CHAPTER VII

INFERENCES AND CONCLUSIONS

The impact of television has been one of the most frequently debated social issues in India especially after the advent of Satellite TV. No major research has been carried out in the recent years in the country especially on the effects of Satellite TV on social participation. The present study is an endeavour to illustrate the impact of Satellite television on various dimensions of social participation. Initially, this study was designed to undertake a comparative study of Cable TV viewers and non-viewers. The assumption was that TV viewing presupposes a certain level of physical immobility of the viewers as they would spend most of their time watching TV programmes. This tendency is expected to curtail social participation of the viewers in a significant manner. Viewers would consequently restrict their outdoor activities, interaction with relatives, friends and neighbours as well as interaction within the family, as they are glued to their TV sets. Further, the round-the-clock entertainment through Satellite TV is expected to isolate individuals from the outside world as well as from their own families. Instead of performing a ‘socializing’ function, it isolates viewers both physically and socially. The present study is an effort to test this hypothesis. Due to paucity of studies on these issues, the study intended to compare the patterns of social participation among subscribers of Cable TV and others who do not have it. But, during the pilot study it was found that it was
not possible to identify any 'non-viewers' since TV had become an essential part of almost every household. Therefore, a comparative study was designed between Cable viewers on the one hand, and the Doordarshan viewers on the other. Such a comparison was justified because at the time the study was conducted, i.e. 1994, Doordarshan had only two channels (DDI and DDII) with limited hours of telecast in each of the sessions—morning, afternoon and evening. On the other hand, the Satellite TV was offering round-the-clock entertainment programmes. Another important factor in addition to the difference in quantity was the qualitative difference in the content between the two kinds of viewership, especially with a greater content of western culture on Satellite TV. The programmes, themes and life styles projected on western channels were catering to the urban upper strata of society while the Doordarshan programmes were insipid and lack lustre in 'quality' (Sinha 1996). Hence, in the backdrop of such a situation, it was meaningful to study the impact of Satellite TV on patterns of social participation among viewers.

Previous studies have indicated that patterns of social participation are not uniform among urban-dwellers. The heterogeneity within city-dwellers and the internal variations in terms of age, sex, socio-economic status etc. are important variables to be considered in such a study. For this, three different socio-economic groups i.e. upper, middle and low socio-economic groups, were identified to see the
variations in the patterns of social participation among the city-dwellers. Whether the patterns of social participation are uniform among the three different socio-economic groups and whether Cable TV exercises a uniform effect on the patterns of social participation i.e. formal and informal participation within and across families in the three different socio-economic groups, were the issues under focus in this study.

Specifically, the study probed into the demographic profile, the selection of TV programmes, social participation at the formal and informal levels as well as the family interaction patterns and the impact of the western media on children.

The universe of the study comprised of the residents of Chandigarh in three different socio-economic groups. As the housing pattern of Chandigarh is structured on the basis of socio-economic status, three sectors i.e., Sector 9, Sector 22 and Ram Darbar were initially selected. But, during the pilot study it was noticed that there was no Cable operator in Sector 9 and the residents of this sector had either subscribed to Cable TV from the neighbouring sectors or had installed their own dish antennae. Due to heavy installation charges, most residents were without cable connections. Hence, the researcher also included the two kanal and / or bigger houses of Sector 8 and Sector 18 where there were cable operators. Therefore, the universe for this study comprised of population residing in 2 kanal and / or bigger houses of Sector 8, Sector 9 and Sector 18, which is representative of the upper socio-economic
group and Sector 22 and Industrial Area B i.e., Ram Darbar which are representative of the middle and socio-economic groups respectively. These households were stratified on the basis of CATV viewers and DD viewers according to information obtained from cable operators as well as the identification of households with privately owned dish antennae. The three localities, i.e., high middle and low have been designated in the present study as Locality I, II and III respectively.

In the final stage, 100 households from each of these three socio-economic groups were selected according to the method of systematic random sampling with an equal proportion of CATV viewers and DD viewers. Our sample therefore comprised of 300 households in all. An interview schedule was used to elicit information from the heads of households.

