CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION OF RESEARCH PROBLEM AND METHOD OF STUDY

Technological advances in the industrial and modern periods of history have not only changed the physical "equipment" of societies but also their social and cultural milieu. Industrialization and modernization have stimulated social and cultural changes leading to several common trends: the adoption of urban values, the increased employment of women in the non-family economy, greater freedom in sexual behaviour and marital choice, higher expectations in marital relationship, more permissive parent-child relationships, greater emotional involvement of fathers with their children and rising survival rates of the very old (Yorburg 1983).

Other social and cultural changes resulting from modernization that have been widely noted include the creation of the job of housewife, an increased standard of living, a paring down of the size of the nuclear family, greater dependence on the home and reduction of contact with neighbours, an increase in the role of the family for emotional interdependence, a decrease in the authority of individual members, a struggle for more space in which to live, an increase in family mobility and consequent lessening of ties with extended kin, and an increase in the disparity in life style between city and rural dwellers. While these changes have been felt in the more developed countries of the world, the fallout of industrialization and modernization has been experienced
everywhere. While all nations may not be equally industrialized or entirely modern, there is industry and modernity in every culture and a fundamental awareness of and desire for a better life exists among people everywhere (Allan 1985).

It has been established that there is an ineluctable link between technology and economic factors on the one hand and social change on the other (Veblen 1904). In every historical epoch, the technological innovations and scientific achievements have left significant repercussions on the social organisation. However, whether the relationship is one-way i.e., flowing from technological to the social change or mutual, depends upon the way one looks at it. Thus, it is possible to delineate a number of theoretical perspectives emphasizing on different dimensions of the interplay between technology and social change.

William F. Ogburn (1938), giving primacy to technological developments, talks of the cultural lag theory. It involves the identification of at least two variables that can be shown to have been in adjustment at one time. One of the variables is then shown to have changed to a greater extent than the other because of a discovery or invention. In other words, whenever the rates of change of the interdependent parts of culture are unequal, we have a condition of cultural lag, and the consequent adjustment is "less satisfactory" than that which existed initially.
To support the notion of cultural lag, the two variables of family size and religious doctrine may be considered. The religious doctrine may make the large family 'sacred'. Then, with modernization, and the use of new techniques of birth control, family may shrink in size. The religious doctrine, however may oppose this trend and the use of birth control methods, causing maladjustment between religion and family.

Ogburn’s thought revolved basically around technology and culture. He points out that non-material aspects of the culture must adjust to the material developments, and the gap between the two will be areas of social problems. Technology is the driving mechanism of change; according to Ogburn people seem to be gasping to keep up and adapt to the world that technology is ever creating anew (Lauer 1992).

A similar emphasis on the technological factors as an independent variable may be found in the conceptualization of 'Pre-industrial cities' made by Gideon Sjoberg (1951). He too ascribes the differences in the social, religious, political and ecological structures between societies in terms of their level of industrialization (Hatt and Reiss 1951).

However, the empirical variations between the western and non-western societies on the one hand and developed and developing on the other, indicate the difficulty of treating technology as an independent variable in the process of social change. One important consequence of such a comparative analysis of societies is provided in the views of Max Weber who found religious ideology to be acting as an important
independent variable for the emergence of capitalism in some western societies (Olsen 1968). Weber (1958) argued that in addition to economic, social and political requirements, industrialization may itself be dependent upon a set of cultural values and norms which must be internalized by individuals so as to motivate their activities. Such values and norms which he found in the "Protestant Ethic", stress the importance of hard work, self denial, self-discipline, thrift, frugality, self-reliance and individual initiative. Industrialization requires the investment of large sums of money or capital into machinery, buildings, raw materials and trained man power. Weber argued that without the values and norms of the Protestant Ethic, individuals lack the motivation and drive, necessary to carry out the process of industrialization. Weber supported his thesis by showing that Protestant England, Germany and Scandinavia industrialized long before Europe. Numerous critics (Sammuelsson 1961) have since attacked Weber's thesis and have conclusively demonstrated logical and factual errors in his linkage between Protestantism and this set of cultural values and norms.

Thus, scholars like Weber and Hoselitz (1960) maintain that traditional societies like India have failed to industrialize at a similar pace owing basically to their social, structural and cultural peculiarities which have hindered economic growth. Despite the varying emphases, it can hardly be denied that the strides made in technological and industrial areas have affected societies in more than one way. There
are some aspects of this technological advancement which directly and constantly have influenced social life.

Of all technological changes which have been sweeping through the traditional societies of the underdeveloped world in the last decade, the most fundamental and pervasive in their effects on human society, have been the changes in communication (Millikan 1961). All these changes began with the industrial revolution during the latter half of the 18th century. Along the path of development, a society finds that it can use communication to implant and extend the idea of change to raise aspirations of the society in which it operates. Raising aspirations of the people would make them want a larger economy and modernized society (Schramm 1967). Communication, while spreading knowledge among the people can also help to create specific attitudes and a type of personality which is necessary in order for traditional societies to become modern (Lerner 1958).

The mass media are largely responsible in bringing about change in the economic and social spheres, especially in the context of modern welfare state. Progressive changes in the communication networks and mass media have not only brought the distant culture within a society together, but more importantly, they have literally contributed to a conception of a 'global society'. The initial attempts of the mass media for generating desired kinds of attitudes among members of a society may be thwarted by the exposure of audience to an even greater variety,
thus leading to a number of implications.

While examining the relationship between technological factors and social change, one must be clear that the different segments of a society may not be uniformly affected due to definite reasons. Therefore, it is evident that the urban societies due to a greater exposure to almost all technological innovations, may experience these changes more drastically and strongly than their rural counterparts. Especially in the case of mass media, the urban population in a developing society like India would definitely have different experiences than the rural. Thus, mass media may serve as one of the many factors influencing the social and cultural life of urban dwellers. Since urban social networks and participation constitute a fertile area for empirical research in the transitional societies like India, the nexus between mass media and changing behaviour in an urban context becomes an important area for investigation.

