

CHAPTER - 5

DISCUSSION

The discussion on the findings of the present study on the perceptions of teachers, parents and media professionals regarding media education in schools is presented in this chapter.

5.1 Overall Perceptions of Teachers, parents and Media Professionals regarding media Education

5.1.1 Overall Perceptions of Teachers and Parents Regarding Media Education

The findings of the present study showed that overall, teachers and parents had more favourable perceptions regarding media education for students in VII to IX standard. This shows that teachers and parents have realised that media education is very essential for students to protect them not only from the harmful effects of media , but also to appreciate media and make wise use of media.

Moreover, both teachers and parents, are greatly concerned with the massive bombardment of media messages directed to children and the alarming number of hours that children are exposed to media programming. They may be greatly worried about the negative influence of media on their children. The commercials in prime time programming have steadily increased so that today at least 16 minutes of an hour-long show are devoted to the advertisements. The emergence of reality TV in the form of shows like Big Boss is gaining tremendous popularity. This form raises significant questions about children's ability to distinguish between facts and fiction, and their awareness of various forms of manipulation that such programme typically entails.

Parents must have experienced the effect of heavy' TV-viewing of children such as poor academic performance and health problems. Teachers also must have noticed symptoms of attention disorders behaviour of students including restlessness, concentration problems, impulsiveness, confusion and obsession

More than 30 years of research has shown that excessive TV watching by children can interfere with the development of intelligence, thinking skills and imagination. It can slow down the development of reading and speaking skills and can cultivate violent or aggressive behavior.

Teachers, parents think that media is largely responsible for creating consumer culture, which is maximally influencing children. With the increment of child viewers' percentage in the recent years, the number of advertisement has also increased. The advertisements present products for children by using persuasive techniques that ultimately force children to create pressure on their parents for buying the products.

Menon (2009) also expressed the same view in his article titled "Media without a Mission" by making a scathing indictment of media in India today. What was once a noble mission to "educate a nation" has become undermined by advertising and stories that "sell". Here are some excerpts-

"News, views and analysis – they helped a person to know what was happening in his country and the world and it is by the quality of this work that a paper was judged, but no more. Today the emphasis is on fashion, beauty, crimes, scandals – lines that bring in money. The idea is to open up as many channels as possible within the paper to make money. Truth, beauty – in short, ethical considerations – these are no more of importance".

“Over the years the area given to news, views and analysis has shrunk from 60 per cent of the paper to 20-30 per cent. The rest of the paper is sold to the highest bidder – the advertisers. And with this, the role of the editor has been reduced and that of the man who brings in the money has been raised”.

The reality is that media today seems to be everywhere and ever present exerting a far reaching influence on the daily lives of people. The role of media in children's education is picking up. Children are getting more and more aware, and knowledgeable of almost every issue under the sun. Where on the one side media has been responsible in enhancing learning and creativity and also originality among children on the other it has imparted disturbing values to them. For example, today internet has become easy, convenient and cheap medium for accessibility of children. With one click of mouse children come across with wide range of information useful for their learning purpose. On the other side, internet gives uncontrolled and unrestricted access to many unwanted messages, one of the common example is pornographic sites, product related advertisements. The fact remains that children are more interested in accessing these unwanted messages. Moreover, they accept the information accessed via internet without even doubting its credibility, authenticity and trustworthiness.

Teachers and parents, both think that this is the cause for alarm, or at least reason to take notice. There are number of studies demonstrating the tremendous impact of media on the most vulnerable sections that is children which further strengthen their concern and worry about the harmful effects of media on children. The psychological research that has been done in the area of television in the lives of children over the last 20 years found three general effects of watching television violence. These were less sensitivity of children to the pain and suffering of others, both on television and in real

life, more fearfulness of children of the world around them and more likeliness of children to behave in aggressive or harmful ways towards others.

