Chapter-I

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INTRODUCTION:

Ever since the advent of modern communication technology that has allowed people around the world to communicate ever so easily, the world itself seems like a smaller space. Electronic media is considered to be the media for masses which has been on an ever evolving process. This evolving process is continuing since the invention of printing by Gutenberg in the 15th century in Germany. From then onwards there have waves of changes in the field of mass communication to propagate news and views about the latest happenings in the contemporary society. Broadcasting is an especially effective manner through which millions of people are able to become unified on the basis that they are common recipients of a particular message. One of the most powerful transmitters of these messages is of course the television; programs of which can be seen around the world to serve many purposes. In most contemporary societies, television is a highly influential medium of popular culture and plays an important role in the social construction of reality. (Morgan, 1990).

With the emergence of Television a dormant volcano erupted which paved the way for the new invention to establish the concept of media on the platform of mass media in the field of mass communication and communication skills. As a whole, the purpose of any media is to inform, evaluate, direct, influence, teach, image projecting, orientation
and create suitable environment for effective decision making. Media consumption captivates long hours each day in the lives of every man. Beyond providing entertainment, television vastly increases both the availability of information about the outside world and exposure to other ways of life.

In one hand, media is playing a very effective role in our lives to inform, entertain, educate and to promote ideas, culture, and values as per the temperament of its own. These tend to emphasize one of thus more than the others. Electronic media emphasize on inform entertain and can be said that these stress on persuasion. Media preserve the culture of furnishing record of events and by the origin, development and ultimate use and influence of mass media is in conformity with the charging complexion of the society. The communication and industrial revelations have changed the facet of our country. Thus, the impact of electronic media has to be seen in the background of our tradition and value based social structure.

**Statement of the problem:**

The globalization process in India, in the last one decade has brought about varied radical changes not only in the arena of Indian economy but has also pored in with ample scope for the mass media communication to flourish its network at global level. Latest developments in the communication technology have affected the functioning of cultural factors in India and are giving a new shape to the life styles of the people. One of the few affects of the neo-communication technology is the trend towards internationalization of mass
communication. Mass communication comprises the institutions and
techniques by which specialized social groups employ technological
devices (press, radio, television, films, etc) to disseminate symbolic
content to large, heterogeneous and widely dispersed audiences. The
process of urbanization, industrialization and modernization has created
conditions for the development of mass communication. These processes
of social change have produced societies that are highly dependent on
mass communication.

A global culture has emerged due to technological changes. Since
1991, India has witnessed an explosion of new media. Between 1990 and
1999, access to television grew from 10 percent of the urban population
to 75 percent of the urban population. Cable television and foreign
movies became widely available for the first time. Despite being heavy
users of this new media, non-elite urban middle-class men continue to be
attached to previous family arrangements (Deme, 2005). The Cable TV,
Internet, and Satellites have acted as a catalyst in bulldozing the cultural
boundaries. All these technologies have changed perceptions and dreams
of ordinary people. Changes have taken place not only in quality of life
(better living standards than in past) but also in the social architect of
society (conventional to modern). Cultural values have changed due to
liberalization and globalization. As a result a global culture is emerging.
The main effect of spread of MNC's is the reason that has taken a toll on
family structure. Indian society was considered a conservative society
during pre-liberalization period but changes are there which are clearly
visible in post liberalization era.
Globalization of communication through mass media has generated several issues to be thought of. Of them, two are most significant ones. Firstly, it raises political issues concerning supra-national, cross-border flow of materials that lie beyond the control of governments in and around the world. Secondly, having to do with the interaction between and the response of specific cultures to the avalanche of informational and entertainment materials made available through the global system. (Curran & Gurevitch, 1996). The functions of mass communication are multidimensional which include the collection of information for the surveillance of the environment, the correlation of the various parts of the society’s heritage from one generation to another. Communication, thus, plays a vital role in the formulation and transmission of culture.

Communication and culture are two closely interrelated facets of any society. While culture reinforces the identity and values, communication propagates it. Hence, the question of potential, cultural effects flowing from the strengths is in debate. The revolution to generate a global media culture has different sources. The most notable and vital source is the increased capacity to transmit sounds and moving images at low cost prices across the frontiers and around the world. These are transgressing the limits of time and space with the rise of global media business and global market for media products. All these different parameters prove the organizational framework and driving force for globalization. In India, especially in the last one decade, the globalization and privatization process has given a momentum to cultural industry to expand its network and flourish.
The advent of Satellite Television in early 90s has shaped the globalization process of mass media in Indian subcontinent in a significant way. The debate about the cultural effects and the globalization of mass media started with the issue of ‘cultural invasion from the sky’. According to an old Chinese proverb, “a picture is worth ten thousand words,” which speaks a universal language and well understood by the people in every walk of life. (V Chandra, 2000). In early ages too, cultures and languages, pictures were used for the purpose of education. And till-to-date, pictures continue to tell the story of life and death, love and hatred, joy and sorrow, laughter and pain.

Modern technology brings life in its true colors instantaneously through pictures from anywhere and everywhere into our living rooms. The reach, power and potential of TV in the present days has not been surpassed by any other medium of transmission as yet. It influences recall and comprehension even among the illiterate and capable of shifting attitudes, beliefs and value systems. Its contents and effects can be a disparate move or done intentionally. It has begun to exercise a profound influence as a socialiser and educator. TV is providing ample opportunities to wander throughout the world and to escape out of the real world while sitting in an easy chair. By the constant and regular repetition of certain themes and through powerful and strong visuals of high technical quality TV is even conditioning many of us to think and behave in a particular way. There is a dispute about the positive role of the TV. Similarly, there also does not exist merely a consensus but a growing concern about its harmful effects. However, positive effects do not stick so easily and negative effects do not leave us so readily. Media has
projected especially TV, different sections in different ways, both positively and negatively. It has tried to center the focus on the happenings of the society as a whole. But, whether it is correctly showing the issues that is a point of debate and lots of discussions and researchers has been done. The neo-communication and the old one are giving rise to new patterns of communication and culture and have a greater impact on the style of life of their users. The media always has specially focused on women and children related issues. Most often, criticism has been done on Indian media regarding TV. But, the western media has also been not kept apart from criticism. Women and culture, these are the two sides of a same coin. TV’s projection of images in a continuous process in a regular manner regarding different issues related with women and how much it is correlated with them is a matter to be thought of seriously.

In any society, feminine personality comes to define itself in relation and connection to other people more than the masculine personality does. (Brown 1986). In an analysis of the work of several Japanese films, the researcher found that the predominance of the perception of women is either wife or whore—the dichotomy already found in media portrayals. (Yasuko 1977). Studies on television programmes have also shown that media present an extremely narrow range of female image—a young in traditional feminine occupations—if employed at all, seeking identity through love, or marriage, deliberately home oriented, self sacrificing and dependable.

