CHAPTER-V
RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The aim of the present investigation was to study the social impacts of multi-channel electronic media. Research has been done to determine the effect of multi-channel electronic media on the socio-cultural and political scenario in the developed countries. However there is a dearth of studies in the Indian context as the advent of multi-channel electronic media is quite recent and the impacts have just started achieving perceivable influences.

Keeping the above facts in views the present study was limited to a small town in Haryana (Rohtak) where the cable network had been introduced just five years ago. An ex-post-facto design was used in the present survey research. A semi-structured interview schedule consisting of 13 questions was constructed for this study. Five colonies having a similar socio-economic status with maximum cable connections namely Model Town, Sector-I, Subhash Nagar, Bharat Colony and Camp Colony were selected. Each of the above colony had their own cable network.

The responses of the subjects were analyzed in terms of number respondents reporting a change/no change in social interactions or attitudes. As the data was in the form of frequency,
chi-square was the most appropriate test to determine the significance of difference between the frequency of responses in the different categories. The obtained demographic data has been tabulated in Appendix I, whereas the social impacts have been shown in Appendix II.

Perusal of the viewing time (Appendix II) indicated that 74 percent of respondents reported that there was an increase in their viewing time after the advent of multichannel new electronic media, while 26 percent reported no change. The difference between the subjects reporting change was found to be significant (Chi-square = 17.2, p<0.01).

Further the minimum viewing time was 1 hour per day and the maximum was 4 hours per day. Average viewing time was 2.41 hours/day. These results are similar to those of Kaur (1998) who reported that the average hours of television watching by adults in Faridkot and Hoshiarpur districts of Punjab were 2 hours 20 minutes/day. Thus the average hours of T.V. viewing are still far less than that of the average British who watch T.V. 25 hours/week or American men and women who watch it for 29 hours and 34 hours/week respectively.

In order to determine whether there was any significant effect of gender, economic status or nature of profession on viewing time, it
was dichotomized into two categories i.e. 0 to 2 hours and 2 to 4 hours. The frequency date was also transformed into percentage, to facilitate comparison, specially in situations where there was a large difference in the member of individuals in each categories.

Table 1  Significance of difference between viewing time of subjects of different gender, economic status and profession by using chi-square

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Demographic Variables</th>
<th>Viewing Time</th>
<th>Chi-square</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0-2 hours</td>
<td>2-4 hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economic Status</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3000-8000</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>54%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8000 &amp; above</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Profession</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salaried</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>61%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Businessmen</td>
<td>71%</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*p < 0.01

From Table 1, it appears that gender does not have any effect on viewing time. A larger percentage of males and females (70% and 64% respectively) spend 0-2 hours in viewing television. Computation of the significance of difference also revealed (chi-square= 0.31, p>0.05) that there was no significant effect of gender on viewing time.

Comparisons between subjects of different economic status, indicated that a larger number of subjects of the higher middle income
group (60%) spent 0-2 hours time in viewing T.V. while there was no
difference in the percentage of lower middle income group subjects
watching T.V. for either 0-2 or 2-4 hours (46 and 54% respectively).
However, the obtained value of chi-square, 0.68 was found to be
insignificant even at the 0.05 level indicating that economic status
does not have any effect on viewing time. The last demographic
variable, profession, was found to have a significant effect on viewing
time. A larger percentage of salaried subjects (61%) spent 2-4 hours in
viewing time while the relationship was reversed in case of
businessmen larger percentage of businessmen (71%) spent lesser
time in viewing T.V. The difference between the viewing time of
salaried and businessmen subjects was found to be significant
(chi-square 7.3, p<0.01).

Considered together, these results show that gender or
economic status does not have any significant effect on viewing time.
The reason for the significant effect of nature of profession could be
that salaried persons have fixed duty hours and can therefore spent
more time in viewing T.V. as compared to businessmen who have
relatively lesser free time.

Thus the first hypothesis which predicted that exposure to
multichannel electronic media would have an effect on viewing time is
verified.
Let us now consider the preferences of the subjects to determine the type of programmes generally watched. Nature of programme would have a very significant influence on the impact of multi-channel new electronic media.

On the basis of the preferences indicated by the subjects, the programmes were grouped into 5 categories i.e. family drama (Janoon, Parampra, Imtihan), religious (Mahabharata, Krishna), Satire (P.A. Sahib), Detective (Kanoon) and informative (News, U.G.C. programmes).

**Table 2  First and second preference of subjects for different kind of programmes.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Programmes</th>
<th>1st Choice</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>2nd Choice</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Family Drama</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>63%</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>61%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religious</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satire</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Detective</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Informative</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

From Table 2, it can be seen that a majority of subjects opted for family drama as their 1st (63%) or 2nd (61%) choice. A smaller percentage (16% and 15%) of subjects preferred religious programmes while a negligible number opted for either satire or detective serials. Surprisingly only 2 subjects gave first preference to informative programmes and four as their second choice. All these subjects were
male-lecturers.

