CHAPTER - III

METHODOLOGY

Rationale of the study

We live in a society that is increasingly saturated by mass media like radio, television newspapers, magazines, books, movies and many more; they are like the air we breathe in ever-present yet rarely considered. The word media is plural of medium derived from the Latin word meduis which means “middle”. The communication media are the different technological processes that facilitate communication between the sender and the receiver of the message. Technology assisted communication combines characteristics of both interpersonal and mass communication. New forms of machine assisted communication have altered some of the functions and customs of interpersonal communication.

Today we use the term new media to refer to media forms and media content that are created and shaped by changes in technology. Thus computer usage, Internet, cell
phones, DVD, CD-ROM are all categorized as new media which are being used for personal, business and official purpose in today’s society. As new technologies appear, media forms and technologies come together resulting in media convergence. Newspaper, going online is an example of media convergence. Today’s age of communication is called as the information revolution because computers have become the electronic storehouse and transmitters of vast amount of information that previously relied on written word. The new media can be viewed as an addition to the existing spectrum of mass media. However, the new media is more interactive, informative and participatory when compared to the old media like movies, radio, newspaper and television.

The new media today is being used by all institutions like family, economic, political and educational institutions. New media like internet and cell phone usage are becoming common in today’s society for exchange of information because of its specific features like interactivity, collective participatory and its use at anytime and anywhere.

According to the Government of India release of a statewide list of broadband subscribers in India, as on 31st October 2008 confirms that there is a growth in the internet usage except in some states which are lagging behind.
State wise Broadband Subscribers in India

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STATE/TELECOM CIRCLE</th>
<th>31st Oct 2008</th>
<th>31st Dec 2007</th>
<th>Growth (10 Months)</th>
<th>% Growth (10 months)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Andaman &amp; Nicobar</td>
<td>2,282</td>
<td>964</td>
<td>1,318</td>
<td>136.72%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Andhra Pradesh</td>
<td>400,663</td>
<td>234,099</td>
<td>166,564</td>
<td>71.15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assam</td>
<td>31,456</td>
<td>12,475</td>
<td>18,981</td>
<td>152.15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bihar (incl Jharkhand)</td>
<td>63,305</td>
<td>37,278</td>
<td>26,027</td>
<td>69.82%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Delhi*</td>
<td>588,716</td>
<td>409,057</td>
<td>179,659</td>
<td>43.92%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gujarat</td>
<td>322,656</td>
<td>188,628</td>
<td>134,028</td>
<td>71.05%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Haryana</td>
<td>88,558</td>
<td>40,218</td>
<td>48,340</td>
<td>120.19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Himachal Pradesh</td>
<td>20,981</td>
<td>6,693</td>
<td>14,288</td>
<td>213.48%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jammu &amp; Kashmir</td>
<td>19,538</td>
<td>9,597</td>
<td>9,941</td>
<td>103.58%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Karnataka</td>
<td>569,057</td>
<td>331,937</td>
<td>237,120</td>
<td>71.44%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kerala</td>
<td>249,909</td>
<td>140,306</td>
<td>109,603</td>
<td>78.12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maharashtra (incl Goa)</td>
<td>934,351</td>
<td>654,308</td>
<td>280,043</td>
<td>42.80%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

According to the statistics released by India broadband forum, there are about 13 percent of internet users in Asia (which accounts for 7.36 percent of the world), of which only 5.3 percent of people are from India. The reason for this is that most of the people in India do not know computer operations. Only 7 percent of people who are familiar with computer have used internet which is a healthy sign for the growth and development of information technology. Among 14 percent are schools going children,
21 percent are college students, 39 percent are graduates and 26 percent are post-graduates.

According to the revised estimates by the Cellular Operators Association of India, the mobile subscriber base is expected to zoom to 893 million by 2012. That is 150 million more subscribers than what was projected earlier. India could have 100 million mobile broadband users on the GSM platform by 2014; overall broadband penetration in India is 4.7 per cent now. The COAI’s earlier estimates had put the mobile user base at 743 million by 2012. India, with 400 million mobile users, is now the second largest market in the world after China which has over 650 million subscribers. According to

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Population (million)</th>
<th>Mobile density (%)</th>
<th>Subscriber projection (million)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>1184</td>
<td>37.15</td>
<td>493</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>1201</td>
<td>46.54</td>
<td>626</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>1218</td>
<td>55.84</td>
<td>761</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>1233</td>
<td>64.69</td>
<td>893</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>1249</td>
<td>72.86</td>
<td>1019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>1265</td>
<td>80.20</td>
<td>1136</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>1281</td>
<td>86.66</td>
<td>1243</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: COAI

2 COAI (Cellular Operators Association of India)
COAI’s projection, there will be 1.24 billion mobile users in 2015, which means one phone for every Indian.