Lopate resistingly, Hartley (1985) argue that women and men in soap operas are probably more equal than in any other form of art or drama or in any area of real life. By playing down men’s domination over
women (and children) the soaps and the game shows make the family palatable. Therefore, the mass media through their gendering techniques transmit the female image among the audiences. Television copes with and helps to produce a crucial categorization of its viewers into masculine and feminine subjects. Mellencamp (1985) traces this back to the 1950s where she finds the origin of the “gender base” of television, with sport and news shows for men, cooking and fashion shows for women and “kidvid” for children. Television’s techniques for gendering its viewers have grown more sophisticated and nowhere more so than in its development gender specific narrative forms. Sieter et al. (1987) found in their study of soap operas fans that women openly and enthusiastically admitted their delight in following soap operas as stories of female transgressions, which destroy the ideological nucleus of the text, the priority and sacredness of family. A wife’s extramarital sex, for instance, is evaluated both patriarchal as unfaithfulness, but also, more resisting, as a woman’s independence and right to her own sexuality. Briefly, the essence of the above discussion is that the mass media brings in a cultural (value) orientation for either traditionalization or development of the perceptions including female image among audiences.

Hence, it was proposed to undertake a research study on the social backgrounds of urban middle class women, undertake a research study on the impact of Television channels on urban middle class women of Guwahati in terms of cultural values in three different social milieu with regard to their patterns of using these channels, the changes taking place in their social and cultural life due to their exposure to these channels. The relevant literature on the theme was reviewed.
REVIEW OF LITERATURE:-

Mass communication research primarily concentrates on the study of its effects on the society. Communication, this is a very basic requirement in the life of every individual which witness its existence since from days immemorial till to date. The ‘communication’ as the area of scientific investigation attracted the sociologists to move for further investigation in the early part of 20th century under the strong influence of “Chicago school” in sociology. The Chicago school developed a general approach to social theory which laid stress on the communication role in social life. The Chicago scientists influence the development of communication in several ways. They collectively played the role of a major force in the establishment of scientific sociology. The cultural focus of Chicago school of scientists by the 1920s was the study of the effects of urbanization on everyday life and the urban ecology of the city. Communication was given attention within this focus in Burgess and Park’s studies of communication, transportation and social change. (Park, et. al., 1925). He also contributed to the analysis of the foreign language immigrant press (Park, 1925), an approach to the history of the newspaper (Park 1923); and discussions about the nature, forms and social and political functions of contemporary news (Park 1940). Almost the quarters of dissertations completed at Chicago prior to World War II were social or institutional analysis of the news and the press. Whereas, Herbert Blumer authored two of the twelve volumes of the classic Payne Fund studies movies and their effects on children. (Blumer, 1933).
Mass communication research primarily concentrates on the study of its effects on the society. The most notable studies that were conducted outside the Chicago sphere about the social significance on communication was the communication media and leisure. (Lynd and Lynd’s, 1929 & 1937) classic studies of “Middletown”, but also major studies of journalism and film (Desmond 1937, Lee 1937, Roston 1937, 1941; Thorpe 1939). These studies suggested that mass communication was having broad impact on the pattern of day to day life and the creation of a national culture. They also showed the importance of understanding media institutions as a part of a large social process. Many smaller studies reflected similar traits like the previous mentioned ones (Prugger 1941, Punke 1937).

Although most researches centered their focus on communication institutions and their effects on society. The influence of society on the communication media also was recognized. (Harris 1933). Most of the research studies on the social impact of communication grew but of the concern from the effects of mass communication particularly on children and youths (Healey 1915, Phelan 1919, Jowett 1976 and Young 1922). There were also enough efforts to establish historical understanding of the developing media of communication. (Young 1922, Mott 1938, 1941; Hampton 1931, Jacobs 1939, Archer 1938, 1939).

As mass communication research primarily deals with the study of effects. Similarly, the dominant paradigm model of mass communication emphasized the powerful nature of the mass media in bringing the people of the third world countries out of their traditional systems of society and putting them on the path of the development, Harold D Laswell (1948)
came up with an innovative conceptualization of mass media effects during this period. His verbal model of communication approach suggested the following question: Who says what, in which channel, to whom and with what effect? He interpreted the theory to mean that human behaviour was essentially irrational and was susceptible to the powerful effects of mass media. But this theory faced serious contradictions in the following years. The effects of mass media on voting behavior was also analyzed. (Lazarsfield, Berelson and Gaudet 1948). The major finding of these voter studies was to suggest the weakness of the mass media indirectly influencing the personal decisions of individuals. The researchers further undermined the great power of the mass media in bringing about direct and lasting effects on the audience. (Hovland et al. 1949 & 1953; Klapper 1960). The studies brought out that people defended themselves against persuasive messages in three ways: selective exposure, selective perception and selective retention. In the studies, it was found that there is a tendency among individuals to expose themselves and to perceive those items of communication that were consonant with their beliefs, ideas, values, attitudes and other factors. (Klapper 1960). Studies showed that even recall of information was influenced by factors such as an individual’s needs, wants, moods, perception, etc. (Allport and Postman 1947, Jones and Kohler 1958, Lavine and Murphy 1958)

Perhaps the more valuable longer-term contribution of research on persuasive communication has been in locating the conditions under which effects can occur and in specifying the mediating factors which are involved. Few findings in this sphere can be frequently the form of a
reinforcement of existing attitudes and opinions (Klapper, 1960); secondly, it is clear that effects vary according to the prestige evaluations attached to the communication source (Hovland, 1954); thirdly, the more complete the monopoly of mass communication, the more likely it is that opinion change in the desired direction will be achieved (Klapper, 1960); fourthly, communication can be effective in producing a shift on unfamiliar, lightly felt, peripheral issues-those that do not effect much or are not tied to audience predisposition (Berelson and Steiner, 1964); fifthly, the selection and interpretation of contents by the audience is influenced by existing opinions and interests and by group norms (Riley 1951, Katz 1955) and finally, it has become clear that the structure of interpersonal relations in the audience mediates the flow of communication content and limits and determines whatever effects occur (Katz 1955).

Mc Quail in 1969 categorized three vital areas of enquiry in the field of mass communication research during 1930s and 1940s and much of the period during 1950s. The areas were:
(a) The research on audience behavior, interest and structure;
(b) Studies on the effectiveness in the persuasive power of media and
(c) The research scholar concerned with general social effects of the mass media.

The audience research studies, concentrated mainly on the observation of the audience, in it are social setting. It attempted to trace out the salient features of audiences behavior, interests and options. The first and foremost independent research directed at the mass media audience was Allport and Cantrils work on radio (1935) which was
followed by a group of impressive and lucid studies, dealing with radio, print and film by Lazarsfield and associates during 1940s. With the entry of television era, a new crop of studies in the radio research tradition grew up. (Bogart 1956; Steiner 1963; Belson 1967). In his findings of the audience research, he showed that there had been an average daily radio listening of around two to three hours. (Allport 1935). The amount of television use in Britain was also around the same level (Belson 1967) and more or less high in the USA (Skiner 1963). Ultimately, certain attention has been laid on audience research to the structure of the audience, and to the setting of interpersonal relations in which mass communication are received. Researcher studied the structural patterns of influence in a small community where the communication flow has been considered in relation with the existing structure of personal relationship. (Merton 1957).