The following hypotheses were drawn for the study:

1. Formal participation has a positive association with income, education and occupation.

2. Viewing Cable TV (with longer duration and variety of channels) would reduce intra-family communication.

3. Viewing Cable TV (within a household) would have the most profound effect on children reflected through both academic and non-academic dimensions.

4. The various socio-economic groups would differ profoundly in terms of the perceived effects of Cable TV on social
participation.

In view of the major objectives and the above assumptions, the study attempted to describe the heterogeneity within and between the three neighbourhoods as well as the Cable TV viewers and DD viewers. The demographic profile relating to age, socio-economic status, religion, caste, type of ownership of house, place of origin of respondents revealed that there were considerable variations within the three socio-economic groups as well as between Cable TV viewers and DD viewers. Specifically, the study revealed that majority of the respondents belonged to the three middle-aged categories i.e., 30 years to 59 years—majority of these belonged to the 40-49 years age group category. The mean age in Locality I was the highest while it was the lowest in Locality III. Also, the mean age of the CATV viewers was less than DD viewers in all the three localities. It was inferred that Cable TV viewers were younger than the DD viewers. Further, the study indicated that the respondents of Locality III were younger in age as compared to respondents of the other two localities. Majority of the respondents had a family income of Rs. 5001-10000. The mean income of the respondents in Locality I was highest while it was the lowest in Locality III, which confirmed the selection of the three localities as high, middle and low in terms of economic criterion. The mean income of Cable TV viewers and DD viewers was the same in Locality I while the mean income among the Cable TV viewers was higher than the DD viewers in
Locality II and Locality III. This signified that income was not a criterion for subscription to Cable TV among the respondents of Locality I.

The educational qualifications of the respondents further revealed that majority were graduates. It was also observed that while majority of the respondents in Locality I and Locality II were graduates, the respondents of Locality III had their education qualification below matric level. There were no considerable differences in educational qualifications between the Cable TV viewers and DD viewers in all the three localities. The study also suggested that majority of the respondents belonged to the occupational prestige category II (for details of occupational prestige, see Appendix B). It was further indicated by the study that respondents in Locality I belonged to occupations with a higher occupational prestige than the respondents of Locality II and Locality III. The occupational prestige was the lowest among respondents of Locality III. The study also showed that on the one hand none of the respondents in Locality I had lower levels of occupational prestige while on the other hand, there were no respondents in Locality III who had a high levels of occupational prestige. This indicates that the three localities not only differed distinctively in terms of occupational status but there is an association between occupational structures and economic status of respondents. The data also indicated that majority of both the CATV viewers and the DD viewers belonged to occupational prestige category II. The study revealed that the CATV viewers had a higher
occupational status than the DD viewers indicating a positive association between viewership and occupational status.

The analysis further indicated that three variables, income, education and occupational status were associated with each other among both CATV viewers and DD viewers. The study then, examined the variations in the socio-economic status between respondents on patterns of social participation. But before that the study sought a glimpse on other characteristics like religion, caste, type of ownership of house, place of origin and duration of stay of respondents in Chandigarh.

It was revealed that in all three localities majority of the respondents were Hindus. Further, on the whole there were more CATV viewers than DD viewers among the Hindus while among the Sikhs the reverse was true. The data also indicated that most of the CATV viewers were Hindus. Also, majority of the respondents belonged to the upper castes. However, in Locality III, majority of the respondents belonged to the low caste category (for details of caste categories refer to page 73). There were a greater proportion of CATV viewers than the DD viewers in the upper caste category in Locality I and Locality II. Further, a similar trend was observed in the low caste category among respondents of Locality III. The study suggested that the upper and middle income groups were dominated by respondents belonging to upper castes while the low income group respondents belonged to the low castes.
Regarding the type of ownership of house, it was important to note the differences in three localities although the sample size was selected on the basis of socio-economic status. The study showed that in all the three localities majority of the respondents owned houses in which they resided. Further, on the whole, the owners of houses were cable subscribers while in Locality III there were more DD viewers who owned houses. The data further revealed that most of the residents of Chandigarh had migrated from Punjab and majority of them had been residing in the city for more than 11 years but less than 20 years. The means duration of stay (in years) in Chandigarh of respondents in Locality II was the highest while it was the lowest in Locality III indicating that the residents of Locality II were staying in Chandigarh for a longer period than the other two localities. It was further indicated that CATV viewers in Locality I and Locality II were staying for a longer duration in Chandigarh than the DD viewers but the reverse was true in Locality III.

