

CHAPTER-V

MASS MEDIA AND WOMEN :- CONCLUSIONS

Introduction :

Among the different kinds of mass media television is one of the most popular mass media today. A lot of changes have been taking place in the Indian society due to the arrival of this wonder box.

The Research Problem :

The researcher selected a topic seeking to examine the role of television in the life of women. For this study an urban setting like Satara City was selected. Due to different limitations of the schedule technique it was decided to use a qualitative method like case study for data collection. This method enabled the researcher to study women as part and parcel of their families and the city instead of isolating the women.

Methodology :

In all fifteen case studies were selected from four distinct economic groups. In this sense the sample was a stratified one. However, for convenience sake families who were known to the researcher and who would be able to give detailed information about their family only were selected for the case studies. (See sampling in Chapter-II : Methodology)

Impact of T.V. on women :

The present research is based on about one month field work. In this sense the research period is a short one. However, on the basis

of comparison of different case studies the following conclusions have been drawn :

1) Impact on women's attitudes :

The first step of change the mass media can bring about is attitudinal changes. Many of the respondents interviewed for the case studies expressed that in general their attitudes in education, health, recreation, consumer behaviour marriage, women's roles etc. had changed. The elite or the rich in the income group of Rs. 10,000.00 and above told that T.V. helped them get more information and general knowledge. They even could see many events happening around the world. Attitudinal changes though important, it is the income level and other socio-economic yardsticks that bring about changes at the behavioural or occupational level. This can be illustrated by taking the example of U.G.C. programmes. The positive impact of the U.G.C. programmes is seen in small degrees that too among the economically well to do families. For example in the income group between Rs. 4001.00 to Rs. 10,000.00 and above consisting of doctors, teachers, officers etc. the impact of the U.G.C. programmes was clearly felt.

2) Impact on children :

Just as the positive effects of T.V. there are also some negative effects like the following :

1. Neglect of the studies and lack of concentration in the studies.
2. Decreasing interest in out door games and physical activities among children.

3. Increase in lazyness among children as complained by various women interviewed for case studies. Increasing criminal tendencies because of watching video films on the V.C.R. by the children belonging to high income group (Rs.10,000.00 and above)

3) impact on social relationships :

Many of the women respondents opined that the warmth in welcoming relatives and guests has changed. Before the arrival of T.V. people in general talked and interacted with their guests sufficiently well, but at a present conversation with the relatives and friends has decreased considerably and especially during the time of viewing of T.V. serials and film songs.

4) Food and food habits :

The respondents also invariably told that their time of food especially dinner had changed due to the T.V. serials. Not only a change in the timing but women respondents also told that they learned the preparations of many of the sweet dishes after seeing the afternoon programmes on cooking.

Awareness of Health and Family Welfare :

The respondents confessed that they came to know about various types of concerns and various reasons associated with it. The women respondents especially remember the T.V Marathi serial Palavi and Aarogy Dnyan Sampada. Women respondents in the income group between Rs. 4001.00 to 7500.00 also frankly confessed that after seeing the T.V.

programmes on family planning. Women even in lower income group seek doctor's advice for family planning. The women respondents in the income group between Rs. 501.00 and Rs.2500.00 are seen to be actually influenced by the T.V. programmes in this regard. (See Case Study No.6)

Consumer Behaviour :

One of the impact of T.V. is on the buying or consumer behaviour of the public in general including women. All the urban women respondents of all income groups had bought Soap, VIM powder, washing powder, dresses of particular brands and other goods which they saw on the T.V. and were impressed. This is easily understandable. A major part of T.V. telecast timing consists of advertisements which have changed the habits and likings of the people. In other words it is the world of advertisement that has changed habits and likings. Another impact of advertisements is on children. Majority of the urban children have taken a liking for chocolates, soft drinks and biscuits. Their food in-take has reduced considerably. This is one of the negative effects of T.V. advertisements.

Mass Media and Women :

In a Short term study like this it is difficult to say specifically about the changes. However, we can classify the impact on women into two kinds (1) Attitudinal and (2) Motivational changes. (2) Behavioural or Action Oriented changes.

As far as the first kind of change is concerned there is sufficient evidence for the fifteen case studies irrespective of income, education and other yardsticks. T.V. has brought about this kind of basic change in the urban women.

As regards the action-oriented or behavioural level changes can be seen more at material level only in buying behaviour, for example in things like soaps, fashion material, dress etc. But the changes say in the field of health, education at the implementation level are slow or rather negligible.

Role of women :

Previously women were confined for the four walls of their houses. Looking after children and cooking food was their main responsibility. But today the situation has changed. Now women can freely go out and receive education. So their traditional role too has changed. Now-a-days women are seen taking part in almost all kinds of activities including political. They are seen working as teachers, doctors, administrators etc. The role of social reformers in uplifting womens social status has been important in Satara and other places in Western Maharashtra. (See section on Social Reformers in Chapter No. III). Many of them can drive vehicles like scooters, motor cycles, cars etc.

Added to the cultural and educational atmosphere of the city, during the last five years T.V. has been playing an important role in bringing about the above discussed changes in women's traditional role.