have you observed a cow chewing cud? Do likewise. Think over the matter you read, examine it in the light of your own observations in the media and, if possible, discuss it with a friend at the study center. Hope you will enjoy the process.

UNIT I THE CONCEPT OF COMMUNICATION

Structure

- 1.0 Objectives
- 1.1 Introduction
- 1.2 Communication and its Functions
 - 1.2.1 Communication
 - 1.2.2 Functions of Communication
- 1.3 Elements of Communication
 - 1.3.1 The Message
 - 1.3.2 The Communicator
 - 1.3.3 Transmission Medium
 - 1.3.4 The Receiver
 - 1.3.5 Feedback
- 1.4 Kinds of Communication
 - 1.4.1 Intrapersonal Communication
 - 1.4.2 Interpersonal Communication
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- 1.5 The Seven C's of Communication
 - 1.5.1 Content
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 - 1.5.4 Clarity
 - 1.5.5 Composition
 - 1.5.6 Contrast
 - 1.5.7 Consistency
- 1.6 Let Us Sum Up
- 1.7 Answers to Check Your Progress

1.0 OBJECTIVES

Through this Unit we aim to introduce you to the fundamentals of communication and its processes. The study of the different aspects of communication will help you to understand the dynamics of the communication process and the importance of communication in our daily life. After studying this unit you should be able to:

- Define communication and its meaning
- Explain its importance
- Define the communication process
- Identify essential elements of communication and the role that each of these elements plays in the communication process
- Discuss the seven C's of communication.

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1.1 INTRODUCTION

As you know, communication is very essential for the survival of human beings and it has a very important place in our life. In fact, it regulates and shapes all human behaviors. Man's need for communication is as strong and as basic as his need to drink, eat, and sleep. Moreover, in a country like ours, communication plays a vital role in creating people's awareness about policies and programmes of development. It helps in motivating them to be active partners in the nation-building endeavor. Therefore, it is important to have a clear understanding of the concepts of communication. What is communication? How does it work? Why is it important to us? What are the elements in the communication process and how do they transmit and set the communication process in motion? Last but not the least, what are the different types of communication and what are the seven C's of communication? Keeping these questions in mind will not only help you to understand the meaning and process of communication but will also help you to identify tools for effective communication.

1.2 COMMUNICATION AND ITS FUNCTIONS

1.2.1 Communication

Communication is a process that allows an individual to exchange information in several ways such as communicating one's own perceptions, point of view or experiences gained in the process of living. Communication requires that all parties understand a common tone of voice and nonverbal physical actions, such as body language, sign language, paralanguage, touch, eye contact or the use of writing. Person-to-person or one- to -one communication is the exchange of information, ideas, and feelings among people. Communication takes place when you transmit a message from one person to another person or to a group of people. Communication is the process of sending a message through different media, whether verbal or nonverbal, so that a person transmits a thought provoking idea, gesture, action, etc.

Communication happens at many levels, in many different ways for most human beings, as well as for certain machines. Most studies dedicate a portion of attention for communication, so when you talk about communication it is very important to be sure about what are the aspects of communication. Definitions of communication range widely, some recognizing that animals can communicate with each other as well as human beings, and some are narrower, including human beings within the parameters of human interaction. Communication is, therefore, a process of sharing or exchanging of ideas, information, knowledge, attitude or feeling among two or more persons through certain signs and symbols.

Communication is the process of sending a message, through different media whether it be verbal or nonverbal, so long as a person transmits a thought provoking idea, gesture, action, etc.

For a society to exist, certain communication needs must be met. These needs have existed since early times. Primitive tribes had sentinels who scanned the environment and reported dangers. Councils of elders interpreted facts and made decisions. Tribal meetings were used to transmit these decisions to the rest of the group. Other members of the tribe may have been story-tellers and jesters who functioned to entertain the group. As society became larger and more complex, these jobs were taken over by the mass media and this change was an important one. Sometimes,

dysfunctions were also performed by the mass media. Dysfunctions are the consequences that are undesirable from the point of view of the welfare of society.

1.2.2 Functions of Communication

The following are the basic functions of communication

Information

Information as a concept bears a diversity of meanings, from everyday usage to technical settings. Generally speaking, the concept of information is closely related to imparting instruction, knowledge, meaning, mental stimulus, pattern, perception, and representation.

Persuasion

Persuasion is a form of social influence. It is the process of guiding people towards the adoption of an idea, attitude, or action by rational and symbolic (though not always logical) means. It is the strategy of problem-solving relying on “appeals” rather than strength. Manipulation is taking persuasion to an extreme, where one person or group benefits at the cost of the other. Aristotle said that one of the most important functions of communication is to persuade the other party. Why is it so? Because persuasion helps in reaching decisions or consensus on public policy so that it is possible to control and govern. But it is possible that one may resort to persuasion with an ulterior motive. The receiver must be careful about the source of such persuasion.

Debate and Discussion

Debate or debating is a formal method of interactive argument. Debate is a broader form of argument since it includes persuasion which appeals to the emotional responses of an audience which enable people to discuss and decide on differences, within a framework defining how they will interact. Deliberative bodies such as parliaments, legislative assemblies, and meetings of all sorts engage in debates. The outcome of a debate may be decided by audience vote, by judges, or by some combination of the two. Formal debates between candidates for elected office, such as the leaders’ debates and the U.S. presidential election debates are common in democracies. It is through debate and discussion in media that the public can clarify different viewpoints on issues of public interest and arrive at a general agreement on matters that concern all. It is important for them to find out the reasons for such debates and discussions. Critical appraisal of debates and discussions benefit the users.

Instruction

An instruction is a form of communicated information that is both command and explanation for how an action, behavior, method, or task is to be begun, completed, conducted, or executed. One of the major functions of communication is to instruct, educate and socialize the members of the society. All these functions start early in life, at home or in school and continue till one completes the full cycle of life. Communication provides a fund of knowledge, expertise and skills that enable people to operate as effective members of society. It also creates awareness, gives direction and opportunity to people so that they actively participate in public life.

Entertainment

Entertainment is an activity designed to give pleasure or relaxation to an audience. The audience may participate in the entertainment passively as in watching opera

or a movie, or actively as in games. Human beings must be entertained to break the monotony of routine and divert their attention from the troubles and tensions of daily life. The diversion should not be taken as a negative element. Such diversion has a positive role in our life: it revitalizes our personality and even educates us. You must have watched some Charlie Chaplin or Laurel and Hardy movies. They entertain and at the same time comment on life. We can learn a lot about life from these comedies. Communication provides boundless entertainment to people through pictures, films, music, drama, dance, art, literature, comedy, sports, games etc.

Cultural Promotion

Communication is a major source for cultural preservation and promotion. It helps individuals to pursue and satisfy their creative urge. Communication provides opportunity for culture to be preserved and promoted. It stimulates individuals to pursue and fulfill their creative urges.

Integration

Communication is a great source for disseminating knowledge and information, which further helps in social integration. Communication is a great integrating tool. Through a fund of knowledge or information, individuals, groups or cultures come to know one another, understand and appreciate each other's ways of life and thereby develop tolerance towards one another.

Check Your Progress 1

- Note:** a) Space given below the question is for writing your answer.
b) Check your answer with the one given at the end of this unit.

i) What do you understand by communication?

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ii) List the various functions of communication.

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1.3 ELEMENTS OF COMMUNICATION

Communication is a dynamic process, ongoing and ever changing, which involves five major elements. The five elements are: the **message**, the **sender**, the **transmission medium**, the **receiver** and **feedback**.

1.3.1 The Message

A message in its most general meaning is the most fundamental object of communication. It is something which provides information. Therefore, its meaning is dependent upon the context in which it is used. The term may apply to both the information and its form.

A message can be transferred through spoken and written mediums, such as radio programmes, films, paintings, posters, photographs etc. However, a message is not only transferred information, but also involves the emotions that give the words meaning. Words alone do not establish the full meaning of the message. Non verbal communications may give clues that the receiver can use to interpret verbal messages.

1.3.2 The Communicator

The Communicator is the source of communication, which begins the communication process by transmitting information to the receiver. Encoding the message, whether written or oral, is a process that requires four separate steps. The first step is to formulate the message, putting thoughts into words. The second step consists of passing the message through many psychological or internal communication barriers. Psychological barriers stem from the sender's existing knowledge, beliefs, biases and feelings. The message, once filtered through these psychological barriers, is encoded for transmission. The encoding process ranges from simply stringing words together, to actually putting the message into some form of code. Transmitting the message, whether in oral or written form, might appear to be the last step in the sender's process, but a good communicator immediately becomes the receiver and prepares to accept feedback for verification of the message delivery.

This is the process of transmitting the information you want to communicate into a form that can be sent and correctly decoded at the other end. Your success in encoding depends partly on your ability to convey information clearly and simply, but also on your ability to anticipate and eliminate sources of confusion (for example, cultural issues, mistaken assumptions and missing information). A key part of this is to know your audience. Failure to understand whom you are communicating with, will result in delivering messages that are misunderstood. For example, an illiterate can not understand a written message but can comprehend it well if explained.

A good communicator needs good communication skills. But what is meant by "communication skills"? The purpose of communication is to get the message across to others clearly and unambiguously. Doing this involves effort from both the sender of the message and the receiver. And it's a process that can be fraught with error, with messages often misinterpreted by the recipient. When this isn't detected, it can cause tremendous confusion, wasted effort and missed opportunity.

In fact, communication is successful only when both the sender and the receiver understand the same information as a result of the communication. By successfully getting your message across, you convey your thoughts and ideas effectively. When not successful, the thoughts and ideas that you send do not necessarily reflect your own, causing a communication breakdown and creating roadblocks that stand in the way of your goals – both personal and professional.

1.3.3 Transmission Medium (Channel)

The transmission medium is the pathway by which the message flows. It is the vehicle that carries the message from the sender to the receiver and back.

Messages are conveyed through various channels, such as verbal, written or electronic. Verbal would include face- to -face meetings, telephone conversations and videoconferencing. Written, include letters, emails, memos and reports. Different channels have different strengths and weaknesses. For example, it's not particularly effective to give a long list of directions verbally, while you'll quickly cause problems if you criticize someone strongly by email.

1.3.4 The Receiver

Just as successful encoding is a skill, so is successful decoding (involving, for example, taking the time to read a message carefully, or listening actively to it). Hence it is the interpretation of the message by the receiver. Just as confusion can arise from errors in encoding, it can also arise from decoding errors. This is particularly the case if the decoder does not have enough knowledge to understand the message.