The data revealed some major differences in the demographic profile between the CATV viewers and DD viewers as well as in between the three localities. It was concluded that there were some consistent variations between the three neighbourhoods in terms of their income, education and occupational attributes. It was then pertinent to see how these variations in the demographic profile would reflect on the patterns of viewership of TV which was discussed in Chapter III.
In view of one of the major objectives, i.e., to analyse the association of duration of viewing TV and selectivity of programmes with the socio-economic status, some dimensions and physical factors of the family environment were examined. Further, as the study focusses on the impact of Cable television on social interaction, the number of TV sets as well as space available in a household were crucial factors. This is so because while the possession of a single television set may bring the members together physically, more than one television set on the other hand may increase physical space between them. Similarly, families with more space and greater economic resources may own more than one TV set which may isolate family members both physically as well as socially. The study pointed out that on the whole majority of the respondents owned one television set. In Locality I, more than one-third of the respondents owned two or more TV sets while in Locality II, one-fifth of the respondents owned two or more TV sets. Only one respondent from Locality III owned two TV sets while the rest owned one TV set. Further, more Cable TV viewers owned more than one TV set as compared to DD viewers indicating a positive association between viewership and the number of TV sets. Also, an association between the economic status and the number of TV sets with viewership on the one hand and with the space available in a household on the other, was established from the study. (We had seen earlier that respondents of Locality I resided in 2 kanal or bigger houses). The results substantiate
the findings of Barrios (1988) that greater the economic resources and space available in a household, the greater the number of TV sets owned by a family.

Further, having inferred that income did not have an association with the subscription of Cable TV among respondents of Locality I, the study probed into the extraneous factors which obstructed respondents from viewership of Satellite TV. One of the main reasons listed out by the DD viewers was their children's studies. The study revealed that respondents of Locality II were most concerned regarding their children's studies as well as expressed grave concern on the obscenity, nudity and vulgarity exhibited on Satellite channels. Also, out of a total of 150 respondents who had not subscribed to Cable TV nearly one-fourth of these DD viewers had earlier remained subscribers of CATV. The withdrawal of subscription to CATV was concentrated mainly in Locality II, wherein nearly half of the respondents of this locality were earlier viewers of CATV. The study also revealed that majority of the DD viewers did not want to subscribe to Cable TV even at a later stage. This indicated that reasons other than their children's studies kept them away from being viewers of Satellite Channels. The reasons according to them was an overdose of obscenity, sexuality and vulgarity depicted on the western channels.

The introduction of television initially made everyone believe that the 'novelty' hypothesis would wear off with the passage of time. But,
in most households, TV viewing has become an addiction and the consumption of TV has been steadily rising over the years with an increase in the number of channels as well as round-the-clock transmission on Satellite channels. Further, as viewers tend to exaggerate viewing times (especially when measured in hours) the present study measured the duration of viewing TV according to the number of sessions—i.e., morning, afternoon, evening and late night, the television set was switched on, during one day. The analysis showed that more than one-third of the respondents watched TV for at least three or more sessions in a day. It was also inferred that respondents of Locality III consumed more hours of TV than the respondents of the other two localities. These findings substantiate earlier findings by Colomina (1968) and Greenberg and Dominick (1969) that low economic status audience consume more hours of television. Further, as these respondents owned one television set, the family members were bound to watch it together substantiating the view held by Colomina (1968) that the lower socio-economic status audience watch more TV content with their children.

