

CHAPTER - 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Influence of Media

Media is the most powerful cannon for any society. Media messages are constantly exerting influences on each of the individual. Much of that influence is neither direct nor immediate. Instead, the majority of that influence is through a complex process. According to Hall (1985), 'The media is important shapers of perception and ideas of people. It is consciousness industry which provides not simply information about the world, but ways of seeing and understanding it.' (Cited in Kellner and Share, 2005, pp.140)

The pervasive effects of various media on various spheres of Indian life - economic, cultural, social, intellectual, religious and even moral - are transforming rapidly. Media is capable of creating different kinds of impact on mankind. It has a powerful influence on various age groups such as children, youths, adults and elderly. The influence of media can be both positive as well as negative. The negative influence of media is mostly prevalent among children.

Maniar (2002) pointed out that 'The children are growing up today in a media-dominated culture, watching televisions, listening to CD, videos and surfing internet are as much part of young persons' lives as eating and sleeping. Media programmes when skillfully designed expose, motivate and persuade children and youth to consumerism and instant gratification' (Cited in Rai, 2006, p.74). By allowing children unlimited access to screens while not providing enough

activities such as play, reading or home work, parents are unintentionally contributing to a deprived mental environment for children which can seriously affect the rate and quality of brain growth. Kumar(1981) pointed out, 'The ever-expanding markets for goods and their unchallenged assault through advertisements is flooding the society with information, ideas and attitudes which is difficult to control and assimilate. This is affecting the young minds to a great extent. Adults may be able to develop a rational resistance to this onslaught, but children may not.' As a result, they become a pressure group on parents and the parents often succumb to children's demands.

Clinton (1996) wrote, 'There is a widespread belief that children are especially vulnerable to negative effects from media violence in general compared to adults. It is easy to understand why there is a need to focus on protecting children. Children are more fearful and anxious about the "scary world" seen on TV, are "desensitized" to other people's feelings, and exhibit more violent and criminal behavior. Children have less experience than adults. They also are yet to develop a high degree of thinking ability, emotional control or moral reasoning.' (Cited in Rai, 2006, p.75). So, their minds are relatively undeveloped, and have difficulty in distinguishing between fantasy and reality. They often do not understand the "make believe" nature of the monsters in the movies. Given these inabilities, certain kinds of depiction of violence would generate a much greater degree of fear among the children than it would to the grown-ups. Therefore, children are less capable of protecting themselves from harm.

Healy (1996) stated 'A good brain for learning develops strong and widespread neural highways that can quickly and efficiently assign different aspects of a task to the most efficient system. Such efficiency is developed only by active practice in thinking and learning which, in turn, builds

increasingly stronger connections. A growing suspicion among brain researchers is that excessive television viewing may affect the development of these kinds of connections. It may also induce habits of using the wrong systems for various types of learning.'

In a research, National Institute of Mental Health (1995) concluded 'extensive exposure to television and video games may promote development of brain systems that scan and shift attention at the expense of those that focus attention.' (Cited in Jensen and Elizabeth, 1995, p.B1)

Bodkin (1994) pointed out that watching television impedes the growth of longer attention spans in the following forms:

- 1) Watching television interferes with the development of reading skills.
- 2) Watching television decreases the time for developing speaking skills.
- 3) A child rarely develops proficiency with speech simply by getting older. A child spending four or more hours a day watching television loses the time needed for conversation, may well find difficulty becoming articulate and fluent, and be less able to speak and write in complete sentences than the child who, it seems, "Just never stops talking." (Cited in Valkenburg and Kremer, 2001. p.81)

Children who spend more time watching television, especially violent programs, are also more likely to show later aggression, restlessness, and a belief in a "scary world" (Singer and Rapaczynski, 1984, cited in Kirstin, Philip, and Erwin, 1997, p. 411).

There is evidence to suggest that high use of television is indeed correlated with poor social adjustment by children (Halloran, Brown and Chaney, 1970, cited in Rai 2006, p. 77).

The various research studies conducted by researchers shows that media is causing harm to children. Children, due to their lack of experiences, fail to make correct interpretation of all the media messages. Advertisers through media advertisements try to convince children that they have problems and that their products can help them quickly to overcome those problems. This unnecessarily leads to increasing demands from the children and create pressure on the parents. Since the media make so many messages so easily accessible, they give children the impression that they are seeing the world in all its varieties and more exposure they have, more they begin to feel that they are in a superior position to understand how the world operates. But are they really learning things of value? Knowing a lot about the current events presented by news organisations does not necessarily mean that they know what the problems in the world are or how to deal with them. Children's constant exposure to media messages influence the way they think about the world and themselves. It influences their beliefs about crime, education, religion, families and the world in general. If the exposure is mostly passive then the mundane details in those messages exert their effect without their awareness. It is from this massive base of misleading or inaccurate images that the children infer their beliefs about the world. How can children gain control over the development of their knowledge structures, over the formulation of their opinions and the shaping of their fundamental values? How can they be more careful in the formulation of their opinions and thus reduce faulty beliefs? Most parents and educators are worried about the impact of the media messages on children. Thus it is clear that the young, fertile and impressionistic minds of the children need to be saved from the ill-effects of over-exposure to media. Each of the children must be protected from the risks of being affected negatively by all the

violence in the fictional stories as well as in news accounts. There is a need to tell children the differences between constructive effects and negative effects, between what looks like real and fantasy and between facts and myth. They should be made to understand better the nature of the problem of media violence. For this the children need to develop the knowledge, skills and attitudes which will encourage their growth of critical awareness and consequently of greater competence among them for the use of print and electronic media. They should be made analytically active during their exposure to various media. This can best be achieved through media education to the children who are the future of the country and who need to become media literate to grow up as a responsible citizen in a media-saturated society.

1.2 Concept of Media Education

There is a distinction between educational media and media education. Educational media means the use of media as tools of learning and media education is the education about media to promote critical awareness and communication competence. Much confusion exists about what media education really is. It has been difficult to pin down what to describe with any degree of accuracy since so many perceptions and interests are involved. Media education has been variously described as "a field of study," "an area of knowledge," "a separate discipline," and "a specific discipline" (Grunwald, 1982), "a new subject" (Canavan, 1975), and "a totalizing conceptual framework for practice" (Littunen, 1974). (Cited in Kumar, 1988, p.9)

Media education is known by a host of names in different countries. In the United States, it is known by such labels as "Visual Literacy," "Audio-visual communication," "Television Receivership skills" and "Media Literacy,"

whereas in European and Asian countries, the term media education is widely used. The labels reveal the emphasis each variant offers. Media literacy, for instance, has been defined as “the skillful collection, interpretation, testing and application of information regardless of medium or presentation for some purposeful action.” The visual literacy programme, however, focuses on the aesthetic aspects of the mass media. The programme comprises at least of four components:

1. Competencies in visual language,
2. Ability to appreciate visible signs and symbols,
3. A process of developing competencies in visual language and appreciation
4. A movement, formal and informal, fostering development in language and appreciation.

According to Hobbs (2005) ‘Media Literacy involves asking questions about what you watch, see and read thus encouraging the outcome of ongoing critical inquiry.’ Thoman and Jolls (2005) noted that, because the definition of media literacy can be so vast, it is almost easier to define “what is not media literacy.” For instance, they stated that “Media literacy is not media bashing, but involves critically analyzing media messages and institutions. It is not just producing media, although production skills should be included. Media literacy is not simply teaching with media, but it is teaching about the media in society. It is not just looking for stereotypes or negative representations, but exploring how these representations are normalized in society. Finally, media literacy is not an effort to restrict media use, but to encourage mindful and critical media consumption.”

Thoman (1999) defined media literacy as 'learning to analyze and question what is on the screen, how is constructed and what many have been left out.' Media literacy is the process of accessing, analyzing, evaluating and producing media messages. The meaning of the terms access, analyse and evaluate are as follows (Rubin, 1998, cited in Christ, 2004, p. 92).

Access: The use of the full range of media and new technologies for receiving and sending information through broadcast, cable, interactive and other media forms.

Analysis: The ability to decipher the elements of media messages and media systems; to understand their forms and functions, ownership and management structures, economic and policy implication, message, content, intent and effects; and re-contextualizing their meaning.

Evaluation: The ability to make judgments about media, assess and apply journalistic ethics, critique aesthetic elements, and compare and contrast the values of media messages and systems to those of other individual and community value systems.

Production: The ability to create messages in a variety of media.

According to Silverblatt (2000) "Media literacy should not be understood merely as an opportunity to bash the media; rather, it can enhance an individual's enjoyment and appreciation of media at its best." Media Literacy incorporates the goal of fostering critical analysis in its participants (Brown, 1998).

Christ and Potter (1998) offered an additional overview of media literacy writing. Most conceptualization of media literacy include the following elements:

- 1) Media are constructed and construct reality;
- 2) Media have commercial implications;
- 3) Media have ideological and political implications, form and content are related in each media each of which has a unique aesthetic, codes and conventions;
- 4) and receivers negotiate meaning in media.'

Potter (1998) described several foundational or bedrock ideas supporting media literacy:

- 1) 'Media literacy is a continuum, not a category. Media literacy is not a categorical condition like being a high school graduate. Media literacy is best regarded as a continuum in which there are degrees. There is always room for improvement.'
- 2) Media literacy needs to be developed. 'As we reach higher levels of maturation intellectually, emotionally and morally we are able to perceive more in media messages. Maturation raises our potential, but we must actively develop our skills and knowledge structures in order to deliver on that potential.'
- 3) 'The purpose of media literacy is to give us more control over interpretation. All media messages are interpretations. A key to media literacy is not to engage in the impossible quest for truthful or objective messages. They don't exist.'
- 4) Media literacy is multidimensional. Potter identified four dimensions of media literacy. Each operates on a continuum. In other words, we interact with media messages in four ways and we do so with varying levels of awareness and skill. These dimensions are the following:

- The cognitive domain refers to mental processes and thinking.
- The emotional domain is the dimension of feeling.
- The aesthetic domain refers to the ability to enjoy, understand and appreciate media content from an artistic point of view.
- The moral domain refers to the ability to infer the values underlying the messages.

Silverblatt (1995) identified five elements of media literacy. They are as follows:

- 1) An awareness of the impact of the media on the individual and society.
- 2) An understanding of the process of mass communication.
- 3) The development of strategies with which to analyse and discuss media messages.
- 4) An awareness of media content as a "text" that provides insight into our contemporary culture and ourselves.
- 5) The cultivation of the enhanced enjoyment, understanding, and appreciation of media content.

Silverblatt (1995) said, 'Media literacy is awareness of the multitude of messages received daily from the media and the effects they can have on attitudes and behavior. Thus, media literacy can help foster critical thinking and discussion of media related issues, including how media messages are created, marketed, and distributed as well as their potential influence (or how they are received).' According to Thoman (1999) "Media literacy is not

just being critical of the media; it's learning to appreciate the power of the most powerful medium that the world has ever known"

In 1989, the Ontario Association for Media Literacy (AML) in Canada offered the following definition:

'Media literacy is concerned with developing an informed and critical understanding of the nature of the mass media, the techniques used by them, and the impact of these techniques. It is education that aims to increase students' understanding and enjoyment of how the media work, how they produce meaning, how they are organized, and how they construct reality. Media literacy also aims to provide students with the ability to create media products.' (Cited in Duncan, 2005, p.24)

Media education is a perspective from which an individual exposes himself to the media and interprets the meanings of messages he encounters. This perspective is built from knowledge structures. To build the knowledge structures, one needs tools and raw material. The tools are his skills; raw material is information from the media and from the real world. Media education teaches the individuals how media messages are constructed, how to decipher them, how to discern the underlying values they present and how to distinguish between the real and unreal in media.

Reasons for the need of media education for children

Some of the reasons for the urgency of media education for children are as follows:

1. Children are having high rate of media consumption. Media has become part and parcel of their life.

2. The media is shaping the perceptions, beliefs and attitudes of children. While research disagrees on the extent and type of influence, it is unquestionable that mass media, particularly television, exert a significant impact on the way children understand, interpret and act on the world around them. By helping them to understand those influences, media education can delink them from their dependencies on them.
3. The growth in media industries and the importance of information in the society has become a matter of concern. This refers not only to the degree to which information processing and information services are at the core of the nation's productivity, but also the degree to which media and information industries are increasingly concentrated in fewer and fewer corporate giants. Media education can help children understand who owns and controls media and information, and to challenge the great inequalities which exist between the manufacturers of information and the consumers.
4. Today media plays key role in our central democratic processes. Elections have become media events and photo-opportunities. Personalities are packaged over issues. Media education is an essential if children who are the future of the nation are to make rational decisions, become effective change agents and have an active involvement in their system of governance in their future.
5. The importance of visual communication and information are increasing day by day. While schools continue to be dominated by print, our lives are increasingly dominated by visual images, from the nightly news to MTV. Learning how to "read" the meanings of these images is a necessary adjunct to print literacy.