The receiver is the element in the communication process that interprets the meaning of the message. Only when the receiver has understood the message, can true communication take place. The receiver also goes through an internal set of processes related to incoming messages. Upon obtaining the message, the receiver decodes it through assimilation and interpretation. The receiving process is made up of the following steps: **receive, decode, filter, and interpret**. Receiving takes place when the receiver first perceives the message, either by sight or hearing. During this process, the receiver filters the information through his/her own psychological barriers such as existing knowledge, attitude, beliefs, biases and perceptions. These barriers affect how well the message is understood, accepted and decoded. To decode a message effectively, the sender and receiver must be communicating in the same language. Language, in this sense, is not limited to formal language types (i.e., English, Spanish, etc.), but also includes the influences of technical knowledge, field of experience and critical items called Operational definitions. The words in the message must mean the same thing to the receiver and sender or there will be miscommunication. Also there are other interruptions that can creep in at any point of the communication process and make it ineffective. Environment is one major cause that interferes with message receptions: like noises from the roadside, constant chattering of individuals outside the communication act, blaring loudspeaker, faulty transmission, etc. Noise can occur in other forms also, poor handwriting, heavy accent or soft speech, communication in a poorly lit room etc. In fact, these are barriers to effective communication. For smooth and effective communication, it is necessary to eliminate or reduce noise as far as possible.

1.3.5 Feedback

Perhaps the greatest cause of ineffective communication is failure of the sender to request feedback from the receiver. Feedback is the element of communication which confirms that the message has been received and understood. It completes the sender's process by verifying that the meaning has not changed. In most written forms of communication, some reply is required. It may range from specific action to a simple receipt. Oral communication via electronic means usually requires only a verbal repeat of the message followed by "roger", "understand", or "aye-aye". In face-to-face oral communications, feedback can be more complex. One way to get feedback from face-to-face communication is to solicit questions from your receiver, or each person to whom your message applies.

Check Your Progress 2

- Note:** a) Space given below the question is for writing your answer.
b) Check your answer with the one given at the end of this unit.

i) What steps does a communicator follow to transmit information?

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ii) What steps are involved in the receiving of a message?

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1.4 KINDS OF COMMUNICATION

1.4.1 Intrapersonal Communication

Every time an individual does something or speaks, he hears it first within himself. Therefore, intrapersonal communication is language used or thought which is internal to the communicator. Intrapersonal communication is the active internal involvement of the individual in the symbolic processing of messages. The individual becomes his or her own sender and receiver, providing feedback to himself or herself in an ongoing internal process.

Although successful communication is generally defined as being between two or more individuals, issues concerning the useful nature of communicating with oneself and problems concerning communication with non-sentient entities such as computers have made some argue that this definition is too narrow.

1.4.2 Interpersonal Communication

Interpersonal communication is defined by communication scholars in numerous ways, though most definitions, involve participants who are interdependent on one another or have a shared history. Communication channels are the medium chosen to convey the message from sender to receiver. Communication channels can be categorized into two main categories: Direct and Indirect channels of communication.

Another way of defining interpersonal communication is to compare it to different forms of communication. In doing so, you would examine how many people are involved, how physically close they are to one another, how many sensory channels are used and the feedback provided. Interpersonal communication differs from other forms of communication in that there are few participants involved, the interactants are in close physical proximity to each other, there are many sensory channels used and the feedback is immediate. An important point to note about the contextual definition is that it does not take into account the relationship between the interactants.

1.4.3 Group Communication

Group Communication examines the most effective ways of communicating and interacting within social and work groups as it provides an opportunity for direct interaction among the members of the group which helps in bringing about changes in attitude and beliefs, and offers a clear understanding. Group communication occurs among three or more persons. The degree of interaction and intimation depends on the size of the group. The larger the group the lesser the personal intimacy and lesser is the possibility of exchange.

Communication is an important cornerstone of all groups and often the variable, which determines their success or failure. Effective communication builds trust and mutual respect and facilitates learning. Although communication is frequently thought of in terms of written or oral dialogue, actions are also important forms of communication and indicate commitment to stated agreements. Three general categories have been identified as critical to successful group communication:

Commitment - Members' integrity and leadership qualities

Communication- discussion, listening and facilitation

Organization - setting ground rules for communication, decision—making

1.4.4 Mass Communication

Mass communication is the term used to describe the various means by which individuals and entities relay information to large segments of the population all at once through mass media. It is usually understood to relate to newspaper and magazine publishing, radio, television and film, as they are used both for disseminating news and for advertising.

The term 'mass' denotes great volume, range or extent (of people or production) and reception of messages. It suggests that the recipients of media products constitute a vast sea of passive, undifferentiated individuals. This is an image associated with some earlier critiques of 'mass culture' and mass society which generally assumed that the development of mass communication has had a largely negative impact on modern social life, creating a kind of bland and homogeneous culture which entertains individuals without challenging them. However, with the advancement in Media Technology, people are no longer receiving gratification without questioning the grounds on which it is based. Instead, people are engaging themselves more with media products such as computers, cell phones and internet. These have gradually become vital tools for communication in a society today.

Check Your Progress 3

- Note:** a) Space given below the question is for writing your answer.
 b) Check your answer with the one given at the end of this unit.

- 1) Write two impacts of each of the following type of communication:
- Intrapersonal : a)
 b)
- Interpersonal : a)
 b)
- Group : a)
 b)
- Mass : a)
 b)

1.5 THE SEVEN C’S OF COMMUNICATION

So far we have discussed the functions, elements and kinds of communication. Now we shall be discussing the most important part of communication, which is designing communication – the most complex but most interesting part of the subject. Designing communication is a complex process. It begins at a high level, with good questions and good listening, and ends in constructing a presentation, document, system or user’s experience.

Here are the seven C’s, in order:

1.5.1 Content

This is the best possible measure of communication effectiveness. What do you want your audience to walk away with and remember? Once you have defined your prime question, set out to answer it. What information is required? Do you have the answer already, or do you need to search it out? The content determines the audience. Hence, the message must have the meaning for the receiver and it must be compatible with his/her value system.

1.5.2 Context

The context must be clear and should not contradict the message. It must provide for participation and play back what’s going on. Do you understand the situation? Is there a dead elephant in the middle of the room that you are not aware of? Ask good questions. You’ll need a clear goal before you begin to design any communication.

1.5.3 Channels

Only the established channels of communication should be used — channels that the receiver uses and respects—creating new ones is difficult. Different channels have different effects and serve effectively in different stages of the diffusion process.

1.5.4 Clarity

This is one of the hardest parts of the process and most often neglected. People's attention will quickly drift — they expect you to get to the point. Learn to edit. The message must be put in simple terms. Words must mean the same thing to the receiver as they do to the sender. Complex issues must be compressed into theme slogans that have simplicity and clarity. The farther a message has to travel, the simpler it should be.

1.5.5 Composition

Now it's time to design the way you will tell your story. Think in terms of both written and visual composition. When writing, who are your main characters? How will you set up the scene? What are the goals and conflicts that will develop? How will the story reach a resolution? In visual terms, where will the reader begin? How will you lead the eye around the page? In all your compositional thinking, how will you engage your audience? How will you keep them engaged? Writing down, forces you to think it through. Communication must break down into basic "building blocks" of content. Formulate the information into clusters and groups. What patterns emerge? How can you make the information more modular? Given your goal, what is the most fundamental unit of information? You can use index cards to break down information into modules.

1.5.6 Contrast

What are the differences that matter? Use contrast to highlight them: Big vs. little; rough vs. smooth; black vs. white. When making any point, ask, "in comparison with what?" Contrast is a trigger to the brain that says "pay attention!"

1.5.7 Consistency

Unless you are highlighting differences, keep things like color, fonts, spacing and type sizes consistent to avoid distracting people. Research shows that any extraneous information will detract from people's ability to assimilate and learn. Communication is an unending process. It requires repetition to achieve penetration. The story must be consistent.

1.6 LET US SUM UP

We have spoken about the concept of communication, the way it works and the various elements of the communication process. Now we have very clearly understood the meaning, the functions and various kinds of communication in which human beings are engaged. We can now very easily understand the impact of mass media, i.e. electronic media, television channels, films and print media for mass communication. Let's sum up every thing in brief.

Communication is a process that allows an individual to exchange information by several ways. Effective communication requires more than just transmitting a message. The message must be clear, accurate and above all, understood by the receiver.

Communication is a dynamic process, ongoing and ever changing, which involves five major elements. The five elements are the message, the sender, the transmission medium, the receiver and feedback.

Designing communication is a complex process. It begins at a high level, with good questions and good listening; and ends in constructing a presentation, document, system or user experience.

Communication requires at least three elements. The source may be an individual speaking, or gesturing, etc., or a communication organization like the newspaper, movie, etc. The message is something which can be interpreted meaningfully by somebody else. The destination may be a person who is listening, or reading, or watching, or it may be a group of people who are listening to a lecture, or watching a movie.

1.7 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Check Your Progress 1

- i) Communication is a process of sending a message, through different media. It is a process that allows an individual to exchange information in several ways.
- ii) To inform, persuade, debate/discuss, instruct, entertain, promote culture and integration.

Check Your Progress 2

- i) A communicator is the source of communication. S/He formulates the message after passing it through psychological or internal communication barriers, encodes it and finally transmits it.
- ii) The receiving process consists of four steps: receive, decode, filter and interpret.

Check Your Progress 3

Intrapersonal : a) clarity of thoughts

b) streamlining of thoughts

Interpersonal : a) exchange of information between two people

b) flow of information; immediate feedback.

Group : a) flow of information to a group of people

b) interaction with greater number of people

Mass : a) use of technology

b) dissemination of information on a large scale.

UNIT 2 MASS MEDIA AND COMMUNICATION

Structure

- 2.0 Objectives
- 2.1 Introduction
- 2.2 Types of Mass Media
 - 2.2.1 Journalism
 - 2.2.2 Broadcasting and Telecasting
 - 2.2.3 Internet
 - 2.2.4 Publishing
 - 2.2.5 Mobile
- 2.3 Impact and Dangers of Mass Media
- 2.4 Impact of Journalism
- 2.5 Impact of Radio and Television
- 2.6 Impact of Films
- 2.7 Impact of Internet
- 2.8 Let Us Sum Up
- 2.9 Answers to Check Your Progress

2.0 OBJECTIVES

Through this Unit our aim is to introduce you to the various mediums of mass communication and discuss their impact on our lives. We shall take up all these Medias in details.

We have touched briefly on the concept of mass communication in the earlier Unit of this Block. After going through this Unit, you would have a fair idea of the impact of mass media in the Indian context. By the end of this Unit you will be able to:

- Outline the development of journalism in India from a mission to an industry and explain its present impact on people
- Describe the reach of radio and its impact on the masses
- Explain the role of films as a mirror of social realities and its effects on society
- Describe the role of TV among the Indian elite and masses and
- Describe the new technologies like the internet and identify its relevance to the Indian media scene

2.1 INTRODUCTION

Reaching out to thousands and millions of people is accomplished through a mass media like television or newspapers. Mass communication can be defined as the process of using mass media to send messages to large audiences for the purpose of informing, entertaining or persuading. In many respects the process of mass communication and other communication are same. Some one conceives a message, essentially an intrapersonal act. The message then is encoded into a common code,

such as language. Then it is transmitted. Another person receives the message, decodes it and internalizes it. In other respects mass communication is distinctive. Crafting an effective message for thousands of people of diverse backgrounds and interest requires different skills than chatting with a friend across the table. Encoding the message is more complex because a device is always used, for example a camera or recorder.

