# ADVANCED COMMUNICATIONS AND MEDIA ETHICS

# (MMC 403)

## DEFINITIONS

Littlejohn and Foss define **mass communication** as *"the process whereby media organizations produce and transmit messages to large publics and the process by which those messages are sought, used, understood, and influenced by audience"*

McQuail states that mass communication is, *"only one of the processes of communication operating at the society-wide level, readily identified by its institutional characteristics"*

**DeFleur & Dennis** – "Mass Communication is a process in which professional communicators use media to disseminate messages widely, rapidly and continuously to arouse intended meanings in Large and diverse audiences in attempts to influence them in a variety of ways."

**Orlik** – "Mass Communication is the process of rapidly conveying identical information, assertions and attitudes to potentially large, dispersed and diversified audiences via mechanisms capable of achieving that task."

**Berge** – "Mass Communication involves the use of print and electronic media such as newspapers, magazines, film, radio or TV to communicate the large number of people who are located in various places often scattered all over the country or the world."

Simply put, mass communication is the public transfer of messages through media or technology-driven channels to a large number of recipients from an entity, usually involving some type of cost or fee (advertising) for the user. "The sender often is a person in some large media organization, the messages are public, and the audience tends to be large and varied"

Mass communication involves communication with the mass audience and hence the name mass communication. Group communication has now been extended by the tools of mass communication: books, the press, the cinema, radio, television, video and the internet.

To understand mass communication, one must first be aware of some of the key factors that distinguish it from other forms of communication. First, is the dependence on a media channel to convey a message to a large audience. Second, the audience tends to be distant, diverse, and varies in size depending on the medium and message. Third, mass communication is most often profit driven, and feedback is limited. Fourth, because of the impersonal nature of mass communication, participants are not equally present during the process.

## EVOLUTION/HISTORICAL OF MASS COMMUNICATION

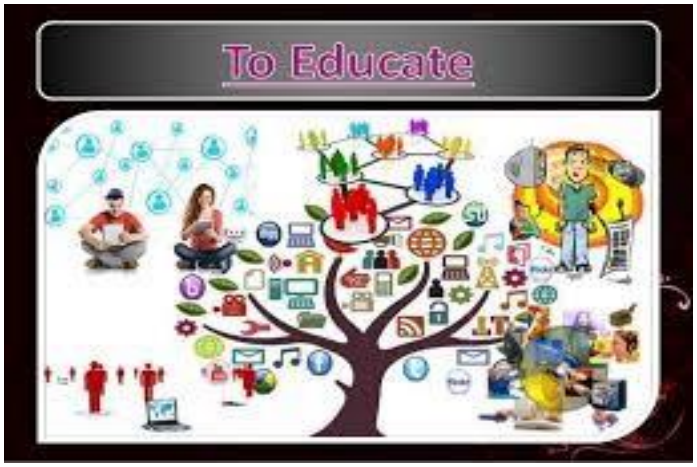
Societies have long had a desire to find effective ways to report environmental dangers and opportunities; circulate opinions, facts, and ideas; pass along knowledge, heritage, and lore; communicate expectations to new members; entertain in an expansive manner; and broaden commerce and trade (Schramm). The primary challenge has been to find ways to communicate messages to as many people as possible. Our need-to-know prompted innovative ways to get messages to the masses.

Before writing, humans relied on oral traditions to pass on information. “It was only in the 1920s-according to the Oxford English Dictionary-that people began to speak of ‘the media’ and a generation later, in the 1950s, of a ‘communication revolution’, but a concern with the means of communication is very much older than that” (Briggs & Burke 1). Oral and written communication played a major role in ancient cultures. These oral cultures used stories to document the past and impart cultural standards, traditions, and knowledge. With the development of

alphabets around the world over 5000 years ago, written language with ideogrammatic (picture-based) alphabets like hieroglyphics started to change how cultures communicated.

## FUNCTIONS OF MASS COMMUNICATION

The content of mass communication seems diverse in nature to audience as they expose themselves to thousands of media stimuli throughout the day and round the clock. News, reviews, commentaries, advertisements, etc. can saturate the audience. Thus, the audience members select the messages according to their needs. The major functions of mass communication are that it **informs, enriches, educates and entertains.**




- To inform
- To educate
- To entertain and
- To persuade

Additionally it also helps in transmission of culture.

**To inform:** Dissemination of information is the primary function of the news media. Newspapers, radio and TV provide us news from around the

world and keep us informed. Describing the events, news media have come to include human interest, analysis and factorized

treatment to news. Journalists are not just 'reporters' now. They have become news analysis analysts who discuss the implications of important news stories. Also, more 'soft stories' are filed these days. In addition to dissemination of information news media provided us information and also helps understand the news events, ideas, policy changes, etc.,

**To entertain:** The most common function of mass communication is entertainment. Radio, television and films are basically entertainment media. Even newspapers provide entertainment through comics, cartoons, features, cross word puzzles etc., Entertainment through radio consists of mainly music and also drama, talk shows, comedy etc.