Moreover, Mahajan and Singh (1997) also found that media especially television certainly affected the lifestyle of adolescents in the age group of 12 to 18 years. They tend to buy the product advertised by media, irrespective of its cost. (Cited in Devi, 2008, p. 51)

Due to this increasing negative influence of media on children, teachers and parents must have felt the urgent need to take steps for protecting the young minds against negative impact of media as well as to guide children for wise and appropriate use of media. They must have become aware that for correct interpretation of media messages children need to develop critical understanding of media among children and these can be best achieved by imparting media education to children. For example, when young children continuously watch aggressive actions from the television, there will always be a tendency for them imitate the actions, thinking such actions as part of their play, which could lead to actual aggressive behavior. This is because repetition of violence in the mass media could results in an increased probability for decreased emotional sensitivity to actual aggressive behavior in real life situations. Here lies the role of media education. Media education help children to understand the various techniques used to stage the violent scene in television such as how costumes, camera angles, and special effects to fool them and consequence of practicing the violent scene in real life. This understanding will help children to understand the difference between real world and fantasy and children will be able to interpret the media messages in correct manner.

The finding of the present study is supported by William (2006) who pinpointed that “Media acts as that double-edged sword that can hurt as much as help whoever wields it. That is why it is so important to stress the education of media literacy starting at a young age. If that happens media would be blamed less for violent actions because the child should know the difference between real world and fantasy. The way media is changing the world today children need to learn before the college level about media literacy.” (Cited in Menon, 2009)

In an increasingly converged communications world, children face greater media choice. Media's influence on children has steadily increased as new and more sophisticated types of media have been developed and made available to the children. Therefore, teachers, parents must have felt that media education provides some of the tools children need to make full use of the opportunities offered, to manage their expectations and to protect themselves from the risks involved. For example if students prepare articles for newspapers, then this learning experience will help them to understand the importance of editing, special effects used to prepare newspaper articles. They will also come to know that that media message they experience are written by several people, and separate pictures taken are all put together by creative designer. So, whatever is constructed by just few people then becomes the “way it is” for rest of the people. But as audience people don't get to see or hear the words, pictures or arrangements that were rejected. This knowledge will help children to become confident of the use of various types of media, gain clearer understanding of the world around them and be better able to engage with it.

Teachers and parents must have thought that schools are the best agents for imparting media education to children. Schools can play a central role in

developing a society literate about mass media. Schools can teach many new information skills like critical viewing such as how media commercials are constructed, their purpose to target the audience, knowledge of production techniques such as endorsement of celebrities, camera close ups to sell the products and understanding of the media production. These skills will help students to understand the role and impact of mass media (both better and worse) in an economically and technologically driven society. Potter (1998) pointed out that "A growing number of school headmasters, parents and teachers are becoming aware that media education must be part of the teaching provided, and the activities carried out, in the school."

Media experiences go by so quickly that there is no time for thoughtful reflection on what it grabs our attention and what meanings we may be taking from it. Too often children's senses are bombarded for hours at a time with carefully crafted images, sounds and ideas that flow in and out of their minds, many at an unconscious or subliminal level. This is one of the reasons why Scharer (2003), made the case for including media literacy in the school curriculum. She focused media literacy mainly on examining the media critically; learning how media-messages are created, marketed and distributed and developing the ability to participate in wise use of various types of media. For example media education focuses on the issue that the real purpose of programmes on commercial TV, whether news or entertainment, is not just to entertain people but rather create an audience, so that the network or local stations can sell the time to sponsors to advertise their products in commercials. Sponsors also target their advertising message to specific kind of viewers. This understanding of the media industry can help children to accept the information disseminated from various types of media, which are suitable for them and reject the futile ones.

Moreover, teachers and parents must have thought that for successful implementation of media education in the schools, teachers hold great responsibility. As students are flooded with various types of media messages, teachers can help students to decipher the deeper meanings of these media messages. To take a relatively simple example, teachers can show a clipping of television programme especially on commercial to students and then help them to explore the implications of commercial distinguishing between program material and commercials, identifying the different purposes of each and begin to analyze the techniques and appeals of commercials.

Teachers and parents must have also realized that the sole responsibility for educating children about media education donot only lie with teachers, parental monitoring is also a key factor. The research studies show that increasing guidance from parents is at least as important as simply reducing media violence. Children may learn negative behavior patterns and values from many other experiences as well as TV programs, and parental guidance is needed to help children sort out these influences and develop the ability to make sound decisions on their own. Parents may discuss with their young children about what is right and what is wrong, especially on aggressive behaviors. This is because when adults express disapproval of on-screen behavior, raise questions about the realism of televised information, and encourage children to discuss they teach children to evaluate television content rather than accept it uncritically Moreover, they might have also realised that media professionals are also responsible for imparting media education to children, as they hold immense expertise in media production.