We shall first take up the print media because that happens to be the original type of mass media in India. We shall then give an account of radio, film and TV as media of mass communication in India, their spread, reach, people's access to these media and their impact on the society. New technologies made their entry during 1970s and 1980s. They are video, cable and satellite TV. We shall discuss the effect these new channels of mass communication have on the people.

2.2 TYPES OF MASS MEDIA

Mass media is a term used to denote a section of the media specifically envisioned and designed to reach a very large audience such as the population of a nation state. It was coined in the 1920s with the advent of nationwide radio networks, mass-circulation newspapers and magazines, although mass media was present centuries before the term became common. Mass communication media makes it possible to deliver messages to millions of people at roughly the same time. The authors of these messages are usually organizations and the audiences are composed of individuals.

Mass media can be used for various purposes. For instance, it can help both for business and social concerns. This can include advertising, marketing, propaganda, public relations and political communication. It can also be used for enrichment, education and entertainment, through performances of acting, music and sports, as well as for public service announcements.

The concept of mass media is complicated in some internet media as now individuals have a means of potential exposure on a scale comparable to what was previously restricted to select group of mass media producers. These internet media can include television, personal web pages, podcasts and blogs. The communication audience has been viewed by some commentators as forming a mass society with special characteristics, notably atomization or lack of social connections, which render it especially susceptible to the influence of modern mass-media techniques such as advertising and propaganda. The term "MSM" or "mainstream media" has been widely used in the blogosphere in discussion of the mass media and media bias.

2.2.1 Journalism

Journalism is a discipline of collecting, analyzing, verifying and presenting information regarding current events, trends, issues and people. Those who practice journalism are known as journalists.

The development and widespread use of printed text in Europe in the 1500s produced a brand new form of communication. For the first time, a single message could be duplicated with little error and distributed to thousands of people. First used to propagate religious texts and arguments, this "mass" approach to communication quickly caught on and was soon being used to distribute news, entertainment and government regulations.

News-oriented journalism is sometimes described as the “first rough draft of history” (attributed to Phil Graham), because journalists often record important events, producing news articles on short deadlines. While under pressure to be first with their stories, news media organizations usually edit and proof read their reports prior to publication, adhering to each organization’s standards of accuracy, quality and style. Many news organizations claim proud traditions of holding government officials and institutions accountable to the public, while media critics have raised questions about holding the press itself accountable.

2.2.2 Broadcasting and Telecasting

Broadcasting is the distribution of audio and/or video signals (programs) to a number of recipients (“listeners” or “viewers”) that belong to a large group. This group may be the public in general, or a relatively large audience within the public. Thus, an Internet channel may distribute text or music world-wide, while a public address system in (for example) a workplace may broadcast very limited *ad hoc* sound bites to a small population within its range.

Television and radio programs are distributed through radio broadcasting over frequency bands that are highly regulated by the Communications Commission. Such a regulation includes determination of the width of the bands, range, licensing, types of receivers and transmitters used and acceptable content.

Cable programs are often broadcast simultaneously with radio and television programs, but have a more limited audience. By coding signals and having decoding equipment in homes, cable also enables subscription-based channels and pay-per-view services.

A broadcasting organization may broadcast several programs at the same time, through several channels (frequencies), for example BBC One and Two. On the other hand, two or more organizations may share a channel and each use it during a fixed part of the day. Digital radio and digital television may also transmit multiplexed programming, with several channels compressed into one ensemble.

When broadcasting is done via the Internet the term webcasting is often used. In 2004 a new phenomenon occurred when a number of technologies combined to produce podcasting. Podcasting is an asynchronous broadcast/ narrowcast medium, with one of the main proponents being Adam Curry and his associates’ the Podshow.

2.2.3 Internet

The Internet (also known simply as “the Net” or “the Web”) can be briefly understood as “a network of networks”. Specifically, it is the worldwide, publicly accessible network of interconnected computer networks that transmit data by packet switching using the standard Internet Protocol (IP). It consists of millions of smaller domestic, academic, business and governmental networks, which together carry various information and services, such as electronic mail, online chat, file transfer and the interlinked Web pages and other documents of the World Wide Web

Contrary to some common usage, the Internet and the World Wide Web are not synonymous. The Internet is a collection of interconnected computer networks, linked by copper wires, fiber-optic cables, wireless connections etc. The Web is a collection of interconnected documents, linked by hyperlinks and URLs. The World Wide Web is accessible via the Internet, along with many other services including e-mail, file sharing and others.

2.2.4 Publishing

Publishing is the industry concerned with the production of literature or information – the activity of making information available for public view. In some cases, authors may be their own publishers.

Traditionally, the term refers to the distribution of printed works such as books and newspapers. With the advent of digital information systems and the Internet, the scope of publishing has expanded to include websites, blogs and the like.

As a business, publishing includes the development, marketing, production and distribution of newspapers, magazines, books, literary works, musical works, software, and other works dealing with information.

Publication is also important as a legal concept; (1) as the process of giving formal notice to the world of a significant intention, for example, to marry or enter bankruptcy and (2) as the essential precondition of being able to claim defamation, that is, the alleged libel must have been published.

2.2.5 Mobile

Mobile phones were introduced in Japan in 1997 but became a mass media only in 1998 when the first downloadable ringing tones were introduced in Finland. Soon most forms of media content were introduced on mobile phones. The mobile media content includes over 8 billion dollars worth of mobile music (ringing tones, ring back tones, true tones, MP3 files, karaoke, music videos, music streaming services, etc); over 5 billion dollars worth of mobile gaming and various news, entertainment and advertising services. In Japan mobile phone books are so popular that five of the ten best-selling printed books were originally released as mobile phone books.

Similar to the internet, mobile is also an interactive media, but has a far wider reach. Like email on the internet, the top application on mobile is also a personal messaging service, and SMS text messaging is used by over 2.4 billion people. Practically all internet services and applications exist or have similar cousins on mobile, from search to multiplayer games to virtual worlds to blogs. Mobile has several unique benefits which many mobile media pundits claim, make mobile a more powerful media than either TV or the internet, starting with mobile being permanently carried and always connected. Mobile has the best audience accuracy and is the only mass media with a built-in payment channel available to every user without any credit cards or PayPal accounts or even an age limit. With the inclusion of various aps like Whatsapp or Wechat the mobile is perhaps the most popular medium of mass communication.

Check Your Progress 1

Note: a) Space given below the question is for writing your answer.

b) Check your answer with the one given at the end of this unit.

i) For what purpose can mass media be used?

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ii) List the various types of mass media.

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2.3 IMPACT AND DANGERS OF MASS MEDIA

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

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

The growth of mass communication has made it possible for us to get far more information today than any time before. Information is indispensable in a complex, advanced society. We are an information-hungry society; we need an ever-increasing amount of facts in order to maintain and enhance our standard of living. We have often been told that information is power. The question is, what do we have to do to ensure that the information we receive from the mass media will serve our needs, not the purpose of someone else?

We shall now discuss the situation of mass media in India and describe the possible impact of each one of these media- print journalism, radio, film, TV, video, cable and satellite TV. India, towards the end of the 20th century, still largely remained an oral society. We spent more time communicating interpersonally rather than through the channels of mass communication. The situation in the West was different. There, an average person daily spends at least six hours “consuming” mass media products, mainly TV, radio, film and newspapers.

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

Among them are these five major concerns:

Manipulation: Perversion of truth by electronic trickery is a major concern today. Clever users of electronic devices can alter the meaning of recorded visual and audio material, making it appear to be what it really isn't.

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

Security: Violation of security, both governmental and institutional is another major concern. Protection of secret government information, private financial transactions, and institutional records in computer systems has become a matter of concern.

Democratic Process: It is axiomatic that democracy functions best when voters are widely informed on all problems and issues. However, given the power to select the information they desire with the aid of new technologies, will citizens be exposing themselves to a sufficiently broad range of knowledge? By choosing to see and hear only what interests them most—for example, sports, stock market quotations, and entertainment—will they be able to vote intelligently? This power of selectivity might actually serve, under some circumstances, as a limiting factor (rather than as a broadening one) in the education of the citizenry.

Isolation: While the communication revolution has the power to draw the global community closer together, simultaneously, it also isolates individuals and small groups. Instead of mingling with crowds at movie theaters, couples and families stay home to watch television and video on their TV screens. Both adults and children sit for hours, aware only of what appears on the small screen. Often they seem visually drugged, almost bewitched. A growing number of workers do their jobs at home, linked to their offices by personal computer. This isolation from comrades, this loss of the group dynamics, has forced some intense media users to seek psychiatric help. The negative influence of such aloneness of a large number of people has still not become a big problem in our country, but we are definitely heading there. This can be seen across cities where groups of people are sitting together, yet are busy with their laptops or mobile phones rather than interacting with each other.

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

2.4 IMPACT OF JOURNALISM

Newspapers in India have undergone revolutionary changes, both in form and content since the eighties. Today, there are hundreds of dailies and magazines crying for attention. Splashes of colour and slick typography based on computer technology are making them brighter and visually more appealing. To keep up with TV, contemporary journalism has increasingly become more pictorial. While still clinging to the traditional news coverage formula with its emphasis on politics, they have also started discussing social economic and environmental issues. This has resulted in a drastic jump in circulations and revenues.

Newspaper readers, though numerically small in India, largely constitute the intelligentsia. The influence of the press is decidedly far wider than reflected by mere circulation statistics. It has a “multiplier effect”; its message spreads far and wide, even into the villages.

The impact of the press can be judged only in the perspectives of current developments and pace of change in the country. Despite its predominantly urban and middle class moorings, the press has done a reasonably good job in highlighting the issues of poverty, corruption and unemployment, and has given the ruling class a sense of guilt. The power of the press is also seen to be mainly responsible for the major political developments in India. The capacity of the Indian press to generate a healthy debate on public issues has been only partially realized. But with increasing literacy, it holds infinite possibilities in the future.

Barring a few instances of blatantly biased reporting, the Indian press has, by and large, shown a high degree of social responsibility. However, we must add that with increasing competition, the press is increasingly being used as the battleground for political and corporate warfare. This has inevitably led to an invasion of privacy, smearing of reputations and even practicing of deception.

2.5 IMPACT OF RADIO AND TELEVISION

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

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

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

TV can transport the viewers to the actual scene of action to see things as they happen. But many have also come to hold TV responsible for inciting violence corrupting the young and creating a make belief world of illusion to keep us away from the realities of life. But if TV can distract and distort, it can also instruct and inspire. As an instant medium, TV is ideal for news presentation. TV news gives the audience a sense of excitement and involvement that cannot be matched by any other medium.

