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HOME SCIENCE, M.A. SEMESTER II

HSCM 207: COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

UNIT III:- MASS MEDIA: TYPES, ROLE AND CHARACTERISTICS

MASS MEDIA:- Mass media refers to communication devices, which can be used to communicate and interact with a large number of audiences in different languages. In short, any means by which the bulk of the people receive information is regarded as a mass media. Be it the pictorial messages of the early ages, or the high-technology media that are available today, one thing that we all agree upon, is that mass media are an inseparable part of our lives. The mass media are 'the vehicles of mass communication'. Entertainment and media always go hand in hand, but in addition to entertainment, mass media also remains to be an effective means of communication, spreading information, advertising, marketing, and in general, of expressing and sharing views, opinions, and ideas.

TYPES OF MASS MEDIA:- There are several types of mass media:

- 1) Print Media
 - a) Newspapers
 - b) Magazines
 - c) Booklets and Brochures
 - d) Billboards
- 2) Electronic Media
 - a) Television
 - b) Radio
- 3) New Age Media
 - a) Mobile Phones
 - b) Computers
 - c) Internet
 - d) Electronic Books

1) **Print Media:-** Traditionally the term “print media” refer to the mass communication through printed material. It includes newspaper, magazines, booklets, brochures, house magazines, periodicals or newsletters, direct mailers, handbills or flyers, billboard, press releases, books etc.

a) **Newspaper:-** 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 the most preferred medium to reach a wider audience until electronic communication emerged on the media scene. In the early days, newspapers were the only medium that masses at large depended on, for daily news. A newspaper carries all kinds of communication related to a variety of topics like politics, current affairs, entertainment, finance, stocks, etc. Apart from this, it also includes topics which are in lighter vein like cartoons, crosswords, Sudoku, movie reviews, book reviews, puzzles, crosswords, etc. This captivates the imagination and interests of 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.

b) **Magazines:-** A Magazine is a periodical which published a variety of articles, generally financed by adverting and purchase by reader. Magazine means a ‘**store house**’ and thus has a variety of contents in it. Magazines have specific well-defined readers and thus advertiser can reach specific target people through it more effectively. The magazines are dependent on advertising and try to reach particular segments of men, women, film lovers, young generation, etc through it. 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.

c) 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).

Post buying promotion: These booklets and brochures are usually given with a product for better customer experience and easy usages, post purchasing. It highlights the information about the company, its capacity and capability, service and solution offered milestone achievements, sustainability, innovation, award, etc.

d) Billboards:- Billboards are huge advertisements that are put up at a height in strategic locations to draw more attention. They usually attract the target audience by their bold colors, attention-grabbing headlines, creativity, designs, special effects, etc. Initially, billboards started by hand painting huge boards, and eventually graduated to putting up printed sheets. Later came a trend for incorporating neon signs, videos, and cut-outs which extend out from the boards, 3D rubber, or plastic balloon objects, etc. Such billboards are called bulletins. Communication in these types of billboards should be in minimum words. The images should speak louder than the words. They are a successful medium of communication as they are good at captivating and retaining customer's attention.

2) Electronic Media:- Electronic media is kind of media that use electronic or electromechanical energy for transmission of messages. It is also known as "Broadcast Media". It includes television, radio, and new-age-media like internet, computers, telephones, etc.

a) Television:- Television appeals to both the auditory and visual senses, and hence is an important communication device as it beholds the attention of the audience. Television has become an advertising hub where advertisers are ready to spend huge amounts of money for an advertisement of a few seconds, especially for programmes with high viewership. It offers various programs to appeal to the masses of different age groups. It is a popular means of communication which provides both information and entertainment. This category also includes electronic media like movies, CDs and DVDs as well as the electronic gadgets.

b) Radio:- Radio has a significant reach. A considerable number of people tune into radio every week while on their way to work. Advertising on the radio with catchy jingles and phrases is a tried and tested means of communication. It is an interactive

means of communication with all the dial-in programs which give the listeners an opportunity to feature on radio.