The study implies that media education should be introduced in the school curriculum for VII to IX standards.

5.1.2 Overall Perceptions of Media Professionals Regarding Media Education

The present study showed that overall, media professionals also had more favourable perceptions regarding media education for students in VII to IX standard. This shows that the need of media education for students in VII to IX standards has been realised by the media professionals. They might have felt that if from the early stage proper knowledge regarding media and its functioning can be given to the children, they can be better equipped for entering into media field and will be able to direct their efforts towards constructive contribution in shaping the media world in future. Learning to think about the media is as important to children as mastering skills if they are to bring best practice to the unprecedented new opportunities that are arising in their near future.

The information technologies have radically transformed the nature of the information and communication profession - journalism, advertising, communication management and the rest. Therefore media professionals must have realized that with the advancement in information technology the technique of news gathering in print as well as electronic media has changed. This has led to the requirement of technically competent media professionals, who would easily be able to adapt the changes in the technique of news gathering for maintaining quality work. Moreover, media professionals must have also felt that due to lack of interest of students to pursue communication or journalism field as their career, the students who enter the media profession field in their future are not well trained or technically competent enough. Therefore, media professionals must have thought that if media education is imparted among children from the early stage, then, both the problems such as requirement of technically competent

media professionals and lack interest of students in career in journalism or communication field can be addressed successfully. For example as media education give students the opportunity to produce various types of media by their own, such as preparing articles for newspapers, designing scripts for television, radio etc, students will develop deep understanding of latest production techniques of various types of media. It will also develop interest among students regarding media production and consequently they will be more interested in pursuing the journalism or communication field as their career.

Moreover, today, media is so criticized by the public for its manipulation process, that media professionals themselves must have felt the need to make children aware of the hidden biases, exaggeration in reporting and media manipulation and this can only be possible through media education. N. Ram, the chief editor of Hindu has rightly pointed out that the "hyper-dependence of newspapers on advertisements" because of the revenue it brought in "is an area of vulnerability." Regretting the phenomenon of "paid news", N. Ram further said the media had gone corrupt to a considerable extent with "newspapers being given equity in certain companies to promote products (of the latter) as news."

In a world in which images are fast becoming of greater significance than policies, in which people make some of the most important democratic decisions on the basis of media evidence, media education is both essential to the exercising of democratic rights and a necessary safeguard against the worse excesses of media manipulation for political purposes. This realisation must have made media professionals to favour the necessity of media education for children. Zettl (1998) also believes that anything having so much influence on individuals or society as a whole deserves to be

critically and carefully analyzed and examined. He stated that “ knowledge of how a specific mass medium such as television operates, how we react to its specific audiovisual stimuli, and how we use it to clarify, intensify, and interpret significant events around us is an essential prerequisite for the effective and responsible discerning consumption of media messages.” For example, media education helps children to identify bias in media such as politically influencing people to give vote to a particular party by making their publicity. Therefore, if media education is imparted to the children from the early stage, then they will be able to play their role more responsibly as citizens in future by making rational decision and becoming an effective change agent.

There is an urgent need to focus on the ethics in media profession as slowly and gradually they are getting eroded. Media professionals need to discover their hidden biases, re-examine their priorities and until they have done so, they are not ready to build a code of ethics.

The adoption of the Millennium Development Goals in 2000 has also called for examining the role of the media in the achievement of the goals, including assessing the conditions under which media influence can be at its maximum. (Cited in Meigs and Torrent, 2009, p. 237) Therefore, media professionals must have felt that if children are taught from the school itself about how to engage with and understand their constant subjection to and interaction with media, then the children who are interested in pursuing the journalism field in future may gain proficiency in storytelling from the production side. Such a student-centered education can only serve to enhance the future news producers, writers, and media executives in the crucial task they stand to serve.