2.6 IMPACT OF FILMS

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

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

A film calls for creative collaboration between the filmmaker and other performing and visual artists. Films fired the imagination of people by the closing years of the nineteenth century. By the twenties, films came to be recognised as an art form, a distinct mode of creative expression. They also earned universal acclaim as a versatile means of communication. Films came to be produced on all subjects of human interest and include, feature films, documentaries and newsreels.

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

Indian films followed the Hollywood model right from the start with heavy emphasis on entertainment. But individual filmmakers broke away from the mainstream, and made socially purposeful films, even in the thirties.

2.7 IMPACT OF INTERNET

The Internet is the decisive technology of the Information Age, just as the electrical engine was the vector of technological transformation of the Industrial Age. This global network of computer networks, largely based nowadays on platforms of wireless communication, provides ubiquitous capacity of multimodal, interactive communication in chosen time, transcending space. The Internet is not really a new technology: its ancestor, the Arpanet, was first deployed in 1969. But it was in the 1990s when it was privatized and released from the control of the U.S. Department of Commerce that it diffused around the world.

The internet is so popular nowadays that almost everyone uses it. It is accessible by almost any person who tries to connect to one of its central, main networks. Moreover, it can be accessed by users of any age and condition. But what are the positive and negative aspects of the internet? The Internet has some great positive effects. For instance, Internet search engines are the best information retrieval systems available. They bring any kind of information for internet users, from local restaurants to international news. The Internet also provides some of the most effective means of communication among people, including online emailing and instant messaging.

Thanks to the internet, people can take action and avoid adverse circumstances. For instance, hurricane, storms and accidents can be tracked through the internet. The internet has allowed the interchange of ideas and materials among scientists, university professors, and students, in addition to providing servers, resource centers and online tools for their research and scholarly activities. Moreover, millions of books, journals and other material are available through the internet because of the digitization of public domain material from libraries. This action enables people to learn all sorts of new things.

However, the internet can also have certain negative effects. For instance illegal or inappropriate materials can be found on the internet. One can also illegally download music or other copyrighted material for free. This action has had a negative impact on the music industry and has led to several lawsuits. The addiction to online social networks can disturb a person's way of living and professional activity. Some criminals use the internet for spreading computer viruses or even intercepting credit card or bank details for wrong purposes.

You will be reading more about the internet and all the new technologies available to us these days in Block 4 of this course.

Check Your Progress 2

Note: a) Space given below the question is for writing your answer.

b) Check your answer with the one given at the end of this unit.

i) List two positive and two negative influences that TV programmes may have on children.

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ii) List some negative impacts of the internet.

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2.8 LET US SUM UP

In this unit, you have been exposed to the major mass media channels available in India, their evolution, growth and use in the Indian context. We also discussed some of the effects these mass media have on their audiences. Because they form a primary channel through which the various units of society communicate, the mass media illuminate and interpret the constantly changing social relationships. Some critics contend that the media, or at least some of the national electronic and print-

media, try to mould society to their own design by seeking to influence the attitudes, habits, and political beliefs of those who make the society. Other observers see the media role as more passive, reflecting rather than promoting change.

To conclude we can say that the bulk of the print, electronic, and film media does not consciously try to shape society, although a small minority of them vigorously and openly pleads causes dear to them. The media as a whole are concerned with reporting and interpreting society's conduct (information and education angles); by presenting material that pleases audiences and earns profit (entertainment angle); and with marketing goods and services through advertising to make a profit for themselves (commercial angle).

2.9 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Check Your Progress 1

- i) Advertising, marketing, propaganda, public relations, enrichment education, entertainment and public service announcements among many others.
- ii) Journalism; Radio and TV; Internet: Publishing and mobiles

Check Your Progress 2

- i) Positive: 1) Children may see places that they may not get a chance to see.
2) TV programmes educate children.
Negative: 1) May lessen their capacity to imagine
2) Excessive violence shown on TV can dehumanize children.
- ii) There are many negative impacts. Children can access sites which may not be suitable for them. etc

UNIT 3 CHARACTERISTICS OF DIFFERENT MASS MEDIA

Structure

- 3.0 Objectives
- 3.1 Introduction
- 3.2 Print Media: Genesis and Characteristics
- 3.3 New Trends in Print Media
 - 3.3.1 Commercialization
 - 3.3.2 New Printing Technologies
 - 3.3.3 Need for Content Revolution
 - 3.3.4 Professional Suffocation
- 3.4 Electronic Media
- 3.5 Characteristics of Radio
- 3.6 Television: Genesis and Characteristics
 - 3.6.1 Characteristics of Television
- 3.7 Characteristics of Film
- 3.8 Internet or Cyber Media
 - 3.8.1 Blogs (Web Logs)
 - 3.8.2 World Wide Web
- 3.9 Let Us Sum Up
- 3.10 Answers to Check Your Progress

3.0 OBJECTIVES

Through this Unit our aim is to tell you in details about the genesis and major characteristics of the four major media of Mass communication i.e. print, radio, TV Films. We also aim to very briefly touch upon internet or cyber media. This will be taken up in greater detail in Block 4 of this course.

By the end of this unit you should be able to:

- describe the current status of the print media in India
- become more sensitive as a listener of radio, as a viewer of TV, and of film in a cinema theatre
- describe the unique process of communication of radio, TV and film and
- identify the unique psychology of reception of the audiences of radio, TV and film.

3.1 INTRODUCTION

You would recall that among the various functions of mass media, the four primary ones are (1) to inform (2) to entertain (3) to educate, and (4) to promote culture, goods and ideas. These functions overlap at times. Each medium tends to emphasize one of these more than the others. The print media tends to emphasize information whereas the focus of broadcast and film media is on entertainment. Advertising is the most blatant form of persuasion, but much of the persuasion in mass media is

concealed and some is passed off as news. Finally, the media preserve culture by furnishing a record of events and by noting changes in the social structure.

3.2 PRINT MEDIA: GENESIS AND CHARACTERISTICS

Today, the print media comprise newspapers, magazines, trade journals, textbooks, posters, leaflets, direct mail literature, and printed material and graphics of various types shown on the slide and small screens. In addition, a variety of mass circulated commercial items now roll out of printing presses. These include wrappers, calendars, packaging labels, postcards, street banners, postal stamps, currency notes, cheque books, stationery pads as also works of great art. Much of educational and cultural system, information and promotion departments and government publishing depend on print today.

The principal technological advances which have accounted for this growth in the domain of the print media are computerization and automation in typesetting, image manipulation of word processing, multi-colour scanning, processing and offset printing. Some other sophisticated printing technologies have followed in quick succession.

By 1989, India had become one of the ten largest publishers of newspapers and the third biggest producer of books in English. In terms of numbers, our country produced 27,054 newspapers of, which 2,538 were dailies, 144 tri/bi-weeklies, 8,353 weeklies and 16,019 other periodicals which included fortnightlies, monthlies, etc.

Today, newspapers are published from all the States and union Territories. Uttar Pradesh claims the top position with 3,711 newspapers, followed by Delhi (3,565), Maharashtra (3,137) and West Bengal (2,684). Others in descending order are Rajasthan (1,735), Tamil Nadu (1,551), Madhya Pradesh (1,534), Andhra Pradesh (1,399), Karnataka (1,381), Kerala (1,291) and Bihar (1,190).

True to the linguistic diversity of our country, newspapers are brought out in 93 languages and dialects, including some foreign languages. Among the 16 principal languages, **Hindi** claims the largest number (20,589), followed by **English** (7,596), **Bengali** (2,741), **Urdu** (2,906), **Marathi** (2,943), **Tamil** (2,119), **Gujarati** (2,215), **Kannada** (1,816), **Telugu** (1,289), and **Malayalam** (1,505).

The English newspapers enjoyed hegemony in the British period but after the declaration of Hindi as the national language after independence, the ascendancy of English was lost. The Hindi newspapers surpassed both in terms of number and circulation. The other language newspapers also recorded significant progress. The phenomenon is called a silent revolution in Indian journalism.

One of the chief characteristics of print media is that they offer extensive news coverage and in-depth treatment of themes. They provide a larger variety of coverage, through different kinds of writings, than any other media in India. There are plenty of backgrounders, field based interviews, spot inquiries and feedback interviews, and incisive comments. Besides special articles, syndicated reports, and features, there are special sections for sports and business. Then there are review columns for books, films, media, and art. For those seeking light reading material, there is a great variety of humour, fun, comics, and satire. The main weakness of the print media is that they can be read only by the literates and their number is still small in our country. Secondly, 93 percent of the newspapers are concentrated in urban areas.

Thirdly, the increasing rise in the price of newspapers and magazines is preventing a large number of our people from purchasing them.

The electronic media, especially TV, are dominating in the United States and other Western countries by providing instantaneous news and entertainment. In India, however, the print media still enjoys greater credibility and social respectability than any other media. The reasons are obvious.

The print media have an added advantage and convenience in using them. People can read newspapers and magazines wherever and whenever it is convenient for them “ at home, in transit, in office or back at home in the evening. That is not possible in the case of electronic media, for they are time scheduled. If one fails to see a programme on TV at a given time, one misses it forever unless the programme is recorded. The old issues of printed media can be easily preserved in the libraries. The actual number of repeated readers of the magazines and periodicals is more for they change hands at the magazine parlours as also among the subscribers. In our country, interestingly, even the old issues of newspapers and magazines are saleable at a discounted price.

3.3 NEW TRENDS IN PRINT MEDIA

After Independence, certain innovations in the printing technology and other socio-economic developments have had a significant effect on the role and functions of the print media. The two notable developments are a shift towards commercialization and introduction of new printing technologies.

3.3.1 Commercialization

The national newspapers, during the British period, functioned primarily with a missionary zeal and acted as the voice of the freedom fighters and stimulated the movement through advocacy journalism. They underwent a significant change after Independence. Having successfully helped the nation to win freedom, the missionary zeal of the newspapers evaporated. Journalism in India, like elsewhere, had already become a publishing industry. The cost of production and distribution was increasing fast in India; so were the wages of journalists and others engaged in newspaper production. The competition too was growing. Although the two Press Commissions stressed “public utility service” as the main attribute of a good press, they did not completely sidetrack the financial aspect because without financial viability freedom is not possible. The theory of de-linking of the press from business houses engaged in other industries, was not accepted by the newspaper magnates.

3.3.2 New Printing Technologies

The induction of modern printing technologies has brought about a new climate of working in the print media organizations. It, of course varies from unit to unit, depending upon the nature of technology employed. In big organisations, reporters now type their copy straight on the computer linked with video terminals (that is, the electronic type-setting machines) and not on the mechanical typewriters. The copy, after corrections, is stored in a small computer from where it can be retrieved by the desk for final selection and electronic editing. The next stage is to prepare the layout, page by page, again by the video process. The final copies of pages are sent to the bigger computer which transmits them to the especially sensitive plates for printing.