1.3 Media Literacy Perspectives

There are two philosophical perspectives on media literacy.

“One perspective, a cultural studies approach, places great emphasis on student’s own, often pleasurable, experiences with media. Members, who follow this perspective, might take issue with the facilitator of a media literacy programme who has a predetermined set of “learning outcomes” on the grounds of protectionism. Those taking this philosophical perspective might object to the views the instructor imposes upon the students, especially if delivered in a top-down approach”(Buckingham, 1998, cited in Scharrer, 2003). The outcomes emphasized in this school of thought pertain to the ways in which media literacy is conceived and the topics addressed as well as to the analysis and discussion that ensues.

The other philosophical perspective, called impact mediation (Anderson, 1983, cited in Scharrer, 2003, p.2), inoculation or interventionism, often focuses on negative issues pertaining to the media such as violence, sex-role stereotyping, or manipulation in advertising (Kubey, 1998, cited in Scharrer, 2003, p.2) and interpret media literacy as a strategy to help protect children from harmful effects (Hobbs, 1998, cited in Scharrer, 2003, p.2). The outcome this perspective appears to advance is for the media to have less of an influence on individuals who participate in a media-literacy program. A program on television violence, for example, would be viewed as most effective if it led to children responding less aggressively to or being less desensitized by violent programs. Doolittle (1975, cited in Scharrer, 2003, p.2) and Huesmann and colleagues (Eron, Klein, Brice, & Fischer, 1983,cited in Scharrer, 2003, p.2) took this approach in their studies of intervention programs (early media literacy curricula) that emphasized the

fictional nature of production techniques used to create violent television scenes. Their results show that intervention programs had only modest success in reducing children's subsequent aggressive responses to television violence.

1.4 Principles of Media Literacy

In the United States and Canada, professional groups such as the Alliance for a Media Literate America and the Association for Media Literacy advocate integrating media literacy across the curriculum, emphasizing its importance in developing informed and responsible citizens. A commonly recognized core of media literacy-principles informs classroom pedagogy that focuses on media texts. These principles are as follows:

- 1) Media messages are constructed
- 2) Each medium has its own forms, conventions, and language
- 3) Media messages contain values and ideology
- 4) Media messages have social and political consequences
- 5) Media have commercial purposes
- 6) Audiences negotiate meaning

1) All media messages are “constructed”

The first principle is the foundation of media literacy, which challenges the power of the media to present messages as non-problematic and transparent. Masterman (1994) asserted that the foundation of media education is the principle of non-transparency. Media do not present reality like transparent windows or simple reflections of the world because media messages are created, shaped, and positioned through a construction

process. This construction involves many decisions about what to include or exclude and how to represent reality. Masterman (1994) further explained non-transparency with a pun: 'the media do not present reality, they represent it.' Masterman (1994) further wrote 'What appears as "natural" must be demystified and revealed as a historical production both in its content, with its unrealized claims or distorting messages, and in the elements that structure its form.' Demystifying media messages through critical inquiry is an important starting point for media literacy. The media are responsible for the majority of the observations and experiences from which an individual builds up his personal understandings of the world and how it works. Much of one's view of reality is based on media messages that have been preconstructed and have attitudes, interpretations, and conclusions already built in. Thus the media, to a great extent, gives the individual his sense of reality.

2) Each medium has its own forms, conventions, and language

The second principle relies heavily on semiotics to illustrate how signs and symbols function. According to Buckingham (2003), "Media literacy practitioners analyse the existence of dual meanings of signs: denotation and signifier (the more literal reference to content) and connotation and signified (the more associative, subjective significations of a message based on ideological and cultural codes). When connotation and denotation become one and the same, representation appears natural, making the historical and social construction invisible." Therefore, a goal of cultivating media literacy is to help an individual distinguish between connotation and denotation and signifier and signified. With younger students the terms are simplified into separating what they see or hear from what they think or feel. Here again, creating media proves to be a powerful vehicle for guiding an individual to

explore these ideas. For example, discussion of the representation of class, gender, in media such as television or film requires analysis of the codes and stereotypes through which subordinate group like women are represented, in contrast to representations of men. An analysis of representation of women makes clear the constructed structure of gender representations.

3) Media messages contain values and ideology

The fourth principle focuses on the actual content of media messages in order to questions values and ideologies. Even though an individual is conditioned to think of movies, television programs and other media as separate and discrete products, ideologically they consistently construct, contain, carry and convey certain basic beliefs and values. All media products are advertising in some sense proclaiming values and ways of life. The mainstream media convey, explicitly or implicitly, ideological messages about such issues as the nature of the good life, the virtue of consumerism, the role of women, the acceptance of authority, and unquestioning patriotism. In literature we might for example move beyond the plot or narrative chain of events and look at the theme or message. When an individual stop seeing media products as discrete self-contained programs and look at the consistent and recurring themes that pervade the media, the individual begin to recognize the cumulative value system at work. Hence in media one might discover messages which suggest that consumption is inherently good and that violence is a viable solution and response to problems we face.

4) Media messages have social and political consequences

This principle explores the relationship between image and influence, content and consequences. It explores the way the media shows and shape, reflect and reinforce reality. It involves understanding who and what is

portrayed both quantitatively and qualitatively, as well as which groups and individuals in the society are left out of the picture. The media has great influence in politics and in forming social change. Television can greatly influence the election of a national leader on the basis of image. The media involves an individual in concerns such as civil rights issues, famines in Africa, and the AIDS epidemic. It gives an intimate sense of national issues and global concerns.

5) Audiences negotiate meaning

Halley (1999) explained: 'Textual meanings do not reside in the texts themselves: a certain text can come to mean different things depending on the inter-discursive context in which viewers interpret it.' The notion that audiences are neither powerless nor omnipotent when it comes to reading media contributes greatly to the potential for media literacy to empower audiences in the process of negotiating meanings. Considine (2002) said, 'While audiences are clearly not passive and are able to pick and choose, it is simultaneously true that there are certain "received" messages that are rarely mediated by the will of the audience.' Empowering the audience through critical thinking inquiry is essential for an individual to challenge the power of media to create preferred readings. The ability for an individual to see how diverse people can interpret the same message differently is important for multicultural education, since understanding difference means more than merely tolerating one another. Different subject positions, like gender, class, sexuality, will produce different readings and one's grasp of a media text is enriched by interpreting from the standpoint of different audience perspectives.

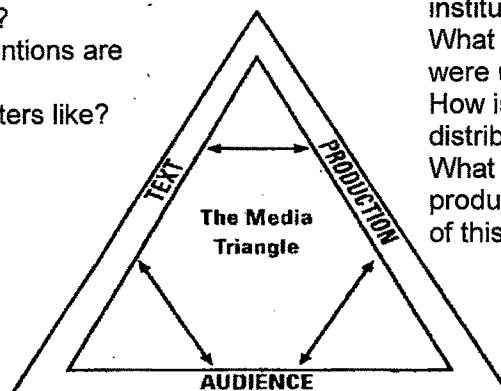
6) Media have commercial purposes

The fifth principle encourages an individual to consider the question of why the message was sent and where it came from. Any real understanding of media content cannot be divorced from the economic context and financial imperatives that drives the media industry. Media literacy aims to encourage awareness of how the media are influenced by commercial considerations, and how they impinge on content, technique, and distribution. Most media production is a business, and so must make a profit. Questions of ownership and control are central: a relatively small number of individuals control what we watch, read and hear in the media.

1.5 Media Literacy Model

Diagrammatical representation of Media Literacy Model

What medium is this text?
What genre is this text?
What codes and conventions are evident?
What are these characters like?



What individuals, Industries or institutions created this text?
What production techniques were used?
How is the text marketed and distributed?
What laws and rules govern production and consumption of this text?

Who is the target audience for this text?
What evidence can you provide?
Who is not addressed by this text?
How and why does the text appeal to its target audience?

Developed by Eddie Dick of the Scottish Film Council (1998)

Table 1 depicts the media literacy model. It is known as TAP model, where T stands for text, A stands for audience and P stands for production. This TAP model is one of the strategies used in media literacy.

Without the ability to question, analyze, and authenticate information found online, in print, or any media format, students are open to manipulation and misinformation. They need supportive comprehension strategies to help them compare, contrast, critique, and analyze such texts.

Text questions examine the type of text (e.g., novel, photograph, film) as well as the genre of the text. As in traditional literature, genre in media literacy refers to specific categories of text. Categories in the case of television include reality, and soap opera, and in the case of films include fantasy, science fiction, gangster, and comedy. Media literacy also addresses questions related to the structure of the text, including setting, characters, conflict, plot, and resolution.

Audience questions focus on the nature and needs of the target audience and attempt to analyze how the text might tap into interests, tastes, preferences, and lifestyles. A foundational assumption of media literacy is that meaning does not reside in the text but rather is constructed by the individual. Therefore, this category recognizes that the same texts can and should be read and responded to in significantly different ways. It suggests a shift away from correct interpretations, to richer readings in which audiences unpack, explain, and justify their interpretation. Consistent with multicultural literacy, it acknowledges that gender, and class, are likely to shape the interpretation of texts, recognizing dominant as well as resistant readings.

Production questions enable students to critically analyze the creative process and institutional context in which the text is created, distributed,

marketed, and consumed. Opportunities are provided to understand these messages from both an individual and an institutional context. Watching an anchor or reporter on News channel may involve understanding what that individual is saying, their personal point of view. A deeper understanding would recognize that the individual has been hired by a large international corporation with holdings in publishing, newspapers, film, and television.

No matter which side of the model we are most interested in, employing the categories of the TAP model enables an individual to engage in the process of deconstructing media messages, exploring dominant as well as resistant readings, and recognizing the context in which such texts are both created and consumed. The TAP model provides structure to engage an individual in analyzing interesting and immediately relevant text.

1.6 Importance of Media Education

In a world in which images are fast assuming greater significance than policies, in which slogans often count for more than rational arguments, and in which each individual will make some of its most important democratic decision on the basis of media evidence, media education is both essential to the exercising of an individual democratic rights and providing necessary safe guards against the worst excesses of media manipulation for political purposes.

Media education skills can help one understand not only the surface content of the media messages but the deeper and often more important meanings below the surface. Media education seeks to give media consumers greater freedom by teaching to analyse, access, evaluate and produce media. If a child develops the ability to “deconstruct” -break down the components of and closely analyze – media messages, practices, processes, institutions, or

influence, then media literacy has been effective and that student is becoming a "critical thinker" about the media. The process of questioning key media related issues – Who owns the media? What kinds of themes are present in media content? How are media produced? What role do the media play in our lives? What influence can media have on our thoughts, feelings, and behaviors? – and the thoughts and beliefs that result are significant achievements.

Media educated children learn to analyze materials; interpret messages; understand sequencing; distinguish fact from opinion; identify emotional appeals, reactions and motives; and recognize inferences, make predictions and draw conclusions.

Kellner (1998) advocated for media literacy promoting the ability to overcome civic disengagement. Further Kellner pointed out 'We are immersed from cradle to grave in a media and consumer society and thus it is important to learn how to understand, interpret, and criticize its meaning and messages.'

Much discussion of media education centers on the pervasive power of the media and the need to build defense mechanisms against their effects. This suggests a protectionist orientation against the harmful effects of the mass media. Media education would transform children's passive relationship to media into an active, critical engagement - capable of challenging the traditions and structures of a privatised, commercial media culture and finding new avenues of citizens' speech and discourse in future. It represents one of the best hopes that society has of countering the most blatant duplicities of the public relations industry, of encouraging more demanding standards from journalists, of producing more discerning,

skeptical and knowledgeable audiences, and of clarifying the rules for manipulating the media for everyone. Media education is one of the few instruments which students possess for beginning to challenge the great inequalities in knowledge and power which exist between those who manufacture information in their own interest and those who consume it innocently as news or entertainment. As the latest technological innovation of the media – Internet – becomes fact of life vastly increasing the accessibility to any source of information, the critical thinking skills if developed among the children would help them navigate through the traditional media with equal ease and clarity.

