

Chapter-7

Mass Media and communications

Facts That Matter

Mass Media

- Include a wide variety of forms, including television, newspapers, films, magazines, radio, advertisements, video games and CDs.
- They are referred to as ‘mass’ media because they reach mass audiences – audiences comprised of very large numbers of people. They are also sometimes referred to as mass communications.
- It has become a very integral part of our lives e.g. Newspapers, TV, radio etc especially after globalisation.
- Keeps in touch with reality and what is happening around the world.
- Mass media also includes telecommunications inter-connectivity through cell phones and advertisements.

Mass Media and Sociology (Expansion of mass communication)

There are many aspects to the expansion of mass communication:

- First, the structure and content of mass media is shaped by changes in the economic, political and socio-cultural contexts. For instance, we see how centre and the state and its vision of development influenced the media in the first decades after independence. And how in the post 1990 period of globalisation the market has a key role to play.
- Second, the relationship between mass media and communication with society is dialectical. Both influence each other. The nature and role of mass media is influenced by the society in which it is located. At the same time the far reaching influence of mass media on society cannot be over-emphasised.
- Third, mass communication is different from other means of communication as it requires a formal structural organisation to meet large-scale capital, production and

management demands. The state and/or the market have a major role in the structure and functioning of mass media. Mass media functions through very large organisations with major investments and large body of employees.

- Fourth, there are sharp differences between how easily different sections of people can use mass media.

Mass Media Before Globalisation

(1) Beginning of Mass Media

- The first modern mass media institution began with the development of the printing press. The first attempts at printing books using modern technologies began in Europe. This technique was first developed by Johann Gutenberg in 1440. Initial attempts at printing were restricted to religious books.
- With the Industrial Revolution, the print industry also grew. The first products of the press were restricted to an audience of literate elites.
- In the mid 19th century, with further development in technologies, transportation and literacy that newspapers began to reach out to a mass audience.
- People living in different corners of the country found themselves reading or hearing the same news. This was in many ways responsible for people across a country to feel connected and develop a sense of belonging or ‘we feeling’.
- The well known scholar Benedict Anderson has thus argued that this helped the growth of nationalism, the feeling that people who did not even know of each other’s existence feel like members of a family.
- It gave people who would never meet each other a sense of togetherness. Anderson thus suggested that we could think of the nation as an ‘imagined community’.

(2) During Colonial Rule

- Newspapers in different languages came up (vernacular, newspaper) of Matrabhumi, Amrita Bazaar, Kesari.
- Through these newspapers they tried to promote the freedom struggle, national movement to instigate people to fight the British but the British disliked this censoring.
- Hence even though newspapers were not under the British government they monitored them through censorship.

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- There were not many literate people. Hence many did not read the papers.
 - Because of monocular languages, their influence was widespread among the people.
 - The underlying news was to fight for the freedom of the people.

(3) All Independent India

- Nehru called media the 'watchdog of democracy' Why?
- It observes as well as we expect of democracy in society.
- He wanted the media to inform the public of the developmental projects being taken by the government.
- Focused on the development of the country e.g. Metro dams.
- He wanted the media to inform the public/promote jobs so that everyone can be self sufficient.
- He wanted people to be aware of all the social evils that are present.

Radio

- In 1920 developed in India
- Started in Kolkata and Chennai

Colonial Rule

- 1940 during the World War II, radio became worldwide in India.

After Independence

- There were 6 broadcasting stations of AIR.
- They broadcasted. News, Entertainment (Bollywood songs). Current affairs. Sports news. Announcements for farmers, Task slower.
- The early years of independence, AIR had to tell the people about the government activities pertaining to development.
- Farmer's were told about new techniques (Insecticides, pesticides etc.)
- Popular channel-Vividh Bharati (purely entertainment radio channel).
- Film songs, interviews, film quotes
- Vividh Bharati started advertising in Radio.
- The government decided that radio broadcasting has to exist in all major cities, towns and important districts (border areas).

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- Spread all over India.
 - Present at three levels—National, Regional - local language and Local - city radio.
 - All programmes cater to the diversity of India in terms of language, region and culture
 - and specially national and regional.
 - By the end of the 20th Century it was broadcasted in 24 languages and 146 dialects.

Globalization and Mass Media

- Till globalization in 1990's each industry in mass media was separate
- After globalization. Radio, TV, newspapers came together,
e.g music & film industry
National → international

(A) Print Media

Advantages

- Despite coming up of TV and radio, newspapers was popular because it was easily accessed, cheaper, monocular.

Changes

- Using modern technology, attractive advertisements, separate sections/ categories.
Supplements

Disadvantage

- Only literate people could read.
- Different states have regional newspapers.
- Information and Entertainment, Edutainment (newspapers cater to this)
- Once upon a time newspapers used to values, but now they are purely commercial.

(B) Television

- In 1991 there was one state controlled TV channel Doordarshan in India. By 1998 there were almost 70 channels came into existence.
- Star TV -Caters to different demands and Categories of people, Zee TV and Sony too.
- Regional networking started e.g. STAR Bengali, Sony TV in Tamil Nadu.

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- Z also started regional networking.
 - The 1990's cable operators were popular and catered to people of their area.
 - One of the reasons for popularity - English serials dubbed in regional languages.
 - One major channel became 24 x 7 news channel
 - TV changed a lot

(C) Radio

- FM came after globalisation in the beginning of the 20th Century.
- Privately owned radio channels started and are purely for entertainment purposes.
- They cannot broadcast any political views and cannot speak against the government.
- Each FM has their own tagline.