This implies that media education is necessary for children in VII to IX standards and therefore, it should be made mandatory for VII to IX standards.

5.2 Perceptions of the Teachers, Parents and Media Professionals Regarding the Selected Aspects of Media Education

The present study showed that teachers, parents and media professionals had more favourable perceptions regarding all the selected aspects of media education. Further, among all the selected aspects of media education, the perceptions of teachers, parents and media professionals regarding the role of parents in imparting media education to children scored highest intensity index.

5.2.1 Importance of Media Education

Teachers, parents and media professionals had more favourable perceptions regarding the importance of media education for children in VII to IX standards. This shows all the three concerned groups perceived that media education is necessary for children for right utilization of media. Teachers, parents and media professionals must have realized that in today's media saturated society, where every now and then media is exerting great influence on children, by shaping their beliefs, attitudes and opinion, children need media education for not only building a protective shield against the negative effects of media, but also to increase understanding and enjoyment of how media work, how they produce meaning and how they construct the reality.

In the present study, the items related to importance of media education such as media education will help children to understand the functions of media, how a message reaches from one person to the other, and role of media in society showed higher intensity index. With the advent of television

and internet and the corresponding growth of the print media including daily newspapers and periodicals, the reach of the media in the society and children's accessibility to media has increased manifold. Naturally, the children are increasingly getting influenced by the media and unless they learn to differentiate between good and the bad, the media may cause more harmful effects on the impressionable minds of the children than doing any good to them. As such, teachers, parents and media professionals perceived it is only through media education that children can be given better insight into the how a media message reaches from one person to another, various functions of media, and different roles of media. This insight will provide them better understanding about the media and learn to read the messages correctly.

In the present study, media education will help children to identify portrayal of men and women stressed in media, revealed higher intensity index. This may be because teachers, parents and media professionals are aware that children are particularly vulnerable to exploitation in the media, both as objects and as subjects. Just as they learn about stereotyped or fancy characters, their perception about the reality can also be changed through education. So, they must have thought that by learning skills for media education, children will be able to adopt a critical stance to exaggerated information and stereotyped images they receive through the media. For instance, media education will help children to identify the portrayal of stereotyped roles of women in various advertisements, whether print or electronic. Children will become aware of portrayal of women like a super women image where they are supposed to do all kinds of work, play the combined roles of a man and a woman, do full time jobs to earn for the family like a man and yet be a dutiful housewife take care of the kids, do

other household chores, clean and cook. This is not true in the real world but because it is portrayed so much in the media people feel it is necessary to have high expectations for women. This understanding will help children to see women in different kinds of roles in the future advertisements. Ramasubramanian (2007) examined the role of media literacy training in reducing the effects of biased news stories about African Americans and Asian Indians. It was found that "When media consumers become more conscious of the role of media in actively shaping social reality, they will be less likely to be influenced by the biased, one-dimensional portrayals of racial groups in the media."

The itemwise finding of the present study ascertained higher intensity index for the item related to importance of media education such as media education will build competence among children to question whatever they see, hear or read. Teachers, parents and media professionals must have experienced that mass media have become so ingrained in the cultural milieu that the task of media education should not only be viewed as providing "protection" to children against unwanted messages. The goal must also be to help the children to become competent, to question any type of media messages they come across, so that children control the interpretation of what they see or hear rather than letting the interpretation control them. For instance, media education develops the ability of children to question about who control media content, and how the political economy of the media industry is influenced by geopolitical trends, why some content types are excluded from media messages, while others are intensively amplified, and an awareness of the effects these media can have on individuals.

The result of the present study showed higher intensity index for the item related to importance of media education such as children will learn how to use media as a tool for learning. In the present media-dominated society, the children have easy and unrestricted access to various forms of media, particularly television and often internet. While some of the media messages may be harmful to the children, the media is also an ocean of knowledge and information. But it must have been noticed by the teachers, parents and the media professionals that most of the time the children use the media for entertainment purposes only. So all these groups stressed that the floodgates of knowledge and information should be opened to the children which will be possible if the children through the media education are taught to use media as a tool for knowledge and information. Children will be motivated to use media more for their educational learning rather than as a source of entertainment and the medium for aggressive marketing through advertisements.