It was also observed that the respondents of Locality II consumed TV content for a lesser duration of time as compared to the other two localities. The study suggested that the upper and low socio-economic groups were heavy consumers of TV content. This indicated that the respondents in these two localities are glued to their TV sets resulting
in physical immobility leading to a loss of social activity both with the outside world as well as within the family. These issues were discussed later in Chapter IV.

However, it was interesting to note that as duration of TV viewing increased, there was proportionate increase of Cable viewers. On the whole, majority of the Cable viewers watched TV for a longer duration as compared to DD viewers. It was also observed that Cable TV viewers of Locality III consumed more hours of TV as compared to the other localities. A uniform positive association between duration of viewing and Satellite TV was suggested by the study. Thus, the hypothesis that an increase in the number of channels as well as the availability of round-the-clock transmission leads to an increase in TV consumption has been accepted by the study. These findings indicates that viewers are bound to curtail their physical and social activities within as well as across families. These aspects were richly illustrated in the subsequent chapters.

Further, the analysis also indicated that the duration of viewing TV among the Cable TV viewers was associated with income, education and occupation. The study also showed that CATV viewers with low economic status consumed more hours of TV on the one hand, while on the other, CATV viewers with high economic status watched TV for a lesser duration of time. An inverse association between income and viewership was suggested by the study. Also, income was found to have
no association with the duration of viewing TV among the DD viewers while education and occupation were significantly associated with the duration of viewing TV among both the CATV viewers and DD viewers. Subsequently, how the variations in the duration of viewing TV affect the family environment were examined in Chapter IV. But before that, the selectivity of programmes by the respondents were studied to see how the variations in the preferences for specific programmes among family members would affect family life.

Research in communication studies have indicated that the role of primary groups and references groups along with other variables such as education, occupation, gender, age etc. may be significant in inducing variations among the audiences. Preferences for specific programmes may differ according to the socio-economic status, age-groups etc. which contribute heavily in the different patterns of viewership among the recipients of media.

The analysis indicated that the ZEE TV channel which had an overdose of entertainment programmes was the most popular among Satellite TV viewers while DD I channel had popularity among the DD viewers. The results also showed that the variables such as income, education and occupation were associated with the selection of channels among Cable TV viewers while there was no association of these variables in the case of DD viewers. This was because the viewers of Satellite TV had a wide choice of channels to choose from while the
Doordarshan viewers were restricted in their choice with the availability of only two channels.

The study further indicated that entertainment based programmes were the most popular among the audience in all the three localities. (This category excluded Hindi film based programmes). Also; the western programmes were popular among the respondents of only Locality I while the Hindi film based programmes were popular mostly among the respondents of Locality III. Further, informative and sports programmes had popularity with some respondents of Locality I and Locality III. It was inferred that in Locality I and Locality II, the respondents were spread over in their choice of programme categories while the respondents of Locality III were stereotyped in their choice of programmes.

Also, the DD viewers preferred informative programmes while western programmes were preferred to a large extent by CATV viewers of Locality I only. This is attributed to the fact that CATV viewers have a wider choice in selection of programmes with the availability of variety of channels. These variations indicate that preference for specific programmes differed according to the socio-economic status as well as the role of primary groups and reference groups which influence viewers for preference of specific programmes. The study also indicates that as the quality of programmes on Doordarshan and Satellite TV differed to a large extent, viewers naturally differed in their selection of
programmes. The programmes on Satellite TV are designed for the urban children, urban teenagers, urban youth, urban women and urban adults while the programmes on Doordarshan are oriented towards information, education and also towards development. Further, the two kinds of viewership differed in the quantity as well as the quality of programmes with a greater emphasis of western culture and lifestyle on Satellite TV channels. Hence, CATV viewers and DD viewers differed in taste for programmes. In other words, the study revealed that different people select particular types of media content which is heavily influenced by the socio-economic and demographic characteristics. This theoretical perspective has been accepted by the present study as respondents of the three localities as well as the CATV viewers and DD viewers differed in the selection of programmes. This perspective was further substantiated with the study indicating an association of income, education and duration of viewing TV with the selection of programmes among CATV viewers. Further, income, education and occupation were significantly associated with selection of programmes among DD viewers but not associated with the selection of channels. Also, education and occupation had an association with the duration of viewing TV, among DD viewers. It was also observed that the duration of viewing TV and choice of programmes significantly associated with each other in the case of both CATV viewers and DD viewers. As the three localities differed in their selection of channels it was pertinent to see in what
other ways TV affects family life with different patterns of selection of channels / programmes among family members. Further, how the duration of viewing TV curtails social participation within the family was the focus of Chapter IV.