The copies of newspapers, you read at home, are now elegantly printed, bearing creative typographical and layout designs. In fact printing today has become a graphic art. Whether you are browsing through **The Times of India, Saptahik Hindustan, India Today, Swagar or Nai Duniya** it is a pleasing exercise to the eyes.

The newspapers at the stalls today are nearly as tantalizing as the glittering magazines. There are elegantly produced morning papers accompanied by colourful supplements on fixed days, especially on Saturdays and Sundays. The seductive tabloids called the ‘evenings’, both in English and Indian languages, have flooded the metropolitan towns. The lure of their catchy titles and big size pictures, along with the ever-present sparkling magazines, has so far enabled the print media to hold well in competition with the electronic media.

3.3.3 Need for Content Revolution

However, merely good looks cannot be a substitute for professionalism and high quality, reader-oriented journalism. The content analysis of newspapers and magazines has revealed a lack of uniform professional excellence in the press. Most of the newspapers concentrate on political issues and negative news (like disasters). High class specialized or feature journalism, investigative and research-based depth or development reporting, and incisive analysis of current national and international news are lacking. The same few high profile commentators dominate in all the newspapers and magazines.

3.3.4 Professional Suffocation

The trend towards commercialization became even more pronounced as the newer printing technologies were increasingly adopted by big and medium sized newspapers. These technologies were capital intensive and pushed the press further in the grip of commercialism. The computer controlled photo composition, multi-coloured offset and typographical designs made old drab newspapers look attractive. This bestowed power on the investor and his managerial staff. As a result, contract journalism is gaining ground and the instances of deviant editors being fired are becoming more common. This trend of the editors being “cut to size” and diminishing value being attached to objective and truthful reporting because of political and commercial pressures has been considered a retrogressive development by leading media observers. The changing relationship at the top managerial and editorial levels has adversely affected the morale of the journalists at the lower levels within the media organizations. Many have complained at media seminars of professional suffocation.

Check Your Progress 1

Note: a) Space given below the question is for writing your answer.

b) Check your answer with the one given at the end of this unit.

i) Do you agree with the statement that there is a need to revolutionize the content of newspapers? Give reasons for your answer.

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ii) Give reasons for newspapers suffering from professional suffocation.

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3.4 ELECTRONIC MEDIA

We described the characteristics of the print media, the oldest among the four major mass media. Now we shall concentrate on the characteristics of radio, television and film. Television has become the most pervasive medium in most countries today. But, radio and film were born much before TV came on the scene. We shall, in this unit, briefly look at their origin and analyse their distinguishing characteristics.

Till the close of the 19th century, the stage provided a form for mass contact. The stage was (and is) a live medium, with live performers, with speakers and actors confronting live audiences. There was an instant feedback in the case of stage communication because of the continuous interaction between the performers and their audiences. But the size of audience was small, at best, a few thousand people.

In 1896 came films, in which the performance was caught by camera and preserved on celluloid. It could be shown again and again, without any variation (which is not possible in the stage medium), to different audiences. So, films could reach vast masses. Till 1927, it was the era of the silent film. In 1927, sound was added to the film and we got talking films or talkies. In India, the first talkie was released in 1931.

The 1920s witnessed the coming of radio broadcasting in many countries, including India. Just as lack of ears was a limitation and a challenge for the silent film, lack of eyes was a limitation and a challenge for the radio. But both film and radio converted the challenge into an opportunity. That was accomplished through creative imagination of talented men.

In the 1930s, the television made its bow in the west. Its true development took place after the Second World War. In India, the new glamour medium came in 1959. Today, TV pervades the life of people in most nations. It has become a very powerful medium of information, education and entertainment. Like films and the radio, TV has its unique process of communication and psychology of reception. All the three media (like the stage medium) have their relevance and utility.

Radio and TV are called electronic media because they are electronically operated. Today, they are the supreme media of mass communication, leaving the other media far behind. No other medium can reach hundreds of thousands of people with such speed as the broadcast media of radio and TV can.

3.5 CHARACTERISTICS OF RADIO

Unlike the live medium of the stage, where there are live performers and live audience, radio is a sightless or a viewless medium. In radio, the performer does

not see his audience and the listeners cannot see the performer, the talker, the actor, etc. That is why radio is sometimes called the blind medium. Since, it is a blind or sightless medium, the performer has to creatively imagine his listeners. The listeners too have to imagine the performance creatively. But the performer must spark off the imagination of the listeners with expressive performance or communication. To understand a radio communication or broadcast, you imagine two complete strangers talking on the phone. Here are some important characteristics of radio

a) A Medium of Sound

It is an exclusive medium of sound. It is an aural or auditory medium, a medium of the ear. There are three elements of a radio broadcast. They are the spoken word, music and sound effects. They are all sounds carried on the air waves to the listener. To be acceptable, all these sounds must be pleasant and expressive for the ears of the listener. They must be artistically integrated or mixed to provoke the imagination of the listener.

b) A Medium of Voice

Radio is a medium of the voice. The performer can use only his voice in a broadcast. The producer mixes his voice with music and sound effects. But it does not mean that a broadcaster, say, an actor, has only to learn a few tricks of the voice. An actor, using only vocal tricks, would soon start sounding fake or untruthful to the listener. A radio listener has a highly developed ear or sound sense. It has been correctly said that an actor or any other performer must broadcast with his mind. An actor, for radio, must express all the emotions through his voice alone — the torture of the soul, the pleasure, the laughter and so on. He is not wearing any costume or make-up; there is no scenery or properties. Neither he nor his co-actors are seen by the listener. So he must imaginatively give cues or intimations only through his voice. This he will be able to do only if he mentally gets under the skin of his character and dialogues or speeches.

c) An Intimate Medium

Radio is an intimate medium. The broadcaster must imagine that the listeners are sitting by his side, shoulder to shoulder. To the listeners, it sounds as if the broadcaster is speaking from within the sound box, the radio set or the transistor as if the broadcaster and the listeners are made for each other, as if the broadcaster is broadcasting for each listener individually.

Because the radio is an intimate medium, the best subjects for radio broadcasts are those which intimately concern the listeners like the personal, the private and family problems, family relations; the working of the soul, the innermost feelings and intimate subjects are especially relevant to good radio drama. An intimate style or acting is especially relevant to the radio. Words, which are supreme or sovereign for the radio, too, must evoke intimate images on the stage of the imagination of the listener. Silence or absence of words on the radio is fatal. It is like an empty stage. Like the words, the manner of expressing or articulating the words must also be intimate.

So, the rule of the oil industry applies here: if you cannot drill in the first two minutes, stop boring. So, the text of the broadcast, a talk, a discussion, a documentary, a feature, a document-feature, a document-drama, etc. must get into the subject informally, intimately and interestingly right at the start.

d) A Mobile Medium

Radio is a mobile medium. You can have it at home, take it to a picnic resort, listen to it while driving, and have it on land or in the sea, in public or in private. So, it is a most convenient medium for anybody. It can accompany you and entertain you anywhere.

It does not respect unities of time, place and action as prescribed by Aristotle, more than two thousand years ago, for dramatic communication. Stage drama may, even now, respect these unities because of the obvious limitations of the stage medium. But radio drama, which is drama of the mind, may hop from any period or place to any other period or place.

e) A Cheap and Quick Medium

Radio is a much cheaper and quicker medium than television for production of programmes. For example, it requires a performer and a producer who may also be a recorder and an effects man. As against this, a TV production (teleproduction) would require a costumes man, a make-up man, two or three cameras and cameramen, a scene designer, a carpenter, several lights and light men, several monitoring sets, engineers, a producer, performer, etc.

Check Your Progress 2

Note: a) Space given below the question is for writing your answer.

b) Check your answer with the one given at the end of this unit.

i) List some characteristics of radio.

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ii) What do you mean by radiogenic?

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iii) Explain why radio is called a blind medium.

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iv) What are the three types of sound generally used in a radio broadcast?

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3.6 TELEVISION: GENESIS AND CHARACTERISTICS

The invention of television “essentially a twentieth-century phenomenon” was the result of a combination of earlier technological developments in the fields of radio-broad casting, motion pictures, photography and the electronic camera. A Scottish engineer, John Baird, is generally credited with the invention of television, in an improvised laboratory in his lodgings in Hastings (England). In 1924 he succeeded in transmitting the form of pictures from one place to another. In April 1927, the American Telephone and Telegraph Company (AT&T) gave a public demonstration in which a speech by the US secretary of Commerce, Herbert Hoover, was broadcast from Washington and watched in New York by an invited audience. The event made front-page headlines in the next day’s newspapers.

The BBC, on 2 November 1936, initiated the first regular television service in the world. In May 1937, the BBC televised the Coronation. A couple of month’s later television cameras went to Wimbledon for the first time. The World War II resulted in six years interruption and TV broadcasting was resumed only in 1946. The United States launched the World’s first regular colour broadcasts in 1953. By 1955, the “Eurovision networks” were established linking the West European nations.

The General Conference of UNESCO, which was hosted by India in New Delhi in 1956, made a provision of \$20,000 to setup a pilot project to study the use of TV as a medium of education, rural uplift and community development. Television was introduced in India in 1959.

Development of television broadcasting proceeded at a very slow pace in the first twenty years of its existence in the country. But right from the very beginning Doordarshan’s role as an agent of education and social change was clearly recognized. In 1961, Doordarshan was used as a support to middle and higher secondary school education. Its experiments in teaching of science, mathematics and language were proved most successful and received appreciation from many UNESCO experts. It was only in April, 1965 that a general service was started. It was for one hour a day on four days of the week. On 15 August 1965 the service was made daily. It was then, under the guidance of Prime Minister Indira Gandhi who at that time was also Minister for Information and Broadcasting.

‘**Krishi Darshan**’ for rural viewers was inaugurated on January 26, 1967, by the then Prime Minister, Mrs. Indira Gandhi. It was telecast on Wednesdays and Fridays for 20 minutes each day, and served 80 villages around Delhi provided with community sets. This pilot project was initiated by the Department of Atomic Energy, in collaboration with the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, All India Radio, the Indian Agricultural Research Institute and the Delhi Administration. From July

15, 1970 the duration was increased to 30 minutes, and the programme was also broadcast on Mondays.

The seventies saw a major expansion of television. Doordarshan Kendra Bombay was commissioned in October 1972 and Doordarshan Kendra Srinagar in January 1973. Subsequently Doordarshan Kendras were set up at Calcutta, Madras, Lucknow, Amritsar and Jalandhar.

