Media and Economic Development

Mass media and economic development are interrelated aspects. In the post-globalization period, media played a key role in promoting sustainable development. Uma Narula has rightly pointed that investment in IT can play critical role in the economic growth and productivity.\(^1\)

Further it is interesting to observe that use of information and communication technology (ICT) has not only enriched mass media but also it has strengthened allied professions like public relations. It is true that information technology plays a key role in economic development with incessant global investment and business management efficiency.

Media Planning and Marketing

Media planning is a new and growing trend in the development of Business. Public relation without such planning image of company cannot be built. It has been observed that the media planning function does not operate in a vacuum. The media plan is one of many components of the overall communication as well as marketing plan as such it intricacy without

other elements of the total plan. In view of this, the following trends have emerged on the basis of content analysis of publicity material produced by major public relations:

1. Newspapers are giving adequate space for computers and information technology.
2. The public relation material is transferred through web page and it has become easier for publication.
3. The public relations are using the institutional website for linking the customers.
4. Interactive websites are becoming more phenomenal.
5. The IT services and e-mail facility are helping to bring business closer and it has improved connectivity.

About benefits of internet for the public relations professional it has been observed that knowledge and facility of the internet is no longer an option for public relations professional. It is a necessity, which is cheap, impressive, effective and now massively available. The emergence of the internet and World Wide Web has radically intensified the spread of communication even further.

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Youth Unemployment

Table 2.1 provides information about youth unemployment rate. It may be noted that youth unemployment rate was of the order of 12.1 per cent for India; 15.5 per cent for urban areas and 11.0 per cent for rural areas in 1999-2000.

It may be worth recording that youth unemployment rate was higher in 1999-2000 as against that of 1993-94, which again reinforces the conclusion that the policies of liberalization failed to tackle the problem of youth unemployment. The youth unemployment rate in the urban areas was 15.5 per cent in 1999-2000 as against 15.0 per cent in 1993-94, but unfortunately the youth unemployment rate in the rural areas showed a significant increase from 8.6 per cent to 11.0 per cent during 1993-94 and 1999-2000. This only underlines the stark reality that the situation of rural youth unemployment worsened during the reform period. Since 15-29 age group accounts for new entrants to the labour force, this only signifies the failure of the reform process to create enough jobs to absorb the new entrants.
Table - 2.1
Unemployment Rates by Age-Group (1999-2000)
(as per cent of labour force)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Group</th>
<th>Rural</th>
<th>Urban</th>
<th>Combined</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>15-19</td>
<td>13.3</td>
<td>19.0</td>
<td>14.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20-24</td>
<td>11.8</td>
<td>18.7</td>
<td>13.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25-29</td>
<td>8.7</td>
<td>10.9</td>
<td>9.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30-34</td>
<td>6.1</td>
<td>4.9</td>
<td>5.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35-39</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>4.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40-44</td>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>4.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45-49</td>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>3.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50-54</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>3.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>55-59</td>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>4.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60 plus</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>3.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


The Employment Scenario

Persons in the age-group of 15 to 29 years are included in the category of ‘youth’. Many of them acquire some level of education and start searching for employment. Some of them remain unemployed, some are chronically unemployed, and some become unemployed at regular intervals. When young persons cannot get jobs to live a purposeful and dignified life their dreams are shattered; initially they feel frustrated; gradually they become bitter. Their efficiency and ethics deteriorate. Youth unemployment is thus an ominous portent for the country.
Table 2.2
Male Unemployment Rate (General and Youth) Rural and Urban

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Unemployment Rate*</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>General</td>
<td>Youth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1993-1994</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1999-2000</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>111</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Unemployment Rate = No. of persons unemployment per thousand persons in the labour force.


The unemployment rates of males both in rural and urban areas have been studied by the National Sample Survey and the results are briefly given in Table 2.2. The general unemployment rate increased from 4.6 per cent in 1987-88 to 5.6 per cent in 1993-94 to 7.2 per cent in 1999-2000 in rural India. The urban unemployment rate declined from 8.8 per cent in 1987-88 to 6.7 per cent in 1993-94 but has again started rising reaching 7.3 per cent in 1999-2000. The youth unemployment is really alarming; it is far in excess of general unemployment rate. In rural areas, the youth unemployment rate was 9 per cent in 1993-94 (against 5.6 per cent in the general rate) and much higher in 1999-2000 (11.1 per cent against 7.2 per cent in the general rate). Youth unemployment rates in urban areas far exceed rural youth unemployment rates and general urban unemployment rates. In 1993-94, the urban youth unemployment rate was 13.7 per cent (more than double the general unemployment rate of 6.7 per cent).
unemployment rate continued to increase during the reform period reaching 14.7 per cent in 1999-2000 (more than double the general unemployment rate of 7.3 percent).  