Urbanization for a long time has been treated as an independent variable in bringing about social change. It has been emphasized on the basis of empirical evidence that urban societies tend to have different social and cultural characteristics (Redfield 1947 and Wirth 1938). Contacts in the city are impersonal, superficial, transitory and segmental so that the urbanite loses the spontaneous self expression, the morale and the sense of participation that comes from living in an integrated society. Wirth’s notion was that an increase in the size and
density of the population leads to increased anonymity; which together with the more widespread division of labour would in turn produce social heterogeneity. Under these conditions, relationships would inevitably become more impersonal and formally prescribed, and prestige would be allocated according to criteria other than personal acquaintance. Wirth listed out secondary contacts, weakening of bonds of kinship, declining social significance of family which resulted into the city dweller to become anonymous, isolated, secular, relativistic, rational and sophisticated. The various dichotomies and continua that were set forth later by the sociologists were derived primarily from the works of Durkheim (1933) and Tonnies (1940).

That urban societies tend to have peculiar social and cultural features is an observation made much earlier by Tonnies in terms of Gemeinschaft and Gesellschaft, by Maine of status and contract and by Durkheim of mechanical and organic solidarity.

That social bonds, relationships and ties are qualitatively different in urban societies is impressively elaborated upon by Tonnies. Such an emphasis is evident from his argument that an essential condition of the social relationship in the Gesellschaft is the 'contract' (De Fleur 1970). The contract is a formal relationship into which a deliberate entry is sought. In the new society of complex credit, world markets, large formal associations and a vast division of labour, the contractual relationship is widely found between members. In other words,
throughout all the major social institutions, the economic, the political structure, the educational system, religion and even in some instances the family, Gemeinschaft is being replaced by the relationships of the contractual type. While no society has been or probably ever will be exclusively Gesellschaft, it is clear that this type of social bond has become ubiquitous and pervasive.

For a long period of time urbanisation was equated with the emergence of cities as a result of which the entire emphasis of the analysts remained on the big cities. It is important to note that urbanism as a way of life is not restricted to the areas which are defined as urban. The continuous interaction between city and the hinterland results in diffusion of urban life style. Urbanism, besides being centripetal is at the same time centrifugal, radiating its influence outward (Anderson 1960). Wirth was probably the first to make a systematic and detailed analysis of 'urbanism' in the social context. He differentiated between 'urbanism' and urbanisation by considering the former as that complex of traits which makes up the characteristic mode of life in cities; and urbanisation as a process of development and extension of these factors. For him, the three demographic conditions i.e., a large size, greater density and heterogeneity of population led to the emergence of secondary, segmental and artificial social relationships. Commenting on Wirth, Lewis (1965) observed:

'Because Wirth thinks of the city as a whole, as a community, he
assumes that all people who live in cities are affected by this experience in profound and similar ways.'

As Wirth had borrowed Redfield's concept of folk-urban continuum, a study by Glass (1964) showed the futility of such a demarcation between urban and rural settlements and of the conception of a unidirectional change from rural to an urban end. While Lewis found the way of life of the city dwellers to vary with their socio-economic status, Gans (1968) emphasized that the lack of uniformity found within the urban population with respect to the way of life depended on the socio-economic status.

Therefore, there is a need for conducting studies of the areas with varying degrees of urbanisation within the framework of their social, economic and demographic background. However, before going into these it would be appropriate to examine the relationship between mass media and urbanisation.

On lines similar to the folk-urban continuum, Lerner (1958) contrasts the oral or the traditional society to the medial system or the modern society. Lerner assumes that communication systems are agents of social change in his book, "The Passing of Traditional Society" (1958). He contrasts the traditional system to the modern system. He lists out the characteristics of the channel of communication of the traditional society as personal (face to face) communication. He also describes the audience of the traditional society as belonging to primary groups,
basically rural, non-representative and illiterate. In contrast, the modern society has a heterogeneous (mass) audience and the channel of communication is the broadcast media. Also, their other characteristics include being urban and literate.

Lerner regards modernization as primarily a communication process. He takes into consideration in his explanation of what he regards as a modernization trend taking place on a global scale and irreversible, four variables, 1. Urbanisation 2. Literacy 3. Participation (divided into economic and political participation) and 4. Media consumption.

Lerner then makes two important conclusions:

1. Urbanisation everywhere leads to a reduction of illiteracy. This brings about a higher consumption of media. This in turn is inter-related with more intensive economic and political participation.

2. There is an interrelationship between media consumption and education as well as the dependence of participation on these two variables.

Schramm and Ruggels (1967) examine Lerner's thesis keeping in view the fact that mass media growth is highly related to general economic and social development and concluded that the basic variables of urbanisation, literacy, GNP seem to be related in different ways in the several regions to the developing media. This suggests that there
are different patterns of change in different countries.

Srivastava (1986) pointed out that media would continue to be urban in location and orientation. However, with a declining significance of the folk-urban continuum in understanding the contemporary urban situation in India, socio-economic status and class differences have emerged as important indices to be preferred in such an analysis (Lewis 1965, Gans 1968, Chandra 1977, Gill & Dhawan 1991). Therefore, it becomes more meaningful to examine the changes in urban social organisation in terms of the variety of socio-economic groups within a settlement. A greater involvement in formal organisation's on the one hand, and a weakening of kinship and neighbourhood ties on the other, have already been identified among the upper socio-economic groups in the urban milieu.

In this background then, the invasion into the life of urban dwellers by the cable media is bound to produce innumerable transformations within the small unit of family as also beyond it at varying levels of social participation.