This growth in internet and mobile phones have been due to the impetus given by economic liberalization where free markets play a much bigger role in the Indian society. Population of India as on July 2009 was 1184 million of which the youth segment (between the age of 15 and 25 years) is around 250 million. Young people of today are the product of these incredible technological changes whereby internet and mobile phones in their lives is not just a communication mode to email, chat or get information but has become an enabling tool to perform various tasks like learning, networking, shopping, gaming and expressing themselves in the form of blogs and websites to the extent of establishing a virtual world for themselves. Youth forms the major chunk to the growing internet user base in India. This may be due to the fact that all the applications which are present today are focusing on youth who has the ability to adapt these changes easily with the changing times and changing applications. Hence an attempt has been made to study the social implications of the new media on the growing youth population with the specific reference to college students who have fallen prey to the this growing new media as communicative and an educative tool. In line with the above thoughts, an attempt was made to study the arrival of new media and its social implications on youth and accordingly the following specific objectives were formulated to carry out the study as follows.
Objectives of the study

1. To study the socio economic background of the students possessing new media.
2. To identify the role of new media as an educational tool.
3. To study the uses of new media among youth.
4. To study the role of new media in influencing their personal and social relationships.

Research setting

The origin of Madurai dates back to the Sangam period, the golden period of Tamil Literature. Pandiyan Kings patronized Tamil language in a large way by creating Sangams to develop this language. Madurai district is one of the 32 districts of the state of Tamil Nadu, in southeastern India. The city of Madurai serves as the district headquarters. It houses the world famous Sri Meenakshi Sundareshwarar temple and is situated on the banks of river Vaigai. Madurai district had a population of 2,578,201 as of 2001. 56.01 percent is urbanized; according to the 2001 census Madurai has an average literacy rate of 79 percent, higher than the national average of 59.5 percent. Male literacy accounts for 84 percent while female literacy is 74 percent. Madurai has thirty four arts and science colleges, 15 engineering colleges, five medical colleges 2 music colleges, two agricultural colleges, 11 paramedical colleges 10 polytechnics, 9 ITI and 30 schools. Madurai has been steadily growing as an educational center since independence and enabling the fruits of education to aspiring students from all walks of life. The specific
area of study from the Madurai city limit was selected from the zonal divisions of Madurai.

**Zonal divisions of Madurai**

![Map of Madurai zonal divisions]

**Sampling**

From among the 34 arts and science colleges in Madurai urban, spread in the four zonal divisions such as north, south, east and west, two colleges were selected using clustered sampling method. That is from the four zonal divisions one zone was selected using lottery method. The zone thus selected was north. From this zone (north) which consisted of 10 colleges, two colleges were selected using the lottery method. The colleges thus chosen were Lady Doak College and American College. From these two colleges students who possess cell phone and internet connection at home were identified from arts science and commerce stream, both from regular and self financing
A list was then prepared of those who possess personal cell phone and internet accesses at home to enable in data collection.

The samples thus identified consisted of 121 males out of the total strength of 1824 students in American college and 271 females out of the total strength of 4349 students in Lady Doak College. Only male members were identified in American college, which is a co educational institution.

**Area of the study**

Lady Doak College, the study area is a premier Christian Institution and the first Women's College in Madurai, was the brainchild of Ms.Katie Wilcox, an American missionary with a vision and fervor for women empowerment. The College made its humble genesis in 1948, and within a short span of time, in 1978, it was commissioned to function as an autonomous college, being affiliated to the Madurai Kamaraj University. The college, presently, functions as a unit of Katie Wilcox Education Association and stands distinguished as one of the pioneering autonomous colleges in India. It offers
education in Arts, Science and Business Studies in both under graduation and post graduation and Doctoral research in the various Arts, Language and Science discipline.

American college is one of the institutions in higher education known for its focus on academic excellence and social relevance. Its pioneering role in the development of college autonomy in India, with its successful beginning of choice based credit system has completed of 125 years of higher education. It was founded by a missionary in 1841 by the American mission.