**Media, Democracy and Development**

Mass media is known as the Fourth Estate. It is true that the media plays the magic multiplier role in the process of development. The communication media accelerates the process of development by involving, persuading and transforming people. According to Amartya Sen, the absence of a free press and the suppression of people’s freedom to communicate with each other have the effect of directly reducing the quality of life. Media is indispensable to democratic governance and its positive contributions cannot be denied. The role of the media in strengthening the demand side of the Right to Information (RTI) regime in India has received considerable attention. For instance, NDTV, in partnership with leading civil society organisations, had launched a nation-wide campaign on the RTI that sought to build public awareness on RTI and wherein people were being encouraged not to pay bribes, but to use the RTI Act to solve their problems.

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Media can act as both a perpetrator and as a protagonist - it can either be an accomplice to gender-based discrimination by portraying stereotypical sensational images of women or it can provide balanced coverage that empowers women while exposing acts of gender bias.

Modern politics is largely a mediated politics and the media has become important in political life and politics in contemporary democracy. Media can shape power and participation in society by promoting the involvement of people in those decisions. Media occupy a contested space in democracy. Democracy implies participative governance, and it is the media that informs the people about the various problems of the society, which makes those wielding power on their behalf answerable to them. It is a useful democratic resource. The press plays a vital role in the effective working of a parliamentary democracy.

Media educates people on the functioning of the democratic setup and the policies and programmes of the government. There is a tendency of blaming the press for providing less space for different schemes and programmes that the government is running for the common masses. Therefore, it is widely recommended that the media should educate and make aware the common masses of the existing schemes aimed at improving human welfare. The systematic embezzlement of funds meant for the people is largely due to lack of awareness among the people. The

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chance of reducing corruption in the implementation of different government development projects and schemes for the poor masses is high when the people are more informed.\(^9\)

**Media Helps Build Tolerant Society**

India is known for its pluralistic culture. We cannot have democracy without secularism. The role of the media in the world's largest democracy and most ethnically divided society like India is necessary to sustain its mosaic cultural heritage. Communalism is a big challenge in India. There are systematic efforts by some right wing political parties and their affiliates to bring about a homogenized society, ignoring the country's pluralistic diversity. It is in this context, the media needs to refrain from clichéd stereotyping of minorities. It is true that the media in the past had shown antipathy to such forces. It can help build a society based on communal harmony. Under no circumstances should media become an instrument for the instigation or continuation of violence. The Indian media is politically and ideologically divided. One group of media supports secularism and other supports the right wing.\(^10\)

Media also needs to be gender sensitive. The press should be prolific and committed in analyzing social, economic and political developments in a gender perspective. Issues like crime against women, pre-birth selection,


domestic violence and promoting daughter's education need in-depth coverage.

The dumbing down of news and the obsession with celebrities and rituals are common to Indian media. But burning issues like the suicide of farmers receive much less attention. What is often noted is the importance of the media in developing and enforcing a code of ethical conduct. The seven principles of conduct enumerated by the Lord Nolan Committee (on standards in public life) in England are necessary for media to occupy the so-called 'fourth estate' in the true sense. These principles were selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, transparency, honesty and leadership. The media needs to be a 'problem solver' than a 'problem maker'.

**Violence in Media**

It is known that a scene of violence catches the attention instantaneously and in this age of racing to make quick bucks whatever has instant return value, sells. In other words, violence sells. Pictures of a brawl, bashing of the people, rioting scenes, verbal abuse, humiliating of a human being are what Bollywood cinema exults in. Television channels, the news stories, plays, advertisements, etc. are replete with scenes of violence. Besides these, there are distorted pictures of human faces and bodies, monsters, witches, ghoulish scenes, which aim at raising fear, dread and unhealthy, supernatural ideas especially in children. The
Constitution of India speaks of instilling and spreading a scientific temper (Article 51A (h) of the Constitution of India dealing with Fundamental Duties of the Indian citizens). The producers of horror shows and crime reporting stories, are in a perpetual race to outdo each other, when it comes to airing scenes depicting eerie supernatural occurrences, blatantly and explicitly violent actions. The background music is as jarring and harsh as the action; all efforts are made with technology inputs to dramatise the effect. The concoction of gory action and music and picturisation are having a long-term damage on the minds and nerve of all the viewers including children.\textsuperscript{11}