Despite frequent comment on the power of Press, Cinema and Radio to change options and influence behaviour, and attempts to measure the effects of mass communications, this topic probably represents the most neglected areas of communication research (Herelson 1953). A number of very useful reviews of research findings on mass media effects have been attempted by the researchers. (Berelson 1948, Hovland1953 and 1954; Cos 1961; Berelson and Steiner 1964; Halloran 1965; Belson 1967). For those who want a simple answer about the power of the mass media, it would have to be in the negative. A thought in many respects misleading, would first be of the available evidence. In the findings of sociological interest, firstly it seems that the effects of media, where they occur, most frequently take the form of a
reinforcement of existing attitudes and opinion (Klapper 1960). Secondly, it is clear that effects vary according to the heritage of evolution attaching to the communication source (Hovland 1954: 1071-2).

As the studies referred, in the social consequences of mass communication, the crime and violence will be encouraged by mass media which is derived in the first instance from the well documented fact that mass media content tends to over represent the portrayals of acts of crime and violence. (Head 1954 and Himmelweit 1958) The effect on attitudes (Peterson 1953), of emotional response to crime portrayals and showing that crime films were popular amongst young criminals (Bluer 1933). But, eventually neither producing a verdict nor an acquittal, an outcome which has been repeated several times in case of television. There is an expectation about mass media especially television that it encouraged: ‘Passivity’, ‘escapism’, unsociability, and loss of creativity. Evidence of small initial reductions on ‘interest’ and ‘initiative’ on the part of ‘new’ adult viewers of television in Britain was obtained by Belson (1967); and Hamilton and Lawless (1956), on the basis of much less elaborate research study, report findings about television in an American community.

Media are helpful in bringing about attitudinal changes. It is said in the studies that news reports can expose a discrepancy between private attitude and behaviour and public morality that forces the public to a decision. (Lazarsfield and Merton 1948). On this matter, the attitudes of a group of subject before and after exposing them to film were tested. (Thurstone & Peterson 1953). The results indicated that in the case of children there were measurable changes in the attitudes and the direction
indicated by the film. At least in one of the groups, these effects persisted significantly for five months. Similarly, it was demonstrated that pictures, with certain types of contents, produce measurable effects on the socio-economic attitudes. (Rosenthal 1934)

The mass media publicity, besides having an effect on the audience, can foster a sense of prestige and importance among the members of a group. (Waples, Berelson and Bradshaw 1940 and Davison 1956), It can happen if this group is singled out by media. In an action situation, the knowledge that others are watching can fortify a group’s determination to struggle for achieving goals or for resisting an enemy. (Davison 1956)

In the examination of the role of mass media it is seen that there is transition of traditional societies in developing nations to a modern form. The researchers have exposed the view that mass media prepare, instigate and undersigned the developments of a modern society. Their prominent works on the role of communication in development are most influential. (Doob 1961, Lerner 1958, Rogers 1962 & 1969 and Scrahmm 1964).

Lerner (1958) saw the potential as one of ‘modernizing’ traditional societies. He saw the spread of literacy resulting from urbanization as a necessary precondition to more complete modernization that includes participatory political institutions. Development was largely a matter of increasing productivity, and ‘the problem of stimulating productivity was basically psychological.’ He pointed out that, development failed to occur because peasants were unable to remain fatalistic, un-ambitious and resistant to change. Lerner saw the media as filling this need of promoting ‘empathy’ and ‘the physic mobility’. These were the
prerequisites of the social and economic mobility that development required. 'Empathy endows a person with capacity to imagine himself as proprietor of a bigger grocery store in a city, to wear nice clothes and live in a nice house, to be interested in “what is going on in the world” and to “get out of his hole”. (Lerner 1963: 342). He pointed to the correlation between economic productivity and media provision in different countries in support of his theory. The richest countries had the most newspapers, radios and so on, and poorest the least.

The development of mass media poses a challenge to these prevailing patterns. It provides the sociologists to study mass communication in these circumstances with a vast natural experiment. This experiment contains the effects of changing communication patterns. It can be observed much more clearly than in economically advanced societies, where industrialization, urbanization and near-universal literacy preceded modern mass communication. Three broad and overlapping areas of interest can be discerned that are dwelling respectively. With the effectiveness of mass media campaigns, the role of media in encouraging the ‘State of Mind of Modernity’ (Lerner 1958). The contribution of mass media is enormous to the growth of participant political institutions in new nations and territories freed from colonial traditional forms of rule.

The tradition of research on the diffusion of innovation described by Roger’s approach has much in common with Lerner’s but different somewhat in emphasis. He saw the diffusion of new ideas and practices as a crucial component of the modernization process. In his early studies it is highlighted the large number of factors in both the ‘message’, and the recipient that might facilitate or impede effective persuasion. The
important realization is that mass communication is seldom sufficient to produce direct changes of attitudes or behavior on their own: the influence of persons and groups with whom the individual is in direct contact constantly could be crucial. It was found that individuals were not equally receptive to their messages. Mass communication influence appears to operate by a ‘two step flow’ process. The more aware members of groups tended to be most readily reached by the media. And these ‘influential’ or ‘opinion leaders’, in return, were instrumental in spreading the message to others (Katz 1957).

Rogers applied these and related ideas to the innovations among farmers in the United States. He proposed a general model for the changes process involved. He concluded that the mass communication was to create the awareness of a possible innovation among the audience. With the development of favorable attitudes and the adoption of the new practice depended crucially upon the response of influential in the group.

Hundreds of ‘diffusion’ studies based on Rogers model have now been carried out in many parts of the world that have resulted in a refinement of the communication techniques involved. The idea of a ‘two step flow’, for instance, has been extended to the nation of ‘communication networks’ operating in the local situation. Some recent work has been developed to analyze these models (Rogers, 1976). Wilbur Schramm in 1964 for the UNESCO mass media development program propounded the theory of magic multipliers. He pointed out that information must flow, not only to people but also from people. Through this their needs can be known and they may participate in the acts and decision of nation building and information must flow vertically so that
decision may be made, work organized and skills learned at all levels of society. The researcher formulated three models of communications which are traditional communication, modern communication and transitional communication system. (Pye 1963) He made a clear-cut distinction at theoretical levels and discussed at length the problems of transformation of traditional societies into a modern one.