The relationship between television viewing and family interaction patterns has been a subject of research since the advent of TV. Whether television facilitates closer relationships within families or weakens bonds has been frequently debated. Some communication experts have held the view that television brings in physical proximity and facilitates communication while on the other hand scholars observed that as a result of physical immobility, there is a reduction in interaction both within and across families. Further, there is an overall decline in the expenditure of leisure time from 'out of home' to 'in home' activities. Television is a primary leisure activity for people indicating that physical and social isolation are bound to occur which leads to a process of 'individuation'.

The study revealed that majority of the respondents both among CATV viewers and DD viewers enjoyed leisure activities which pertained to their ownself, suggesting an isolation among members of the family. It was also observed that more members of the family in Locality III had leisure activities which related to one's ownself as compared to the other localities. Respondents opined that as there was a boom in electronic gadgets, the prime leisure activities of children were
'individualistic' in nature. They also remarked that social activity was curtailed which resulted in a decrease in communication within and across families as viewers interact more and more with the media.

The study suggested an association between Satellite TV and the process of individuation. Further, the study indicated that Satellite TV is a catalytic agent in enhancing isolation within and across families. The perspective which states that TV reduces communication within families has been substantiated while the perspective which states that TV facilitates communication has been rejected by the study. The study stands to further substantiate this perspective with the following inferences.

Further, although our traditional culture is known for its hospitality, there has been decline in such a hospitality, as more than half the respondents expressed irritation on the arrival of guests while watching an interesting programme. The arrival of guests was not a pleasurable experience for many respondents. The study indicated a significant decline in interpersonal relationships across families. The analysis depicted an inverse relationship between TV viewing and hospitality. The increasing number of channels on Satellite TV resulted in a reduction in intra-familial communication. Also, a number of respondents especially in the upper and middle income groups revealed that it they visited somebody during prime hours of TV, they felt unattended. Instead of getting a welcome, they had to face
embarrassment since they disturbed the hosts who were more interested in TV programmes. The respondents revealed that for the fear of being forced guests they avoided visiting people at their homes during prime hours of TV. It was observed that as the TV viewing duration increased consequent to the increase in the number of channels there was a decrease in inter-family communication. The increase in the duration of viewing TV led to a further decrease in physical mobility resulting in a decline in inter-familial relationships.

The study also suggested that on the one hand, TV increased physical closeness and proximity (especially among the Cable TV viewers of Locality III), while on the other hand TV weakened ties among family members. Further, it was indicated that TV promoted passivity among family members. The time spent interacting with family members was considerably reduced especially among the Cable viewers. Majority of the Cable TV viewers of Locality I and Locality III were of the opinion that TV had contributed to reducing interaction between family members. The study inferred an inverse association between the interaction time of family members and Satellite TV. Hence, the study suggests that TV is a catalytic agent in weakening bonds within and across families. Family members also disclosed that they did not want any interruptions while watching interesting programmes on TV. They also avoided important household issues for discussion as well as outings in favour of watching TV. It was also revealed that children avoided
social interaction within as well as across families.

It was also indicated that children exercised maximum control over the TV set in all three localities. Also, the study suggested a positive association between conflicts and the number of TV sets on the one hand with the number of channels on the other. The frequency of quarrels were maximum between children themselves. It was also indicated that Satellite TV had contributed to disharmony in the husband-wife as well as parent-child relationships. Physical isolation was increasing in families with the increasing rise in the number of channels and the number of TV sets in a household. It can be concluded that the present study substantiates the perspective that TV curtails intra-family communication suggesting a decline in informal social participation within the families.