Cable Television: With the sudden and spectacular growth of satellite and cable television network since 1991, the most dramatic revolution on the TV screen got underway, when India ended decades of isolation from the rest of the world. Cable Television promised multiple channels and multiple choices for the viewer. Its introduction had profound effects on the broadcasting situation. Liberalization of airwaves has resulted in a proliferation of satellite channels in India.

3.6.1 Characteristics of Television

Television is an audio-visual medium. We have seen that radio is a medium of sound only. TV has both sound and sight. But TV should not be taken as radio with sight. Radio and TV are different media with different grammar, different vocabulary, different **mechanics** and **dynamics**. TV and radio are uniquely different from each other all along the line. Their broadcast right from conception down to reception is different. A “radio-broadcast” is uniquely radio-phonic or radiogenic. And, a TV broadcast is uniquely telegenic.

a) An Audio-Visual Medium

TV is an audio-visual but predominantly visual, proportionately much more visual than audio. A TV broadcast is conceived and produced and received in audio-visual terms. A TV broadcast directly affects two senses simultaneously, those of hearing and seeing. It is more effective than the radio broadcast. Radio is a uni--sense medium, affecting only one sense, i.e. hearing. TV broadcasts can have greater effect or influence on the receiver of the broadcast, called the viewer. The potential of TV to have greater effect or impact is because, according to psychologists, the eye absorbs much more than the ear in the same time. The eyes also retain the seen image much longer than the ears can.

b) Wide Reach and High Credibility

TV is a supreme medium of mass communication. With the support of the satellite technology today, it can reach all the corners of the globe. The TV camera, today, goes on to planes; it goes under the earth and into the sea and throws light on the dark areas of knowledge about our world, the universe, and the total environment. It has brought about an information revolution and has turned our society into an information society. Because of its reach, TV has widened the mental horizons of man. It has become the supreme educator of man. It has the potential of humanizing knowledge. TV is a credible and a believable medium. Seeing is believing. Things that few people might believe otherwise become believable when shown on the TV screen. They become effectively truer than those that one reads about in the print medium or listens to on the radio or learns through hearsay or word of mouth. Just recall the telepictures of the upheaval in Russia after the collapse of communism, or the visuals of the uprising in Tiananmen Square in China or those of the Iraq war, or, the havoc caused by the earthquake in Maharashtra

c) A Glamour Medium

TV is a glamour medium. You can watch glittering personalities and events, international conferences, sports meets and festivals, fashion shows and banquets, travel shows and interviews with world leaders, bold and beautiful personalities as well as rich and famous people. The great convenience of watching all this, sitting at home, adds to its glamour. Because of its glamour, TV has also been called the magic box. All sorts of people all sorts of times, almost magically, seem to be appearing on the screen from within the box. It has also been called a toy, a toy with which adults get fascinated, like the child's toy which fascinates the child. Incidentally, some critics have also called it an idiot box. Very few can resist the glamour and magic of T.V. It has a habit of attracting people to the point of addiction. Tele-addiction, in fact, has become the greatest addiction of our times, for most people.

d) A Medium of the Close-up

TV is the medium of the close-up. Its stage is its screen, which is small. Because of the small screen, it is not an ideal medium for spectacles or huge pageants. It is ideal for close-up of human faces, for long shots of scenery. It is an ideal medium for expressing reaction and interaction between people in a tele-drama, for presenting an interview and a discussion, etc. That is why you would find the camera catching the reaction or expression of the man who is talking at a particular moment. If something has happened or somebody has said something, the camera would show the reaction of several people, one by one, in close-up. According to artistic necessity, the camera would take full close-up or half or quarter close-up of a character or a man

e) A Living Room Medium

TV is a medium of and for the family. It is a medium of entertainment and information at home. TV brings theatre and the cinema auditorium to the living room. Stage drama has become a drawing room theatre. Film drama too has become a drawing room cinema auditorium. Fewer people now go to witness stage performances. Also, fewer people go to the cinema theatre for a movie. The film or the theatre comes to you in your drawing room under home conditions. Just think of street theatre in the context of stage drama. Instead of the people going to the theatre, the street drama takes the theatre to the people. Since TV is watched by the young and the old members of the family sitting together, the tele-subjects have to be in tune with the culture of the particular society. In our country, the subjects must be treated with restraint. They must respect our cultural heritage. They should not be very explosive or provocative. Since young girls and boys are sharing the viewing with their elders, parents, grand-parents and parents-in-law, the essence and ethos of our cultural taste cannot be over looked.

f) A Democratizing Medium

It is a democratizing medium. It is available to all people. Since it is a medium of mass communication, it has to deal with the problems of all sections of the society and democratize information and informal education, reaching out to one and all to democratize literature by discussing it in broadcasts or by telecasting its dramatic version. Even those who have not read literature or are illiterate or semi-literate come to know of it. Since TV, a mass medium, has to cater to all sections of the society, it is not uniformly very artistic. Highly artistic things might go over the heads of the common viewer. As against TV,

the stage can afford to be highly artistic because the audience is selective. Only those people go to the theatres that are ready to pay for the show. Theatres like Broadway have select audiences who are ready to pay for artistic productions as against commercial productions which can not choose their viewers. And TV does not charge ticket money for entry into shows. So, most TV programmes are for the common people.

g) A Medium of Immediacy

TV is a medium of immediacy. It captures the events even as they are happening much before the newspaper comes out with information on events next morning. Yesterday's news is no news on TV. It will make TV look outdated. TV is a super reporter. In audio-visual terms, it reports the events "here and now". Remember how the CNN or BBC report minute-by-minute Presidential election results or the Olympics or even wars and insurgencies.

h) Advertiser's Influence

TV is the great salesman of modern times. The businessman sells his products through TV. This medium is much more effective for him to reach out to a vast number of potential and actual customers than the newspaper hoardings. TV advertisements or programmes sponsored by business persons can reach tens of millions of people. No newspaper can ever dream of reaching out to such large numbers.

Check Your Progress 3

Note: a) Space given below the question is for writing your answer.

b) Check your answer with the one given at the end of this unit.

i) List some characteristics of TV

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ii) Why is TV called a medium of mass communication?

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iii) Why is TV (as well as radio) called an electronic media?

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iv) When did TV come to India?

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3.7 CHARACTERISTICS OF FILM

Film or cinema is a highly mechanical medium. It uses so many mechanical devices like cameras, microphones, dubbing machine, editing or cutting machine, several lenses for cameras, projectors, mixers, sound tracks, trolleys to mount the cameras, celluloid, laboratory equipment, etc. Film is a product of interaction between machines and artistic and technical people. Artistic people are the actors, the directors, costumers and make-up artists.

Film is a continuous strip of exposed celluloid. Celluloid is composed of several reels. Reels have several shots. Shots have several frames. Frames have only images which are static and do not move. So, film is only a sequence of static images, recorded by the camera. These images move and come to life through projectors, running one after the other at the end of each reel. Actually there is no real movement of images when the projectors project them on the cinema screen. It is only an illusion of movement of images. We have in our eyes the faculty which is called persistence of vision. Persistence of vision has the ability of the retina of our eye to retain the image due to the stimulus of light. So, film strips contain only static, frozen movement and action. Fast projections of images on the screen give an illusion of movement and action to the eye which has persistence of vision.

A motion picture is not shot as a continuous whole. It is photographed in bits and pieces. Final scenes may be shot first and the opening scenes later. Intervening or middle scenes may be recorded in a jumbled sequence. This shooting process is understood completely by the director alone. Later, he may create any effect by joining scenes in a certain sequence, through what is called the editing or “cutting” process.

a) A Mass Medium

Film is a medium of mass communication. Millions of cine-goers watch the movie in a country. The same movie may be seen by a very large number of people in several countries (like Richard Attenborough’s Gandhi). Although in a cinema hall only a few hundred people can watch a film at one time, it can be shown in many cities, towns and villages at the same time. Any number of copies can be made of the film for screening. Today, a film can also be transferred from the celluloid to the CD. The CD can be played at home through the CD player or DVD. The cable operators can transmit the film on to the TV sets of a large number of their customers at the same time. So, a film can reach out to a very large number of people.

b) Mechanically Reproducible

Film is a mechanically reproducible medium. So it can be preserved. It can be seen again and again. It can be useful for research on a relevant subject. It is

very useful as a mirror of society of the time when the film was made. It describes the political social, economic and cultural scene of a country. It describes the customs, fashions and attitudes of people at a particular time. It also throws light on the style of acting, music, dance, and direction, etc. of the times.

Films can be watched and understood even by illiterate people. They may not have the fortune to go to books for information to enrich their personalities. But they can understand and entertain themselves with films.

c) A Collaborative Medium

Film is a collaborative medium. So many people collaborate to make the film and to send it out to the people. The producer, director, writer, actor, art director, music director, dance director, fight director, light-man, costume-man, make-up man, scene designer, sound man, cameraman, clapper boy etc. work together to make a film. After a film has been made, the financier, the distributor, the exhibitor, and others work together, to make it available to the common people. No other medium depends so much on so many people.

The director, with his artistic and technical skill, can make a good film out of a bad script. A bad director, similarly, can kill a good script. A good director can, by using several devices like different camera angles, editing, re-recording, re-processing in the laboratory, make an average performance look great on the screen. In the cinema, camera is very important, next only to the director. But it is the director who ultimately gives orders to the camera too.

d) An Art Medium

Film, today, has become an art medium. It was during the last couple of decades that cinema has come to be considered as an art form. In the beginning it was considered a medium only of cheap entertainment, even of escaping from the harsh realities of life into the world of fantasy and dream for two to three hours. In our times, intellectuals and serious thinkers have associated themselves with cinema. Today, cinema is considered the seventh art like the earlier arts of painting, sculpture, architecture, drama, poetry and music. In fact the famous film maker Satyajit Ray made a passionate plea to introduce cinema as an art discipline at the universities. It should be studied by serious scholars and developed further. It should not be treated as a sub-culture and only as an entertainment medium. That is how it was treated in the earlier years in India and elsewhere.

e) A Medium for Development

Film is an effective medium for development. Development, in the broad sense, means the growth of the individual and the growth of society in all aspects. These include political, economic, social and cultural aspects. Films can promote national and emotional integration. They can bring about a creative understanding between different regions and their people. They can be a medium for educating the people against superstitions and for promoting scientific ideas, can contribute to modernizing the traditional society by helping to change the attitudes of people. For example, a change in attitudes relating to work, sex, religion, customs, communities, beliefs, etc. can be brought about through films.

f) A Medium that Demands People’s Concentration

The conditions under which a film is screened and is received by the cine-goers in a cinema house, demand concentration of different sections of society, sitting together in the same hall and constituting the audience. All these people tend to be unified, so to speak. Everybody’s motive is the same, to watch the film. The images, the words, the music, the sound effects are skillfully integrated. For the audience, the integrated whole or the film becomes a total experience. This demands great concentration from the audience. Sitting in the dark silence of the hall, the audience is mysteriously affected by how the story and scenes are presented. In a very indirect way, the director communicates his or the camera’s point of view.

