Chapter - I

The Framework of the Study
This chapter has been discussed under several headings. The chapter begins with the introduction followed by the statement of the problem. This chapter also includes review of literature. A detailed discussion has been done on the review of literature. The chapter further includes rationale of the study, objectives of the study, hypothesis, methodology, methodological strategy, variables and parameters of the study, operational definitions and scope of the study.

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. 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. Television is a highly influential medium and plays an important role in the social construction of reality, (Morgan, 1990).

On the other hand as it exists today suppresses Indian reality. It created a world of fantasy for the rich and the poor. With increase in proliferation of science and technology several changes have appeared and there changes have affected people in several ways. The central fact about modern technology is that it has powers for both good and evil. T.V. takes up more of our time then any activity other than sleeping and working. Because T.V. is, in general a leisure pursuit, viewing practices have a well - marked daily rhythm.

It is generally recognised that among the mass media television is the most powerful instrument yet devised. Whether it is for influencing public opinion or for reshaping social life, its potential is considered to be immense and far reaching in our country, is still it is being nursed with high hopes to take new challenges (BSS Rao 1992). The development of television has kindled hopes of bringing about unity in diversity in a pluralistic society like India. Marshall McLuhan observes, “T.V. is the most appropriate medium for mass communication especially for the developing countries because its involving and absorbing
nature T.V. involves the viewers as a whole. The emergence of satellite T.V. has brought about a global change”, (Jib Fowles 1992, pp-2).

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 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 information, entertainment and can be said that these stress on persuasion. Thus, the impact of electronic media has to be seen in the background of our value based social structure.

T.V. does need deep pockets. T.V. needs vision. T.V. needs participation. T.V. is the highway that will bring social change, which will open up our minds and souls and allow us to compete, (Malavika, pp-34-35).

**STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM**

Media and society both are inter-related and affect each other in many ways. Sometimes media communication is guided by society and sometimes media have dominance over society. The mass media are essential not only in promotion and propagation of innovative ideas but also in transformation of the society. The media affects the mind of people in such a manner that their thinking, perception and ideas are changed. As a public broadcaster, television in India had originated as a social, economic and educational project in 1949. (Pendakur1991). Television was seen as a catalyst of social change and national development, sensitizing society about social justice, educating the population and developing and uplifting its human resources, (Acharya, 1987:90, 117). As an effective audio - visual medium television has tremendous impact on Indian society where majority of population is illiterate.
The effectiveness of media has been a matter of great concern among the researchers right from the beginning. There is a long debate regarding medium and content. The theory of Mc Luhan ‘Medium is the message’ has been subject of debate among the researchers and critiques on the ground that content (program) is more important than medium. The success of serial ‘Mahabharata’ and ‘Hum Log’ (Mitra 1993 A) and advertisements like ‘thanda matlab Coca - Cola’ indicates that program contents and their presentation are also equally important. Thus, the contents of programmes and advertisements and their presentation on this audio-visual medium make it a very effective tool of communication.

Ever since T.V. became one of the dominant media of entertainment and information, there have been contradictory claims about its effects. There have also been continued debates whether the effects of television are good or evil, powerful or weak. Some observers believe audiences are little more than puppets, manipulated by the invisible strings of television, others consider it as minor influence compared to other experiences, needs, social relationships, and behaviours of people. Nonetheless television affects us and our society in variety of ways.

A number of researches have been conducted for a better understanding of the nature of its effects. However, many such studies have brought out the fact that the impact of television observed, in one area, society or community may not be relevant to other.

T.V. is domestic and familial. Most of the vital questions about T.V. audiences concern what audiences actually make of the programmes that they see, what meaning they give them.

Soaps in general have a predominantly female audience, although prime-time soaps such as Dallas are deliberately aimed at a wider audience, and in fact at least 30 per cent of the audience for this soap was male. According to Ang, and Hartley surprisingly, in Dallas the main interest for men was in business relations and problem and the power and wealth shown, whereas women were more often interested in the family issues and love affairs. In the case of Dallas it is clear that the programme meant something different for female viewers compared with male viewers. The audience for soaps does include men (and probably more men than are prepared to admit it), but some theorists argue that the gender of the viewers is ‘inscribed’ in the programme so that soaps address women in particular. Soaps appeal to those who value the personal and domestic world. Dorothy Hobson argues the women typically use soaps as a way of talking indirectly about their own attitudes and
behavior. There is no doubt that viewing and talking with family and friends about soaps operas is expressed by many women as a pleasurable experience.

The programmes of any T.V. channel are shaped by the sponsor advertisers and also by the choices of the audiences. In India, women watch more T.V. than men. So, the programmes are also made keeping the interest of this category of people in mind.

Doordarshan’s success in the soap opera ‘Hum Log’ has paved the way for serials or soap operas. Serials and mega serials in India have penetrated a very big portion of our common households. They become part of their daily core.

People often become more interested to know what happened to their hero or heroine in the next episode more than they are interested to know about their own relatives. Due to the popularity of such serial character, producers of such serials have often been compelled to bring back the character after death by inventing some story or the other.

The T.V. serial does have an impact on the T.V. viewers which has been inbuilt in their making.

“In view of the fact that Television in India is fast developing as a major source of Mass enlightenment, leisure and pleasure, it is essential that its impact in various areas is analyzed. In terms of critics, comments and reviews no other medium, print, radio, cinema, caught the fancy of the analysts as television has”.

This may only be evident if we study the impact of T.V. serials on social attitudes and examine these with viewing preference of women T.V. viewers in Silchar Town. The existing literature on the theme may now be reviewed.

**REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

Media research in India began in earnest in the 1950. The focus of communication studies in India in the earlier phase has been developmental process and diffusion of agricultural innovations. Since the time Government of India established Indian Institute of Mass Communication (IIMC) in New Delhi in 1965, a good number of researches have undertaken on various dimensions of communication such as communication and family planning media habits and information needs, communication and elections, communication for tribal development north-eastern region, response to visuals in posters, role of daily newspapers during elections and effectiveness of puppetry and film. 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).

An examination of the impact of T.V. from a semiotic and cultural perspective leads us to pursue the relationship between the T.V. message, the everyday reality of the audience and the functions performed by T.V. for that audience (Fiske and Hartley: 1994). Based on the notion of functionalism, which derives from a well established sociological discipline, T.V. is considered to be used by viewers to satisfy their psychological needs.

Katz (1973) lists five basic needs to be fulfilled by the mass media-which includes the television:

1. Cognitive needs: the acquiring of information, knowledge and understanding.
2. Affective needs: the need for emotional and aesthetic experience, love and friendship, the desire to see beautiful things.
3. Personal integrative needs: the need for self - confidence, stability, status, reassurance.
4. Social integrative needs: the needs for strengthening contacts with family, friends and others.
5. Tension - release needs: the need for escape and diversion.

McQual (1972) has identified four main categories/functions of T.V.:
1. Diversion and escape – from routines and problems.
2. Personal relationship – the media provide company for the lonely and topics for conversation.
3. Personal identity – the media provide models and values that we can identify with or use as a point of comparison.
4. Surveillance – the media satisfy a need to know what is going on in the world.

The impact of the television on the audience depends on what we watch and why we watch it. A growing body of literature on the T.V. impact focuses on this ‘Agenda Setting Role’ of the TC.

It is also true to an extent what we watch and how we exercise our choices depend on what shown on the T.V. what is considered watchable. Barwise and Ehrenberg (1996) observe that watching T.V. is cheap, but producing watchable T.V. programme may increase
viewership which bring revenue from Pay T.V. or through better patronage from commercial advertisers. Often it is the commercial advertisers and the public authorities who decide what we watch and when (at what time of the day). This line of thinking in the literature is described as the ‘Gate-keeper theory’.

Watching T.V. is considered a passive activity for two reasons (Barwise and Ehrenberg: 1996):

1. It involves little physical, emotional, intellectual or financial effort or investment.
2. Most of the time it seems to be something that we do so a ‘filler’, when we have nothing better or more important to do.
3. Over a period we get used to what the media cultivates us to do. ‘Cultivation Analysis Theory’ points to the long-term role of T.V. in blending or moulding audience attitudes and preferences.

De Fleur and Ball - Rokeach (1975) propose an ‘Integrated Theory’ of mass media in which the idea of needs becomes the basis for understanding the media. They consider that people need to: (a) understand the social world in which they live; (b) act meaningfully and effectively in that world; and (c) experience fantasy-escape from daily problems and tensions. Based on these needs analysis, they develop the ‘Dependency Theory’ which suggests that everyone in the modern world is to a great extent dependant on the mass media for the information which enable them to satisfy all the above mentioned needs.

McQuail (1972) suggests the following five general conditions which bear upon the effect of media:

1. The greater the monopoly of the communication sources over the recipient, the greater the chance or effect in favour of the source over the recipient.
2. Communication effects are greatest where the message is in line with the existing opinions, beliefs and dispositions of the receiver.
3. Communication can produce the most effective shifts unfamiliar, lightly felt, peripheral issues, which do not lie at the center of the recipient’s value systems.
4. Communication is more likely to be effective where the source is believed to have expertise, high status, objectivity, or likeability, but particularly where the source has power, and can be identified with.
5. The social context, group or reference group will mediate the communication and influence whether or not it is accepted.
McQuail (1972) classified the relationship between media content and the audience as following:

1. Diversion
   i) Escape from the constraints of routine.
   ii) Escape from the burdens of problems.
   iii) Emotional release.

2. Personal Relationships
   i) Companionship.
   ii) Social Utility.

3. Personal Identity
   i) Personal reference.
   ii) Reality exploration.
   iii) Value reinforcement.

4. Surveillance

Although McQuail is critical about the inadequacy of studies which seek to measure the effects of media, yet, he recognizes one of the major effects as diversion.

Marshall McLuhan (1965) observed, “In a culture like ours, long accustomed to splitting 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 of ourselves - results from the new scale that is introduced into our affairs by each extension of ourselves, or by any new technology.”

Though McLuhan (1965) agreed with critics who proclaimed that the television was radically altering society, he sneered at their moralistic attempts to censor or curtail certain types of programmes. He claimed that the content of T.V. (programming) is irrelevant, what is changing society, rather, is the medium’s stimulation of new, more active ways of looking at the world, in which “information” is less important than patterns of feeling and engagement. He observes that T.V. introduced young people to “mythic” thought, “the instant vision of a complex process that ordinarily extends over a long period of time.”

Lazerfeld and Merton (1960) identify three social functions which the media serves and call for sustained research into these aspects:
i) The media confer status on public issues, persons, organizations, and social movements. It bestows prestige and enhances the authority of individuals and groups by legitimizing their status. This status conferral function thus enters into organized social action by legitimizing select policies, persons, and groups which receive the support of mass media.

ii) Media serves to reaffirm social norms by exposing deviations from these norms to public view. Media publicity closes the gap between ‘private attitudes’ and ‘public morality’.

iii) The mass media has narcotizing dysfunction. Though the mass media has lifted the level of information of large population, apart from intent, increasing dosages of mass communications do sometimes inadvertently transform the energies of men from active participation into passive knowledge.

Harold Lasswell (1948) has described three major functions of mass communication (which include T.V.) as:

i) Surveillance of the environment, disclosing threats and opportunities affecting the value position of the community and of the component parts within it.

ii) Correlation of the different parts of society in responding to environment.

iii) Transmission of the social heritage from one generation to the next.

Wilson and Gutierrez (1985) examine Lasswell’s proposition and observe that the surveillance function assigns to the media the responsibility of looking across the society in order to define and describe the different minority groups within it. The correlation function of the media helps members of the media audience to take stock of the different groups and determine how and where they fit in the society. The transmission function both defines what the culture and heritage of the society are, and transmits it to other members of the society. However, Lasswell cautions that “the communication process reveals special characteristics when the ruling element is afraid of the internal as well as the external environment. Therefore, the structure and ownership of media has been the subject of great concern for governments.

The economic function of the media is “to make money.” Whether the media can achieve this by increasing the size of the audience without maximizing the satisfaction of the audience is a subject of inquiry by itself. This line of inquiry is also pursued in a different way by those who look at needs-goals or needs - gratification theorists.
Eliot (1996) is critical of some of the uses and gratification studies on the ground that the various media and the consumption behaviours associated with them are already socially stratified. Differences in tastes, reported consumption behaviour, or needs - goal can be related to social class and similar variables. As far as T.V. is concerned, Eliot argues, it is reported behaviour, not actual behaviour, which differs along this dimension.

**Mass Media and Social Change, Klapper, 1960:**

The mass media play a vital role in disseminating information, conducting propaganda, educating and enlightening people, strengthening national integration and accelerating social development. The communication media are potent instruments of social change, contributing substantially to national development. When we talk of national development, we mean of women and men, and we talk of women development and the media role in their development, we have to identify the two dimensions of the term “development”. Firstly, it is the development of women and the role of the mass media in this process. Secondly, it is the development of the society and the nation through the development of its women.

The role of the media in development of women is twofold.

(a) Development through exposure to media by way of programmes and printed material. This is a consumer - oriented function, and by the consumer, we mean women.

(b) Development through the active participation of women in the production of media messages by participating in the decision-making process regarding programme content, policies and the projection of a balanced image of women.

A preliminary examination of the literature concerning the image, role and social conditions of women in mass media showed that any study of the image of women in the mass media and women's association in the production of messages will have to be viewed in the socio-economic, political and cultural context.

In the ultimate analysis, the presentation of women in the mass media depends on the interplay of forces that shape social reality and one of these forces is the media itself. “The communication media produce messages and symbols which create on structure prevailing images of social reality, thus affecting the process of social change”.
Women Media and Communication:

The contents of communication are reflective of the values of society which in turn, are
natured and sustained through communication. The treatment meted to women and girls in
different modes of human communication, mirror and prevailing attitudes and values towards
women in particular society. Image portrayal through communication reinforces reality. In
India, the dominant stereotype images of women and girls are that of:-
(i) Less competent human beings.
(ii) Instruments for exploitation by men.
(iii) Key to commercial success in this age of advertising.

To break the vicious circle of existing ‘undesirable’ images and project the reality of the
lives of women girls would need and overhaul of the content of the existing communication
messages through a well thought out National Communication Policy on women and girls.

Any nation on the path of development cannot relegate nearly half its population to be
wasted assets: or to utilize their potential only half measure. The success of all development
programmes including those relating to education, small family norms, health and nutrition
etc; depends upon the active involvement and participation of women.

Both common experience and several systematic research studies, reveal that the mass
media so far have not been effective, instruments to inform and prepare society about
women’s new role in national development. This is largely due to the very limited reach of
mass media among women and girls, especially in rural area. Even the limited exposure is
mainly in the form of entertainment films or film-based programmes providing little
opportunities for education about new values tasks or skills. Media content and production
also leave much to be desired in terms of making educational programmes meaningful or
attractive enough for the common men/women. In these circumstances, the expansion of
media facilities, especially of electronic mass media like T.V., is both an opportunity and a
risk in the case of women and girls. Used wisely on the basis of a well thought out
communication policy for women and girls, mass media like the T.V. can be great instrument
for social transformation towards women’s greater participation and equality.
Television and the Concept of ‘Preferred Meanings’:

Some studies—notably those of Parkin and Hall, et al. on T.V. show the power of the T.V. to construct its preferred meanings on the viewers. (Parkin: 1972, Hall: 1980).

Ethnologists like Morley (1981) point to the viewer’s ability to make own meanings. Words do not have meaning, people have. Similarly, pictures also may carry different meanings to different people. Psychologists use thematic apperception tests to understand the psyche of people. Socialization processes facilities or inhibit people to be comfortable with the things they are exposed to. As such, it can be said that the same T.V. programme can be received in different ways by different people.

Hobson (1982) observed 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.

Fiske and Hartley (1978) 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. Therefore, it is difficult to generalize on the individual behavioural aspects of the causes and effects of T.V. 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 one hundred times may have the chance of being considered true. The T.V. has the potential to interweave fact (for example, news) and fiction (for instance, social drama). Myths can naturalise history since truth can often be stranger than fiction.

Fiske and Hartley (1978) also observed that “the written word (and particularly the printed word) works through and so promotes consistency, narrative development from cause to effect, universality and abstraction, clarity, and a single tone of voice. The television on the other hand, is ephemeral, episodic, concrete and dramatic in mode. Its meaning is arrived at by contrasts and by the juxtaposition of seemingly contradictory signs and its ‘logic’ is oral and visual.”

T.V’s information is ephemeral; there is no way for the viewer to go back over material, in the way a newspaper reader or book reader can glance back over the page. Fiske and Hartley further point out that T.V. “uses codes which are closely related to those by which we perceive reality itself. It appears to be the natural way of seeing the world. It shows us not our names but our collective selves.” (Fiske and Hartley: 1978)
Smythe (1986) analysed all the drama programmes broadcast in New York City in the first week of January of that year. He found, among other things, that most characters worked in professional, middle-class jobs rather than in routine white-collar or blue-collar ones, and males outnumbered females by 2:1 among the lead characters of the stories and 4:1 among villains. Villains tended to be older than heroes, and where less likely to be white Americans.

De Fleur (1964) studied, over six months, drama on T.V. in the early 1960's to examine how the world of work was represented on T.V. and came up with observations that were quite similar to that of Smythe. Both observed that T.V. dramas tend to over-represent white males and high prestige jobs. De Fleur was particularly concerned that “Television presents least often and as least desirable (from a child's standpoint) those occupations in which its younger viewers are most likely to find themselves later. Television may be instructing children in ways that are not readily apparent even to close observers - ways that may lead to later disappoints as the individual enters the labour force” (De Fleur: 1964).

Grebner (1973) however, does not imply that T.V. drama should necessarily reflect the real world precisely. Nor does he imply that children generally react to the message system in the same way as they react to the reality that it portrays. There is a difference between, say, messages about violence and violence itself. What T.V. reflects, in De Fleur's view, is social values, not social reality per se (Grebner: 1973).

Fiske and Hartley (1978) have asserted that the world of T.V., though not unrelated to, is different from our real world. T.V. may not represent the manifest actuality of our society, but it reflects, rather symbolically, the structure of values and relationship beneath the surface.

Hodge and Tripp (1986) did not ask the viewers what effect the television has on them; nor did they ask the viewers what use they make of the television. They asked the viewers how a particular T.V. text connects with their social life. The respondents were school children in Australia. The most popular programme they cited in this context was a serial called, 'Prisoner'. The social drama dealt with a women's prison in the USA most children were able to articulate with varying degrees of explicitness, significant parallels between the prison and the school. The following were perceived by the school children as the key similarities between prisoners and school children:

1. Pupils are shut in.
2. Pupils are separated from their friends.
3. Pupils would not be there if they are not made to be.
4. Pupils only work because they are punished if they do not, and it is less boring than doing nothing at all.
5. Pupils have no right: they can do nothing about an unfair teacher.
6. Some teachers victimize their pupils.
7. There are gangs and leaders among the pupils.
8. There are silly rules which everyone tries to break (Hodge and Tripp: 1986).

**Television and social change:**

The arguments that television is always an agent of the status quo are convincing, but not totally so. Social change does occur, ideological values do shift, and television is part of this movement. It is wrong to see it as an originator of social change, or even to claim that it ought to be so, for social change must have its roots in material social existence; but television can be, must be, part of that change, and its effectivity will either hasten or delay it. Thus series like ‘Charlie’s Angels’ and ‘Police Woman’ in the 1970s, despite their numerous incorporating devices, were part of the changing status of women in our society, and could not have been popular in a period when women were firmly confined to domestic and traditional female roles. The tension in the programs between the portrayal of the liberated, active, strong woman and the incorporating devices of patriarchy was never wholly resolved to patriarchy’s advantage, however much textual theorists might point to textual evidence that “demonstrates” that it was. Not all viewers read television programs according to the textual strategies encoded in them. The problem with much traditional textual analysis, whether its impulse has been ideological or aesthetic, is that it has tended to produce and authoritarian, even “correct,” reading of a text, and has tended to ascribe to the text the power to impose this reading on the viewer. We are only just beginning to produce a theory of the text and consequent methods of analysis that can cater for the activity of the variety of viewers to make a variety of meanings out of the same text.

A similar problem confronts theorists, like MacCabe and Kaplan, who call for a radical text. Kaplan (1983a), who is primarily concerned with gender politics rather than class politics, finds four main characteristics in radical feminist films: her list summarizes the strategies that radical theorists in general call for to defeat realism as the dominant mode of
patriarchal capitalism, and as such is easily adapted to apply to television and film in general, rather than to feminist film specifically. The first of her four features of radical texts is:

1. They focus on the mode of representation, on film or television as a machine producing illusions of the real; they draw attention to the (televisual) process and use techniques to break the illusion that we are not watching television, but "reality". These echoes MacCabe's claim that part of the subject matter of any radical film or television program must be the process of making the program.

2. They refuse to construct a fixed spectator, but position the spectator so that he/she as to be involved in the processes of the film, rather than passively being captured by it. Distanciation techniques ensure the divorce of spectator from text.

3. They rather deliberately refuse the pleasure that usually comes from the manipulation of our emotions. They try to replace pleasure in recognition with pleasure in learning - with cognitive processes, as against emotional ones.

4. All mix documentary and fiction either (a) as part of the belief that the two cannot ultimately be distinguished as filmic models or (b) to create a certain tension between the social formation, subjectivity, and representation.

This sort of implied call to action on the part of the producers derives from a belief in the power of the text to produce a radical frame of mind in the spectator and thus to effect, if not originate, social change. This seems to her to overestimate the power of the text, to misplace the origins of radicalism and of social change, and to underestimate the role of the reader in the construction of meaning. Kaplan and MacCabe both have doubts about whether the sort of radical film or television program they want would be popular, but neither of them addresses the problem of popularity and its relationship to radicalism or progressiveness. The radical text, in its rejection of the dominant conventions for representing reality, tries to exclude the dominant ideology from any role in the production of meanings from the text. But in a mass industrialized society, where our cultural life is dominated by the products of industrialized cultural production and distribution, the conventions of that culture industry, with their necessarily close relationship to the dominant ideology, have become the agents of popularity, accessibility, and understandability, and thus have to be taken into account in a theory of popular meanings within a mass culture.

Social change in industrial democracies rarely occurs through revolution, which is the socio-political equivalent of the radical text. Rather it occurs as a result of a constant tension
between those with social power, and subordinate groups trying to gain more power so as to shift social values towards their own interests. The textual equivalent of this is the progressive text, where the discourses of social change are articulated in relationship with the meta-discourse of the dominant ideology. *Cagney* and *Lacey* is a progressive text because the discourses of feminism are articulated in a constant tension with those of the dominant ideology of patriarchy. The presence of the dominant ideology and the conventional form of realism through which it works are necessary to ensure the program's popularity and accessibility, but do not necessarily deny the progressive, oppositional discourses a space for themselves. Rather they provide a frame with which such oppositional discourses can be heard and their oppositionality made part of the substance of the drama.

The ability of the realistic form to contain oppositional discourses without defusing them completely is predicated on the ability of the viewer to read radically, and to give these discourses semiotic priority over the dominant ideological framework.

**Gossip and oral culture:**

The word gossip is clearly from a phallocentric discourse: its connotations are of triviality and femininity, and it is opposed, by implication, to serious male talk. But these negative connotations can only get in the way of our understanding its role in television culture. It is a form of “social cement” (Geraghty, 1981) which binds together characters and narrative strands in soap opera, binds viewers to each other as they gossip about the show, and establishes an active relationship between viewer and program. It is patriarchally wrong to see women's gossip about soap operas as evidence of their inability to tell fact from fiction: it is, rather, an active engagement with the issues of the program and a desire to read them in a way that makes them relevant to the rest of their lives. As Katz and Liebes (1984) say, “it is clear from these examples that people are discussing and evaluating not only the issues of the Ewing family but the issues in their own lives”. McQuail, Blumler, and Brown (1972) and others working with the uses and gratifications approach have shown how common it is for television to be used as something to talk about, whether at the factory tea break, at the suburban coffee morning, or in the schoolyard.

Uses and gratification theory and ethnography all too frequently assume that such a social use is in itself an adequate explanation, and they fail to ask further how gossip can be
read back into the program, can activate certain of its meanings, and can become part of the critique of its values.

So much critical and theoretical attention has been devoted to the mass media in a mass society that we have tended to ignore the fact that our urbanized, institutionalized society facilitates oral communication at least as well as it does mass communication. We may have concentrated much of our leisure and entertainment into the home but we attend large schools and universities, many of us work in large organizations, and most belong to or attend some sort of club or social organization. And we live in neighborhoods or communities. And in all of these social organizations we talk. Much of this talk is about the mass media and its cultural commodities and much of it is performing a similar cultural function to those commodities - that is, it is representing aspects of our social experience in such a way as to make that experience meaningful and pleasurable to us. These meanings, these pleasures are instrumental in constructing social relations and thus our sense of social identity.