Results further revealed that many respondents rescheduled their daily activities to watch TV programmes. Respondents did not eat on the dining table while some managed to shift the TV set from the drawing room or lobby into dining rooms and bedrooms. It was also noticed that the Cable TV viewers especially those of Locality III had rescheduled their daily routines. The lady of the household tried to complete her domestic work and cooking while children did their homework early or while watching TV. The study inferred that TV had rescheduled daily routines substantiating the finding of Luthra and Mahajan (1993).

Despite the agreement on the dangers of TV viewing more than
95 per cent of the respondents did not want to change their TV viewing duration substantiating the view held by Leitcher and her associates (1985). It was concluded from Chapter IV that inter-familial and intra-familial ties had weakened as a result of TV viewing. Further, children emerged as the most prominent segment in the family who avoided household issues, outings, showed disrespect to elders, and ignored guests, due to TV viewing.

The data in the preceding chapters reflected an impact of TV—whether DD or Cable on the social life within the families. It was evident from the analysis that Cable TV, by restricting the physical mobility of its viewers, would reduce the social participation of people across the families too. In other words, being glued to TV sets during most of the day, inter-familial ties with neighbours, relatives, friends etc. would normally decline. Chapter V undertakes an appraisal of this hypothesis. The question posed in this chapter was—Does TV viewing (especially the Cable) in any way affect patterns of social participation among city dwellers? The emphasis on this chapter was upon patterns of social participation across families as the impact of TV on intra-familial interaction was examined. Specifically, in Chapter V, the nature and degree of formal and informal social participation as well as the impact of TV on these dimensions were studied.

The results showed that formal participation was positively associated with income, education and occupational status as majority
of the members of formal organisations belonged to Locality I, substantiating studies by Chandra (1977), Pasricha (1988), Gill (1991) and Gill and Dhawan (1992). It was also observed that memberships in majority of the families were held by the male head of the household. Further, respondents sought membership in entertainment based organisations for dining/playing cards and tambola as well as sports and games. The nature of formal social participation was that majority of the respondents were consumers of services only. Also, the level of participation of the respondents was at the city level and majority of these memberships were held for 5-10 years.

The degree of formal participation was frequent—almost daily among majority of the members. Television did not exercise any affect on formal participation on both dimensions—degree and nature as the type of participation is voluntarily chosen by an individual as well as it is a paid form of social participation. That TV viewing has not affect formal participation in a big way is understandable because members indulge into such a participation by choice. They join formal organisations for achieving some very tangible and concrete ends—ranging from entertainment, physical fitness, to professional development. In the competitiveness world of today, these requirments constitute a top most agenda for an urbanite—especially in an upper income group. It is for this reason that TV or no TV, members of formal organisations maintain regular participation at the formal level. These
inferences have been drawn on the basis of our findings in the study.

The informal participation of the respondents of Locality I and Locality II were at the medium level on both dimensions—degree as well as nature (in terms of intimacy of ties). The respondents of Locality III had very strong neighbourhood ties, the study suggested. The quantitative analysis revealed that the degree of informal participation was not associated with the duration of viewing TV both among CATV viewers and DD viewers in the upper and middle income localities. Also, there was no consistent association between income, education and occupation with the degree of informal participation both among CATV viewers and DD viewers. Further, the low levels of degree and nature of informal participation were characteristics of urban dwellers in Locality I and Locality II according to the quantitative analysis. However, the qualitative analysis revealed that majority of the respondents felt that TV had restricted neighbourhood relations. Also, nearly half the respondents did not want to miss TV programmes for the sake of visiting relatives, friends and neighbours in favour of watching TV programmes.

The analysis in Chapter V revealed that different trends followed out of quantitative and qualitative investigation of the data. While responses analysed through the use of the index indicated that informal participation had little relationship with TV viewing, indirect questioning of respondents elicited altogether different trends. These
responses clearly indicated that television had certainly curtailed their outdoor activities especially in relation to their visits to relatives, neighbours and friends. But the fact remains that this had happened more among the younger generation.

