

The term **media**, which is the plural of medium, refers to the communication channels through which we disseminate news, music, movies, education, promotional messages and other data. It includes physical and online newspapers and magazines, television, radio, telephone and the Internet. The word media comes from the Latin plural of medium. The traditional view is that it should therefore be treated as a plural noun in all its senses in English and be used with a plural rather than a singular verb. In practice, it refers collectively to ‘television, radio, and the press. Collectively’, which means that it is now acceptable in standard English for it to be taken as either a singular or a plural term.

Media is the source of news, information and entertainment the majority of the general public needs in their day today lives which they get through the print media, radio, television and computer with internet, which represents media technology. Media means the main means of mass communication (broadcasting, publishing, and the Internet) regarded collectively. It has various forms such as print, television, radio, and the internet. The print is the oldest form of it. Whereas, the newest form of it is the internet. Print media has two aspects i.e. newspapers and magazines. It may or may not be influenced by powerful people, political parties, organizations, etc. This may lead to a biased coverage of that particular political party, organization, or person.

Mass media means technology that is intended to reach a mass audience. It is the primary means of communication used to reach the vast majority of the general public. The most common platforms for mass media are newspapers, magazines, radio, television, and the Internet. The general public typically relies on the mass media to provide information regarding political issues, social issues, entertainment, and news in pop culture.

Types of Mass Media

The mass media has evolved significantly over time. Have you ever wondered how the latest news and information was communicated in the past? Well, before there was the Internet, television, or the radio, there was the newspaper. The newspaper was the original platform for mass media. For a long period of time, the public relied on writers and journalists for the local newspapers to provide them with the latest news in current events.

Centuries later, in the 1890s, came the invention of the radio. The radio would soon supersede the newspaper as the most pertinent source for mass media. Families would gather around the radio and listen to their favorite radio station programs to hear the latest news regarding politics, social issues, and entertainment.

Later on down the line came the invention of the television. The television would soon replace the radio for the most effective platform to reach the general public. Today, the Internet is the most relevant form of mass media and has become a major tool for news outlets. Since the evolution of the Internet, the general public is now able to access those same news outlets in an instant with just a click of a mouse.

Role of Media

Media is said to be the fourth pillar of democracy. One of its important roles is to inform people about the things that are happening. It is also important to give valid and real news and helps to progress the society. It has also helped to get justice for a lot of cases.

Impact of Media on Society

Society is affected by the media multifariously. Media plays its role effectively in the following areas:

- i. Information Access to media means access to fact and document which help one acquire information and knowledge. Media as purveyors of news and views have a decisive role of preparing the human race for the 21st Century. Media organization and communication hardware expand access to information. The world became closer and cohesive due to transmission of information. Within seconds information reaches every nook and corner of all countries. Everyone knows everything happening everywhere.
- ii. Public watchdog Media have played a leading role in shaping, guiding and reflecting the public opinion. The functions of media help to establish democracy. A well-developed media system, informing and teaching its citizens, helps democracy move towards its ideal state. In the current corrupt society, media plays a pivotal role in exposing the

corrupt activities taking place in Government, trade and profession and make the public to think and act accordingly.

- iii. **Safeguarding the Democratic Society:** Access to media means access to public opinion. So it is essential for preserve and protects democratic system. It is advantageous for both the leaders and masses. Leader can address masses depending upon their convenience. They reach widely dispersed masses simultaneously through the media. One of the chief advantages of media access is that it helps to correct distortion in facts, views and attitudes.
- iv. **Entertainment** The media has monopolized the leisure industry. Literature, music drama, dance sport, interaction with resourceful persons, culture entertainments etc. which are popular among public such as „Harikatha“ and „Burrakatha“ are some of the performances which are liked by masses. The media play a large role in shaping modern culture.
- v. **Education** The overall human development is directly related to education. Media enable the spread of education through conventional as well as unconventional methods. Ignorance can be eradicated with adequate information supply. Media add new information to human knowledge. This is educative values. Media may also be educational in nature, for instance the public broadcasting stations which provides educational programming to national audience. Newspapers release special „education Plus“ supplement every week which contain material useful to student community.
- vi. **Economic Growth.** Media can be used for both the social and business concerns. They can include advertising, marketing, propaganda, public relations and political communication. The market for goods expands and economic growth takes place through advertisements in media. Information relating jobs in different fields are available through media to public. The needed skills are being taught through media for instance farmers learn the methods of modern farming; workers get

information to master technical skills, people in general learn more about how to keep themselves healthy and strong. A health media keeps a wealthy nation on development track.