**Existing Theoretical Perspectives On Effects Of Mass Media**

The potentiality of mass media for bringing about planned and desired change in society has been assessed in different theoretical perspectives. The relationship between the communicator/sender of the message on the one hand, and the receiver on the other, has been projected differently in these formulations. Before going into these,
however we must give a brief account of the initial environment in which the most important mode of mass media i.e., television and later on Cable TV emerged as a major technological change inducing social change.

In the aftermath of the World War I, there emerged quite a general belief in the great power of mass communication. The media were thought to be able to shape public opinion to sway the masses toward almost any point of view desired by the communicator. This first set of beliefs about the nature and power of mass communication was never actually formulated at that time into a systematic statement by any communication scholar. But in retrospect it has come to be called the 'magic bullet theory' or the hypodermic needle theory which assumes that media messages are received in a uniform way by every member and that immediate and direct responses are triggered by such stimuli. The audience are assumed to be passive according to this theory. This theory was criticized by researchers of mass media as it depicted a one-way relationship between media and its audience (Katz and Lazarsfeld 1954).

During the 1920's and early 1930's scholars developed an interest in the media as objects of research. They were beginning to turn from mere speculation about their effects to systematic studies of impact of particular communication upon particular kinds of people. Such an interest led to the emergence of various theories relating to the effects of the media on different aspects of society.
Contrary to the initial perspectives discussed above, mass media was believed to exercise varying impact on the audience, thus recognizing the significance of selectivity in acceptance or rejection of the media messages. Further, the variables along which variations among the receivers occurred were delineated. The empirical investigations in this direction proved to be highly relevant since these exposed the complexity involved in the interplay between mass media and the consequent change at individual and group levels.

An important contribution in this direction came from Lazarsfeld (1949) who contends that the social categories perspective is a central focus in media studies. It assumes that there are broad collectivities, or social categories, particularly in urban industrial societies, whose behaviour in the face of a given set of stimuli is more or less uniform. Such characteristics as age, sex, income level, educational attainment, rural-urban residence or religious affiliation provide a reasonably accurate guide to the type of communication content, a given individual will or will not select from available media.

The most obvious contemporary expression of the role of individual differences in the process of media exposure and effects is the uses and gratification approach (Blumler and Katz 1974). Uses and gratification is an unsystematised set of specific theoretical viewpoints tied together by a shared emphasis on an active media audience (Katz 1979; Swanson 1979). These researchers have portrayed the individuals
that constitute any mass audience as active selectors and interpreters of media messages who utilize media messages to gratify their individual needs. Individuals not only selectively expose themselves to media messages but also selectively avoid media messages (Becker 1979).

Another theory which has been used by media researchers is the **cultural norms theory**. De Fleur states that the cultural norms theory postulates that the mass media through selective presentations and the emphasis of certain themes creates impressions among their audiences and that cultural norms concerning the emphasized topics are structured or defined in some specific way (De Fleur 1970). In essence, this theory assumes that people identify themselves with particular demographic and social groups.

Close to this theory, Riley and Riley (1959), point to the role played in the communication process by **primary groups** and **reference groups**. The communicator influences his receivers through transmitting specially designed messages. The researchers distinguish primary groups by intimate relations among their members, a family being a typical example. A reference group is a group with the help of which an individual may define his attitudes, values and behaviour. He does not need to be member of the group but its norms nevertheless guide him. Primary groups close to the individual often serve as reference groups for him as well. As a communicator or a receiver in the communication process, an individual is influenced by the primary
As a receiver, he may be guided by these groups in how to select, perceive and react to messages.

In the light of the above discussion, the medium of communication, Cable TV in this case, may create new reference groups for the viewers. The selection and adoption as well as rejection of these media messages may be greatly influenced by group norms, so that different messages may be received differently by various groups with different group norms. Also, different individual personalities would accept and reject media messages differently. Thus, in the same ecological situation, a city in this case with a similar media i.e., Cable TV—members of different socio-economic groups may select, adopt and reject different messages. But before getting on directly to the effects of Cable television on social life in a city, it would be appropriate to familiarize ourselves with its historical emergence.

**Emergence Of Cable Television**

Cable television had a humble start, conceived of as a way to sell TV sets. An appliance store owner in Mahanoy City, Pennsylvania, John Walson, Sr., was frustrated because when TV sets were first marketed in 1947, he couldn't even demonstrate the new technology to his customers. The town was surrounded by the Appalachian Mountains, which entirely blocked TV reception. Later that year, Walson erected a large antenna on a nearby mountain and strung wire down the mountain, using amplifiers to boost the signal, to a television set in a
warehouse in town. He was successful in selling several TV sets to townspeople who also paid Walson $100 for a cable connection plus $2 monthly fees. In a short time, other cities that couldn't receive TV signals adopted Walson's methods. Thus Cable television was born in 1948. It was named Community Antenna Television (CATV) because it provided households with limited or non-existent TV reception with a connection via cable to a 'master' antenna that could pick up TV signals. Early Cable TV merely extended the reach of commercial TV by enabling small communities access to broadcasts from major cities and by improving the quality of TV reception.

Satellite communication systems have also expanded the horizons of cable operators. Apart from being able to relay TV signals over oceans, domestic satellite operators provide instant transmission of programmes over vast distances. By relaying signals to a satellite transponder (device which receives and then retransmits TV signals) a programme can be received anywhere in the country by anyone with a receive-only earth station.

Development of Cable television is a relatively inexpensive and simple technological matter where in large dish antennas receive satellite transmissions. These transmissions are then sent via coaxial cable to the subscribers. The initial cost of connecting households with CATV antenna is made relatively modest by piggybacking coaxial-cable lines on existing telephone-pole routes and by using the conventional
TV set as the receiver.

CATV appealed to urban residents because it increased both picture fidelity and the number of channels they could receive. Channel capacity and picture fidelity are increased because cable transmissions are relatively unaffected by the airspace limitations and interference problems of conventional over the air television.

As the terms Satellite television, CATV (Community Antenna Television) and Cable TV have the same meaning, these terms have been used interchangeably in the study.