Further, Satellite TV had definitely restricted neighbourhood relations in all the three income groups. It was also inferred that informal participation was affected by Satellite TV in the sense that respondents avoided social visits across families during prime hours of TV. The study suggested that Satellite TV did not exercise a uniform effect on both dimensions of social participation—formal and informal. While formal participation remained unaffected by TV, informal participation across families had been definitely affected by Satellite TV.

Hence, it may be inferred that as the researcher examined the impact of Satellite TV from a macro level of social participation to micro level, investigations indicated that Satellite TV had exercised maximum impact on the most crucial unit of the family i.e., children. Therefore, Chapter VI was designed to study how television affected children, with western media creeping into Indian homes.

Parental mediation in controlling TV viewing among children has been one of the major concerns all over the world. In spite of this, our study revealed that 95 per cent of the respondents wanted to continue their TV viewing duration. Therefore, the role of parents in this context
needs to be examined.

The study indicated that more than half the respondents among both CATV viewers and DD viewers claimed that they regulated TV for their children. There was no significant difference between the CATV viewers and DD viewers in three localities among those who regulated TV for their children. The responses were found to be inconsistent as we had inferred earlier that children had exercised maximum control over the TV sets. Further, inspite of such an observation, more than half the respondents indicated that there was a deterioration in the academic performance of children. Also, the deterioration in the academic performance of the children was more among Cable viewers as compared to DD viewers.

It was also observed that there were more respondents among the regulators of TV who reported a deterioration in the academic performance of children. The study showed that as the responses were inconsistent regarding regulation of TV, deterioration in academic performance was indicated by respondents. This meant that TV was hardly in the control of parents. The study substantiates the findings of Greenberg, Ku and Li (1992) that children are less willing to follow parental rules or obey them. Consequently parents have less control of over their children, the study suggested.

The study further revealed that majority of the Cable viewers indicated that TV had an effect on extra-curricular activities, dress
sense, life style, taste of music and creativity of children. Respondents complained that their children were swayed away by the western life styles and value system, forgetting their traditional culture. Further, parents wanted that their children should reduce their TV viewing duration but were unable to assert their authority over their children. Parents also indicated that a negative impact of Satellite TV was exerted on the relationship between their children and their friends. Further, parents identified deteriorating standards of the parent-child relationship indication disobedience, disrespect, back answering, rude and rash behaviour of their children towards them. The study also indicated that among some respondents, television had contributed in widening the generation gap between parents and children while majority held the view that generation gap was a universal phenomenon.

Majority of the DD viewers were of the view that if they subscribed to CATV, there would be a changer in the life style as well as family interaction patterns. Further, nearly two-thirds of the DD viewers and majority of the Cable TV viewers felt uncomfortable while watching TV programmes with their families. Respondents pointed out obscenity, vulgarity, love scenes and bed scenes which embarrassed them while watching TV with their family members. Although western channels were appreciated by a few respondents for their presentation, photography and information, respondents criticised STAR TV and VTV channels for excessive love scenes, lip kissing and nudity on these
channels. Viewers expressed that nudity projected on western channels was not in good taste with the western value system creeping into Indian homes.

Further, majority of the Satellite TV viewers believed that their life styles would be different had they not subscribed to CATV. They also asserted that there would be more intra-family interaction and respect in the husband-wife and parent-child relationships which was diminishing day by day.

On the one hand, respondents indicated that CATV was a boon while on the other hand they termed it as an evil. Respondents agreed that if controlled and restricted viewing is practised, then Satellite TV can produce excellent results, creating awareness among children and youth. If watched with discretion, Satellite TV can bring positive changes in the familial relationships, opined respondents. The negative aspects respondents emphasized upon were the academics of children, promotion of criminal, rash and violent tendencies, projection of western culture and values and obscenity, nudity and vulgarity on Satellite channels.