Feminists (e.g. Hobson 1982, Brown 1987a, Brown and Barwick 1986) have begun to revaluate gossip as part of women’s oral culture and to argue that it can be both creative and resistive to patriarchy. Tulloch and Moran (1986) also find positive value for women in gossip: arguably it is males’ refusal to be open in their emotions, and to gossip, which is a major reason for their put down of soaps. They displace their own inadequacies onto the viewing habits of women. And in asserting the value of gossip and emotional release, women are insisting on their own adequacy, their own personal and social space, in the face of male dominated culture.

Oral culture is responsive to and is part of its immediate community. It resists centralization and the ideological control that goes with it and it promotes cultural diversity. Like mass culture, it is highly conventional - talk and gossip are as clearly formulaic as any T.V. crime-buster series - but the conventions of talk vary as widely as the social situations or social group within which that talk operates. Teenage girl talk differs from male worker talk, lounge room talk differs from public bar talk, and the differences are in the conventions. When this talk is about television it works to activate and circulate meanings of the text that resonate with the cultural needs of that particular talk community.

Katz and Liebes (1984, 1985) in their study of ethnic audiences of ‘Dallas’ found that during and after the programme, people discuss what they have seen, and come to collective
understandings. Viewers selectively perceive, interpret and evaluate the programme in terms of local cultures and personal experiences, selectively incorporating it into their minds and lives.

This incorporation of the program into local culture is an active, oral process that denies any overwhelming precedence to the Hollywood culture. The audiences participate in the meanings of the program in a way that the Hollywood moguls can neither foresee nor control.

For oral culture is active, participatory. Because the conventions are so well known and so closely related to the social situation of the community, all members of that community can participate more or less equally in the production and circulation of meanings: talk does not distinguish between producers and consumers.

In its interface with mass culture, oral culture necessarily brings its activeness to that process by which the viewer becomes the producer of meanings. An important part of a mass-produced text’s ability to appeal to a wide diversity of audiences is the ease with which its conventions can be made to interact productively with the conventions of the speech community within which it is circulating.

Thus, Geraghty (1981), Brown (1987a), and others have shown how the conventions of daytime soap opera (its “nowness,” its concern with relationships and reactions, the real-seemingness of its characters) enable it to interact fruitfully and creatively with women’s gossip.

Katz and Liebes (1984, 1985) found that part of the appeal of ‘Dallas’ to non-American audiences was the way that it was so easily incorporated, via gossip, into local, oral culture. They conclude that the feeling of intimacy with characters...has a “gossipy” quality which seems to facilitate an easy transition to discussion of oneself and one’s close associates. It is likely that the continuous and indeterminate flow of the programme, from week to week, in the family salon invites viewers to invest themselves in fantasy, thought and discussion.

What Katz and Liebes (1985:188) call “conversations with significant others” help viewers select “frames for interpreting the programme and, possibly, incorporating it into their lives” (1985:188). Talk plays a crucial role in “the social dynamics of meaning-making” (Katz and Liebes 1984:28). As Tulloch and Moran (1986) put it, “this process of watching
aloud is important because it enables the viewer to go beyond his or her individuality and call on group reactions, group knowledge”.

Hobson (1982) has shown how the viewers of ‘Crossroads’ were overwhelmingly concerned with the program’s realism: they had an internalized set of social norms that enabled them to evaluate how “real” an incident, a reaction, or a piece of dialogue appeared to be, and the more real, the better. The norms themselves and their application to the program were influenced by gossip. Talking about television is a process of bringing out the meanings that “work” for a particular audience group, which then, in turn, functions to activate those meanings in the next viewing. In this way solitary viewing can be experienced as group viewing, because the viewer knows well that other members of her/his group are viewing at the same time. Gossip works actively in two ways: it constructs audience-driven meanings and it constructs audience communities within which those meanings circulate.

The “trekkies” (the fans of Star Trek) are a particularly active and creative T.V. audience. They publish a number of newsletters in which fans imagine the continuing lives of the characters in the serial. Some of these imaginings have grown to novel length and there are even soft-porn novels of Spock and his sex life in circulation. Those privately produced and circulated publications are explicit and extreme manifestations of the audience activity in which viewers, particularly of serials, write future “scripts” in their heads and then check these scripts against the broadcast ones. They are also gossip which has had to revert to the typewriter in order to overcome the problems of a geographically dispersed audience community. Commercially published soap opera magazines serve a similar function: they promote and circulate gossip within a community that is defined not geographically but by a commonality of taste deriving from a shared social situation.

Children, too, have a dynamic oral culture that interacts with the culture of television. They frequently incorporate television into their games, songs, and slang, and, indeed, use television as the raw material out of which to create new games and new songs. All of this suggests that a folk, oral culture still lives despite the dislocations of mass society, and that television is not only readily incorporable into this, but that it is actually essential to its survival. Television provides a common symbolic experience and a common discourse, a set of shared formal conventions that are so important to a folk culture. And an oral or folk culture provides the television viewer with a set of reading relations that are essentially
participatory and active, and that recognize only minimal differentiation between performer
and audience or producer and consumer.

**Televisual narrative:**

Feuer (1986) argues that television has produced and developed distinctive forms of
narrative that invite what I have called “producerly” relations with the text. The series and the
serial, which she characterizes as television’s dominant narrative forms, are, she argues,
inherently more open texts that the one-off, completed, closed narratives typical of the novel
and film.

The television serial, typified by the soap opera, departs from traditional narrative
structure in a number of ways, the most obvious being the way that its many plots never reach
a point of closure, and its absence of any originary state of equilibrium from which they
departed. But Feuer, (1986) does point out that there is an unwritten and unachieved ideal of
the stable, happy family against which all the disruptions are plotted.

She also makes the point that traditional narrative theories are better at describing
“masculine” narrative, such as the cop/adventure show, than “feminine” narrative, such as the
soap opera. Even so, the series, while reaching a resounding conclusion to each episode,
ever resolves the ongoing situation. The police force is engaged in a constant war against
crime, *The A-Team* has a constant supply of “little people” who need its help because of the
limitations of the official agencies of law and order. Similarly Eaton (1981) argues that in
television sitcoms, the comedy may be resolved each week, but the situation never is. The
syntagmatic chain of events may reach a closure, but the paradigmatic oppositions of
character and situation never can. It is a requirement of television’s routine repetition that its
stories can never be finally resolved and closed off. The conventional, repetitious nature of
the news means that its stories, however formally they may be closed off, never really end:
there will always be more terrorists, more political conferences, more murders, more
disasters, more kittens in trees, tomorrow, next week, or next month. The narrative tension
between equilibrium and disruption is always there.

Ellis (1982) says that and effect of this is succession, rather than consequence. The
inevitable sequence of cause and effect that marks the progression of the traditional narrative
to its point of resolution is constantly interrupted in television by advertisements, promos,
spot announcements, and so on. The self-sufficiency of the single diegetic world of
traditional realist narrative can never be maintained in television. On similar lines Feuer (1986) argues that television has three diegetic worlds that constantly intersect and interrupt each other - that of the television program, that of the ads and promos, and that of the viewing family.

These interruptions of the narrative that fracture its diegetic world are characteristics of the apparatus of television, that is, of its commercial mix of programs and advertisements and of its domestic mode of reception, which means that it may be watched either continuously or interruptedly, according to the way the viewer inserts it into her/his domestic routine. It is arguable that women's domestic routine is the most insistent and interruptive so the feminine narrative of the soap opera is least like the traditional closed narrative and most amenable to being viewed with differential modes of attention. Its diegetic world is not only fragmented into its multiple plots, but is interrupted by its advertisements in a way that Flitterman (1983) argues is unique. She suggests that the ads aimed at women and inserted in the daytime soaps are mini-narratives that bear an inverse relationship to the narrative structure of the programs. The ads are closed narratives that reach a successful, if temporary, closure. The problem of stained shirt, facial wrinkles, or muddy floors which disrupts the "normal" state of equilibrium (ideologically proposed as a state of perfect hygiene, beauty, and agelessness) is solved by the hero-product which restores an enhanced order. But, like the episodic sitcom, the resolution is temporary and fragile, and in no way touches the basic situation of dirt-bearing children/husbands or the passage of time/youth beauty which constitutes the ongoing problems of the housewife. The ads, Flitterman argues, complement the program by providing a limited sense of achievement and satisfaction which is constantly deferred in the narrative of the program itself. But they do more than this; they frequently address the viewer directly, acknowledging the bridgeable gap between their diegetic world and that of the viewing housewife. They make explicit the sense of intimacy between the televisual world and that of the viewer in a way that breaks the self-containedness of television's diegesis by presenting it not as a separate world (like that of a film or a book) but as a part of the "real" world of the viewer. The viewer willingly enters into this illusion to increase her pleasure and in so doing interacts with the world of television in order to create a meaningful relationship between it and her world. She uses Barthes's referential and semic codes positively in order to construct bridges between her "life as culture" and the representational world on television. She is a writerly viewer of a writerly text.

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Recent masculine narratives, such as *Miami Vice* and, occasionally, *Hunter*, do not wait for the ads to fracture their diegetic world, but use pop songs in the sound track to relate out of the world of the narrative and into the cultural life of the viewer’s previous experience of the song or, intertextually, to rock video or MTV. The diegesis is fractured by emphasizing and exploiting the cultural work of Barthe’s referential code.

The intertextuality of television which crosses diegetic worlds in typically more explicit than that of the novel or film. Feuer (1986) notes some examples of deliberate exploitation of this, such as when a trauma drama on teenage suicide is followed by a discussion program on the problem. Similarly *Threads*, a fictional telemovie on the effects of a nuclear war and the nuclear winter, was followed by expert comment by scientist’s and politicians on the “real world” problem. Commercially the interdiegetic references are exploited by inserting ads showing Krystle/Linda Evans extolling her band of cosmetics in *Dynasty*, in which she is a major character. Ads in which sportsmen or sportswomen endorse a product are frequently inserted into sports broadcasts in which they are performing. A less intentional, but no less significant, Australian example occurred in a commercial break that contained station identification for Channel Nine and a promo for *The Flying Doctors*, a program to be screened later in the evening. The promo previewed one of the plotlines which concerned the drama of a pregnant woman in a remote rural area needing the services of the Flying Doctors’ team. Channel Nine’s identification consisted of a rapid series of portraits of typical “real” West Australians, one of which showed a pregnant woman being helped into a “real” Flying Doctors’ aircraft. This blurring of the distinctions between the fictional and real replicates the denial of genre differences between fiction, fact, and advertisement, and reduces the power of the text to construct a viewing subject position. The text can only suggest that the various diegetic worlds are related, not self-contained: it cannot specify the links that the viewer makes between them.

Television viewing is more interactive than either cinema spectating or novel reading and consequently its narratives are more open to negotiation. The segmented, fractured nature of television, its producerly text, and its active audiences, come together to oppose any forces of closure within its narrative structures.

Narrative theory which is derived from folk tale, with its emphasis on common structures conventions that relate directly to its social context would seem more pertinent to a popular medium like television, with its simple, repeated structures. But folk tales developed
in essentially homogeneous tribal societies, or in simple agrarian ones, whereas television narratives have to be popular in heterogeneous societies amongst audiences with different and often conflicting social interest and experiences. So television narrative must be more open and multiple than the singular folk narrative with its comparatively tight closure. Television narratives may embody the repetitious, straightforward structure of the folk tale, but they must be able to build into it contradictions that weaker its closure, and fragmentations that deny its unity.

Disruption:

This infinitely extended middle means that soap operas are never in a state of equilibrium, but their world is one of perpetual disturbance and threat. The equilibrium of a happy, stable family is constantly there in the background, but is never achieved. Even a soap opera marriage, and marriages are ritual high points to be greatly savored, is not the same as a marriage in traditional romance in which the couple are expected to live happily ever after. All soap opera marriages have within them the seeds of their own destruction. On one level the fans know that this is because a happy, unthreatened marriage is boring and incapable of producing good plotlines. But these generic conventions have not grown from some formalist ideal world of “good plotlines”: they have a social base. Marriage is not a point of narrative and ideological closure because soap operas interrogate it as they celebrate it. Building the threat into the celebration opens marriage up to readings other than those preferred by patriarchy. This double evaluation is generic to soap opera, and is part of the reason for its openness. A wife’s extra-marital sex, for instance, is evaluated both patriarchally as unfaithfulness, but also, more resistingly, as a woman’s independence and right to her own sexuality. Such affairs often spring from the man’s, or the marriages, inability to satisfy her. A wife’s “unfaithfulness,” then, is capable of being read by both masculine and feminine value systems simultaneously.

As Seiter et. al. (1987) found in their study of soap opera fans, 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 the family.

The dominant ideology is inscribed in the status quo, and soap operas offer their subordinated women viewers the pleasure of seeing this status quo in a constant state of
Disruption. Disruption without resolution produces openness in the text. It can be read dominantly (patriarchally): such readings would produce fans who return to their more “normal” marriages with a sense of relief. But disruption can also serve to interrogate the status quo.

The marital relationship is not the only one being simultaneously affirmed and questioned. One of the commonest plot themes is that of family ties and relationships. This concern to clarify relationships within the disrupted and unstable family may be seen as “women’s matters,” that is, as a domain where patriarchy grants women a position of some power. But if it is, its representation and the pleasure it offer overspill these ideological constraints. The ability to understand, facilitate, and control relationship is often shown as a source of women’s power, used disruptively by the bitches and more constructively by the matriarchs. Men are often shown as deficient in these abilities and knowledges, and cause many problems by this masculine lack. This set of abilities and knowledges, normally devalued by patriarchy, is given a high valuation and legitimation in soap operas, and can serve as a source of self-esteem for the fans and as an assertion of women’s values against the place assigned to them in patriarchy.

This concern with relationships often manifests itself in an extreme form in the theme of incest. Exploring the boundaries of permitted sexual and family relationships in this way may work not only to clarify those boundaries, but also to interrogate them and the system that established them. If Levi-Strauss’s theory of kinship systems is accepted, the incest taboo is an agent of patriarchy, for it defines which women can, or cannot, be given in marriage to which men. Central to it is the construction of women as object of exchange, and of the kinship system as being patriarchally determined. Freud’s Oedipus theory is concerned with a similar area, and offers an equally patriarchal explanation of sexuality, desire, and effect upon family relationships. The commonness of incest as a topic in soap operas, and its absence from more “masculine” television genres, suggests, at the very least, that women find more pleasure in interrogating the boundaries that it assumes, and thus in interrogating the system that has set them in place.

**Deferment and process:**

Disruption in not the only effect of the infinitely extended “middle”; deferment is an equally important characteristic. As Modleski (1982:88) puts it, soap opera “by placing ever
more complex obstacles between desire and fulfillment, makes anticipation of an end an end in itself." A soap opera narrative strand has no climax to close it off, no point at which it is seen to have finished: indeed, the outcome of most plotlines is relatively unimportant, and often not really in doubt. What matters is the process that people have to go through to achieve it. As Brunsdon (1984), argues the pleasure in soap opera lies in seeing how the events occur rather than in the events themselves. Indeed, the soap opera press often summarizes future plotlines: the reader knows the events before they occur, her interest lies in how the characters behave and feel as they react to the events. Each event always has consequences, final outcomes are indefinitely deferred, and narrative climax is rarely reached. Instead there is a succession of obstacles and problem to be overcome and the narrative interest centres on people's feeling and reaction as they live through a constant series of disruption and difficulties. No solutions are final, smooth patches are free from the sense of impending disasters. The triumphs are small-scale and temporary, but frequent. They provide a mundane, almost routine, set of satisfaction of desire, but the final climactic jouissance of desire satisfied is constantly deferred. Indeed, the mini-climaxes complicate as much as they resolve. This might well be seen as hegemony at work: the soap operas teach women by example to forgo the real, final satisfaction of desire in favor of a series of unreal, minor pleasures. These minor pleasures "buy" the viewers, and win their apparently willing consent to the system that subordinates them. Women, this argument runs, harm themselves as class by their pleasure as individuals.

But this endless deferment need not be seen simply as textual transformation of women's powerlessness in patriarchy. It can be seen more positively as an articulation of a specific feminine definition of desire and pleasure that is contrasted with the masculine pleasure of the final success. The emphasis on the process rather than the product, on pleasure as ongoing and cyclical rather than climactic and final, is constitutive of a feminine subjectivity in so far as it opposes masculine pleasures and rewards. This feminine subjectivity and the pleasures which reward and legitimate it are not bound to be understood according to their dominant construction as inferior to their masculine counterparts. Indeed, soap opera narratives consistently validate these feminine principles as a source of legitimate pleasure within and against patriarchy.

Deferment and process are enacted in talk and facial expression. The sound track of soap operas is full of words, and the screen is full of close-ups of faces. The camera lingers
on the telling expression, giving the viewers' time not just to experience the emotion of the character, but to imagine what constitutes that emotion. Porter (1977) suggests that "a face in close-up is what before the age of film only a lover or a mother saw."

As Brown (1987) says, "soaps allow us to linger, like the pleasure of a long conversation with an old friend." Feuer (1984) suggests that the acting style of soaps is excessive and exaggerates the hyperintensity of each emotional confrontation.

**Sexuality and empowerment:**

As Davies (1984) argues, soap opera sexuality is concerned with seduction and emotion rather than, as masculine sexuality is, with achievements and climax. If a woman's body and sexuality are all that patriarchy allows her, then, according to Davies, soap shows her how to use them as a weapon against men. It has been pointed out (e.g. by Geraghty 1981) that soaps show and celebrate the sexuality of the middle-aged woman and thus articulate what is repressed elsewhere on television as in the culture generally. In the prime-time soaps the sexual power of the middle-aged woman goes hand in hand with her economic power in a significant reversal of conventional gender ascription. For in patriarchy, economic and sexual powers have been closely interdependent characteristics of masculinity, but when reversed into femininity they undergo a necessary change of function from possession to control. The traditional patriarchal equation of possession of goods with possession of women is so commonly represented as to need no elaboration; we simply need to point out that it is a state to be achieved. Control, however, is a process that needs constant struggle to exercise it, it is ongoing, never finally achievable, and is thus an appropriate result of the feminization of the linking of sexual with economic power. The powerful women in soap opera never achieve a settled state of power, but are in a continual process of struggle to exercise control over themselves and others.

There is some evidence, too, of a similar feminization of normally masculine pleasure, that of pornography. All soaps are highly sexual, and many woman use terms more conventionally applied to male pornography to describe their reaction to them. The response to the male "hunk" is a fantasy that appears very similar to the masculine pornographic fantasy, involving a fantasized identification with a sex object of the opposite sex, but there are crucial differences. The sexuality of the "hunk" is not always confined to his body, but is often contextualized into his relationships and interpersonal style. Similarly, the erotic turn-
on of the love scenes is consistently described as resulting from the representation of a relationship, not the body of an individual. Brown (1987) argues that the sexuality of soaps is “not constructed around the male gaze, but it is heard and spoken.” It is thus part of a relationship between people, and it is relationships, rather than the body of the male, that are the source of the erotic pleasure offered by soaps.

Women’s view of masculinity, as evidenced in soap operas, differs markedly from that produced from the masculine audience. The “good” male in the daytime soaps is caring, nurturing, and verbal. He is prone making comments like “I don’t care about material wealth or professional success, all I care about is us and our relationship.” He will talk about feelings and people and rarely expresses his masculinity in direct action. Of course he is still decisive, he still has masculine power, but that power is given a “feminine” inflection. This produces different gender roles and relationships:

Women and men in the soap operas are probably more equal than in any other form of art of 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. On daytime T.V. the family is not a hierarchy, starting with the father and ending with the youngest girl, but an intimate group of people, connected to each other intimately through ties of love and kinship.

The “macho” characteristics of goal centeredness, assertiveness, and the morality of the strongest that indentify the hero in masculine television, tend here to be characteristics of the villain. It is not surprising that, in women’s culture, feminized men should be seen positively while the masculine men are more associated with villainy, but the reversal is not a simple one. The desirable “hunks”; they are loved and hated, admired and despised. Similarly, the good, feminized men, particularly the younger ones, typically have the strong good looks associated with conventional heterosexual masculinity. It is rare to find sensitivity, feminized looks (with their possible threat of homosexuality) going with the sensitivity of the character.

This opens their sexuality up to different reading. Their sensitivity and their passion are shown in their relationship with other character. But their macho looks invite a fantasy relationship with some viewers at least. The primary texts concentrate on the relationship, whereas the secondary texts often emphasize the physical, compensating for the soaps’ refusal to sexualize the body of the male in a feminized inflection voyeurism. The soap opera press, however, as no such inhibitions. Commonest pin-up photograph is a close-up of the
face, but there are frequent ones of male soap actors posed with bare torsos in traditional beefcake style which seem to invite a feminine equivalent of the masculine pornographic fantasy. It may be argued that such appropriation do at least make a “masculine” pleasure available for women, in addition to the more feminine eroticism of the represented relationship, but they do nothing to question that pleasure, nor to suggest alternatives to it.

Brown (1987) on the other hand, argues that soaps are positive and empowering in the way they handle sexuality and sexual pleasure:

Thus the image of body as sexual currency is absent, but the spoken discourse of the power of the female body to create is given crucial importance. There is no need to reiterate here the number of pregnancies, the importance attached to paternity and sometimes to maternity or the large number of sexual liaisons between characters in soap operas. However, contrary to the discourse which places the pregnant woman as powerless over natural event, often women in soaps use pregnancy as power over the father of the unborn child. The father will usually marry the mother of his child, whether or not he loves her (or whether or not the pregnancy is real), thereby achieving the woman’s felt need to be taken care of in the only way that is available to her in the dominant system. Women characters, then, use their bodies to achieve their own ends.

A women’s sexuality does not, in soap opera, result in her objectification for the male. Rather it is a positive source of pleasure in a relationship, or a means of her empowerment in a patriarchal world. The woman’s power to influence and control the male can never be finally achieved but is constantly in process. It is a form of power not legitimated by the dominant ideology, and can thus exist only in the continuous struggle to exercise it.

Davies (1984) goes on to show how advertisements in soap opera magazine lend support to the theory that women’s bodies and sexuality are the main means open to them to achieve power in patriarchy. The commonest type of advertisement is for products to improve the sexuality power of the female body - losing weight, enlarging breasts, improving skin or hair, shaping buttocks - the list is limited only by the parts of the female body that can been constituted as a problem for a product to solve. These advertisements are obviously patriarchal capitalism exploiting the lack of self-esteem that the system produces in women, but they are not just that. They exist alongside another category of ads which also play on women’s desire to improve their situation and thus their power in society. These are for courses to improve their qualifications, for ideas to start and run a business from home, or
even for lucky charms. The advertisements capitalize on this with a range of exploitative products: the soap operas themselves, however, show how such a power may be achieved by feminine values rather than the products of patriarchal capitalism.

But this desire for feminine power is never simple, because it is a desire born in patriarchy and must contain those contradictions within it.

For instance, Charlie’s Angels, first screened in the early 1970s, featured three beautiful women detectives in an agency run by “Charlie,” who was never seen, but only heard on the intercom as a controlling male voice. Each week the women would solve the case, even if they “needed” masculine help from Charlie’s agent, Bosney, and, after the narrative climax, would always return to the agency and the control of Charlie’s voice. Patriarchy was deeply inscribed in the series, particularly by this masculine closure of each episode and in the voyeuristic camera work on the three heroines. But it was challenged by the aggressiveness and success of the women detectives, and, as mentioned earlier, many women have reported to him that their pleasure in this was strong enough to overwhelm the patriarchal frame and block the effectivity of the ideological closure.

Modleski’s (1982) account of the soap opera villainess and she argues that the villainess is a negative image of the viewer’s ideal self, which is constructed by the soaps as the ideal mother, able to sympathize with and understand all the members of her (and the soap opera’s) extended family. Such a mother role is, of course, specific to the patriarchal family, for it denies the mother any claims on herself, and requires her to find her satisfaction in helping her children to come to terms with and resolve their multiple difficulties. She is other-directed and decentered.

Modleski’s account derives from textual and psychoanalytic analysis and thus can identify only the ideological thrust of the text, but we can be chary of assuming its effectiveness in all situations, Seiter et al. (1987), for instance, found that many of their subjects explicitly rejected this textually constructed role:

While this position [the Ideal Mother] was partially taken up by some of our middle-class, educated informants, it was also consciously resisted and vehemently rejected by most of the women we interviewed, especially by working-class women.

The villainess turns traditional feminine characteristics (which are often seen as weakness ensuring her subordination) into a source of strength. She uses pregnancy (real or alleged) as weapon, she uses her insight into people to manipulate them, and she uses her
sexuality for her own ends, not for masculine pleasure. She reverses male and female roles (which probably explain why Alexix in Dynasty is popular with the gay community) and, above all, she embodies the female desire for power which is both produced and frustrated by the social relations of patriarchy. The final control that the villainess strives for is, Modleski argues control not over men, but over feminine passivity.

