

CHAPTER - II

" Every minute of television programming
commercials, entertainment, news teaches us something".

(Nicholas Johnson)

POTENTIAL ROLE OF TV AS MASS MEDIA OF COMMUNICATION

Among all the available media of mass communication, television is one of the most powerful, for it combines the advantages of both video and audio media and is therefore, more effective than other media in providing education as well as entertainment.

Philip Abrahams defines " television as a universal, continuous public service medium for domestic consumption."¹ Lord Keith defines "TV as being a medium for information education and entertainment."² According to Marshall McLuhan (1967) Television is the only genuine revolution in mankind's communication. It offers possibilities for both enrichment and impoverishment of life. If intelligently used the medium can help in leapfrogging decades in the drive to eliminate ignorance and poverty, if not, it may become an "idiot box" merely a status symbol and a means of promoting commercial interest."³

Wilbur Schramm says that Television is our glamour girl. When she came in to the room, we turned our attention

to her, rather than her plainer sister radio'.⁴ Thus, television today is unquestionably one of the most impressive media for the advertiser. It provides a much wider reach and is much more effective than other mass media. It was invented in 1922 by John L. Baird, a Scotsman. It can bring a fundamental sociological transformation changing peoples life style, modes of thinking and items of daily consumption. The TV audience is drawn from all strata of society. The newly constituted "Open University" would take to the broadcasting of educational programmes presented in an interesting manner which may not only be of value directly but which may also help part time students to make up their minds. Prem Iqbal Bakshi, says that among the available media TV is capable of transmitting information insteously and has a direct impact on the audience. It gives the illusion of transmitting reality and the viewers become visual witnesses of events".⁵

Television was introduced in India on 15th September 1959 at Delhi on an experimental basis and later on from 2 October 1972 at Bombay, and at Poona a year later. In the begining it was declared by the Government that TV would be used as a medium of social education and an instrument and weapon to fight illiteracy and ignorance. Afterwards the recommendations of the seminar of software objectives

held in February 1973 was that TV must be used in the development process as an instrument of social change and national cohesion by unhesitatingly upholding progressive values and involving the community in a free dialogue. Indian TV has to shun an elitist approach and consumers value system and ~~e~~volve a true national model.⁶

In India according to the latest figures (1986) the TV transmitting centers are 259 and this growth will be total upto 483 TV centers in 1990. The total TV sets in India are about 9.5 million to 11.00 millions and this growth is increasing day by day. The study conducted by Path-Finders India consumers society (1986) showed that black and white TV were found more among lower income class and colour TV among the higher income class. Now ~~an~~ on average there are 7.00 persons per TV set. TV viewing population is 8.8 crores and 13 and half million houses are exposed to TV. In India 9 crores, or of the total Indian population (about 11%) is exposed to TV. If we see the regionwise distribution of TV it is higher in the west and north zone ^{than} that of south and East zone because of Hindi language.⁸

In developing countries Television is of great help in mass education of children and others and in informing and educating people on national programmes

and development efforts. Democracy needs widespread understanding of the national objectives and attitudes, details of welfare programmes and the method of their operation by the people. Chatterjee concludes that " within the present samples of children and occupations television is a more potent source of occupational status knowledge than either personal contact or the general community culture."⁹

However, socially desired changes in values and behaviour can also be cultivated by TV entertainment, including the acquisition of useful social skills and the development of cooperation and self control.¹⁰ It arouses curiosity draws attention, creates interest and motivates children for learning. The Chanda Committee had this to say about the role which the Indian TV service should fulfil. Education is the key stone to social and economic progress and should have therefore top priority, We conceive education in its broader concept to cover techniques of agricultural and industrial production, of principles of health, hygiene and family planning, Television has also been used with success for giving vocational and technical of training to overcome the shortage of technical training schools and even otherwise.¹¹

The Indian TV has one definite plus point : It has widened the horizons of the viewers and has brought

the whole ^{world} nearer home. It has brought the thrills of Wimbledon and the Olympics to thousands of homes. TV has been viewed as one of the key to the process of social, educational behavioural and cultural change in society. According to Hanumantha Rao 'TV has brought family members together and promoted oneness and understanding among them.¹² This is very important to integrate ~~to integrate~~ the family. In the modern or business cultural society ~~has~~ ^{one has} ~~one time~~ to see ^{that} ~~others~~ everybody is busy in his work. In other words humanity is losing importance in society.