These results present a very bleak picture. Increase in the number of channels and nature of programmes could have had a positive impact as they could become a major source of information and social change. However, the kind of programmes being watched by the people i.e. Janoon, Intihan and Parampara etc. are demeaning the Indian socio-cultural values and propagating western values. Exposure of this kind creates a chasm between the values that have been imbibed and the one being projected especially, in a town like Rohtak, which despite of its physical proximity to a metropolis, like Delhi, has retained its rustic and orthodox cultural climate. The general population, which till now was relatively unexposed to the Western culture, is being presented a glamorized, westernized version of Indian society. These portrayals can create a greater damage than western serials or movies.

Let us now consider the responses of the subjects to evaluate whether they have perceived any impact of the advent of the multi-channel new electronic media on their social interactions.
Table 3  Significance of difference between the frequency of subjects reporting change/no change/enhancement in their social interactions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interactions</th>
<th>Reduce</th>
<th>No Change</th>
<th>Enhance</th>
<th>Chi-Square</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>With family members</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>54·</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>9.92*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>With friends</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>9.92*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hospitality</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>31*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*p <0.01

From Table 3 it can be seen that 25 (32%) subjects reported a reduction in interaction with family members while 54 (68%) felt that there was no perceivable change. The difference between these frequencies was found to be significant (Chi-square 9.92, p<0.01). However, since a significantly smaller number of subjects reported a change this indicates that the multi-channel media has not had any significant effect on family interactions.

These results are in contradictory to those of Kaur (1998) who found that ties with family members had been affected as there was very little interaction between family members, who remain glued in the front of the "idiot box."

However, the respondents of the present investigation largely felt that increased viewing time did not interfere with the time they spend with family members (especially children), nor did it have any influence on the relationship between the family members.
A smaller number did report that communication between family members had undergone a change. They could not communicate on important issues, as they used to earlier, because of the interfering influences of the varied interests in T.V. programmes. But this effect was not found to be significant.

On the other hand, a clear impact of new electronic media on interaction with friends was found in the present study. Fifty-four (68%) subjects reported that their interactions with friends had reduced while only 25 (32%) felt there was no change. Here again the chi-square value (9.92, p<0.01) was found to be significant.

These results are line with those of Kaur (1998) who also reported reduced interactions with friends. Subjects in her study had reported that they had started celebrating religious days and festivals (a major reason for social interaction in rural areas) by watching T.V. rather than actual celebrations and their interactions with neighbours and family members had decreased.

In the present investigation also a few respondents reported that "Now cable has become our most favourite friend", "It has restricted us behind the walls of our home." Thus, people become so engrossed in the serials they watch that guests, who cause a distraction are not welcomed, especially during the prime viewing time. Further, the need for social interaction has decreased, because
the required stimulation is provided by the multichannel media. This effect is evident in the present study. From Table 3 it can be seen that 65 subjects (82%) reported that they had become less hospitable after the advent of multi-channel electronic media, while only 14 (18%) respondents felt that they had become more hospitable. The obtained chi-square value (31, P<0.01) was highly significant.

When the investigator had asked the respondents how they feel about the appearance of guests during their favourite programme on T.V., most of the respondents reported that they felt unhappy when some guests came during this time. These responses also strengthen our results which indicates that people have became less hospitable after the introduction of multi-channel electronic media.

These results confirm the results of a survey conducted in Delhi in 1992 in which 60% respondents reported that the new multi-channel electronic media had a socio-cultural effect, especially as now they had no spare time and were not very hospitable.

Thus, it is evident that the advent of new multi-channel electronic media has eroded social ties, specially with friends, as people are not very hospitable (do not welcome guests when they are watching their favourite programmes) and further they have hardly any leisure time left over to socialise and the need for social contact is being fulfilled by the television.
Thus the second hypothesis which predicted exposure to multichannel media would result in changes in social interaction is verified only partially, changes were found in interactions with friends but not within the family.

The effect of the multi-channel electronic media is not only limited to social interactions, but also assumes a major cultural significance as an object of domestic consumption having far reaching impacts on aspirations and attitudes. In the present investigation an attempt was made to determine whether the subjects had perceived any effect of multi-channel electronic media on their aspirations, consumer attitude or incidence of violence.

Table 4 Significance of difference between the frequency of subjects reporting change/no change/enhancement in their aspirations, consumer attitude and incidence of violence.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Frequency of responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Interactions</td>
<td>Reduce</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aspirations</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consumer attitude</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Violence/Obscenity</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*p < 0.01

From Table 4, it can be seen that 66 subjects (84%) felt that their aspirations had increased after the advent of multi-channel
electronic media while 13 (16%) reported no change. The differences between the frequency of these responses was highly significant (chi-square 34, p<0.01).