Seiter et. al. (1987) found clear evidence of the appeal of the strong villainess for women chafing against their subjection in patriarchy:

All of these women commented on their preference of strong villainesses: the younger respondents expressed their pleasure in an admiration for the powerful female characteristics.

But there was little evidence of any hatred for the villainess, rather the respondents despised the woman who suffered despite her middle-class privileges, a character type they called the “whiner,” or “the wimpy woman”.

But, in the portrayal of the villainess, soap operas set these “positive” feminine characteristics in a framework of moral disapproval, and follow them at work through a repeated narrative structure that denies their ultimate success. The woman viewer loves and hates the villainess, sides with her, and desires her downfall. The contradictions in the text and its reading position reflect the contradictions inherent in the attempt to assert feminine values within and against a patriarchal society.

The contradictions in the villainess that enable her to bear meanings that variously justify or challenge female powerlessness are typical of the openness of soap opera texts. Representations of marriage and the family are shot through with similar contradictions. Neither is ever stable, both are constantly in turmoil, threatened by incessant disruptive forces that stem largely from individuals’ desires or deficiencies. The difficulty experienced by such dominant institutions as marriage and the family in coping with people’s desires and behaviour is clearly not on unequivocal assertion of their value, but sets them up, rather, as a site of contestation with which personal conflict can acquire a socio-political dimension. The ideal of a happy marriage and a stable family may never be explicitly attacked, but it is brought into question by the apparent impossibility of achieving it.

Plenitude and polysemy:

Soap operas are characterized by a multiplicity of characters and plotlines, and this plenitude opens them up to a variety of readings and reading positions. Thorburn (1982)
emphasizes the effect of this “multiplicity principle” in opening the text up: because of it, “familiar character - types and situations become more suggestive and less imprisoning.” The “population” of daytime soaps can number as many as forty, which produces what Allen (1985) refers to as paradigmatic complexity. The characters in this population are read both as individuals offering opportunities for identification, and as bearers of social or moral values. The network of relationship by which a reader understands “who a character is” is immensely complex and impossible for the narrative structure to control. Allen argues that soap opera’s repetitiousness, its syntagmatic redundancy of repeated talk about the same events or relationships by different characters in different situations, is more than just a means of bringing up to date a viewer who missed a particular episode: it is, for the regular viewer, an invoking of the paradigmatic network. He concludes that “to the experienced reader, however, soap opera’s distinctive network of characters relationship open up major sources of signifying potential that are simply unreadable to the naive reader”.

On the syntagmatic dimension, the multiplicity of plotlines allows a variety of topics to be introduced and explored form a variety of positions. “Progressive” subject, such as abortion, test - tube babies, or interracial marriage can be introduced and explored through the different experiences of a number of characters. The viewer of soap opera is never allowed a stable reading position: no sooner has she understood and empathized with one character’s reaction to an event than the focus changes and she is required to shift her experiential knowledge to that embodied by another.

Allen (1985) suggests that this anti - hierarchical openness has been developed over time by television soap operas. He argues that though there is an “underlying normative perspective,” new normative positions can be explored:

the soap opera’s textual openness allows it to colonize new normative territory at little cost - in the process opening up spaces for new groups of readers. New characters and situations can be introduced in an attempt to attract new audience members, but since the new narrative strands are positioned alongside other, more “traditional” ones, there is little risk of alienating existing viewers.

The multiplicity of plots allows the soap opera to offer a variety of pleasures and identifications to a variety of viewers. A plotline that seems silly is compensated for by one that is enjoyed, and the soap opera press is full of viewers’ opinions about which plotlines are
"silly" and which "enjoyable" or "believable". The marked lack of consensus amongst these opinions is evidence of soap opera's ability to appeal to a variety of audiences.

The feminine as decentered:

A defining characteristic of soap opera is its denial of a unified reading position and of a coherent meaning of the text. Its texts and its reading subjects are decentered. Chodorow (1974) suggests that the feminine subjectivity is less centered than the masculine. Its lack of center produces an insecure boundary to the feminine ego:

in any given society, feminine personality comes to define itself in relation and connection to other people more than masculine personality does (in psychoanalytic terms, women are less individuated than men; they have more flexible ego boundaries). Moreover, issues of dependency are handled and experienced differently by men and women. For boys and men, both individuation and dependency issues become tied up with the sense of masculinity, masculine identity, for girls and women, by contrast, issues of femininity, or feminine identity, are not problematic in the same way. The structural situation of child rearing, reinforced by female and male role training, produces those differences, which are replicated and reproduced in the sexual sociology of adult life.

Whether this an inherent, natural difference between females and males or a socially produced one is a subject of considerable debate. What is not at issue, however, is that the cultural formations of patriarchy constantly reproduce and revalidate these differences, and soap operas work more explicitly than most art forms to connect with women's decentered subjectivity, their social relations in patriarchy, and the structure of texts that are popular with them.

The decenteredness of the soap opera form with its multiple reading positions is argued by theorists such as Modleski (1982) to be the textual equivalent of woman's role in the patriarchal family. Here she is decentered, finding her identity only in her relationship with children and husband, constantly reconstituting herself to accommodate the changing demands of these relationships.

Similarly, the constant repetition of plot themes (Wiebel 1977, in Modleski 1982,) and the inevitability of their outcomes can be seen as a formal equivalent of the domestic routine imposed upon housewives. In this view the multiplicity of characters and plot is equivalent to the multiplicity of simultaneous tasks that make up housework. The frequent
interruptions of the television text (of one plotline by another, of program by commercial) are
the textual equivalent of the constant interruptions of housework, and the lack of narrative
closure parallels the unending nature of housework.

The difference between women's and men's modes of viewing in the family follows a
similar pattern. Morley (1986) has shown how women typically view while doing something
else, often housework, while men tend to view more concentratedly. Feminine work,
feminine viewing practices, and feminine texts combine to produce decentered, flexible,
multifocused feminine subjectivities. All of these elements are contrasted with male work,
macho texts, and a masculine subjectivity.

These accounts may well clarify the relation among textual characteristics, women's
social roles, and their decentered subjectivity. But what is problematic is the effect of this
relationship. It can be argued that these are the devices of masculine hegemony, working to
naturalize patriarchy in the feminine subjects who suffer from it. Alternatively, it can be
argued, as Modleski (1982) does, that these are the characters of a feminine aesthetic. They
constitute not an oppositional feminist culture, but a feminine culture that asserts the value of
feminine characteristics and pleasure within and against patriarchy. Lovell (1980) makes a
similar point about popular entertainment in general and soap opera in particular:

Some of the pleasure of entertainment will be readily mobilized for domination. Others may be more intractable. Among the latter will be those expressing the hopes and
aspirations of the dominated which are thwarted under patriarchy. To be sure, these will be
deply embedded alongside the contradictory sensibilities of domination. But their expression
and development in however contradictory a manner within popular culture ensures that they
remain alive and available for different mobilizations and articulations.

In negotiating a feminine terrain where feminine meaning can be made and circulated,
yielding to patriarchy under constant interrogation, they legitimate feminine values and thus
produce self-esteem for the women who live by them. They provide, in short, the means for
a feminine culture that pragmatically is the only sort possible because it takes account of
current social relations. It is a feminine culture in constant struggle to establish and extend
itself within and against a dominant patriarchy. While it may not challenge that patriarchal
domination in any direct or radical way, at the very least it constantly whittles away a
patriarchy's power to subject women and at best it provides both a masculine-free zone from
which a direct challenge may be mounted and the self-esteem that such a challenge would require.

**Toddlers learn little from T.V., Winston Salem Journal, December 1, 2009:**

According to research published in June by Wake Forest University professor Marina Kromar and researchers at the University of Connecticut, children between 15 and 24 months are more likely to learn vocabulary from a live person, or even a simple video of an adult repeating new words, than they are from voice-overs on Teletubbies.

"In recent years, more television shows and DVDs for the toddler and younger set - *Baby Einstein, Baby Mozart* and even an entire channel devoted to the teething demographic, *Baby First T.V.* - have cropped up in stores and online, all marketed to parents eager to unlock their children's inner precociousness.

While there has been research to back up some of the educational claims of shows for older children, such as 'Sesame Street', there hasn't been much research done on shows geared to younger children, Kromar said. "*All those claims really aren’t substantial.*"

**Pupil T.V. habits concern teachers, March 30, 2009:**

90 percent of teachers say some pupils are imitating the language and behaviour of reality television stars, a survey for a teaching union suggests, reports the BBC.

Three quarters also think pupils are behaving more aggressively as a consequence, the survey found.

Reality T.V. shows 'Big Brother' was singled out as a bad example by two thirds of teachers questioned by the Association of Teachers and Lecturers.

More teachers thought that television had a greater influence on children's behaviour than computers and video games.

**Impact of T.V on children:**

Child's mind is very sensitive. He learns a lot from nature and his surroundings. It is necessary to gather good knowledge from various sources to make healthy brain. Television is a central media for entertainment as well as developing personality. It provides extensive knowledge but at the same time it deteriorates human minds through showing violent screen plays. Many violent scripts slow down mental level and child may develop malicious instinct.
Since many decades place of television is important in the life of an individual and it strongly supports socialization of children. According to data, children spend approximately four hours daily in front of television set. It is quite necessary to research the impact of television on perceptive minds of children and adults. We all must focus on the fundamental issue of how television nastiness affects harmfully in child awareness.

There has been great deal of research done to examine the effects of television violent serials on children's overall progress. Research reports indicate high correlation between aggressive behavior and television violent program. These representations affect greatly on children's sex-role development and professional option and their attitudes. Other studies stressed that child's reading, learning and attribution of television information either increases or interferes with violent programs on television. There are individual and cultural differences in assessing violent behavior presented in Television program. Children of different gender, age or background may respond in a different way to the similar series.

Many studies showed facts of the harmful impact of T.V. violence on children and teenagers and found that children may become resistant to the dreadful scenes depicted, steadily recognize such violence to resolve many hurdles they face in life when they watch programs in which violence is very pragmatic, commonly repetitive or punishment is not given to criminals. They imitate the aggression as they learn from television program and recognize with certain characters, sufferers. T.V. violence easily molds the conduct of children who have emotional, behavioral, learning or impulse control problems and their reactions can be observed in consecutive years of life. Television played a significant part in the lives of young people and had a general potential to influence their aggressive behavior.

Experts observed some major effects of watching violence on television: Children do not bother about others pain and less vulnerable to the ache. Children may develop dreaded feeling among surroundings. Children inherit aggressive behavior and react to all possible situation violently. Children who view violent shows hit out at their playfellows, quarrels, disobey set of laws and do not complete their task in time. In recent study, it has been indicated that unnecessary watching of violence on television seriously affect critical brain function, named as 'executive functioning' which is described as the ability to stay focused on a thought or task, the capability to plan, disregard interruptions and to use past experiences to control behavior. These executive functions became feeble when adolescents engaged in watching media violence and such violence make person aggressive permanently. Television
violence is a primary driving force which reinforces the aggressive temperament of the children and youth when person makes a regular habit to watch such terrible screenplays. Especially children and teenagers who are in developing stage get affected with violent program and behave in aggressive way which creates trouble in their whole life. Watching violent scripts also affect social life.

It is recommended that entertainment is necessary to overcome fatigue but not at the cost of lifelong trouble. Violence in television shows is not a health enhancer. Instead it will create lots of trouble in life which makes person weak. Specially teenagers and youth must choose the television programs which are inventive, knowledgeable and improves lifestyle. They are in career building stage. Wise approach will show the path of success.

Impact of T.V. on children, Dr. A. Nirmala, Child Psychologist, Thiruvananthapuram:

There is no doubt that television has a great influence on children from a very early age itself and it will affect children’s cognitive and social development. In 1992, the American psychologist Huston conducted a research on T.V. watching and found that by the age of 16, the average American child has spent more time watching T.V than attending school!

The role that Television plays in socializing children is very great. Television can be educational and beneficial, but its negative aspects, such as the amount of aggressive and violent activity it displays daily, is causing grave concern to parents and educators around the world. Whether and how we will manage to control the harmful effects of television? The impact of television and harness its potential for the good of children is a subject of ongoing debate.

Children do not generally become consistent viewers until they are about 2½ to 3 years old. Even then they do not watch the set constantly because their span of attention is very short. So they get easily distracted. Now - a - days the working parents are so busy; they don’t have enough time to spend with their kids. The mother has to do the cooking and look after the child simultaneously; there may not be servants also. So she switches on the T.V. and puts the child in front of it. Slowly it becomes a habit. After sometime the kid becomes addicted to the television. And the mother blames the child for regularly watching it. Most of the ‘speech delay’ cases seen among babies are caused due to the excessive T.V. watching. T.V. watching is not interactive. It is a one way mode of activity. In order to develop speech,
as the young one begins to produce the babbling sounds; we must reproduce a similar sound, so that the young one is motivated to talk more, which slowly leads to verbal communication.

T.V. viewing patterns are affected not only by program content but by the formal features of television as well, such as animation, high action, loud music and visual and auditory special effects. These formal features, which help to attract as well as retain children’s attention, are, to some degree, independent of program content, and they are important for younger and older children alike (Huston and Wright 1998). Children increase their viewing time gradually until, in preadolescence, they are watching T.V. almost four hours a day. Although this may seem to be too much, adults, especially people who are retired and over 65, watch T.V. even more than children. They simply spend all their time inside the homes and their only means of entertainment is T.V. watching. And housewives too watch most of the T.V. programmes. Often there is clash between the grand - parents and children regarding the channel they prefer. The elderly would prefer the serials, while children want their favourite cartoons. It might end up in a family tiff even. In flats there is limited space, and as the grand - parents wish to watch their favourite serial, the children who might be studying at that time, get distracted easily.

The parents would be in a dilemma. If they scold the child, the grand - parents would be indirectly affected. And we can’t blame the old people; their main entertainment is T.V. watching. There is a positive aspect to this situation as well. The presence of older people will prevent the children from viewing horror movies and adult movies. Children watch a variety of programmes. Boys prefer action adventure and sports programmes, and girls prefer human social dramas and music.

Small kids will not understand what they see on television, in a reasonable manner. Children must be able to distinguish between fantasy and reality. Displaying what has been called ‘magic window thinking’ the little kids are likely to believe that T.V. images are real as the people and things about them (Huston and Wright, 1998). (During the age of 2 and 3, they come to understand that the characters and objects they see on T.V. are not actually present inside the set.) As kids grow and their cognitive skills continue to improve, their ability to distinguish fantasy from reality improves as well. When they get older, children understand that shows are made up, scripted and rehearsed. The impact of violence in television can be reduced by helping young children distinguish between what they see in Television and reality. We must also constantly inform them that television is an unrealistic
portrayal of the real world and aggressive behaviours are not as universal in the real world as they appear to be on T.V. If we go on watching interesting T.V. programmes we will not realize the time that has elapsed. Due to excessive T.V. watching our attitudes, moods, behaviour will all get affected. In 1997 Koolstra and Kamp in their research found that heavy viewing of T.V. had a clearly adverse impact on reading. Some researchers also suggest that socio-economic and family factors may account for these links between T.V. and reading ability.

T.V. viewing takes time and may displace other activities, such as sports, exercises or even talking to others. Guests are not properly taken care of if they visit other houses during popular T.V serials. Also, in most of the houses the T.V.'s are placed in the drawing room. Even though we will talk with the guests, our attention will be constantly diverted by the T.V. We must make it a practice to switch off the T.V. when guests come.

Earlier, children loved to visit other houses with their parents. But now - a - days, if we ask them to join us, they will say “Amma, please, we will sit at home and watch T.V.” They prefer sitting at home and watching T.V. over visiting relatives or friends. Parents must also ensure that children are getting sufficient physical exercises.

It is also not a good practice to place T.V. in the dining room. In the busy modern times, there is lack of communication between the family members. Watching television during dinning hours, however, will prevent family members from conversing with one another freely. Lack of such open talks and friendly gestures leads to tension and family break downs.

Some parents will switch on the T.V. and feed the children. The parents will be happy as the little one opens his mouth like gold fish and swallows the food while watching T.V. The parent is not realizing that she herself is developing in the child the habit of watching T.V. while eating food. Now - a - days some children watch T.V. even while doing home work. This practice must be dissuaded from the beginning stage itself. All the children’s programmes and cartoon channels are intermixed with advertisements. These advertisements have a definite influence on the tender mind. Fast food snacks filled with masala and aginomotto are harmful to health. As these snacks provide tattoos and stickers children often force their parents to buy this.

The present trend in the theme of serials is not satisfactory. In all the stories, importance is given to the negative aspects of human personality. They depict the different
ways to cheat other people, the unhealthy relationships between the husbands and wives, the shortcut ways to get money by cheating people. Violence is given preference. By watching these types of serials, throughout the time, the behaviour of even the elder generation seem to have changed. They have become narrow - minded and they tend to find fault with others and enjoy gossips and go into negative thinking. In the past, grand - parents loved to look after the young ones. But now the modern grand - ma is reluctant to find time to spend with their grand - children among these never - ending serials. This is a cyclic process. Children learn through imitation. If the elderly persons are behaving like this, how can we blame the little ones? As a result, a selfish generation is emerging! The parents must go on talking to the child while watching T.V., that is, they must explain the programme contents to the younger ones. This will help the children to make important connection between actions and their consequences. Studies have shown that children whose parents explain events and clarify information tend to be more imaginative, less aggressive and less hyperactive and tend to understand the contents of the programme better. But at present, the parents do not spend time with children, nor do they discuss the values of the programme. Co - viewing can also help a child to cope with the fear produced by the programme. The rapport between the parents and children will also improve. We must not forget the benefits of T.V. By viewing the news sessions, the child can get clear, accurate information about all the happenings around the world. By seeing the incidents directly, children understand things better. The quiz programmes are very beneficial to children.

The programmes in the Animal Planet, National Geographic Channel are also very informative. The travelogue helps to gather information on other countries. By watching such programmes we will get a feeling that we are actually visiting these places. The important buildings and places shown in such programmes give us valuable knowledge. Children will be able to know about and understand different cultures. By watching the great epics ‘Mahabharata’, ‘Ramayana’, etc., the modern child learns about values and traditions.

The important thing to keep in mind is that parents must not blame the children for watching T.V. Together they must prepare a tentative time - table for T.V. viewing. Children must be given some time to watch their favourite programmes, but parents must have an eye on the programmes which the children watch. There must be open discussions among the family members and parents must provide a positive guidance to children. This will help them to learn to evaluate the T.V. programmes and what they see. Also, we must not discuss
in front of the child his/her habit of watching T.V. throughout the time, even if that be the case. We must slowly steer him out of the habit instead.

**Influence of Television viewing on Adolescents as perceived by themselves and their Mothers in relation to the selected variables, Uma Joshi, Avani Maniar, 1994:**

The present study was undertaken to study the influence of television viewing on developmental tasks and aspects of development of adolescents. Mother’s perceptions regarding the influence of television viewing on their children were also studied. The sample of the study were comprised of 200 adolescents studying in the 8th and 9th standards of Alembic Vidyalaya, Baroda, and the mothers of the 50 adolescents and the tool used for data collection was a questionnaire.

The findings of the study consisted of three sections; including background information of adolescents:

i) The first section deals with influence of television viewing on developmental tasks.

ii) The second section deals with influence of television viewing on aspects of development.

iii) The third section deals with mother’s views on influence of television viewing on their children.

**Background information of adolescents:**

A little more than (50 per cent) of the respondents were boys who had less exposure to other media than television. Almost equal percentage of the respondents belonged to middle and lower income group. Little less than one-fifth of the respondents were heavy viewers of television programmes. More than one-third of the respondents were viewing television since one to five years.

**Section 1 - Influence on Developmental Tasks:**

1. Overall, there was a moderate influence of television viewing on the developmental tasks of the adolescents.

2. Influence of television viewing was high on ‘Civic competence’, whereas on the other developmental tasks like ‘Body image’, ‘Sex roles’, ‘Preparation for family life’, ‘Preparation for career’, and ‘Independence’, it was found to be moderate.
3. A higher percentage of the respondents from all the categories of variables showed moderate influence of television viewing on the developmental tasks of the adolescents as compared to the respondents showing high and low influence.

4. Higher percentage of the respondents from all the categories of variables showed moderate influence of television viewing on the body image of the adolescents as compared to the respondents showing high and low influence.

5. Higher percentage of the respondents from all the following categories of the variables showed high influence of television viewing on the sex roles of the adolescents as compared to the respondents showing moderate and low influence:
   a) Boys and girls.
   b) Respondents belonging to middle and low income groups.
   c) Respondents having more or less exposure to other media.
   d) Light and heavy viewers.
   e) Respondents viewing television for short, average and long duration.

6. Higher percentage of the respondents from all the following categories of the variables showed a high influence of television viewing on independence as compared to the respondents showing moderate and low influence:
   a) Girls.
   b) Respondents belonging to low and middle income groups.
   c) Respondents having more exposure to other media.
   d) Moderate viewers.
   e) Respondents viewing television for average duration.

7. Higher percentage of the respondents from all the following categories of the variables showed moderate influence of television viewing on preparation for family life of the adolescents as compared to the respondents showing high and low influence:
   a) Boys.
   b) Respondents belonging to middle and high income groups.
   c) Respondents having more or less exposure to other media.
   d) Light and heavy viewers.
   e) Respondents viewing television for short and long duration.
8. Higher percentage of light viewers had a high influence of television viewing of ‘Preparation of career’ whereas respondents from all other categories showed moderate influence on this task as compared to the respondents showing moderate and low influence.

9. A higher percentage of the respondents from all the categories of variables showed a high influence of television viewing on ‘Civic competence’ of the adolescents.

10. Significant differences were found in the influence of television viewing on the overall developmental tasks of adolescents in relation to their
   a) viewing duration, and,
   b) length of viewing television.

11. Significant differences were found in the influence of television viewing on body image of adolescents in relation to their:
   a) exposure to other media,
   b) length of viewing television.

12. Significant differences were found in the influence of television viewing on the independence of adolescents in relation to their length of viewing television.

13. Significant differences were found in the influence of television viewing on ‘Preparation of family life’ of adolescents in relation to their:
   a) viewing duration, and,
   b) length of viewing television.

14. No significant differences were found in the influence of television viewing on sex roles, preparation for career and civic competence of adolescents in relation to the selected variables.

Section II - Influence on Aspects of Development:

1. Overall, there was high influence of television viewing on the aspects of development of the adolescents.

2. Influence of television viewing was high in physical, social, cognitive and moral developmental of adolescents whereas it was found to be moderate on emotional development of adolescents.

3. Higher percentage of the respondents from all the categories of variables showed a high influence of television viewing on the overall aspects of developmental as compared to the respondents showing moderate and low influence.
4. Higher percentage of the respondents from all the categories of variables showed high influence of television viewing on:
   a) Physical development of adolescents
   b) Social development of adolescents
   c) Cognitive development of adolescents
   d) Moral development of adolescents
      as compared to the respondents showing moderate and low influence.

5. Higher percentage of the respondents from all the categories of variables showed moderate influence of television viewing on emotional development as compared to the respondents showing high and low influence.

6. No significant differences were found in the influence of television viewing on overall aspects of development, physical, social and moral development of adolescents in relation to the selected variables.

7. Significant differences were found in the influence of television viewing on the cognitive development of adolescents according to their sex.

8. Significant differences were found in the influence of television viewing on the emotional development of adolescents according to their viewing duration.

Section III - Mothers:

Influence on the development tasks:

1. Overall, there was moderate influence of television viewing on the developmental tasks of the adolescents.

2. There was moderate influence of television viewing on all developmental tasks of the adolescents.

3. Higher percentage of the mothers from both the categories of variables showed moderate influence of television viewing on the developmental tasks of their children as compared to the respondents showing high and low influence.

Influence on aspect of development:

4. There was high influence of television viewing on the overall aspects of development of the adolescents.

5. There was high influence of television viewing on each of the aspects of development of the adolescents.
6. Majority of the mothers from both the categories of variables indicated high influence of television viewing on the aspects of development of their children as compared to the mothers indicating moderate and low influence.

7. No significant differences were found in the percentage of mother regarding the influence of television viewing on the overall developmental tasks of adolescents and on the overall aspects of developmental of adolescents in relation to their educational qualification.

Discussion: There was moderate influence of television viewing on the development tasks of adolescents, which shows that television had helped adolescents in acquiring information regarding their developmental tasks, though, the extent of influence was moderate and not high. The reasons for it could be stronger peer group influence, inadequate information provided by television and the whole communication process is one way, through T.V. Adolescents cannot argue, reason or ask questions to television and hence peers or parents may be influencing more than television. Another reason could be parents may not be allowing their children to view television programmes as much as their children want to see. In India, parents do exercise some control on their children as compared to Western countries, which must have resulted in moderate influence.