As Doob says that the contributions of media can best be witnessed when we scrutinize the role of mass media in the transition of traditional societies or developing nations to a modern one. Media modes are helpful in bringing about varied attitudinal changes among the people. During the course of study regarding the effectiveness of mass media in stimulating people's interests in various activities, Mass media stimulates a passive interest in some of the activities in it rather than directing the interest related to it. (Himmelweit 1962). However, similar kind of findings related with the importance of the existence of prior interest and related skills are the determinants of effects in behaviour during the course of media demonstrations. (Crile 1953). In other words the researchers have expressed their view that mass media prepare, instigate and under grid the development of a modern society. (Lerner 1958 & Schramm 1964). The mass media publicity besides having an effect on the audience can foster a sense of prestige and importance among the members of a group of the community. (Waples, Berelson and Bradshaw 1940, and Davison 1956),

There is enormous evidence that the measured changes in attitudes or opinion as a result of persuasive material presented in radio, film, television or the press are likely to be small. Studies suggested that people expressed themselves to messages selectively only to those which
are consonant with their belief, ideas, values etc. (Klapper 1960) In spite of exposure constantly to communication methods or modes, an individual’s perception of a certain event, issue, person, or place could be influenced by his/her latent belief’s attitudes, wants, need or other factors. Thus, two individuals’ exposure to the same message could go away with diametrically different perception about it. Studies showed that even recall of information was influenced by factors such as an individual’s needs, wants, moods, perceptions and so on. However, in studies it was urged that “Mass Communication ordinarily does not serve as a necessary and sufficient cause of audience effects, but rather function among and through a nexus of mediating influences.” (Klapper 1960:8) Though studies didn’t put any light on the fact that different media to be without any effects, but it had established the primacy of other social facts and showed the power of the media to be located within the existing structure of social relationships and systems of culture and belief. Research has established that the realization of the facts that social structure and social institutions intervene powerfully in the process of media effects. (Rogers and Shoemaker 1971). But it is to be mentioned here that a number of social scientists have expressed their doubt on this. Studies paid more attention or focus on people in their social contexts, rather than their attitudes and opinions. (Lang & Lang 1959; Key 1961: Halloran 1964). They took into consideration of the uses and motives of the audience members of using media. They considered the structure of belief, opinion and social behaviour rather than individual cases that also took more notice of the content whose effects are being studied.
However, the propounders of the ‘theory of mass society’ have examined the question of media effects on culture and society (Mills 1956; Kornhauser 1960; and Shils 1957). According to them, mass media encourage and make viable a rootless, alienated form of social organization in which we are increasingly within the control of powerful and distant institutions. They found that the effect of mass media is a powerful ideological weapon or instrument for holding the mass people in voluntary submission to capitalism (Amrcuse, 1964; Miliband, 1969; Carey 1969). They argued that mass media are both a force for integration and for dispersion and individualization of society. It suggests that mass media do have important consequences for individuals for institutions, for society and culture.

If we consider the diffusion of innovations theory then it can be well traced that it has got links with communication effects research. This theory lay emphasis on communication effects: the ability of media messages and opinion leaders to create knowledge of new practices and ideas and persuade the target to adopt the exogenously introduced innovations. In present century, there was disagreement on the question of whether ideas were independently developed in different cultures, or whether an idea was invented in one culture and borrowed by or diffused into another. Evidence shows that in most cultures there was a predominance of borrowed or diffused elements over those that developed from within a particular culture (Linton, 1936, Kroeber 1944). The diffusion of innovations research established the importance of communication in the modernization process at the local level. In the dominant paradigm, communication was considered to be an important
link or entry point of exogenous ideas into the local communities. Daniel Lerner’s in *The Passing of the Traditional Society* (1958); illustrated the major ideas under the mass media and modernization approach. In Lerner’s model, the mass media were both an index and agent of modernization. In his model, there was a close reciprocal relationship between literacy and mass media exposure. The literate genre developed the media message which in turn accelerated the spread of literacy.

While Lerner and others saw all of media output as having potentially modernizing effects, for Schramm it was their informational content that was the key to their use in development. He had little to say about entertainment which he regarded as irrelevant distracting or at best sweetener for the informational pill. In recent years there has been a shift in communication studies, if we study the impact of TV form a semiotic and cultural perspective then it leads us to pursue the relationship between the TV message, the everyday reality of the audience and the functions performed by TV for that audience (Fiske, 1994:70-71). Based on the factor of functionalism, TV is considered to be sued by viewers to satisfy their psychological needs.

Katz lists five basic needs that are to be fulfilled by the mass media—that includes the television: (a) Cognitive needs, (b) Affective needs, (c) Personal Integrative needs, (d) Social integrative needs, and (e) Tension-release needs. (Katz, 1973). Similarly, Mc Quail identified four main functions of TV as: (i) Diversion and escape, (ii) Personal relationships, (iii) Personal identity and (iv) Surveillance. (Mc Quail, 1972). The impact of TV on the audience largely depends on what ‘they’ watch it. But, at the same time, there is enough scope to exercise their
choices on the selection of the programmes is considered to be watchable. A growing body of literature on the TV impact focuses on this ‘Agenda Setting Role’ of the TV. Barwise and Ehrenberg observed that viewing TV is cheap, but producing watchable TV programmes is not. (Mc Quail, 1972). Often it is the commercial advertisers and the public authorities who decide what to watch and when. This line of thinking in the literature is described the ‘Gate-keeper theory’.

( It is worth mentioning here that, the research in the field of mass communication has gained a momentum in developing countries in the decade of fifties and sixties. Y B Damle’s article entitled ‘Communication of Modern Ideas: Knowledge in Indian Villagers’ appeared in the Public Opinion Quarterly (1956-57) can be regarded as the first major work in the field of the Sociology of Communication in India. In this study, Damle studied the diffusion of modern ideas and knowledge in seven villages near Pune and Maharashtra. The villages selected for this study differed not only in distance from the city areas but also in relative accessibility to communication and their degree of isolation. The study showed that it was not merely the distance from the city that facilitated or hindered the communication of ideas and knowledge but it was equally affected by the social structure of the community which determined the qualitative and quantitative contents of communication media messages. Information that is relevant to the needs and interests of the people is more widespread than awareness of less functional matters. Dube (1958) studied the importance of communication in community development programme in India. The role of communication in the process of social change was emphasized by
citing that the development of mass media is one of the requisites for and simultaneously the signs of a modernizing society. (Wilbur Schramm 1964). “Communication is not something that has a life of its own, it is something that people do. It is the fundamental process of society, the way that people relate to each other.” (Schramm 1964:11)

The researcher observed, “In a culture like ours, long accustomed of spitting and dividing things as a means of control, it is sometimes a bit of a shock to be reminded that in operational and practical fact, the medium is the message. This is merely to say that the personal and social consequences of any medium—that is, of any extension to ourselves—results from the new scale that is introduced on to our affairs by each extension of ourselves or by any new technology.” (Marshal Mc Luhan 1965)

In any society, feminine personality comes to define itself in relation and connection to other people more than the masculine personality does. (Brown 1986). In an analysis of the work of several Japanese films, the researcher found that the predominance of the perception of women is either wife or whore—the dichotomy already found in media portrayals. (Yasuko 1977). Studies on television programmes have also shown that media present an extremely narrow rage of female image— a young in traditional feminine occupations—if employed at all, seeking identity through love or marriage, deliberately home oriented, self sacrificing and dependable.