A key to media education is not to engage in the impossible quest for truthful or objective messages, instead one needs to be aware of the interpretive process and be vigilant in looking for patterns in interpretations within media messages. This means avoiding mindless exposure to the media, which results in uncritically accepting the media interpretations by default. The process of media effects continues whether one is aware of it or not. When an individual can gain greater control over the media (not just through exposure but also through interpretation), he can amplify the effects he wants to have and discount those he wants to avoid. In order to achieve this purpose, he needs to be able to recognise the full range of media effects and how they exercise their influence on an individual. This is not an easy task. Most media effects are subtle. They happen very gradually and most of the effects take a long time to show up. By the time they reach a high enough profile to be easily recognised, they have grown deep-roots in one's sub-conscious and are very hard to change. Media effects also often exert their influence directly through other people or institutions. Even if an individual somehow avoid all direct exposures to media messages, he would

be influenced indirectly by the messages that have influenced his institutions of family, education and religion. The only way to be completely free of all media influence is to remove oneself completely from society and its institutions. But ironically, this might potentially be the greatest media influence of all - to force one to alter his lifestyle radically and to give up all the benefits of being part of culture. The reasonable response to the flood of media messages is to be more active in processing them in order to get the information and experiences one wants and values. By developing a higher level of media literacy one can gain control over the media influence process. One knows how to spot those subtle yet important effects as they occur and how to intervene in that effect process in order to shape the effects the individual wants. Thus, media literate individuals have greater control over media messages. Various researchers around the world have conducted studies related to media education and found media education to be effective in developing critical abilities among children. Acock, Rosankoette, and other researchers of Oregon State University (2005) carried out an experimental study on media literacy intervention in reducing children's viewing of violent television. Findings of the study showed reduction in violent television viewing among first – through fourth grade children. Students reported having more critical attitudes about violence on television after the intervention.

From the above discussion it is clear that media education help individuals to become critical consumers of media and also to make right utilization of media. Therefore media education has become the necessity for children, who are mostly influenced by media. Now the question arises how can media education be imparted to children? How can it be optimised? The schools are the best agent for imparting media education to the children in

an effective way. Schools are the place where the foundation for the all-round development of a child is laid. Therefore, schools can empower young children with better understanding of media so that the children can control their relationship with vast array of media messages they receive in their everyday environment. So, it is necessary to know how media education is developing in the schools in various countries of the world.

1.7 Development of Media Education in different Countries

Media education is developing in Great Britain, Australia, South Africa, Canada and the United States, with growing interest in the European and Asian countries. Media literacy was originally conceived as an educational tool to protect people from what many perceived to be mass media's ill effects. Among the pioneering countries known to use this as an inoculation paradigm was Great Britain in the 1930s.

In the 1980s, there came recognition that the ideological power of the media was tied to the naturalization of the image. Constructed messages were being passed off as natural ones. The focus of media literacy also shifted to the consumption of images and representations, also known as the representational paradigm. In the United Kingdom and Australia, media literacy is often a stand alone credit course, as also as a part of the English curricula.

1.7.1 Development of media education in European countries

a) Development of media education in England

In England, Media Studies as a distinct specialist subject continues to expand. There has been continuing growth in specialist optional courses in Media Studies. On the other hand, the explicit requirements for media

education in the national curriculum for English in England, Wales and Northern Ireland are fairly small.

Conceptual frameworks for media education exist for specialist courses and although they differ in detail and emphasis, they all cover similar key concepts such as 'media language', 'media institutions', 'media audiences' and 'representation'. Students learning in specialist courses are formally assessed via written essays, practical tasks and evaluation work.

Media education has grown in England primarily with the remit to 'empower' students as 'critical and knowledgeable consumer of media'. A range of informal agencies across the UK provide practical production opportunities for children and young people. In some respects the situation is quite well developed in England but some of the same problems occur here as in other contexts. Training of teachers is a key lack. The British Film Institute, a government – funded body, has played a key role in the development of media education-particularly in relation to the moving image media of film and television-over the last 50 years. Its Education Department staff helped draft a number of media syllabuses for the 14-19 yrs age phase in the 1970s and 80s, and in the late 80s successfully lobbied for the inclusion of media education in the National Curriculum for England and Wales. It has published curriculum statements for media education which have created wide influence. Despite these substantial and sustained initiatives, central government funding for media education training is not forthcoming, leaving the subject in the hands of enthusiasts. Both political and economic initiatives are needed to move the situation forward.

b) Development of media education in France

There is no official media education curriculum in French schools but there is some specific reference to “cinema et audiovisuel” education in other areas of the curriculum. Indeed references in the official curriculum to media education can be found in most of the areas. In France, the main aims of media education are to empower students as critical consumers and to prepare them as future citizens of intelligent media consumers (and even producers). There is no perfect conceptual framework but there are texts which outline a preferred framework for media education. One such document “Educational information” attempts to show how media education should be delivered.

Despite these initiatives, as in other contexts, what happens in France is more arbitrary-individual teachers, in the absence of a formal curriculum, choose the emphasis they wish to place on media related skills. Some teachers develop special activities such as content analysis, others prefer production activities linked to process comprehension. Media production by students is one of the possible ways chosen by the teachers or by the students themselves to approach the media.

c) Development of media education in Germany

In Germany, no established media education curriculum is in force, although opportunities for media education exist in many different subject areas across the curriculum. Media education has grown in Germany along a very similar model to other contexts. It has moved away from the protectionist stance towards activities that render students capable of close analysis of the media and how they produce messages, alongside opportunities to create audiences for their own interests and needs by making media

products. The predominant aim of media education is to empower students as critical recipients. No formal assessment procedures are in force. Student's competence, development and progression are measured via the assessment criteria of the host subject.

Further development of media education depends upon a level of teacher that has only been proposed rather than implemented. Some university level involvement in teacher training is in evidence in Germany but is inadequate to 'prepare all teachers for the challenges of the information age.

d) Development of media education in Italy

There is no formal media education curriculum in Italy. At present some media education topics are proposed – for example, teachers of technical education are encouraged to look at 'how TV works', or art teachers are encouraged to consider issues of 'visual language' – but there is no systematic provision. Throughout the 1980s and 1990s and 2000s, a number of declarations about media education in schools were made, one of which stated that the media form an important environment and therefore an approach that is both critical and productive is recommended. Despite these attempts to agree some formal media education, the situation remains unchanged at curriculum level, media education only occurs if individual teachers introduce it. There is no formal conceptual framework or any progressive goals in place.

The Italian Association for Media Education gets most of its inspiration from the international experiences (like those of England and Canada). Out of this influence two skills have gained prominence in the Italian schools: the ability to analyse media texts and the use of methodology for producing audiovisual media.

There are not very well established links with media producers in Italy. The more developed form of media education is in youth associations, and within the network of Media Education Teachers. One of the very significant initiatives for the formation of media educators has been the *Summer School* of Corvara in Val Badia (1992-2001) which has trained more than 400 Italian teachers. Also Italian universities are now getting interested in Media Education.

However, as in other contexts government initiatives are firmly directed towards the introduction of new technologies in schools. Teacher education is now prioritising technical expertise as an area of development.

e) Development of media education in Russia

The history of Media Education in Russia goes back to the 1920s. The first attempts to instruct in media education (on the press and film materials, with the vigorous emphasis on the communist ideology) appeared in the 1920s but were stopped later. The beginning of the 1960s was the time of the revival of media education in secondary schools, universities, and the revival of media education seminars and conferences for the teachers.

Today media education is yet to become compulsory in Russian schools. However, it may be found as a strand of many other subjects, such as history, literature and art. There is no formal curriculum specifically in media education. There is no central aim for media education: some teachers focus on practical work, others give emphasis on theory and some others are primarily concerned with the aesthetic value of the media. One unifying factor is that Russian media teachers are interested in media education as a means to develop students' critical thinking about media texts.

No clear conceptual framework exists here, but media education tends to be organised around certain activities, including: developing abilities of analysis, creative and practical production, and exploration of the role of the media in contemporary social and cultural situations. Teachers may be quite successfully trained in media theory, but most are less well trained in technical or creative skills. Some Russian research into how media education is taught in schools reveals that because the subject is not obligatory, many teachers do not seek to implement it. Many teachers use media in the classroom merely as an illustration of a lesson's theme) Russian media education may only grow further with more co-operations between the Ministry of Education and teachers' associations. The important events in media education development in Russia were the registration of the new specialization-media education (2002) for the pedagogical universities and the launch of a new academic journal 'Media Education' since January 2005. Additionally, the Internet sites of Russian Association for Film and Media Education in English and Russian versions were created.

There are 'many of the same difficulties as in other contexts: a low status for the subject, a lack of resources from central providers, an inability to implement a clear framework for teaching media, and limited amounts of research, publishing and training to support the enthusiastic initiatives that do exist in classrooms.

1.7.2 Development of media education in Australia

In Australia, media education was influenced by developments in Britain related to the inoculation, popular arts and demystification approaches. Key theorists who influenced Australian media education were Turner and Hartley who helped develop Australian media and cultural studies.

Today, Media Studies is quite well advanced at both the secondary and tertiary levels of Australian education. Its acceptance is based on the recognition that the media have a significant impact on our lives; that they influence the way we spend our time, help shape the way we see ourselves and others, and play a crucial role in the creation of personal, social and national identity.

Australian schools are well equipped with a range of information technology and new learning technology. The expectation for students to develop the creative potential of these technologies is high. Students develop practical skills in media education through undertaking assigned roles during their participation in media production, and they are encouraged to analyse the stages and roles in the production process.

Media education aims to produce critical consumers and provide opportunities for practical production. The curriculum is organised around key concepts of institutions, genre, narrative, messages and values. Skills and competencies form part of the syllabus for media education and are measured against statement relating to critical analysis, production, problem solving and teamwork. Teachers trained in media studies are appointed to teach the subject. This fact alone makes the Australian experience unique.

There is some research in media education as well mainly involving studies around the relationship between traditional literacy and media literacy. The main needs are for training to keep pace with developments in the media industries, and to apply media education to teaching about the new technologies.

ATOM (Australian Teachers of Media) is an independent, non-profit, professional organisation of media educators and media industry representatives. ATOM provides an essential space for discussion about

media education amongst Australian teachers, through state-wide and national conferences. Each year they sponsor awards for productions with an educational value, which acknowledge a strong and growing relationship between media providers and media educators. ATOM also publishes journals and provides resources for use in the classroom.

1.7.3 Development of media education in the Middle East

a) Development of media education in Israel

Israel is a country with a great deal of differentiation in its education system based on religious belief and age. There is an 'elective' national curriculum in media education in schools. Formal classes in media education take place in 450 elementary schools, 100 middle schools and 100 secondary schools. The main aims are that students should be motivated to 'struggle' with the mass media. There is a central emphasis on the role of media in current affairs and in enabling students to understand the debate about the role and function of media in a divided society involved in an existential political conflict. By contrast, hardly any concern is for the development of critical consumers. However, student production is becoming a more popular strategy in schools.

Where media exists as an elective element of the upper school curriculum, there is formal, examined assessment via essay writing and production work. There is little formal training for teachers and there is dearth in publications.

1.7.4 Development of media education in Canada

In North America, the beginning of a formalized approach to media literacy as a topic of education is attributed to the formation of the Ontario Association for Media Literacy (AML) in the year 1978. Canada is the first country in North America to introduce media literacy in the school curriculum.

As of September 2000, media education has become a mandated part of the language arts curriculum in every Canadian province and territory. Additionally, some provinces provide stand-alone specialist media studies courses. Media literacy in Canada is concerned with helping students develop an informed and critical understanding of the nature of the mass media, the techniques used by them and the impact of these techniques. The definition of media literacy includes giving students opportunities for practical work. Up to 30% of the overall assessment in media education is practical in focus.

In 1999 the Media Awareness Network was funded to prepare a detailed report on media education in each of Canada's provinces and territories, with a further update in summer 2001. Media education has become a mandated part of the language arts curriculum; it has clearly stated aims and a network of advocates and experienced practitioners. However, there is little emphasis on teacher training. The most optimistic development in this area comes from parts of the private sector, which display a willingness to be involved in the media education community and provide support and guidance for teacher education.

