Chapter 2
Review of Literature

2.1 Communication Theories
2.2 Communication Models
2.3 Study of Earlier Contemporary Research
The assumption behind this study is that the impact of television viewing on health and behaviour of children and teenagers is mediated by society and family. This calls for a reflection on how people perceive media reality, how their cognitive structure which conditions perception develops and how the cognitive structure is related to the social structure. Thus the theoretical perspective has got three parameters: first is strand communication theory, second of behaviour theory and a third of Mass Communication theory.

**Theories of Communication**

According to the definition ‘any attempt to explain or represent a phenomenon is a theory’. The enormous interest among social scientists to find out the effects of the mass communication within society has resulted in a number of communication theories which essentially trace the relationship between mass communication and society. The term communication theory usually refers to the body of explanations for understanding the communication process. They are based on the studies of signs, symbols and meaning and their relation to the objects or concepts to which they belong.

Theories are stories about how and why events occur or have occurred. Scientific theories begin with the assumption that the universe, including the social universe created by acting human beings, reveals certain basic essential properties and processes that explain the ebb and flow of events in specific processes. Similarly, in terms of communication, communication theories are general theoretical paradigms that provide basic and analytical framework for any kind of communication. In Behaviour theories, another attempt is made to explain shaping of human personality. Most important of these are the ways in which each claims how human personality is formed. The Behaviorists in particular believe that cultural and sub-cultural conditioning moulds and shapes behaviour and subsequently the personality. There are certain assumptions, implications, hypothesis, paradigms, developing into concepts and theories. The assumptions are theoretical explanations of more specific aspects of communication. We always start with assumptions followed by its implications that are called theorems, propositions, or hypotheses. These hypotheses are tested against research data that also provides paradigms or models of communication. The two major groups of theories are responsible for communication feature common to various communities.
General communication theories that are universal formulations and are responsible for communication features common to various communities. Special communication theories which relate to communication practices of communities clearly bounded by patterns of general usage or for specific purposes.

When we talk about the communication both the above mentioned theories are important as they serve different functions, which can be categorized as special theories and contemporary theories.

There is no single integrated theory of communication that has yet emerged which is universally accepted. Nonetheless, it is best to first understand the underlining concepts explained in the normative theories of communication.

**Normative Theories of Mass Media**

Normative by definition is what ‘ought to be’ or can be ‘expected to be’ and theses theories attempt to elaborate on action under the prevailing set of political-economic circumstances. Western theories have their origin in Aristotle’s Rhetoric. According to Aristotle, rhetoric is made up of three elements: the speaker, the speech and the listener. Since each society controls its mass media in accordance with its policies and needs, it formulates its own separate press theory. Therefore, the media system that exists in a country is directly related to the political system in that country. The political system determines the exact relationship between the media and the government. Siebert and his colleagues (1956) mentioned four theories, based on classification of the world’s national media systems. Denis McQuail added two more theories to the original set of four. He concedes that these theories “may not correspond to complete media systems” but “they have now become part of the discussion of press theory and provide some of the principles for current media policy and practice”.¹ A brief description of these theories has been given below:

**Authoritarian Theory**

This theory evolved in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries is spreading throughout the Europe with the invention of the printing press. The authoritarian theory views humans as subservient to the state with the belief that the ruling elite should guide the masses. The intellectual ability of public was held to be in low esteem. Public

dissent and criticism were considered harmful to both government and the people and were not tolerated. The press in such a society is viewed as an instrument for disseminating the state’s position to the public, informing the public what is right and what is wrong, based on the state’s interpretations of issues and providing official policy statements of the ruling elite. The state, after determining its objectives, uses the press as a means of attaining those objectives. The press becomes a means to an end rather than an instrument of criticism of either means or ends. The main principles of the theory can be briefly summarized:

1. Media should do nothing which could undermine established authority or disturb the order.
2. Media should always be subordinate to the established authority.
3. Censorship can be justified to enforce these principles.
4. Media should avoid offence to majority or dominant, moral and political values.
5. Unacceptable attacks on authority, deviations from official policy or offences against moral codes should be criminal offences.
6. Journalists or other media professionals have no independence within their media organizations.

Today the authoritarian system of the press is still in operation in China and many parts of the world.

Libertarian Theory

The libertarian theory developed slowly in the sixteenth century being refined in the eighteenth century as libertarian principles found their way into nation’s constitutional framework. In theory, a libertarian press is the exact opposite of an authoritarian press. Libertarians assume that human beings are rational and are capable of making their own decisions and governments exist to serve the individual. Unlike the authoritarians, libertarians hold that every common citizen has a right to hear all sides of an issue in order to distinguish truth from falsehood. Since any government restriction on the expression of ideas infringes on the rights of the citizens; the government can best serve the people by not interfering with the media. In short, the press must be free of control.

Fred Siebert in discussing the development of libertarianism credits its transition from authoritarianism to the efforts of four men: John Milton in the
seventeenth century, John Erskine and Thomas Jafferson in the eighteenth century and John Stuart Mill in the nineteenth century.

This theory can be expressed in the following principles:

1. Publication should be free from any prior censorship.
2. Attacks on any government, official or political party, should not be punishable, even after the event.
3. There should be no compulsion to publish anything.
4. No restriction should be placed for gathering the information for publication.
5. The act of publication and distribution should be open to a person, a group without licence or permit.
6. There should be no restriction on getting or sending information overseas.
7. Journalists should have professional autonomy within their organisation.

This theory is, however, criticised on the grounds:

That, it is unclear to the extent it can be held to apply to public broadcasting, which now accounts for a large part of media activity in many societies.

The theory has been most frequently formulated to protect the owners of media and cannot give equal expression to the arguable rights of editors and journalists within the press.

The theory seems designed to protect opinion and belief and has much less to say on ‘information’.

The theory prescribes obligatory freedom but provides no obvious way of handling many pressures to which media are subject.

Social Responsibility Theory

This theory was constructed in 1947 by the Commission of Freedom of the Press, a private organization financed by magazine publisher Henry Luce. According to this theory, although the press had a right to criticize government and other institutions, it also had a responsibility to preserve democracy by properly informing the public and by responding to society’s interests and needs. Probably the most significant contribution of the social responsibility theorists is their view that it is more important for citizens to have the right of access to information than it is for the press to achieve complete freedom of speech. It is not enough that increasing by large media and economic structures have the freedom to do as they please. They are also obliged to respond to society’s needs. The main principles of this theory can be stated as follows:
Media should accept and fulfil certain obligations to society by setting high or professional standards of truth, accuracy, objectivity, balance and such practices.

In accepting and applying these obligations, media should be self regulating within the framework of law and established institutions.

Journalists and media professionals should be accountable to society as well as to employers.

Social responsibility theory has a wide range of application since it covers several kinds of private print media and public institutions of broadcasting, which are answerable to society through various kinds of democratic procedures. The theory has thus to reconcile independence with obligation to society. It is assumed that the media do serve essential functions in society, especially in relation to democratic politics. Media should accept an obligation to fulfil these functions - not only in the sphere of information and the provision of a platform for diverse views, but also in matters of culture. It should give maximum emphasis on media independency, consistent with their obligations to society. The theory States that media should also follow certain standards in work.

**Soviet Communist Theory**

The Russian press and other media were completely reorganized after the Revolution of 1917. This theory is derived from the basic postulates of Marx and Engels. It envisages media to be under the control of the working class. The working class by definition holds power in a socialist society.

In order to understand the Soviet media theory of the press, one must examine the Soviet interpretation of the word “freedom”. The Soviet constitution guarantees both free speech and a free press. In addition, the principle tenet of Soviet political life was one of unity. The rise of the working class, the revolution, was a movement of unity within Soviet Society. This joining together of the people into a classless society had become the philosophy of the Soviet state. Thus, freedom from the Soviet point of view was freedom from the oppression of upper, middle and lower class.

Schramm explains that mass communication in the Soviet media theory is an instrument of the state. The media does not have integrity of its own. Their integrity is
that of the state. Media are “kept” instruments, and they follow humbly and nimbly the gyrations of the party line and the state directives. Mass communication is integrated with other instruments of the state, such as schools, the police, and even assemblies as instruments protecting the communist philosophy. Yet, while the press is considered an instrument of unity, it is also considered an instrument of revelation to provide enlightenment and to prepare the masses for unity and eventually revolution. The press is an “agitator, propagandist and organizer”. The theory can be summed as follows:

1. Media should not be privately owned.
2. It should serve the interests of, and be in control of the working class.
3. Media should respond to wishes and needs of their audience.
4. Media should serve positive functions for society by education, information, motivation and mobilization.
5. Society has a right to punish for the anti-societal publication.
6. Media should provide a complete and objective view of society.
7. Journalists’ aims and ideals should coincide with the best interests of the society.

Broadcasting under the Soviet-Communist theory likewise is designed not so much to serve the public but to inform it. Programming is again the instrument of the state, and the medium is important to it because of the large number of people that broadcasting can reach.

**Development Media Theory**

Development media theory favours democratic grass-roots involvement to a certain extent. It emphasized on a ‘right to communicate based on Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights:

> “Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes the freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media regardless of frontiers”.