\textbf{Media Helping to Create a Violent Society}

We are aware that in India children hang around in the adult world sharing space with their parents in the bedrooms and TV rooms. Consequently a lot of muck, violence, cruelty and inhuman behaviour sink deep down in their system manifesting itself in a society, highly aggressive and immune to violence. A child grown on a daily dose of violence cannot be expected to be compassionate, humane and sensitive to suffering and pain of others. It has learnt the lesson that "might is right": who can get away with what and against whom. Police violence and state violence have an adverse impact on the psyche of the nation. Dehumanising a police force is not healthy. There are innumerable incidents of policemen

\textsuperscript{11} \textit{Ibid.}, pp. 345-346.
committing suicide.\textsuperscript{12} Major urgent interventions on the part of society, educationists and state agencies are required to channelize the energies of the age. Media must be closely watched, to air more of the arts and music, a generation will have to be cultured to discriminate the true from the fake.

As well informed, mature citizenry will set high standards of governance for the state and society. Transparency, good governance, institutional sanctity and social values can all be attained by taming the behaviour of the media.\textsuperscript{13}

Indian press is seen to function according to Edmund Burke's idea of 'the Fourth Estate' except for a brief period of emergency when the press was censored. The role played by Indian media is very appreciative right from the anti-colonial struggle for independence to the current conjuncture. Media freedom is an important aspect of public law and an essential element of democracy.\textsuperscript{14}

The mass media has multifarious functions in a democratic state. Media, democracy and development are interconnected. The role of the media in governing changing societies is not a new phenomenon. Mass media helps to achieve some of the substantive values of democracy.

\textsuperscript{12} Ibid., p. 346.
\textsuperscript{13} Ibid., p. 347.
There were both opposition and support. The opposition camp argued that liberalization of the media would amount to legitimization of 'cultural imperialism'. It might pose a threat to national sovereignty as India is facing the problem of internal security.

Private participation in the electronic media was almost absent till the 1990s. In the post 1990s there was an increase in the growth of private TV channels and cable TVs and the growth rate is put at 5.6 per cent per annum. This monopoly can be said to be an abuse of media freedom in the name of national interests, i.e., subject to public morality, security and integrity of media. Media is more than the news and it includes entertainment also. Media is an important part of civil society.\(^{15}\)

**Mass Media Communication**

Mass media gives the greatest importance to the feedback through the reviews. Every newspaper and magazine have review column written by a media critic. In these columns, the media critics examine the mass communication of radio and television.\(^{16}\)

Katz recommends the approach to explaining the influence of mass communication in preference to what he considers to have been the two dominant modes of explanation in the past. One of those he describes as

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\(^{15}\) Sita Ram Kumbhar, *op. cit.*, p. 351.

based on an ‘irrational model of man’ which represents people as a prey to any form of powerful suggestion. Another is based on a ‘rational’ model in which people are viewed as using a calculated and logical approach to new information. Both he regards as unrealistic and less likely to account for any change of attitude than his suggested functional approach.¹⁷

The view given by Cohen is that the mass media provides a major source of knowledge in a segregated society of what the consensus actually is and what the nature of deviation is. In this view the media are responsible for promoting ‘moral panics’, identifying scapegoats, and acting as a guide to social control. The terms ‘amplification’, ‘sensitisation’ and ‘polarisation’ have been used to describe the tendency of the media to exaggerate the incidence of a phenomenon, to increase the likelihood of it being noticed and to mobilize society against a supposed threat.¹⁸

Steiner (1963) in his famous study, ‘The people look at Television’ made a national survey of 2427 television viewers in USA to find out what the phenomenon of television means to American people. The findings of the study showed that the American people look at the television mainly as a medium of entertainment. For detailed and serious news,

the study revealed that the American people turned to radio and newspapers.\textsuperscript{19}

Schramm (1973) made a comparative study of popularity of newspapers and television in American society. The author in his study found out that the television has not been successful in displacing newspaper reading because the television did not make the detailed news coverage.\textsuperscript{20}