Influence on Body Image:

Various programmes telecast, show modes/actresses/actors wearing contemporary fashionable clothes, footwear, etc. They adopt themselves with the actors and want to adopt fashionable clothes, new hairstyle, style of doing make - up, which sometimes is not acceptable in our society. At the same time, television was helping them to understand the changes occurring in their body.

Influence on Sex Roles:

The extent of influence with regard to sex roles was found to be moderate. According to the adolescent’s perception, television was helping them to perform modern roles. Programmes like socio - drama, serials or films shown on television generally depict sex - stereotyped roles showing women’s place in the home. She is expected to be coy and submissive, whereas men are shown dominating and aggressive. This reinforces the traditional roles of the society among adolescents.
It made them aware of the lower status of women in our society and changing roles of women in modern society. Therefore, through television, adolescents must have come to know about the need to raise the status of women and their changing roles in modern society.

**Influence on Independence:**

Television was helping adolescents to select their own career, their cloths, footwears and other items. Besides this, television was encouraging them to do household tasks independently.

**Influence on Future Roles:**

There was moderate influence of television viewing on the developmental tasks-future roles. Due to urbanization functions of family have changed. Earlier parents used to train their children for their future family life. Now, these functions of the family are transferred to the outside agencies like media. Adolescents were getting information related to family life from television to prepare themselves for family life.

Television can generate awareness regarding various vocations, impart knowledge regarding various jobs in rural and urban areas, opportunities for self-employment and so on, to help viewers to choose career for themselves.

Television has performed the function to some extent by telecasting programmes like “Aur Bhi Hai Rahen”. Hence, moderate influence was perceived by adolescents.

**Influence on Civic Competence:**

There was a high influence of television viewing on the developmental task-civic competence. Television was playing a vital role in helping adolescents to realize the laws of human rights as well as their rights and duties as a citizen.

Another interesting finding was that television viewing increased patriotism among adolescents. This is the need of the hour. Various programmes are telecast to develop the feeling of oneness among the countrymen such as “Mashal”, “Saudaa”, “Bharat Ke Shahid”, etc. This must have influenced adolescents.

**Influence of Television Viewing on the Aspects of Development of Adolescents:**

With large viewership and variety of programmes throughout the day, adolescents were influenced by it.

Television viewing motivated adolescents to play various outdoor games and participate in adventurous and extra - curricular activities. Nathani (1986) revealed a similar type of finding in his study. It was also helping them to know about the healthy food habits and
preventive measures for various dangerous diseases like AIDS, cancer, heart attack, etc. One striking finding of the study was that television viewing did not weaken the adolescent’s eyesight.

Television viewing helped adolescents to know about the culture of our country and other countries, about various religious festivals celebrated in India, and our customs and values.

One other influential role of television is that it helped adolescents in motivating them to oppose the social evil present in our society like dowry, child marriage, sati system, etc. Mahajan (1988) also reported a similar type of finding.

Television viewing influenced the adolescent’s cognitive development. It was found by various researches that there was improvement in general knowledge after viewing television programmes. Television viewing had increased inquisitiveness among its viewers, so they could gather more information on the programmes viewed.

Television being influential on cognitive development has also proved to be influential on emotional development of adolescents.

It helped them to release their pent-up emotions like they could laugh, cry, feel the excitement and thrill while viewing the programmes. Adolescents reported that by viewing television their feeling of sex and romance increased. Television was also helping adolescents to take them to the world of fantasy, which may not be desirable every time.

Television is performing the task of ‘Integration’ which is very well perceived by adolescents. Adolescents were helped to respect other religions and developed the feeling of oneness among them.

To tap the potential of television, programmes should be telecast keeping in mind the developmental tasks and needs of each age group. Specific programmes relevant to various age groups should be telecast for healthy development of individuals.

**Mothers’ Views on Influence of Television Viewing on Their Children:**

According to mothers of adolescents under the study, there was moderate influence of television viewing on the overall developmental tasks of the adolescents.

**Conclusion:** The present study throws light that television has potential to influence its audience. Television viewing not only helped adolescents to gain knowledge regarding world’s happenings, but it also helped them to adopt healthy food habits, in knowing ways of behaving with elders, increased their vocabulary, clarified their science and math’s concepts,
refreshed them for other day’s work, helped them in respecting another religions and also helped them in performing various developmental tasks.

**Impact of T.V. on Children and Women:**

Minow (1991) observed, “In 1961, I worried that my children would not benefit from television, but in 1991, I worry that my grandchildren will actually be harmed by it”.

A study by BBJ media Services (1996) revealed that on an average weekday, boys in the UK watch 4 hours on the weekend. Boys devote 15 minutes more in a day than girls to watching T.V.

Stayer (1995) has reported the results of a survey of 750 children in the age group 10-16 in the USA conducted by a nationally research public opinion research firm of Fairbank, Maslin, Maulin and Associates in 1995. The survey results show that T.V. is sending kids mixed messages about the moral condition of the society. What young people see on T.V. makes them think that people are mostly dishonest (49 per cent), care more about money than about people (54 per cent), are selfish (46 per cent) and talk back to their parents (51 per cent). On the other hand, kids also report that what they see on T.V. makes them think people take responsibility for their actions (54 per cent) and have food morals (61 per cent). The study also notes that kids say that the T.V. and the movies do an average job addressing the issues they think are more important. The kids say that the issues which are addressed most often by entertainment T.V. are crime (37 per cent) say it is “often” addressed, gangs (37 per cent) and drugs (31 per cent), those least often addressed are the education (28 per cent), AIDS (24 per cent), school related issues (18 per cent) and family issues (12 per cent).

Webster (1995) explores whether a high level of T.V. watching will have only a negative impact on the thinking and the behaviour of children and how they can be countered by using T.V. constructively in teaching. He asks whether long term passive television watching has damaging effects on children’s cognitive skills, language, learning, behaviour and achievement and answers in the affirmative. He concedes that, “Those children who spend more time watching television tend to be those with more limited general abilities in any case. In other words the longer a child habitually spends watching Television at home, the worse is her performance on measures such as reading comprehension, spelling, math’s concepts or language structure.” The problem is not just with the television.
Levy (1994) observes that advancements in multimedia systems and the children's access to computer mouse and remote control devices even before they go to school are encouraging them (the children) to discover monetary delights, most often in form of special effects.

There are conflicting theories about the impact of video games on children. Tulupman (1993) summarizes the study, 'Mind and Media' by Patrician Greenfield of the University of California. According to the study, the possible effects of video games on children could be either of the following:-

1. The interactive violence may reduce a certain amount of aggression by giving children an outlet to release their energy.
2. Video games provide a model of aggressive behaviour and teach children how to become violent.

Webster (1995) suggests that the research evidence on T.V. watching and children's behaviour is not easy to interpret. Teachers and parents may be concerned that violence on television may produce more violent behaviour. Webster cites that "the classic psychologist's experiment is to ask children to watch a film of an adult hitting a doll, and then observe them in a room which contains, among other things, dolls of the types shown in the film. In this setting children, especially boys, do imitate the adult's violent behaviour." However, Webster is optimistic that the tendency for the children who watch violent scenes to display more violent behaviour would be short-lived phenomenon as by the age of five or six, more children would be able to distinguish between violence and its consequences in real and real life. Since the use of new media forms is likely to continue escalating, instead of allowing T.V. to pace the viewer, if teachers and parents can draw up with children the questions to ask and develop learning, Webster argues that the negative effects of T.V. can be minimized and the positive effects can be harnessed.

Prasad (1995) has made observations on media strategies for rural development as follows:-

Prasad observed the role of Radio & Television that "We seem to think that coverage is communication, that quality is credibility" for making appropriate strategy for rural India (H.Y. Sardaprasad: 1981).
The sheer amount of time spent in watching TV itself is considered too large to have no impact on children in considered of their studies, socialization and participation in physical exercises regardless of the nature and quality of the programmes.

Narayanan's (1983) doctoral study in Sociology, which dealt with the TV viewing habits of children in Mumbai, reveals that TV keeps children indoors in the evening when they should actually be engaged in vigorous outdoor play. Though TV is supposed to provide information and knowledge, Narayanan said few of his respondents reported that TV glued kids got good grades in examinations!

Singh, Ranjit (1992) reviewed 108 published works on the impact of television. Almost all of these focused on the impact on children and education, particularly in the context of rural India. Singh's broad conclusions are that TV has changed the habits of the children. Educational TV has a positive impact and helped children to gain more knowledge. Singh, Ranjit (1995) 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. 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. Singh, V.P. (1993) found that the advent of the innovation of the satellite television has affected the Indian middle class in two ways. 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 of their value orientation. The major findings of the pioneer works of Singh, V.P. (1995) lying on the fact that a significant decrease in the frequency of radio listening and cinema going was observed which is an indicator of change their media habits. The programmes of foreign origin have an edge over the indigenous programmes of Doordarshan.

Mahajan (1988) 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 general feeling of universal brotherhood.

Kalra and Karla (1996) studied the impact of cable TV viewing on adolescents. The Study was conducted in four colonies of Ludhiana city in Punjab covering a sample of 150 adolescents in the age group 13-19 who had connections in their houses. The authors point out that the media invasion has triggered off a number of unhealthy trends in the society. It
was even interfered with social mingling and family bonds. The ‘Villain’ has driven guests away and injected lethargy into to the youth and students. Studies have gone out of gear and the ocular, physical and mental health of the ‘Victims’ been affected. The authors point to the special responsibility of parents in curtailing the negative effects of cable T.V.

Deodhar (1991) rightly summed up the dilemmas concerning the impact of T.V. “T.V. is a double edged weapon. It can be the healing knife of a surgeon or the stabbing weapon of a killer.” The book very aptly brings home the point that a child builds its character, its intelligence and its knowledge level in the constant company of its two parents, the mother and the father. Tele- video at home or at school or at the community place may soon become the third parent.

Nandini Prasad (1995) studied 75 days programmes of Doordarshan. Based on a content analysis she observed that the public sector broadcasting fails in one of its prime aims of promoting women’s development. She finds that more often women were portrayed as a mere decorative piece, a feather - glamour doll existing only to highlight the hero’s masculinity. Articulation about the women as a victim of injustice in the patriarchal world order is rare. The afternoon transmission which targets women, children and the elderly encompass cooking and beauty tips, training in first-aid, songs, and a few goods serials.

Communication may take several different forms. It may be interpersonal in nature, it may involve the use of personal communication medium, or it may be described as mass communication. The act of communicating via interpersonal, media, or mass media channels involves a process or series of stages. Even in its simplest form, communication between a source and a receiver may take on an interactional or transactional dimension. Mass communication involves one or more institutional sources (usually complex entities such as production houses in conjunction with a television network) reaching thousands or millions of people with the same transient message. The audience members are heterogeneous, or demographically diverse, and unknown to the message source.

Scholars have developed models and theories and illustrate abstract ideas regarding communication processes and behavior. Models may also be used to explain media effects. Models help to demonstrate the different process of communication, whether linear, international, or transactional in nature.
The study of media effects assumes a basic cause-and-effect scenario. Social scientists employ statistical methods to account for chance as an important component of the notion of causality.

Researchers often measure media effects in laboratory settings using experimental methods. Other research methods include survey, field experiments, and panel studies. Content analysis is used to examine the presence, absence, or quantity of certain attributes of media messages that allegedly contribute to certain media effect. Most media effects studies employ statistical methods.

With so many of the problems in today's world being blamed on media communications, the issue of mass media effects has become one of the paramount social relevance. Media effect is an important and fascinating research domain. A fundamental knowledge of media effects is a necessary criteria for excelling in the information age.

Impact of T.V. on the Status of Women:

The growth of television in the developing world over the last two decades has been extraordinary. Estimates suggest that the number of television sets in Asia has increased more than six-fold since the 1980s, increasing from 100 million to 650 million. In China, television exposure grew from 18 million people in 1977 to 1 billion by 1995. In more recent years, satellite and cable television availability has risen dramatically. Again in China, the number of people with satellite access increased from just 270,000 in 1991 to 14 million by 2005. Further, these numbers are likely to understate the change in the number of people for whom television is available, since a single television is often watched by many. India has not been left out of the cable and satellite revolution: A recent survey finds that 112 million households in India own a television, with (61 per cent) of those homes having cable or satellite service.

This figure represents a doubling in cable access in just five years from a previous survey.

Beyond providing entertainment, television vastly increases both the availability of information about the outside world and exposure to other ways of life. This is especially true for remote rural villages; where several ethnographic and anthropological studies have suggested that television is the primary channel through which households get information about life outside their villages. Most popular cable programming features urban settings
where lifestyles differ in prominent and salient ways from those in rural areas. Anthropological accounts suggest that the growth of T.V. in rural areas has had large effects on a wide range of day-to-day lifestyle behaviours, including latrine building and fan usage.

In a recent paper, "The Power of T.V.: Cable Television and Women's Status in India," University of Chicago Department of Economics professor Emily Oster and Robert Jensen of the University of California, Los Angeles, explore the effect of the introduction of cable television in rural areas of India on a particular set of values and behaviours, namely attitudes toward and discrimination against women.

Although issues of gender equality are important throughout the world, they are particularly salient in India. In a 1992 article, Nobel Prize-winner Amartya Sen of Harvard University argued that India had 41 million "missing women"—women and girls who died prematurely due to mistreatment resulting from a dramatically male-biased population. The population bias toward men has only gotten worse in the last two decades as sex-selective abortion has become more widely used to avoid female births. More broadly, girls in India are discriminated against in nutrition, medical care, vaccination, and education. Even within India, gender inequality is significantly worse in rural than in urban areas.

Many characters on popular soap operas have more education, marry later, and have smaller families—all things rarely found in rural areas; and many female characters work outside the home, sometimes as professionals, running businesses, or in other positions of authority. By exposing rural households to urban attitudes and values, cable and satellite television may lead to improvements in status for rural women. It is this possibility that Jensen and Oster explore in their paper. In particular, they evaluate the effect of the introduction of cable and satellite television on a variety of measures of women's status: autonomy, attitudes toward spousal abuse, son preference, and fertility. In addition, they explore the effects on education for children, which some authors have argued will increase when the status of women is higher.

**Television and Modernization among College Girls in India, Kamlesh Mahajan, 1990:**

'Television' refers to a process by which a change occurs in the mental outlook of the people. 'Horikawa' has very ably identified the changes caused by the television on the lives of women and children.
A survey was done in the Meerut City in the Meerut district of Uttar Pradesh State in India. The universe of the study consists of the girl students of three post-graduate women colleges in Meerut city. The aim of the study was firstly, to identify the patterns of television among the young women in terms of the frequency of watching T.V., daily time allotment and the purpose of watching. Secondly, it attempts to gauge the implications of T.V. watching from the point of view of modernization. In other words, it aims to know the views of the Indian College girls about the role of television in the process of modernization. Samples of 425 girls were carbed out from the total of 4218 students. The data were collected in 1988 by a administering a schedule to the respondents.

The major findings as regards the frequency of televiewing among young college girls, was that (84.3 per cent) of them frequently watch T.V., (10.8 per cent) occasionally watch, whereas, the remaining (4.9 per cent) of them rarely do so. Thus, all the girls watch T.V though their frequency of watching varies.

Their daily time allotment for televiewing is, (19.1 per cent) watch for approximately half an hour, (32.7 per cent) for 1-2 hours, (25.9 per cent) for 3-4 hours, and the remaining (22.4 per cent) for more than 4 hours, (66.8 per cent) of the college girls watch T.V. programmes for recreation, (16.7 per cent) for education and (16.5 per cent) for information.

The study has revealed three basic behavioural characteristics regarding televiewing by the young Indian women:-

First, they are frequently watching television programmes; secondly, they, on an average, devote 1-3 hours daily to televiewing and thirdly, they watch television for the purpose of recreation rather than education or information to a great extent. These patterns confirm the belief that the young Indian women are significantly exposed to television and are vulnerable to its influence.

The findings of the study suggest the following inferences in relation to modernization:

1. An overwhelming majority of college girls finds that television increases knowledge about other countries and promotes the feelings of universal brotherhood;
2. Two-thirds of the respondents have agreed that television helps inter-caste marriages;
3. A more than half of the college girls have opined that television motivates people to oppose social evils;
4. In the opinion of two-third of the respondents the television increases the feelings of sex and romance and the tendency towards violence;

5. Nearly three-fourth of the college girls find television conducive to the dissemination of new techniques of committing crime and the promotion of the unbridled life styles; and

They are ambivalent as regards the effects of television on traditional values. A little less than half of them think that it adversely affect such values, whereas, the other half holds the opposite view.

**Perceptions of Housewives regarding the Influence of Cable Television on the Selected Areas of Their Lives, Uma Joshi, Suvarna Bhokare, 1999:**

The present study was undertaken to study the perceptions of housewives regarding the influence of cable television in the areas of information acquisition, daily and other activities, health, and development of creative abilities. The sample of the study consisted of 80 housewives of Baroda City. Only the housewives, having pre-school or primary school-going children, were selected for the study. The data were collected using methods such as personal contact, contacting through friends, relatives and through telephone. The findings suggested that there were no significant differences in the perceptions of the housewives regarding influence of cable television on daily and other activities, health, and development of creative abilities in relations to the selected variables.

**Background Information of the Housewives:** The findings of the study revealed that little more than (50 per cent) of the housewives took cable television connection to avoid going to theatres for watching new movies and stop children from going to neighbour’s house. (40 per cent) of the housewives reported that they took cable connection for entertainment.

Dass and Mohansundaram (1990) also found that the television owner purchased television purely for entertainment. This shows that although television entered with promise of educating people in India, it is mainly used for entertainment purpose.

A high majority of the housewives watched Zee Channel most of the times, while a majority of the housewives watched Sony Channel most of the times. This may be due to the fact that Zee television and Sony Channels telecast a variety of entertainment programmes which are film based and in Hindi language which can have relevance to some of the changing and traditional cultural values in India. It is very disappointing to find that
Doordarshan being our national channel was to some extent. This was also reflected, the reasons given by the housewives for taking cable connection was that they were bored of Doordarshan programmes. This implies that Doordarshan needs to do introspection in the content of its programmes and make them more relevant and interesting.

A majority of the housewives watch serials and news. They watch serials as they are of short duration and shown in the afternoons and those serials are generally based on social themes.

**Daily and Other Activities:** The time spent on activities done in free time, religious and other book reading, magazine reading, offering prayer to God at home, visiting friends and relatives was reduced to some extent. These activities are not compulsory for the housewives. They can adjust or even sacrifice these activities for watching cable television.

There was increase in the impulsive buying and buying foreign products of the housewives to a great extent as a result of cable television. The findings is supported by a survey conducted by Operation Research Group (1987), which revealed that a little more than (50 per cent) of the respondents purchased commercial products after seeing them advertised on the television.

Eashwar (1994) studied the impact of cable television on women in terms of activities, time management and interactions with family members and the outside world. The findings of the study revealed that cable television did not have a profound effect on the activities of women. It increases considerably the isolation of women by restricting her interactions with husband, children, and other members of the family, friends and neighbours. This happens both due to her own involvement with the television as well as the involvement of each member of the family in watching cable television and regular television programmes.

**Health:** Little more than (80 per cent) of the housewives reported that their health was influenced to a less extent due to prolonged sitting infront of the television.

This may be due to the reason that a majority of the housewives are below 40 years of age group. Thus, as they were young, prolonged sitting in front of cable television may not be showing any influence on their health.

However, it was found that the housewives sometimes faced problems like headache, backache and of eyesight. This may be because sometimes they were watching cable
television for long hours, especially when interesting programmes were there. This may have been straining their eyes and back for some time.

Some programmes should be shown on cable television itself which give information regarding how much distance should be kept from the television set, appropriate posture while watching programmes and for how many hours the television should be watched to minimize its negative influence on the viewer’s health.

**Development of Creative Abilities:** Watching cable television programmes helped the housewives in developing creative abilities to some extent. Many programmes on cable television are telecast which provide information on making various products, e.g., using waste materials, various garbage management techniques, stitching or designing of various garments, making various income generating products.

**Conclusion:** The present study throws light on the perceptions of the housewives regarding the influence of cable television on the selected areas of their lives. The study has revealed that the housewives acquired information and developed creative abilities to some extent as a result of watching cable television, whereas, their daily and other activities and health remained unaffected.

It can be concluded that cable television can be exploited for education and development if meaningful programmes are produced and telecast. There should be some slots of programmes telecast for women on every channel. Cable operators themselves should be made to realise that apart from showing films and film-based programmes they can telecast educative and meaningful programmes for various age groups. If more informative programmes are telecast, the viewers will become well informed citizens.

**Television, though significant, is only one variable in the complex dynamics of Social change, referring to the Impact of Television in Brazil, Kottak, 1990:**

T.V. impact is one highly significant part of a more general process of urbanism, nationalism, and state solidification, with many mutually reinforcing aspects (television) characters tend to belong to the national elite, enjoying the good life of wealth, power and leisure, encourages local-level acceptance of the external messages. Townspeople mine the world of (television programs) for patterns and values that eventually influence local prestige norms. More and more people emulate them. Over time...T.V. gradually aids a national process of social liberalization.
Television - not the Internet - is responsible for World Wide Social change, Foreign Policy reports via T.V. Tattle, October 22, 2009:

It's not Twitter or Facebook that's reinventing the planet. Eighty years after the first commercial broadcast crackled to life, television still rules our world. All those soap operas might be the ticket to a better future after all.

"And it's not earnest educational programming that's reshaping the world on all those T.V. sets. The programs that so many dismiss as junk -- from song - and - dance shows to Desperate Housewives -- are being eagerly consumed by poor people everywhere who are just now getting access to television for the first time. That's a powerful force for spreading glitz and drama -- but also social change."

T.V. themes more popular than hymns at Funerals, April 17, 2009:

T.V. theme tunes and pop songs are now more popular than traditional hymns at funerals, a new survey reveals, reports Ananova.

"A survey of 30,000 funerals conducted last year found that hymns were now the most popular requests at only (35 per cent) of services.

'My Way' by Frank Sinatra was the most popular, followed by 'Wind Beneath My Wings' by Bette Midler and 'Time To Say Goodbye' by Andrea Bocelli and Sarah Brightman.

Happy endings on T.V. are no guarantee that networks will live happily ever after, by James Hibberd from the 'The Hollywood Reporter', February 11, 2009:

'Producers on current shows are being told to keep their subject matter light, as if writers should use the Dow to calculate each episode's pathos - to - comedy ratio. One need only glance at next season's T.V. drama pilots to see that networks are banking on traditional closed - ended procedural dramas that have the potential to provide satisfying happy endings on a weekly basis.

Programmers forget that the content trend toward darker and serialized shows -- the one now ebbing out of style - wasn't born out of the stock market peak of 2007. It came after 9/11 and the bursting of the Internet bubble, during the previous period of stock-market lows.
Fox's "24," FX's "The Shield," ABC's "Lost" and Sci Fi's "Battlestar Galactica" helped usher in an era of dark, complex, groundbreaking, critically acclaimed and conspiratorial action dramas that were major hits for their networks.

The point isn't that dark times produce more gritty, realistic hits. The point is that recession-era successes are just as likely to reflect the mood of the country as to act as a lighthearted tonic. Truly escapist T.V. is any show that's so compelling viewers forget they're on the couch.

The "Americans want escapism and happy endings" mantra is wishful thinking. With the broadcast ratings woes, it's TV executives who want to escape.'

Watching T.V. gives First Aid Clues, February 2, 2009:

Watching T.V. shows like Casualty and ER makes people confident enough to try and resuscitate people in real life, a survey has suggested, reports the BBC. The poll of just under 2,000 people found one in five would try. Not everyone agrees it's a good idea.

An article in T.V. Squad last August, reported that a doctor's group in Italy was so upset by the inaccuracies in American medical shows such as Scrubs, Grey's Anatomy, ER and House, that want Italian broadcasters to refrain from airing these shows at all, lest, they prompt people to take medicine into their own hands.

Related:
-- Medical Dramas a source of health information for audiences.
-- Medical T.V. 'feeds health fears'.
-- Study: 'ER' Episodes Influence Viewers Health Knowledge.
-- Scrubs, Grey's Anatomy may be banned in Italy.

Sex on T.V. Increases Teen Pregnancy, Says Report, November 3, 2008:

Researchers at the Rand Corporation say they have documented for the first time how exposure to racy content can influence teen pregnancy rates. They found that teens exposed to the most sexual content on T.V. were twice as likely as teens watching less of this material to become pregnant before they reach age 20.
Social Audit of the Media, Survey findings:
Quantitative Assessment

The Centre for Media Studies (CMS) based in New Delhi conducted during 1994-95 a country wide social audit of the functioning of mass media which is without precedent in the relatively new field of media research in India.

Pioneering combination of methods: It was found that the couple of studies of the social impact of television that are available were conducted before the spread of T.V. in India on a large scale, and much prior to the advent of cable and satellite television. The CMS inquiry can therefore be described as a virtual base-line study at national level.