Check Your Progress 4

- Note:** a) Space given below the question is for writing your answer.
b) Check your answer with the one given at the end of this unit.

i) Why is film a director’s medium?

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3.8 INTERNET OR CYBER MEDIA

The **Internet** is a worldwide, publicly accessible series of interconnected computer networks that transmit data by packet switching using the standard Internet Protocol (IP). It is a “network of networks” that consists of millions of smaller domestic, academic, business, and government networks, which together carry various information and services, such as electronic mail, online chat, file transfer, and the interlinked web pages and other resources of the World Wide Web (WWW).

3.8.1 Blogs (Web Logs)

Blogging has become a huge form of media made popular through the internet. A Blog is a website, usually maintained by an individual, with regular entries of commentary, descriptions of events, or other material such as graphics or video. Entries are commonly displayed in reverse chronological order. Many blogs provide commentary or news on a particular subject; others function as more personal online diaries. A typical blog combines text, images, and links to other blogs, web pages, and other media related to its topic. The ability for readers to leave comments in an interactive format is an important part of many blogs. Most blogs are primarily textual, although some focus on art (art blog), photographs (photo blog), sketch blog, videos (vlog), music (MP3 blog), audio (podcasting) and are part of a wider network of social media. Micro-blogging is another type of blogging which consists of blogs with very short posts.

3.8.2 The World Wide Web

Many people use the terms *Internet* and *World Wide Web* (or just the *Web*) interchangeably, but, the two terms are not synonymous. The World Wide Web is a huge set of interlinked documents, images and other resources, linked by hyperlinks and URLs. These hyperlinks and URLs allow the web servers and other machines that store originals, and cached copies, of these resources to deliver them as required using HTTP (Hypertext Transfer Protocol). HTTP is only one of the communication protocols used on the Internet. Web services also use HTTP to allow software systems to communicate in order to share and exchange business logic and data.

Through keyword-driven Internet research using search engines like Yahoo! and Google, millions of people worldwide have easy, instant access to a vast and diverse amount of online information. Compared to encyclopedias and traditional libraries, the World Wide Web has enabled a sudden and extreme decentralization of information and data.

Using the Web is also easier than ever before for individuals and organisations to publish ideas and information to an extremely large audience. Anyone can find ways to publish a web page or build a website for very little initial cost. Publishing and maintaining large, professional websites full of attractive, diverse and up-to-date information is still a difficult and expensive proposition, however.

Advertising on popular web pages can be lucrative, and e-commerce or the sale of products and services directly via the Web continues to grow.

3.9 LET US SUM UP

In this Unit we have told you about the genesis of the various mediums of mass communication. These are the print media, radio, television and films. We also gave you the main characteristics of each of these media. We have also briefly spoken about the cyber media or internet.

3.10 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Check Your Progress 1

- i) Yes there is, since a uniform professional excellence is missing. Also we need more high class feature journalism and investigative reporting as well as incisive analysis of current news.
- ii) Political and commercial pressures lead to this suffocation.

Check Your Progress 2

- i) Radio is a medium of sound and voice. It is an intimate and mobile medium as well as a cost effective and fast medium.
- ii) Radiogenic is a script written for the ears only.
- iii) In radio the performer does not see his audience and the listener cannot see the performer/talker/actor.
- iv) They are the spoken word, music and sound effects (SFX).

Check Your Progress 3

- i) TV is an audio-visual medium with a wide reach and high credibility. It's a glamorous and democratizing medium-among various other features.

- ii) Because it can reach all the corners of the globe and has turned our world into a global village. It has brought about an information revaluation and turned our society into an information based society.
- iii) Because both TV as well as radio are electronically operated.
- iv) In 1959

Check Your Progress 4

- i) Because the Director hides himself behind the actors and speaks through them. The actors do what the director says. Also the Director, with his artistic skills, can make or mar a good script.



UNIT 4 WRITING FOR MASS MEDIA

Structure

- 4.0 Objectives
- 4.1 Introduction
- 4.2 Writing for Print
 - 4.2.1 The Inverted Pyramid
 - 4.2.2 The Lead Paragraph
 - 4.2.3 Developing the Story
- 4.3 Writing for Broadcast
- 4.4 Writing for Television
- 4.5 Writing for the Web
- 4.6 Let Us Sum Up
- 4.7 Answers to Check Your Progress

4.0 OBJECTIVES

Our aim through this Unit is to familiarize you with the basic rules for writing for the various media. Our aim will also be to show you how writing for one particular medium differs from writing for another media. After reading this unit, you should be able to:

- discuss how drafting news for radio differs from drafting news for a newspaper,
- distinguish between the news in the print media (newspapers) and television news, and
- discuss the techniques of television news reporting as well as know the rules for writing for the web.

4.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter attempts to introduce you to the concept of “style” and what it means to those who work in the mass media. Conforming to the rules and conventions of the medium in which you are working is the mark of a true professional. Strict adherence to the details of style shows that you care about what you write. Writing for the mass media differs from other forms of writing in several aspects:

Subject matter: Writers for the mass media must take on a wide variety of subjects, including news stories, feature stories, advertisements, letters, editorials and so on.

Purpose: Writing for the mass media has three major purposes: to inform, to entertain and to persuade.

Audience: Mass media writing is often directed to a wide audience and this fact dictates not only the subject matter but the way in which something is written.

Circumstances of writing: Writing for the mass media often takes place in the presence of others who are doing the same thing. The writing is frequently done under the pressures of deadlines and many times several people will have a hand in writing and editing a particular item for the mass media.

4.2 WRITING FOR PRINT

Writers for the mass media always work at two tasks: gathering information and putting that information into an acceptable form. Having the proper information – all the relevant facts of a story, the proper identification for the people involved, the time and the dates, accurate direct quotations, etc. – is vital to the writing process, but it is only the beginning. There comes a time when the information gathering must cease and the writing must begin.

The ability to write well requires that the writer has a thorough knowledge and understanding of the subject about which he or she is writing. In addition, the writer must understand the basic structure of the news story and the conventions or customs of news writing in order to complete the process.

Many forms of writing – or writing structures – populate the print media, but the most common are the news story and the feature story. These forms are found in newspapers, magazines, newsletters and many other publications. Mastering these two forms will give the person beginning to write for the mass media, a good foundation on which to build on, while learning to write in other forms and for other media.

4.2.1 The Inverted Pyramid

Once a writer has gathered the information necessary to begin a story, he or she must decide on the structure of the story. The goal of a proper structure is to get information to the reader quickly and to allow the reader to move through the story easily. The reader must be able to see the relationships between the various pieces of information that the reporter has gathered.

The most common structure for writing news stories is called the inverted pyramid. The daily newspaper contains many stories. Most of the stories must be written so that readers can get more information in less time. The inverted pyramid structure concentrates on the most interesting and important information at the top of the story so that readers can get the information they need or want and then go on to another story if they choose. Headlines and leads should be written to describe what the story contains as succinctly and as interestingly as possible.

4.2.2 The Lead Paragraph

The most important part of the news story is the first or lead (pronounced ‘leed’) paragraph. The lead should give the reader the most important information in the story. It should be written in such a way that the reader will be interested in going further into the story.

A good news story, unlike the novel or play, is based on one main idea. That is why it is so important to decide on a focus and stick to it. A well-focused article tells your reader that you worked from a plan. It gives the reader a sense of completeness, a sense that you know what you are doing. In deciding on this focus, you are also working on your lead. By asking yourself about the main theme for your story, you are deciding how to begin, for often the two—a statement of theme and a lead—are one and the same. To help you decide on this theme, sometimes it helps to try the “tell-a-friend” technique. Imagine your friend asking, “What’s your story about?” Answer that question in one sentence that captures the essence of the entire story. Now try to refine your answer so it can do two things: it should capture the essence of your story and do so in a way that encourages the reader to continue. It is your promise to the reader of what is to come. It is your lead.

4.2.3 Developing the Story

The inverted pyramid requires that writers make judgments not only about what should be at the beginning of the story but also about the relative importance of all the information they present in the story. In other words, writers must not only decide what the most important information is for the lead, but they must also decide what the second and third most important pieces of information are. Developing the story in a logical and coherent way requires much skill and practice.

If the lead paragraph is the most important part of the news story, the second paragraph is the second most important part of the story. In some ways, it is almost as important as the lead but for different reasons. A lead paragraph cannot contain all of the information in a news story. If it is written well, it will inform the reader but it will also raise certain questions in the reader's mind about the story. The real strength of your story will come from the details that back up the promise of the lead. This is the background material, the examples and quotes, the things you have observed, the explanations and definitions and the sense of history. These parts lend meaning and significance to the event or person you are writing about.

4.3 WRITING FOR BROADCAST

Broadcasting is the world's most pervasive medium of mass communication.. A wide variety of radio stations are available to anyone with a receiver since the early days of the medium. Underdeveloped areas that cannot get access to even a small newspaper will usually have a transistor radio to link it with the rest of the world. Satellite broadcasting has drawn the world closer together by ensuring that we have instant, live coverage of major news events from almost anywhere in the world. Most of the news values discussed apply to news selection for broadcasting. Broadcast journalists are interested in those events that have an impact on many people — people in the news, current issues, events that happen close to home and conflicts or unusual happenings. Because of the opportunities and limitations of their medium, however, broadcasters are likely to view such events in somewhat different ways than their counterparts in print journalism. The following are some of the factors that broadcasters use to select news.

Timeliness: Because of the nature of their medium, broadcasters often consider timeliness the most important news value. Broadcasters work on hourly or less than hourly cycles. A news broadcaster may go on the air several times a day. The news must be up-to-the-minute. News that is more than an hour or two old may be too late for the broadcaster. When you listen to a news report on a breaking news story, you expect to hear the very latest news— what happened just a few minutes before.

Information not explanation: Broadcasters look for stories that do not need a lot of explanation in order for listeners or viewers to understand them. They prefer stories that are simple and can be told in a straightforward manner. In some larger markets, radio reporters are being told to reduce their story lengths to ten seconds and actualities to five seconds. That amount of time is not enough to explain a complex story in detail. It is enough time to give the listener a few pertinent facts. Of course, some stories are complex and important and explanation cannot be avoided. These are the ones the broadcaster must wrestle with and it takes practice and talent to condense these stories to their essence.

The news on the radio moves fast without the facility of recall which is possible, in the case of newspapers. Therefore, whatever is written must be clear, precise and to the point. Sentences should be short and direct without sub clauses. Brevity is essential as a minute of broadcast time can take about 100 words, thus giving an editor the choice of about 1000 to 1100 words (in a 10-minute news bulletin) to cover world, national and regional news. There is a great constraint of space in radio, hence broadcast news must be big and important and should be put in crisp and easily understood language. Ceremonial items or didactic speeches distract the attention of the listener who can always switch off or change over to some other programme.