Sheley and Ashkins (1981) made a study on the ways in which the different media such as television and newspapers on the one hand, and the police, on the other, present the public images of crime trends in the USA. The findings suggest that the newspaper presentation of the relative distribution of crime approximated to the police figures more closely than the one presented by the television.\textsuperscript{21}

Everett M. Rogers a well known sociologist and communication scholar says that new ideas diffuse into a community through mass media and interpersonal communication. He says that new ideas spread into a community slowly and this follows a four step process. In his social


diffusion theory, Rogers postulates that a series of steps are adopted by people in the process of trying out new ideas.\textsuperscript{22} These are:

i) Knowledge, the stage in which an individual gains awareness,

ii) Persuasion, the stage in which the individual gets persuaded about the new ideas,

iii) Decision, the stage in which a decision to adopt or not to adopt is taken, and

iv) Confirmation, the step in which confirmation of earlier decision is taken.

Wilbur Schramm (1964) argued that the modernization of industrial and agricultural sectors in developing nations required the mobilization of human resources. Education and mass media, then, were vested with crucial responsibility in the process of mobilization of human resources.\textsuperscript{23}

Brown (1978) made a study of the functions of television in comparison to other mass media. The findings of the study indicated that the people used print media for information and television for both entertainment and news information.\textsuperscript{24}


Hoffsteller (1978) used the national survey of the exposure on viewers’ perception about the candidates imagery, personality, issue position and political information. The findings of the study in the first instance suggested that the exposure of television did produce the increase in the imagery and perception of the television viewers. Secondly, the author found that the television news were associated with less political information as compared to the printed media as well as the radio.²⁵

Rogers’ survey (1969) of peasants in Colombia, India, Kenya and Brazil showed the role of mass media as an intervening variable between functional literacy and various measures of modernization such as empathy, agricultural innovativeness, political knowledge and educational aspirations for children.²⁶

Klapper (1960) suggested that the mass media were more serious agents of reinforcement than causal agents of behavioural or attitudinal change in individuals. The demographic categories to which people belonged, their individual characteristics, and their social relationships had a far greater influence than the combined mass media.²⁷

Diaz-Bordenave (1977) noted that the findings of the minimal effects research aside, mass media were increasingly used for short-term information delivery, persuasion and change. Particularly during the Cold War of the 1950s, mass media were used as propaganda tools for the United States in foreign countries. In the third world countries diverse fields such as agricultural extension and health education began using mass media for the transmission of information and for persuasion.\(^{28}\)

**Mass Media Reach**

The owners and producers of the mass media conceive the total population whom their communications can reach. The signals of All India Radio are available to about 95 per cent of the population living in about 85 per cent of country’s area. So the total population of India may be treated as audience for All India Radio. Similarly, Doordarshan can claim more than 80 per cent of the population as its audience because its signals can reach many people. For newspapers, the readers would be defined in terms of all individuals who are within the distribution range of the papers. For a cable TV system the audience reach will include all residents within the wired area.\(^{29}\)

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**Media Exposure**

According to Ravindran, everyone who has access to radio or television does not necessarily use them. In a family that subscribes to a actually expose themselves to the media audiences. Again, no one is exposed to the total content of any medium. No one listens to all the programmes broadcast by All India Radio. Similarly, it is impossible to watch all the programmes of Doordarshan. Many people do not even glance at the commerce page of the newspaper. There are many young people, specially students, who read only the sports page. So the users can also be seen as programme specific or content specific, that is the population is actually exposed to specific media contents. Another important aspect of media behaviour is that all users of media content are not uniformly exposed. There are people who listen to news everyday without fail. Others may listen to news; say on an average of five days a week. Still others may be people whose exposure to news or radio is nil.\(^{30}\)

Indian newspapers have shown an upward trend in sales, increasing by 7 per cent in 2005 over the previous year and 33 per cent over the last 5 years. It is heartening to note that newspaper circulation worldwide has risen slightly in 2005; newspaper advertising revenue has shown the largest growth in four years as per the World Association of Newspapers

(WAN) (Newswatch). Most of the growth has been registered in Asia. On close scrutiny one finds that the media today is centred in the market. Corporate houses run media like any other business. There is consolidation, control and regulation of a kind very different from the control exercised by the State. Any restriction on freedom by the state is with the objective of public interest. Controls exercised by the media are more subtle, sometimes direct but always with the perspective of a long term impact and additional revenue.