At once large-scale and in-depth, the pioneering research effort by CMS utilized a combination of methods. One was the conventional questionnaire-based survey, which still remains the primary and indispensable tool for quantitative research.

The survey of exposure to various media and the perceived effects of television were carried out in 2,464 T.V. households in seven States spread across the country: A.P (south), Assam (north-east), Maharashtra (west), Orissa (east) and U.P (north), besides Delhi and Bangalore. About (60 per cent) of the sampled homes had access out to Doordarshan while (40 per cent) had cable T.V. also.

Discussion with focus groups was the second method employed in the course of the social audit of the media. The groups spoken to were of students, parents, teachers, and housewives.

The third method employed by CMS was to convene colloquia at national and regional levels which brought together, for an exchange of views, persons active in public life, social scientists, legal luminaries, media critics and practitioners, administrators, academicians and, importantly, social activists including and in particular those engaged in work among women and children. Among the eminent participants were three former Ministers of Information and Broadcasting - I.K. Gujral, Vasant Sathe and P. Upendra.

The colloquia yielded both diagnoses of the malady of the mass media and suggested cures, from different perspectives and backgrounds of experience. The idea of organizing such round-tables at regional centres outside the national capital and other metro-politian cities was mooted by N. Bhaskara Rao, chairman of CMS, at a national seminar on violence and vulgarity in the mass media organized in New Delhi on 22nd September, 1994.

These gatherings proved valuable in three ways:-
As for exchange of views among concerned citizens in culturally homogeneous areas,

As a supplement and a corrective to the Delhi-centric bias to which are liable not only the vast central bureaucracy but many of the government-funded academic and professional bodies that have mushroomed in the capital since independence.

Serving to sensitise local public opinion through Press coverage of the seminar proceedings and the personal interaction of participants with their professional peers and with friends in different walks of life.

**Impact of T.V., A Statistical Outline:**

**Time spent on different media**

The average time spent per day by viewers in cable households was 246 minutes (about 4 hours) and in DD - only 210 minutes (3 ½ hours). T.V. claimed the highest share among the media, on the part of all categories of members of a household: men, women, children and youth. It accounted for more than 50 per cent of media-time in each category.

Television has cast a shadow on all other media. The change in media habits is brought out by the following figures:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Cable (%)</th>
<th>DD - only (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Newspapers</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reduced</td>
<td>26.2</td>
<td>30.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increased</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>4.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Radio</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reduced</td>
<td>32.7</td>
<td>46.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increased</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>1.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cinema going</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reduced</td>
<td>66.9</td>
<td>60.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increased</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It should be noted that though cinema going has declined, watching movies has not: films are viewed more than before, but at home, on the T.V. screen. The biggest casualty is radio, and reading of books/novels, magazines and dailies have all suffered, in that order. While readership of newspapers may not have declined, the time devoted to newspaper reading has come down, partly due to the attention claimed by T.V. in general and by its news and current affairs programmes.
That cable leads to more addictive T.V. viewing is suggested by the following figures of the percentage of viewers in three categories:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Hours/Week</th>
<th>Cable</th>
<th>DD - only</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>Up to 14 hrs.</td>
<td>31.2</td>
<td>41.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heavy</td>
<td>15-35 hrs.</td>
<td>63.9</td>
<td>55.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T.V. addicts</td>
<td>Above 35 hrs.</td>
<td>4.9</td>
<td>2.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**DD for entertainment mainly**

The study findings reveal that only a third of cable viewers (35.1 per cent) and a quarter of DD - only viewers (26.8 per cent) watch news on Doordarshan at least once a week. In other words, nearly two-thirds of all viewers rarely watch DD news.

This suggests that the typical T.V. viewer is primarily interested in entertainment rather than news and current affairs, and that his exposure to the latter is incidental to T.V. viewing.

**Effect on studies and homework**

Information, education and entertainment are often stated to be the objectives of the mass media. Doordarshan is run by the Government supposedly as a public service. But the study showed that DD’s direct contribution to children’s education is next to nil, though its contribution to enrichment of general knowledge is rated highly.

It was found that the percentage of viewership of DD’s educational programmes among children was as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Cable</th>
<th>DD - only</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes, always</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>3.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes, sometimes</td>
<td>21.8</td>
<td>15.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rarely</td>
<td>10.6</td>
<td>7.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Never</td>
<td>64.8</td>
<td>73.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

When asked about the quality of these educational programmes, nearly two-thirds of cable viewers and three-fourths of DD - only viewers pleaded ignorance as they had never seen those programmes.

On the other hand, a very high proportion of viewers (93 per cent) said that Doordarshan had helped them in developing an understanding of history through its historical
programmes, and of India's cultural heritage. Promotion of awareness of economic development, and of health awareness through programmes like those on immunization, was lauded. Television was also given credit for promoting awareness about consumer products through its advertisements and about sports through its live visual coverage of national and international events; but, ironically, about a third of the children who were interviewed reported that they play less due to their pre-occupation with T.V.

Children also study less on account of pre-occupation with T.V. More than (25 per cent) of parents of children below 15 years said that T.V. had a negative impact on studies, while nearly a fifth said that they could not say. Following is the percentage distribution of the different responses regarding T.V.'s effect on the homework habits and studies of children:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Cable</th>
<th>DD - only</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Positive</td>
<td>22.8</td>
<td>24.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative</td>
<td>25.5</td>
<td>30.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No influence</td>
<td>36.3</td>
<td>28.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don't know/can't say</td>
<td>15.2</td>
<td>15.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Opinion was divided among parents on the general question whether the influence of T.V. on children's development has been harmful or helpful. Over a quarter of the parents felt that it was harmful:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Cable</th>
<th>DD - only</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Harming</td>
<td>26.5</td>
<td>30.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Helping</td>
<td>39.7</td>
<td>40.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don't know/can't say</td>
<td>33.8</td>
<td>29.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

How do children themselves see it? About one-third of them reported that their homework habits had been influenced by T.V. in one way or another, as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Cable</th>
<th>DD - only</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Adjusted</td>
<td>9.5</td>
<td>9.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disturbed</td>
<td>11.2</td>
<td>10.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neglected</td>
<td>12.1</td>
<td>10.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
How parents responded to this situation was also sought to be ascertained. In a majority of T.V. households there is no bar on what children may watch. Only in (35.3 per cent) of cable and (36.1 per cent) of DD - only households are children prevented from seeing some programmes. Moderation of children’s viewing of T.V. by parents was reported as follow:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Cable</th>
<th>DD - only</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Always</td>
<td>12.6</td>
<td>14.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>51.0</td>
<td>56.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Never</td>
<td>36.4</td>
<td>28.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Why cable and why not?**

One of the aspects of the study was ascertainment of reasons for having/not having cable T.V.

**Reasons for cable connection**

- More films on cable: 45.38
- Wider choice of entertainment: 67.31
- Better news/awareness: 40.61
- Pressure of children: 17.46
- English music/serials: 28.22
- Sports: 3.76
- Inferiority of DD programmes: 3.76
- Cable as status symbol: 2.54

Those not having cable T.V. were also asked to mention the reasons.

**Reasons for not having cable**

- Have enough entertainment on DD: 36.44
- Studies will be affected: 33.67
- Not available in our area: 30.42
- Costs money: 13.44
- Obscenity/vulgarity: 17.11
- Programmes not relevant: 6.63
- Cannot relate: 2.91
It was found that as many as (4 per cent) of the viewers covered in the survey had disconnected cable either permanently or temporarily. The study sought to ascertain the reason. Adverse effects on children’s studies were cited as the most important reason.

**Reasons for disconnecting cable**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Children’s studies affected</td>
<td>67.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Programmes not good/obscene</td>
<td>18.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No time</td>
<td>7.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DD is enough</td>
<td>2.9</td>
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<td>Grandparents’ pressure</td>
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**Individual and societal impact**

The study brought out a variety of changes, to a greater or lesser degree, induced by exposure to T.V. in dress and food habits, sleeping hours, interaction among family members, etc. Perhaps it is a case of the respondents not being able to discern what is happening in their own lives while making a gloomy projection of T.V.’s influence on society. It is also a question whether there is an element of self-justification and evasion on the part of parents in their responses, cited earlier, to questions on T.V.’s influence on studies and children’s development in general, and on parental control/moderation of T.V. viewing by children: can parents who lack self-control in their own T.V. viewing control or guide T.V. viewing by their children?

**Focus Group Discussions:**

Discussions on the social impact of T.V. were held by CMS-trained interviewers between the month of October, 1994 and January, 1995 with focus groups at fourteen places in six States across the country. These were: Hyderabad, Cuddapah and Karimnagar in Andhra Pradesh; Guwahati, Tezpur and Golaghat in Assam; Delhi; Jalgaon in Maharashtra; Allahabad and Lucknow in Uttar Pradesh; and Sundergarh, Keonjahr, Cuttack and Bhubaneswar in Orissa.

The focus groups comprised children, students and youth; teachers; and parents (including separate discussions with male and female heads of households).

Presented below are the salient points that emerged from the focus group discussions.
Awareness programmes hailed

The group of English-speaking parents at Hyderabad said that the general knowledge of children was improved by their viewing such programmes as ‘World This Week’, ‘Turning Point’ and ‘Quiz’. These programmes were also cited with approval in several other discussion groups.

A housewives group at George Town in Allahabad referred to ‘Surabhi’ as an example of providing useful knowledge in an interesting way. ‘Parakh’ won similar praise as a news magazine during discussion with male heads of households at Vikas Nagar in Lucknow.

The programmes sponsored by the University Grants Commission won high praise, but the timing of their telecast was regarded by some as unsuitable, thereby reducing their usefulness.

Other current affairs and general knowledge programmes that received favourable comment included Eye Witness, News Track and Animal Kingdom.

Effect on children

a) As Seen by Themselves: A group of children (below 15 year) who were interviewed at Gomti Nagar in Lucknow said that they used to devote more time to their studies, and to play more games, before cable T.V. came into their homes. They now spent less time with others of their own age.

On the other hand, their knowledge about the outside world, which had been very limited, was now greater. Another positive feature mentioned by them was that they have been made aware of many things not mentioned in their school books.

Some said that their role model now was a film star or a sports person, rather than a historical figure, political leader or industrialist as in the past.

When probed what would happen if cable T.V. were removed tomorrow, one of them exclaimed: ‘No, uncle! Do not do that. How will we pass our time?’ They said that, except for the BBC channel, they found something or other that was attractive in all the foreign channels.

A couple of the children said, half seriously, that when a movie or interesting programme is on, their mothers try to finish their household work quickly; as a result, the food they get is not as tasty as it used to be.
A group of children at Guwahati said that they cannot study when a cricket match is being shown on T.V., even if examinations are on; similarly if some other favourite programme of theirs is on.

Some children in Bhubaneswar said that when T.V. telecasts fairy tales like ‘Cinderella’ and ‘Sleeping Beauty’ it motivates them to go to the library and read those stories. They enjoyed the reading as they could picturise the situations.

b) As Seen by Parents: A group of housewives in Delhi said that if T.V. is turned on, it is easier to get the child to eat.

At Golaghat in Assam, Mr. Duara said that, specially after the coming of cable T.V., they have to be firm with the children to the point of rudeness and forcibly turn off the T.V., specially when a cricket match is being shown; otherwise they will not attend to their studies. He pleaded that Doordarshan should stop telecasting cricket matches.

A housewife in Delhi claimed that T.V. does not affect the care and attention bestowed by mother on their children. Housewives go about attending to the kitchen and other work even when T.V. is on.

An adverse effect on children cited by housewives in Delhi is that they start singing off-colour songs, or repeating a greeting like ‘meri jaan’, when they meet any visitor.

In Guwahati, Mrs. Bardoloi felt that her children had some innovative talent which they have lost after beginning to spend their time before the T.V. set.

According to a parent in Gourinagar, Bhubanshwar, after watching a serial ‘Phir Wohi Talash’ his daughter forced him to grant her permission to marry the boy of her choice.

c) As Seen by Teachers: The principal of a school in Bhubaneshwar complained that children in her school feel sleepy in the classroom as they sit up till late at night watching movies.

Some teachers working on the afternoon shift complained that the 2 p.m. films on the Metro Channel had led to an unmistakable drop in the attendance at school.

In the elite schools of Delhi where discussions were held with teachers - a Delhi Public School unit, Air Force Bal Bharati, Sardar Patel Vidyalaya and Kannada School and two Kendriya Vidyalayas - almost all agreed with the prognosis of a male teacher in Kannada school that in any class there are (20 per cent) toppers, (20 per cent) below average, and the remaining (60 per cent) average. The toppers know how to adjust their time between studies and T.V. viewing. The problem lies with the others as they are succumbing to T.V.
A number of teachers said that with both parents going to work, the formative years of a child are left, much of the time, in the care of an ayah or of T.V. The parents do not make the effort, when at home, to sit with the children and talk to them or read to them. From a sense of guilt, they allow the children to do what they like: and watching T.V. comes at the top of the list.

The teachers also blamed the film-based programmes and the sex-permeated among serials for a big increase in love affairs in the schools. Earlier such incidence used to be few and far between, and confined to students in the 11th and 12th classes. Now such things are happening even among 6th and 7th graders.

**Students and Youth**

At each of the twelve cities and towns where focus group discussions were organised, CMS researchers made it a point to talk to groups of students and youth - who are considered the most vulnerable to the impact of T.V. and more especially of cable T.V. - as well as to parents. The following salient points emerged.

**Positive Elements:**

(i) Students are improving their general knowledge by viewing programmes such as Quiz, World This Week and Turning Point.

(ii) The young are gaining in self-confidence and are able to move freely in society.

(iii) There is greater acceptance of gender equality.

(iv) Young housewives are able to spend the afternoons without boredom or recourse to gossip.

(v) There is better sports awareness and career guidance is found useful.

(vi) Young people feel confident in their ability to shape their future, after watching programmes where T.V. has shown stories of people in real life who have risen from the ranks by their own efforts and hard work.

**Negative Elements:**

(i) Getting hooked to the idiot box definitely hampers the studies of school and college students.

(ii) There is neglect of sports, affecting the health of the young, and continuous T.V. watching leads in many cases to impairment of eyesight and the need to wear spectacles or contact lenses.
(iii) Young people are led prematurely into a world of sexual fantasy by watching T.V. or some of the Zee T.V. programmes.

(iv) Some of them practice copycat violence. It was reported in a Delhi elite school that a student mixed laxative given to horses with food, and fed it to his unsuspecting schoolmates. It almost led to the death of one of the victims. The boy who did it had seen it done in one of the movies shown on T.V. Another case referred to in the discussions was of a boy in the Naval School who took to stealing cars and got nabbed after his tenth exploit.

**Growth of Consumerism:**

Young people want to acquire whatever goods - from fancy shoes to ‘Dove’ soap - are advertised on T.V. They are being inducted into a materialistic culture of consumerism. Soon there may be only one culture world - wide: American pop culture.

**Precocious Sexual Stimulation:**

The pursuit of sexual gratification, which is part of the consumerist culture, is promoted prematurely among the young by exposure to titillating scenes on the T.V. screen, fashion shows, hot films, and film - based song - and - dance sequences. A housewife in Allahabad said that this effect of T.V. on the young can be neutralized in two ways: firstly, regulating their T.V. watching in terms of timing and of programmes; and (ii) answering satisfactorily the questions that arise in their minds after watching T.V. However, she said, these measures are not easy to implement. For one thing, ‘We ourselves feel like watching those programmes which we think are not good for the children.’ Secondly, ‘most of us are either not competent or bold enough to explain to children their questions concerning sex’.

**Temptation of Small - Screen Career:**

During a discussion with students of Lucknow University, a girl student confessed: ‘In the field of acting there are few chances in films, but one can go to the small screen without much difficulty’.

**Dress and Deportment:**

Several respondents spoke disapprovingly of the tendency on the part of both boys and girls to imitate western pop dress styles - jeans in particular - or the wearing of an ear - ring in one ear.

However, a focus group of parents in Andhra Pradesh noted a healthy change in the dress habit of young girls as the result of exposure to T.V. In place of the traditional,
provocative lehanga and half-sari, they were switching on to salwars kameez which seemed to the respondents to be more decent.

**Parents' double standards**

The need for parents themselves to exercise self-control if they are to regulate T.V. viewing by their children was highlighted by some instances, which focus-group moderators came across, of double standards on the part of elders.

In Lucknow, a doctor (name withheld) who claims to be the disciple of a 'Satsangi Baba' expressed himself against Star T.V. He said that cable T.V. is leading to a cultural colonisation of our country. It was discovered towards the end of the discussion, however, that the doctor is himself a successful cable operator.

Such hypocrisy, it turned out, is not confined to men. A lady in her late fifties (name withheld), residing in Mohannagar, expressed herself strongly against cable T.V. She said that many of the programmes shown on the foreign channels were destructive of our cultural values. She herself watched T.V. rarely, she said, and only to see 'Krishna' on DD2. But her daughter, who is a doctor by profession, came out with the revelation that her mother devoted several hours a day to T.V.

**Impact on family life: Two views**

Contrasting impressions of the effect of DD and cable T.V. on communication and interaction between family members were voiced by discussants in focus group sessions.

Some housewives said that instead of playing cards in a club or visiting their men friends, husbands came home early in the evening because of the pull of T.V. Thus more time was spent together by the husband and wife, and by both with their children, than during life before T.V.

Whether this physical proximity for a greater duration meant better communication and understanding between the members of a family was a question on which views differed. Some felt that family ties were improved, while some others said that members of the family were each separately glued to the small screen, without any interaction by way of conversation taking place.

Discussants in Andhra Pradesh said that cable T.V. helped to keep elderly members of the family occupied. They now felt less neglected, and more cared for. This view of T.V. as a lollipop for the aged was expressed at more than one focus group discussion with male and female heads of households.
During discussion with a youth group in Delhi, a participant said that T.V. was a source of conflict within the family because of differing views on what programmes should be watched.

**Case studies of T.V. addicts**

A 20-year-old student of Osmania University (name withheld) said that he was not exposed to cable T.V. till he completed his 12th class, since his parents feared that it would hamper his study. Once he got through the joint entrance examination for engineering and medical education, and was admitted to the B.E. (Chemical Engineering) course, he requested his parents to subscribe to cable T.V. as a reward for his good performance. They agreed, as there were no younger children in the home who were likely to be adversely affected by cable T.V.

Prior to the arrival of cable, he had watched T.V. very little since he was busy with studies. But now his addiction began. He compared his being hooked on cable T.V to becoming addicted to drugs. Except for the time he spends in the college, he is all the time with T.V. The moment he gets home he turns it on if it is not already on, and watches it even while having his food. Formerly, he used to complete his meal within 15 minutes; now it takes at least 45 minutes.

He does not care about what he is eating, or how much, or the taste of the food. When news is telecast on one channel, he switches to another for entertainment programmes. He is attracted in particular to programmes that show semi-clad women. He feels that cable T.V. has taken away the potential to pursue any goal; it has slowly killed ambition. He had wanted to become eminent as an engineer; now he has been reduced to an addict. Realising his condition, his parents wanted to disconnect cable, but he told them he could not live without it. He might not have developed the addiction, he said, if he had viewed only Doordarshan.

A teacher in the Sardar Patel Vidyalaya, Delhi, who is married but childless, said that they have two T.V. sets in their home with cable. Her husband is an ardent sports fan and gets engrossed in the sports channel. She watches whatever she wants on the other set. They do not even sit together for their meals but eat separately while watching T.V. Her listening to music, as well as her reading, has come down. She confesses that she has become an addict and does not know how to get out of it.
Many members of the housewives’ group at George Town in Allahabad said that removal of T.V. would be like the death of a family member: it had become so much a part of their life. One of them asked: ‘How can I cut vegetables without looking at TV?’

Social impact of advertisements

Next only to the condemnation of vulgarity and violence depicted on the T.V. screen was the concern expressed by discussants, in almost all the focus groups, at the social effect of the commercial advertisements carried by T.V., including Doordarshan.

Housewives in Allahabad said that often the advertisements are misleading because the product, after it has been bought, is not as good as the advertisement claimed. More serious, they said, is that some of the advertisements confuse children and when they ask for clarification of an advertisement of condoms or of female sanitary napkins, it is embarrassing. They also objected to nearly half of the time allotted for certain programmes being consumed by advertisements: it was very irritating.

At all the centres where focus group discussions were conducted, the participants said that children began to press for the purchase of things which were beyond the family’s financial reach.

One participant wondered why there is no provision to complain about advertisements, and why Doordarshan does not bother to distinguish an ad from the news or a programme.

Preference for local language programmes

Telugu-speaking housewives, spoken to at Hyderabad, Cuddapah and Karimnagar in Andhra Pradesh, said that they do not understand the Hindi programmes on Doordarshan. They preferred cable T.V. since they could see Telugu films. Some of the discussants said that since they do not understand any language other than Telugu, it hardly mattered whether they watch programmes in Hindi, English or other foreign language: hence their exercise of the cable T.V. option.

Dislike of the imposition of Hindi programmes on them by Doordarshan was voiced also by English-speaking male heads of households who were spoken to in Hyderabad. These Hindi programmes were poor in quality and did not interest them, and since they could follow programmes in English equally well, they switched to cable T.V.
TV as threat to culture

While many among the discussants spoke of foreign satellite channels disseminated by cable as a threat to India's cultural heritage and identity, some respondents in Assam regarded Doordarshan itself as the carrier of polluting influences.

At Tezpur, the Saikias said that they were nostalgic about life as it used to be prior to the advent of T.V. They visited friend's homes, listened to radio, and went out now and then to see a movie or to eat out. All this had stopped now. Mr. Saikia compared T.V. to a sweet-tasting poison. Children wanted them to buy everything advertised on T.V.

The Kalitas said that cable T.V. is undesirable not so much because of the cost factor as the obscenity and vulgarity of the Western programmes shown on the foreign channels.

Leaves Little to Imagination:

Mrs. Barkakati said that, before T.V. came, radio was a much better medium. She used to give close attention to radio programmes, and because radio did not provide visuals, they used to picture mentally what was referred to. This helped to improve the imaginative power of listeners. Now, this power is totally lost.

Realistic visual depiction on T.V. was referred to also by Pramod Mishra, a postgraduate student of Allahabad University, though without disapproval. He was sore about his parents intervening, and reminding him about his studies, when he watched 'adult' scenes. He recalled how he was rebuked when he was engrossed in a certain scene in a mythological serial in which Sakuntala was shown with the minimum of clothing.

Obscenity in 'Chitrahaar':

Many participants in the focus groups said that there was vulgarity and obscenity in Doordarshan, though on a smaller scale than in some of the foreign satellite channels. Depiction of some of the love scenes was described as provocative.

The group of housewives at George Town in Allahabad said that undesirable obscene sequences are shown by Doordarshan too, not only by the foreign channels. Obscene songs featured in 'Chitrahaar' were condemned. Some wondered how songs and song-dances from yet-to-be released/censored feature films could be shown on Doordarshan so blatantly.

Towards clean fun and wider awareness

That T.V. has made the earth shrink and brought it to one's doorstep is a view that was shared by every focus group. But there was a price to be paid for this wider awareness:
namely the vulgarity, obscenity and violence that marked many of the programmes of Doordarshan and, even more so, of the foreign channels made accessible by cable operators.

Colloquia on Media Maladies and Remedies:

CMS (The Centre for Media Studies) organized during 1994-95 a series of round-table discussions on the plus and minus points of the performance of the mass media in India and on steps necessary to enhance their contribution to nation building in the context of globe-encircling satellite T.V.

Four of these colloquia were held in Delhi and in six regional centres across the country: Lucknow, Bhubaneshwar, Vijayawada, Ahmedabad, Pune and Bangalore.

The first symposium in Delhi, on 18th February 1954, was on the emerging scene of satellite T.V. and India’s response to the challenge.

Challenge of Transnational Television

Presented here are the salient points made by the various participants, grouped under the thematic heads.

Self - defence through locally relevant programming

Vasant Sathe, former Minister of Information and Broadcasting: India does run a serious risk of cultural invasion, information imperialism and economic colonialism. We need not cave in. We have resources enough to stand on our own legs. It is our market of 250 million well-to-do consumers whom the foreign media and investors are after. We cannot ban cable T.V. Rather, we should be competitive. Let us show better programmes on Doordarshan, of local interest, so that we retain the viewership. The low power transmitters should be enabled to transmit locally made video feeds.

P. Upendra, former Minister of Information and Broadcasting: Neither a ban on dish antennae, nor aping, will help. MTV will always be slicker in its presentation of mindless entertainment. We should offer programmes that are at once entertaining, socially relevant and useful. The appeal of foreign T.V. is to the urban viewers. There is no immediate threat in rural India. If we provide programmes of interest, in the regional languages, they will hold the attention and interest of the audience.

M. V. Desai, veteran journalist: The electronic media suffer from excessive centralisation. They use English and Hindi almost exclusively, whereas the majority of our people have mother tongues other than these. Doordarshan should offer locally relevant and
useful programmes in local speech. Decentralisation is the best defence against destabilisation of the Indian ethos.