1.7.5 Development of media education in United States

As the world's leading media producer, the USA is one country where one might expect to find a substantial and coherent curriculum in media education. However, the history of practice in this country has been fraught with all kinds of tensions, political and pedagogic, largely connected to diverse conceptualizations of media, technology, education, and schooling.

With more than 15,000 independent school districts and 65 million school aged children, there is wide disparity among various cities and states in the

implementation of media education initiatives, with some states making considerable progress in teacher education and curriculum development. There are substantial references to media education activity in documentation but how this translates into actual practice is highly variable.

In practice, most media work take place formally in English Language courses and in elective courses in health education, video production, journalism or media studies. Substantial growth in media literacy programme implementation throughout the 1990s has come from the active embrace by health educators of media literacy as a life skill for healthy development, with the analysis of media representation of violence, sexual behaviour and gender roles, and exploration of the marketing of alcohol and tobacco becoming considerably more common in classrooms across the country. These emphasis reflect the continuing influence of protectionist views of media education, which are relatively rare elsewhere in the world.

Nevertheless, media education in the US adhere to a set of concepts, requiring students to address matters of media construction, media language, media representations and messages, media audiences and media institutions. There is a lack of specific reference to developing skills and competencies. Educational attainment in the US is measured individually by teachers and by state level standardised assessments and there is no formal, widespread, or standardised assessment for student progress in media education. Competency in the area of media education is measured via individual teachers' assessment of student performance within the standards prescribed for the 'host' subject, e.g. English/Language Arts,

With respect to production, however, there is a change in approach. Schools are gaining greater access to digital media tools and such tools are more widely present in the homes, so production exercises are increasingly

presented as an option for students as a means to demonstrate their learning in various subject areas, including social studies and science. The quality of production and the amount of production continues to be inhibited by the limits of teacher education. Support for teacher education is one key area that is in need of development in the US.

The United States of America now has two national media literacy membership organizations that host bi-annual national conferences. These organizations support variety of media literacy activities, and have about 400 members each.

These organizations are as follows:

- 1) **National Association for Media Literacy Education (NAMLE):** This organization was officially founded as Alliance for Media Literate Americans in the year 2001, at media education conference in Austin, Texas. It is an umbrella organization of many independent media literacy organizations. This organization attempts to unite media literacy organizations as well as commercial media makers. It is dedicated to advancing the field of media literacy education in the United States.
- 2) **Action Coalition for Media Education:** This organization was founded in the year 2002. It rejects any ties with corporate media and supports an activist position in relation to media regulation and ownership. While many media educators are members of both the organizations, personal differences between some of the leaders have hindered collaborations. Media education in the United States of America is having more success in more limited levels by hard working individuals and small organizations.

In 2009, the Journal of Media Literacy Education was launched to support the work of scholars and practitioners in the field.

1.7.6 Development of media education in Asian countries

a) Development of media education in China:

In China, there is no formal curriculum and no clear aims for media education, or particularly good examples of practice in elementary or middle schools.

UNICEF has been involved in establishing a *Children's Express* style project in China engaging young children in journalism and offering opportunities for children to represent their own issues and opinions. It is a tiny project in a massive country. Children do learn about the media through participation and discussion. Some schools have established TV or radio stations, newspapers and magazines; but China is a long way from establishing concepts and principles for a media education curriculum. There is little research in media education, and very little training for teachers. There is very little history of children thinking 'critically' and no particular proposals to introduce this. There is no awareness of participatory learning as a method of learning.

b) Development of media education in Japan:

In Japan there is not much progress in media literacy. Schools are well-equipped with TV sets and even computers, yet there is no subject that teaches media, and no official efforts are made to integrate media literacy into other subject areas. Still, individual teachers have begun to teach critical reading of the media.

On the other hand, media literacy from an empowerment perspective is taught formally at a number of universities and informally at life-long learning centres. The Ministry of Education and Technology emphasises 'information literacy' which aims to teach computer competence, while NGOs and academics advocate media literacy as the development of critical skills and competencies.

A blueprint for a formal media literacy curriculum has been drawn up among others by the Ritsumeikan University Media Literacy Project. Its Study Guide in media Literacy, a textbook for teachers and students (young people as well as adults) include a theoretical framework, curriculum suggestions and teaching materials. Drawing on media literacy research in Canada and England, the Guide introduces key concepts for the study of the media as "constructing reality", and as having social, political and cultural implications. It also presents a model for analysing the media in terms of text, audiences and industry. It sees media literacy as empowering the audiences. There is little emphasis on production work.

While some nations are desperate for technology, Japanese media educators feel that easy access to technology has been at the expense of the development of a critical pedagogy. They argue that governments, industries and educators have a lot to do before they will share aims about the purpose of education. Japan is making only show progress in introducing media literacy into the curriculum, since it effectively challenges dominant paradigms in education. In informal settings, however, media literacy studies are gaining recognition as a democratic and empowering tool.

c) Development of media education in India:

Media education in India has made very uneven progress. Media education in India is still in an experimental stage. The efforts made to promote media education in India are scattered and provided on an ad hoc basis. Media education as an unified practice is yet to be developed. In most of the schools, media is used as an educational technology. However, various organizations, institutions, academic council have taken the initiatives to promote media education through their programmes and workshops.

1) Media education programme in Bombay

The Xavier Institute of communication, Bombay, in 1979 started a programme on media education for the high school students of Bombay. This course was outside the pale of the formal school system, and was a voluntary fee paying part time experiment. It was known as 'Media world'. This course is still running today, on school premises by a team of practicing primary and secondary school teachers.

Programme objective

The main objective is to develop a critical attitude towards the media, to foster the creative imagination with regard to the media and to develop a critical attitude towards its values. This course completes what students learn in school, and widens his perception of the audiovisual culture in which we all are immersed.

The programme seeks to achieve its objectives in twelve two hour sessions spread over two months and a half during the monsoon season every year. Its components are

- 1) A basic understanding of how media operate in society.
- 2) Practical exercise which include production of different types of media.
- 3) To sharpen critical awareness
- 4) A group project using communication tools. Three of the sessions of the project deal with advertising, the next three with newspapers and four on the cinema. The final two sessions devotes to practical projects like putting together an advertisement, a chart, a poster, a wall newspaper or a scrap book, and to guided visits to film or

communication institutes. It uses worksheets and printed handouts for discussion and analysis. Some of the questions raised during the sessions, which are 'animated' rather than taught are as follows:

- How deeply has the media affected you?
- What kind of films do you see?
- Are they all fantasies or are they based on reality?
- Is the press really a monopoly?
- In whose hands is the control of the media?
- Is this control commercial, or political, or ideological?
- Why advertisements are called hidden persuaders?
- Are all advertisements varnished lies?

In a workshop conducted with parents on children and media in the year 2005-2006, in a school in Bombay, the emphasis, was on making media work for children and helping parents understand the media. After, a brief presentation on media effects on children, the discussion veered towards parental control, helplessness especially of working parents in controlling television time, and in harmful media messages. Violence in media whether film or television news or sexually explicit media messages were discussed and parents exchanged views and information on their own coping strategies.

In 2007, media literacy workshop was conducted for 6th grade students of a central Mumbai school. In a session, on food and advertising, the students brought advertisements and discussed their favourite food advertisements, the photography used to market food. Students were asked to list the number of advertisements for some food or the other before, during and after their favourite TV programmes, the kind of food advertised and a list of toys in various junk food packets.

2) Gandhi Media Literacy Programme :

Gandhi Media Literacy Programme for children was initiated by Gandhi Smriti and Darshan Samiti in 2003 as part of the centenary year of Indian Opinion, the journal started by Mahatma Gandhi in South Africa in 1903. The programme is implemented in several schools of Delhi, Chandigarh, Solan (Himachal Pradesh) and Belgaum (Karnataka). The Gandhi Media Literacy Programme is aimed to help Parents, Teachers, and Students to become more discriminating in the use of mass media, to help them to distinguish between reality and fantasy and separate fact from fiction, think critically about media messages and help them to consider whether media values are their values. As part of the Gandhi Media Literacy Programme, the Samiti has launched The Yamuna, a global children's newspaper. It is presently a quarterly newspaper and has child reporters not only in different parts of the country but also in other countries. The samiti also organised workshop in the Rastriya Buniyadi Vidyalaya, Kumarbagh Brindavan Ashram, Bettiah, Champaran in 2006 to develop critical understanding of the media and imparts media training amongst children and youth, to help them to develop better communicative skills, competence development and life-long learning. "More than 100 girls have been empowered through this programme and are now taking up various social causes. They bring out a quarterly newsletter highlighting problems of the area." Said Mr. Vedavyas Kundu, Programme coordinator, media literacy programme.

In the words of Ratna Kumari, a trainee, "Earlier we would hardly read the newspaper or listen to the radio. As there is still no electricity in our village, television is out of bounds. But after we got involved in the programmes and activities of Gandhi Smriti especially the media training programme, we started reading the newspaper critically. We had scant interests in what was

going on around us, but now we firmly believe that we need to bring about a change. We realize how those who are running the system are taking poor people for a ride. If we young people continue to be indifferent, the situation will slump further. There will be no checks on corruption and poor administration.”

3) UNODC-Quest programme on media literacy :

The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) in collaboration with Quest the school's programme of the Indian Express organised the Media Literacy workshop. More than 50 teachers from schools in Delhi attended the workshop. The workshop was an initiative to train them to make their students aware about the harmful affects of drugs and how media messages need to be interpreted correctly to avoid drug abuse. The objective of the seminar was to spread mass-based awareness amongst the youngsters, from class 6 onwards.

Media has created a virtual family for children who spend more than 4-5 hours per day on Internet, television, advertisements and radio. But the problem is that media sends down 'one way traffic', which means that the messages sent down by media are not argued. The whole agenda was to drive home the message of 'I decide'. The child should have his own definition of beauty, lifestyle etc.

The experts from UNODC discussed about the harmful effects of drugs and how things like cough syrup, eraser fluid and petrol are intoxicating drugs. A media literacy kit has been developed by the Quest team, which was given to teachers so that they can teach the students how to distinguish from reel and real media portrayals. Similar workshops were organized in Chandigarh and Pune.

4) The organisations promoting media education

Abhivyakti, an organisation in Maharashtra in western India, started media education programme in 11 local schools in Nasik in 1995. The organisation equips the children with critical awareness about media and in a participatory process, attempt to discover ways of strengthening their response towards media. A systematic documentation of children's responses is being maintained. Pre and post test are conducted to monitor and evaluate the impact of media education session. The weekly session in schools is based on media syllabus developed by the organisation. The media syllabus in school is developed for VI, VII and VIII students. The organisation felt the need to provide an access to the children for viewing children's film. Therefore an initiative taken by Abhivyakti, is the opening of "Bal Chitraput Udyan" (children's Film Park) at the organisation's premises which features children film. It published "Media education in Indian context", a booklet which features the functions, objectives and methodologies of the media education programme in the schools. "Tej Prasarini" or 'Light – Spreader' is a multimedia publishing project of Don Bosco Education Society of Bombay. It offers four days course in media education for parents, teachers and youth leaders.

SIGNIS: World Catholic Association for Communication

SIGNIS is a non-governmental organization that includes members from 140 countries. As the "World Catholic Association for Communication", it brings together radio, television, cinema, video, media education, Internet, and new technology professionals. SIGNIS was created in November 2001 from the merger between two organizations that were both created in 1928. Its very diversified programmes cover fields such as the promotion of films or television program, the creation of radio, video, and television studios,

production and distribution of programmes, supplying specialized equipment, training professionals. SIGNIS has consultative statutes with UNESCO. SIGNIS is officially recognized by the Vatican as a Catholic organization for communication.

India is one of the members of SIGNIS among 140 countries. Santhome Communications Centre is the name of the centre of SIGNIS in India. Fifteen religious sisters and brothers belonging to various congregation from Tamil Nadu successfully completed a six day intensive training in communication and media with special focus on Media Education held in Chennai from 28th April to 3rd May, 2008. Critical analysis of Mass media products, processes of message constructions and developing creative media skills among children are the three broad areas covered during the course. Skills related to writing for media programmes, radio programme production, production of video spots, conducting Media Education sessions for varied participants are the skills shared among the participants during the training. As a result, the participants conceptualized, written and produced three radio programmes (a documentary on AIDS, a drama on health and hygiene and a radio magazine on traditional cultural festivals). They also produced three video spots on Child labour, Water and environmental protection. They also produced three public service advertisements and wrote 15 letters to the editors on various issues appeared in the journals and sent to respective journals for publication. 'Meet the Expert' component of the course enabled the participants to interact with current and famous film directors and television programme producers to know and learn from the 'horses mouth' about inside stories of media industry. The participants were taken to AVM studio to witness a shooting of a television programme. The programme is a dance show. The visit helped the participants to understand the complexities of a film shooting, the magnitude of human and material resources involved and to understand the

interconnectedness of culture, values, money and media. The participants were provided with various methodologies to conduct Media Education sessions in their respective institutions. "This workshop has made the participants understand the importance of Media Education for children today.