**Media Ownership in India**

The issue of ownership of the media is acquiring serious attention of the people. The concentration of ownership of media in a few hands is by far more significant debatable issue than ownership itself. Among others, the following two arguments merit attention. Ownership of the news media can lead to distortion and manipulation of news. Secondly, media informs, educates and entertains people. Therefore, exposure and influence of the media are very significant. The media houses in India are owned by both politicians and some corporate houses. The corporate ownership of the media is beyond doubt. We come across two serious debates about the ownership in India today. Most of the media houses, especially the press, are under the direct control of different political parties and political leaders. The second important aspect is that the representation of the

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weaker sections in the media ownership and at the position of taking independent decision is almost negligent.  

**The Media Corporation is Too Powerful to be Left on its own**

Robert McChesney has argued in his book *Rich Media Poor Democracy* that the major beneficiaries of the information age are wealthy investors, advertisers and a handful of enormous media tycoons, telecom and computer corporations. This concentrated corporal control is disastrous for any nation of participatory democracy. That the market compels the media firms to "give to the people what they want" is an argument of the votaries of the market. If we value our democracy, we must organize politically and restructure the media in order to affirm their connection to democracy. A trend visible in India is that the strings holding a particular mass media, be it the newspapers, radio, television, cinema, internet, are the corporate bigwigs and a few members of Parliament. The same corporate heads, the owners of the biggest advertising agency, cinema production laboratory and other communication systems are done the mantle of Parliamentarians. All the media is fed on advertising revenue – the appetite seems limitless. 

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Women in Media

Women's reform movements of the media are no longer centred on the portrayal of women in cultural products, including advertising, though that issue is still important and unresolved. Likewise, the recruitment of women to the media, their rights and promotions to managerial positions are no longer the panacea of the struggle. It is rather the qualitative difference, which women can make to the community environment as a whole which are now at the core of the debate.\(^{34}\)


Attack on Media

The confrontation between the media and politicians is not new. Media is often used against each other in most of the states in India. In Andhra Pradesh, the confrontation between the Chief Minister and Ramoji Rao, who owns \textit{Eenadu}, is one example of suppression of press freedom. \textit{Eenadu} has been running exposes on the Chief Minister's property assets. The financier of \textit{Eenadu} is being harassed by the state government through the voluminous record seizure, raids on premises by the government

\(^{34}\) \textit{Ibid.}, p. 344.
officials with retaliation in mind.\textsuperscript{35} The media can occupy the status of the ‘fourth estate’ if it is run to serve the society more than to earn profit. Newspapers are still very much alive in the daily battle for survival in this fast changing world. The press perform in its own way on the functioning, checking and controlling abuse of public power. Television is more important for the public mass, especially for illiterate viewers. Media can protect the democratic rights of the people and ensure accountability of all individuals and institutions in exercising public power and expending public resources. The media as an institution of the civil society is performing its duties very well in India. There are limitations on the part of the media too. The press cannot reach the poor and illiterate people. India has a large illiterate population which cannot benefit from the press directly.

\textbf{Mass Media and the Law}

The Indecent Representation of Women (Prohibition) Act, 1986 provides for the regulation of representation of women in the media. It prohibits indecent representation of women through advertisements, books, writings, paintings, figures or in any other manner. Section 4 prohibits the production, sale, hire, distribution, circulation, sending by post any book, pamphlet, slide, film, writing, drawing, painting etc. which contains indecent representation of women in any form. Since media is considered as the

\textsuperscript{35} \textit{Ibid.}, p. 356.
fourth estate, its function is to act as a guardian of the public interest and as a watchdog.36

Around 7 p.m. on 31st July 2007, unidentified youths delivered a gift-wrapped Nokia mobile handset package for the editor of The Sangai Express, the largest selling English daily in Manipur. The non-suspecting staff took it to the editor’s table, little knowing that nestled inside the package was a rocket propelled grenade. All media houses in Imphal shut down and media persons congregated to sit on a dharna demanding an apology and assurance of non-interference (by the underground group) in the functioning of the media. The Manipur government responded with strictures on the media regarding news related to unlawful organisations.37

Pressure on the media from both state and non-state forces is not a new phenomenon in Manipur especially due to the long-standing armed separatist insurgency. For the media this meant more than its work of disseminating information and opinions - however conflicting - has been transformed into a tight-rope walk between the devil and the deep sea. Making the job more hazardous is the presence of too many lines to toe, each line coming with the threat to life, limb, ideology and most importantly,

36 Ibid., p. 379.
the freedom of the press - the fourth pillar or the fourth estate on which rests the basic foundation of democracy.