The main principles of this theory can be summed as follows:

1. Media should accept and carry out positive development tasks in line with nationally established policy.
2. Media should give priority to the national culture and language.

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3. Article 19, Universal Declaration of Human Rights, United Nations,
Freedom of media should be restricted to an extent keeping in view the economic priorities and development needs of the society.

Journalists and other media workers have responsibilities as well as freedom in their information gathering and dissemination tasks.

The state has a right to intervene in or restrict media operations and devices of censorship and direct control in the interests of the development of a country.

**Democratic-Participant Media Theory**

Denis McQuail states that it is most difficult to formulate this theory, partly because it lacks full legitimisation and incorporation into media institutions and partly because some of its tenets are already to be found in some of the other theories.

The main features of the democratic-participant theory relate to the needs, interests and aspirations of the active “receiver” in a political society. It is concerned with the right to relevant information, the right to answer back, the right to use the means of communication for interaction in small-scale settings of community, interest groups and sub-cultures. This theory has a mixture of theoretical elements, including libertarianism, utopianism, socialism, egalitarianism, environmentalism and localism.

Media institutions constructed according to the theory be involved more closely with social life than they are at present and more directly in control of their audiences, offering opportunities for access and participation on terms set by their predecessors rather than by controllers. The main principles of this theory can be stated as below:

1. Individual citizens and minority groups have rights to communicate. Groups, organizations and local communities should have their own Media.
2. The organization and content of media should not be subject to centralized political or state bureaucratic control.
3. Small scale, interactive and participative media forms are better than large-scale, one-way and professionalized media.

**2.1 Theories Related to the Research**

a. Gerbner's Cultivation Theory

Cultivation theory is the most basic form of social theory that examines the long term effects of television. Developed by George Gerbner and Larry Gross of the University of Pennsylvania, the theory stated that repeated exposures to media
portrayals of a stereotype may result in public acceptance of the stereotype reality. There are numerous communication theories, but Gerbner's Cultivation Theory is especially applicable to many situations. It focuses on the idea that television plays a central role in viewers' perceptions of the world by affecting attitudes, beliefs, and ways of thinking. The severity of these effects depends on the amount of television an individual watches each day. Even though the immediate consequences of watching television are small, they accumulate and have a significant impact on the viewers and our culture as a whole. The images depicted on television can have an immense impression on the aspects that make up a society.

According to Gerbner, television has become the main source of storytelling in today’s society. Those who watch four or more hours a day are labeled heavy television viewers and those who view less than four hours per day are light viewers.

Gerbner places viewers in three categories: light (watch less than two hours of television a day), medium (watch between two and four hours of television a day), and heavy (watch more than four hours of television a day). His research focuses mainly on the heavy and light viewers. Through various experiments, Gerbner has discovered that heavy viewers hold opinions and ideals that are typically portrayed on television rather than in the real world. He believes that "for heavy viewers, television virtually monopolizes and subsumes other sources of information, ideas, and consciousness," which in turn leads to influencing the viewers' belief system (Gerbner, 1980). Various social groups may also play a part in the cultivation of attitudes with regards to the amount of television that is watched.

The Cultivation Theory concentrates on two processes known as "mainstreaming" and "resonance" to explain the differences between groups of viewers. According to Gerbner, mainstreaming is the idea that heavy viewers that come from different demographic groups still acquire similar ways of seeing the world. He uses the example of the "mean world syndrome" to illustrate this concept, where respondents to particular questions regarding trust, no matter what their demographic situations are, would typically display sentiments of mistrust (a notion often shown in television) as long as they are heavy viewers. The data collected from this experiment points to the idea that "television does contribute to the cultivation of common perspectives. In particular, heavy viewing may serve to cultivate beliefs of otherwise disparate and divergent groups toward a more homogeneous 'mainstream' view" (Gerbner, 1980).
Resonance, Gerbner believes, has to do with relevant ideas portrayed on the television. If people watch television and see something that connects to their reality, then it is likely that they will receive what Gerbner calls a "double dose" of the message and will eventually experience intensified cultivating effects. If heavy television-viewing individuals live in a high-crime neighborhood, then images of crime portrayed on the television will resonate with them and cause them to expect instances of crime more than would light viewers living in the same neighborhood. As Gerbner concludes, "the correlates of heavy viewing are most apparent among those for whom the topic holds considerable personal relevance" (1980).

Overall, the Cultivation Theory emphasizes the influence that television can have on individuals' attitudes. The more one watches television, the more likely his or her attitude is created by the images on the television, especially if the images are relevant.

Dependency Theory

Media systems dependency theory or simply media dependency was developed by Sandra Ball Rokeach and Melvin DeFleur in 1976. The theory focuses on the interrelations of broader social systems, mass media, and the individual into a comprehensive explanation of media effects. At its core, the basic dependency hypothesis states that the more a person depends on media to meet needs, the more important media will be in a person’s life, and therefore integrate several perspectives:

- It combines the views from psychology with elements from the social category theory.
- It integrates system’s perspectives with elements from causal approaches.
- It combines elements of uses and gratifications research with those of media effects traditions, although its primary focus is less on effects per se than on rationales for why media effects are typically limited.

Now, since the theory predicts that one depends on media information to meet certain needs and achieve certain goals it does not depend on all media equally. Two factors influence the degree of media dependence. First, you will become more dependent on media that meets a number of your needs than on media that provides for just a few. The second source of dependency is social stability. When social change and conflict are high, established institutions, beliefs and practices are challenged, at such
times dependence on the media for information will increase. At other, more stable times, dependency on media will fall.

According to the theorists, the degree of dependence is directly proportional to:

Individual: the media has ability to satisfy the audience needs. An individual will become more dependent on the media, if the medium satisfies his/her needs. Otherwise the media dependence will become less.

Social stability: the audience reconsiders their beliefs, practice and behaviours when strong social change, conflicts, riot or election tends to force to re-evaluate and make new decisions. During this period, media dependency is dramatically increased, because there is a strong need for information, support and advice.

Active Audience: In this communication process, the active audience chooses the media depending on their individual needs and other factors such as economic conditions, society and culture. If alternative source fulfils the audience’s needs, it will decrease the media dependence.

Therefore, it can be said that when audiences for media are high, more people turn to media to meet those needs, and therefore the media has a greater opportunity to affect them. It is said that none of these media needs are constant over long periods of time as they change based on aspects of our social environment.

Figure 4: Conceptual Model of Dependency Theory
(Ball-Rokeach & DeFleur's (1976) MSDT conceptual model.)

Social Learning Theory

It is one of the most widely used theories in mass communication. According to this theory, the media is active but subtle educator in teaching readers, viewers and listeners about the world. Due to audiences’ frequent exposure to television, the medium is considered capable of teaching viewers a number of both positive and negative social behaviours and attitudes that they might not personally come into contact with. An important component of this theory is that it explains how people can learn from observations alone.

There are even more theories on Media like Hypodermic or Bullet Theory, Individual Differences Theory; Selective Exposure; Selective Perception & Selective Retention, Cognitive Dissonance Theory, Personal Influence Theory; Two-step flow of communication theory & Multi-step Flow of Communication, which explain the way media operates. However, these theories need to be looked at rather carefully, because some of them suit to the different situations in the different Asian, African as well as American countries. The sociological media theories have been included hence forth. The sociological approach to communication theory is based on the assumption that there exists a definite relationship between mass communication and social change. Some of the relevant theories we are going to discuss are given below:-

Agenda Setting Theory

The term was coined by Maxwell McCombs and Donald L Shaw in the context of election campaign where politicians seek to convince the voters about the party’s most important issues. An agenda is a selection of items arranged to give some items more importance to some items than others. Agenda theory says that the news media presents the public net with a picture of the world as it is but with an agenda of their own; a selection of reports about what is happening in the world.⁵ Agenda theorists try to describe and explain:-

(a) How stories are selected, packaged and presented; a process; known as gate-keeping,
(b) The resulting agenda, and
(c) How this agenda affects what people think about the relative importance of the issues presented.

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The theory also ‘predicts’ that if a particular news item is presented prominently and frequently by the press, the public will come to believe that it is important. Thus, the press does not necessarily tell us what to think, but it does tell us what to think about.

The study of gate-keeping has a long tradition in the study of the media. A whole series of factors cultural, social, psychological and so on operate at various stages to influence what is presented and how some journalists maintain that economic factors often outweigh conceptions of the public interest in determining what is reported.

(\url{http://usahitman.com})

Figure 5: Agenda Setting Theory

There are various factors which affect gate-keeping at various stages, including the moral principles of individual journalists, the policies of editors or publishers, a desire to get ahead of others, to protect one’s job or to avoid conflict, time and space limitations, and dependence on handouts from government or from public relations offices as the source of news.

Shaw, McCombs and their associates found substantial correlation between the agendas set by the media and the public’s beliefs about the importance of the issues. It was found that audience had different sets of beliefs depending on their social categories. That is, young people’s perceptions of the important issues differed from those of other people and men’s patterns were different from women’s. Differences in attention to issues and evaluations of their importance also varied among people with different income levels and different political preferences.\textsuperscript{6} But the authors did find

\textsuperscript{6} Ibid
strong support for the Agenda Setting Theory.