Television has become primarily an entertainment medium. Even highly specialized channels like news, nature and wildlife channels also have a lot of humorous and comic content. Among all media, films are perhaps the only medium concentrating or entertainment.

**To Persuade**: Most of the mass media are used as vehicles of promotion and persuasion. Goods, services, ideas, persons, places, events – the range of things that are advertised through mass media is endless. Different media have different features and reach. Advertisers and advertising agencies analyze these features and depending upon the nature of the message and the target audience, choose where and how the message should be placed.

**Transmission of culture:** Any communication leaves a direct or indirect impact on an individual. It becomes part of one's experience, knowledge and accumulated learning. Through individuals, communication becomes part of the collective experience of groups, audiences of all kinds and finally the masses. Mass communication plays an important role in the

transmission of culture from one generation to another.

Mass communication doesn't exist for a single purpose. With its evolution, more and more uses have developed and the role it plays in our lives has increased greatly. Wright characterizes seven functions of mass communication that offer insight into its role in our lives.

- **Surveillance**. The first function of mass communication is to serve as the eyes and ears for those seeking information about the world. The internet, televisions, and newspapers are the main sources for finding out what's going around you. Society relies on mass communication for news and information about our daily lives, it reports the weather, current issues, the latest celebrity gossip and even start times for games. Do you remember the Boston Marathon Bombing that happened in 2013? How did you hear about it? Thanks to the internet and smart phones instant access to information is at the users fingertips. News apps have made mass communication surveillance instantly accessible by sending notifications to smartphones with the latest news.
- **Correlation**. Correlation addresses how the media presents facts that we use to move through the world. The information received through mass communication is not objective and without bias. People ironically state "it must be true if it's on the internet." However, we don't think that in generations past people must have without a doubt stated it "has to be true" because it was on the radio. This statement begs the question, how credible are the media? Can we consume media without questioning motive and agenda? Someone selects, arranges, interprets, edits, and critiques the information used in the media. If you ask anyone who works for a

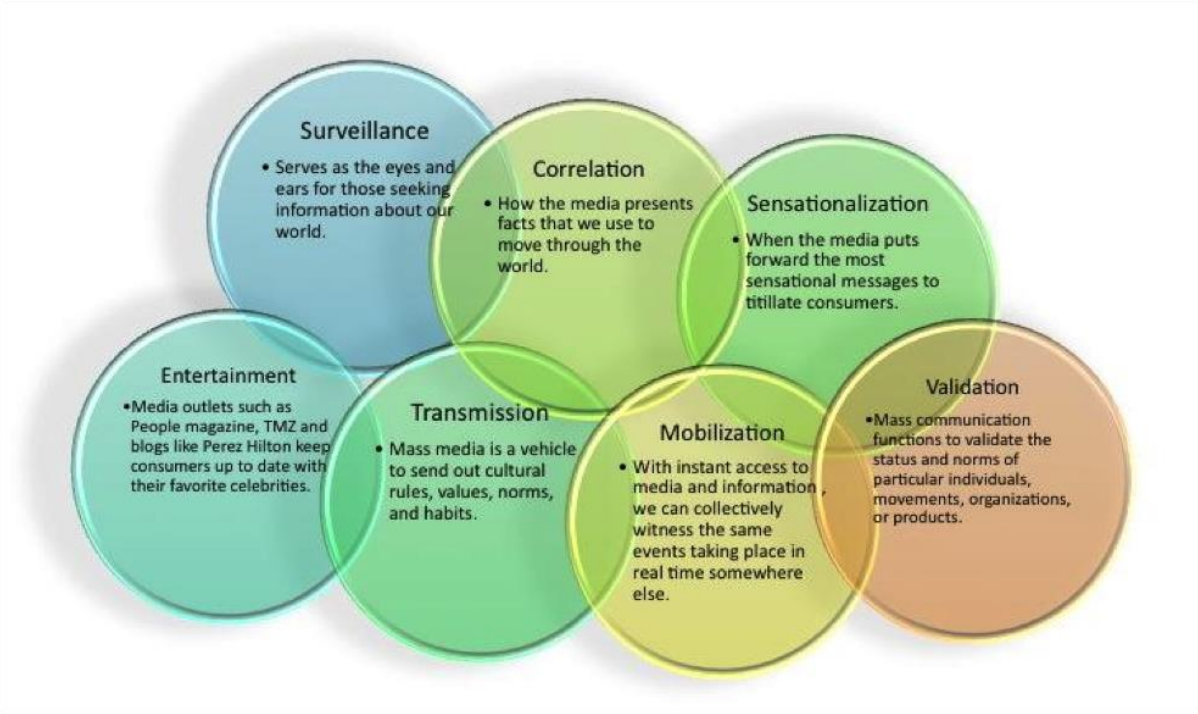
major reality TV show if what we see if a fair representation of what really happens, the person would probably tell you “no.”