In India, the cosy world of home-green television is no longer what it was. In more and more homes, viewers are able to change channels and get a variety of programmes not only off the satellites, though these are the main source of the new stream of programmes, but from cable networks which are beginning to sprout all over the big cities and in some cases in not so big cities as well.

What started with CNN during the Gulf war in January 1991 was carried forward by STAR TV (Satellite Television Asian Region). CNN, MTV, STAR PLUS, BBC, PRIME SPORTS, ATN and ZEE TV are commanding prime viewership and in the process are edging out not just Doordarshan and films but are also affecting the social life within as well as across families. (The Tribune, Dec. 21, 1992).

Satellite television hence treated as a carrier of social change has had several consequences. Although, in its growing stages, it has
opened up numerous tangible benefits in the economic and entertainment arenas. Dua (1992) observed that CATV will generate employment for the rapidly expanding self-employed entrepreneurial youth in cities and towns. Retail and small advertisers will get an opportunity to advertise their products and services on cable networks. This will thus contribute to increasing the market size. Also, cabling will prove to be an important source of revenue for the government as there will be an opportunity to collect licence fees.

On the other hand, CATV is also sometimes perceived as having deleterious effects on Indian culture (Sharma 1992). The pervasive influence of such alien norm based television viewing can have several consequences. The process of non-Indian acculturisation of the urban middle class, which had set in even earlier, is perhaps getting consolidated now. More and more Indians are expected to identify with and adopt values and norms of men and women being projected on the screen. Since the presentation is so life-like the process of identification is greatly facilitated. This may lead to initiate the screen models in language, dress, life-styles etc. This process is so subtle and at an unconscious level, that most people would not even be aware of it. If such a situation continues over a period of time, a whole group of Indians may change and such a change would be in a non-Indian direction (Patri 92).

Vasantha R. Patri (1992) further observes that the invasion of Satellite television has had considerable and varying impact on the
viewers in India. Clearer role models are being provided for the westernization of the urban youth. Further, among adults, Satellite television with its many serials that cater to the fantasy of the starved urban upper-middle class lives, may have an impact on socialising, family outings and gatherings.

The undeniable feature of Satellite television is that it caters to the needs of different people. The young and old, males and females of different classes and soon even the non-urban group may be drawn into it.

Regarding the viewership of the various channels by STAR TV, i.e. STAR PLUS, PRIME SPORTS, MTV, BBC (the entertainment channel, the sports channel, the music channel, and BBC world service channel respectively), Dyal (1992) found an increased relevance of factors such as age and socio-economic status.

India has earned the distinction of being the first developing country to have her National language satellite channel, i.e. the Asia Television Network. ATN is credited to have first realised the potential of Hindi language software in the Asia region. Also with a wide variety of programmes on ZEE TV, it is meaningful and appropriate for the researcher to study and examine the popularity of the various channels among viewers in different socio-economic groups in the urban context.

Television And Family

Cable television as a strong invader especially in the life of the urbanities is expected to influence a number of aspects of human life.
Even with an analysis of the changing urban and social fabric, specific areas directly under its influence may be delineated. Perhaps first among these would relate to the influence Cable TV may have on the smallest unit of society, i.e., family, which also constitutes the most crucial primary group.

There is no doubt that the Indian families are changing under the influence of urbanization and modernization. Exposure to mass media, education, greater physical mobility and wider job opportunities in non-traditional sectors are the major contemporary developments in urban India. Keeping these factors in mind, it is therefore important for us to define 'family'.

Generally, families are composed of persons who are related by blood or marriage or sharing the same roof, food, dining table, money, material goods or emotions could define any group of family (Lull 1988). Families in ethnically diverse countries are especially heterogeneous. Still differences often persist in the form of values and these values are present in the ways that families think and act. Socio-economic classes within individual cultures are another critical determinant of difference, as is the number of persons in the living space, whether or not there are children present and when there are children, whether or not both parents live at home.

A careful review of studies on family change in India at once makes one conscious regarding the usage of the term 'family' and its
definition. Whether it is defined as a "dwelling unit" or a "network of relationships" would make a tremendous difference on such an analysis. With this in view a distinction is preferred between 'family' and 'household' for the subsequent discussion to avoid ambiguity. The term household is preferred both for its conceptual as well as the methodological appropriateness. However, while analysing the ties among members i.e., between spouses, parents and their children and their ties with other such units at both formal and informal levels, the concept of nuclear family would be more useful with a focus on relationships rather than a common residence.

Family is the first and most important social unit to experience the influence of media especially in the form of television, and thus it constitutes a fertile area of research.

Formulation Of The Problem

The impact of Cable television on urban society could be observed in several ways through various dimensions. However, for the present purpose, the difference that cable viewing makes to the degree and nature of social participation within the primary as well as the secondary groups, is emphasized.

The review of literature clearly indicates that Cable TV may not work as an independent variable in transforming the values and behaviour patterns of the viewers. On the contrary, the process has been found to be both sided and mutual. Audience must not be
considered as totally passive and the heterogeneity within the viewers in terms of age, sex, socio-economic status, rural-urban background, culture etc. may be quite prominent in the whole process.

Also, it must be pointed out, that due to limited availability of literature on Cable television, studies relating to television can be appraised for the present purpose. There are divergent opinions of social scientists regarding the interaction patterns among viewers of television.

Dorr (1986) came out with an interesting finding that even when television viewing is not on, it can be a stimulus to social interaction. Television facilitates discussion as it provides a subject for interaction. This leads to greater interaction among house-hold members. This view has been highlighted by Lull (1980), Brodie et. al (1983) and Goodman (1983). However, contradictory to this view, Robinson (1972), Szalai (1972) and Noelle-Neumann (1981), observed that television in the household reduced conversation among married couples. Comstock (1978) also held a similar view that television had reduced interaction among family members.