In the present study, media education will protect children from harmful effects of media showed more favourable perceptions of teachers, parents and media professionals. Teacher, parents and media professionals must have conceived media education as a form of preventive or protective measure. Media education is primarily seen as a means of reducing or counteracting the impact of what are seen as harmful media messages. The itemwise finding was supported by 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. Further, Kubey (1998) also interpreted media literacy as a "Strategy to help protect young people from harmful effects. 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."

This implies that the findings related to importance of media education should be considered as a base for formulating the objectives, while designing the media education curriculum.

5.2.2 Content for Media Education Curriculum

The study revealed that except for one item, all the other items related to content for media education curriculum for students in VII to IX standards revealed more favourable perceptions of teachers, parents and media professionals. This shows that teachers, parents and media professionals perceived the suggested content as appropriate for students in VII to IX standards. The appropriateness and suitability of the content is an important and essential component of a worthwhile curriculum in media education. It is absolutely necessary that content be flexible and constantly open to innovations in tools and practices. So teachers, parents and media professionals had perceived media related concepts, critical analysis of media messages, discussion of media related issues, analysis of advertisements and production of different types of media, as the appropriate and suitable content for students of VII to IX standards. Cantor(2003) also recommended that media education curriculum should include analytical viewing exercises, aspects of media production, lessons

and critical discussions dealing with media violence, media effects, and the role that media play in young people's lives (Cited in Buckingham, Banaji, Burn, Carr, Crammer and willett, 2004).

The itemwise findings of the present study ascertained higher intensity index for the items related to the content for media education such as media education should include an overview of media focussing role of media, influence of media on individuals, different types of media, functions of media, components of communication process and advantages and disadvantages of media showed higher intensity index. All the three groups might have felt that the theoretical concepts of media would help children to grasp the fundamentals of media structure and influence. Teachers, parents and media professionals must have thought that if children understand the basic concepts of media, then this knowledge will form the base for further deeper understanding of how media work and as a result they will become less susceptible to the media manipulations. For example, if children understand that any message be it in the form of information or entertainment, is created by a sender who after creation of the message use a medium for sending the message to the receiver or audience, then this knowledge will help the children to understand more clearly that the media messages they experience, is written or designed by someone or several people together who decide what to include within the message and what all needs to be rejected. This deeper understanding will help children to judge whether to accept or reject the message.

In the present study, the item related to content for media education such as media education should include analysis of media messages viz. content and purpose of the message, influence of the message on people and techniques used to create the message and revealed higher intensity index.

All the three groups might have realized that if students are encouraged to analyse critically the messages disseminated from media, then children will be able to make wise use of media. Critical theorists Horkheimer and Adorno (2001) also suggested, that curriculum that encourages learners to engage in the critical analysis of media is also encouraging learners to engage in the analysis of culture, an inherently empowering act (Cited in Dunlop and Kymes, 2007).

Kellner (2005) also opined that "If students develops the ability to closely analyze – media messages, or influence, then media education has been effective and that student is becoming a "critical thinker" about the media. Outcomes such as these are better measures of the effectiveness of media-education curricula."

The media messages are greatly influenced by commercial considerations. The final media product that children experience is born out of many decisions and is carefully constructed. The content, technology and distribution are decided to make profit. For example, producers sell their programmes to television channels; television channels attract advertisers to their programmes and advertisers sell their products to viewers like children. If children are explained that the purpose of the media messages such as advertisements is to make profit by influencing the children to buy the product, this understanding will help children to control the influence of the media messages upon them. Kellner (2005) rightly advocated that "Media do not present reality like transparent windows because media messages are created, shaped, and positioned through a construction process. This construction is influenced by commercial considerations and thus involves many decisions about what to include or exclude and how to represent reality."

Teachers, parents and media professionals must have also felt that in order to understand messages sent through media and their ultimate impact on society, children need to realize that each form of media, whether newspaper, television or computer games, has its own unique "language" such as use of words in different sizes and typefronts, use of bold letters, photographs, colours and page location in which sounds, images, text and movement are manipulated to create the message.