Workshop organized by SIGNIS at Chennai in India

Sisters in Chennai called parents to protect their children from the effects of the media. Around five hundred parents sat through the intensive sessions on Media Education organized by the famous Holy Angles Anglo-Indian Higher Secondary School run by Franciscan Missionaries of Mary in Chennai on 22 and 29 August 2009

Sr.Mary Zacharia, one of the finest Principals of schools in India today, with thirty years of experience in formation has been consistent in introducing Media Education in schools during the past several years. Convinced of the fact that some of the unwanted elements in media mislead our children, Sr. Zacharia was keen that all parents participate in the programme without fail. 'Unless the parents spend quality time with their children and get to know what is happening in their world, it may be difficult for them to lead their children to bright future and meaningful life' told Sr. Zacharia to the parents who were led into critical reflection on 'media products, production processes and children's behavior'.

Dr.Magimai Pragasam, the noted Media Consultant and Film Maker was the resource person for the sessions. At the end of every session, the parents were asked to propose useful and practical strategies to combat the media related problems of our children. A documentary on Children and Cinema produced by SIGNIS INDIA covering media issues and various strategies, was screened during each session.

The ME sessions revolved around the following questions:

- How media influence the social, moral, cultural and spiritual values of our children,
- How the over exposure to violence in media encourage violent behavior in our children,
- How advertisements convert 'information' into 'wants' and 'wants' into 'needs' resulting in creation of consumer culture,
- How commercial television programmes affect the academic excellence of our children,
- How depiction of celebrities and their lifestyles affect the physical health of our children leading them into psychological problems later,
- How the problems of identify crisis, desire for freedom and understanding of love and sex lead our children into chaos with the support of media etc

The above topics were discussed with concrete examples during each session. The parents could link what was shared with the behavior of their children.

5) Workshop organised by school on Media Education :

The School, Krishna Foundation India, Chennai hosted workshop on Media and Education from 4-6 January, 2002. The workshop was organized to illuminate the issues surrounding the media and its increasing use by children and adults, and to create openings for educational interventions. The workshop was structured in three parts: (1) It aimed at providing perspectives and insights into the functioning of various media, especially

the print media and television. (2) It exposed teachers to tools of analysis that could be applied to understanding the impact of different media products. (3) It provided space for teachers to begin creating modules for use in the classroom. These modules were aimed at helping children develop a facility in deconstructing the structure and messages of various media products. The eventual goal of the workshop was to enable teachers and students to become more informed and discerning users of the media.

6) The initiatives taken by the academic body CIET in media literacy

Central Institute of Educational Technology (CIET), a constituent of NCERT (National Council for Educational Research and training), promotes utilization of educational technologies especially mass media viz radio, TV satellite communications and cyber media either separately or in combinations to widen educational opportunities and improving quality of educational processes at school level. The CIET has also contributed to the field of media literacy in a similar way by involving students in production of programmes. In collaboration with the five State Institute of Educational Technology institutes namely Hyderabad, Pune, Bhubaneshwar, Ahmedabad and Lucknow school going children in the year 2008-2009 were trained in making video programme. The media production exercises were aimed to teach students applied skills and put them in a role of producer and the production assignment which were given to them were on the issues of social justice and social change. To motivate such young talent CIET introduced a new category for nomination in its 13th Annual children's educational Audio - Video festival - Best Student Production. The Educational Audio Video programmes made by the children and for the children were showcased in the festival that was held from 27th February to 2nd March 2009 at NCERT campus in New Delhi. In the 14th Annual children's educational Audio - Video

festival students participated enthusiastically and noted actor and director Mr. Nassirudin Shah, who was the chief guest of the award ceremony, urged young filmmakers to listen to their heart and make film which depicts the reality. Encouraging children, he said, put your energy in making programmes that depicts reality rather than putting your energy in trying to make those programmes interesting.

From the above discussion based on development of media education in different countries, it can be inferred that in many countries around the world, the past two decades have seen extensive and far reaching changes in educational policy and practices. In some of the countries, media education is informed by a rigorous and systematic conceptual framework that is clearly reflected in teaching materials, syllabus documents and the like. In some of the countries, media education gives emphasis on critical analysis of media and thus empowering students as critical and knowledgeable consumers of media as well as preparing students as future citizens. While other countries focus more on media production.

Despite these developments, however, media education has made very uneven progress. In many cases, one can see bursts of innovative activity that have not ultimately been sustained, while in others, potential advances on the level of national policy have subsequently been overturned. Media education is also confused with educational media that is with the use of media technology for educational purposes.

In most of the developing countries, (such as European and Asian countries) media education is only just beginning to register as a concern; while in the countries where media education is most firmly established in the curriculum (such as United States of America, Canada and England), there are clear signs of weariness among its most prominent advocates.

Where media education exists as a defined area of study, it tends to take the form of an elective or optional area in the secondary school curriculum, rather than a compulsory element. There is considerable uncertainty about whether media education should be regarded as a separate curriculum subject or integrated within existing subjects.

In **India**, there is no formal established media education curriculum, though in various private schools media education is taught at an informal level. Media education is provided by enthusiastic and well-intentioned practitioners in an ad-hoc way. In most of the efforts in media education, NGOs, social action groups, academic council, and institutions have taken the lead. The initiatives taken by them indicate that importance of media education especially for children have been realised in India. But at the same time, even though various initiatives have been taken to promote media education in India, a long journey is yet to be covered to successfully implement media education in all the schools of India. At college and university level, there is little media education, the priority in most of the courses, is to train the professionals for various media. In such circumstances, and given fact, then an independent and critical involvement needs to be strengthened in India, otherwise the efforts of media literacy will remain scattered and segmented.

Today media education has become an essential requirement for today's children to guide them for right utilization of media. Studies carried out by researchers have already established the importance of media education for children. In abroad, some of the countries such as United States of America, Canada and England, have taken the initiative of establishing media education in the curriculum. Now it is high time for all the Indian schools to implement media education in their school curriculum. So, it is necessary to

find out how media education should be introduced in the educational curriculum of Indian schools in an effective way and for this it is very required to know the views of all the members of society, who are largely involved in the development of the children.

1.8 Statement of the Problem

In the light of above discussions, certain research questions arises which are as follows:

- Q1. How media education should be introduced in the schools in an effective way?
- Q.2. How will imparting of media education to children benefit them?
- Q.3. Should media education be introduced as compulsory subject, optional course or integrated with other courses?
- Q4. How can media education be actually imparted among children through schools?

To seek answers to these questions it was decided to undertake a study on "Perceptions of teachers, parents and media professionals regarding media education in schools."

1.9 Justification

1.9.1 Justification of the subject of the study

Today's children are growing up in the media-dominated society. Their constant exposure to media messages influence the way the children think about the world. The media is drawing children away from their assigned and imperative tasks and have strongly affected their attitudes and emotions. The children watch the programmes with undue sex, violence and

adult themes and glorified affluent life-styles. As children are more stimulus-bound than adults, they are much more vulnerable to the negative impact of media.

So the young, productive and budding minds of children are required to be protected against the harmful effects of the media. If they are not exposed to wide range of media messages of real world experience, their knowledge structure will be very limited and unbalanced and will be forced to accept unquestionably the dominant themes, values, beliefs and interpretation presented in the media. Therefore, children need to become media-savvy but at the same time critical consumers of the media products. Media education is one way to teach children about the media and communication technology (Maniar 2002, cited in Rai, 2006). Media education will help children to build defense mechanism against the ill effects of media by empowering them with better understanding of media so that they can behave as responsible citizens in media-saturated society. Schools today are the most appropriate medium in making media education available to children.

Schools are educational institutions, which provide varied pattern of activities to cater to the development of children's entire personality. Schools formulate scheme of hobbies, occupation and projects that appeal to draw out the power of children of varied temperaments and attitudes. To quote Dewey (1997), 'School is primarily a social institution. Education being a social process, the school is simply that form of community life in which all those agencies are concentrated that will be the most effective in bringing the child to share in the inherited resources of the race to use powers for social ends.' Ross (1990) said, 'Schools ought to stress the duties and responsibilities of individual citizens, they ought to train their pupils in the spirit of cheerful, willing and effective service and they will themselves become model communities,' (Cited in Aggarwal, 1994, p.451). Schools play a major role in

moulding the ideas, habits and attitudes of the children with a view to producing well-balanced personalities: physically strong, mentally alert, emotionally stable, culturally sound and socially efficient. Whatever is taught in the schools, it is assumed that the children will use that knowledge, skills, attitudes and information to solve problems of life after completing their formal education. So, schools can play significant role in training children to look critically and discriminate between what is good and what is bad in whatever they see and hear. The challenge for schools is to help children navigate the sea of messages flooding into their lives daily through TV movies, radio, music, videogames, magazines, newspapers; even billboards. Students are inundated with information from the Internet, television, advertisements, and film. Helping them construct meaning from these messages must become a central goal of schools. Media education develops students' abilities to analyze and evaluate every text, both print and non-print. So, schools should also address the social and commercial context of media messages as well as the potential effects or consequences of those messages. These life lessons can come only when students are provided multiple opportunities to cultivate skills in comprehending and creating media.

Potter (2001) wrote, 'Each year it becomes even more important that the educational system provide students with accurate information so they can continually assess the value of information coming at them from media. The skills of reading, writing and arithmetic are important but no more than the skills incorporating media literacy'. (Cited in Dennis, 2004, p.202)

Kellner (1995) pointed out that 'School should produce pedagogies that provide media literacy and enable students, teachers and citizens to discern the nature and effects of media culture.' (Cited in Buckingham, Banaji, Burn, Carr, Cranmer and Willett, 2004, p.20)

The most urgent issue of today is a systemic education reform that will effectively prepare children for citizenship in the Information Age. An effort of this scope requires a sea-change in the individuals' understanding of the functions and impacts, and educational potential, of the media, which can be best achieved through the schools.

To sum up, schools can be the best agent to impart media education to children in an effective way, by preparing children to play active roles as citizens in the democratic society in future. So, there is an urgent need to introduce media education in the school curriculum. As already discussed that certain schools, NGOs in India are already covering such topics in some form or another, but it is time for media education to be formally addressed and made mandatory and for all schools to address this in the school curriculum. For innovation and successful implementation of any educational curriculum it is absolutely necessary that content be flexible and constantly open to the ideas, contributions of expertise and inputs from members of the society who make important contributions in developing the personality of a child. Before implementation of any educational innovation in the schools, it is always desirable to know their views on the educational innovation. Among the members of the society, teachers, parents and media professionals play pivotal role in the development of a child. So it was felt necessary to know whether teachers, parents and media professionals really think that media education is necessary for children, and if so, how children can be benefited through media education, what all media education should include to help children to become critical consumers of media, what all strategies needs to be adopted to successfully implement media education in the school curriculum, for example whether it should be introduced as an optional subject, as a compulsory subject or integrated with other existing



school subjects, and how media education can be effectively imparted to children and how school teachers, parents and media professionals can play the role. The information obtained on how they envisioned media education can become a guideline for researchers and educational planners to identify the skills that are required to be developed among school children for critically analysing, interpreting and evaluating the messages generated by media texts and hence will be a great help to them for developing appropriate curriculum for media education.