Various social scientists have examined the influence of the intervening variables like age, sex, cultural values etc. on television viewing. Lull (1988) indicates a two-way relationship between television and family. He, on the one hand discusses the effects of television on the dynamics of the family and on the other, he brings out the fact that familial social and cultural ethos and norms influence television viewing.
patterns as well as interpretations of the programmes. Also, Cantor and Cantor (1986) reported that it is the audience in each country with its own system of cultural values and beliefs that ultimately decides the popularity of programmes. They further add that audience worldwide have the power to watch or not watch programmes that others select for them. But, given a choice audience almost invariably prefer their own local programmes to those produced in the US or elsewhere. Further, research by Greenberg and Dominick (1969) shows that low status minorities consume more hours of television than does any other social group. Such studies reveal the significant intervening role of cultural background of viewers.

It has been observed that sex and age of the viewers may influence their motivation for watching different programmes and channels on Cable TV. Differences in programme preferences held by men and women all over the world follow a predictable pattern. Men everywhere prefer sports, action-oriented programmes, and information programming (especially news), while women prefer dramas (including serials, soap operas, and films) and music/dance/comedy-based programmes (Morley 1988). These findings by Morley (1988) were held to be true not only in the West but also in China, Venezuela, India and West Germany. He further adds that males assert cultural power within the realm of domestic relations, including the construction of routine acts of television viewing. Men plan their viewing carefully and also
control the technical aspects of television, including the remote control device, which they may use for unnegotiated channel switching, thereby asserting their preferences and wielding "cultural power" even more. Women, on the other hand, do not have as much say as men in the selection of shows or in possession and use of the technical aspects. They watch television far less attentively (more "distractedly") because they are constantly trying to manage their domestic responsibilities in addition to whatever viewing they can do at night.

**Television And Children**

Studies have been conducted on a limited scale on the viewing habits of children. There has been a great deal of public speculation that television cuts into the time for school work and serious study and ultimately affects academic performance. Once addicted to this medium, children become listless; this leads to passivity and poor concentration in other spheres. Some programmes, such as imported serials, which glorify violence, can lead to aggression or create hallucinatious in childrens' minds (Kunhikrishnan 1990).

Kunhikrishnan (1990) further states that television is bound to create displacements in children's schedule of daily activities, to make time for viewing programmes. It has a dominating influence on general family life, and this can cause conflict; often parents feel they are losing control and have no authority over their children; sometimes such conflicts may result in a total collapse of the family and bring in material
change in the value system. This change is further contributed by the western channels of Satellite television.

Dyal (1992) adds that MTV, the musical programme of STAR TV was the most popular channel amongst the younger age group. Therefore, the role of age and sex plays an important role and it is inferred that different types of programmes elicit different styles of viewing for different people at different times of the day. Thus, longer hours of cable viewing are bound to influence the activities of viewers in terms of their social interaction at different levels. The role of socio-economic status cannot be overlooked in the relationship between television and social participation. In practice, family forms in the industrial urban centres differ according to social class. On the basis of an extensive survey of literature, Goode (1963) contends that the contacts of upper strata families with their kin form a smaller proportion of their total social participation, since the higher strata belong to more voluntary organisations, clubs and formal groups than the lower strata. On the other hand, they have more resources with which to maintain their ties with kin and because of these means mutual exchanges are also more frequent than in the lower strata. The positive association between socio-economic status and formal participation is further substantiated by various other studies in India (Chandra 1977 and Gill & Dhawan 1992). Also, research by Buley (1977) reveals that if subscribers of Cable TV spend more and more time interacting with cable, then there
will be less chance for social contacts and it would isolate individuals and families. Such a process then is expected to enhance anonymity, reduce social participation at the informal level and social interaction in general, thus, resulting into changes in the direction of urbanism.

The very definition of urbanism as a way of life involves a change from a folk to an urban society basically flowing from the perspective of folk-urban continuum. The conceptualization by Wirth and Redfield predicts a change from social participation based on predominantly primary ties which are face to face, informal, conventional, traditional, personal and emotional, towards predominantly secondary ties which are formal, superficial, segmental, impersonal and transitory.

Although the characteristics of urban-dwellers as listed out by Wirth have not been found to be relevant in many of the western as well as non-western cities (Lewis 1965 and Gans 1968), still the nature of social participation from an informal to formal participation has been empirically confirmed in different types of cities including the Indian (Chandra 1977 and Gill & Dhawan 1992). Therefore, formal participation has usually been taken as an indicator of urbanism although it has been found to be positively associated with education, occupation and economic status of urban-dwellers.

An important inference that can be drawn from such studies is that although the nature and degree of social participation would normally undergo change with urbanism, such a change may not be
uniform among the urban dwellers in view of the internal variations within them.

In yet another study in an Indian city, different patterns of change were found between formal and informal participation within the urban dwellers among various socio-economic groups. Further, while informal participation among all these groups was found to have declined, an increase in formal participation was basically a characteristic of the upper socio-economic groups, thereby creating a kind of vacuum for the lower and middle socio-economic groups (Gill & Dhawan 1992).

Hence, the relationship between urban residence and specific types of social participation is evident. However, one factor within the urban milieu which is bound to play a significant role in transforming both the degree as well as the nature of social participation, relates to the strong influence exercised by viewership of Satellite television.

In view of the empirical studies mentioned above, it is evident that television has made a considerable impact on social interaction within the families. But, we lack any studies to examine its impact on social participation beyond the unit of family. Whether Cable television exercises a uniform effect on formal and informal social participation or not, also remains to be explored. Secondly, whether such an impact on the two types of social participation takes place uniformly among the urban dwellers constitutes an important question. These are some of the important gaps in existing theoretical
understanding regarding the impact of Cable television on social participation and the present study addresses itself to these.