In the present study, itemwise, content for media education revealed higher intensity index for the items such as media education should include discussion on media related issues such as portrayal of men and women stressed in media and exaggeration in reporting events in media. This means, teachers, parents and media professionals have understood that if students are given the opportunity of discussing the media related issues in the classroom, then they will become more alert of the power of media and will be able to apply critical skills while examining media texts.

Media often uses stereotype gender specific roles of men and women's reinforcing existing clichés and it has been criticized as "inadvertently or even intentionally promoting sexism, racism, and ageism. Therefore, it is through media education that student consumers of mass media should be taught to "critically evaluate media content and that this critical evaluation can change the ways in which the content is processed and internalized. This itemwise finding was supported by Reichert, Lambiase, and Adkins (2007) who explored how media literacy pertaining to the sexual objectification of women influences cognitive, affective, and behavioral responses to advertisements containing objectifying images. They assessed the efficacy of media literacy training designed to teach critical thinking about images of women in changing middle school students' perceptions of women scientists.

Not only in the portrayal of women, high intensity reporting, at times bordering to exaggeration of events, is frequently noticed in reporting communal disturbances, rioting, and crime stories in the media giving a very distorted version of the actual happenings and often cause more harms to the society by intensifying passion and hatred against each other rather than trying to bridge the gap in the society. Besides the print and the electronic media which directly take the blame for exaggeration in reporting events, another most powerful medium of education, the feature films, have also often been found guilty of presenting super human powers in men and women, which if attempted to be copied, will only cause him or her dismay. There also are some television channels and other forms of media which are contributing in spreading superstitious beliefs and blind faith in the name of reporting "unbelievable events" which in reality may not be actually existing or may be existing only in part but present in an exaggerated form to make people believe it. An example of spreading such blind faith was found in a television channel recently which carried a story on the version of a priest of a Shiva temple in Godhra claiming that the "Shivalinga" was expanding by an inch every 100 years. No one had measured the "Shivalinga" 100 years ago to justify the claim of it really having expanded by an inch nor will the present generation ever know whether it expanded by another inch in the next 100 years, but such stories only aim at creating blind faith and help provide commercial gains for the temple. The stories of ghosts and so-called evil spirits are abundantly seen in the television channels which may only encourage superstitious beliefs among the children. Therefore, to prevent children from getting influenced by the exaggerations in reporting of media messages, media education should include discussion on such type media related issues.

In the present study, media education should include analysis of media advertisements such as the influence of advertisements on people and different types of appeal used in advertisements to touch emotions of people, showed higher intensity index. Advertising has an "agenda setting function" which is the ability, with huge sums of money, to put consumption as the only item on the agenda. Children are among the most sophisticated observers of advertisements. The media advertisements turn children to frequent consumers. Therefore, all the three groups must be worried with the influence of media advertisements on children. They must have realised that struggle against advertising is essential to negate the effects of media advertisements. It is very necessary for students to become more aware of the persuasive techniques used by the advertisers and how this persuasive techniques influence people. Therefore, teachers, parents and media professionals must have thought that if discussion on media advertisements is taken as one of component for media education content, then children will become more skeptical of commercial messages. For example, if children are explained about the different techniques used by the television advertisements such as use of celebrities, music, humour, product comparisons, and depiction of target audience to persuade the consumers to buy certain products, then children will be better equipped to analyze commercials more skillfully and make better decision about products.

Yates and Lee (2000) found the effectiveness of analysis of media advertisements as the core component of media literacy training on children's responses to persuasive messages. Children exposed to the media literacy training were found to possess more negative attitudes towards the products, advertisements, television advertising in general, and



certain peripheral cues. The media literacy training made the children more skeptical of commercial messages because they became more aware of the techniques used by the advertisers to persuade the viewers. The study concluded that if children can be made more aware of the persuasive techniques used by advertisers, then they will be better equipped to analyze commercials more critically and more skillfully. Buckingham, (2003) also emphasized that in using advertising in the classroom, teachers should emphasize the skills of analyzing and evaluating advertisements to identify the message purpose, influence on target audience, and persuasive techniques used.