1.9.2 Justification for including VII to IX standard under the present study

In the present study the perceptions of teachers, parents and media professionals regarding media education were studied for children in standards VII to IX. Generally, children in standards VII to IX are above 12 years of age. By age of twelve, children reach cognitive maturity, and their minds are opened to a full understanding of abstract thoughts. Media education requires certain level of cognition to understand the media functioning, as such, twelve years onwards becomes the appropriate age for imparting media education. Various supports can be provided which also suggest that by age of twelve, children develop their cognitive maturities which are detailed below:

John (2002) provided a comprehensive model of “consumer socialization” that relates children’s understanding of persuasive intention to broader characteristics of particular development stages. During the “perceptual” stage (age 3 - 7), children remain at the level of perceptual rather than abstract or symbolic thought. At this age, they distinguish between commercials and programmes primarily on the basis of perceptual characteristics, and have a generally positive attitude towards them. In the

“analytical” stage (age 7 - 11), they make significant leaps in their ability to identify underlying principles, and to make account of multiple perspectives. Accordingly, they distinguish advertisements on the basis of their persuasive intent, and recognize that they can be honest, biased or deceitful. Finally, in the “reflective” stage (age 12-16), they become more able to understand the complex social contexts and meanings related to consumption. Their attitude towards advertising modulates somewhat at this age, becoming skeptical and discriminating rather than comprehensively dismissive.

Buckingham's (2000) research suggested that young people are quite alert to the possibility of bias or misrepresentation in television news, but this becomes a more significant factor across the teenage years. (Cited in Buckingham, Banaji, Burn, Carr, Cranmer and Willett, 2004, p.18)

According to Potter (1998), ‘A lack of cognitive development can prevent emotional reaction. For example, very young children (5 to 8 years) cannot follow the inter-connected elements in a continuing plot. Instead they focus on individual elements. Therefore they cannot understand suspense, and without such an understanding, they cannot become emotionally aroused as the suspense builds. This means that a child's ability to heave to media messages is low not because of lack of ability to feel emotions, but because of a lack of ability to understand what is going on in certain narratives. By adolescence, children have reached cognitive maturity, and all the gates are opened to a full understanding of all kinds of narratives. Being emotionally literate requires an understanding of how emotions are evoked by the media and how those effects can be controlled when individual is confronted with different types of messages.’

Further, Potter (1998) said, 'Children must acquire the knowledge that advertisements are paid messages that are designed to get them to buy something or to get them to ask their parents to buy something.' Only ten percent of young children of 7 to 9 years of age have a clear understanding of the profit – seeking motives of commercials: Fifty five percent are totally unaware of the nature of advertisement and believe commercials are purely entertainment. For example, Wilson and Weiss (1992) found that compared to older children (Above 12 years), younger children (below 9 years) were less able to recognize an advertisement for a particular toy and comprehend its intent when it was shown in a cartoon programme.

Buckingham (1996) pointed out that 'From the age of twelve upwards, children begin to speculate about ideological impact of television, and potential effects of positive or negative images of particular groups on audiences, even hypothetical ones. They begin to become aware of the process of stereotyping, both in real life and in media. They also come to perceive the differences between different styles of realism, and develop an aesthetic appreciation of the various ways in which the illusion of reality is created by television.' (Cited in Buckingham, Banaji, Burn, Carr, Cranmer and Willett, 2004, p.18)

According to Smith and Cowie (1988), 'When we are very young, our minds are not developed enough to allow for understanding of abstract thoughts. Our minds mature as we grow through childhood. As we reach higher levels of maturation intellectually, emotionally, and morally we are able to perceive more in the media messages.' (Cited in Potter, 1998, p.6)

Keller, Gunter and Kelley (1985) evaluated television studies course for 14 to 15 years olds at Herford school, Grimsby (England). The course aimed at

explaining television news broadcast and drama. It involved the analysis of specific broadcasts and the planning, preparation and production of video programmes by students themselves. Detailed course evaluation by careful pre and post-testing of experimental and control groups, demonstrated that children's understanding of television was significantly higher after undertaking the course. (Cited in Buckingham, Banaji, Burn, Carr, Cranmer and Willett, 2004, p.20)

Children lack the full capacity for cognitive functioning until about age 12 years – the onset of adolescence. Therefore children are different from adults because of their lower cognitive development. (Piaget and Inhelder, 1969, cited in Potter, 1998, p.58)

In context to the research supports, as discussed above, it can be inferred that children above twelve years of age are the most appropriate ones for receiving media education, and students in VII standards are generally of twelve or above twelve years of age. On the other hand, students up to IX standard were included in the research study, as students from X to XII standards would be busy in preparation for board examination. They may be already overloaded with existing subjects in the schools. Therefore, perceptions of teachers, parents and media professionals regarding media education were studied for students in VII to IX standards.

Further, as children in X standards are generally busy in preparation for board examination and they are already overloaded with existing subjects in the schools, so media education as an additional subject would be an added pressure for them. Therefore, perceptions of teachers, parents and media professionals regarding media education were studied for children in standards VII to IX.

1.9.3 Justification of the samples

The present study has been undertaken to study the perceptions of teachers, parents and media professionals regarding media education. The study comprised of three groups of samples. Justifications for selecting teachers, parents and media professionals as samples for the research study are as follows:

1.9.3.1 Justification for the sample of teachers

Schools provide a purified environment for children and teachers play an important role in this. The teachers help in preparing children for their future lives. They contribute to a large extent in developing knowledge, values and proper habits among children, in other words, shaping their personality. They modify the behaviour of children so that the children can become useful members of the society. With efforts they bring forth a fine harvest of young men and women who are able to contribute their best for the welfare of mankind. The teachers not only preserve that is best in the society but also create new channels and prepare new members who will contribute towards social progress. Thus we see that they are devoted not only to teaching, sharing responsibility and working together but also help the members of the society to follow pattern of social behaviour and preserve the social heritage. According to Dewey (1992), 'The teacher is a guide, a director, he steers the boat but the energy that propels it must come from those who are learning.' (Cited in Aggarwal, 1994). The teacher is not an instructor or a task-master; he is a helper and a guide. He does not actually train the pupil's mind, he shows him how to perfect his instruments of knowledge and helps and encourages him in the process. Teachers perform various acts of responsibility because they are the builders of future citizens of the nation. They build the brain of the nation.

In today's media saturated society, media have become part and parcel of children's lives. Media are playing pivotal role in children's development. Their unrestricted and unlimited exposures to media experiences often endanger their future lives. Now, as children bring to the class-room the media related information and share their experiences, the teachers can help them in processing the information of media messages, eliminating the futile ones, and channelising the relevant and useful information to develop their knowledge. The perceptions of the students of a given situation, to which they do not have personal experience, are greatly influenced by what they view in the media. The reality is that the students' lack of experience is replaced by what they see in movies and television and what they read in newspapers and magazines. Without the critical awareness fostered by media literacy these students are susceptible to adopt the opinions represented in the media. If certain perceptions are repetitively presented, the repetition of the message validates the message. Therefore, the challenge to the teachers is to continuously critique media messages and to seek out the rest of the context and the deeper patterns of behavior that were not provided by the media. Teachers can teach children not only to learn from media, to resist media manipulation and to use media materials in constructive ways, but also develops skill that will help create good citizens and that will make them more motivated and competent participants in the social life. Miller (1984) pointed out, that the teachers should help students to be more analytical about what they see and hear, to be more actively engaged in moving from passive acceptance and to be more critically evaluative and less gullible to think more clearly about, and about what the student does with his values, with his money and with his life. (Cited in Potter, 1998)

To sum up, teachers can play a vital role in making children media-literate individuals, so that they are better equipped to decipher the complex media messages.

1.9.3.2 Justification for the sample of parents

Like teachers, parents also make large contributions for children's all-round development. Parents, who constitute children's family, influence them to a great extent and thereby shape their attitudes and behaviour patterns. Children learn a lot through imitation. While dwelling with the parents, they observe their feelings, their manners, their interests, behaviour etc. In other words, children's personality is shaped along the lines of the family proceedings. Children learn good habits and cultivate values of life from their parents. They are trained in social inter-actions and relationships through their parental instructions. This is why if the training of parents in the family are not benefiting, children become a problem for the society. Instead of modifying the society, they spoil it through their undesirable activities. Frank (1990) perceived parents as essential agent for child rearing, socialisation and introducing them to the culture of the society, thereby shaping their basic character, structure of the culture and form the child's personality (In Aggarwal, 1994)

In today's world where the children are over-exposed to the media, the role of the parents in shaping the young minds becomes all the more important. Today's children are having constant and passive exposure to the media. This is taking the young minds to the world of fiction and fantasies. Children are accepting unquestionably the images in the media messages and ending up with faulty believes about the world. Here lies the role of parents in protecting the children from detrimental effects of media by controlling their

media usage. They can make children conscious of what they are exposed to. Through their active interaction with children regarding the content of media, the parents can retain control over their learning process.

Messaris (1986) in a research found that parents played an important positive role in young children's learning from television in three main aspects. Firstly, at a very young age, they helped children to make distinctions between different types of programmes, and between television and reality. Secondly, they helped children to evaluate the accuracy of television representations, and hence to adjust unrealistic expectations about the real world that might have arisen from television viewing. Thirdly, parents could provide background information when children were confronted with unfamiliar materials, particularly relating to aspects of adult life that children could not have experienced themselves. (Cited in Buckingham, Carr, Cranmer and Willett, 2004, p.38)

In brief, parents can have important contribution in preparing children for responsible participation in the media-saturated environment. Through family interactions children can gain specific knowledge and skills which will help them throughout their lives to think, discern and question media messages such as who is the message intended for, who wants to reach this audience and why.

1.9.3.3 Justification for the sample of media professionals

Besides teachers and parents, media professionals are the ones who are involved in structuring the media world. Media professionals' possessed reserves of expertise and resources which could be invaluable to schools. They have an up-to-date experiences and knowledge of day-to-day workings of the media. They are able to illuminate in details media practices and the ways in which particular texts are produced, and general knowledge about media. As

advocated by Zettl (1998), 'Media education is concerned with helping students develop an informal and critical understanding of the nature of mass media, the techniques used by them, and the impact of these techniques. More specifically, it is education that aims to increase the students' understanding and enjoyment of how the media work, how they produce meaning, how they are organized, and how they construct reality. Media education also aims to provide students with the ability to create media products.' It may not be possible to decipher the inherent meanings of the media messages without knowing the various components that have gone into preparing the messages. Such an insight into the methodology of production of media messages can best be provided by the media professionals only.

From the above discussion it can be inferred that teachers, parents and media professionals can play the role of mediators in imparting media education to children. Therefore teachers, parents and media professionals were taken as sample of the present study.

1.9.4 Significance of the study in the department of Home Science Extension and Communication

Department of Extension and Communication has strengthened communication as one of its component in the department curriculum. The aim of the Communication component is to analyse critically various communication media with respect to their impact, effectiveness, influence and the role in development. Since communication is one of the two curricular components of the department, it is of importance to conduct studies in the field of communication and enrich teaching of communication with research. Media education is an important aspect of teaching of communication. Therefore the study of the subject is pertinent in the department of Home Science Extension and Communication.

The department is engaged in conducting researches in the field of communication. Therefore, the study will help to know the importance, content, and strategy of media education, as perceived by the teachers, parents and media professionals. The findings of the study will help the department to develop suitable course for imparting media education to the school children and try out the media education course on an experimental basis to judge its effectiveness.

Media production and media appreciation are among the courses offered under communication component in the department curriculum. The department of Extension and Communication offers courses such as media production and media appreciation. Media production course teaches students the operation as well as appropriate use of various media and through media appreciation course students get the opportunity to learn about proper method of appreciation of various films (e.g. critical analyses of films with respect to its content, cinematography, effects on society, its implication, etc.). It also organizes seminars, workshops on themes related to communication and media.

The study will provide information regarding the role of parents and teachers, content and strategy of media education. Thus, the department will be able to provide training to the parents regarding the suitable role that they can play in order to provide a protectionist shield against the unwanted influence of children through workshops. The training can also be provided to the teachers regarding their role, and appropriate content and strategy that they can adopt for promotion of media education in the schools. This will ultimately help in increasing their knowledge and understanding of the media and also develop skills required for empowering children with better understanding of media to become responsible citizens in future.

Moreover, no research studies has been carried out in the department which throws light on the perceptions of teacher, parents and media professionals regarding media education.

1.9.5 Justification for the variables of the study:

Perception is a process by which sensory input is so interpreted as to render it meaningfully. Sensory inputs are those that reach our senses from environment. It is the process of perception that helps us see, feel, hear, taste and smell things in the world and to interpret them. It is our window over the world and frame of reference through which we look at people, situation, and the whole environment and in fact everything.

Perceptions of individuals differ on the basis of their sex, educational background, experiences, occupation, exposure and other related factors. Many research studies have proven that there is difference between two sexes. As there are differences in the brains of the two sexes, they may have their own perspective to see the world. (Moir, Jessel, 1992, cited in Bhatia, 2002, p.42).