P. C. Chatterji, former Director General of All India Radio: Doordarshan and AIR should acquire credibility. Both blacked out the views on the Kashmir question expressed recently by Dr. Karan Singh, though he is an important political actor and observer vis a vis Kashmir. We should not drive viewers to alternative sources of news.

N. Bhaskara Rao: There is a class division in the world of information, as of economic life. There should be citizen involvement in the media. There are now no local advisory committees for the stations of All India Radio or Doordarshan. We have to promote responsiveness of media towards the public, and create awareness of issues. I have mooted the idea of ‘social audit of the media’ on a continuing basis, with involvement of independent professionals.

S. S. Gill, former Secretary of Information and Broadcasting Ministry: If indigenous programmes are excellent and useful, no one will want to watch foreign programmes. It is not as if we lack talented programme makers. Only, we must allow them to work under conditions that will permit credibility such as the BBC has.

Brahma Kumari Asha, social worker: The mass media should help to build national character. The need to preserve family values is being realized now in the West, and 1994 has been designated as the U.N. Year of the Family.

Hanumantha Rao: Dish Antennae for direct reception of foreign programmes via satellite are not allowed in China. This is the reason why Rupert Murdoch is turning to India, the next biggest market. Countries like Malaysia and Singapore are market-oriented in their economy but are zealous to preserve their cultural identity. Only India seems to be unconcerned. Do we want to pride ourselves that we are a media democracy, whatever be its consequences to our people?

R. Vijay, documentary producer: Though T.V. is primarily a visual medium, there is far too much talking on Doordarshan, especially by political VIPs.

Nori Venkateswarlu, broadcasting engineer: Many excellent films are being made in the regional languages. These can be telecast with dubbing in the local language. Each low power transmitter can be utilized for telecasting locally made video programmes of relevance and interest.
S.B. Lal, former Secretary of Information and Broadcasting Ministry: Our country boasts of the biggest cinema industry, and a widely appreciated Press. Why can’t we have world class television too?

Ownership, Autonomy, Accountability

P. Upendra: No government will be willing to give up its control over the national electronic media. While the government can retain the main T.V. channel for its purposes ranging from information and education to propaganda, it should hand over other channels to private, competitive initiative.

Vasant Sathe: The government should retain one channel of Doordarshan and convert the others into independent commercial channels.

Kuldip Nayyar, veteran journalist: There is an increasing tendency for persons who have made money in other industries to come into newspaper publishing. This is not a healthy trend.

N. Bhaskara Rao: There is an increasing trend towards cross-media ownership. This is ominous. We should beware of its implications.

Vulgar Entertainment, Consumerism, Crime

Rami Chhabra, active in the women’s and family welfare movements, said that the low standard of Doordarshan’s Chitrahaar and other filmy fare, especially on the Metro Channel, was debasing public taste. Instead of promoting gender equality and other dimensions of desirable social change, the advertisements and many of the entertainment programmes of Doordarshan present women as sex objects. This is contributing to increasing incidents of molestation of and crimes against women. The Indian mass media are shaking the foundations of Indian culture.

G.N.S. Raghavan: There have been many reports of the murder of employers by domestic servants in Delhi over the last year. This is not to be wondered at. Domestic employees watch along with members of the employing family Doordarshan’s programmes, the most popular of which are punctuated by commercial advertisement of goods and services meant for the well-to-do. Why should they not aspire to the same luxuries? The culture of consumerism spread by Doordarshan incites them to theft and murder.

H. B. Mathur, media critic, said that the visual medium is expensive and has an inherent tendency to become centralised and market-oriented. It treats the viewers as consumers rather than people to be served. The size and purchasing power of the audience
determines profit. Zee TV and DD Metro tend to be oriented to the Gulf, which is now a zone of prosperity. Hindi cinema as a whole has become increasingly Gulf-oriented.

Mira Aghi, media specialist, said that the quality of Metro Channel programmes was appealing and no better than the satellite entertainment channels. It is as if India’s T.V. system is no different in its priorities and concerns.

Citizen’s Initiative: Talking back to the media

In 1994 CMS (The Centre for Media Studies) organised a seminar of concerned citizens on violence and vulgarity in the media from various walks of life.

Bhubaneshwar

Chandrasekhar Rath, well-known Oriya writer, delivered the keynote address at the symposium on violence and vulgarity in mass media held at Bhubaneshwar on 22nd October, 1994. He suggested amendment of the Consumer Protection Act on 1984 to save consumers of mass media programmes from their ill effects. Commercial cinema goes by the market, not by morals, Prof. Rath said. For film makers, films are commodities - just like any other to be sold as hot stuff. Sex is a lure which the film industry exploits. He urged a holistic approach to the present situation, which would prove more useful than trying to tackle various problems in isolation.

Hara Prasad Das, Accountant General and well-known scholar of Orissa, said that we are on an extremely difficult terrain in considering the social effects of the media. It is difficult because of contradictions between Global and Local India, between public gestures and private morals. He suggested some ways by which the incidence of violence and vulgarity in the media could by curbed. One is through innovative creation of new audience interests; this is possible, as shown by the box-office failure of some big-budget films based on the sex-violence formula and the success of some elegant love stories. A second way could be to establish closer links between cinema and the print media, particularly creative works of fiction. Another way, he said, is to create mass awareness so that people refuse to see films or T.V. programmes that violate their aesthetic sensibility.

Jayanti Patnaik, chairperson of the National Commission for Women and chief guest at the symposium, called for a national media policy which will help arrest the negative trends of violence and vulgarity.

Ramakanta Rath, eminent poet and former Chief Secretary of Orissa, said that vulgarity and obscenity were inevitably a part of the present social scenario in which
cent) of criminals are allowed to go scot-free. Public taste has taken a downswing, while the culture of irresponsibility pervaded every sphere of society. He felt that the basic need is for a regeneration of society.

Maqbool Ali, social worker, said that in India the norms of behaviour are clearly defined in our family and social life. We should guide the younger generation to watch such programmes in the media which are in conformity with those norms. Secondly, people must insist on healthy movies and serials portraying humans as humans and not as super-powerful heroes. Unfortunately, the media depend more on ‘masala’ than on facts. People need to be advised to stick to truth and reality and not succumb to fantasy. Finally, he suggested that while the depiction of reality is important in the media, gory reality should not be visually portrayed but should be left to the imagination.

Others who participated in the symposium included Prof. Bidhu Bhushan Das, former Vice Chancellor; Shakuntala Panda, Editor of ‘Sucharity’; Dr. Kumudini Barai, Principal of R. D. Women’s College; Basant Nayak, Chairman, Orissa Film Chamber; Prof. Shanti Sahoo of Utkal University; and Dr. Sangram Jena, Editor, ‘Nishant’. They welcomed the effort of the Centre for Media Studies to promote citizen initiative for arresting negative trends in the mass media.

**VIJAYAWADA**

Hemalatha Lavanam, social worker, delivered the keynote address at the symposium on violence and vulgarity in mass media held at Vijayawada on 5th November 1994. She stressed the need to develop a positive attitude among children towards society. The time has come, she felt, for the public to check sex and violence on the idiot box.

**Father Shouraiyah**, Director, Loyola College and chief guest at the symposium, said that though the aim of the mass media was supposed to be to educate, inform and entertain the people, the media were actually at war with the people by dishing out cheap entertainment catering to the baser instincts. He also said that while T.V. was on the one hand bringing the world together, it was, at the same time creating a wedge in family relationships.

**Dr. Koteswaramma**, Principal of the Montessori Mahila Kalasala who presided over the symposium observed that the advances made in communication technology were exploited for wrong-ends. Social audit of mass media, being attempted by the Centre for Media Studies, is an effective way of checking undesirable messages.
**Durga Bhaskar**, All India Radio station director, expressed concern at the exhibition of obscene scenes on television. To restore the cultural ethos, she said it was necessary to screen all the film-based programmes before telecast.

**Dr. Sudha** said that the media are a powerful weapon which should be handled carefully, like the knife in the hands of a surgeon, and not like the knife in the hands of criminals. Society is already suffering from a variety of pollutions, she said, and the media by spreading vulgarity and violence are adding another dangerous kind of ‘psychological pollution’.

**N. Bhaskara Rao** of CMS referred to the poor working of the Film Censorship machinery. He cited as an example the fact that songs from films were being released before the films were certified for exhibition by the Board.

The large number of women participants in the Vijayawada symposium reflected the concern of women at the social impact of television. Many participants underlined the role of parents and teachers in moulding children as future citizens. It was for teachers and parents to create awareness about good and bad among the youth.

**AHMEDABAD**

**Mrinalini Sarabhai** was chief guest at the symposium on social impact of electronic media organized by CMS in cooperation with the National Commission for Women at the Chamber of Commerce and Industry hall, Ahmadabad, on 21st November, 1994. She said that not only do the media not communicate adequately, communication links have broken down - be it between citizens or between parents and children.

**Manubhai Shah**, chairman of the Consumer Education and Research Centre, said in his keynote address that India’s culture was a repository of good dramas that reflected life with its negative as well as positive tendencies, and society should not therefore blindly oppose all violence and vulgarity. He said that despite the onslaught of T.V., people after all have the choice whether to have a T.V. set at home, or to turn it on only for certain programmes. The real problem was that with the changes in Indian society, parents are not performing their duty towards children.

**Ramlal Parikh**, Vice Chancellor of Gujarat Vidyapeeth, who presided over the symposium, felt that there is urgent need for a dialogue on the impact that T.V. has on the family, specially women and children. Electronic media should promote human values, he
Several other participants from various fields also said that electronic media had a negative effect on society and we ought to be more concerned over the implications.

Kiran Kaitik, director of the Consortium of Educational Communication, said the time has come to think individually and act collectively so far as the issues of violence and vulgarity are concerned. Though the electronic media had a tremendous potential, he said, they are not being used for social good; Doordarshan had become more of a commercial undertaking than a public service.

Other participants included Ila Bhatt, Chairperson of the Self - Employed Women's Association; Dr Karthikbhai Sarabhai; Dr. Ashok Chatterji of the National Institute of Design; Prof. T.V. Rao of the Indian Institute of Management; Prof. Vimal Shah; Dr Vinod Patel of the Department of Family Welfare; Ila Joshi; Preetiben Shah; Vijaya Seth and Saroj Tandola, director, Doordarshan.

N. Bhaskara Rao in his concluding remarks expressed regret at the passive attitude of both the Government and the general public in face of the threat to values from the mass media. He said a National Citizens forum should be formed to initiate action against those screening socially undesirable programmes.

PUNE

Mohan Dharia, president of VANARAI, was chief guest at the symposium on social impact of electronic media held at the Institute of Engineers, Shivaji Nagar, Pune, on 1st December, 1994. He said: “The electronic media can be an effective instrument of socio-economic transformation. They should be used to portray national issues like population control, environment protection and wasteland development.”

He suggested that negative impact of programmes beamed through certain channels can be neutralised by having a powerful and attractive channel to project issues concerning the common man. Democracy and discipline must go together, and the mass media should carry this message. Mohan Dharia said there was need for government control of the right king over the mass media, and suggested that quality programmes can be promoted by harnessing talent and offering incentives.

B.G. Deshmukh, former Cabinet Secretary who presided over the discussion, said: “Sex, violence and consumerism are the negative aspects of the channels.” Instead of wishing away the channels, which is not possible, we should involve people in social action to combat the negative influence of the electronic media.
E.V. Chitnis, former director of the Space Applications Centre, in his keynote remarks spoke on the advances made by television and radio and the great scope for reducing the gap between the information-rich and the information-poor through satellite communication. While stressing the need for regulation of the electronic media for the public good, he regretted that Doordarshan was forgetting the educative role it had itself tried to play in the early stages of its growth, and was falling into what he called a ‘popularity trap’.

Sucheta Paranjpye, teacher at Tilak Maharashtra Vidyapeeth said: “Sex and violence have become the rule of the day.” To an average Indian viewer, television by definition is commercial cinema, and people are blindly imitating the idols of the small screen. She also said that family relationships have suffered a setback and people are becoming highly self-centered and materialistic. T.V. as a responsible medium must “mature fast and become more Indian”, she said.

Pramod Kale, chief of the Satellite Launch Vehicle Project, pointed out that it is within an individual’s control whether to watch T.V. or not. He stressed the need for selectiveness in viewing programmes.

S.D. Gokhale, corporate adviser to the Sakal newspaper group, said that problems cannot be solved by banning certain channels. Instead, a good alternate model of useful and attractive local community television should be developed.

Sridhar Gupte, Vice Chancellor of Pune University, Dr. Shyamala Wanvase, Prof. Samar Nakhata, Freny Tarapore, Dr. Vasant Gowariker and Dr. Arun Nigvekar were among other concerned citizens, from various fields like education and films, who spoke at the symposium.

Bangalore

M. N. Srinivas, eminent sociologist, was chief guest at a seminar on social impact of electronic media held at Bharatiya Vidya Bhawan, Bangalore, on 7th January, 1995. He advocated more careful scrutiny of television programmes in order to restrain the overplaying of violence and sex. He said it was imperative to fine-tune the programmes since the family, which had ensured the stability of Indian society so far, is showing signs of erosion. Television was contributing to this process: with the increasing popularity of T.V., there was less interaction between parents and children at home. T.V. has unfortunately taken over the process of socialisation, Prof. Srinivas observed.
The electronic media had initially played a part in social transformation in India, along with adult franchise, protective discrimination and abolition of untouchability. But now there was a close connection between television, advertising and consumerism, and populist advertisements were luring impressionable minds towards a crassly consumerist culture.

**P. R. Brahmananda,** eminent economist, accused Indian television of ignoring a significant section of society in its programmes: “There is an abysmal darkness about the major part of India” in Doordarshan, he said. With its elitist programmes, T.V. was destroying the social sensitivity of the viewers. He urged the mass media, both the Press and the electronic, to sensitise the rulers to the socio-economic conditions prevailing in the country. These conditions were grim, and the rulers’ insensitivity could prove fatal, he warned.

**Leela Rao,** professor in the Department of Mass Communication, Bangalore University, established through statistics how children were being exploited by advertisers to promote their goods on T.V. According to her, television was fast becoming a surrogate parent to children. She expressed concern over the lack of good programmes for children.

**H.K. Ranganath** of the Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan pointed out that reading habits were on the decline, and expressed concern at T.V. causing a set-back to art forms like poetry and literature, and to India’s value system itself. T.V., he said, was robbing the child’s interface with parents. However, the electronic media in India are fortunately still young, and if we take care of the software, the adverse trends could be arrested and the media could begin to play a positive role.

Other participants included Prof. Ramaswamy, former director of the Indian Institute of Management, Bangalore; Prof. K. E. Eapen, media expert; M.A.S. Rajan, retired civil servant; Prabha Murthy and Jajie Mandanna, both consumer activists’. The women participants were particularly critical of the way in which women are portrayed in T.V. serials as well as in films.

The findings of the survey conducted by CMS have brought out how persons of all ages have been attracted by the tinsel entertainment of film music and dance offered by radio and T.V. Such is the compelling attraction of this fare that even those parents and other older members of a family who know that it is not healthy for young palates (let alone their own) do not turn off the source. They permit children to watch even scenes of obscenity and sadistic violence on T.V. since they are not prepared to forgo their own amusement.
Citizen Awareness and Initiative, People as Victims and Accomplices:

Talking back to the media

But not all is lost. There have lately been signs of citizen awareness and protest, alongside citizen acquiescence.

Letters to the Editor is a hoary feature of newspapers. It is a column that reflects not only the views and feelings of some of the readers, but the taste and philosophy of the editorial staff who scan and select from the large mail that is received. The press has rendered a public service by conveying the distress and disgust of their readers at Doordarshan's performance, and publishing news of the consequences of violence depicted on the T.V. screen. Reproduced below are some illustrative instances from a couple of Delhi newspapers:

T.V. havoc at night

"Is it not common sense that 11.30 is not the time to start T.V. programmes for students, small or grown-up? Many families are in a dilemma. Grown-up children cannot tolerate a family time-table which wants them to go to bed by at least 11.30 p.m."--- 'Patriot', 3rd June, 1995.

T.V. serial leads to suicide

"Bangalore: Apparently influenced by a suicide scene in a television serial, Nandeesh, a teenager, hanged himself to death at his residence here on Sunday, the police said. A student of St. Joseph's high school, Nandeesh had been experimenting daredevil acts shown on T.V. and was in the habit of emulating such acts. - PTI"--- 'Indian Express', 23rd August, 1995.

Teleserials draw flak from women's groups

New Delhi, Sept 6 --- Women's groups are disturbed at the images of girls projected by several television serials. Issues such as teenage pregnancy, molestation, rape and abortion are often exaggerated or shown in a facile manner that downplays the seriousness of the problem, it is felt.

"Clips from serials on ZEE TV and Doordarshan were monitored and viewed by women's groups, and their impact on young girls analysed at a discussion organised recently, by the Media Advocacy Group in which the participants were several health workers from Action India who work in the middle and lower income housing colonies in Delhi. It is felt that while incidents of rape, molestation and incestuous rape do occur, T.V. serials only show part of the reality. T.V. serials often exaggerate what is happening and this further encourages
men to commit such acts. In many T.V. serials, abortion is shown as a quick and easy option. In one clip, the girl is shown simply walks into the clinic with her brother and then walking out and going home. Women pointed out that contrary to what is depicted, abortion can be painful."—‘Indian Express’, 7th September, 1995.

**Peddling Obscenity**

“Doordarshan, it appears, is competing in obscenity with foreign television networks. DD is wooing the youth away from foreign networks by airing vulgar song sequences from films. Our censors do not allow a kissing scene in Indian films, but they seem to have no problem about clearing sexually suggestive song sequences.” — ‘Indian Express’, 11th September, 1995.

**Impact of Television on Society, Jaspal Singh, 1960:**

**Subjective Impressions**

Unstructured discussions with viewers and overview of writings in the field have brought out the following impact of television on society:-

1. **Political Impact:** Those who own or control television manipulate them in their own interest, in order to build up certain leaders at the cost of their rivals, to promote specific political parties, and to legitimise the state. Television leads to centralisation of authority.

   Political leaders are shown on the screen again and again. Their words are reported. Thus they become dependent on their television appearance. Their manners, looks, television style and image become more important than their personal competence and political issues. Experts in electoral surveys, electronic data processing, motivation research and image building, gain prominence. Because leaders gain direct access to the voters, party cadres become less important for them. In those countries where television stations are privately owned, the cost of advertising for electoral campaigns is high. Election expenses go up, and avenues for recovering such expenditure through fair and foul means are broadened accordingly.

   Presence of power-holders on the television screen with them in their living rooms gives voters the delusion of close company with the high ups and participation in decision-making with them. Thus television becomes a means for image-building, mind management and electoral effectiveness in the hands of central instances. Frequently recurring faces on the
centrally controlled T.V. screen are earnest competitors of free-enterprise celluloid heroes like NTR and MGR in South India.

Credibility of television varies from country to country. E.g. during Egypt’s war with Israel, Egyptians used to switch on Israeli television for reliable reports.

(ii) Social Problems: It is feared that by showing excessive violence, crime, sex and intrigue on the screen again and again, television creates social problems. Such scenes frighten the children and disturb them. On the one hand television over socialises them and on the other it excites their immature libidinal urges. This makes it difficult for them to control their impulses in stressful situations. In other words, television may accentuate delinquency. Television stimulates crime by making criminal acts appear common, even respectable, and by showing techniques of intrigue, theft and murder on the screen. This trains the potential criminals in this field.

(iii) Minorities: Even when portrayals on television are realistic, they tend to reproduce the existing structure of dominance. Mirror image of reality presents the dominant castes and communities in bright light. Mainstream castes, communities and viewpoints are presented frequently and spoken well of. Minorities are thereby further marginalised. Even though communication alone is not enough for spreading anti-minority stereotypes and prejudice, it is an important element in this process.

Inter-ethnic stereotypes and prejudices are weaker in peripheral regions of countries (e.g. Berlin, Amritsar) with receptions from neighbouring lands having different structures of dominance.

(iv) Leisure: Television is a means of entertainment. It amuses and relaxes. Like eating peanuts and playing cards, televiewing makes time pass. Television provides escape and diversion. It is useful against loneliness and isolation. It breaks the monotony of day-to-day life. Instead of loitering about in the bazaars and watching cock-fights and race horses, men sit still at home and watch television. They identify themselves with characters on the screen. This helps them to escape from anxiety, deprivation, and insecurity. Television soothes and pacifies, even making the viewers inactive and apathetic. It makes them feel satisfied without doing anything. Passive viewers are diverted from music, hobbies, religious activities, and so on.
Television withdraws people from real life problems. It rounds off reality, making it tolerable. It provided escape from boredom and insecurity. Like narcotics, television has stupefying efforts.

(v) Consumerism: Television is a boon for commercial houses’ search for profits. In order to increase sales of their products, they invest large sums on advertisements, and sponsor programmes of their choice. Thus, Sita in ‘Ramayana’ and Radha in ‘Mahabharata’ are seen wearing the latest dresses and the most fashionable ornaments. This spreads product-awareness and fans the motivation to buy elite wares. Television creates demand for cosmetics, distinctive dresses, exotic foods, kitchen gadgets, and luxury goods. However, television cannot satisfy the mass needs on which it lives. This promotes the politics of scarcity, unrest and instability. In environments, without legitimate means to finance the consumption of luxury goods, creation of false needs enhances demonstrative consumption, as well as corruption.

(vi) Inequality: Television widens the inequality between those who have and those who do not have access to it. Those who have television sets become well informed. Their awareness and general knowledge become broad and deep. Television sharpens their imagination, and makes them tolerant. Those who do not have access to television sets or similar media, remain ignorant. Their general knowledge remains poor and horizons narrows. Gaps between the haves and have-nots of information create breakdowns. Information overload at the top makes decision making difficult.

Television widens the cultural gulf between viewers and performers. Overawed by the performance of the top-most artists of the country, young people remain passive viewers rather than actively engaging themselves in amateur singing, dancing and acting.

Producers and directors of programmes focus attention on their targets: youth, women, semi-literate, middle class viewers. Thereby they break up a heterogeneous audience into homogeneous target groups. Segmentation further increases inequality in society.

(vii) Education: Viewers watch day in and day out the flora, fauna, and people from far away land-scenes. Various programmes broaden their horizons, and provide insight into what different people do, say, and think.

Educational programmes are meant to provide a country-wide class room for continued education of a high quality. They can help overcome the shortage of laboratory
equipment, libraries, and trained teachers. However, they can also denigrate the schools and
colleges at home, which are often inferior as compared the best elsewhere. Television lessons
may also impose standardization of syllabi, teaching programmes and approaches to
problems.

In poor countries television stations are often provided without ensuring availability
of receiving sets. Often, common television sets provided for educational purpose, may be
refunctioned for entertainment. Unlike the western countries, two or more sets per household
rarely available in India. Due to multiplicity of tastes in the family, TV sets are often used for
entertainment, especially where a second channel is available in own or a neighbouring
country.

(viii) Family: Why do families acquire television sets? To keep up with their neighbours and
relatives. They go in for colour sets for the same reason. Parents do not like their children to
visits their neighbours houses too often, putting them to inconvenience, or distancing
themselves away from their parents.

Television is health hazards for families. Instead of going for jogging or a walk
outdoors, the elderly sit at home and look through the television screen at their own past.
Television creates noise pollution. Continued noise impairs hearing.

Instead of playing with their children, parents watch television. Instead of doing their
homework, spending their leisure on creative's activities or playing outdoors with little ones
like themselves, children watch television. Parents have little control over what children
watch. They tend to imitate what they watch. They are socialized accordingly. In Germany,
children are not allowed to watch television after 21.00 hours. ‘Adults only’ programmes are
not televised before that hour. But in India children of many television owners go to bed late
and get up early in the morning next day for going to school - depriving themselves of sleep.
This disturbs them and spoils their health. Such children suffer from sleeplessness, tiredness,
loss of appetite, stomach ache, and so on. This distorts their maturation process. Their mental
age becomes more than their chronological age.

At certain times (e.g. on Sunday evening, when Hindi feature films are shown on
Doordarshan) everybody in middle - class neighbourhoods is indoors and streets are empty.
Friends and relatives stop dropping in suddenly, apprehending disturbance to the host’s pre-
occupation. Gradually, sociability declines. Television brings family members closer
together.

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Television makes housewives inactive. Instead of doing household chores and religious activities, they just sit and watch television programmes. In earlier days, some family members (women, girls) seldom had access to Ramlila shows outdoors. Now everybody can watch 'Ramayana' and 'Mahabharata' at home, taking leave from domestic chores.

Glamour of actors and actress on the screen makes the mutual expectations of husbands and wives unrealistic. Husbands want their wives to look like a Swapna Sundari and wives want their husbands to be like an Anil Kapoor. This raises the household expenditure on textiles, cosmetics, household goods, and may cause dissatisfaction.