**Major Objectives Of The Study**

In view of the existing literature it may be inferred that as a society undergoes the process of urbanisation, the degree as well as the nature of informal ties among families as well as within them tend to weaken. A similar kind of effect has been found empirically to follow the inception of Satellite television due to its capacity to glue the viewers to the TV sets for long periods. Hence, it may be assumed that Satellite TV would be expected to further reduce the degree of informal ties among families as well as within them, thus making urbanism as a way of life even more pronounced. However, whether it has a similar impact on formal participation too, needs to be explored. We intend in this study to test these assumptions. However, the specific objectives are listed below:

1. To study the socio-economic and demographic profile of Cable TV viewers and DD viewers.
2. To examine the association of the time devoted to TV and selectivity of programmes with income, education and occupation.
3. To analyse the association of duration of viewing TV with selectivity of programmes on the one hand and degree of social participation (both formal and informal) on the other.
4. To examine the association between socio-economic status and social participation of the respondents.

5. To analyse if viewing of Satellite TV has led to a change in the degree and nature of social participation, (both formal and informal) from the point of view of viewers themselves.

6. To assess the impact of Satellite TV on social participation within and outside the family by comparing the Cable TV viewers and DD viewers in terms of the degree and nature of social participation.

7. To examine the reactions of the respondents towards the western media dominating on the Satellite television among various socio-economic groups, especially in terms of its impact on the children.

**Hypotheses**

The following hypotheses were drawn for the study:

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

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

3. Viewing Cable television (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 significantly
in terms of the perceived effects of Cable TV on social participation.

**Rationale Of The Study**

Initially, this study intended 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, so that they would spend most of their time glued to the TV sets. This tendency is expected to curtail social participation of the viewers in a significant manner. Viewers would naturally curtail their outdoor activities, interaction with relatives, friends and neighbours when they are busy watching their favourite programmes. Further, the presence of TV that offers entertainment for 24 hours through the cable network, may further affect interactional patterns within the members of a family. Hence, TV is expected to isolate the individuals from a) the outside world, as well as b) from their family members. Instead of performing a socializing function, it is expected to 'individuate' or 'isolate' the viewers both physically and socially. The present study makes an endeavour to analyse this main hypothesis. The importance of the study increases in view of the paucity of studies on the above issues. Whatever literature we have has mainly focussed upon the intra-familial communication only, that too in the western context.

For conducting this study, it was intended to compare the patterns of social participation among subscribers of Cable TV and others who do not have it. But, then it was found that while it was possible to
identify the Cable subscribers, it was not possible to locate any 'non-viewers' since television 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 when the survey was conducted i.e., 1994, Doordarshan had only two channels i.e., DD I and DD II. Also with the advent of Cable TV, Doordarshan in an effort to compete with it, started increasing the timings of its telecast to woo the viewers. Initially, Doordarshan had limited telecast timings during morning, afternoon, evening and night with ample space in between each of these sessions of telecast. Also, with the lack of good programmes, manpower and expertise available in the country that many 'quick and easy to make' type of programmes were produced although efforts are now being made to improve quality (Sinha 1996). On the other hand, Satellite TV was offering round the clock programmes. Secondly, in addition to the quantity, the two kinds of viewerships differed in quality too, with a greater content of western culture in the Satellite TV. The nature of programmes, themes of serials, predominant life styles depicted were considerably different. With round-the-clock programmes, viewers are engrossed in selecting programmes to suit their choice and hence are glued to the TV, thus rescheduling their daily activities. On the other hand, DD provides limited channels thus limiting the choice of programmes as well as giving ample time for
its audiences’ to continue their daily routine. The time available for DD viewers may lead to a greater involvement in social participation both within and outside the family, whereas in the case Cable viewers, social participation may be curtailed at both these levels. Hence, it was meaningful to study the impact of Satellite TV on social participation among people as well as comparing Cable viewers with DD viewers.

For the present study, social participation has been treated as the key dependent variable. Social participation is one area on which Satellite television is expected to have exercised its influence to a great extent. Therefore, it is assumed that the impact of such a media will create different patterns in the nature and degree of social participation within and across families.

Definition Of Social Participation

Social participation has been defined as all those actions or dispositions for actions that reflect an individual’s interest, concern or identification for an organisation, programme, group etc. (Chandra 1977 p. 31).

Social participation may be located in various social situations—in family and kinship groups, in groups of friends, neighbours and in formal and informal associations.

Operationalization Of Social Participation

For the present study, social participation in an operational
context would cover all activities related to the urbanite's joining formal social-cultural organizations and all varieties of informal interactions within the family, with neighbours, relatives and friends.

Social participation has been operationalized on two main dimensions, namely formal and informal participation.

**Definition Of Formal Participation**

For this study, formal participation is defined as the voluntary membership of any social-cultural or religious organisation by an individual. This does not include an organisation where a person is employed. Formal participation as defined by Wirth is also the symbolic manifestation of the urban ethos characterized by segmental and transitory relationships, secondary contact, sophistication, cosmopolitanism etc.

**Definition Of Informal Participation**

For the present purpose, informal participation would include the interactions within the family, and across families with neighbours, relatives and friends. Participation of this type refers to all varieties of interactions within the family, membership of friendship circles, neighbourhood participation and participation in informal interest groups. This informal participation is generally considered to be at its minimum in an urban milieu.

Formal and informal participation can be measured from two dimensions—nature and degree.
Operationalization Of Nature And Degree Of Formal Participation

Regarding the nature of formal participation, a typology of formal organizations to which respondents belong were developed on the basis of a pilot study. Thus, the nature of formal participation was measured in terms of

a) nature of the organisation to which the respondent belongs, i.e., religious, political, entertainment based, sports etc.

b) nature of the membership of the respondent in terms of the following:

1. Only consumers of services
2. Contribute money only
3. Contribute money and participate actively
4. Office-holding

The degree of formal participation was measured in terms of the frequency of attendance in the organizations mentioned above.