- **Sensationalization**. There is an old saying in the news industry “if it bleeds, it leads,” which highlights the idea of Sensationalization. Sensationalization is when the media puts forward the most sensational messages to titillate consumers. Elliot observes, “Media managers think in terms of consumers rather than citizens. Good journalism sells, but unfortunately, bad journalism sells as well. And, bad journalism-stories that simply repeat government claims or that reinforce what the public wants to hear instead of offering independent reporting -is cheaper and easier to produce” (35).
- **Entertainment**. Media outlets such as People Magazine, TMZ, and entertainment blogs such as Perez Hilton keep us up to date on the daily comings and goings of our favorite celebrities. We use technology to watch sports, go to the movies, play video games, watch YouTube videos, and listen to iPods on a daily basis. Most mass communication simultaneously entertains and informs. People often turn to media during our leisure time to provide an escape from boredom and relief from the predictability of our everyday lives. We rely on media to take us places we could not afford to go or imagine, acquaints us with bits of culture, and make us laugh, think or cry. Entertainment can have the secondary effect of providing companionship and/or catharsis through the media we consume.
- **Transmission**. Mass media is a vehicle to transmit cultural norms, values, rules, and habits. Consider how you learned about what’s fashionable in clothes or music. Mass media plays a significant role in the socialization process. We look for role models to display appropriate cultural norms, but all too often, not recognizing their inappropriate or stereotypical behavior. Mainstream society starts

shopping, dressing, smelling, walking, and talking like the person in the music video, commercial, or movies. Why would soft drink companies pay Kim Kardashian or Taylor Swift millions of dollars to sell their products? Have you ever bought a pair of shoes or changed your hairstyle because of something you encountered in the media? Obviously, culture, age, type of media, and other cultural variables factor into how mass communication influences how we learn and perceive our culture.

- **Mobilization**. Mass communication functions to mobilize people during times of crisis (McQuail, 1994). Think back to the Boston Marathon Bombing. Regardless of your association to the incident, Americans felt the attack as a nation and people followed the news until they found the perpetrators. With instant access to media and information, we can collectively witness the same events taking place in real time somewhere else, thus mobilizing a large population of people around a particular event. The online community Reddit.com is a key example of the internet's proactivity. While the FBI was investigating the bombing, the Reddit community was posting witness's photos and trying to help identify the culprits. People felt they were making a difference.
- **Validation**. Mass communication functions to validate the status and norms of particular individuals, movements, organizations, or products. The validation of particular people or groups serves to enforce social norms (Lazarsfeld & Merton). If you think about most television dramas and sitcoms, who are the primary characters? What gender and ethnicity are the majority of the stars? What gender and ethnicity are those that play criminals or those considered abnormal? The media validates particular cultural norms while diminishing differences and variations from those norms. A great deal of criticism

focuses on how certain groups are promoted, and others marginalized by how they are portrayed in mass media.




## FEATURES OF MASS COMMUNICATION

We require a sender, a message, a channel and a receiver for communication to occur. Further there is feedback, which is the response or reaction of the receiver, which comes back to the sender through the same or some other channel. Another element, which plays and important role in communication, is noise or the disturbances. It is observed that the term mass communication must have at least five aspects.

- Large audience
- Fairly undifferentiated audience composition
- Some form of message reproduction

- Rapid distribution and delivery
- Low cost to the consumers

## PROCESS OF MASS COMMUNICATION

**Source**: Source mostly represents the institution or organization where the idea has been started. In case of source and the sender being different, the sender belongs to media institution or is a professional in media communication. Thus, a scientist or a technologist may use the mass communication media himself for propagating his idea. Or else, they can send the script of the message to the media for delivering the message by an announcer or a reporter.

**Message:** A message needs reproduction for making it communicable through the media. the message is processed and put to various forms like talk, discussion interview, documentary, play, etc., in case of radio and TV. In case of newspaper the message is processed by means of article, feature news story, etc.

**Channel:** The term channel and media are used interchangeably in mass communication. Modern mass media like radio, television, newspapers spread the message with enormous speed far and wide. The ability of mass communication to encompass by Mc Luhan's term **global village. T**he term expresses that the world is smaller than before due to advances in mass communication. More information is coming faster, at cheaper rates per unit, from farther away and from more sources through more channels including multimedia channels with more varied subject matter. Channels of mass communication can be classified into two broad categories:

1. Print Media – Newspapers, books, magazine, pamphlets etc.,
2. Electronic Media – Radio, Television, Cinema, Internet (New Media)

**Receiver:** Mass communication means communication to the mass, so there

remains mass of individuals at the receiver end of the communication. This mass of receivers, are often called as mass audience.

Mass audience can be defined as 'individuals united by a common focus of interest (to be informed, educated or entertained) engaging in identical behavior towards common ends (listening, viewing or reading)'. Mass communication has an enormous ability to multiply a message and make it available in many places. The greatest advantage of this mode of communication is the rapid spread of message to a sizeable audience remaining scattered far and wide and thus cost of exposure per individual is lowest.

**Feedback:** Mass communication will have indirect feedback. A source having communicated a message regarding family planning through radio, television or print either has to depend on indirect means like survey of audience reaction, letters and telephone calls from audience members, review of the programme by columnists to know the reaction of audience to the message. Direct feedback which is possible in interpersonal and to a limited extent in group communication, is almost absent in the mass communication.