There should be no need for a dictionary while listening to a radio bulletin. It should be in words which are common in everyday speech. For example, “The work has started” and not “the work has commenced”. “The play has ended” and not “terminated”. We should acquaint ourselves with the elements of quality radio scripts. Their success rests entirely on the right combination of words and sounds in the narration/commentary. The shorter your sentences and crisper your narration, the greater will be the commentary’s impact. While padding has to be avoided at all costs, repetition of the main points is permitted and may even be necessary. This you can do towards the end of the programme in the form of a summary. This is to ensure that all the points that you want your listeners to remember are, in fact, briefly expressed again.

Enliven the Script/Commentary

The wider your vocabulary, the more visual are your images. And this, in turn, helps you to vary your form and have a firm hold over the listeners/audience. The radio is an audio medium. The secret of the ideal broadcast is the unexpressed will to woo listeners to stay tuned for the entire programme by simply providing the right fare. A good radio feature or running commentary is one that strives to describe the subject or phenomenon cogently and comprehensively. A radio feature or commentary is written in words that create appropriate atmosphere and concrete pictures in the listener’s mind. It is by improving the script and presenting it creatively that a radio feature writer and commentator make even the most complex subject appear simple. It is in their hands to make ‘hearing’ a gainful and lasting pleasure. They have only to wield their power correctly to their audience.

Be Completely Natural

You read aloud your narration/script/commentary as you write, if it is not off-the-cuff broadcast, e.g., running commentary. If it sounds natural, as if you were talking, you are on the right line. If on the other hand, it sounds like formal written language, you will immediately know you are off-the-track. Get your friends and well-wishers to help you with their reactions. This tried and tested method will provide an immense help to you in improving your performance. The broadcaster’s language is indeed easy to understand because only the simplest possible terms are used. It is important to remember that the language be intelligible to the majority of the listeners. You must know that one picturesque phrase will do more to arouse the listener’s interest than a bunch of literary and idiomatic expressions.

Keep Clichés Out

This applies to hackneyed phrases as much as to journalistic ones. The microphone only reinforces their staleness. It is radio journalism at its worst. You should be yourself and not what you would like the listeners to think you are. While the listener

is seldom deceived, you may flounder and reveal your true colours sooner rather than later. Give your listeners the best of listening by being your natural ebullient self. The art of writing a production script for the radio very often lies in the art of knowing what not to say. It is said in the BBC TV circles that a commentator is paid as much to comment as to keep quiet

Keep on Looking for the Needs of the Market

It is well to remember that broadcasting is essentially a family affair. Good taste is what matters and should be the main criterion. The writer's script should be simple and conjure visual rather than oral images in the listeners mind. Remember: short sentences and short words are always more effective than long-winded and pedantic phrases.

Do not Talk down to the Audience

In any programme where the spoken word dominates, as in a running commentary one must take precautions against any slip of the tongue that would offend a listener. Be professional when you have to explain some matter. Do not sound like a teacher talking down to the students. Do not patronize the listeners. At least, for having taken the trouble to listen to you, the listeners ought to be treated with courtesy. The listener is a friend. Would you not treat a friend in a natural and respectful manner? So, address the listeners too on equal terms. Be friendly without being familiar. Do not take the listeners for granted. Do not shout or preach. Speak impressively, confidently and with dignity.

Check Your Progress 1

- Note:** a) Space given below the question is for writing your answer.
b) Check your answer with the one given at the end of this unit.

- i) What are some rules to be followed while writing scripts for radio broadcast?

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4.4 WRITING FOR TELEVISION

We do not watch news on TV just to get the latest news. Radio does a better job. We do not prefer television because we want to get all the news: local, national and international. The newspaper does a better job. We as television viewers, benefit from TV newscasts because they transport us to the scene of action. The news is packaged and delivered to us. For this, a reporter must be able to relate words and pictures in a news story. Words fill in the factual details that pictures omit. While the pictures are indeed important, it is the narration behind the film, in most instances, that is responsible for the success of visual news stories on television. Poorly written narration can hurt the effectiveness of visuals but appropriate narration can greatly improve even poorly shot visuals. Writing to background graphics is the same as writing a story to visuals as described above. The trick is to avoid redundancy or repeating what the graphics show.

There are three basic rules which must be followed by the TV reporter writing to visuals:

- a) Do not cram your video narration full with details.
- b) Relate words to the pictures when telling the story. The narration and pictures must go hand in hand.
- c) Carry the viewer into the story by describing the way it happened. Although the narrator may begin with a brief opening summary (without pictures) telling the viewer the main points of the story, when the film rolls on, the story should be told as it happened not necessarily in chronological order.

In short, writing narration to blend with the visuals is one of the most difficult skills in broadcast reporting. The language must be crisp, the timing exact and the words have to click with what appears on the screen.

To be able to comprehensively cover the news, television news reporters generally employ the following techniques.

a) **Piece to Camera**

Of all the skills needed for television news reporting, the piece to camera is amongst the most frequently used. The piece to camera, which is essentially in-vision, is recorded on location. It has three advantages: it immediately establishes the reporter's presence on the spot, it is extremely simple to execute and it is fast enough to be considered a kind of contingency sample. These stand-ups are written on the scene, without the benefit of typewriters or the other conveniences of the newsroom. Since the reporter looks straight into the camera, the lines have to be memorized. Sometimes, the reporters read from a note-book or a clip-board after ensuring the opening paragraph. Most stand-ups are short – 10 to 20 seconds. On some occasions they run longer, especially in complex stories that require a lot of explaining, but do not offer many visuals. A stand-up can also be used in the middle of a story to “bridge” two other sections of the report. Bridges work especially well when the report demonstrates something.

b) **Studio Spots**

While the piece to camera is an in-vision news presentation by the reporter recorded on location, the studio spot is a news item read in the studio by someone other than the programme's main presenter, as additional information to the visuals. Usually, it is a special correspondent or a reporter who is called upon to draw together the elements of a news story with or without the aid of videotape or illustration.

Because television news is a team effort involving many persons, the chances of human error are great in a studio set-up, particularly as an ‘on-air’ situation. There are some simple rules that the on-camera studio reporter/ correspondent should follow. These are

- i) Maintain self-control. Expect problems and be prepared to cope with them;
- ii) Always prepare file copy. If film or video tape fails to come up, have the file copy close at hand, to carry on the show;
- iii) Be familiar with studio cue-signals.

Check Your Progress 2

Note: a) Space given below the question is for writing your answer.

b) Check your answer with the one given at the end of this unit.

i) How is television more effective than other media of Mass Communication?

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4.5 WRITING FOR THE WEB

In the last few years, the Internet and its publishing spin-off, the World Wide Web, has grown from a fledgling concept to a medium that offers enormous potential for people and organizations to connect with one another. New possibilities are arising every day for communication through the web and with those possibilities come employment opportunities for those who can use the language and master production techniques.

Is there something different about writing for the web or is it just writing as we have always done it, but now for an electronic form? Unlike any other medium, the web is so egalitarian that the rules or conventions of writing have not yet been established or institutionalized. Consequently, we can make only a few observations about the directions in which the web and its content seem to be heading. Writing for the web does not demand much more than writing for any other medium demands. Some of the rules to be followed could possibly be:

Sensitivity to the needs and expectations of the audience; Mastery by the writer of the subject about which he or she is writing; the ability to meet deadlines, and clarity of expression, and precision and efficiency in the use of the language

All of these demands are common to any form of writing, whether for a book, newspaper or broadcast, and the web is no exception. Much of the writing that you find on the Internet looks and reads exactly like the writing that you would find in other media. In fact, many organizations use the web to display reports and other materials that have originally appeared in some traditional form.

Still, there is a type of writing on the web that is almost peculiarly its own. That type of writing has its base in a concept called **hypertext**. Prose writing is linear, that is, you begin at the beginning and read through to the end. That's the way the writer intended to write and most readers follow that pattern. Hypertext is non-linear. The text is broken into bits and structured so that a reader can begin at any number of points and decide which sequence suits his or her purpose. Writing for a hypertext structure has profound implications for a writer.

Web Writing Skills

The medium demands that information and ideas be broken into smaller blocks. These blocks should be related to the whole but they also need to stand by themselves

within the context of the entire article or website. They are generally hierarchical that is, they go from the general to the specific. But because the web offers readers the opportunity to move quickly from one item to another, the writer must also look for opportunities to “link” parts of the writing with other parts to make it easier for the reader to move around. This means the writer needs to anticipate how the reader might navigate within a website.

Another demand on writers using the hypertext structure is the ability to write headlines, subheads and summaries. Writing headlines and subheads for the web is far less restrictive than writing them for newspaper or magazines in terms of making them fit into a certain space.

Web writers are likely to have many more options and fewer typographical rules than the headlines writer for newspapers. But their abilities to summarize, whether in headline, subhead or summary form, will be severely tested, just as they are in traditional media. Summaries demand precise and concise use of the language. They also demand that the writer understand the material being summarized so well that he or she can do it accurately. Summarizing is a skill that is essential to the web writer.

Another characteristic of the web is the integration of graphics and text. The best websites are built around graphical elements because from a reader’s point of view, websites are visual before they are textual. Graphics, then, are a vital part of web production and people who are involved in this medium must be fluent in the use of both graphics and text. With proper study and practice, anyone can become a better writer. Writing is not simply an inherent talent that some people have and others do not. There are steps that each of us can take to improve our writing. Writing is a process. That is, the rules, techniques must be mixed in with the individual’s style, thoughts and methods and with the subject and form of the writing. They all should work together to produce writing that is good. Writing requires discipline. Most people give up writing as soon as they can because it is such hard work. It is physically, mentally and emotionally demanding. The person who commits to writing must marshal all of his or her resources for the task. Writing is building. Good writing doesn’t happen all at once. It is formed, word by word, sentence by sentence and thought by thought. The writing process is often slow, tedious and frustrating. But the product of this process of good writing is well worth the effort.

Finally, reading good writing is the next step. If you are interested in learning to write well, in any form, you should read as much as possible— newspapers, magazines, books, and anything else you can get your hands on. Then there is the writing itself, one has to “sit down and write.” That is the only way to become a good writer.

4.6 LET US SUM UP

In this Unit we talked about some rules that one needs to follow to write for the print media, radio, television and the web. Language for radio scripts needs to be simple and the sentences need to be short and crisp. So brevity and clarity is important. TV language should be written in the active voice and in the present tense. Similarly the print and web writing have to be well researched and well presented.

4.7 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Check Your Progress 1

- i) Language for radio broadcasts should be simple and sentences should be short and crisp.

Check Your Progress 2

- i) Television with its visuals, cuts across all barriers. The visuals make a more instant and powerful impression than the black and white newspapers. The visual images supplement as well as complement the sound and make it more effective than radio.