The itemwise findings of the present study affirmed higher intensity index for the items related to the content for media education such as media should include production of different types of media viz, articles for newspapers, posters for campaigns and articles for magazines revealed higher intensity index. Teachers, parents and media professionals might have felt that practical work in a variety of forms is an important, indeed an essential, component of any worthwhile course in media education. If students are to understand media texts as constructions, then it will be helpful if the content of media education include production of different types of media as first-hand experience of the construction process from the inside. Production of cheaply- made student articles for newspapers and magazines, and posters for campaigns, may actively increase media mystification when beginners compare their own halting efforts with the polished products of advertisers. Further, teachers, parents and media professionals must have thought that encouraging students to produce the print media in the classroom environment will be more easier, convenient for teachers as well

as useful for students. Buckingham and Sefton-Green (1994) also recommended that media education which integrates analytical work with creative production, produce more secure conceptual learning as well as greater expressive opportunities for children. (Cited in Grahame and Simons, 2004, p. 46). Several research studies have pointed to the benefits of including student production work, particularly in terms of enabling students to explore and reflect upon their emotional investments in the media, and issues of identity formation more broadly. (Bragg, 2001, cited in Grahame and Simons, 2004, p. 44) Media production is seen by some to provide a safe space, in which students can explore media related fantasies and address some of the complexities of their investments in media images. Production experiences help students understand how and what happens in the exchange between media producers and their audiences.

In the present study media education should include production of folk media such as bhavai, showed less favourable perceptions of the three groups. Teachers, parents and media professionals did not perceive production of folk media, bhavai as important component to be included under the content for media education. With the advent of modern technologies, the importance of folk media especially bhavai has become almost negligible. Therefore, they might have felt that it is more required to give students opportunity for experiencing production of those media which are in vogue.

This implies that, in the present study content suggested for media education curriculum should become the guideline for educationists and researchers in designing media education curriculum for VII to IX standards.

5.2.3 Strategy for Implementing Media Education Curriculum

Teachers, parents and media professionals had more favourable perceptions regarding the strategy for implementing media education in VII to IX standards. This shows all the three groups perceived the suggested strategy as appropriate for students in VII to IX standards. Any educational innovation can be successful only when the strategies planned are channeled towards right direction. Experience in several countries suggests that promoting and developing media education depends upon the well designed strategies. In the present study, teacher, parents and media professionals must have felt that if the strategies suggested for VII to IX standards are implemented in the schools, then the goal of media education to develop media literate children can definitely be attained.

In the present study, itemwise, media education should be introduced in the schools by integrating it with other courses revealed higher intensity index. This means teachers parents and media professionals think that media education will be effective when media education is integrated into the content-area of the subject matter curricula. They must have thought that if media education is integrated with other courses, a well-designed media-focused subject would improve not only the students' media education skills and their but also their subject skills and students would find more interest in their courses as media education will provide them the opportunity to express their thoughts freely. For example if media education is integrated into the content area of geography taught in VII to IX standards then it will encourage comparisons of the images of cities in films and TV to the socio-economic realities of those cities; deconstruction of travel films; bias in films made by governments or corporations; depiction of countries as portrayed

by governments vs. "structured absences," images that are not included in the official portrayal. This knowledge will not only increase the media education skills, but also better and deeper understanding of the subject geography.

The other reason why teachers, parents and media professionals encouraged integration of media education with other subjects may be that media is being increasingly used in a routine way in the teaching of all subjects. Hit by severe financial cutbacks, many schools are finding it difficult to provide as wide a range of educational materials as they did in the past, and are beginning to rely increasingly, upon glossily packaged and presented film, video and other materials produced by multi-national corporations, government departments and other well-financed institutions and agencies. It is a matter of some importance that such material should not be consumed innocently, but read critically. In particular, the basic media education technique of relating media messages to the political, social and economic interests of those who are producing them needs to be encouraged as a matter of concern within subjects taught by teachers.