**Gate Keeping:** This is again a characteristic unique to mass communication. The enormous scope of mass communication demands some control over the selection and editing of the messages that are constantly transmitted to the mass audience. Both individuals and organization do gate keeping. Whether done by individuals or organizations, gate keeping involves setting certain standards and limitations that serve as guidelines for both content development and delivery of a, mass communication message.

**Noise:** It is in mass communication is of two types- channel noises and semantic noise. **Channel Noise** is any disturbance within transmission

aspects of media. In print media, it may be misspellings, scrambled words or misprinting. Any type of mechanical failure stops the message from reaching the audience in its original form. **Semantic Noise** will include language barriers, difference in education level, socio-economic status, occupation, age, experience and interests between the source and the audience members. One way of solving the problem of semantic noise is to use simplicity and commonality.

## CHARACTERISTICS OF MASS COMMUNICATION

1. Directs messages toward relatively large, heterogeneous and anonymous audience.
2. Messages are transmitted publicly
3. Short duration message for immediate consumption
4. Feedback is indirect, non-existent or delayed
5. Cost per exposure per individual is minimum
6. Source belongs to organization or institutions
7. Mostly one way
8. Involves good deal of selection that is, medium chooses its audience (newspaper for literates) and audience choose media (poor, illiterates select radio)
9. There is need for fewer media to reach vast and widespread audience because of wide reach of each
10. Communication is done by social institutions which are responsive to the environment in which they operate

## MASS COMMUNICATION AS A SOURCE OF INFORMATION

Mass communication is a process in which a person, group of people, or an organization sends a message through a channel of communication to a

large group of anonymous and heterogeneous people and organizations. You can think of a large group of anonymous and heterogeneous people as either the general public. Channels of communication include broadcast television, radio, social media, and print. The sender of the message is usually a professional communicator that often represents an organization. Mass communication is an expensive process. Unlike interpersonal communication feedback for mass communication is usually slow and indirect.

Mass communication is the study of how people and entities relay information through mass media to large segments of the population at the same time. It is usually understood to relate newspaper, magazine, book publishing, as well as radio, television and film, even via internet as these mediums are used for disseminating information, news and advertising.

Mass communication differs from the studies of other forms of communication, such as interpersonal communication or organizational communication, in that it focuses on a single source transmitting information to a large number of receivers. The study of mass communication is chiefly concerned with how the content of mass communication persuades or otherwise affects the behavior, attitude, opinion or emotion of the person or people receiving the information.

The following are some types of mass communication:

- Advertising, which consists of communications attempting to induce purchasing behavior.
- Journalism such as news
- Public relations, which is communication intended to influence behavior, public opinion on a product or organization
- Broadcasting, which the channels offer informative and entertaining content of general and specific interest audience.

## GROUNDING THEORIES OF MASS COMMUNICATION

Almost forty years ago Osmo Wiio argued that mass communication does not accurately portray reality. Interesting that all this time later we now have a large number of "reality tv" shows that continue to blur the lines of reality and fiction. Are you always able to tell the difference between fiction and reality in mass communication? Most people tend to rationalize that others are more affected by mass communication than they are (Paul, Salwen, & Dupagne). However, we are all susceptible to the influence of mass communication.

Let's look at five fundamental theories of mass communication: *1) the magic bullet theory, 2) two-step flow theory, 3) multi-step flow theory, 4) uses and gratification theory, and 5) cultivation theory.*

- **Magic Bullet Theory**. The magic bullet theory (also called the hypodermic needle theory) suggests that *mass communication is like a gun firing bullet of information at a passive audience*. "Communication was seen as a magic bullet that transferred ideas or feelings or knowledge or motivations almost automatically from one mind to another" (Schramm 8). This theory has been largely discredited by academics because of its suggestion that all members of an audience interpret messages in the same way, and are largely passive receptors of messages. This theory does not take into account intervening cultural and demographic variables such as age, ethnicity, gender, personality, or education that cause us to react differently to the media messages we encounter.
- **Two-Step Flow Theory**. After World War II, researchers began noticing that not all audiences react in the same ways to mass

communication. Media had less power and relatively less affect than previously assumed (Klapper). The **two-step flow theory** suggests that mass communication messages do not move directly from a sender to the receiver (Katz & Lazarsfeld). Instead, *a small group of people, gatekeepers, screen media messages, reshape these messages, and control their transmission to the masses*. Opinion leaders initially consume "media content on topics of particular interest to them" and make sense of it based upon their own values and beliefs (Baran). In the second step, the opinion leaders filter and interpret the messages before they pass them along to individuals with shared ideologies who have less contact with the media, opinion followers. An example of this theory occurs during political campaigns. Research has shown that during an election, media influence your voting preferences (Lazarsfeld, Berelson, & Gaudet) through the information they choose to show about a candidate. This research can still be applied to current political campaigns. Pope Francis has over 4 million followers on twitter and is one of the most re-tweeted social leaders. He uses social media to engage and influence his followers about what's going on in the world.