In a developing country an adequate flow of information is of utmost importance and TV must carry to the people information about the role they need to play. For the development of society we should first deal with adult literacy which is essential for social and economic progress. It is never too late to learn on television. TV can help the extension of man's perception, involvement of the senses and deeper extension of the consciousness, ~~and~~ ^h social awareness. It takes the viewer closer to reality. Dr. Vikram Sarabhai strongly believed that TV could be the most important single tool for development especially for the isolated rural communities where the bulk of India's population reside, as well as the urban population already exposed to other influences of modernisation.¹³

The biggest innovation that TV can bring to our society both to the literate and illiterate sections is the popularisation of science. There are great sections of people who despite being literate are unaware of many basic matters of hygiene, nutrition, medicine and health care. By this people can be made aware of the precautionary means there by avoiding remedies at advanced stages of ailments. Science is not possible for our school education to give the children complete knowledge in all areas of interest. It is for television to sustain their curiosity by telecasting programmes on science and its application in day to day life.

Television is one such instrument that can truly propagate to the people living in total ignorance of our cultural values a clearer picture of our cultural heritage and help them to develop new sets of values founded on the old faith, in order to suit the modern living conditions, With the help of TV the concept of entertainment is undergoing vast and fast changes. Even in rural areas people love to watch the TV programmes. TV has modified their tastes and preferences.

Television as a vital medium first try to encourage programmes that are innovative, reflect a high degree of creative skill, deal with significant moral and social issues

and present challenging concepts and other subject matter that relate to the world in which the viewers live. TV programmes should not only reflect the influence of the established institutions that shape our values and culture but also expose the dynamics of social change which bear upon our lives. To achieve these goals, television broadcasters should be conversant with the general and specific needs, interests and aspirations of all the segments of the communities they serve. While viewing TV programmes a viewers, children and elders alike, are glued to their seats, hour after hour. Especially during cricket the youngsters see their cricket idols actually playing on the ground. As a result, the younger generation today know the details of the game of cricket far better than their own elders who did not have a chance of seeing the old cricketers on TV. One sits in ones room, switch on the TV set and the whole world comes into the room. So the youngsters get knowledge about a variety of things and subjects. One sees different parts of the world, world, wonders of nature snowy mountains, birds life and the varied life of different people the world. There are special educational programmes for school children as well as university students. There are musical concerts, performances in Indian dance and Western dance and pictures in different languages.

Thus the strong influence of TV cannot be doubted. But there are some adverse effects as well. On Sunday morning people hurry through their morning routine in order to be able to see the serial 'Ramayana'. In towns like Karad and Kolhapur we can no longer see crowds of people going out shopping or for a walk, on Saturday and Sunday evenings. They seem to have forgotten their neighbourly duties like visiting neighbours, friends and relatives. Students do not take regular exercises or study since they are engaged in viewing TV events.

Thus TV has positive roles like providing knowledge, education recreation, as well as negative roles like affecting one's favourable health and hygienic activities like games, sports, interpersonal interaction and so on. The objective of the present study is therefore, to assess the role and impact of TV on the school going children. We shall now pass on to the next section: The research methodology in communication research .

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY IN COMMUNICATION RESEARCH:

Sociology of Mass Communication draws its methods and techniques mainly from the social science research methods and techniques. However, it has also added new methods, techniques of studying communications. Any research methodology refers broadly to the overall approach of a particular study. An approach may further make use of several methods and techniques of data collection. Methodology in communication research refers to the overall procedures or ways of collecting data in the field of communication,. We find the use of the following research methods/methodology

1. Survey Research.
2. Public Opinion.
3. Content Analysis.
4. Systemic analysis
 - a) Participant observation
 - b) Case studies.