However, the study established agenda-setting as an important influence on our political process. At the same time, the researchers concluded that the influence of the media’s agenda must be interpreted in long-range terms and depends on social categories, changing patterns of media use and frequency of media exposure.\(^7\) Generally, then, agenda-setting appears to be one indirect way in which the media can change society over a long period of time.

**Play Theory**

In theory of mass communication, William Stephenson counters those who speak of the harmful effects of the mass media by arguing that first and foremost the media serves audiences as play experiences.\(^8\) Even newspapers, says Stephenson, are read for pleasure rather than information and enlightenment. He sees the media as a buffer against conditions which would otherwise be anxiety producing. The media provide communication pleasure. Stephenson argues that what is most required by people within a national culture is something for everyone to talk about. For him mass communication should serve two purposes. It should suggest how best to maximize the communication-pleasure in the world. It should also show how far autonomy of the individual can be achieved in spite of the weight of social controls against him.

**Uses and Gratification Theory**

This theory has emerged out of the studies which shifted their focus from what the media does to the people to what people do with the media.\(^9\) The uses approach assumes that audiences are active and willingly expose themselves to media and that the most potent of mass media content cannot influence an individual who has “no use” for it in the environment in which he lives. The uses of the mass media are dependent on the perception, selectivity and previously held values, beliefs and interests of the people.

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\(^7\) Ibid


The term “gratification” refers to the rewards and satisfaction experienced by audiences after the use of media, it helps to explain motivations behind media use and habits of media use or the actual needs satisfaction by the media are called media gratification. In nutshell, this theory which deals in individual functions and dysfunctions view that mass media audiences make active use of what the media has to offer arising from a complex set of needs which the media in one form or another gratifies. Several researchers have classified the various uses and gratifications:

- Cognition: “the act of coming to know something”, when a person uses a mass medium to obtain information about something then she or he is using the medium in a cognitive way. At the individual level, however, researchers have noted that there are two different types of cognitive functions that are performed. One is to use the media to keep up with information on current events like ‘I want to know what is going on in the world.’ The other is using the media to learn about things in general or things that relate to a person’s general curiosity like ‘the media give me ideas’.

Psychologists and sociologists point out that using the media in this manner seems to address a person’s cognitive needs. These needs are related to strengthening the knowledge and understanding the world one lives in and are based to a certain extent on a desire to explore and master the surrounding environment. Thus, the use of the media is linked to the fulfillment of a basic human need.

- Diversion: Diversion can take many forms. Some of these forms identified by researchers include:
  - Stimulation or seeking relief from boredom or the routine activities of everyday life, Viewers watch a television programme when they are bored and have nothing else to do or simply to pass the time.
  - Relaxation or escape from day to day pressures and problems of day-to-day existence;

Too much stimulation, however, is undesirable. Psychological experiments have indicated that human beings are negatively affected by a condition called “sensory overload.” When faced with sensory overload, people tend to seek relief. The media is one source of this relief.
Emotional release of pent-up emotions and energy, the use of media for emotional release is fairly obvious.

Emotional release can take many subtle forms. One of the big attractions of soap operas, for example, seems to be that many people in the audience are comforted by seeing that other people have troubles greater than their own. Other people identify with media heroes and heroines and participate vicariously in their triumphs. Such a process evidently enables these people to vent some of the frustrations connected with their normal lives.

Reality exploration or advice; the programme is used to help solve problems in the viewer’s own life.

Some of the programmes help the viewer understand her or his life as well as of the others and to provide an accurate reflection of reality.

Social utility;

Psychologists have also identified a set of social integrative needs including our need to strengthen our contact with family, friends and others in our society. The social integrative need seems to spring from an individual’s need to affiliate with others. The media function that addresses this need is called social utility. When the programme is used as a tool for social interaction with others and the people view the programme with friends and enjoy talking about the programme with friends then we are using the media as conversational facility.

Other people report that they use the media, particularly television and radio, as a means to overcome loneliness. The TV set represents a voice in the house for people who might otherwise be alone. Radio gives people company at their work places. People who might otherwise be deprived of social relationships find companionship in media content and media personalities. In fact, some viewers might go so far as to develop feelings of kinship and friendship with media characters. Audience members might react to media performers and the characters they portray as if the performers were actual friends. This phenomenon is called Para-social relationship.

Withdrawal;

At times, people use the mass media to create a barrier between themselves and other people or other activities. For example, the media help people avoid certain chores that should be done. Perhaps many of us put off our work until we finish
watching a TV programme or reading the newspaper. Children are quick to learn how to use the media in this fashion.

This theory is so functional in orientation that it ignores the dysfunctions of media in society and culture. It is conservative at heart and sees media primarily as a positive way in which individuals meet their needs without any attention to the overall negative cultural effects of media in society. However, this theory fails to take into account that the mass media competes with other sources of satisfaction. Relaxation, for example, can also be achieved by taking a couple of drinks and social utility needs can be satisfied by joining a club or playing football.

The uses-and-gratifications approach assumes that people are aware of their own needs and are able to verbalize them. This approach relies heavily on surveys based on the actual responses of audience members. Thus, the research techniques assume that people’s responses are valid indicators of their motives. A great deal of additional research needs to be done in connection with the uses-and-gratifications approach. In particular, more work is needed in defining and categorizing media-related needs or drives in relating these needs to media usage. Nonetheless, the current approach provides a valuable way to examine the complex interaction between the various media and their audiences.

Mass Communication Theory

In the first half of 20th century, media were considered as very powerful and it was thought no one could be outside its all pervasive influence. Of all the mass media, TV was the most powerful which, it seemed, would have overriding control over human minds. Michael Novak puts the effect of television in these words:

Television is a moulder of the soul’s geography. It builds up incrementally a psychic structure of expectations. It does so in much the same way that school lessons slowly, over the years, tutor the unformed mind and teach it how to think.  

Television was viewed as one of the chief socialising agents and it appeared that it would replace traditional socialising agents like the family and the school. George Comstock wrote: “Television has become an unavoidable and an unremitting factor in shaping what we are and what we will become.”

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11 Ibid.
In the beginning all attention was turned on the media, to the communicators, to be precise. It was thought that anyone could bring people to his viewpoint by communicating through the media. Audiences were considered as a mass of passive receivers.

This view was the result of the apparent success of war-time propaganda through the media. The recent research has demonstrated that media audiences are not passive but active interpreters of media texts. The meaning of a media text is something that active audience constructs rather than something that is prefabricated by media producers. 3

Encoding and Decoding

A media text is a message constructed according to certain codes. A message is a meaning that has been coded. Meaning is not transferable; it can only be evoked. It is coded using certain conventional signs which are capable of evoking the meaning in the receivers.

The receivers or the audience in turn decodes the message and understand the meaning. The audiences are active interpreters and they may not always take in the meaning intended by the communicator or media producer. Different audiences have different backgrounds and defining experiences. It is likely that they interpret the same media text differently. So we can say that a media text is polysemic.12

It was semiologists who emphasized the power of encoded text. According to them the communicator chooses signs to encode definite meaning. The receivers who decode the text are bound to accept that meaning. Communicators can encode messages for ideological and institutional purposes and manipulate the media to that end. 13 this theory credits media with immense power which they may not, in fact, possess.

Reception Analysts, following Stuart Hall, challenged the basic principles of semiology which presumed that meanings were produced according to the choices made by the encoder. They held that receivers were not obliged to accept the messages as intended by the encoder. For Hall, a Television program is a meaningful discourse encoded according to the meaning structure of media producers but decoded according to the different meaning structures and frameworks of knowledge of differently situated audiences.6

13 Ibid
Does it mean that the meaning as decoded and understood by the receivers bears no correspondence with the meaning as intended and encoded by the communicators? Though each receiver constructs meaning from the media text all receivers generally construct the same meaning from the same text when they share a common culture. Culture could be viewed as a system of signs which binded people into a cognitive community with a shared world view. Communication is possible only when the communicators and the receivers share the same semiotic resources. When the receivers share the culture of communicators and read the media text in accordance with the code the communicators have employed they got the intended meaning.

Every medium text will have preferred meaning- A meaning intended by the communicator. It will also have inbuilt guidelines for interpretation by the receivers. The audience may read the preferred meaning or may not. They can always negotiate a meaning. For they approach the text with the “meaning structures” or the “cognitive structures” which may trace back their cognitive deposits or experiences.14

**Audience – Producers of Meaning**

It may be assumed that each viewer constructs meaning from a TV text. That need not be the one, the TV programme producer intended. In support of this assumption two research findings may be pointed out.

One is the analysis of the British television magazine programme ‘Nationwide’ by David Morley (1980). He found that the economic issues discussed in the programme were interpreted differently by managers and workers. The bank managers whom Morley interviewed, read the preferred meaning. The style of presentation of the issue was a perfect fit with the common sense view of the bank managers. On the other hand, the group of trade unionists he interviewed, saw the economic coverage as entirely favouring the management. At the same time, younger management trainees also saw the coverage as ideological but found it as favouring as the unions.