Interestingly, the first resistance movement in the state was a Communist movement led by Hijam Irabot in the 1930s demanding, among other things, the British to quit Manipur, abolition of the Manipur State darbar and establishing an elected government (Life and Works of Jananeta Irabat Singh, L Damodar Singh, Ningshing Chephong, 1996). Another significant point is that on the 14th August 1947, the Naga people through the Naga National Council (NNC) declared their independence from British rule, one day before India declared her Independence. These insurrections took an upsurge in the late 1970s, and escalated in the next decades ushering in an era of armed conflict between the insurgent groups and the forces of the state.38

Regarding news agencies, there are correspondents for the United News of India (UNI), Press Information Bureau (PIB), Press Trust of India (PTI) and Reuters. A local news agency Newmai News Network (NNN) was also established in 2002. Besides, there are a number of correspondents and stringers for various national and international news agencies, newspapers, magazines and electronic media houses like the Hindustan

38 Ibid., pp. 383-384.
In the fifth annual press freedom report for South Asia, “The Fight Goes on: Press Freedom Crises in South Asia (2006-07)”, the International Federation of Journalists (IFJ) identifies five key needs to be addressed:

1. Journalists must be trained to monitor violations of press freedom and journalists' rights.
2. Systems should be set up to communicate.
3. Highlight such violations through alerts.
4. Journalists in conflict areas must be provided with safety training and professional skill development.
5. There should be training in union/association building skills, to help media workers present a stronger, united front and assert their rights to report objectively, free from pressure and harassment.

It is not only by addressing these five needs, but also by creating better law and order situation as well as a respect for the freedom of the press which could help alleviate the situation in Manipur. Until then, media in the state would continue to be gagged and threatened.\(^\text{40}\)

The dynamics of development in a modern world is based on effective public relations. Public relation is the art of managing people and


Half-hearted Attempts at Self-regulation

The Press Council of India (PCI) was set up through an Act of the Parliament in 1978 as an autonomous body. It speaks of a code of conduct in Section 13(1(b), journalistic ethics, and Power of Censure in 14(1). Perhaps the PCI cannot extend its power to the electronic media, but the print media has much to answer for. The Advertising Standards Council of India (ASCI) came into existence around 1985, in keeping with the practice followed in 50 countries around the world. It set up a code for self-regulation, laid down that all advertising should be truthful, honest, decent and legal, safe for consumers especially minors and fair to competition.  

In 1995, the Cable Television Network Act was brought to streamline and regulate cable business. Guidelines like those for uplinking television channels, Direct to Home (DTH) and FM Radio are no good. Media cannot consolidate and invigorate the processes of democracy, unless it evolves and matures to know how to be responsible at handling power, how to differentiate between a public service provider and a business venture.  

41 www.ascionline.org  
Television

Television emerges as one of the best performing media. The medium clocked an impressive 17 per cent growth at Rs.8319 crore, and emerged as one of the best performing media platforms in 2008. The growth has been more visible in its ability to create or generate income. In absolute terms also, its contribution rose from Rs.7110 crore to reach Rs.8319 crore in the year gone-by. Riding on the growth momentum, the medium continued to sustain its share in the advertising pie at 40.2 per cent.43

The Idiot Box Turns into Magic Box

Cable and satellite television have grown rapidly throughout the developing world. Of all the popular means of mass media, television has the greatest mass appeal and acceptance. With the advent of satellite television in 1991, the idiot box of 1980s turned into a whole new magical world, comprising of innumerable and a wide variety of satellite channels.

Television creates a world which seems very real and viewers are unable to differentiate between the contrived world and the real one. The impact of television is more on the young children and adolescents, who sit

in front of the television, and for hours, the succession of pictures becomes imprinted on minds that are still impressionable.\textsuperscript{44} 

**Television Serials**

Television serials have undergone a huge transformation in the last decade and a half. Serials have moved a great deal in portraying strong women. Here again 'modernity' or 'westernization' as it is commonly called, is co-related and confused with debasement of morals and ideals.\textsuperscript{45} Another feature commonly portrayed is the *unrealistic* 'superwoman': the superwife, the super daughter-in-law and the super mother. This 'superwoman' has multifarious qualities - loyalty, compassion and devotion - her domain is her home and her family justifies her very existence. Her greatness lies in the obliteration of her individuality and self-worth; she is more of an ideal, a superlative rather than a personality. In the role of a mother she sacrifices her happiness for her children and family, she is the panacea for all ills that might plague the family.\textsuperscript{46}