- **Multi-step Flow Theory**. This theory suggests that *there is a reciprocal nature of sharing information and influencing beliefs, attitudes, and behaviors* (Troldahl; Troldahl & Van Dam). The idea is that opinion leaders might create media messages, but opinion followers might be able to sway opinion leaders. Thus, the relationship to media becomes much more complex. Some believe that the role of the opinion leader in our changing culture is diminishing (Baran; Kang) particularly with the ability for average people to reach potentially millions of people through social media.

You've likely heard the term "going viral" which is something that could not have happened even ten-fifteen years ago. This mediated diffusion de-bunks the notion of an all-powerful media but still recognizes that media have some effect on the audience.

- **Uses and Gratification Theory**. The uses and gratification theory suggests that *audience members actively pursue particular media to satisfy their own needs*. "Researchers focus their attention, then, on how audiences use the media rather than how the media affect audiences" (Berger 127). The reciprocal nature of the mass communication process no longer sees the media user as an inactive, unknowing participant but as an active, sense-making participant that chooses content and makes informed media choices. We tend to avoid media that do not agree with our values, attitudes, beliefs, or pocketbooks. Schramm argued that we make media choices by determining how gratified we will be from consuming a particular media. Is it easier for you to read a newspaper or would you rather watch television or listen to the radio? Even with all the information on the internet, there are still some people who consider it too time consuming and complex.
- **Cultivation Theory**. Cultivation theory *questions how active we actually are when we consume mass communication*. For example, the average American views between three and five hours of television a day for an average of 21 hours per week (Hinckly). According to the American Academy of Pediatrics, by age 18, the average American child will have watched 200,000 acts of violence on television. This statistic does not even take into account the violence a child has access through YouTube videos, Instagram, Facebook, music videos or any other media distribution. When violence is shown on television, rarely are the negative consequences of it acknowledged-47% of victims

show no evidence of harm and 73% of perpetrators were not held accountable for their violent actions (Huston et al.).

Mass communication theories are outlined into three categories:(1) theories about culture and society, (2) theories of influence and persuasion and (3) media use theories (Littlejohn and Foss). Understanding a few of the theories on mass communication, let's look at some skills that will help you become a better and more critical consumer of mass communication.

## MEDIA LITERACY

Studying how we use and consume mass communication allows us to scrutinize the conflicts, contradictions, problems, or even positive outcomes in our use of mass communication. With so much to learn about mass communication, how informed are you? Our consciousness of our media consumption is vital to understanding its effects on us as members of society. **Media literacy** is *our awareness regarding our mediated environment or consumption of mass communication. It is our ability to responsibly comprehend, access, and use mass communication in our personal and professional lives.* Potter states that we should maintain cognitive, emotional, aesthetic, and moral awareness as we interact with media. Baran suggests a number of skills we can develop in order to be media literate.

- **Understand and respect the power of mass communication messages**. An important skill for media literacy is to acknowledge just how dominant mass communication is in our lives and around the globe. Through mass communication, media shape, entertain, inform, represent, reflect, create, move, educate, and affect our behaviors, attitudes, values, and habits in direct and indirect ways. Virtually

everyone in the world has been touched in some way by mass communication, and has made personal and professional decisions largely based on representations of reality portrayed though mass communication. We must understand and respect the power media have in our lives and understand how we make sense of certain meanings.

- **Understand content by paying attention and filtering out noise**. As we learned in Chapter 1, anything that hinders communication is noise. Much of the noise in mass communication originates with our consumption behaviors. How often do you do something other than pay complete attention to the media that you're accessing? Do you listen to the radio while you drive, watch television while you eat, or text message a friend while you're in class? When it comes to mass communication we tend to multitask, an act that acts as noise and impacts the quality of the messages and our understanding of their meanings. We often turn ourselves into passive consumers, not really paying attention to the messages we receive as we perform other tasks while consuming media.
- **Understand emotional versus reasoned reactions to mass communication content in order to act accordingly**. A great deal of mass communication content is intended to touch us on an emotional level. Therefore, it's important to understand our emotional reactions to mass communication. Advertising often appeals to our emotions in order to sell products (Jhally). "Sex sells" is an old advertising adage, but one that highlights how often we make decisions based on emotional reactions, versus reasoned actions. Glance through magazines like *Maxim* or *Glamour* and you'll quickly realize how the emotions associated with sex are used to sell products of all kinds. Reasoned actions require us to think critically

about the mass communication we consume before we come to conclusions simply based on our emotional responses.