Second is the soap opera “hum log” broadcast by Indian national television channel. Doordarshan in 1984-1985, the serial was intended to convey pro-social messages to the audience along with entertainment. Bhagwati, a woman character was conceived as a negative role model for gender equality. But according to a survey conducted in 1987, 80% of the women viewers interviewed, considered Bhagwati as a positive role model. The researchers concluded that the perception of women viewers.

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14 Denis McQuail, op. cit. p-54
suggested that modeling effects were mediated by the viewer’s prior attitudes and experiences.\textsuperscript{15}

To conclude, media text is open and hence the audience constructs meaning in the context of their own cognitive structures.

**Cognitive Dissonance Theory and Four Rings of Defenses**

Cognitive dissonance is the term used in modern psychology to describe the state of holding two or more conflicting cognitions (e.g. Ideas, beliefs, values, emotional reactions) simultaneously. In a state of dissonance, people may sometimes feel surprised, dreaded, guilty, angry, or embarrassed. The theory was developed almost half a century ago by social psychologist Leon Festinger, (1957), which is somewhat counter intuitive and in fact, fits into a category of counter intuitive social psychology theories sometimes referred to as action-opinion theories.\textsuperscript{16} The fundamental characteristic of action opinion theories is that they propose that actions can influence subsequent beliefs and attitudes.

The theory of cognitive dissonance in social psychology proposes that people have a motivational drive to reduce dissonance by altering existing cognitions, adding new ones to create a consistent belief system, or alternatively by reducing the importance of any one of the dissonant elements. It also replaces previous conditioning or reinforcement theories by viewing individuals as more purposeful decision makers.

The cognitive dissonance theory is based on three fundamental assumptions:

- **Humans are sensitive to inconsistencies between actions and beliefs:** According to the theory, sometimes we act in a way that is inconsistent with our beliefs/attitudes/opinions. For example, if you have a belief that it is wrong to cheat, yet you find yourself resorting to cheating on a test you will notice and be affected by this inconsistency.

- **Recognition of this inconsistency will cause dissonance, and will motivate an individual to resolve the dissonance:** it means the degree of dissonance, of course, will

\textsuperscript{15} Arvind Singhal and Everest M. Rogers, India’s Information Revolution, SAGE Publications, New Delhi, 1989, pp-10-107.

\textsuperscript{16} http://web.mst.edu/~psyworld/cognitive_dissonance.htm
vary with the importance of your belief/attitude/principle and with the degree of inconsistency between your behaviour and this belief. In any case, according to the theory, the greater the dissonance the more you will be motivated to resolve it.

**Dissonance will be resolved in one of the three basic ways:**

Change beliefs - this is the simplest way to resolve dissonance between actions and beliefs. If one decides that cheating is fine, then this would take care of any dissonance. However, if the belief is fundamental and important, then such a course of action is unlikely. Moreover, basic beliefs and attitudes are pretty stable, and people don’t just go around changing basic beliefs/attitudes/opinions all the times. Therefore, though this is the simplest option for resolving dissonance, it’s probably not the most common.

Change actions - A second option would be not to repeat the same action. For example - if you may say to yourself that you will never cheat on a test again, this may help in resolving the dissonance. However, aversive conditioning (i.e., guilt/anxiety) can often be a pretty poor way of learning, especially if you can train yourself not to feel these things. So, the trick would be to get rid of this feeling without changing your beliefs or your actions.

Change perception of action: A third and more complex method of resolution is to change the way you view/remember/perceive your action. In more colloquial terms, you would “rationalize” your actions. For example, you might decide that the test you cheated on was for a dump class that you didn’t need anyway, or you may say to yourself that everyone cheats so why not you? In other words you may think about your action in a different manner or context so that it is no longer appears to be inconsistent with your beliefs.

Cognitive approach is highly influential in all the areas of psychology (e.g.-biological, social, behaviourism, development etc.) In fact, what can elaborate the theory better is the concept of cognitive psychology. It focuses on the way human beings process information and the way it leads to responses. Cognitive psychological study processes includes perception, attention, language, memory and thinking.
Basically, it theoretically means that if you confront people with the concept that radically shakes up their belief structure, you might get them to pay attention. However, later research revealed that people use a fairly sophisticated psychological defence mechanism to filter out unwanted information. This mechanism consists of four “rings of defense”:

Selective Exposure- people tend to seek out only that information which agrees with their existing attitudes or beliefs. For Example: people who feel that dowry system should be banned will always stand by their belief and shall also criticize the practice.

Selective attention: attention is selective in nature yet a complex process. People tune out communication that goes against their attitudes or beliefs, or they pay attention only to parts that reinforce their positions, for getting the dissonant parts. This is why two people with differing points of view can come to different conclusions about the same message, each of them is turning out the parts on which they disagree.

Selective perception- perception means an individual way of thinking on an issue. No two individuals think alike. Besides, people seek to interpret the information so that it agrees with their attitudes and beliefs. This accounts for a lot of misinterpretations of messages. For example, people have different views about a particular programme.

Selective retention: people tend to let psychological factors influence their recall of information. In other words, we forget the unpleasant or block the unwanted. This also means that people tend to be more receptive to messages presented in pleasant environments – a lesson to anyone who has ever put on a news conference understands. In other words, individuals retain messages that suit or match their ideologies.
Social Cognitive Theory-- Bandura

In social learning theory Albert Bandura (1977) states behavior is learned from the environment through the process of observational learning. Children observe the people around them behaving in various ways. This is illustrated during the famous Bobo doll experiment (Bandura, 1961). Individuals that are observed are called models. In society children are surrounded by many influential models, such as parents within the family, characters on children’s TV, friends within their peer group and teachers at school. Theses models provide examples of masculine and feminine behaviour to observe and imitate.

Children pay attention to some of these people (models) and imitate their behavior. At a later time, they may imitate the behavior they have observed. They may do this regardless of whether the behavior is ‘gender appropriate’ or not but there are a number of processes that make it more likely that a child will reproduce the behaviour that its society deems appropriate for its gender.

First, the child is more likely to attend to and imitate those people he/she perceives as similar to himself/herself. Consequently, he/she is more likely to imitate behaviour modelled by people of the same sex as it is.

Second, the people around the child will respond to the behaviour it imitates with either reinforcement or punishment. If a child imitates a model’s behaviour and the consequences are rewarding, the child is likely to continue performing the behaviour. If a parent sees a little girl consoling her teddy bear and says “what a kind of girl you are”, this is rewarding for the child and makes it more likely that she will repeat the behavior. Her behaviour has been reinforced.

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Figure 7: Social Cognitive Theory

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2.2 Social Cognitive Theory Model

Reinforcement can be external or internal and can be positive or negative. If a child wants approval from parents or peers, this approval is an external reinforcement, but feeling happy about being approved of is an internal reinforcement. A child will behave in a way which it believes will earn approval because he/she desires approval. Positive (or negative) reinforcement will have little impact if the reinforcement offered externally does not match an individual’s needs. It leads to a change in a person’s behaviour.

Third, the child will also take into account of what happens to other people when deciding whether or not to copy someone’s actions. This is known as vicarious reinforcement. This relates to attachment to specific models which possess qualities seen as rewarding. Children will have a number of models to be identified with. These may be people in their immediate world, such as parents or older siblings, or could be fantasy characters or people in the media. The motivation to identify with a particular model is that they have a quality which the individual would like to possess.

Identification occurs with another person (the model) and involves taking on (or adopting) observed behaviours, values, beliefs and attitudes of the person with whom one is identifying. Identification is different to imitation as it may involve a number of behaviours being adopted whereas imitation usually involves copying a single behaviour.

Propaganda Model

The Propaganda model of media control was introduced by Edward. S. Herman and Noam Chomsky in their book ‘Manufacturing Consent – The Political Economy of the Mass Media’. This theory states how propaganda works in a mass media. The model tries to understand how the population is manipulated, and how the social, economic, political attitudes are created in the minds of people through propaganda. Herman and Chomsky mostly concentrated on the American population and media for their research but this theory is universally applicable.

In their book Manufacturing Consent, Herman and Chomsky say “A propaganda model focuses on this inequality of wealth and power and its multilevel
effects on mass-media interests and choices. It traces the routes by which money and power are able to filter out the news fit to print, marginalize dissent, and allow the government and dominant private interests to get their messages across to the public”.

According to the theory media operates as a business which sells its products (readers and subscribers) to other business entities that do their advertisements in media, rather than performing the function of disseminating news for the public. Here, the news is being misshaped and reformed from its original form. Herman and Chomsky call the factors which misshape news as filters. The news is being filtered by each of these factors before they reach its audience or general public.

The Five Filters are

Size, Ownership and Profit Orientation of Mass Media.

The major media organizations are in the hands of a few elites. The major news channels, newspapers and other mass media instruments are a part of large corporation and conglomerations. The information presented to the public will be varying as per the interests of these organizations. As a part of maximizing profit they sacrifice some news objectives. The extensive financial interests of these organizations may endanger the quality of news. It is common around the world that the Medias in the hands of government are just puppets.