**Television Advertisements**

Advertisements are yet another prominent and integral part of television viewing. Due to its power and charisma, advertising is the best known and most widely discussed form of promotion. Advertising not only

\textsuperscript{44} Meenu Anand (2004), ‘Reflections on Media and Development: The Case of India, Strengthening Democracy for an Equitable and Just Society’, *Social Action, A Quarterly Review of Social Trends*, 57: 368.

\textsuperscript{45} Ibid., p. 370

\textsuperscript{46} Ibid., p. 371.
informs but persuades and motivates the consumer about the advertised products, services or ideas. Advertising plays an important role in persuading the public to change their attitudes towards a product, service or idea.⁴⁷

**News Channels**

It is said that Indian viewers now spend more time on watching news than reading news. As TV news channels in India compete with each other for more viewership, more and more sensational types of news programmes are being created vying for public attention and ultimately to improve their television rating points.⁴⁸

**Bollywood Fixation**

Gender and related issues are totally ignored by the news channels that often depend on Bollywood stars for their survival. Most news channels sensationalize news related to celebrities such as Bachchan family's numerous visits to temples, covering wedding arrangements of actors like Liz Hurley-Arun Nayar, Abhishek-Aishwarya, Raveena Tandon and Karisma Kapoor. News channels tirelessly present for hours news related to Shah Rukh Khan, Shilpa Shetty and others in order to woo their viewers and improve their rating. Recently Sanjay Dutt dominated all news channels after getting convicted for his long pending TADA case. All news channels

for days covered this news, interviewing Dutt's family, his colleagues and asking viewers for sending mobile messages. The programme anchors spoke nonstop and at great length about the jail food, living conditions, his transfer to another jail and so on. The private life of Sanjay Dutt was associated with Gandhigri which is probably the reason for sympathy from the masses Dutt has received, particularly from the youth.\(^{49}\)

**Music Videos**

There is yet another side to television, which is the trend of the music videos to promote music albums.\(^{50}\)

**Children's Programmes**

There has been a tremendous increase in the number of channels for the little ones. An analysis of programmes that are aired for children shows that in general on TV, boys tend to be shown as active, aggressive, rational and discontented. Boys tend to engage in traditional male activities such as sports, travel and causing trouble. Girls are often shown talking on the phone, playing with dolls, reading and helping in the housework. Children's channels like Pogo, Cartoon Network, Nick, Jetix, Hungama TV all thrive on shows of bravery and the Icons are mostly males – Spiderman, Batman, Ultraman, Perman, Power Rangers etc.


Sports Channels

Sports channels are primarily devoted to men and the games they play. Cricket and tennis dominate. Sport on television is dominated by men and tends to inculcate masculine values. Sports programmes define men in relation to competition, strength and discipline.\textsuperscript{51}

Radio

With close to 270 stations spread across the top 75 cities, the private FM radio industry has come of age in the country. In every sense, barring the profitability as the books of many a player confirm - but it's still long for a capital-intensive industry to be profitable from the start - be its reach (radio reaches close to 90 per cent of the population where it is present) or its popularity or the rising preference of advertisers for this medium thanks to its ability for customization and cost benefit. This growth has been more visible in its ability to generate revenue.\textsuperscript{52}

Press

In today's fast changing scenario, press has emerged as a vital tool for information dissemination and image building of the organisations. In fact, press is a friend, philosopher and guide for public relations, says Sardana, who retired as General Manager (corporate public relations) in

\textsuperscript{51} Ibid., p. 378.

\textsuperscript{52} K. J. Bennychan (2009), ‘Singing Louder!’, (Pitch-Madison Media Advertising), \textit{Outlook}, pp. 54-58.
1993 from Bharat Heavy Electricals Limited. (BHEL). Press is, in fact, a friend, philosopher and guide for public relations. But, one can’t and shouldn’t take press for granted. One has to recognise and appreciate the role of the press as a watchdog. It is neither the PR department of an organisation nor the mouthpiece of an organisation. Nor can it be ‘cultivated’ through various allurements for writing all that is good in an organisation or for ‘killing’ a factually correct but damaging news story.  