Ethnologists pointed to the viewer’s ability to make their own meanings. (Morley, Parkins F., 1972, Hall S, Hobson, D Lowe, A Wills, P., 1980). Pictures also may carry different meanings to different people.
Psychologists use thematic perception tests to understand the psyche of people. Socialization processes facilitate or inhibit people to be comfortable with the things they are exposed to. As such, it can be said that the same TV programmes can be received in different ways by different people. Hobson observes that “the message is not solely in the ‘text’, but can be changed or ‘worked on’ by the audience as they make their own interpretation of a programme.” (Morley, 1981).

Fiske and Hartley emphasize that a “Television message is made meaningful only at the moment when the semiotic codes interlock with the cultural awareness supplied by the viewer, whose own context will play a major part in shaping that cultural awareness,” (Hobson, 1982, p: 106). Therefore, it is difficult to generalize on the individual behavioral aspects of the causes and effects of TV. However, when the same or similar things are repeatedly viewed by people it can have a social or ideological impact on people. It is said that a myth repeated on hundred times may have the chance of being considered true. The TV has the potential to interweave fact (for e.g. News) and fiction (for instance, social drama). Fiske and Hartley also observed that, television is empirical, episodic, specific, concrete and dramatic in mode. Their meanings are arrived at by contrasts and by the juxtaposition of seemingly contradictory signs and its ‘logic’ are oral and visual. (Fiske & Hartley, 1978, p.123-4). They also pointed out that TV uses codes which are closely related to those by which we (audience) perceive reality itself. It appears to be the natural way of seeing the world. It shows not our names but our collective selves.
Grebner however does not imply that TV drama should necessarily reflect the real world precisely. What TV reflects, in De Fleur’s view, is social values, not social reality per se. (Grebner, 1973). Fiske and Hartley have asserted the point that TV may not represent the manifest actuality of our society, but it reflects, rather symbolically, the structure of values and relationships beneath the surface .According to Elen Seiter, “because television is based on weak codes than those that govern verbal languages, it, as a system of communication, unstable: it is constantly undergoing modification and operates by conventions rather than by hard fast rules.” Williams calls TV a “unified social intake.” Playfair observes that while cinema offers it’s produces on its own territory. TV invades the home and the difference is of considerable psychological significance. The television has upset the balance of the family in way that cinema and radio never did. He also holds the view that the television is a mass conditioning machine that produces responses on a scale, “that would have alarmed Pavlov.” (Playfair, 1990)

The impact of TV on the society depends on notions of cultural relativism which deals with the concept of what is right and what is wrong which varies from society to society. Every society is based on different aspects which vary from one to another. Folkways and mores are also essential to the understanding of society. The television can be used to promote the renewal of folk and peasant art and culture; it can also cause the disintegration and destruction of the same.

According to Bustos and Espirity, “Folkways are customary ways of doing things while the mores are behavior and attitudes consider necessary to the well being of the group. The mores are compelling and
so strong that individuals do not violate them for fear of social ostracism.” Television has had its impact on both folkways and social mores. (Bustos, 1985).

Taylor has reviewed the TV programmes, mass – marketed fiction, and Hollywood films which have repeatedly focused on nuclear weapons. Looking back on these cultural artifacts, Taylor has observed that people can see the shock, fantasy, regret and the possibility of nuclear destruction.” (Taylor, 1995)

Joshi of the Social Research Group in the Development and Educational Communication Unit of the Indian Space Research Organization, Ahmedabad surveyed the media exposure of 400 people of 18-75 years to find out the perceptions of the respondents regarding the ethnic issue and the role played by different media in the reporting of the ethnic issues. The most positive role according to both students and non students as well as all the religious groups in the sample was played by the English language newspapers. Doordarshan was ranked number two and regional newspapers were ranked three. Most studies in India pointed out that it is not Doordarshan, but the cable TV which is largely responsible for a variety of distortions, including culture. (Joshi, 1996)

Lee and Wang observed that satellite TV in Asia “is likely to agglomerate the diverse markets into bigger cultural markets to gain the economy of scale. Satellite TV will bring about a regional capitalist culture. Professional journalism modeled after the West may also grow.” (Lee & Wang, 1995).

Regarding the impact on culture there is nothing to be worried in case of country like India as Rasheeduddin Khan has observed, “
Beyond political identity, there is no other identities, single and universal. Territorial political identity need not rest on linguistic identity, cultural identity, religious identity, ethnic identity and so on. Plurality is the hallmark of our cultural civilization, and we ought to be proud of it.”

When the foreign media swamps the national media, the right to maintain the local languages, identities and maintaining overriding loyalty to the country and its customs and practices is affected. If the presupposition is followed then it can be said that TV is used mainly for education and not so much for entertainment. If critically examined the ratings of entertainment related programmes in foreign media then it can be concluded that TV is used more for entertainment than for education. Much of the entertainment provided on foreign media tends to question the traditional family values.

In the studies it was asserted that, “Media is a double-edged weapon. It can help; it can also harm a cause grievously. In a developing country like India with massive illiteracy, vast distances and formidable diversity, media plays a vital role in reaching people, carrying the torch of enlightenment to them and moulding their thinking.” (Duggal, 1994)

In India there is a custom of reading the holy scriptures of their vernacular renderings in some months of the years. This is also done in several parts of the country through various cultural forms such as Yaksagana, Kalapam, Vithinatakam (street shows-dramas), Harikatha, Burrakatha and Bommalata (puppetry), among others like folk songs and religious discourses and TV shows are used to present stories based on epics like the Ramayana and Bhagavatam. But, gradually these old forms of cultural transmission are dying. And, even on TV, competition from
the foreign channels is making the Indian producers to shift competing themes rather than striving towards the preservation and transmission of our customs and traditions. In the study of the sociology of TV viewing behavior indicated that illiterate, low-educated, middle aged respondents of nuclear families engaged in service were found to devote more time on an average per day on TV than others. A certainly foreign medium, particularly the electronic media---Cable TV---has its impact on Indian culture. (Mehra, 1985).

The impact can be both positive and negative. The positive impact lies in its utility to spread knowledge, promote awareness and breed understanding. The negative impact is usually highlighted in terms of corrosion of traditional values, cultural imperialism and orientation to sex, violence, etc. The TV—particularly the foreign, cable TV—is popular in as much as it can attract vast audiences. At the same time, it is also anti-popular in as much as it is preventing the actual participation of the vast majority in creating new cultural forms or maintaining the old ones. It is producing culture that is not cultivated from within, to begin with, but imposed, invaded or inflicted from without. Social interaction has been replaced by community viewing. Outdoor sports and games have been replaced by indoor electronic media games. Real world experience and exposure to nature has been replaced by simulated media environment.