Example: Corporate organization which owns media never publishes the financial details, which may endanger them.

Funding

The advertisements play the major role of funding in mass media. If advertisements were not funding mass media, then price of the newspapers may include cost of its production and also it’s applicable for other mass media like Television, Radio and electronic media. So it is common that the media filters the news, in favour of their advertisement providers. The ethics of the mass media is often modified, for their existence, by media.

Example: A corporate organization may threaten the media saying that they will withdraw advertising contract if the media publishes any news which may damage the reputation of the organization.

http://communicationtheory.org/propaganda-model/
Source

Even the biggest media organizations cannot afford to have reporters and camera persons where ever the news breaks. There will be some sources for news and the media is supposed to protect these sources and at the same time, there will be some powerful sources which tend to change the policies of media. For availing a continuous flow of news, the media take suitable actions in favour of sources. The relationships have to be maintained with these sources and it is common that the news are published keeping the ‘source’ in mind.

Example: The spokesperson of a prime minister or president is considered as a powerful source of news. For making sure of a proper flow of news, the organizations keep the source delighted by fine-tuning the news.

Flaks

Flaks refer to the negative responses to the statement or programme published or broadcasted. If the flaks are produced in a large scale, it is destructive to the media. The media will always have an eye on the negative responses. It will have a thorough look on the materials and news before it publishes or broadcasts some news about a publically loved figure. As a filter, it will try to avoid the news items which may bring sorts of negative responses.

Example: Most of the media never publishes news projecting negative image of religious leaders without strong evidence because it may harm the reputation of media organization among the public.

Anti-communism

As far as the American corporations and elite groups are concerned the communism was an ultimate evil because it took their wealth and power from them, it threatened their superior positions and high class. So the elites who are the owners of media adopted a policy to bring censorship on the articles and news which talk about the good side of communism. The American elite even feared the word “communal”. This is the fifth filter in propaganda model suggested by Herman and Chomsky.

Example: The news which says about the communal living of workers was never allowed to publish in America because they were afraid of a revolt by the workers if such articles and news were disseminated.
2.3 Study of Earlier and Contemporary Research

Research in the field of Impact of Television viewing and its influence on children and teenagers, to say the least, have been quite impressive; however, it is apparent that more dimensions of the problem need to be identified in order to reach more conclusive evidence. The introduction of television sets in homes was of considerable importance for educationalists and sociologists to be concerned about how children and teenagers were affected by television viewing. In order to identify Impact of Television viewing on Health and behaviour, the researcher has reviewed some of the literature. Study of previous research work is also necessary as it throws light on research methodology and other aspects. Their contribution in the development of the tools required to carry a research forward is great especially in the measurement strategies, control, research designs or different models of statistical analysis.

The purpose of review of literature is to identify and review the research which supports Impact of Television Viewing on Health and Behavior of Children and Teenagers because children’s television is potentially, equally advantageous as well as disadvantageous medium. In certain circumstances, it can be a powerful educational tool; it can inform and inspire; it is culturally relevant to today’s children; it can have an impact directly or indirectly on health and behaviour of children and teenagers. Many discussions on television’s impact on children focus only on its negative influence in relation to violence and advertising, but it is also important to recognize that television can also have a positive impact. Two noted commentators point out in their research that:

Television can be of widespread benefit to children. It can increase awareness among them and can bring them into contact with phases of life. It can provide a priceless tool in the home and at school not simply to keep children engaged but also, if used correctly, as a productive way to use their time. It is not a ‘one-eyed monster’ lurking impishly in the corner of the living room or bedroom waiting to exert an evil influence over young members of the household. It is a channel through which a range of entertainment, drama and learning can be obtained and experienced and increasingly these days it is under the control of the viewer. (Gunter and McAleer, 1997: xii-xiii).

Greenberg (1972)\(^{21}\) in his study found that the actual world for children is what they see on television, as more a child watches television the more likely the child is to rely on television for information about people of other races. White children who frequently came into contact with Blacks are just as likely to get most of their information about Blacks from television as children who do not have such contact, and neither contact nor televised messages seem to change the attitudes of white children’s towards Blacks.

Aimee Dorr Leifer, Neal J. Gordon, Sheryl Browne Graves in a journal published in Harvard education and publication group on Children's Television say that television has more propose because while entertaining children, it also socializes them. For maintaining this conclusion they review the literature regarding the effects of television content on aggressiveness and prosocial behavior and social attitudes. The structure of the television industry is examined and economic factors are found to outweigh concern for the public in the choice of programming. To increase the beneficial role of television, the authors that argue there must be more parental direction of children's exposure to television and greater diversity of broadcast content.

Bob Hope and David Tripp reported in their study that children from 6-12 years old, have regulated television against reality is a major concern for children throughout this age group (Hodge& Tripp, 1986, p126), and other studies\(^{22}\) suggests that this may well apply to even younger viewers. Hodge and Tripp have argued that television watching can develop concepts of reality and fantasy among children. Cartoons have a special function for young viewers. This was the favorite television genre of 6-8 year old children they studied in Australia, whilst most of 9 to 12 years old in their study preferred TV dramas, so that the popularity of programmes amongst these children was directly the opposite of the order of reality, going from most unrealistic (cartoons) to most realistic (real-life characters)\(^{23}\). Following a detailed semiotic study of how children made nature of cartoons causing confusion between fantasy and reality, the largeness of the gap is helpful to young children in building up specifically this capacity to discriminate\(^{24}\). Offering some explanation as to why children might be

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\(^{23}\) Ibid, p. 119

\(^{24}\) Ibid., p. 9
particularly concerned with making judgments about the reality status of television programmes, the psychologist Howard Gardner and his colleague Patricia Morison have suggested plausibly that the frightening status of certain fantasy figures may motivate children early on to master their reality status. Learning to remind themselves of the evil effects of a television programmes may help viewers to distance themselves from emotional responses to disturbing scenes.

**Aimee Dorr (1983)** give stress to the child's dynamic role in making sense of the television and examines the children's contact with television. She gave specific examples of programmes watched by children; what effects television can have; the sense they create of advertising and programming; what a formal feature is; what children know about the medium; how effects are studied and what literacy core curriculum look like. However, even before the age of 5 years, there are major developments in children’s understanding of television reality which will be considered here in relation to the recognition of absence.

Dorr demonstrated that for the children of 5 years old and older whom she studied, criteria other than fabrication were more important in judging the reality status of television programs. The other criteria she specified assumed that programs were fabricated, but required additional judgments (Dorr et al., 1990).

**Taylor & Flavell** in their study initiate that understanding of what is “real” on television among children clearly needs to be related more generally to the development of their understanding of what is real in the everyday world. In the preschool years, children’s concepts of reality involve discriminating between the way objects appear and the way they really are (Taylor & Flavell 1984; Flavel 1986). Preschoolers (3-4 years old) seem to have little grasped of a distinction between appearance and reality (e.g. when a toy car of one color is screened by a transparent filter of another color). This skill is highly correlated with visual perspective taking tasks (Flavell, 1986). In comparison, 6 and 7 years old easily manage simple appearance-reality tasks but have difficulty reflecting on and talking about related

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notions such as “looks like” and ‘really and truly is’. By 11 or 12 years old, children demonstrate considerable skill in making rich distinctions between appearance and reality.\(^{29}\)

Among very little children’s assessment of the reality of television, one must first consider the ontological status which they grant to identifiable objects appearing on the screen. It can be as an issue of substance. In three carefully designed experimental studies Flavell et al. investigated whether 3- and 4 years old children interpreted television images as solid, physically-present objects or simply as insubstantial images of them. 3 years old seemed to assume the former, 4 years old clearly believed the latter. For instance, the younger children tended to agree that a bowl of popcorn shown on television would spill if the television set were turned upside down. However, the researchers argue that the 3 years old did not really believe that a television set contained physical objects but rather had difficulty in distinguishing conceptually between television images and their referents. They hypothesize an early developmental process; under 3s probably begin by assuming that what they see on TV are real, tangible objects in the set; around the age of 3 years, children gradually learn that TV images do not behave like ordinary objects; and around the age of 4 years, children realize that TV images represent an absent reality and, when asked, are capable of distinguishing TV images from their referents.\(^{30}\)

An associated issue reflected in very young children’s judgments about the reality and authenticity of television is what the viewer understanding of the independent, uncontrollable nature of objects and events depicted on television. In a small but intensive longitudinal study, Leona Jaglom and Howard Gardner (1981a, b) noted that by the age of 3 years the children realized that they could not directly involve them (Jaglom and Gardner (1981a, p. 39).’ between the age of 3 and 4 years, children recognize the fact that the television world is in fact separate from their own. Its events do not actually exist in reality; they cannot be acted on directly’ (ibid. p.45). However, even at 3 or 4 years old children had difficulty in accepting that the timing and availability of broadcast programs could not be controlled in the home (ibid. p.44).