Further, the most disturbing elements identified by respondents was sexuality projected on Satellite channels. Respondents were vehemently against the depiction of scenes with sexual tendencies which were openly viewed in families. Some respondents suggested restrictions while some others proposed a ban on Cable television. Thus, the hypothesis that TV would affect children the most, especially on academic
and non-academic dimensions has been substantiated by the study.

Therefore, it is concluded that TV exercised a strong impact on informal social participation within and across families while it did not exercise any effect on formal social participation. Further, it is inferred that most of the viewers perceived Satellite TV as an evil as it destroyed not only the careers of children but the rich traditional Indian culture and value system.

Despite all these tendencies, it remains a fact that those involved in commercialization of Satellite television have been tremendously successful. They have, despite all the problems, been able to induce Cable TV as an unavoidable necessity not only for the children, but for the parents as well. With the growing choice out of a variety of channels and increasing competition among private channels, the viewer is getting more and more enslaved by its glamour.

The present study highlights the need to study the impact of intervening variables on social participation—both within and across families, rather than looking for a unidimensional relationship between urban residence and nature of social participation. While folk-urban continuum perspective remains an important tool to understand changing societies under the impact of urbanisation, the present study underlined the inability of the continuum perspective in acknowledging the role of intervening factors. Findings in our study thus provide a useful insight into the role played by Cable television in transforming
the patterns of social participation in an urban setting.

The study partially substantiates the social categories perspective, in that the impact of Satellite TV on social participation is mediated through the social categories. At the same time however, in certain other dimensions, Satellite TV has been found to exercise a more or less uniform impact irrespective of social class or status for e.g. its impact on children. Hence, the relationship between TV and social participation cannot be understood with the help of any single perspective. Due to the tremendous complexities involved in the phenomena, impact of Satellite TV on social participation—within and outside family, cannot be explained by a single perspective. On the contrary, our findings caution us against formulating any sweeping generalization in this regard.

Theoretical Relevance Of The Study

The theoretical contribution of the study lies in its ability to fill in the gaps in existing literature regarding the impact of television at varying levels—micro and macro, formal and informal, intra-familial and inter-familial spheres. Rather than homogenizing the social units which receive the impact, the study is able to specify as to how TV viewing exercises an impact on the urban dwellers through varying socio-economic status. Further, the analysis makes it explicit that TV has affected us most in our informal groupings in that our participation within the family as well as in the neighbourhood has considerably
declined due to it. Going further, the study not only reveals the substantial impact exercised by TV within our homes, affecting almost every unit within the family, it also shows how it happens. The role played by the number of TV sets for instance, duration of viewing and viewing patterns in transforming relations between spouses, siblings and between them, is brought out clearly by our findings. Participation in formal organisations on the other hand, which basically tends to be goal-oriented, hardly gets affected by TV viewing because of the professional or other specific goals incurred through such a participation.

The present study therefore helps in laying bare some of the mechanisms through which Satellite TV has been working as an intervening variable in the process of urbanization, in that it leads to specific changes under some given conditions. It prevents us from visualizing any one to one relationship between urban residence on the one hand, and a particular find of social participation on the other.

To conclude, Satellite TV not only makes a differential impact upon different categories of urban dwellers, it also impacts various forms of social participation very differently. Also, the Satellite TV is playing a significant role in transforming the relationships within the family, by hitting directly at parental authority and changing altogether the orientation of children towards social participation. The theoretical relevance of the present study hence lies in going beyond the relationship between Cable television and social participation. It provides insights
into the specific conditions under which Cable TV may or may not produce a given impact within the members of a family, as also outside families. The major hypothesis that due to the physical binding of the viewer by Cable TV for long hours, it results into a decline in social participation, mainly the informal, has been born out by our findings.

Richness of a research study also lies in its ability to raise some new issues, which may be taken up for future research. This study highlights the need to conduct further analyses as to why Cable TV, which takes a large chunk of a viewer’s time, has been invading his participation only at informal level and why it has little effect on formal participation. Whether this is true only of urban dwellers or it applies to rural dwellers too, is yet to be investigated. These are some of the questions which are posed by the study, to be taken up subsequently.