In the epilogue of her book entitled as *When Old Technologies Were New: Thinking About Electric Communication in the Late Nineteenth Century*, first published in 1988, Carolyn Marvin writes that the early electrical technologies were central to the new era of "cognitive
imperialism”. Here, the “Western civilization was the center of the stage play for which the rest of the world was an awestruck audience.” Mass media such as television, the modern newspapers, radio and cinema are by their very nature highly inequitable, and owned, operated by those with extraordinary access to capital and technology. Thus, it can be reasonably said that the freedom of expression of *individuals* cannot be arbitrarily extended to mean “freedom of expression for the mass media.”

Those who are controlling the mass media and its forms constantly are engaged in efforts to manufacture consent which has been highlighted by Noam Chomsky and others. At no point of time this has been in greater evidence than in the past decade. There is an elaborate campaign of consumerist propaganda and cultural indoctrination. It is aimed squarely at juveniles and youth of the non-Western world which has become amply evident. Even within the Western world, the psycho-social effects of the mass media and especially of television has become a subject of much discussion by the 1970s. In his famous book, *Four Arguments for the Elimination of Television*, first published in 1978 the advertising --- professional turned media critic, Jerry Mander, wrote:

*Television is a form of sense deprivation, causing disorientation and confusion. It leaves viewers less able to tell the real from the non-real, the internal from the external, the personally experienced from the externally implanted. It disorients a sense of time, place, history and nature.*

Another researcher observed that, “Eventually, in the nineties, what has evolved is that advertisements on television play a key-role in
framing the other texts of television. In addition, the text of advertisements has the potential for developing inter-textual relationships with everything on television.” (Mitra, 1993). In another study it was apprehended that it would be harmful to allow mass media to create ‘desire’ beyond means which can create frustration in people when they fail to get what they desire. (Saksena, 1996). He further observed that, the availability of multi channels and multi national television in India has given rise to a much more discriminating, perceptive demanding viewership. Instead of blaming on the TV, it is the viewers who need to be specific about their choices as different channels cater exclusively to different tastes and preferences. The viewers are not necessarily dependent any longer on what the TV offers, but they can pick and choose what they want to view. (Saksena, 1996)

On the other hand, Nandini Prasad studied 75 programmes of Doordarshan and done the content analysis. Based on this, she observed that, the public sector broadcasting fails in one of its prime aims of promoting one’s development. She finds that more often women were portrayed as a mere decorative piece, a feather-brained glamour doll existing only to highlight the hero’s masculinity. Articulation about the woman as a victim of injustice in the patriarchal world order is rare. The afternoon transmission which targets women, children and the elderly encompass cooking, beauty tips, training in first-aid, songs and a few good serials…..Television, incorporating visual images and bridging time and distance has the potentiality to serve as an effective agent of social change. But, she regrets that quite often Doordarshan either ignores women’s issues or paints a negative picture of women.(Prasad, 1995).
She further commented on the reactions of diverse groups of people to a variety of instances from TV shows and observed that, "The tension between TV depiction and their reception only reflected, in a sense, the contradictions in a rapidly changing Indian society, where new mores were murmurings even as old allured remained entrenched. And women, not on the box and in the home, were often at the centre of this uneasy coexistence." (Prasad, 1995).

However, it cannot be said that TV is always bad and socially irresponsible. The research scientist documents how cinema lost the 'family audience' and TV quickly seized the opportunity and launched its on serials based on high voltage family melodrama. He however, only questions the TV reinforcing the myth of the typical Indian family with male headed hierarchy as the normative model. (Bhattacharya, 1995).

In Screening Culture, Viewing Politics: Television, Womanhood and Nation in Modern India, Purnima Mankekar presents cutting edge ethnography of television viewing in India. Mankekar focuses on the responses of upwardly mobile, middle-class urban women to state-sponsored entertainment serials (including Ramayan, Mahabharat and Hum Log). She demonstrates how television in India has profoundly shaped women's place in the family, community and nation and how it has played a crucial role in the realignment of class, caste, consumption, religion and politics. She examines 'entertainment' narratives and advertisements designed to convey particular ideas about the nation. Organizing the study around recurring narrative themes in TV programmes--Indian womanhood, family, community, constructions of historical memory, development, integration, and sometimes violence--
she dissects both the messages and her New Delhi subjects' perceptions of and reactions to these messages. Her ethnographic analysis reveals the texture of women's daily lives, social relationships and everyday practices. Throughout her study she remains attentive to the tumultuous historical and political context of the integrationalist messages in TV programmes, the cultural diversity of the viewership, and her own role as an ethnographer. In an enlightening epilogue the author describes how understandings of national sovereignty and gender were again reconstituted in response to satellite television and transnational programming in India since the 1990s.

Television is a mass communication medium with integration of technology, culture, commerce and politics. As a cultural product using audio-visual codes it projects the cultural values of their producers and the social reality in which they are produced. Viewing television is not merely an act of consumption but is "rather complex process of decoding cultural meanings." (Wang et al., 2000:4). Developments in satellites and telecommunication infrastructure led to enormous growth of television across the globe in the last decades of twentieth century. Statistics show 73.4 percent rise in TV sets per 1000 persons around the world between 1980 and 1997. The growth is enormous in "developing countries (92 percent) and marginal (2.2 percent) in industrial countries. (UNESCO, 2000:303). This led to two viewpoints. Firstly, it concerns about influence of so called first world media content on the populations in the third world. Secondly, bridging of geographical and political boundaries leading to better understanding about other countries. The cause of
concern was also because unlike other mass media, TV reaches the household directly.

The literature in 1960s on communication and media concentrated on social and development role of media. In 1970s it was more critical bringing in evaluation of the role of media. NWICO – New World Information and Communication Order, the term originally coined in 1973 Conference of Non-Aligned countries brought about the concept of cultural-media imperialism. UNESCO led the debate of restructuring international information and communication systems through initiating studies on communication flows across the globe. The earlier TV flow studies lead to theoretical formulation of media imperialism mainly from media institution perspective. The audiences remained absent in the imperialism premise as there was assumption that since there is a supply, so there would be consumption of TV content. In 1994, UNESCO felt the need “to include the analysis of viewer consumption with regards to country of reception, instead of studying only the sources of television flows” initiated a study covering five European and four Asia-pacific countries. “By the 1990s several scholars of globalization had begun to address consumption and the formation of transnational consumption communities as key issues and foci for study.” (Griffin, 2002). Varied concepts like cultural dependency cultural imperialism, media imperialism communication imperialism, electronic colonialism etc., came into being. (Schiller 1976, Boyd-Barrett 1977; 1998, Lee 1980). Cultural imperialism includes broader social, cultural, economic and political contexts while media imperialism refers mainly to media
industries. All these concepts dealt mainly with the flow of transnational TV programmes from West to the other parts of the world.