Operationalization of Nature and Degree of Informal Participation

The nature of informal participation with neighbours, friends and relatives was measured in terms of the levels of intimacy and casualness. An index was developed to measure the nature of informal participation in terms of the intensity of the ties. Due to the difficulty in quantifying the interaction among the members of a household, respondents was asked to give their perceived effects of Cable TV on the interaction within the household unit.
The degree of informal participation, on the other hand, was measured in terms of the frequency of contacts of the respondents with the neighbours, friends and relatives. A separate index for this purpose was constructed. The time spent together by members of a household, viewing patterns etc., were analysed to measure the degree of social participation within the household.

Reactions To The Western Media

Since the Satellite television contains a heavy dose of the western media, thus exposing the viewers to the western culture through its various channels, people may respond differently to it depending on their selectivity of programmes. Thus, it is intended here to elicit their reactions to the western media in terms of sexuality, nudity or obscenity. It is expected that these reactions will vary among various socio-economic groups.

Viewership

In the present study, by viewership we mean watching the Satellite television which of course includes watching of the local Doordarshan programmes. Therefore, by CATV viewers we mean (i) all those who have subscribed to the Cable TV and (ii) all those having the connections through private dish antennas. On the other hand, by DD viewers we mean all those without a provision of Satellite television through either of the above two means. Hence, the DD Viewers would not be regular viewers of Satellite television, although they may be viewing television.
as such. Since viewing of TV as such (Doordarshan) may be a common factor between CATV viewers and DD viewers, the differences between the two groups can be safely ascribed to Satellite TV.

**Method Of Study**

Most of the descriptive studies in Sociology lay a substantial focus on 'describing' a certain aspect of the social phenomena. As and when an attempt is made to explain the transforming social phenomena in terms of certain independent variables, the first problem encountered by the researcher is, how to ensure that the phenomenon under study is an effect of the independent variable/s in question. Indeed, it is admitted at the very outset that it is neither feasible nor a desirable goal for a social scientist to aspire for a causal analysis in view of the tremendous degree of heterogeneity as well as changeability of the phenomenon under study. Since the present study is intended to examine the extent to which the patterns of social participation and interaction within and across families are being influenced by Cable TV as an important technological factor, I as a researcher am faced with a similar problem. However, the difficulty in arriving at causal explanations in no way can minimize the importance of examining the association between a particular social dimension and a factor directly influencing it. I have tried to achieve this by the following steps.

**Universe And Sampling Frame**

Since the CATV viewers and DD viewers may not form neat and
homogeneous categories within themselves, there is a need to specify the universe precisely. Thus, roughly we may find the following categories: (a) subscribers to Cable TV and those who own private dish antennas (b) those who own television (c) those who do not own a television, but watch it at any other place (neighbours, friends etc.) (d) Non-viewers — those who neither own a television nor watch it elsewhere. On the basis of a preliminary survey conducted by me, in the localities under study, the third and fourth categories are almost non-existent except negligible exceptions in the case of low socio-economic group. Therefore, it is feasible and quite practical to delineate the viewers of Satellite TV from DD viewers.

The study was conducted in the city of Chandigarh. This city represents a typical case where uniformity of houses in each sector indicates socio-economic distinctions within its population, making it easy to distinguish one socio-economic segment from the other.

The city on the whole comprises of 54 sectors and each sector is further sub-divided into four sub-sectors i.e., A,B,C and D. Due to its planned nature, residential plots of an equal size are cut in different sectors, thus providing homogeneously structured neighbourhoods on the basis of socio-economic status, although all the sectors are not absolutely homogeneous in terms of the housing units.

Since the present study undertakes a comparative analysis among upper, middle and low socio-economic groups of urban-dwellers and since
it is not possible to stratify the total population of Chandigarh on the basis of socio-economic status, three sectors were purposely selected as they are homogeneous within themselves in terms of the housing units. During the pilot study, it was noticed that there was no cable operator in Sector 9 and the residents of Sector 9 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 included the two kanal or bigger houses of Sector 8 and Sector 18 too, where there were local operators. Hence, the universe for this study comprises of the population residing in two kanal or bigger houses in Sectors 8, 9 and 18, which is representative of the upper socio-economic group and Sector 22 and Industrial Area 'B' which are representative of the middle and low socio-economic groups respectively. The rationale behind selecting Industrial Area 'B' i.e., Ram Darbar are (a) Cable television exists in this low socio-economic locality, (b) It consists of pucca houses occupied by relatively settled households with well developed informal and formal networks. In no other low socio-economic locality with comparable size of population, such a permanent settlement was found. Hence, Ram Darbar represents the low-socio economic segment for the present study.

The sampling frame for this study consisted of all 2 kanal and bigger than 2 kanal houses in Sectors 8, 9 and 18; all households in Sector 22 and in Ram Darbar. The information regarding number of
households in these sectors was obtained from the Town planner, UT Secretariat Office, Sector 9, Chandigarh.

It was observed that there were a total of 282 (2 kanal plus) houses in Sector 9, 313 houses in Sector 8; 318 houses in Sector 18; 1472 houses in Sector 22 and 344 houses in Ram Darbar. Thus there were 913 households in the upper socio-economic group; 1472 households in the middle and 344 households in lower socio-economic group which constituted our sampling frame. At the next stage, these households were stratified on the basis of CATV viewers and DD viewers in each of these sectors. This was done on the basis of information obtained from the cable operators within these sectors as also the identification of privately owned dish antennas. The cable operators were contacted during December 1994 at the time when the survey began and from each of these sectors all the cable operators (in sectors where there were more than one cable operator, all were contacted) were asked to give a list of the households which had cable connections. It was observed that there were a total of 363 households in the upper socio-economic group, 637 households in the middle economic group and 72 households in Ram Darbar who had either cable connections or private dish antennae. In the final stage 100 households from each of these three socio-economic groups were selected by using the method of systematic random sampling with an equal proportion of CATV viewers and DD viewers in each case. In households where there was more than
one married couples residing together, the youngest married male was chosen in the sample.