The American college is affiliated to Madurai Kamaraj University. With its extreme sensitivity to national policies and community needs, the college has grown from strength to strength. It was one of the first set of seven colleges to be made autonomous by the UGC in 1977-1978. Today the college offers eighteen undergraduate and thirteen post-graduate programmes and there are research centers offering M.Phil and Ph.D programmes in various arts, language and science discipline.
Research design

Explorative cum descriptive design was adopted for study because not much study has been conducted in this area of research as the phenomenon under study is something new and in the Indian context, the study is gaining ground with the proliferation of the new media especially among the youth. The researcher used descriptive design because it would give a detailed picture of the usage of new media among youth, reasons, and social implications of the usage of new media among youth.

Formulation of Hypothesis

Possession of internet is independent of birth order of the respondents Possession of new media accesses in terms of years and gender are independent of each other Duration of usage of new media is independent of gender.

Operational definition

New media

New media is a term meant to encompass the emergence of digital, computerized, or networked information and communication technologies in the later part of the 20th century. Most technologies described as "new media" are digital, often having characteristics of being networkable, dense, compressible, interactive and impartial. Different types of new media may be understood as Internet, websites, computer multimedia, computer games, CD-ROMS, and DVDs. Also new media is not television programs, feature films, magazines, books, or paper-based publications.
Youth

The United Nations, for defines ‘youth’, as those persons between the ages of 15 and 24 years. But it also recognizes that this can vary according to cultural and institutional factors in each country. In this study the same definition is considered but with specific reference to college students in the age group of 18-24 years.\textsuperscript{4}

Social implications

The term Social refers to a characteristic of human being. It refers to the interaction of human with other human being and to their collective co-existence; the term Implications refers to a consequence implied by an action. Thus the term here refers to the use of new media by human beings to interact with each other or self and the consequence thereafter to the individual and society.

Tools

To formulate a questionnaire a survey of literature was made on similar studies to gain an understanding of the problem. The researcher also had informal discussions with students and experts. The information gathered from these sources along with the prior knowledge that the investigator had helped in formulating a questionnaire. Before the final draft of questionnaire was designed, a pretest was made in a research setting that was not included in the research area of this study. The pretest was conducted in order to identify any fallacies in the tool designed. The errors that were detected were either rectified or deleted.\textsuperscript{5}
The questionnaire prepared consisted of eighty-three questions. They were both open-ended and closed questions. The items in the questionnaire related to demographic details respondents family, usage of new media for educational entertainment and communication purpose and their experience and etiquette in the usage of new media.

**Time frame**

The fieldwork was undertaken from January 2010 to April 2010. During the fieldwork, the researcher met the students after class hours and during breaks since the time schedule to meet the students was made by the Head of the concerned department. A list was obtained from all the departments of students who owned the new media earlier from the head of the department and then a day was arranged to meet the students to explain and distribute the questionnaire.

**Data analyses**

Descriptive statistics were used to determine the distributional characteristics of each of the study variables. Inferential statistics (Pearson correlation) was used to determine the extent of associations between the year of study and duration of internet use. Chance probability level of less than .05 was set to reject the null hypotheses.

**Difficulties faced**

Difficulties experienced in the collection of data were absenteeism among both male and female students. The researcher had to make repeated visits to colleges in order to get the questionnaire completed. In addition, to meet them on a working day was very
difficult since they were busy with lab schedules and other college programmes. Contacting youth looks easy but in reality, it was a challenge to the researcher. Repeated visits to colleges enabled the researcher to complete data collection within a span of four months.

**Limitations of the study**

The student population living in the hostel could not be considered since they were not permitted to possess personal computer connection as a policy followed in colleges. Similarly, youth outside the institutional setup was also not considered due to lack of time in contacting them since they are dispersed everywhere. The findings are very specific and could only be generalized to population with the same characteristics. Furthermore, the questionnaires were self administered; thus the reliability and validity of the information obtained depended solely on the honesty of the respondents in responding to the questionnaire. Despite the limitations, the current study provides the impetus for new investigations to refine the understanding of mobile phone use amongst college students. Further research could investigate other underlying factors that exist within the ecosystems of the students that could shape their mobile phone behaviours. More research data considering the above factors could be taken up for future research making the study wider with a heterogeneous population.⁶
End Notes

5. http://maps.google.co.in/maps?hl=en&source=hp&um=1&ie=UTF-8&q=american+college