Post 1990s witnessed onslaught of transnational television also referred to as international satellite broadcasting, television without border, cross border television, transborder television, global television or satellite television. This lead to unique process of communication where though most audiences were located within confines of one country the media became transnational creating transnational audiences. "There is virtually overwhelming evidence that cultural messages are differently received and interpreted and that meaning can be produced locally at the point of reception... (but) exact influence of television on communities is shown in the ambiguous nature of research results." (Robertson, 1994:46). International studies on influence of transnational content revealed that "influence to be more diverse than so far acknowledged" (Kang & Morgan, 1990). In another revelation "audiences are interested in cultural proximity" (Straubhaar et al., 1995). "For news and information programmes, sitcoms and films, the judgment varies with country" (Goonasekera & Lee, 1998). And the "General findings of nearly all empirical studies point to the fact that viewing global television has little influence on viewers, not to say changing their deeply entrenched values." (Lee, 2000:188). Transnational television consumption by Indian audiences has been studied mainly from three dimensions as identity and nationhood, media reach and access, and audience profiles and their concerns. The studies made in India reveals the fact that "other technologies are also influencing the readings and subsequent understandings of transnational television programming in India."
(Butcher 2002). Whereas there is a sense of guilt associated with the act of watching television, the viewers seem to be using television programs to redefine their life-styles in various ways. (Gupta, 1998: 136). The Indian value systems and culture are strong enough to withstand any outside undesirable influences. (Joshi, 1998).

The evidence of the pernicious influence of today's mass-media empires is overwhelming. But, lacking a historical consciousness that includes technology, modern India is thoroughly unprepared to tackle the excesses they promote, says Venkatesh R. Iyer.

Those who control the mass-media are constantly engaged in efforts to 'manufacture consent' which has been highlighted by Noam Chomsky and others. At no time there is any greater evidence in the past decade, where an elaborate campaign of consumerist propaganda and cultural indoctrination which was aimed squarely at juveniles and youth of the non-Western world. Even within the Western world, the psycho-social effects of the mass-media (and especially of television) had become a subject of much discussion by the 1970s. In his highly acclaimed book, *Four Arguments for the Elimination of Television*, first published in 1978, the advertising-professional-turned-media-critic, Jerry Mander, wrote:

*Television is a form of sense deprivation, causing disorientation and confusion. It leaves viewers less able to tell the real from the non-real, the internal from the external, the personally experienced from the externally implanted. It disorients a sense of time, place, history and nature.*
In an article *Media and social change: the modernizing influences of television in rural India* by Kirk Johnson, the role of television in rural life, and the influence it has had on various social, economic and political processes have been revolutionizing the landscape of village India in recent years. It discusses the unique characteristics of television that make it an important agent of cultural change. Furthermore, the article analyzes various social processes that include consumerism, urban modeling, restructuring of human relationships, linguistic hegemony, migration and the emergence of an information underclass. The article concludes with a discussion of social change at both the structural as well as psychological levels and argues that the village audience is an active and vibrant participant in the use of media. It has ramifications for 'development' both at the village level and beyond.

Another important group that has faced major identity transformations sparked by the engagement in television is women. In recent years, viewers of Indian film and television have witnessed a shift from portrayals of females as innocent and subordinate in nature, into independent sexual beings. (Malhotra, 2000). While India’s strong traditional heritage has always been significantly characterized by the traditional roles of women as homemakers and mothers, the portrayal of women on television has challenged this ideal, and therefore cultivated a new perception of womanhood for the Indian woman.

It is quite clear from the above mentioned studies that the TV has a considerable power to influence beliefs and behavior. But it is quite ascertain to gauge the effects of mass media on their audiences. Singh reviewed 108 published works on the impact of TV on Indian society and
observed that there is a greater necessity to conduct in-depth and critical studies of different socio-psychological as well as cultural aspects of the impact of TV in the Indian society. Since TV viewers belong to diverse social groups and they are different in certain aspects, hence it seems absurd to ascribe to TV having a homogenous influence or power to cause the same or similar effect on all individuals who watch Television. There is a concern in recent studies about not only the effects, but also about the selection of the content and the form or structure of presentation. When conclusions are drawn about the effects, it is important to see whether and what weightage is given to the ability to differentiate the real from the reel life. And so, there is a need to study critically before any conclusion is drawn on the generability of the study.

COMMUNICATION RESEARCH IN INDIA:

Communication is a process broadly said as in which ideas; thoughts and words are transferred from one person to another. The process of transmission of ideas can be said as communication. Research according to dictionary meaning is to make a detailed inquiry into. Researcher is someone who makes a detailed enquiry into a subject. The objective of research is to find out something of the research that is being undertaken in order to satisfy our interests. Research in the field of communication started only in the late fifties and early sixties. Mass Communication research can be either simple or complex based on the objective of undertaking the research and the scope and what is intended to find out in the research. Mass Communication research aims to find out the audience behavior and uses of the media by the users etc.
It is a late starter and at the outset remained concentrated on rural areas. The researcher conducted a survey on the perception of emergency after the Chinese attack. (S C Dube 1964). He observed that 83.3% of the respondents were aware of the Chinese aggression. The information reaching the elite through the mass media is relayed to the common village people through the traditional channel. In another the role played by the communication in the economic, social and political development of a community was observed. (Lakshamana Rao 1966). Dumle (1966) enquired into the diffusion of modern ideas and kinds of knowledge in seven villages. The study elicited information regarding the awareness of people about the national political scene, national politics, world political structure, modern ideas regarding caste and religion and the impact of new ideas of recreation, movie, radio, sports, newspapers lectures, political propaganda etc. A study on the human communication channels in three villages of Andhra Pradesh were reported where one of the important findings was that the knowledge imparted through broadcasting was significantly retained by the respondent even 30 days after the broadcast. (C R Prasad Rao and K Ranga Rao 1976)

Since the establishments of the Indian Institute of Mass Communication (IIMC) in New Delhi in 1965 by the Government of India, various types of researches have been undertaken on various dimensions of communication. Since August 1, 1975 through the Satellite Instructional Experiment (SITE) development programmes were shown in 2,379 villages of six states. A team of social scientists was employed by SITE to test the efficiency of television in improving agricultural practices and population control in promoting national integration, in
upgrading and expanding education and in promoting better health and hygiene for a better life in rural areas. (Gupta 1985).