The present study has been undertaken to study the perceptions of teachers, parents and media professionals regarding media education. Therefore the above mentioned factors may affects perceptions of the teachers, parents and media professionals regarding media education.

The study highlights the perceptions of teachers regarding media education in relation to sex, educational qualification, teaching experience, type of schools they are employed in, mass media exposure, opinion about importance of media and perceptions of parents regarding media education in relation to sex, educational qualification, occupation, mass media exposure, opinion about importance of media. Moreover, the study also

focus on perception of media professionals regarding media education in relation to sex, age, experience in media profession, type of media organization, and type of employment.

a) Sex of teachers, parents and media professionals

Various research studies inferred that there are number of differences between two sexes. Sex difference is assumed by Wilson (1982), in his socio-biological theory to be 'evolutionary.' He said that 'females tend to be higher than males in empathy, verbal skills, social skills and security seeking, among other things, while men tend to be higher in independence, dominance, spatial and mathematical skills, rank-related aggression and other characteristics.' (Cited in Bhatia, 2002, p. 44)

The female teachers, parents and media professionals are more sensitive towards different societal issues as compared to their counterparts. They are more observant, critical in their thinking process and may foresee the future of children better. Women are perceived as more sympathetic and more intuitive than men. (Heilman et al., 1989, cited in Bumpus and Hill, 2008)

Therefore, male and female teachers, parents, and media professionals may process the information in a different way. Female teachers, parents or media professionals may be more critical in analyzing the messages received from various sources. They may be more concerned with the influence that media have on students and try to minimize the negative influence of media. Therefore, the sex difference of teachers, parents and media professionals may affect their perceptions regarding the media education in schools.

b) Educational qualification of teachers and parents

Education play an important role in shaping human responses to the world around, mainly the way in which education contributes to cultivating human mind with behaviour of control and sense. Gain in knowledge depends on ones level of education. The increase in educational level increases the learning capacity and develop positive attitude towards acceptance of new ideas, concepts and issues.

Quality, competence and skill of an individual come with educational qualification. The increase in educational level increases the knowledge, awareness and analytical power. It also increases the maturity, cognition level, logical thinking, reasoning power and understanding of any problem or issue in the existing society. Decades of research points to education as a powerful cognitive resource that can undermine media propaganda. To quote Robert (1973), 'People who are highly educated are motivated to seek out information from the media. These people select the information that has greatest utility.'

Teachers and parents who are highly educated may think actively about the different meanings of media messages. They may try to find the hidden meanings beneath the surface of the media messages.

On the other hand, those who are moderately or less educated do not have well developed knowledge structure. Their choices are limited, because they do not have wide enough range of experiences and knowledge to allow them to see most of the media messages in different perspectives. Therefore, difference in the educational qualification of the teachers and parents may influence their perceptions regarding media education.

c) Mass Media exposure of teachers and parents

Exposure to various types of media leads to media appreciation and interpretation of an individual. Therefore, the more one is having exposure to media, more he or she becomes critical in consuming the messages. Unless the person actively seeks a wide variety of sources of information, the knowledge structure will not expand, and he will not be able to gain better insight about the world, even though the person may think that he or she is keeping himself or herself informed and learning more because of the constant exposure to information.

Exposure to various forms of media help in identifying the key information of who, what, when, where, and why of the story in media. It will help to sort out quickly through what is said, the graphics and the visuals to focus on the essence of the event being covered. This may lead to increase in the understanding of the problems, which the media is causing to children and may feel the need to solve those problems. The difference in the media exposure of teachers and parents may cause difference in their awareness level of what is happening on the screen, as well as frequent judgment of real and fantasy or good and bad. Therefore the difference in the media exposure of teachers and parents may have bearing on their perceptions regarding media education in schools.

d) Teachers' and parents' opinion about importance of media

An individual's opinion about media plays a significant role in shaping his perception about media information. Therefore, if the teachers and parents have more favourable opinion about the importances of media they may believe that media is responsible primarily for development purposes. They may be less aware of the problem of proliferation of violence in media and

how media affects the individuals and hence may not easily accept the fact that media is also causing harmful effects especially on children who are the most vulnerable members of the society. Therefore they may not feel the need for contributing much for protecting children and help children to use media more effectively and efficiently.

Perceptions of the individuals have often been influenced by the opinion about media, (for eg. Negative views about media in general) and have ranged from simple prejudice to sophisticated exercises in media analysis (Quail, 1997). As individual differs, so do their opinions. Teachers and parents who have more favourable about the importances of media believe that media play pivotal role building positive characteristics of individuals. They develop a sense of understanding that the influences of media are solely positive and whatever information media transfers are beneficial to audiences.

In contrast, among the teachers and parents, those who have less favourable opinion about the importance of media may not agree with everything that is presented in media. Their past experience about television would not be satisfying and profiting. They may think that media is primarily responsible for negative effects especially on children who are the most vulnerable section of society. This realisation may develop among them the feeling for the need to address the issue. Thus the perceptions of teachers and parents regarding media education in schools may vary according to their opinion about importance of media.

e) Teaching experience

Through each teaching year, one gains invaluable experience and insight, which further strengthens teaching, honed by teaching goals and affirmed by desire to teach. The increase in the years of teaching experience leads to

more knowledge to train students. The experienced teachers are more intimate to the needs, interests, requirements and demands of students. So, they may better understand the importance of media education for children for preparing them to become active citizens of the future.

Teachers, who have less years of experience are not adequately trained to guide students as they themselves are learning to get adjusted with situation and conditions. They are still in the process of establishing themselves academically and administratively.

On the other hand, teachers who have less years of experience are young and hence more enthusiastic, innovative, energetic and updated with latest techniques and methods used as a pedagogical tool in teaching. Less experienced teachers may be more acquainted with new technologies. They may be more interested in development of problem solving skills and skills in learning. They have progressive mind and may easily accept new ideas and inventions. Therefore, they may easily accept the importance of media education.

Whereas, the teachers having more years of experience may be conservative, traditional and may want to stick to traditional system of education. Hence they may not be in favour of introduction of new courses. The overwhelming curriculum changes, high demands for accountability and reporting contributes to general unwillingness on the part of them to go an extra mile for additional professional development. Therefore, the difference in the teaching experience may influence their perceptions regarding media education in schools

f) Type of school teachers are employed in

The type of school may be either self-financed or government-aided. The teachers who are employed in self-financed schools may have adequate material support and facilities, both for teaching staff and students. There may be adequate fund available to introduce changes for betterment of the school. There may be advance educational technologies made available to students. The authorities of the self-financed schools may be enthusiastic to make changes whenever necessary and add new methods, techniques to overcome the defects. They may have their own uniqueness in attaining the expected goal.

On the other hand schools which are government-aided may not have these facilities available due to lack of funds. The school authorities may not encourage new ideas or subjects. They may want to stick to the traditional system of learning. So the type of school in which teachers are employed may affect their perceptions regarding media education in schools.

g) Parents' occupation (occupational status)

Occupation of male parents

Male parents who are in service may have more intellectual or enriched environment in comparison to the male parents who are in business. In many jobs, they can steal time off to indulge in discussions with their colleagues. After professional hazards, current events usually are the most discussed topic among the men. In discussing current events, reference to media messages are bound to come and often the discussions veer round to the merits and demerits of the media messages also and the impact of such messages on the society, particularly on the children. Once out of the office,

their responsibility ends for the day and they can concentrate in their family affairs. Service class parents may have more interaction and sharing with the family members. Therefore they may have better understanding of the needs, interest and requirements of their children. Therefore they may better perceive the need of media education for their children in comparison to the parents who are in business. In contrast, the parents in business have much longer working hours and always remained too engrossed in thinking about the promotion of their business neglecting the family affairs. They have little time to think about anything else other than their business affairs and have very little knowledge of what is happening to their family members. So perceptions of the male parents who are in business may vary from the male parents who are in service.

Occupation of female parents

Working female parents are not been able to spend much time with their children. So they may not be well aware of the needs, requirements, problems faced by their children. Female parents who work outside of the home show lower level of protectiveness because their life circumstances often require that their children develop more autonomy (Romich, 2007, cited in Power and Hill, 2008, p. 191).

Whereas, female parents who are housewives, spend most of the time with their children. So they may be more close to their children. They have more time for social gathering compared to working mothers. With the advent of television, the TV serials and movies is the most favoured topic of discussion among the housewives in such social gatherings and invariably the effects of the media on their children come up for discussion and they exchange views on the need for media education among the children.

On the other hand, like male parents, female parents who are working have the scope to interact with the outside world. So their horizon of knowledge and outlook may be more broadened as compared to the housewives. Working female parents keep themselves updated about recent trends and changing scenario in a society. Whereas female parents who are not working, may not keep themselves informed about recent trends. They prefer to stick to traditional values and beliefs. Therefore, the occupational status of female parents may influence their perceptions regarding media education.

h) Age of media professionals

Media professionals may be of younger, middle or older age group. Media professionals of younger or middle age are more flexible, enthusiastic, energetic, and ready to accept new ideas and methods. Since early 1990's, a diploma or degree in journalism was made compulsory for an editorial job in the media profession. Because of this, the media professionals of the present era have come to the field after class-room studies due to which they are updated with the latest developments, are more knowledgeable about the nuances of the profession and have better understanding of their job requirements. They also have greater knowledge of the modern technological advancements in the field of communication and are better equipped to make full use of the facilities available. With the advent of technological advancement, the demands and requirements of the media profession is also changing. They develop more positive thinking about the class- room studies and so they may realize that if from early stage proper knowledge regarding media and its functioning are imparted to the children, they can be better equipped for entering into media field and direct their effort towards constructive contribution in shaping the media world.

Whereas, media professionals of the older age who do not have the journalistic background and have received only on-job training, may not appreciate the need for classroom studies. Being at the fag end of their career, they have already established themselves in their profession through their practical experiences. They neither had the facilities available for acquiring theoretical knowledge of journalism which are to be put into practice in the practical field, nor have the knowledge of the technological development and making best use of it. They may not be in favour of required change and may want to stick to the traditional system. Their job requirement has been satisfied with whatever knowledge they had. So they may not perceive the requirement of critical appreciation of the media through media education. Therefore, their perceptions regarding media education may vary from media professionals of younger or middle age.

i) Experience in media profession

Media professionals are significant contributors in shaping the world of media. They are involved in designing, producing, broadcasting and telecasting of messages. The experience of media professional increases their knowledge, efficiency, the critical understanding level and reasoning power of media processes. Media professionals, who have more years of experience may have the greater ability to critically analyse the needs, requirements, different problems related to media profession as compared to the media professionals who have less years of experience.

On the other hand, the media professionals who have less years of experience are new in the media field. They may face an array of challenges in an effort to perform their jobs while maintaining professional ethics keeping their target readers in mind. They may be trying hard to establish themselves professionally, having little time to think of anything else. So,

they may not be aware of the requirements and problems related to this field. Therefore, the experience in media profession may have bearing on the perceptions of media professionals regarding media education.

j) Type of media organisation

The type of media organisation may be Government or non-government. The media professionals working in government organisations have different work environment and work culture when compared with the media professionals working in non-government organisations. Their techniques of message designing as well as media production are not the same. The facilities provided, the work control they enjoy all differs in both the organisations. Many of the government organizations, namely the Press Information Bureau (PIB) and the Information Departments function as facilitators to the mainline media rather than themselves catering to the readers or viewers. Their work culture is not advertisement-driven and their job safety is not depended on the market forces.

Non-government organizations are more flexible and entrepreneurial. In contrast, government organisations are more resistant to changes. The non-government organizations are advertisement-driven and are depended on the market forces and therefore face very stiff competition. They always have to think how to beat their competitor. To be competitive in changing markets, non government organisations are more innovative. They have greater expertise, resources and thus providing more strategic options for innovation. They have greater support to take risks to be able to go ahead over their competitors. Therefore, their perceptions regarding media education may vary from the media professionals who are working in government organizations.

k) Type of employment of media professionals

Media professionals may be employed or freelancers. Media professionals who are employed are attached with particular organisation. Their work environment and work pattern are totally different from freelancers. They need to have intense knowledge regarding each and every aspects involved in making of media setup. Such as, in print media they need to know reporting, editing, page set up, and also administration. They are concerned with media organisation at large. Therefore, they are more aware and concerned about the needs, requirement, and issues related to media organisations.