In upper-middle class households with television and video, children spend a lot of time before the screen. They become uncompetitive in studies vis-a-vis their cousins in lower-middle class households without audio-visual gadgets. Consequently, television does promote some amount of intergenerational social mobility.

What is good enough for the cow need not be good for the calf. Chitrahbar and advertisements for Nirodh and Mala-D being watched by the grown-ups and children together bring forth embarrassing questions from children. This is considered objectionable by the elders due to moral and aesthetic reasons. Repeated exposure of children to family planning campaigns breaks down inhibitions, taboos, established values, and kinship norms.

(ix) Impact on other Media: Television has acted as a rival to other media of information. Inspite of recent improvements in cine-technology, like wide screens and three-dimension viewing, availability of television, and video-parlours, has led to the decline of film industry by decreasing the number of cinema houses, and frequency of their cinema visits. The size of new cinema houses is smaller. They cater to specialized popular tastes wherever television has gone, it has cut cinema to a smaller size.

In spite of television, certain conventional media still holds way. Television and radio are used by different types of audience. Radio is often used by teenagers, housewives, sports fans, drivers, workers, and similar audience. They listen while working or travelling, or cannot afford to buy more than an inexpensive transistor. Radio has survived television invasion, because its broadcasts can be received far and wide, and when it is off-time for telecasts. Television suffers from narrow horizons.

Television presentations are more realistic than newspapers and magazines. Telecasts are quickly received even in out of the way places. On the other hand, whereas television
stations are often owned by government, newspapers may be owned by diverse interests, and government controls are less strict. Television has reduced the circulation of magazines, but newspapers continue to be read.

Television has adversely influenced the habit of reading books during leisure hours. Novels are read by fewer people these days, due to competition from television.

Empirical Studies

Walter Weiss has given a systematic summary of research work on the effects of mass media on society, upto late 1960s.

He says that television is an important medium of mass communication. It may act as a whole, through programmes presented or specific features thereof. Its presentations are realistic than other media like newspapers or radio. One can listen to and also see the milieu and experience empathy. Television appears to be trustworthy, because viewers can imagine that they are there. It attracts different type of audience than other media. Viewers perceive different programmes in their own way and react differently.

Impact of television may extend from a few individuals to entire societies. It is mediated by various conditions.

Weiss has classified the effects into the following categories:-

(i) **Cognition:** Television broadens the horizons of individuals beyond their immediate environment. Prior interest in the matter under consideration calls forth selective exposure, attentiveness, retention and forgetting. Different viewers selectively perceive and recognize the matter.

(ii) **Comprehension:** The viewer’s attitudes and values influence how they receive the message. Misinterpretation by prejudice persons may call forth distorted inferences.

(iii) **Arousal:** Contents of telecasts are not inherently provocative. Emotional arousal is cause by selective perception and cognition, which in turn are caused by various types of learning, motivation and personality. Fear, panic and hysteria may be evoked when the threats shown on the screen are perceived as realistic. Social and physical conditions (loneliness, darkness, coviewers’ responses) influence emotional reactions. Individual circumstances of the audience also influence arousal. Telecasts induce different moods in different types of viewers. Girls are more prone to crying. In other words, different types of viewers react differently.
(iv) **Identification:** Depending on their motives and values, viewers imagine as if they were on the scene. They develop empathy with some characters who happen to be somehow like them and identify themselves with same or adopt them as models, sharing their feelings and values and copying them.

(v) **Interest:** Television does not initiate interest in; say novels or music, unless the viewers are already favourably inclined towards the matter.

(vi) **Attitude:** It is often said that negative projection of marginal groups adds to the prejudice against them. Empirical evidence shows that this is only scarcely so, unless the viewers are already prejudiced and congruent views are expressed again and again. Television does not change attitudes. It only reinforces the existing ones.

(vii) **Values:** Hard data to check up apprehensions regarding the adverse consequences of televiewing on the mature minds of children are not available. Values and attitudes are only marginally influence by what they watch (especially when the moral is not clear) unless they are already disposed that way.

(viii) **Passivity:** Empirical data do-not justify the assumption that televiewing makes us passive, unless we are already so inclined. It does improve children’s vocabulary as well as their general knowledge. Empirical studies quoted by Weiss reveal that television does not divert their attention away from school-work. It is not correct that children go to bed late or sleep late, because of television. If they were not watching television, they would have played or read in bed. Factors other than television are more important in this regard.

(ix) **Overt behavior:** Viewers spends a substantial part of their time budgets on watching television every day. This takes time away from creative pursuits. Television cuts down children’s playtime. It also reduces the time spent on going to cinema, listening to radio, reading novels, and conservation.

Even though the sales effectiveness of advertisements has not been methodically established, it can be said that advertisements regulate existing values and motives for increasing sales of specific brands. Television is not a cause of consumer behaviour. It only makes the same definitive.

(x) **Voting behavior:** Candidate’s images antedate television appearance. Television can only clarify perceptions, or sharpen the images. Television does not have much effect on voting behaviour. Survey data from U.K. and U.S.A. show that two-thirds to three
- fourths of the voters make up their minds before an election campaign starts. The rests are disinterested, under cross-pressures or otherwise waverers. Television can influence few of them to vote one way or another. Strong pre - conceptions cannot be overcome with brief electoral campaigns. Between the campaigns, telecasts might create emulative effects over a period of time. Exposure to propaganda is a function of pre - dispositions. Selective exposure promotes selective awareness which, however, is not exclusively one - sided.

(xi) **Violence:** Is there sufficient evidence for the assertion that television promotes delinquency and violence? Empirical studies show that there are no direct effects. Vivid portrayals on television do make the viewers aware about the techniques of violence. But the motivation, the willingness, the situation to use the techniques, and the required weapons, come from elsewhere. Violence on the screen may call forth aggressive behavior when somebody is 'annoyed with the victim, regards it fair to strike and inhibiting controls from within and without are weak. Television does not make children violent, unless they are already emotionally disturbed. Proper socialization and policing would not let such a contingency to take place. Communication is not the only variable in violence. There are several other elements in the process of violence.

(xii) **Public taste:** Does television sharpens aesthetic sensibility or does it bring down the public taste to its lowest common denominator? When alternatives are available, viewers would switch on entertaining rather than educational programmes, unless co - viewers' (e.g. parents') predispositions to the contrary come in the way.

(xiii) **Family life:** There is not much impact of television on family life. Family members may sit together while watching television. But they can hardly talk to each other or interact without causing distraction. Rather than creating new relations, television manifests and reinforces the already existing ones. Most of the studies in Weiss' review article support the 'no effect' hypothesis. If there were really no effects, families would not have spent time on watching television, politicians in power would not have achieved electoral success by hiding their rivals' faces away from the television screens, and advertisers would not have been able to raise their profits by investing on sponsored programmes and advertisements.
Everett Rogers

Roger's book is a non-technical introduction to the impact of new information technology on society. Spread of the media of mass communication (radio, television, printed matter, etc.) is changing the nature of society. In the emerging information society, the number of teachers, scientist, consultants, managers, secretaries, and computed-programmers, is going up. New developments in computer-based communication technology (video, teletext, teleconferencing, satellite communication, etc.) during the second half of the twentieth century have demassified communications and made them interactive in nature.

Television has a variety of effects on different types of individuals in society. Society influences the nature and types of programs to be telecasted. New communications have complex effects, which are not directly and immediately clear. These have to be properly studied.

During 1960s and 1970s researchers started realising that some media had some effects under some conditions on some people. Some factors for making campaigns successful, and some indirect effects, were identified. It was pointed out that television violence did not induce all children to behave aggressively. It could have trigger-effect on emotionally disturbed children.

Studies during the 1980s have moved beyond the process of synchronic effects to the over-time process of communication. Linear models are being discarded in favour of analysis of social networks. Attention has shifted from micro-effects on individuals to macro-effects on social systems.

Effects of the new media on society may be direct, anticipated, desirable, or otherwise. Both these sets go hand in hand. The effects include unemployment, inequality between various social segments, information gap between the have and have-nots, information overload, decentralisation of decision-making, and audience segmentation. Developments in various types of media influence each other's growth. E.g., growth in television checked the growth of radio and led to the decline of film industry.

Conclusion

Literary and journalistic reports about the impact of television on society have highlighted the adverse effects on culture, social institutions, political action, and consumer behavior. It appears that the available techniques of empirical social science research
(content analysis, social surveys, and experiments) would have to be suitably adjusted, and new techniques would have to be devised, for studying the long term and indirect impact of television.

At the end, we can say that television as such is not an agent of development communication. It depends on how it is used by those who control it, and how much is its credibility with users.

Impact of T.V. on the Press, Bhatt S.C.:

Like some other things in our country, the media scene has been changing fast, particularly in the past few years, and the Press is naturally affected. Until 1984, the urban middle-class had the option of seeing Doordarshan Programmes or beguiling themselves with listening to the radio, reading newspapers and magazines or books, or calling on one another v socialising in the traditional manner. In that year, enterprising cable T.V. operators in Bombay city and some parts of Gujarat brought the latest as well as old feature films to the viewers in the afternoon hours when Doordarshan would be availing of a long siesta. By 1990, the cable operators had spread to other parts of the country, and in the following year satellite T.V. made its appearance. This was through the courtesy of the cable people who, by installing a dish antenna, could get more subscribers for their services by disseminating the satellite channels; and the latter were happy that they got viewers through the cable.

Both DD and the satellite channels have increased their output of programmes and there is a rivalry often assuming unhealthy properties, between the national network and the Indian or foreign satellite channels and their cable collaborators. We are concerned here not with the ethics and other problems of this rivalry, often called a cultural invasion of India, but with the impact T.V. has been having on the print medium.

Newspapers have registered substantial growth in terms both of circulation and the number of publications coming out (although quite a few are also closing down). But the growth of television is definitely faster. Will T.V. swamp newspapers and lead to the closure of many of them, as has happened in several Western countries? The Indian Newspaper Society (INS) said in its 1993-94 report: “The liberalisation policies of the government have opened many avenues for the electronic media has resulted in the commissioning of multiple channels on Doordarshan and also that of foreign T.V. networks in the country. This, along with video and cable T.V. is a major challenge for press advertising as a good part of
advertising which otherwise would have gave to the print media is being diverted to the electronic medium.” The report goes on to say that the society has launched a campaign to stress the benefits of press advertising.

Foreign print media have been kept out of India, for the time being at least, but foreign satellite T.V. channels are having a field day. Although the national network has taken a series of measures to meet their competition, in the process it has made quite a few compromises too. Advertising revenue, which sustains the Press as well as T.V., goes out of the country through ads released on the foreign channels by Indian advertisers, including Indian brands of liquor addressed to viewers in India watching the foreign channels. The impact of the entertainment - oriented T.V. medium on the Press can also be measured in terms of the reach of the two media. According to a survey, this reach is higher for T.V. in almost all areas of the country except Kerela where the Press has a greater reach, and radio even greater than either T.V. or the Press.

Some stalwarts of the print medium have in a way found their own solution. For some time now, recognising the power of the visual medium, they have begun diversifying their media business and sought to get for themselves a slice of the growing T.V. cake ‘The Times of India’ group a front - runner in the print media, is trying hard to make a niche for itself in the television sphere too. Its time T.V. has several programmes to its credit and, what is more, it has shed its adversary attitude to Doordarshan, a government organ.

In many countries newspapers have entered the T.V. area. Rupert Murdoch, one of the big operators who own Star T.V. and (49.5 per cent) of Zee, branched out into T.V. via newspapers. India is thus not a solitary example of this phenomenon of the print media giants, or even small ones, pushing themselves into the T.V. business. In some of the advanced countries the growth of T.V. has wiped out many a flourishing newspaper because the ad revenue was not enough to sustain both the local T.V. station and a modern day newspaper.

The spurt in the ad revenues, specially of the big papers, owes not only to the fact that the rates are higher but because they are the chosen medium for classified advertisements, company notices including announcement of new capital issues, appointments and like. The display advertisements may not be as repetitive as on T.V., but T.V. can hardly put out classified advertisements, matrimonial, wanted advertisements, job announcements, property sale and car sale and the like.
But one may ask: will the papers not be affected by the rising trend of T.V. watching? In other words, will not the newspapers decline in circulation. At what point will a daily newspaper become redundant? We have seen how even in advanced countries where the literacy level is very high, almost a (100 per cent), the T.V. habit has led to the closure of many papers, even the big newspapers.

In the advanced countries the T.V. is largely free of government control and the viewer has the satisfaction of getting a more or less complete picture of the day’s happenings and multifaceted presentation of different points of view, with visuals and interviews with the main characters of the day’s drama, as only T.V. can. This has helped T.V. replace the common man’s newspaper. On the other hand, the local papers, announcing the daily sales in the bid department stores and supermarkets (full - page advertisements of price slashes in a big type) is of interest to the housewife.

The T.V. medium has not only arrived; it is also full of potential and the variety it offers, with strong emphasis on entertainment, cannot be matched by the print medium. The electronic media in India had long suffered from lack of competition which is the soul of a good newspaper seeking to keep ahead of its rivals in bringing to readers the news first, along with interesting and entertaining features.

Newspapers cannot hope to compete with the T.V. medium in the area of entertainment but newspapers can be close to the people and their lives. If some children die of defective vaccine being administered, the local press can convey the tragedy vividly.

Therefore, serious newspapers with all - India appeal can still offer features, comments, interpretative and investigate reports that no T.V. channel, however autonomous it may be, can hope to do. Local newspapers seeking to reflect the events in their region can also pose a challenge to the entertainment-oriented T.V. medium if they know how to do it.

T.V: Siren among the Media:

A variety of forces were at work in the 1950’s to bring television to India, Businessmen, politicians in power, and civil servants who went aboard and saw television in the U.S.A. and elsewhere wanted to have similar entertainment at home.

From Pij to MTV: Looking at Doordarshan today, one would find it hard to believe that television was introduced in India in 1959 with a wholly educational and development intent. Jawaharlal Nehru was Prime Minister at the time, and he would not have countenanced the expenditure of rupee and foreign exchange resources on introducing television as a medium.
primarily of entertainment as in the affluent countries. Television was therefore, canvassed on the grounds of education and development.

The localised and exclusively educational use of television ended on independence anniversary in 1965. Indira Gandhi, as Information and Broadcasting Minister in the Lal Bahadur Shastri Cabinet, introduced on 15th August, 1965 a daily general service for Delhi’s cosmopolitan population, of one hours duration and comprising entertainment and news for those who could buy their own T.V. receiving sets. Doordarshan Kendras were opened thereafter in city after city and television became a means of entertainment (much of it coarse) and information (with the news part of it selective and angled), only taken obeisance, being paid to education and development. Consumerism began to be promoted with the introduction of commercials from 1st January, 1976.

Television in India has already turned into a major source of ‘passive forms of recreation’, and via the feature film it has also become a mechanism of ‘phantasy escapes from life’.

T.V. programmes, it is said by anxious parents and teachers, are over - exposing the child to the glamour of modern life. Films depicting sex, crime and violence, being viewed by children with their parents, are creating new problems and new anxieties. Even in the West the issue of the impact of T.V. on the minds of children and the youth is a subject of great concern. Social scientists are investigating whether television has oriented children and youth towards sex, crime and violence. In this context the concept of moral responsibility of those managing T.V. has emerged in the developed countries.

The question of moral responsibility arises because television is very subtle in its impact, and it has invaded the home. Its influence has been compared to water dripping on a stone and eroding its hardness slowly and steadily. T.V. influences tastes and consciousness very slowly but steadily and without our knowing. The task of orienting young minds to new values while preserving respect for old ideals is a task as difficult as it is challenging and creative.

One of the major social changes of modern times is the entry of television inside the home. The fact that television has entered the home has created new problems but also vast possibilities. People are worried because T.V. has invaded the home which enjoyed a certain autonomy and sanctity in the past. Our primary source of education - cum - information - cum - entertainment as children was the home. Deep inside our unconscious and sub -
conscious we carry the influences from inter-personal communication within the home. The nursery tales and lullabies form grandmothers and mothers, and lessons by grandfathers and fathers, gave the pre-T.V. generation its first orientation to the world, its social consciousness and sense of values. Now T.V. along with other agents of change is threatening these traditional modes of communication and socialisation. It is acquiring a great hold on the minds of children and weakening the influence of parents and teachers. This is being viewed with alarm as children have no time now for listening to their parents in their homes. Thus T.V. has emerged as formidable rival to the authority of the parents over their children and of the teachers over their pupils. The Annon Committee in England noted: “Television might in some ways be taking the place of the family, church or school in influencing children’s outlook.”

Will the teachers and parents find in T.V. a wholesome ally in shaping the consciousness of the growing child? Or will T.V. result in moral and mental disorientation of children? These are the questions being asked by anxious parents in every home where T.V. viewing has become a way of life. New tensions are arising from the impact of the communication. Revolution on the family, on the concept of the home, man and woman relation or relations between the old and the young, the individual and society. This impact is full of promise as well as dangers, depending on the type of programmes to which children are exposed.

A study of reactions of the Selected High School Students of IPCL School, Baroda, to the selected episodes of the Serial ‘Aur Bhi Hai Rahen’ as a Medium of Educational and Vocational guidance, Kalpana R. Paralikar, Vandana Dave, 1991:

Abstract: Television serves the purpose of imparting education and information, regarding educational and vocational scopes. It imparts such information to the youth and women through serials as well as vocational news. A popular T.V. serial ‘Aur Bhi Hai Rahen’ presented through Doordarshan in 1987 was entertaining as well as educative. It was one with educational and vocational guidance potential. Therefore, it was decided to study the reactions of the selected episodes of the serial for educational and vocational guidance activities in School.
Findings of the study revealed that higher percentage of the respondents expressed that the video film oriented them to various educational and vocational fields, and admission procedures for various courses.

Television is one of the popular channels of communication media, which has accesses to masses both socially as well as mentally. It serves the purpose of educating as well informing the masses at a time. Many T.V., serials serve the purpose.

Narayan’s (1987) study revealed that one of the functions of T.V. as identified by adolescence was fulfilling the need for information as well as education. T.V. promotes various programmes which provide recreation and education, and serves the purpose of welfare as well as development. Serials and ‘Chitrarh’ provide recreation and entertainment whereas UGC programmes as well as some other special programmes like ‘Quiz’, ‘The world This Week’ provide information. ‘Krishi Darshan’ as well as special programmes for women and children deal with specific problems and issues and provide information about various welfare and development schemes meant to meet the needs of the specific groups.

As T.V. affects a large number of masses it can be effective in changing people’s thinking. Through various programmes on T.V., necessary impact on learners can be created through formal, informal as well as non-formal educational situations. The main use of T.V. as far as education is concerned is that of a ‘supplementary resource’. It brings information, which supplements actual teaching.

The demand for higher education increased with increasing population in our country. T.V. serves the purpose of imparting education and information, which supplements educational as well as vocational needs. ‘Aur Bhi Hai Rahen’, a popular serial, was presented through Doordarshan in 1987. It was presented as an entertaining as well as informative serial, for 13 episodes. The serial depicted vocational success stories of women having various levels of education and abilities along with educational programmes to strengthen their abilities and skills and the institutes offering them with job prospects as well as employment opportunities including self-employment.

‘Aur Bhi Hai Rahen’ was a popular T.V. serial with educational as well as vocational value. The main characters assumed the role of educational and vocational counsellors for traditional as well as non-traditional vocations. Every episode depicted one vocation.
It was, therefore, felt by the investigators to try out the utility of this serial ‘Aur Bhi Hai Rahen’ for promoting educational and vocational awareness among students at high school level.

The objectives of the study were:

1. to find out the differences in the responses regarding the reasons for opting for science stream by the students according to their place of residence and medium of instruction independently and with the level of study.
2. to find out the differences in the responses of the selected students in terms of objectives fulfilled by selected episodes of the serial ‘Aur Bhi Hai Rahen’.
3. to study the reactions of the selected students to the selected episodes of the serial ‘Aur Bhi Hai Rahen’ (ABHR) in general as well as in terms of other aspects like content commentary and dialogue delivery, action, voice and music as well as visuals in relation to their place of residence, level of study, medium of instruction and sex.
4. to study the educational and vocational awareness as well as awareness regarding admission procedure of selected students on the bases of their place of residence, medium of instruction and level of study.

The sample of the study comprised of 195 Gujarati medium students and 190 English medium students from the Secondary and Higher Secondary sections of IPCL schools, Jawaharnagar, Baroda.

A reaction scale was constructed by the investigator. The tool consisted of eight parts seeking information on the following aspects:-

1. Background information of students.
2. Reasons for opting for science stream.
3. Objectives fulfilled by episodes of the serials in terms of educational and vocational values.
4. Reactions to video film in general as well as in relation to specific aspects like content covered, commentary and dialogue, actions, music, voice and visuals.
5. Information regarding various courses which students already know about.
6. Views of students regarding viewing particular type of serial.
7. Courses which students preferred to opt for after completing high - school studies.
8. Awareness regarding universities which offered courses preferred by students.
Experimental design was used for conducting the study. It was a one-way experimental study.

Data were collected according to medium of instruction from both the groups personally by investigator with the help of the counsellor of the school. Three episodes were selected after consulting the school counsellor. They were on medical and paramedical courses as well as those dealing with cookery, dietetics and computer management. The data were collected in November 1990. The students were exposed to the three video films on three days and after viewing each of the films the tool including reaction scale was administrative to the viewers.

Data were analysed in terms of rank and frequency distribution for characteristics sample under study as well as reason for opting for science stream and objectives fulfilled by the serial ‘Aur Bhi Hai Rahen’.

T.V. Soaps are actually educating Rural Women in India, Robert Jensen of Brown University and Emily Oster of the University of Chicago, August 30, 2007:

Could anyone ever have imagined that our inane television serials would be educative? Well, certainly not those who called television soaps serial killers convinced that all they had to offer were decadent moral values. Or those who felt that they were turning Indians into idiots because of their sheer stupidity and their inability to talk about serious social issues.

A recent study of 2,700 households (in villages in the four states - Bihar, Goa, Haryana, and Tamil Nadu - and Delhi) from 2001 to 2003, by Robert Jensen of Brown University and Emily Oster of the University of Chicago shows that television is actually helping rural Indian women come out of their shell. Their attitudes seemingly underwent a change, even to an extent that women’s preference for male children fell slightly! And the authors’ “composite autonomy index jumped substantially, by an amount equivalent to the attitude difference associated with 5.5 years of additional education.”

How? Surely, television soaps show regressive values? They mostly show women crying and suffering in a patriarchal set-up. The fact that they often they grin and bear it is a matter of concern. But that’s exactly it. Rural women had no idea that these things were to be ‘borne.’ For them oppression is so normal that they feel it’s deserved!
Surveys from 2001-2003 shows that rural Indian women don’t have a lot of control over their lives. More than half need permission from their husbands to go shopping. Two-thirds need their husbands’ permission to visit friends. Spousal beating is common and accepted. (62 per cent) of women believe that it is sometimes acceptable. (34 per cent) of the women surveyed believed a husband could hit his wife if she neglected the children, while nearly a third believed that showing disrespect and going places without permission warranted a beating. One-fifth of women believe husbands are entitled to hit them for cooking a lousy dinner.

Now these are the little freedoms that most urban educated women take for granted. But didn’t rural women know what sort of life their urban educated sisters led?

Well, to them an urban educated woman would be someone strange, someone alien, a character who probably led an immoral, wasted life and neglects her family. Men who do not believe in women’s education like to perpetuate this myth. But once this urban educated character stepped right into the homes and hearts of rural women, she suddenly transformed herself from an alien creature to an intimate one. Someone who’s heart and mind her rural sister could read. The result? A feeling that hey, she is a woman, and she is just like me.

This study’s findings are not something out of the blue. Earlier, there have been articles on how soaps are positively impacting women in small towns. The soap opera ‘Astitva’ for example showed changing attitudes towards single and divorced women in a conservative India. A young girl from Bhopal interviewed by the author of this particular article said:

‘Things are changing. You just have to watch T.V., or read the news and you know the world is no longer the same as when my mother was my age’.

So even if the women in television soaps are shown suffering, even if they often pay a heavy price for standing up to society, they are also seen as strong and worthy, women who deserve better. And this is what has impressed rural women viewers. Sure, it’s only their attitudes which have changed, and that too far too slightly to have impacted their life in any significant way. But if their behavior hasn’t changed…it’s only a matter of time before it does and if you notice most of these soaps - they are centered on “Dealing things in Luxury Joint family” mostly women is in top make - up, costly jewellery and high worth saris or overdressed and mostly they are busy in solving family related problems and no work at all but all of these things are uncommon in rural India and spreads wrong influence.
Anyways Yes, T.V. soaps are changing our rural India... Everyone is now dreaming of those lavish lifestyles and thinking of shifting to Metros.