1. SURVEY RESEARCH :

Survey research is generally conducted on large populations. However, a representative sample of the population under study is selected, further after selecting the sample the peoples particular preferences, outlooks, attitudes and characteristics are collected through an interview schedule or a questionnaire.¹⁴

The major objective of the survey research is to obtain responses to a set of common basic questions from these sample respondents. Questions are generally informal and comparable.

2. PUBLIC OPINION :

The term 'Public Opinion' may be used to refer to any collection of individual opinions. In every day discourse it is frequently used to designate the collective opinions of large numbers of people. In that sense it is synonymous with mass opinion." Public Opinion is the social judgement of a self conscious community on a question of general importance after rational public discussion."¹⁵

".....a certain apprehension of common and fundamental interests by all members of the group."¹⁶

" Public opinion consists of peoples reactions to definitely worded statement and questions under interview conditions."¹⁷

The study of public opinion of widespread interest is the extent to which a given public agrees in its opinions on a selected subject. In its simplest form this type of study by means of survey, polls, referenda or elections seeks to ascertain how many persons in the public favour a given measure or candidate. The results or conclusion may have depending on the nature of persons.

The Public opinion polls has become the indispensable tool of the student of public opinion, whether he is interested in the attitudes and opinions of selected groups, the role of selected factors in the process of opinion formation, voting behaviour communication or propaganda. Each step in the procedure of public opinion surveying attention has been given to problems of sampling, and to the relative merits of quota and probability sampling, framing questionnaires, studies of question meaning and complexity projection devices and other type of question design in pretesting questionnaires experiments in working questions and studies of question validity.

The technique of polling has been studied more carefully than the interviewer and interviewing in respect of interviewer bias, depth interviewing, interviewer performance, effect of subquestions, card sorting, interviews, etc.,. A large proportion of these studies related to the mass media: press and publications radio motion pictures and television. It appears that public opinion research is overwhelmingly preoccupied with finding out what public opinion is, and with the role of communication agencies in the opinion forming process. Much public opinion research is applied research, seeking to solve the immediate problems of public opinion, market research proprietors of

communication agencies, advertisers, public relations experts and propagandists of one kind or another. Public is always a collection of the opinions of these individuals constituting the public. There are three basic elements in the opinion forming process. The person, his environment, and the interaction between the two.¹⁸

3. CONTENT ANALYSIS :

The sheer availability of mass communication content has stimulated a considerable body of research in to the "what" aspect of Harold Lasswell's four faceted question. Research into mass media content or content analysis, as it has come to be called has been particularly influenced by the recognition that such content is amenable to quantitative treatment. (See especially Lasswell & Leites 1949 ; Berelson 1952). Content analysis procedures both quantitative and qualitative have been applied to all types of media content. It is an analytical tool for analyzing the communications process and its impact.

Content analysis has been an effective instrument for describing both short term and long term trends in media content. The range of topics covered by descriptive trend studies is indeed broad e.g. such studies have

traced the decline in prophetic religious themes in popular sermons. Content analysis supplies an approach for comparing the same material as presented in different media as between different nations.

The procedure of content analysis are also particularly appropriate for comparing media content with some explicit set of standards or abstract categories e.g. studies have been done to determine whether newspapers conform in their content to particular standards. Content analysis offers a relatively precise technique for describing the diffusion of scientific and scholarly knowledge and for observing the process of popularization of scientific materials, e.g. the readability test. Such ^{tests} ~~tests~~ have been developed to help editors and publishers judge the difficulty of a particular communication and to estimate the type and size of audiences that can readily understand the message.

There are various types of content analysis like :

1. SYMBOL COUNTS :

Symbol counts consists of identifying and counting specified key symbols in communication.¹⁹

2. ONE DIMENSIONAL CLASSIFICATION OF SYMBOLS :

Symbols are classified as positive favourable or negative (unfavourable for propoganda)

3. ITEM ANALYSIS :

Classification of segments or sections of the propaganda (e.g. scenes in a film, song in a radio programme) This requires selections of significant and insignificant items on the basis of a psychological theory of 'attention value'.