On the other hand, the freelancers are not attached to any particular organisation. They are only concerned with writing effective news. They are more concerned about their own product. Because they are not connected with any particular organisation, they always have to look for such events and reports which are not commonly covered by the staffers. Their work requirement keep them busy leaving little time to think about anything else. Their outlook may not have broadened to know overall requirement of media professionals. So, the type of employment of media professionals may affect their perceptions regarding media education.

1.10 Objectives of the Study

1. To study the overall perceptions of the teachers regarding the selected aspects of media education for students in standards VII to IX.
2. To study the perceptions of teachers regarding
 - a) importance of media education
 - b) content for media education
 - c) strategy for implementing media education
 - d) their role in imparting media education

- e) role of parents in imparting media education
 - f) role of media professionals in imparting media education.
3. To study the differences in the overall perceptions of teachers regarding the selected aspects of media education in relation to their
- a) sex
 - b) educational qualification
 - c) teaching experience
 - d) type of school they are employed in
 - e) mass Media exposure
 - f) opinion about importance of media.
4. To study the differences in the perceptions of teachers regarding importance of media education in relation to their
- a) sex
 - b) educational qualification
 - c) teaching experience
 - d) type of school they are employed in
 - e) mass Media exposure
 - f) opinion about importance of media.
5. To study the differences in the perceptions of teachers regarding content for media education in relation to their
- a) sex
 - b) educational qualification
 - c) teaching experience
 - d) type of school they are employed in
 - e) mass Media exposure
 - f) opinion about importance of media.

6. To study the differences in the perceptions of teachers regarding strategy for implementing media education in relation to their
 - a) sex
 - b) educational qualification
 - c) teaching experience
 - d) type of school they are employed in
 - e) mass Media exposure
 - f) opinion about importance of media.
7. To study the differences in the perceptions of teachers regarding their role in imparting media education in relation to their
 - a) sex
 - b) educational qualification
 - c) teaching experience
 - d) type of school they are employed in
 - e) mass Media exposure
 - f) opinion about importance of media.
8. To study the differences in the perceptions of teachers regarding role of parents in imparting media education in relation to their
 - a) sex
 - b) educational qualification
 - c) teaching experience
 - d) type of school they are employed in
 - e) mass Media exposure
 - f) opinion about importance of media.

9. To study the differences in the perceptions of teachers regarding role of media professionals in imparting media education in relation to their
 - a) sex
 - b) educational qualification
 - c) teaching experience
 - d) type of school they are employed in
 - e) mass Media exposure
 - f) opinion about importance of media.
10. To study the overall perceptions of the parents regarding the selected aspects of media education for students in standards VII to IX.
11. To study the perceptions of parents regarding
 - a) importance of media education
 - b) content of media education
 - c) strategy for media education
 - d) their role in imparting media education
 - e) role of teachers in imparting media education
 - f) role of media professionals in imparting media education.
12. To study the differences in the overall perceptions of parents regarding the selected aspects of media education in relation to their
 - a) sex
 - b) educational qualification
 - d) occupation
 - e) mass Media exposure
 - f) opinion about importance of media.

13. To study the differences in the perceptions of parents regarding importance of media education in relation to their
- a) sex
 - b) educational qualification
 - c) occupation
 - d) mass Media exposure
 - e) opinion about importance of media.
14. To study the differences in the perceptions of parents regarding content for media education in relation to their
- a) sex
 - b) educational qualification
 - c) occupation
 - d) mass Media exposure
 - e) opinion about importance of media.
15. To study the differences in the perceptions of parents regarding strategy for implementing media education in relation to their
- a) sex
 - b) educational qualification
 - c) occupation
 - d) mass Media exposure
 - e) opinion about importance of media.

16. To study the differences in the perceptions of parents regarding role of teachers in imparting media education in relation to their
 - a) sex
 - b) educational qualification
 - c) occupation
 - d) mass Media exposure
 - e) opinion about importance of media.
17. To study the differences in the perceptions of parents regarding their role in imparting media education in relation to their
 - a) sex
 - b) educational qualification
 - c) occupation
 - d) mass Media exposure
 - e) opinion about importance of media.
18. To study the differences in the perceptions of parents regarding role of media professionals in imparting media education in relation to their
 - a) sex
 - b) educational qualification
 - c) occupation
 - d) mass Media exposure
 - e) opinion about importance of media.
19. To study the overall perceptions of the media professionals regarding the selected aspects of media education for students in standards VII to IX.

20. To study the perceptions of media professionals regarding
- a) importance of media education
 - b) content of media education
 - c) strategy for media education
 - d) role of teachers in imparting media education
 - e) role of parents in imparting media education
 - f) their role in imparting media education.
21. To study the differences in the overall perceptions of media professionals regarding the selected aspects of media education in relation to their
- a) sex
 - b) age
 - c) experience in media profession
 - d) type of Media organization
 - e) type of employment.
22. To study the differences in the perceptions of media professionals regarding importance of media education in relation to their
- a) sex
 - b) age
 - c) experience in media profession
 - d) type of Media organization
 - e) type of employment.

23. To study the differences in the perceptions of media professionals regarding content for media education in relation to their
- a) sex
 - b) age
 - c) experience in media profession
 - d) type of Media organization
 - e) type of employment.
24. To study the differences in the perceptions of media professionals regarding strategy for implementing media education in relation to their
- a) sex
 - b) age
 - c) experience in media profession
 - d) type of Media organization
 - e) type of employment.
25. To study the differences in the perceptions of media professionals regarding role of teachers in imparting media education in relation to their
- a) sex
 - b) age
 - c) experience in media profession
 - d) type of Media organization
 - e) type of employment.

26. To study the differences in the perceptions of media professionals regarding role of parents in imparting media education in relation to their
- a) sex
 - b) age
 - c) experience in media profession
 - d) type of Media organization
 - e) type of employment.
27. To study the differences in the perceptions of media professionals regarding their role in imparting media education in relation to their
- a) sex
 - b) age
 - c) experience in media profession
 - d) type of Media organization
 - e) type of employment.

1.11 Null Hypothesis of the Study

1. There will be no significant differences in the overall perceptions of teachers regarding the selected aspects of media education in relation to their
- a) sex
 - b) educational qualification
 - c) teaching experience
 - d) type of school they are employed in
 - e) mass Media exposure
 - f) opinion about importance of media.

2. There will be no significant differences in the perceptions of teachers regarding importance of media education in relation to their
 - a) sex
 - b) educational qualification
 - c) teaching experience
 - d) type of school they are employed in
 - e) mass Media exposure
 - f) opinion about importance of media.
3. There will be no significant differences in the perceptions of teachers regarding content for media education in relation to their
 - a) sex
 - b) educational qualification
 - c) teaching experience
 - d) type of school they are employed in
 - e) mass Media exposure
 - f) opinion about importance of media.
4. There will be no significant differences in the perceptions of teachers regarding strategy for implementing media education in relation to their
 - a) sex
 - b) educational qualification
 - c) teaching experience
 - d) type of school they are employed in
 - e) mass Media exposure
 - f) opinion about importance of media.

5. There will be no significant differences in the perceptions of teachers regarding their role in imparting media education in relation to their
- a) sex
 - b) educational qualification
 - c) teaching experience
 - d) type of school they are employed in
 - e) mass Media exposure
 - f) opinion about importance of media.
6. There will be no significant differences in the perceptions of teachers regarding role of parents in imparting media education in relation to their
- a) sex
 - b) educational qualification
 - c) teaching experience
 - d) type of school they are employed in
 - e) mass Media exposure
 - f) opinion about importance of media.
7. There will be no significant differences in the perceptions of teachers regarding role of media professionals in imparting media education in relation to their
- a) sex
 - b) educational qualification
 - c) teaching experience
 - d) type of school they are employed in
 - e) mass Media exposure
 - f) opinion about importance of media.

8. There will be no significant differences in the overall perceptions of parents regarding the selected aspects of media education in relation to their
- a) sex
 - b) educational qualification
 - c) occupation
 - d) mass Media exposure
 - e) opinion about importance of media.
9. There will be no significant differences in the perceptions of parents regarding importance of media education in relation to their
- a) sex
 - b) educational qualification
 - c) occupation
 - d) mass Media exposure
 - e) opinion about importance of media.
10. There will be no significant differences in the perceptions of parents regarding content for media education in relation to their
- a) sex
 - b) educational qualification
 - c) occupation
 - d) mass Media exposure
 - e) opinion about importance of media.

11. There will be no significant differences in the perceptions of parents regarding strategy for implementing media education in relation to their
- a) sex
 - b) educational qualification
 - c) occupation
 - d) mass Media exposure
 - e) opinion about importance of media.
12. There will be no significant differences in the perceptions of parents regarding role of teachers in imparting media education in relation to their
- a) sex
 - b) educational qualification
 - c) occupation
 - d) mass Media exposure
 - e) opinion about importance of media.
13. There will be no significant differences in the perceptions of parents regarding their role in imparting media education in relation to their
- a) sex
 - b) educational qualification
 - c) occupation
 - d) mass Media exposure
 - e) opinion about importance of media.

14. There will be no significant differences in the perceptions of parents regarding role of media professionals in imparting media education in relation to their
- a) sex
 - b) educational qualification
 - c) occupation
 - d) mass Media exposure
 - e) opinion about importance of media.
15. There will be no significant differences in the overall perceptions of media professionals regarding the selected aspects of media education in relation to their
- a) sex
 - b) age
 - c) experience in media profession
 - d) type of Media organization
 - e) type of employment.
16. There will be no significant differences in the perceptions of media professionals regarding importance of media education in relation to their
- a) sex
 - b) age
 - c) experience in media profession
 - d) type of Media organization
 - e) type of employment.

17. There will be no significant differences in the perceptions of media professionals regarding content for media education in relation to their
- a) sex
 - b) age
 - c) experience in media profession
 - d) type of Media organization
 - e) type of employment.
18. There will be no significant differences in the perceptions of media professionals regarding strategy for implementing media education in relation to their
- a) sex
 - b) age
 - c) experience in media profession
 - d) type of Media organization
 - e) type of employment.
19. There will be no significant differences in the perceptions of media professionals regarding role of teachers in imparting media education in relation to their
- a) sex
 - b) age
 - c) experience in media profession
 - d) type of Media organization
 - e) type of employment.

20. There will be no significant differences in the perceptions of media professionals regarding role of parents in imparting media education in relation to their
- a) sex
 - b) age
 - c) experience in media profession
 - d) type of Media organization
 - e) type of employment.
21. There will be no significant differences in the perceptions of media professionals regarding their role in imparting media education in relation to their
- a) sex
 - b) age
 - c) experience in media profession
 - d) type of Media organization
 - e) type of employment.

1.12 Assumptions of the Study

1. Media education has become necessary in the present context.
2. Teachers, parents and media professionals can play a role in controlling media influences of children.

3. The teachers will vary in their
 - a) sex
 - b) educational qualification
 - c) teaching experience
 - d) type of school they are employed in
 - e) mass Media exposure
 - f) opinion about importance of media.
4. The parents will vary in their
 - a) sex
 - b) educational qualification
 - c) occupation
 - d) mass Media exposure
 - e) opinion about importance of media.
5. The media professionals will vary in their
 - a) sex
 - b) age
 - c) experience in media profession
 - d) type of Media organization
 - e) type of employment.

1.13 Delimitations of the Study

1. The study will be delimited to the perceptions of teachers, parents and media professionals regarding media education for students in standards VII to IX.

2. The study will be delimited to the perceptions of teachers and parents of selected schools and media professionals of Ahmedabad city.
3. Studying perceptions of the teachers will be delimited to
 - a) importance of media education
 - b) content for media education
 - c) strategy for implementing media education
 - d) their role in imparting media education
 - e) role of parents in imparting media education
 - f) role of media professionals in imparting media education.
4. Studying perceptions of parents will be delimited to
 - a) importance of media education
 - b) content for media education
 - c) strategy for implementing media education
 - d) their role in imparting media education
 - e) role of teachers in imparting media education
 - f) role of media professionals in imparting media education.
5. Studying perceptions of the media professionals will be delimited to
 - a) importance of media education
 - b) content for media education
 - c) strategy for implementing media education
 - d) role of teachers in imparting media education
 - e) role of parents in imparting media education
 - f) their role in imparting media education.