- vii. **Gives us immense knowledge & transmits information** – Media keeps us informed about various happening around the world. It lets us know what is happening around us and all over the world. With the help of media, we get immense knowledge on various subjects. Media plays a vital role in the dissemination of information. It broadcasts, prints and updates information from time to time so that the general public stays aware of what is going on in the country and in the entire world.
- viii. **Raises our consciousness** – Media ignites awareness in us by providing information and knowledge. *It does not enforces its own opinion on us, but provides facts, figures and news to us so that we can analyze the information and can understand, what is wrong and what is right?*
- ix. **Raises voice against social evils** – Media also plays a constructive role for the society by raising social issues. *Presently, there are many examples of social evils like dowry, female foeticide, gender discrimination, etc. that have been raised by media.* When media presents and unveils such issues, the public becomes aware and the necessary steps are taken for resolving the issues! Media also helps reach the voice of masses to the concerned authorities.
- x. **Provides true pictures and live telecast for various events** – Be it the cricket world cup, FIFA matches, our prime minster or president addressing the nation, the areas affected by flooding or just any other incident, media helps us see the true picture by providing the LIVE or recorded telecast for almost all important events.
- xi. **Educates the society** – One of the most important roles of media is to educate the society. We can explore and analyze various product reviews, do price comparison for various items, read news about

politics, fashion, war, weather, health and much more with the help of media. Media exposes issues like poverty, illiteracy, social backwardness, etc., and educates people on the same. It also educates people about their rights and duties and helps enforce law as well.

Media plays a crucial role in shaping public perceptions on variety of important issues, both the information that is dispensed through them, and through the interpretation they place upon this information. They also play a large role in shaping modern culture, by portraying a particular set of beliefs, values, and traditions as reality. That is, by portraying a certain interpretation of reality, they shape reality to be more in line with that interpretation.

For example, The Ayushi Talvaar murder case, The Nirbhaya Rape case, Jessica Lal murder case, etc. It also exposes a lot of corrupt people. Some other important functions include influencing public opinion, determining the political agenda, providing a link between the government and the people, acting as a government watchdog, and affecting socialization.

Types of Media

There are various types of mass media we people, even the children who are at home watching cartoons and geography channels is also a kind of mass media.

We human beings, today, is surrounded by various types of Mass Media which influences our life. Through oral, written and broadcast medium, all age groups get knowledge, information and entertainment.

There are 6 types of Mass Media:

- Traditional Media
- Print Media
- Electronic Broadcasting Media
- Outdoor Media

- Transit Media
- Digital Media or New Media

Traditional Media

People over some time developed different ways of communications through local languages and written medium. **Traditional Media** is considered as the oldest forms of media, which transfers culture and tradition from generation to generation. Communication tools have been developed over some time from customs, rituals, beliefs and practices of society.

There are various forms of Traditional media:

- Folk Songs and Music
- Theatres and Drama
- Fairs and Festivals

Print Media

Print Media is defined as a Print form of information which is provided to the larger audience. During Ancient times or Early Age, information is conveyed to the masses through manuscripts. Before the invention of the Printing press, the articles and printed matters are to be handwritten that was made available to a larger audience.

There are various forms of Print Media:

- Newspapers
- Journals
- Books, Novels and Comics

The oldest media forms are newspapers, magazines, journals, newsletters, and other printed material. These publications are collectively known as the **Print Media**. Although print media readership has declined in the last few decades, many Americans still read a newspaper every day or a newsmagazine on a regular basis. The influence of print media is therefore significant. Regular readers of print media tend to be more likely to be politically active.

The print media is responsible for more reporting than other news sources. Many news reports on television, for example, are merely follow-up stories about news that first appeared in newspapers. The top American newspapers, such as the *New York Times*, the *Washington Post*, and the *Los Angeles Times*, often set the agenda for many other media sources.

News papers

A newspaper is publication containing news and information and also advertising, usually printed on low cost paper called news print. It may be general or special interest, most often published daily or weekly. The first printed newspaper was published in 1605.

Newspapers enjoyed the position of most preferred medium to reach a wider audience until electronics communication emerged on the media scene. In previous days, newspaper was the only medium that masses at large depend on, for daily news. A newspaper carries all kinds of communication, related to a variety of topics like politics, socialism, current affairs entertainment, finance, stocks, etc. Apart from this, it also includes topics which are in lighter vein like cartoon, crossword, Sudoku, movie reviews, puzzles, which captivate the imagination and interest of the readers, from all age groups. Newspapers are an important platform of mass communication as they reach every nook and corner of the world where electronic media fails to reach. It plays a pivotal role in providing authentic firsthand information, building opinion, updating the knowledge of the reader, and serves a good platform for advertiser to promote the products. However, with the emergence of internet which updates information every second, and is just a click away, the popularity of newspapers has reduced.