But the serial ‘Udaan’, had a good impact on rural India and it really inspired the generation.”

**An interesting angle to the saas - bahu soaps:**

But before we celebrate the positive impact of these soaps let us also consider:

1) What is their effect on urban women? Negative or positive and how much?
2) Are there any negative impact on rural women?

An interesting angle is the negative impact of these serials on rural women. “Yes, there is bound to be a negative impact and consumerism is one of those. It kicked with the idea of a rural woman telling her husband” - “Ji, can you change the baby’s nappy, I am watching kyuki!”

The impact on urban women would be negative. Like all soaps, the story lines are exaggerated and sometimes ridiculous. Anyone who believes that this is reality is in for trouble!

Another woman telling her husband “Ji, Us dukaan mein Tulsi vaali saree aayee hein, worth Rs. 8000/-... Please I want that looks like, it’s very trendy!”

One more benefit of the T.V. soaps is that instead of discussing their bahus the old men and women discuss Tulsi and Parvati. The bahus are spared. In these soaps all men are shown as idiots and the women are smart (good or evil possible). They can control businesses manipulate their husbands and do pretty much everything on earth. So true women empowerment.

It seems that it is a good way to kill time for urban women because they are educated enough to know this is just pure entertainment so we don’t need to worry about that, its actually the young girls who are under 10 years who watch these shows they put an idol for that this is how women are suppose to be. But young kids should not watch these soaps it matures them way before time. And for rural areas this is really good that they watch these shows because it does empower them, makes them more confident, and able to go on with their lives without feeling bad.

Adults watching such serials are different but people who are addicted to these serials, their world view also changes. There has been a lot of research conducted on the bad effects
of T.V. viewing, indeed, hundreds and hundreds of studies! The basic conclusions are that heavy T.V. watchers tend to have a slightly distorted view of life and of people. They tend to be more suspicious and hostile than those who do not see T.V. for the simple reason is that in serials most of the characters are always plotting and conspiring against each other.

The matriarchal roles in Ekta Kapoor - made soaps (Ekta Kapoor is the Queen of T.V. Industry Producer of all Star T.V Serials India, in the Banner of Balaji Telefilms) do indeed portray women who struggle yet fight against the wrong doings around them. It might not seem too much on the surface - generic, wealthy, traditional Indian families based in Mumbai and other cities. However, within this environment the mothers, daughters, daughter-in-laws, etc do have personal battles and are shown to come out on top. The storylines can be a bit farfetched, but it’s wonderful if they have this empowering effect on rural women.

Effects of a Prosocial Television Soap Opera in Promoting Women’s Status, Michael J. Brown, Assistant Professor, University of Hawaii and Michael J. Cody, Professor, Department of Communication Arts and Sciences at the University of Southern California:

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Abstract: This study examines the effects of "Hum Log" ("We People"), India's first long-running television soap opera. "Hum Log" was a prosocial television program that was designed to promote women's status in Indian society. LISREL analysis was used to measure the degree to which viewers' awareness, involvement, and television dependency mediated the effects of exposure to the television series. Results indicated that exposure to "Hum Log" was positively associated with viewers' involvement with the characters in the program and with viewers television dependency but did not make viewers more aware of women's status issues. Viewers who were more aware of "Hum Log's" prosocial content had stronger beliefs in women's freedom of choice and family planning. Although viewers were highly involved with the characters of "Hum Log," the role models for unman in the program did not consistently promote women's status because of occasional negative consequences associated with their behavior.

Research shows that Vietnam has levels of knowledge about HIV/AIDS, but many people remain at risk due to widespread, deeply-held attitudes about sex, gender and AIDS. Vietnamese media often portray HIV/AIDS dramatically, but portrayals are haphazard and often counterproductive. The power of popular T.V. serials to effect deep attitude change is well-recognised internationally, but seldom put into practice, systematically due to cost and the difference in needs and work modes of social communicators and the entertainment industry.

This 30 episode dramatic T.V. serial (Vietnam’s 1st) aims to make a measurable impact on risk attitudes for HIV/AIDS by integrating AIDS-related issues into a complex, fast moving story of life in modern Vietnam. Audience-centered communication methodology is used at each stage, including a prior audience analysis, pre-testing of the script, and impact evaluation. Proven attitude change strategies such as modeling, identification and peer support are used subtly to challenge gender expectations and enhance perceived risk, without overwhelming the story line.

The script has been developed and pre-tested. Production is now under way. The team is learning daily lessons about how to bridge the gap between the national AIDS authority, the T.V. industry and an international NGO. Specific lessons learned include how to develop a script with both wide popular appeal and a calculated impact on key risk attitudes, how to train T.V. professionals to be AIDS prevention communicators, and how to maintain essential messages throughout the process of production. It is hoped that this media development methodology and experience can benefit others wanting to use T.V. for attitude change.

Studying the impact of an edutainment Soap Opera for HIV/AIDS prevention in Cambodiad, Borima C., Makin J., Longfield K., 2003:

PSI/Cambodia produced a television soap opera, ‘Punishment of Love’ (PoL), as part of its HIV/AIDS prevention campaign. Developed in accordance with traditional Cambodian culture, religious values and ethical considerations, the campaign provided health messages that aimed to enable viewers to improve their HIV/AIDS knowledge and to reduce stigma.
associated with infection. A survey was conducted during the month after the conclusion of 'PoL' to evaluate its impact.

Data were collected from 2,865 respondents using 3 sampling strategies: a household survey among individuals aged 15-49, street intercepts with in- and out-of-school youth aged 15-24, potential clients of indirect sex workers, and garment workers, and a targeted survey with women in the hospitality industry. Quotas were imposed on each target group in order to survey equal numbers of viewers and non-viewers of 'PoL'.

The series reached 505 of the Cambodian population. The survey result show that viewers were predominantly young, educated, and had a relatively high socio-economic status. Nearly all viewers (94 per cent) said they learned something from the television series, and (38 per cent) discussed it with someone they knew. Of these, (70 per cent) discussed an episode’s message, principally condom use for HIV/STI prevention. 'PoL' viewers were more likely than non-viewers to have discussed HIV/AIDS in the past two months demonstrated more positive attitudes toward condom use and people living with likely to have shared a meal with an HIV+ person and were more likely to be willing to care for a relative infected with AIDS in their own home. Behavior change communication messages broadcast on television benefit from wide coverage in Cambodia and are an effective way of reaching a broad cross-section of the community. The campaign was successful in promoting discussion around HIV/AIDS issues and attitude change with regard to condom use and PLWHA.

Soap operas may be good for health: Impact evaluation of the Egyptian Soap Opera, Family house, Farag M., Elkamel:

It was devised in order to use the entertainment approach and format of a soap opera to convey health messages designed to create awareness, give knowledge and change attitudes and behaviour with regard to several health problems, including Acquired Immuno Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS), Acute Respiratory Infections (ARI), home accidents, drug addiction, child marriages and child-spacing. 'Family house' was created in 1992/1993 by the Center for Development Communication (CDC), Egypt, and was supported by grants from the Ford Foundation, the International Development Research Center Research (IDRC) and United States Agency for International Development (USAID). It was broadcast in Morocco in 1993 and in Egypt and Lebanon in 1994. The objective of this project was to test
the potential impact of television material, particularly a drama series, on the knowledge, attitudes and behaviour of the general, particularly women. The rationale for the project was that such material captures the attention of the majority of viewers, more so than any other type of television programme, and this provides an excellent opportunity to reach the general public. The project also aimed to establish which socio-economic and demographic categories of the public were likely to benefit most from such an approach.

After ‘Family house’ was aired in Egypt in January 1994, a survey of 600 viewers was carried out to assess audience feedback. The cluster sample was randomly selected from Upper Egypt, Cairo and the Delta; it reflected the urban-rural distribution of the population and males and females were equally represented.

One of the evaluation criteria was the perceived entertainment value of ‘Family house’. Respondents were, therefore, asked whether or not they had liked it. As an indirect measurement, they were also asked whether or not they would like to see a sequel. A second evaluation criterion was the educational value of the serial. Participants were asked a number of questions which aimed at assessing what, if anything, they had learned from watching ‘Family house’.

Most soap operas and other entertainment material usually appeal to the middle-classes and often to urban viewers. The fact that rural and illiterate viewers particularly liked ‘Family house’ is consistent with the educational objectives of the serial; it is those segments of the audience who are most in need of the educational messages it contained. Those who said that they had liked the serial were asked to state what they liked most. Of those, (18 per cent) mentioned a particular actor or actress as what they liked most, (17 per cent) liked particular scenes or events, (12 per cent) mentioned AIDS, (10 per cent) liked the educational messages generally, (8 per cent) mentioned the theme of caring for one’s children, (8 per cent) liked the songs, (7 per cent) liked the story on addiction and the rest mentioned various other things. Those who said that they had learned from the serial were also asked to give examples of what they had learned. The most frequent answer was related to the causes and prevention of AIDS. Knowledge of how AIDS is transmitted was quite high among respondents, (85 per cent) mentioned that AIDS is transmitted through sexual contact and about (90 per cent) mentioned blood transfusion, contaminated needles or injecting drugs. Of those who knew how AIDS is transmitted, (9 per cent) stated that they had acquired this information for the first time from ‘Family house’. However, this figure increased to (15 per
cent) among those with less than high school education, to 125 among female viewers and to (14 per cent) among rural viewers.

The project was very much successful in conveying health and educational messages.

**Why people watch soap opera? An analysis of the explanations of British viewers, Sonia M., Livingstone:**

The high popularity of soap opera raises important questions about viewer’s involvement with the genre. British viewer’s explanations for watching soap opera are shown to concern escapism, realism, relationship with characters, critical response, problem-solving, and role in viewer’s life, emotional experience and entertainment. The viewers take soap opera seriously and consider that the characters and problems portrayed are highly realistic and personally involving, has implications for issues of media effects.

Soap opera is the most popular form of television programming in the world, being the foremost genre in Britain for thirty five years, since the very first episode of ‘Coronation Street’ was screened in 1960. The phenomenon evolved from the radio soap operas of the 1930s and 40s, emerging initially in the United States, and attracting a large following of predominantly female listeners. Soap opera origin in rather humble, in that it was originally intended to provide entertainment on local level. However, it was soon realized that the genre had major export potential, resulting in international reputation for the majority of contemporary soaps, be they British, American or Australian. It seems that soaps have succeeded in capturing the global imagination.

Regular serial viewers begin to regard themselves as people with degree of mastery in their subject; positively empowered when pitted against someone less knowledgeable than themselves. Indeed, T.V. serials are often watched for their compensatory function, so individuals can combat feelings of loneliness by escaping into the realistic world.

**Psychological Impact of T.V. Serials (Soaps) in India:**

When ‘Hum Log’, the first soap for the middle - class was aired for the first time, millions of viewers across India sat glued to their sets sharing the joys and heart breaks of the characters and identifying with their middle class attitude. This was the first serial which discussed issues of family planning, freedom of choice to find a life partner or job and the role of women in society. This was followed by other ‘identifiable’ serials like ‘Buniyaad’,
and mythological serials like ‘Ramayana’ and ‘Mahabharata’. The Indian audience was well and truly ensured by the variety of serials on offer. Soaps had finally arrived in India. Such was the psychological impact of mythologies like ‘Mahabharata’ that people would hurry up with their morning chores and then sit glued to the television sets, some even offering incense and flowers to the ‘godly’ characters of Lord Krishna. For a nation fed on religion right from birth, these serials fed on the religious psychology of the viewers and soon the characters of Ram, Sita, Krishna had a hysterical mass following. People would touch their feet in public; such was the identification with their psyche! With a population close to 400 million individual viewers, and bouquet of channels offering an exhausting, unlimited and formula-tested soaps of holier-than-thou women with huge red bindis, streams of vermilion and imitation mangalsutras, as opposed to the vamps with over the toppan-caked make up and a perpetual evil look in eyes, Indian soaps have been playing with the psychological emotions of the common Indian women who are the primary target for high drama and suspense and who tend to favour the positive or the negative vibes given out by these women characters.

With the advent of soap factories like Balaji Televisions, women have started swearing by the characters of ‘Tulsi’ of ‘Kunki Saas Bhi Kabhi Bahu Thii’ ….. (the title itself making no sense as the story seems to have gone haywire), or ‘Parvati’ of ‘Kahani Ghar Ghar Ki’. Such is the craze for these women characters that advertisements for marriages have inserts like, ‘the girl should be like Tulsi’! The message is strong and clear, today’s mother-in-law wants a girl who would be completely traditional, protect the family values of her in-laws (does not matter if she is abused and berated by one and all - misunderstandings are always cleared after six episodes of glycerine tears and high family drama) and respect her in-laws no matter how scheming they are. This is just an example to show the extent of psychological play soap can have on the mindset of the viewers.

It would be a long debate to get into; the positivity and negativity of the woman characters. Almost all serials are women-dominated, and if one leaves the saas-bahu (family drama) and moves to the more modern soaps, there have been some great ones, that have taken up bold themes, uncommon themes and worked on them. Soaps like ‘Astitva - Ek Prem Kahani’, dealing with a young man falling in love with a much older woman, or ‘Jassi Jaisi Koi Nahi’ where a common ordinary looking girl makes it to the top on basis of her merit, have been some milestones in influencing the youth. ‘Jassi Jaisi Koi Nahi’ has inspired common looking girls, with no glamour to back them, to stand for themselves and create their
own niche in society. Definitely a very positive play of psychological interpretation of the human mind.

The fact remains that how much ever critics cry themselves hoarse over the portrayal of women and the one sided views presented (since men hardly play any role in decision making), the serials will go on. A dedicated audience sits glued to the sets and in order to reward this, star channel (India) came up with the ‘Star Parivaar Awards’ where viewers are given a choice to create their own family of choice. So much so that there was a best ‘Star Atithi’, who shared the limelight with the hallowed starcast? The awards bring forward the view working and who unwind with their daily boost of late night serials.

Serials in India, claim to have the pulse of their viewers, Balaji Telefilms mainstay Ekta Kapoor is of the idea that her serials are the essence of Indian sense and sensibility and her characters and plots are normal people and normal incidents. Again there is no getting into a debate over this since, the majority of viewers swear over the characters and their actions. One thing is for sure, it can be an eyesore for some, some can hate it, there may be hysterical debates over them, but soaps are here to stay. They have found their way and embedded themselves into the mindset of millions across the country. If nothing binds to strangers are being set, progressive or regressive attitudes (depending on how one views the serial) are being set, and emotions are running wild as characters drip tears or acid. The ball has started rolling. The Indian soapy affair has begun!

**Measuring the Power of Television:**

While television was first introduced to India in 1959, for the first three decades almost all broadcasting was in the hands of the state, and the content was primarily focused on news or information about economic development. The most significant innovation in terms of both content and viewership was the introduction of satellite television in the early 1990s. In the five years from 2001 to 2006, about 30 million households, representing approximately 150 million individuals, added cable service.

Soap operas are among the most popular shows on cable: The most popular show in both 2000 and 2007 (based on Indian Nielsen ratings) is “Kyunki Saas Bhi Kabhi Bahu Thi,” (Because a Mother - in - Law was Once a Daughter - in - Law, Also), a show based around the life of a wealthy industrial family in the large city of Mumbai. By virtue of the fact that the most popular Indian serials take place in urban settings, women depicted on these shows
are typically much more emancipated than rural women. Further, in many cases there is access to Western television, where these behaviors differ even more markedly from rural India. Based on anthropological reports, this seems to have affected attitudes within India. Several respondents in one study thought television might lead women to question their social position and might help the cause of female advancement. Another woman surveyed reported that, because of television, men and women are able to open up more.

RATIONALE OF THE STUDY

T.V. serials have already been recognised as one of the key attractions of television for the audiences and T.V. serials are having very large audience, especially the women audience. As a scholar of communication, the researcher realized the need for assessing the impact of T.V. serials on social attitudes of women of our country. The researcher would like to find out how far these T.V. serials influence the women of Silchar Town on their social attitudes.

Three significant questions that follows are:-
1. What is the type of viewing patterns of the women T.V. viewers in Silchar Town?
2. What is the typology of serials that are being viewed by the respondents?
3. Which patterns of serials influences the social attitudes of women T.V. viewers in Silchar Town?

There is an acute dearth of research work done in this field. Hence, study of impact of T.V. serials on social attitudes of women gains paramount importance.

Thus, the present study aimed to analyse the impact of T.V. serials on social attitudes of women in the Silchar Town.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The specific objectives of the proposed study are as follows:
1) To ascertain the social background of the respondents.
2) To understand the viewing patterns of serials.
3) To find out the typology of serials that are being viewed by the respondents.
4) To analyze the patterns of serials influencing the social attitudes of women.
HYPOTHESIS

1) H1- "Gender plays a significant role in channels and programmes preference".
2) H2- "The preference for serials is greater than any other programmes among the female viewers".
3) H3- "T.V. serials have an impact on social attitudes of women".

METHODOLOGY

The purpose of the study is located in Silchar Town in Cachar district of Assam, Silchar head - quarter of the district is one of the developed town of Barak Valley and second gateway of the north - east which is well developed in terms of basic amenities such as banks, educational institutions, primary health care and hospitals, strong socio - political institutions, radio and television stations, means of communication and transportation. Moreover, it is well connected with other parts of the country through train and air.

METHODOLOGICAL STRATEGY

Nature of Data:

According to the nature of the investigation both primary and secondary data were required in the study. Primary data or first hand 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 the study. The secondary data required for the study were collected from the various books, research reports, dissertations and recognised websites, etc.

Universe of the Study:

The present study was conducted on 280 women of Silchar Town.

Unit of Study:

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

Sample of the Study:

In each sample only those women belonging to the age group of 18-28 years, 29-39 years, 40-50 years and 51 -above 60 years were selected as respondents.

Techniques of Data Collection:

The researcher had employed audience survey method study in order to collect the data which is required to fulfil the stated objectives of the study. 280 women respondents
were chosen by convenient sampling and data were collected from them with the help of an interview schedule developed by the researcher herself. For further clarification formal discussions were organised and appropriate notes were taken for later analysis.

VARIABLES AND PARAMETERS OF THE STUDY

Social Background:-

The social background of the respondents was studied in terms of their age groups, religion, caste, mother tongue, languages known, marital status, educational level of the respondents, father's and mother's education, occupation of the respondents, father's and mother's occupation and monthly income.

Media Exposure:-

Media exposure of the respondents was studied in terms of exposure to the television, access to television channels (ownership, kind of channels they are being exposed, time spent on watching T.V., place of watching, language preferences, mode of watching, choice of programmes they watch).

Social Attitudes:-

Social attitudes were studied in case of women:

1. To understand the viewing patterns of serials.
2. To find out the typology of serials that are being viewed by the respondents
3. To analyse the patterns of serials influencing the social attitudes of women.

These were analysed to find out whether T.V. serials have an impact on social attitudes of women.

OPERATIONAL DEFINITIONS

1. **Attitudes:** A hypothetical construct that represents an individual's like or dislike for an item. "Attitudes are positive, negative or neutral views of an attitude object", i.e., a person, behaviour or event. Attitudes denote a person's outlook shaped by television programmes.

2. **Social attitudes:** In psychology, social attitudes are a mental position with regard to a fact or state. Attitudes reflect a tendency to classify objects and events and to react to them with some consistency. Attitudes are not directly observable but rather are inferred from the objective, evaluative responses a person makes. Thus, investigators
depend heavily on behavioural indications of attitudes—what people say, how they respond to questionnaires, or such physiological signs as changes in heart rate.

3. **Social attitudes of women:** Generally women are slow to change. They try to cling to age-old traditions more rigidly. But because of the wide prevalence of T.V., especially cable T.V. network there is a distinct change in attitudes of women even in these so-called backwaters.

4. **Culture:** It is shared, learned, symbolic system of values, beliefs and attitudes that shapes and influences perception and behaviour—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.

5. **T.V. serial:** A T.V. serial is usually a fictional story that is ‘broken up’ into a number of episodes. eg. *The Thornbirds*, etc. (It probably comes from the “**serial** isation of a novel”). A T.V. serial has a pre-defined number of episodes broken into instalments. If it’s very popular it could continue for many years. If it is not, it could be terminated at the end of the current contract.

6. **Soap opera:** The American press coined the term “soap opera” in the 1930s to denote the extraordinarily popular genre of serialized domestic radio dramas, which by 1940, represented some 90% of all commercially sponsored day time broadcast hours. The “soap” in soap opera alluded to their sponsorship by manufacturers of household cleaning products; while “opera” suggested an ironic incongruity between the domestic narrative concerns of the day time serial and the most elevated of dramatic forms. Not only does a soap opera resist any textual closure, but it thrives on the interplay between these multiple viewpoints. Sarah Kozloff [cited in Allen, 1992:74] states that textual openness is achieved by the facts that soaps run five or six story lines simultaneously. What makes a soap opera unique is that the story never ends, that is why soaps like “Guiding Light” can be on the air (either radio or T.V.) for more than 50 years.

7. **Drama:** A story that tells about conflict and emotion through action and dialogue. Drama originally started in plays in the Renaissance by one of the world’s greatest playwrights William Shakespeare. Drama is one of the oldest genres of T.V. shows in television. Drama television shows started in the 1940’s and they were a huge hit.
Drama shows could be about family, animals, school and so much more. Also, dramas can be for viewers of all ages.

8. **Reality show:** A television or radio show that deals with real people in real situations. Infact, T.V. designating or of programming, a show, etc that features people, who are not actors, engaged in unscripted activity, often in contrived situations.

9. **Fiction and Non - fiction:** Fiction is a writing that uses characters, setting, and plot to convey stories that are not real (not true). They are imaginations, it is usually in narrative form, though non - fiction is factual and true writing that tells about real people, places and events. Non - fiction is facts, fiction is fantasy. In brief, fiction is a made - up story, non - fiction is truth.

10. **Audiences:** The term audience is used to describe a large number of unidentifiable people, usually united by their participation in media use. Audiences enable media organizations to sell advertising or to fulfil their public and statutory obligations, whether for television, radio, magazine or the press.

11. **TRP:** It means Television Rating Points. It indicates the popularity of a particular programme or a television channel. The higher the TRP ratings the better is the programme. Depending on the TRP’s sponsors sponsor a particular programme. Also the channel determines whether to continue with a particular show depending on its TRP. TRP does not reflect the quality of the show/channel, only popularity. In India there are two methods to decide TRP. In first INTAM (INDIAN TELEVISION AUDIENCE MEASUREMENT) installs an equipment called “peoples meter” in sample homes. These meters record the frequency of all the channels that are watched in this home. These frequencies are decoded and channel nem determined. All the data from different sample homes gives the TRP. If the cable operator has a habit of putting channels on different frequencies then there might be an error. In the picture matching technique, people meter will record two things. First - A small portion of picture that is being watched on that television. Second - All the channels data in the form of a small portion. Data collected is checked with the main national data bank to get the name of the channel. However, TRP rating are said to be urban oriented and do not reflect true viewership. It is a tool provided to judge which programmes are viewed the most. Its calculation is a kind of survey to know whether people are
watching the show or not. A high TRP signifies that a huge number of people are watching the show.

12. **Program**: A program is a clearly defined and labelled fragment of television's output. It has clear boundaries, both temporal and formal, and it relates to other programs in terms of generic similarity and, more essentially, of difference. Programs are stable, fixed entities, produced and sold as commodities, and organized by schedulers into distribution packages.

13. **Text**: A text is a different matter altogether. Programs are produced, distributed, and defined by the industry: texts are the product of their readers. So a program becomes a text at the moment of reading, that is, when its interaction with one of its many audiences activates some of the meanings/pleasures that are capable of provoking. So, one program can stimulate the production of many texts according to the social conditions of its reception. A text is the site of struggle for meaning that reproduces the conflicts of interest between the producers and consumers of the cultural commodity. Texts are unstable, unconfined.

The advertisement and the program may be part of the same text in their interaction in the production of meaning and pleasure.

14. **Level of viewing**: Level of viewing refers to the number of hours devoted for viewing television programmes on a regular day. The level of viewing can be classified into four types which are as follows:-

(i) **Light viewer**: A person who watches television programmes for 1-2 (one to two) hours on a regular day.

(ii) **Moderate viewer**: A person who watches television programmes for 3-5 (three to five) hours on a regular day.

(iii) **Heavy viewer**: A person who watches television programmes for 6-8 (six to eight) hours on a regular day.

(iv) **Very heavy viewer**: A person who watches television programmes for more than 8 (eight) hours on a regular day.
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.

Barak Valley is very often found to be neglected area when it comes to dealing with any mass media. Frequent studies have no doubt been undertaken on impact of Television and T.V. serials. But when it comes to, Barak Valley, it becomes a level of negligence on the part of researchers which is worth mentioning. This study is just a humble attempt to focus on the impact of T.V. serials on the social attitudes of women T.V. viewers in Silchar Town of Assam.