- **Develop heightened expectations of mass communication content**. Would you consider yourself an informed consumer of mass communication? Do you expect a lot from mass communication? You may like a mystery novel because it's "fun," or a movie might take your mind off of reality for a few hours. However, Baran challenges us to require more from the media we consume. "When we expect little from the content before us, we tend to give meaning making little effort and attention" (57). It depends upon you what you're willing to accept as quality. Some people may watch fewer and fewer mainstream movies because they think the current movies in theaters are low culture or are aimed at less educated audiences. They may begin to look for more foreign films, independent films, and documentaries rather than go to see the popular movies released by Hollywood. We've even seen a backlash against television programming in general. With the rise of services like Netflix, Hulu and Amazon On-Demand, many media consumers have chosen to become what's known as "cord cutters" and cancel their cable subscriptions. These new services often offer popular tv shows and sometimes even the most current episodes available to watch at your own leisure.
- **Understand genre conventions and recognize when they are being mixed**. All media have their own unique characteristics or "certain distinctive, standardized style elements" that mark them as a category or genre (Baran 57). We expect certain things from different forms of mass communication. Most of us believe, for example, that we are able to tell the difference between news and entertainment. But, are we? Television news shows often recreate parts of a story to

fill in missing video of an event. Do you always catch the "re-enactment" disclaimer? Shows such as *The Daily Show* or *Last Week Tonight* effectively blurred the lines between comedy and news, and both became recognized as credible sources for news information. Even eighty years ago, Walter Lippmann recognized that media are so invasive in our lives that we might have difficulty distinguishing between what is real and what is manipulated by the media. The "reality TV" genre is now blurring these lines even more. Another example is the election of Arnold Schwarzenegger as governor of California. He, and others, often refer to him as the "governator," a blurring of his fictional role as the Terminator and his real role as California's governor.

- **Think critically about mass communication messages, no matter how credible their source**. It is essential that we critically consider the source of all mass communication messages. No matter how credible a media source, we can't always believe everything we see or hear because all mass communication is motivated by political, profit, or personal factors. Publicists, editors, and publishers present the information from their perspective–informed by their experiences and agendas. Even if the motive is pure or the spin is minimal, we tend to selectively interpret meanings based on our own lived experiences. Audiences do not always hold similar perceptions regarding mediated messages.
- **Understand the internal language of mass communication to understand its effects, no matter how complex**. This skill requires us to develop sensitivity to what is going on in the media. This doesn't just refer to whether you can program a DVR or surf the internet. This means being familiar with the intent or motivation behind the action or message. "Each medium has its own specific internal language.

This language is expressed in production values–the choice of lighting, editing, special effects, music, camera angle, location on the page, and size and placement of headline. To be able to read a media text, you must understand its language" (Baran 58). What effect do these have on your interpretive or sense making abilities? Most news coverage of the Iraq war included background symbols of American flags, eagles, as well as words like "Freedom," and "Liberation." What is the impact of using these symbols in "objective" coverage of something like war? Shows like *Scandal* makes editorial choices to glamorize and demoralize politics while making it appear provocatively thrilling. On the surface, we might not realize the amount of effort that goes into dealing with political scandals, but shows like *Scandal* shed a light on these unspoken issues.

## FUNCTIONS OF MASS MEDIA

Mass media is the term applied to the technical devise that is used to transmit the message. Print and the electronic are the two major classifications of the mass media. Primarily are four major activities or functions of mass media: **surveillance, correlation- interpretation, socialization and entertainment.**

**Surveillance of environment:** It is one of the most important major functions of mass communication conceptualized by Lasswell. This refers to the collection and distribution of information on events both outside and within the society. Generally, this refers to the news function of the press.

**Correlation – Interpretation:** This involves interpretation of information to improve the quantity of the usefulness of the information for the citizen. Interpretative journalism is a major manifestation of the effort to fulfill this function. Editorial and other propaganda activities of the print media is often

referred to as helping the society respond to the environment.

**Transmitting the social heritage:** Often identifies as socialization, this educational activity is the communication of information, values and social norms from one generation to another. This helps the individual know the current common base of norms, values and collective experience to help unify the society.

**Entertainment:** Communication acts primarily intended for amusement is distinguished from information and fills the readers/audiences time, by providing a release form tension, stress and difficulties. Entertainment is a major factor in Stephenson's play theory of mass communication. The most obvious of all media functions is that of entertainment. Even though most of the newspaper is devoted to covering the events of the day, comic, puzzles, horoscopes, games, advice gossip, humor, and general entertainment features usually account for 20% of a typical content in a daily paper. The entertainment content of radio varies widely according to station format. Television is primarily devoted to entertainment, with about three quarters of a typical broadcast day falling into this category.

**Marketing**: Mass media are currently an irreplaceable element in the marketing process. A consumer society we are, a smoothly marketing system is important to all of us.

Media carry advertising messages which influence consumers and also inform them. Some feel that mass media exist primarily for delivering commercial messages.

**Watchdogging:** Media are on the constant look out for any malfunctions of importance to be brought to the notice of the society. Watchdog reporting covers an array of malfeasance: from sex and personal scandals to financial wrongdoing, political corruption, enrichment in public office and other types of wrongdoing.

**Status conferral:** Persons and issues when given coverage in the media are conferred status to get the attention of the society.

**Message Reinforcement:** Mass communication often reinforces and stabilizes/beliefs which might otherwise change. By stabilizing beliefs, it stabilizes social action. Mass communication plays significant role in affecting and substituting personal aspects of human behavior. As mass communication affect the values and attitudes of the users, in turn these have an influence on mass communication. Since communication functions in relation to society. It must be viewed as one among the

Media is acting as a bridge between the state and public. It plays a role of informer, motivator or for healthy democracy at all levels. Ethics are the inner superintendent decent moralities, ideals and opinions that people use to analyses or interpret a situation and then decide what is the right way to behave. It is free to discharge their duties in the society but media needs to follow ethics in collecting and disseminating the news by ensuring objectivity and fairness in reporting of information to society.