**Study Undertaken on the Standard of Physical Actuality**

\(^{29}\) Ibid

The kind of physical actuality involves assessing television reality in terms of whether a person or even show on television is known to exist or happen in the real world. **Kelly (1981)** found that children of 7 and 8 years old seemed to assess television reality initially in terms of this criterion: if they considered that a person or event on television existed or happened in the real world, then it was regarded as real. In contrast to the focus of 7 and 8 years old on the criterion of physical actuality, the 9 and 10 years old in her study more often asked themselves ‘does something like this exist?’ or ‘Is it about something that does or did exist?’

A study of 54 children from 7 years old to 12 years old by **Morison et al (1981)** showed that actuality was the most frequent criterion cited, accounting for around half of the references to criteria offered, with no major fluctuations across these age ranges (Morison et al,1981,p.236). Various researchers employ differing categorization of criteria, of course: Dorr (1983), for example, does not separate a criterion of actuality from one of ‘possibility’ and such a distinction may depend on such subtleties as the directness of viewers’ experience of the phenomena depicted or the degree of certainty which they express.

**Study on the Criterion of Possibility**

**Kelly (1981)** reported that, in addition to actuality, 7 and 8 years old assessed possibility or impossibility (whether something could happen in real life)--- especially physical impossibility--- ‘people can’t fly unless they go in an aeroplane”, etc. And Dorr (1983) found that as they grew older, children (from 5 to 12 years old) became increasingly concerned with whether, on the basis of their direct or indirect knowledge of the world, a phenomenon on television seemed possible (however uncommon) in real life. A child might argue that ‘the bionic man’ appearing at the time in action adventure programs (who had been completely ‘rebuilt’ by scientists), could be real because prosthetic devices are sometimes used in medicine (Dorr, 1983, p.202).

**Morison et. Al (1981)** found that amongst children from 7 to 10 years old possibility accounted for around one third of their references to criteria for assessing the reality status of television programs (second only to actuality), but that amongst children of 11 and 12 years old, this dropped to only 13% (Morisson et al.,1981,p.236).

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31 Ibid. p.67
They added that whilst the negative criterion of impossibility was used by equal numbers of children from 7 to 12 years old to explain why television programs were not real, twice as many as 9 and 10 years old as 7 and 8 years old used the positive criterion of possibility to confirm that programs were real (ibid., p238). In her study, Dorr found that for the various age groups, judgments which could be ascribed to possibility as a percentage of all the criteria she noted were as follows: 5 and 6 years old, 17%; 7 and 9 years old, 28%; 11 and 12 years old, 47% (Dorr, 1983, p 204).

Indeed, she added that the possibility remained the most common criteria amongst adolescents and adults she studied. Clearly, the findings regarding the standard of possibility reported in these studies differ markedly in 11 and 12 years old (though this may be related to the fact that Dorr does not make use of a separate “actuality” criterion).

Other Factors

Stages of cognitive development clearly play an important part in children’s understanding of what is real on television. James Potter (1988) notes the importance of the viewer’s particular motives for watching television. Some motives have been shown to be related to levels of perceived reality, in particular the motive of watching television in order to seek information.

Greenfield (1984) suggested that cartoons, nowadays, were less violent, e.g. Tom And Jerry used to consist of a series of isolated acts of violence, thereby implying that violence had no consequence. She considered that modern cartoon characters had positive relationship with each other and provided better models for children, and she thought that pain and the consequences of actions should be portrayed in the interests of realism. In recent years, some cartoon makers have responded to criticisms of violence by seeking guidance from child psychiatrists in order to suppress those scenes which could adversely affect a child's mental development and emphasize those more positive traits such as generosity and sympathy.

Hodge & Tripp (1986) conducted several experiments with different groups of children. When asked who their favorite television characters were, younger children were more likely to choose cartoon characters than older ones. 76% of the 6-8 year-olds preferred cartoon characters, compared with 28% of the 9-12 year-olds who, by now, tended to prefer characters from dramatic series. When asked who they would most like to be on television, Hodge & Tripp found that 35% of the 8-9 year-olds wanted to be
fantasy figures, compared to 29% of the 12 year-olds. Reasons given included the ability to perform superhuman activities such as flying.

**Bettelheim (1983)** in his study disagreed that fairy tales and fantasy provided a means of escape for the child from any mental problems they may have had and that cartoons were a modern form of fantasy, especially useful to the young child or the non-reader. "Far from being trivial forms that stunt the growing mind, (they) have a positive cultural value and as important a role as the humble fairy tale" (Hodge & Tripp 1986:32). Furthermore, as cartoons often depicted otherwise apparently impossible solutions, they may somehow help children learn how to cope with uncomfortable aspects of life.

Research undertaken by **Schramm, Wilbur (1961)** ---- ‘Television in the lives of our Children’ during 1961, Wilbur Schramm and others conducted a research and found that television had some effects on some children. For some children under some conditions, television is harmful. For other children under some conditions, it may be beneficial. For most children, under most conditions, television is probably neither harmful nor particularly beneficial.

Delinquency is a complex phenomenon which cannot be attributed solely to any single cause- be it poverty or the media. Many delinquents get their criminal ideas from television programs. Schramm and others concluded that the overall effects of television pointed as much to the parents as to television. Parents who provided their children with warm, secure relationships and an interesting home life had growing usually out of a number of roots, the chief one usually being some great lack in the child’s life--- often a broken home, or a feeling of rejection by parents or peer groups.”

According to the **American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry** (1999), parents can protect children from excessive television violence in following ways:

- Pay attention to the programs your children are watching and watch some with them.
- Set limits on the amount of time the children spend with the television, do not keep a television set in a child’s bedroom.
- Point out that although the actor has not actually been hurt or killed by such violence in real life results in pain or death.

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- Refuse to let children see shows known to be violent, and change the channel or turn off the television set when offensive material comes on, with an explanation of what is wrong with the programs.
- Disapprove of the violent episodes in front of the children, stressing the belief that such behavior is not the best way to solve a problem.
- To offset peer pressure among friends and classmates, contact other parents and agree to enforce similar rules about the length of time and type of programs the children may watch.

During 1980’s Cattermole, Jennifer conducted a study focusing on “the influence of television on children of primary school age”, was based on investigating the viewing habits (and their possible effects) of two consecutive junior school classes. Because of the non-experimental situation, it was almost impossible to ascertain whether any behavior exhibited was attributable to television or to any other circumstance, such as the home environment. Present day television broadcasts are mostly regulated by national bodies such as the B.B.C. and I.T.A. But, with the advent of satellite television, children are more able to watch without restriction for twenty four hours a day. The spread of cable television and video output will also increase this availability.

In order to minimize any harmful effects of television, children need to know how to critically assess such aspects as screen violence and stereotyped values. Television tends to mirror evolving society. However, different people respond to this reflection in different ways: some will be bored, some passively entertained, some mentally stimulated while others may react in a physical way. The school also mirrors society; the attitudes brought to it by children and teachers reflect the way they are influenced, in turn, by broader influences in their own environments, including the media.

In the Research (Cattermole, Jennifer) tried to establish that the influence of television on children has been carried out since the early days and is of continuing importance because television is a powerful medium and is regularly watched by children. It is also important to teach children about the way the medium operates, how to view critically, and how to derive the maximum benefit out of it.

According to research compiled by Signiorelli (1988), non-nutritious foods dominate both the children's programming and advertising. The findings also revealed that seven out of ten children thought that (1) fast foods were more nutritious than foods prepared at home; and (2) to maintain good health, children should take advertised medicine, eat fast foods, take vitamins and drink Coke. Clearly, these children may see the televised world as realistic and one to be modelled.

Goldberg, Gorn, and Gibson (1978) examined the relationship between broadcasted food messages and children's preferences for snacks and breakfast foods. Those children who had viewed pronutrition Public Service Announcements (PSAs) chose more vegetables, fruits, and other healthy food; those who had viewed commercials for highly sugared foods opted for the sugared snacks. Further studies conducted by Goldberg and Gorn (1982) supported the earlier research and expanded upon the long term effects of pronutrition PSAs. In addition, their research revealed, that in order for PSAs to be effective, they must be professionally produced with jingles, emotional appeals, and other advertising tactics that capture the attention of the child. Also, results indicate that children should receive daily exposure to the PSAs for maximum benefit. The study confirms that children basically know what they should eat, but their behavior is affected by a variety of reasons—

One of which is the number and type of commercials they see on a given day. The link between eating heavily sugared cereals, too many sweets, snacking in general and the increase of nutritional diseases such as dental caries and obesity has been confirmed by a considerable body of research.

The Payne Fund Studies

This was perhaps the first step in conducting a massive program to illustrate the influences of the mass media on children. The first was a set of psychological field experiments undertaken by Thurston and Peterson to find out children’s outlook towards social issues from the point of view of their exposure to films. The second study sponsored by the Payne Fund was done by Blumer, a qualitative research based on a biological technique to investigate the influence of movies on the daily behavior of children, like in play, imitation of actors, daydreaming, fantasy and emotional life.