In fact, very little work has been done in the field of social communication prior to 1990s. Since 1990s onwards the trends have been shifted to national Television Network i.e., Doordarshan and more specifically to successful launch of the Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle (PSLV D2) on Oct 15, 1994 marks an important mile stone in India’s space programmes. In a study of patterns of television viewing among girls in Meerut city found that television viewing increased knowledge about other countries and promotes the feeling of universal brotherhood. (Mahajan1988). Another research scientist conducted a pioneer study about the impacts of satellite television on the middle class youth of Bhopal city of Madhya Pradesh in terms of the shift in their habits of using other media of mass communication specifically broadcast media and print media. (Singh 1995). In this study he analyzed the impact of satellite television network on the viewing of National Television network and specific impact of the channels of STAR Television Network on the urban middle class youth. The study found that the advent of the innovation of the satellite television has affected the Indian middle class in two ways. Singh (1993). On the one hand, it has changed the habits of using other media of mass communication in the middle class and on the other hand, it has an impact on their value orientation. The major findings of the pioneer woks of a researcher lie on the fact that a significant decrease in the frequency of radio listening and cinema going was observed which is an indicator of change in their media habits. (Singh,1995). However, the exposure of urban middle class to the print
media was not affected by satellite television. The programmes of foreign origin have an edge over the indigenous programmes of Doordarshan. Another finding of the study was that there was a change in the value-orientation due to continuous exposure to STAR television.

*The discussion brings in relief the following features of mass media in India.*

(i) The mass media in India reaches the common masses through the traditional channels of communication i.e., from elite to masses.

(ii) The mass media in India has contributed immensely to the process of development in the aspect such as rural development, agriculture, population control, national integration, education, health and hygiene, value orientation etc.

**RATIONALE OF THE STUDY:**

It transpires from the above discussion that contemporary Indian illustrates the many paradoxes and complex problems of a society in the process of transmission from a traditional to a modern way of life; and the changing value orientation of women presents an index of this cultural transformation process.

Two significant questions that follow are:

1. What role does television play in this cultural transformation process?
2. Whether television text has any role in deciding the cultural value orientation of urban women?
There was an acute dearth of research work done in the field of communication and culture. Hence, study of the impact of television on the traditional value system gains paramount importance.

Moreover, in a society with firm traditional moorings, as India, the impact of television must be judged not only in terms of the changes in the attitudes and behavior produced but also in terms of the reinforcing effect of social norms, behavior and tradition.

Thus, the researcher within the scope of the present study would probe into this relatively virgin domain of communication research and try to investigate the correlation between television exposure and cultural value transformation.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY:-

1. To analyze the level of Mass media exposure of the middle class urban women in Guwahati city of Assam.
2. To analyze the patterns of television viewing among the urban middle class women in Guwahati city of Assam.
3. To understand the culture orientation of middle class urban women in Guwahati city of Assam.

METHODOLOGY:
The Variables of the study:-
The variables of the study are as follows:-
Social Background:

The social background of the respondents was studied in terms of their age groups, sex, religion, mother tongue, caste, marital status, income, languages known, educational level of the respondent, occupation, income, native place, parents’ educational background, household consumption pattern.

Media exposure of women:

Media exposure of women was studied in terms of exposure to the newspaper (subscription of newspaper, number of newspapers read, language of the newspaper read, time spent on newspaper reading, category of newspaper they read, preferences of the sections of the newspapers), access to television channels (ownership, kind of channels they are being exposed --- national / international and local, time spent on watching TV, place of watching, channels watch, choice of programmes they watch), magazines, radio (ownership, frequency of radio listening, programmes listen), and cinema (frequency of cinema going, types of films preferred, language of the film), and also to find out any sort of existing noise problem.

Cultural values:

Cultural values were studied in case of women in terms of two social settings as modern and traditional values in three social milieus. Their rituals and customs, marriage, education, dress habits, health consciousness, inclination towards art forms (music/ dance/painting) were
analyzed to find out whether TV exposure is shifting them towards modern or traditional values.

**Message:**

Message were analyzed in terms of the theme, kind of content projected through the programmes i.e., traditional and modern, popularity of the programmes, representation of women in the programmes, any sort of noise exists or not while telecasting of the programme.

**Nature of Data:**

Secondary data were collected from government documents and other research journals. Primary data were gathered from the respondents through survey, taking the help of various tools. Both qualitative and quantitative data were gathered which was necessary to elicit the necessary information required for a culture study.

**Universe of the study:**

Television in general and satellite channel in particular is urban based and is basically owned by upper or middle class people. The present study was conducted on 300 middle class families of Guwahati city, in the areas namely—Manipuri Basti, Dispur area and Maligaon area, where there is spread of population from three major communities namely Manipuri, Assamese and Bengali respectively. They are having access to national, international and local satellite service. In the local channels there are Prag Network, NE TV, DY 365, News Live, NE TV Hi Fi, etc.
Unit of study:

For the present study, individuals were considered as the unit of the study.

Sample of the study:

The samples were collected from the list of subscribers of the cable operators providing service in the Guwahati city. The required numbers of samples were drawn from the population of cable subscribers through proportionate stratified sampling method. In each sample only those women belonging to the age group of 15-25, 25-35, 35-45 and 45-55 years were selected as respondents.

Techniques of Data Collection:

Six programmes with the highest TRP ratings were considered from each channel as the reference text for studying cultural contents and messages. Data from the 300 respondents proportionately representing each of the three social milieus were collected through an interview schedule and questionnaire. For further clarification informal discussions were organized and appropriate notes were taken for later analysis. In the said chapters pie and bar chart are used as per the requirement of the study.

Operational definitions:

Culture: It is a shared, learned, symbolic system of values, beliefs and attitudes that shapes and influences perception and behavior -- an abstract
"mental blueprint" or "mental code." The attitudes, beliefs, customs, traditions, art and achievements of society that are passed on to each generation. The components of culture are values, mores and norms.

**Custom:** A long-established specific practice common to a specific people or culture, accepted or habitual practice of long standing followed by people of a particular group or region or a habitual practice of a person.

**Ritual:**
- Any customary observance or practice.
- The prescribed procedure for conducting religious ceremonies.
- Of or relating to or characteristic of religious rituals; "ritual killing".
- Stereotyped behavior.

**Middle class:** A relatively financially stable class that generally works white collar jobs. Class is defined by four things: Wealth, Income, Education and Prestige.

**Traditional values:** It refer to those beliefs, moral codes, and mores that are passed down from generation to generation within a culture, subculture or community. The term "traditional values" has become synonymous with "family values". In its own right "traditional values" simply means the values coming from tradition rather than any specific philosopher, moralist, or writer. This means the "traditional values" of non-Western societies may be wildly at variance from any Christian
Right notion of Family values. It place high value on the maintenance of traditional culture and values. It is related to the concept of traditional authority and culture. The term can also refer to an intention to preserve ancient or traditional customs and values against anything deemed "innovation."

**Scope of the study:**

Television has emerged to be one of the most powerful communication technologies with tremendous power to attract and influence the people. The present study will be useful in determining the possible cultural impact of television on the urban middle class women in Indian society. It may also be beneficial for the planners and the policy makers particularly in formulating communication polices for the areas located in remote corners of the country.