The twentieth century has seen the rapid growth of the newspaper industry, to the challenges withstand the challenges posed by electronic media, to speed up the production process and improve their quality.

Magazines

A Magazine is a periodical which published a variety of articles, generally financed by advertising and purchase by reader. Magazine fall in two categories, consumer magazine and business magazine they usually cater to a specific type of audience who are looking for information based on a particular subject. Magazines cover a plethora of topics like current affairs, business, finance, consumers, gadgets, self-help, luxury, lifestyle, beauty, fashion, entertainment, travel, etc. are the subject of periodicals, distinct from those periodicals produced by scientific, artistic, academic or special interest publishers which are subscribed only, more expensive, narrowly limited in circulation, and often have little or no advertising. Magazines like TIME and Reader's Digest include information which is all pervasive. The frequency of magazines can be weekly, fortnightly, monthly, bi-monthly, quarterly, half-yearly or yearly. These magazines are the best forum for advertiser as they have a niche readership. The readers look for a specific type of information, for instance a camera and in a gadget magazine will definitely have a direct brand impact on the reader who wants to buy a camera. Also the self-life and brand recall of magazines is far better than newspapers which have a short life span.

Booklets and Brochures

Booklets and brochures are a part of promotional literature of product. There are two types of booklets and brochures. Pre-buying promotion: Usually in malls and stores, promotional literature is distributed free to all (with discount offers, or other schemes which seems profitable). For example a free booklet about cosmetics will include information about the products, latest trends, contents, the benefits of using them, the available range, or color, discount coupons, which will most likely which have a positive impact on decision-making of the prospective customer.

Post buying promotion: these booklets and brochures are usually given with a product for better customer experience and easy usages, post purchasing. It is to be observed that a product is usually accompanied with a small booklet

giving detail about the benefit of using the product, usage direction, cleaning and storage instructions. The guidelines are usually followed by series of “how to images” which facilitate to easy information about the product. These booklets may also include other offering section. Organization also has their own profiles in the form of brochures which they give to their stakeholder to create a favorable image. It highlights the information about the company, its capacity and capability, service and solution offered milestone achievements, sustainability, innovation, award, etc. In this case people, “do judge the book by its cover” and hence these booklets and brochures are designed in an attractive format using colors and photos.

House Magazine, Periodical or Newsletter

Most of the organizations today have learned that it is important to communicate with all the stockholders in order to be successful. Hence, the customer, shareholder, investors, solicitors and employees are updated about the activities of the organization from time to time. Many organizations today invent various platforms like house magazines, periodicals, or newsletters to keep the stockholders posted about the news related to the company. Usually the house magazine includes data about a company’s achievements, employee engagement activities, and information to offers. A periodical or newsletter is more or less, designed on similar lines but its size is restricted to a few pages. Mostly, it includes similar information but in very short format. Their frequency ranges from weekly to yearly. It has an encouraging impact on the stakeholders because of the feel-good factor. They believe that the company cares to communicate with them, and this also increases their confidence about the prospects of the company.

Direct Mailers

Direct mailers are small pamphlets, which are devices for direct advertising and marketing. Usually they arrive at the doorsteps through the postal mails. Direct mails are relatively cheaper option of marketing as bulk advertising is coast effective through post. Most of them include colorful advertisement, discount and gift coupons, preapproved credit card offers, automobile, realtor, and political promotion. Direct mailing system is the best suited for back to back business. People have a tendency to remember what they see in the

advertisement, and recall it while making a purchase and voting decisions. Attractive offers on a commercial direct mailer also prompt many to make a positive buying decision.

Handbills or flyers

Handbills or flyers are a form of communication which is printed on a small paper. It is easy to carry, colorful, attractive, and legible to read. They are handed out to all the passersby. These are useful for restaurants, hotels, nightclubs, political campaigns, concerts, rallies, etc. Peoples are more prompted to throw it away without reading. Hence, many a time this fails to be an effective medium of mass communication.

Billboards or Hoardings

Billboards or hoardings are huge advertisements that are put up at a height in strategic locations to fetch more attention. They usually attract the targeted audience by their bold colors, attending grabbing headlines, creativity, designs, special effects, etc. Initially billboards started by hand painting on huge board, and eventually graduated to putting up printed sheets. Later came a trend for incorporating neon signs, videos, and graphic (which are part of electronic communication) cut-out which extent out form the boards, 3D rubber, or plastic balloon objects, etc. Such billboards are called bulletins. They command the best customer exposure. Minimum words are should be used for communication in Billboards. The images should speak louder than the words. They are successful medium of communication as they are good at captivating and retaining customer attention.

Dr. Vasudha MC

Department of Sociology

JNC