These results are line with those of Blumler (1992) who reported that global communication concept was compelling the young generation to move in the imaginatory world.

Further, appraisal of the nature of the questions asked by the present investigator (whether aspirations and materialism had strengthen) indicate that aspirations as well as materialism had increased. The major cause this increase, as reported by a majority of respondents, was increased awareness about the diverse objects of necessities and luxury available and potential means by which these could be acquired. Further, their awareness regarding job opportunities had also increased.

Thus, this imaginatory mobility provides the individual with a kaleidoscopic vista of potentially viable situations where he can hope to release his potential, thereby raising his aspiration.

Another aspect which has been manipulated by mass media ever since its inception its consumer attitude. The extent of this manipulative endeavour by the multi-channel electronic media is
evident from the fact that nowadays, even the daily news bulletins (even on Doordarshan which is not a paid channel) have a commercial break.

From Table 4, it can be seen that only 2 (3%) subjects reported no perceivable impact on their consumer attitude. The remaining 77 respondents (97%) reported that there was an impact on their attitude. This difference was found to be highly significant (chi-square=68, p<0.01).

Atkin (1952), had also reported that there had been immense activity in the marketing and advertising world with profitable brands, fragmented audiences and escalating media costs over a decade. Consumer behaviour had witnessed a rapid growth as a result of exposure to the multi-channel media. In the present investigation respondents had been asked whether advertisements had influenced their consumer attitude. The respondents unanimously agreed that advertisement had increased their desire for acquiring luxury commodities which had now because their essential needs.

Along with increased consumerism another serious threat posed by multi-channel electronic media is an increase in violence. As early as 1985, the American Psychological Association had reported there was a strong relationship between violence, crime and television.
In the present investigation also, 78 (99%) respondents felt that the multi-channel electronic media had been instrumental in propagating violence and obscenity. The difference between the frequency of responses was highly significant (Chi-square=73, p<0.01).

These results receive support from a study by Atkin (1972) who reported a positive relationship between respondents level of violence viewing and their self report of aggression.

The respondents of the present investigation also reported that multichannel electronic media is creating an environment which strengthened the violence and obscenity, when they asked regarding the impacts of multichannel electronic media on violence and obscenity.

In conclusion it seems that in the present study that with the advent of multichannel electronic media, consumer attitude had strengthened due to exposure of varied objects and consumer items, leading to increased curiosity and desire to acquire maximum luxuries. This in turn results in an increase in aspirations. Further portrayal of violence and obscenity on the television is leading to their increase in the society. This investigation reports that viewers felt that children are receiving adverse impacts which becomes a cause of aggressive and violent behaviour in children.
A study conducted by a leading market research agency also reported that 69 percent respondents felt that any form of the vulgarity should be censored. This indicates that there is a urgent need for the value based, healthy programmes. Thus the third hypothesis, which predicted exposure to multichannel electronic media would result in changes in aspiration, consumer attitude and violence in the society, is verified.

Thus the results of this investigation clearly reveal that the respondents feel that advent of multichannel electronic media is having a negative impact. In spite of the perceived negative influence not even a single respondent reported (to question no.13) that they wished to discontinue with the cable connection. Twenty one of the respondents (27%) reported that they wanted to continue with the connection while 58 (73%) said that they were compelled due to family (mainly children) pressures to continue with cable.

Let us finally sum up the results of the present study.

The results clearly indicate that advent of multichannel electronic media had resulted in an increase in the viewing time of the respondents. This effect was found to be uniform across gender and economic status. However, viewing time of salaried respondents was significantly more than that of the businessmen. Secondly although there was a significant decrease in hospitality and interactions with
friends, interactions within the family were found to be unchanged. Lastly a significant increase in aspirations, consumer attitude and perceived violence and obscenity in the society were reported by the respondents.

Thus the first and third hypotheses were verified while the second was verified only partially, i.e. a significant change was observed in interactions with friends but not within the family.

Suggestions for Further Research

The present investigation was a very modest attempt to determine whether a short term exposure to multi-channel electronic media has had any social influence. This survey indicates that the negative impacts of multi-channel electronic media have alarming increased within a short span. The investigator feels that:

1. On the basis of the results of the present investigation, a standardized questionnaire could be developed to objectively measure the impacts of globalization of communication.

2. In the present study, a very small, limited sample which was not representative of the general Indian population was studied. Therefore, for the purpose for generalization, it is necessary that a larger, more, varied sample should be investigated to determine whether the same effects would be found across different sub-cultural and age groups.