Both the researchers concluded that though exposure to a single movie did not produce any noticeable effect, however, two or more movies stressing on one particular
subject produced considerable behavioural modifications, especially for a long term. The conclusions drawn from them created a history and greatly impressed the erstwhile scholars who favored the study of human conduct, within the traditional boundaries of the physical sciences as well as the use of internal statistics which is even today considered very sophisticated. Apart from this, Blumer studies\textsuperscript{34} reveal a depth of insight at the instance of child's imitation of role models, adolescent emotional developments and the problems of teenagers, young people interpreting the adult world. Children copied the pattern of speech, hairstyle and mannerism of the stars, acted out the plots on screen and had profound emotional experiences while viewing. The influences as assessed by him are even today discussed in terms of ‘modeling’ (using actors as models of personal behaviour and meaning) using the interpretations of movies as valid constructions of reality. For Example, he quotes on the influences of play—“In my childhood it was common for one to imitate consciously, heroes on the screen. For instance, I would climb the lone tree.... And hang by one hand or hammer my chest shouting “Tarzan!” and the likes. Jumping over fences was usual in my young life. Fighting with one another, and after conquering him placing one foot on his chest and raising the hands to the sky as Tarzan did was also common”

**Violence and the Media: The Task Force Report**

Public discontent regarding the media, especially television peaked during the 1960’s. Historically speaking, society during this time was particularly violent and crime ridden with the Vietnam War at the backdrop. In the words of noted author, “Violence in the society escalated, crime rate arose, students rioted, cities explored in turmoil, there were frequent demonstrations, flags, draft cards------- drug use expanded as a problem, sky lacking began, and political leaders were assimilated. It was a frightening time”. This turbulence gave rise to the prevention of violence commission whose brainchild was the Task Force to assess the role of mass communication in stimulating violence in the society. Its major concern was television.

The Task Force report can be generally categorized into two sections—the first was the content analysis of violence portrayed in primetime television programs and the other was based on an elaborate survey on violence and the Americans. The research showed that 80% of American prime time shows portrayed considerable amount of

\textsuperscript{34} Blumer, Movies and Conduct, xiii-xiv
violence. The overall conclusions revealed that the US programs were inherently violent and what was more intriguing was that the Americans were actually used to it. This led to the final conclusion that television had to be considered as a potent factor in explaining violence in the US.

From all these divergent sources, one can develop a paradigm which implies that media plays a great role in the creation of society, the nature of its norms and the propriety of behaviors in certain circumstances. Hence, it shows how violent content on television is actually perceived and later internalized by children.

Siegel (1956) examined the effect of an aggressive film on young children. She compared the play of twelve pairs of 3-5 year old children after they had seen either an aggressive film (Woody Woodpecker and the Large Air Force Sergeant), or a control film (The Little Red Hen). The children were then left to play with a variety of toys (including rubber daggers, clay, dolls, and balloons) and observed the signs of anxiety and aggression. There was no significant difference resulting from either film but Seigel suggested the film “may have an effect on children’s beliefs, their role perceptions, and perhaps their values and attitudes” (1956:377). This was a small scale laboratory experiment, involving only twenty four children. In later years, other researchers (Cline, Croft & Courrier 1973; Coastes, Pusser& Goodman1976; Metra 1978) would return to this type of study to investigate the effects of watching films on children’s pro-social and aggressive behaviour.

Himmelweit, Oppenheim & Vince (1958) published the first huge scale research ever into television and children. A comparison was made between children with a TV set and those without. Analysis revealed that a child's viewing was related to his or her sex, emotional and intellectual maturity, and his/her own needs. Less intelligent children and the socially insecure spent the longest time viewing and a vicious circle ensued, because escape through television was so easy whereas other sources of companionship demanded too much effort and might not succeed. Concern about television as a major source of modelling was shown to be unjustified: children did not directly model themselves upon screen characters but, instead, identified themselves with personalities as a means of expressing a longing for adventure and heroism. It also enabled them to safely deny conventions and enjoy danger vicariously. By frequently watching familiar programmes, or types of programmes with similar themes and personalities, a child's need for security may have been satisfied.
The introduction of a second television channel increased the choice of programs but, paradoxically, narrowed the variety actually watched, because the child could now choose to view more programs of a similar type. In general, there was a preference for adult programs. This finding was to be reiterated by Culling ford (1984), who noted that children over 6 years consistently preferred to watch similar programs every night.

Himmelweit et al. concluded that, in general, the influence of television was small and that it was "the child's emotional make-up and the total of his environmental influences that determine his behavior" (1958:215) and, although television may not affect a stable child, it could evoke a response in a child who was disturbed or emotionally unstable. The enjoyment of television and the amount watched reinforces the messages the child might absorb. Though individual programs can make an impact, it was the slow accumulation of minute influences from many programs that worried Himmelweit et al., especially if the child had not been previously supplied with a set of values against which to assess the views offered by television. "Under certain conditions, ideas and values which form part of the underlying entertainment pattern do influence children's attitudes.... because they are repeated and seen so much more often" (1958:216).

This research provided a unique opportunity to study children's reactions to television when it was first introduced to an area and also when a second channel was added, rather than relying on retrospective accounts of pre-television behavior. However, it should be pointed out that Himmelweit et al.'s research was among children who were new to television, and may have already developed other interests and values. The "long-term viewers" had access to television for only a few years whereas, nowadays, most children are exposed to television from birth. The daily transmission breaks between afternoon, children's and evening broadcasts reduced the total viewing time available.

The researcher considers that Himmelweit et al.'s findings based upon the children's diaries may have been more illuminating than their responses to questionnaires. Furthermore, the present day concern could be more about the amount of television watched by children and teenagers and any possible consequent change in their behavior.

Schramm, Lyle & Parker (1961) compiled the first major American study on children and television, using an approach similar to that of Himmelweit et al. (1958).
Over 6,000 children from communities with and without television were studied using questionnaires and interviews. Schramm et al. suggested that the shared experience of viewing was a major social factor, along with school and home. They also found children of lower ability watched more television, whereas brighter ones were more critical and selected programs to fit in with their other activities. From television, each child absorbed particular experiences in his life. For children under 10 years, their selection of programs was most strongly influenced by the family. Schramm et al. suggested that how television was used depended on the child as much as the programs but, nevertheless, three main categories of users age were distinguished:

(a) Passive entertainment, escape from real-life boredom or problems, identity with exciting and attractive people, and vicarious "thrill-play".

(b) As an incidental source of information about how people dress, behave, speak and live.

(c) As a social utility, providing a common experience for conversation with the peer group.

Like Himmelweit et al. (1958), Schramm et al. provided a broad-based survey of children's responses to a relatively new part of their lives. It was still possible to find regions without television in order to measure and compare changes in children's leisure habits since its introduction of television. More recent studies have appreciated that television has been a part of children's lives from birth and is, therefore, possibly used in different ways. As a major piece of research, Schramm et al.'s study provided a yardstick for subsequent American studies comparable with Himmelweit et al. in England. The effect of television on a particular child depends on individual child's own character and previous experiences. As Schramm et al. states, "For some children, under some conditions, some television is harmful. For other children, under the same conditions, or for the same children under other conditions, it may be beneficial. For most children, under most conditions, most television is probably neither particularly harmful nor particularly beneficial" (1961:1). Thus, Schramm et al. neatly refutes the current argument that television is a major cause of violence. Furthermore, because a programs is perceived by different people in different ways, its influence varies so that, say, television violence may not necessarily lead to imitative behavior, a fact borne out by the small number of violent incidents relative to the vast viewing audience. This author was interested as to why some children were apparently affected more than others, despite having been exposed to similar programs.
During the 1960's, Bandura investigated the way children acquired certain physical and verbal responses. He showed that children could learn new behavior by observing others and, if that new behavior was rewarded in some way, and then the learning was reinforced (Bandura & Walters 1963). Although children often copied from real models (e.g. Parents and siblings), the symbolic models of television and film could be more influential because of the amount of time spent on watching (see Himmelweit et al. 1958; Schramm et al. 1961). Bandura and his associates carried out a number of experiments in which groups of children were shown films of adults with a large inflatable doll. Children who observed adults behaving aggressively towards the doll subsequently imitated accordingly, whereas children who had seen nonaggressive adults hardly ever reacted in this way. "The results indicated that the film-mediated models are as effective as real-life models in transmitting deviant patterns of behavior" (1963:61). Bandura's use of specially made film contrasted with Siegel (1956) who showed commercially available films. Bandura similarly observed children playing afterwards in a room containing the apparatus featured in the film and which, therefore, might have encouraged some of them to copy unusual behavior. After showing commercial films and cartoons, Bandura noted that children not only imitated them but added other aggressive responses learnt previously.

The rate and level of observational learning can vary, while a visual stimulus may be more important than a verbal one. Thus a parent's instruction may be "far less influential than the audio-visual mass media in shaping children's social behavior, unless parent’s exhibit modelling behavior that is consonant with the instructions they issue" (Bandura & Walters 1963:50).