4. THEMATIC ANALYSIS :

Classification of the explicit and implicit (symbolic) themes in propaganda material. This as distinct from item analysis deals with the supposed cumulative significance of a series of items.

5. STRUCTURAL ANALYSIS :

Structural analysis is concerned with the interrelations of the various themes in propaganda. The themes may be either complimentary or interfering.

6. COMPAGN ANALYSIS :

Campaign analysis deals with the relations or a series of such propaganda documents. Problems of sequences, duration, relative emphasis, timing, etc. are involved. Thus content analysis is very useful in communication research.

4. SYSTEMIC ANALYSIS :

Such studies are very less in number and fall in the realm of media or communication anthropology. The

anthropologist who study the tribal and rural community as an independent system make use of the holistic method. They use case studies, participant observation and other qualitative methods of data collection. Examples of studies which have followed such as approach are Rao Lakmanna, Ambekar (Yadav) J.B. (1980), Agrawal and Ambekar (1977) Ambekar⁽¹⁹⁸⁸⁾ and Hartman (1988), etc.²⁰

We have so far given a brief account of the various types of research methodologies or approaches like survey research, public opinion, content analysis audience research and systemic analysis. The communication researcher use appropriate methods and techniques of data collection. Generally they use quantitative methods like interview method, questionnaire method, schedule method etc. we will not discuss the various communication studies.

AUDIENCE RESEARCH :

One aspect of the direct investigation of the impact of the mass media is the description of the size and structure of the audience for each particular medium of communication.

The department of Mass Communications of UNESCO has an active programme for collecting basic statistical data on the development of mass media and the size of the

audience through out the world. These world wide reports rely mainly on statistical data about the number and circulation of newspaper radio receiving sets, movie theaters, published books and other measures of audiences that derive from production figures. Important aspects of audience size can also be measured from such built in or automatic measures of consumption as ticket sales, news stand circulation or subscription sales.

Interest in audience research is particularly strong in the units states, where the mass media are havily supported by commercial advertising revenues Paul F. Lazarsfeld has been one of the leading experts in the development of such research. Alothough various mechanical and electronic devices as well as self reporting questionaries and diaries have been used the standard approach is to make use of sample surveys to measure audience size and composition. Frequently these surveys are conducted by telephone and involve elaborate and repid field work in order to measure the relative position of leading mass media performers for the united states.

In countries where radio and TV are operated by the government, audience research is carried out for the purpose of understanding audience reactions and as an aid to program planning.

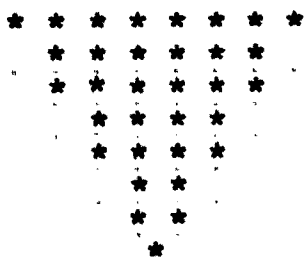
In one sense, exposure is cumulative with an increase in level of education persons who are exposed to one Medium are likely to expose themselves to newspapers, Magazines and books. In other words, as a persons field of interest is broadened by more education his interest in the mass media also grow.

Audience research has developed in the direction of seeking to describe more precisely the social and psychological characteristics and the specific content preferences of the persons who make up the audiences of particular media. Routine surveys of audience structure, especially those sponsored by commercial groups proceed in terms of basic categories such as sex, age, education occupation and income. But these categories are not refined enough to capture the complexities of contemporary social structure.

Audience research has also come progressively to concentrate on social psychological and personality characteristics. Both from a theoretical point of view and in the practical application of research findings, it is not enough to know the gross characteristics of those persons who are exposed to a particular channel of communication. It is equally important to isolate those social psychological predispositions that can be appealed to in order

to mobilize new audiences or to change the exposure. We patterns of existing ones.

In recent years advertisers have shown considerable interest in the study of the motive structures underlying exposure to various types of messages. The term "Motivation research" has been loosely used to refer to studies that seek to understand the social psychology of audience exposure to advertisement. Having discussed various methods in communication, now describe the methodology of the present study.



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