Limitations Of The Study

Due to the non-availability of a sampling frame for the total population of Chandigarh on the basis of socio-economic status, the sampling frame consists of only the selected sectors. Hence, the inferences drawn in the study will be generalizable only to these sectors.

Collection Of Data

An interview schedule was constructed to elicit relevant information from the heads of the households. However, an effort was made to conduct the interviews in the presence of other members to get a glimpse and sensitization to their reactions too. Both, open ended as well as fixed alternative questions were framed to obtain relevant information. During the pilot survey it was observed that the lady of the household (wife of the respondent) was intervening to give answers to some questions pertaining to her husband's TV viewing habits. As the study was focussing on intra-familial relationships some questions were posed to the lady of household in the context of TV viewing by her husband and children. Also, at times, as the male head of the household was being interviewed, the wife too started responding, which was quite advantageous. Such responses helped me in getting more information especially regarding children which was used while drawing inferences.
Theoretical Framework

The present study aims to examine the impact of Satellite viewing on social participation among urban dwellers. Various theoretical frameworks have been developed in the area of communication studies to understand the role of mass media in transforming the different aspects of society. On the other hand, the changing pattern of social participation in an urban milieu has also been examined from a number of perspectives. It is therefore necessary here to specify the theoretical framework to which the present study belongs.

Perspectives On Impact Of Mass Media

The impact of mass media on various aspects of society has been understood differently by scholars. The initial theoretical perspective thus projected this relationship as one-sided, with a determining role to the mass media and is known as 'magic-bullet' or the 'hypodermic needle theory'. Contrary to this perspective, the later theories ascribed a more active role to the audience, thus making sufficient scope for the variations within the effects of media on society (Lazarsfeld 1949). Thus, according to the 'social categories perspective', there are broad collectivities, particularly in urban industrial societies, whose behaviour in the face of a given set of stimuli is more or less uniform. Thus individuals constituting a social category may experience a similar effect as a consequence of exposure to a media. 'Uses and gratification approach' is another unsystematized set of specific theoretical
viewpoints tied together by a shared emphasis on an active media audience (Katz 1979; Swanson 1979).

The theory that comes close to a sociological way of looking at the phenomenon is the 'cultural norms theory' (De Fleur 1970). In this perspective, Riley & Riley (1959) underline the role played in the communication process by primary groups and reference groups. As a communicator or a receiver in the process, he may be guided by these groups in how to select, perceive and react to messages.

**Perspectives On Changing Patterns Of Social Participation In Cities**

The most prominent theoretical perspective developed to understand the changing nature of social participation in urban societies is the 'folk-urban continuum' perspective (Redfield 1947 & Wirth 1938). According to this perspective, urban dwellers have been found to be substituting the traditional, informal, personal and primary group ties by the transitory, formal, impersonal and secondary ties. Such a viewpoint owed a lot to the dichotomous conception of societies developed by Emile Durkheim, Tonnies, Max Weber and others. However, later empirical research has put some of the major assumptions of the continuum theory into question. Change in social organization following urbanization has not been found to be uniform and is greatly intervened by factors such as socio-economic status, suburbanism, life-cycle, age and ethnic background (Gans 1968 and Gill & Dhawan 1992).

In the backdrop of these theoretical perspectives then, the present
study focussing on the impact of Satellite television on social participation is based on the assumption that this impact would be influenced by the socio-economic status of viewers. Thus the 'social categories' perspective seems to be most useful in delineating specific social categories among the audience and studying the impact of a specific kind of media exposure on them. Since the present study undertakes the task to examine the changing patterns of social participation among urban dwellers as a consequence of cable viewing, the analysis will be made following this framework, using socio-economic groups as the social categories under study.

**Significance Of The Study**

Ever since the concept of Cable TV emerged in India after the Gulf war in 1991, there has been very limited research conducted in this field by social scientists in the country. Although studies regarding viewership of Cable TV have been conducted by a few research organisations in India, there is little literature available on the effects of Cable TV especially in the social context. Research into mass communication and the study of media effects, which is almost 50 years old or more can be discussed in terms of three main stages. In the first phase, the media were attributed considerable power to shape opinion and belief, change habits of life, actively mould behaviour and impose political systems. Such views were not based on scientific investigation but were based on empirical observation of the sudden extension of the
audience to large majorities and on the great attraction of popular press, cinema and radio. The second phase extending from 1940 to early 1960's was concerned with the application of empirical method to specific questions about the effects and effectiveness of mass communication. The third phase which still persists is, one where new thinking and new evidence is accumulating on the influence of mass communication, especially television. The availability of variety of effects research makes comparisons across studies difficult. Yet, the numerous dimensions on which the effects studies differ, can also serve to point out the parameters of the field. These include empirical design (experimental, correlational, field study, etc.), and type of effect studied (short term or long term effects, media-induced change, effects on beliefs or behaviour etc.), target population studied (children, adolescents, youth etc.), and type of media content studied (news reports, cartoons, violence, advertisements etc.). Differences between studies must also be understood in their historical context: the media have themselves changed over the past 50 years of research, in terms of technology, content, availability and relation to the changing practices of everyday life.

Hence, this researcher, in the light of the prevailing scenario, feels the need to examine the emerging patterns of social organisation among urban-dwellers as a consequence of a exposure to Cable television.

Although researchers in the US have studied the effects of Cable
TV, the same may not be applicable to Third World countries especially India. It is therefore felt that the study is of significant importance for understanding the contemporary urban society in India. Moreover, a number of studies in our country have clearly brought out the varying patterns of formal and informal participation among upper, middle and low socio-economic groups. But, we lack any attempts to identify the factors contributing to such a tendency. Therefore, the present study gains relevance in its effort to find out the association between viewing of Cable television on the one hand, and the nature and level of social participation within and across families on the other.