- 3) New Age Media:-** With the advent of internet, we are now enjoying the benefit of high technology mass media, which is not only faster than the old school mass media, but also has a widespread range. Mobile phones, computers, and internet are often referred to as the new-age media. Internet has opened up several new opportunities for mass communication which includes email, websites, e-forums, e-books, blogging, internet TV and many others which are booming today. Internet has also started social networking sites which have redefined mass communication all together. Sites like Facebook, Twitter and YouTube had made communication to the masses all the more entertaining, interesting and easier.
- a) Mobile Phones:-** Mobile phones have become a boon to mankind. It has made communication possible at any time, and from anywhere. Nowadays, a smart device like a mobile phone is not only used for interaction, but also for other technical utilities like operating pumps from remote locations, etc. You can also get alerts of your monetary transactions on a mobile phone. Today, we can stay in touch with the whole world via the Internet on our mobile phones.
- b) Computers:-** With the invention of computers the impossible has become possible. It has added speed and multimedia to the information which was earlier available only in the print format. Also, anyone can voice their opinions through computers.
- c) Internet:-** This is the most important device of the new age media. The discovery of the internet can be called the biggest invention in mass media. The Internet has inspired interaction and connectivity through its social networking medium. It has become one of the core means of mass communication. Internet impacts mass communication through E-mails, websites, podcasts, E-Forums, E-Books, blogging, facebook, twitter, and YouTube.
- d) E-Books:-** There are a number of websites which have hosted eBooks and online libraries. The main benefit of having eBooks is that you don't have to carry bulky books. You can read them on your eBook readers, mobiles, computer screens, or other devices. You can even adjust the font size to suit your requirements.

ROLE OF MASS MEDIA:-

- 1) It play a key role in the improvement of communication.
- 2) It also secures the advancements in the way individuals obtain information globally and attribute the level of indoctrination.
- 3) Modern mass media technologies provide advanced communication processes. It has played a key role in generating a vast and efficient media structure.
- 4) It have an enormous influence in helping to shape public opinion and underlying sentiment. Newspapers, TV and radio are all important sources of basic information about other people and other places and this can itself help to engender understanding if presented in a fair, even-handed and non-inflammatory way.
- 5) It raises important issues, corruption for example, that might otherwise never be publicly debated or addressed.
- 6) The emergence of modern mass technologies has helped various institutions such as the agricultural and scientific sectors. The agricultural researchers would be equipped with paramount knowledge about crop diseases, weeds and pests, seedlings and fertilizer.
- 7) The success of agricultural development programmes in developing countries largely depends on the nature and extent of use of mass media in mobilisation of people for development. The planners in developing countries realise that the development of agriculture could be hastened with the effective use of mass media. Radio, Television has been acclaimed to be the most effective media for diffusing the scientific knowledge to the masses.
- 8) These are also important for human, development, bringing health and education information to remote villages.

CHARACTERISTICS OF MASS MEDIA:-

- 1) **It is a one-way communication:-** One major characteristic of mass media is that the traffic flows in only one direction that is, from the material source to the consumers. The audience listens or reads but cannot give responses instantaneously. This may be so because the audience is far away from the source of the news.

- 2) **Reaches a large audience:-** It can reach a large number of audiences at the same time. Millions of people can tune into a radio programme. Mass media, therefore, has a very large audience base.
- 3) **Influences society:-** Mass media also influences the society in it operates or the people who listen to it. They can help to shape the opinion of people on a particular issue. On the other hand, the audience can also influence the media houses. If the audience expresses an opinion on an issue published or broadcast by a mass media house, it could influence the way the media house may have thought about the issue previously.
- 4) **Reaches varying types of people:-** It reaches a wide spectrum of audience. This is so because people of different ages, religious persuasion, political leanings, and professions tune into the station. The types of people, who listen to a radio programme, watch a television show or read a newspaper publication cannot be pre-determined by the media house. On the internet, however, children can be prevented from visiting certain adult sites. This may be the exception.
- 5) **Scattered audience:-** The target group of a media house are scattered all over the world. In other words, they do not live in the same community. The audiences are distributed along a wide geographical area.