**Media Ethic** is concerned with how a moral media person should behave.

The media ethics are values like trustworthiness, respect, responsibility, fairness, truth and self-restraint to be practiced by the media people voluntarily, to preserve and promote the trust of the people and to maintain their own credibility and not betray the faith and confidence of the people.

Media ethics are important for proper broadcasting, avoiding misrepresentation of information, to avoid conflict of interest. It is important to promote universal values, truthfulness, accountability and rule of law of equality. Maturity in ethics progresses by identifying values, topics and judging several advices and enduring the other viewpoints on them. A person does not one day just become ethical'.

Individual grow ethically just as they grow physically and intellectually (Merrill 2011 p.30). A further study is needed and a proper rules and legislations should be framed for media ethics at universal level to protect the interest of individual and society. Keywords: Media, media ethics, news, freedom of press, social responsibility.

Information is vital for the functioning of a true democracy. People have to be kept informed about current affairs and broad issues related to country.

## CONCEPT OF MEDIA

Media: is a channel of communication networks, broadcasting and narrowcasting medium through which news, entertainment, education, mail, government, legal and other various information are circulated among people. It provides knowledge and makes society aware of various legal, political, social, economic, educational activities happening around the world.

Media is a backbone of society. The media serve as bringers of cultural heritage and social values, allowing the large community to recognize what are well-thought-out adequate systems of behavior. Dan Laughey (2008) defined Media as technologies that spread the messages to masses in different parts of a region, country and the world.

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**New Media:** The Media which uses digital technology and the internet is termed as New Media. Traditional media incorporates all the means of communication that existed before the Internet and new media technology, which includes books, magazines, newspapers, (printed materials) and (broadcast communications)

television, radio, film, and music. New media include all forms of communication in the digital world, including electronic video games, the Internet, and social media. They are more instant, free, and can reach a large number of people. The term new media particularly relates to digital media which includes social media sites, such as Facebook, Twitter, etc. Internet, video and audio files, Computers, mobiles.

**Internet:** Internet has added a whole new autonomous measurement to communication. It is much used as a means of private communication by email, as a means of transferring documents, as an interactive service facility for banking, shopping, etc., advertising and entertainment. Despite this, however, for regulatory purposes it is treated primarily under the common carrier model and is subject to no particular regulatory regime of its own.

**Social media:** social media is the digital media used for social interaction with internet. social media include blogs, social networking sites, wikis, and video-sharing websites, anyone can underwrite concepts on the web. The immediate dispersal of news, a variety of different perceptions on a single event, and the ability to communicate with people all over the globe are advantages of social media.

There are also virtual communities. The advantage of new media is immediate, empowering consumers to find out the latest news, weather report, or stock prices at the touch of a button. The key features of this new media: Convergence: One device can be used to contact a extensive diversity of media. New media facilitate more interaction. Accessibility new media is free media.

Examples of New Media

- websites and blogs.
- streaming audio and video.

- chat rooms.
- email.
- online communities.
- social media and sharing platforms.
- mobile apps.
- Web advertising.

## CONCEPT OF ETHICS

Ethics are the inner superintendent decent moralities, ideals and opinions that people use to analyses or interpret a situation and then decide what is the right way to behave. According to Macquarie Dictionary of Australian English, ethics is a system of decent ideologies by which individual movements and suggestions may be mediated right or wrong." Jay- black and Chris Robert in their book "Doing Ethics in Media, states that Ethics comes from many words one of them is Greek "Ethos" means character or what does to have a good character. The news is very important in media. News, data, material also referred as information ethics which is the branch of morals that concentrations on the association between the construction, organization, broadcasting, use of information, the moral values and ethical codes leading human conduct in society. It delivers a critical agenda for considering ethical issues regarding news privacy, moral agency, new conservation issues, problems arising from the life-cycle of information.

## SIGNIFICANCE OF ETHICS

Ethics are very important in every province of lifetime. It is observed that the graph of culture, tradition, values and beliefs is at weakening slope. The significance of ethics includes:

1) With knowledge of Ethics individual is in a position to understand, analyze and can achieve the final goal of life with proper decisions.
2) The study of ethics help individual for thoughtful consideration of ethical ideas. It supports individual in understanding of certain fundamental principles of logical and moral.
3) For proper and peaceful life the society is framed by authorities, values, culture and beliefs The Ethics are pioneers of the rules and regulations in human society.