When the child is exposed to a variety of models he adopts various characteristics from them all and exhibits a behaviour pattern that is an amalgam of elements from all the models. As the child gets older, the range of social models increases and the parental influence becomes less important. Thus Bandura & Walters developed the work of Himmelweit et al. (1958) and Schramm et al.(1961) into television as a further source of behavioral models. As part of the process of being entertained, the child also acquires information and "conceptions of the world around him and his pattern of adjustment to that world" (de Fleur 1964:58). Television is "an important source of incidental learning through which children develop a variety of conceptions, ideas, attitudes and preferences" (Ibid: 73). A child may spend more time
watching television than on any other single activity; learning is incidental and unplanned; thus imparted knowledge need not be complete or objective and may require augmentation from other sources.

Maire Messenger Davies wrote in her book “Television is Good for Your Kids” in 1989, which challenged the view that television turned its young viewers into ‘layabouts’ and ‘morons’. Most British children only had access to the terrestrial offerings of the BBC, ITV and Channel 4. This landscape has radically changed, and British children now inhabit a ‘media-rich’ environment (Livingstone 2002: 41) of multichannel television, mobile phones, and the internet and computer games. According to Ofcom’s latest media literacy audit, 72% of children aged 8-15 now have access to digital TV, 64% have access to the internet at home, half own game consoles, and 65% of 8-15s own mobile phones (including 49% of 8-11year olds) (Ofcom 2006). However, although they use different media in their everyday life, television is still the most popular medium, occupying a significant proportion of children’s time, up to 13.9 hours a week, with higher viewing for those from ethnic minority (15.2 hours) and low income groups (15.5 hours) (Ofcom, 2006; see also Livingstone, 2002: 60; Rideout, 2003:12).

Bromley, in his study looked at how young school children were engaged with the phenomenon of Pokemon illustrated the ways in which they can participate more effectively in traditional school-based literacy practices if they are given more opportunities to exhibit the knowledge and skills they have acquired from their own interests such as Pokemon (Bromley, 2004). Allowed to engage with Pokemon as a group in class, Bromley found that children become very creative in writing their own stories, or a child who had never had social status in the classroom gained confidence by his peer’s acceptance and appreciation of his wide knowledge of Pokemon (Bromley, 2004: 223). In a climate where children have to follow teacher-led models for literacy and numeracy with little recognition of their interests, Bromley suggests that children should be given more opportunities to exhibit their knowledge and skills (Ibid). If educators had more flexible attitudes towards popular culture, they could use some elements to create ‘educational’ material, and also enhance children’s media literacy as well as traditional forms of literacy (Bromley 2004; Marsh et al 2005).
Although very young children can and do learn from educational television, some programs are more effective than others. Factors which raise this effectiveness include: the use of appealing elements such as humor; the use of age-appropriate topics and language; handling educational content in ways that are clear, direct and explicit; focusing on a small number of ideas in one episode and employing repetition; using action-filled visuals and characters with whom children can identify; encouraging children to actively engage in the content themselves through viewer participation and motivating children to carry their learning forward (see Fisch, 2005: 13; also Lemish, 2007: 173).

**Stein & Friedrich (1971)** studied the behavior of children in a nursery school over a four week period following the showing of aggressive, neutral, and pro-social programs. They found that violent programs had no consistent effect on children who were initially non-aggressive, as they had been socialized to control their aggressive impulses. Highly aggressive children were more likely to respond to aggressive stimuli. Viewers of the pro-social programs exhibited a slight increase in pro-social behavior. These results show that relatively short exposure to television can affect behavior, but the effects vary for different types of children.

**Liebert & Baron (1971)** showed aggressive and non-aggressive television programs for children of 5-6 years and 8-9 years, who was then given the opportunity to ostensibly help or hurt a child in another room. In both age groups, those children who had viewed aggression demonstrated a greater willingness to "hurt" the unseen child. Free play was also observed: younger boys behaved more aggressively after aggressive programs.

**Pankaj Priya, Rajat Kanti Baisya, Seema Sharma, (2010)** "Television Advertisements and Children's Buying Behaviour", journal published in Television Advertisements and Children's Buying Behavior Marketing Intelligence & Planning, suggests that children differ in their cognitive ability while trying to interpret television advertisements and hence form different attitudes towards them. Basically they analyze the impact of children's attitudes towards television advertisements on their resultant buying behavior. The demand for the advertised products is heavily influenced by the children's attitude towards advertisements. Further, the cognitive changes among the different age groups lead to the formation of varying attitudes towards the
advertisements. Yet there are other potent factors apart from advertisements, which result in the requests for a product or brand.  

Vivek Agarwal & Saranya Dhanasekaran in their article Harmful Effects of Media on Children and Adolescents (2012) in the Journal Indian Assoc. Child Adolescent Mental Health considered the profound role of the media on various facts of a child’s development, the requirement is to find ways to promote the healthy use of the media in the community. This requires the combined efforts of physicians, educators, parents and policy makers. Physicians, as health promoters, should become more active in sensitising the media to its impact on youth. Programming decisions should be made with possible consequences to the viewing audience kept in mind. When violence is present, there should be adequate warnings like need for parental guidance made available. Physicians should make parents and schools "media literate," meaning they should understand the risks of exposure to violence and other unfortunate sexual content. The parents should also monitor what programs their children are viewing and should also limit the time spent watching the same. Children should be taught how to interpret what they see on television and in the movies, including the intent and content of all type of commercials without blindly copying or imitating the same. In doing so, children may be increasingly able to discern which media messages are suitable.

Gerbner (1972) analyzed violent incidents shown on scheduled television and found that children had little chance of escaping them, even on a Saturday morning, because cartoons were among the most violent programs shown. In 1967, the average cartoon hour contained more than three times as many violent episodes as the average adult dramatic hour, and violence was the characteristic means of solving problems. He stated that "children watching Saturday morning cartoons had the least chance of escaping violence or of avoiding the heaviest saturation of violence on all television" (1972:36). Television also encouraged children to acquire stereotyped ideas about social structure and shaped attitudes about other people and the world at large. The most powerful group of people on television (and therefore by suggestion in real-life) were white American males, young and middle class, unmarried, often involved in violence and less likely to be punished. Women were shown less often, and were more likely to be romantic or family roles, married or engaged, were less aggressive, less

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successful and more likely to be the victims. Few other races were represented and, they were, frequently in criminal roles. Berkowitz (1974) concluded that exposure to media violence a roused the aggressive drive in the viewers. He noted that many American films infer that violence is necessary for manliness. If the violence was considered to be justified, then viewers would have had fewer inhibitions against aggressive behavior. The closer the violence to the children's own life, the more likely is that children will be aggressive themselves. Berkowitz also commented that children from poverty-stricken families were particularly susceptible to this type of learning.

**Dr Sameer Aggarwal,** Assistant Professor, Department of Medicine, PGIMS Rohtak (August 2013), explained the increasing childhood obesity among children due to changing lifestyles in one of his article in The Tribune. He emphasize that it can cause many health problems like diabetes, liver diseases, asthma, high blood pressure and even psychological problems. Childhood obesity is increasing in both developed and developing countries. It can be found among all socio-economic groups irrespective of the age, sex or ethnicity. A study carried in New Delhi in private schools showed that in age group of 4-18 years in 2002 by Nutritional Foundation of India found that 29% of these kids were overweight. It is important to maintain healthy weight among children because children who are overweight or obese can have:

- Diabetes
- Asthma
- Liver problems
- High blood pressure
- Knee or back pain
- Sleep problems
- Menstrual problems
- Psychosocial problems

The reasons of obesity now a day's among children in large number may be due to over eating, eating unhealthy foods and not getting enough exercise. Although in common, some medicines can also make children gain weight more easily. For attaining healthy weight among your children, the best way is to improve dietary habits and physical activity levels of entire family.

To help your child start making lifestyle changes, always remember the numbers 5, 2, 1 and 0. each of these number stands for a goal a child should try to reach every day.
5. Have your child eat five servings of fruits or vegetables every day.

2. Decrease your child’s “screen time” to two hours or less each day. It includes watching television, playing video games or using internet.

1. Have your child do physical activity for one hour or more each day. This can include playing, sports e.t.c

0. Your child should have zero sugary drinks every day. Sugary drinks include soda or aerated drinks, sports drink and all fruit juices.

He emphasized on lifestyle which is affecting the growth and development of a child and how we can help our child in maintaining proper health.

While various books, journals and websites were referred to for understanding the impact of television viewing on health and behavior of children and teenagers, in order to make the study more meaningful a survey was also conducted that included proper research methodology. In his book, Kothari (2005), explained the meaning and idea behind the research methodology which is a way to systematically solve the research problem. It may be understood as a science of studying how research is done scientifically that includes various steps that are generally adopted by a researcher in studying the research problem along with the methods/ techniques but also the methodology. Researchers not only need to know how to develop certain indices or tests, how to calculate the mean, the mode, the median of the standard deviation or chi-square, how to apply particular research techniques, but they also need to know which of these methods or techniques is relevant and which is not, and what would they mean and indicate and why.\textsuperscript{37}

\textsuperscript{37} Kothari, C.R; Research Methodology (Methods and Techniques); New Age International Pvt Ltd Publishers, New Delhi 2005