## CLASSIFICATION OF ETHICAL THEORIES:

Ethical theories can be divided into three main classifications:

I. Teleological /Consequential
II. Deontological /non-consequential.
III. Virtue Ethics

## APPROACHES OF ETHICS

There are various approaches of ethics:

a. The Non-Normative approach includes the Descriptive Approach and the Meta-ethics: The Non-Normative approach inspects the principles without the anxieties for making judgements. The Meta Ethics approach focuses on the concepts and terms of ethical reasoning and decision making. It explains meanings of various terms of ethics.
b. Normative Approach make judgements as to what is morally right or wrong. The normative ethics is sometimes called prescriptive science as, it investigates how one should act. Applied Ethics is about how honest consequences can be achieved in specific conditions. It tries to apply the

ethical theory to real-life situations. It includes bioethics, human ethics, legal ethics, and business ethics.

c. The Descriptive Ethics Approach related to belief, values, attitudes of individual and group of people. The media collects information and tries to find right and wrong actions.
d. Absolute Ethics & Relative Ethics: Absolute ethics is an ideal code of conduct expressing the behavior of the completely altered human person in the completely evolved society.
e. Deductive Method: The media collect information and comes to specific object on the basis of logical conclusion. Deductive reasoning begins with a universal truth and leads towards the knowledge of a particular thing
f. Inductive Method is the process of moving from specific explanations to broader generalizations and theories. In this method media collect information and draw conclusions from their observation.

## MEDIA ETHICS:

Media ethics is the subdivision of real-world actions and their moral consideration in the area of public, private and professional life, health, law, technology and leadership dealing with morals and media standards. It is also known as Journalism Ethics.

Ethical communication helps people to grow to their fullest potential, by emphasizing value of the other individual. Both parties in the communication exchange are reliable, appreciated and valued to have a positive communication. One cannot imagine a life without rules, values and ethics. The laws and ethics are for everyone which includes individual, business, society, journalists and media. The power and deceptive inspiration of the media was long realized.

The Code of Ethics for Electronic Media, journalists must evade stereotypes and prejudices when reporting about a society. They should oppose the interlocutors who express stereotypes and prejudices in interviews and discussions.

I. By Hutchins Commission (1947): As per Straubhaar, LaRose & Davenport (pg 477), Hutchins Commission expressed code for media ethics as follows: Media person is only one who is responsible and liable for providing news.

a) Media people, journalists must provide evocative information which should be precise and detached from judgement.
b) Assist as an opportunity for the argument of remark and reproach to assorted points of view.
c) Create a representative image of the basic sets in civilization by adding all levels of people.
d) Clarify the goals and values of society; implicit was an appeal to avoid pandering to the lowest common denominator.
e) Give broad coverage of what was known about society.

II. The Society of Professional Journalists (SPJ): According to the SPJ's code of ethics journalists should

a. To Report actual and correct information: Media should collect actual, real and true information and report the same without fabricating to public.

b) To Curtail damage: The sources, topics, generations, information and public representative should be given due respect and damage to image should be avoided.

c) Act independently: It is basic and highest priority of media to work for benefit of society by acting independently and fairly.

d) Be accountable: journalist is responsible for providing accurate reports and information to public.

## IMPORTANCE OF MEDIA ETHICS:

It is main duty of media to supply accurate and fair news, data, entertainment, discussion on legal, political, economic information to peoples in society.

1.**Responsibility:** It is responsibility of media to provide accurate and fair information for public welfare. A reporter who misuse media power for any selfish reason is not trustworthy and held responsible.

2.**Freedom of the Press:** Media is having freedom of collecting information, asking questions on related matters, conducting survey and discussion etc. Media ethics carries a legal framework for the protection of the right to freedom of expression.

3.**Independence:** Media should be free to express their views. Media should be independent but should be loyal to country and country people.

4.The media ethics reflects Sincerity, Truthfulness, Accuracy by connecting with people through efficient and effective information delivery.

5.**Impartiality**: Media people should be impartial about news, and expression of opinion of any kind.

6.**Fairplay:** Media ethics guides about fair play. The matter related to religion , pubic and private rights should be handled fairly by media.

7. Protect cultural heritage and social values: It is important for media to preserve and promote our cultural heritage and social values.

8. **Social approval:** For Social approval and respect media ethics are important.

9. Minimizing harm and maximizing benefits for social welfare and public.

## CODE OF ETHICS

- It is the duty of press to creates public opinion, journalist or media should consider their profession as a faith, truth and oblige public interests.
- Media should give importance to social and human rights and have justice and equality in news reporting.
- In the situation of tensions which are supposed to lead civil disorder journalists should
- observe restraint in their reports and comments. Journalists should avoid identifying
- communities because it may lead to chain reactions. Media should try to promote national unity, pride in the country, its citizens, its achievements and its forte in diversity. Comments should be avoided which give support to the advocates of such ideas and further their interests.
- Evidences shall not be destroyed and omitted by media o journalist. Fake information shall not be published.
- Journalists should accept responsibility for all information and comments published by them.
- Professional secrecy must be preserved and confidence shall always be respected.
- Rectification of errors in reports should be done by media.
- Journalists are not allowed to use their status for non-journalistic purposes.
- Professional conduct of journalists shall not be influenced by their personal interests.

## QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Discuss the elements of mass communication.
2. Define and explain the process of mass communication
3. Elaborately discuss the functions of mass media.