Current research indicates that media education has been effective when it is integrated into the content-area of subject matter curricula. Subject integration, then, provides an opportunity to teach media education concepts in a way that might actually help students in the content area as well. This type of integrated curriculum also capitalizes on the rich literacy resources teachers bring with them. Media education instruction differs from traditional literacy curriculum, but it is not entirely different, and the skills in teaching analysis and critical evaluation, must be leveraged in the new curriculum. Hobbs and Frost (2003) conducted a study of a high school English

department which adapted its curriculum to include a year-long course in English media/communication studies. Although the teachers held the traditional language arts skills of analysis and composition to be the most important aspects of their instruction, the curriculum included the integration of core media literacy concepts, and the study of mass media texts, such as newspapers, films, and television programs. They also scored higher than a control school in specific media literacy skills such as identification of target audience and purpose of media messages. This study is of particular importance because it was found that a well-designed media-focused English program improved both the students' media literacy skills and their general English language compositional skills. This was also supported by Renee, Teresa and Taylor (2002) who carried out a study on an analysis of the media literacy curricula of Canada, Australia and England. The study found that most of the media literacy instruction in each country was integrated with English language curriculum.

On the other hand, media education should be introduced in the schools as a compulsory subject, revealed less favourable perceptions of all the three groups. They may have understood that the teachers are required to teach a huge amount of content in a school year; it is difficult to imagine media education as an additional subject getting equal treatment. Moreover, if media education is introduced as compulsory subjects then, students already having the burden of existing courses, will further be heavily pressurized by one extra subject matter.

The itemwise finding of the present study affirmed higher intensity index for the item related to the strategy for media implementing education curriculum such as school administrators, teachers should be involved in developing a guideline on effective methods of imparting media education.

The field of media is broad and amorphous, encompassing various types of media. As such, to understand the entire functioning of media under the media education curriculum, there is a need to develop proper guideline on the various approaches that should be adopted, principles to be followed and various classroom activities to be practiced. This guideline will help in imparting media education in right direction. The school administrators and teachers, both are responsible for developing the entire education system. They are aware of the students' needs, interest and what suited them most. So, teachers, parents and media professionals perceived that school administrators and teachers should be involved in developing a guideline on effective methods of imparting media education. No media education curriculum can ever be designed and implemented successfully without these two pivotal forces.

In the present study, school administrators should take initiatives to provide for optimum infrastructural facilities and equipments ascertained higher intensity index. Teachers, parents and media professionals must have realized that to make media education relevant and applicable for students, school administrators need to take initiative to provide adequate infrastructural facilities. Unless the school administrators provide the infrastructural facilities such as adopting the curriculum incorporating media education, providing the time slot for imparting the media education and arrangement for teachers to conduct the classes, media education can not be implemented successfully. The schools administrators should also take the responsibility for providing other facilities like allotment of class rooms for teaching media education, a library with books and literature on media education, and media equipment including television sets and newspapers and periodicals etc.

In the present study, itemwise, school administrators should encourage and facilitate various talks on media in school, affirmed higher intensity index. The media are, in many respects, the most obvious vehicle for media education. Teachers, parents and media professionals must have felt that collaboration between teachers and media experts is an essential feature of successful implementation of media education in schools. These media experts can be journalists, media critics or media educators. The media expert such as journalists possess expertise in media production so if they are invited in the schools these experts can contribute in terms of accessing appropriate teaching resources, informing students about the role of media in society, informing teachers and students of contemporary developments within the media industries, and addressing students' vocational ambitions.

Itemwise, the result of the present study ascertained higher intensity index for the item such as school administrators should organise workshops for teachers on methods of imparting media education. Teachers, parents and media professionals realized that well-intended curricular frameworks are worthless without trained staff to implement them. Therefore, if workshops are arranged for teachers in the schools then teachers will learn the right techniques of imparting media education to students and become competent enough to impart media education in an effective way. Elements of training in media education can be included in initial and in-service training programmes, and be available as part of teachers' ongoing professional development.

In the present study, itemwise, school administrators, teachers should organise workshop for students on techniques of media production ascertained higher intensity index. Teachers, parents and media professionals must have thought that workshop on techniques of media

production will help students to learn practically how different types of media messages are produced. The workshop will provide students with an opportunity to learn the right techniques of media production and students develop will become competent enough to analyze various forms of modern communication.

Itemwise, teachers should keep in mind to provide students full freedom for producing media messages according to their own interest showed higher intensity index. Teachers, parents and media professionals think that it is the responsibility of the teachers to encourage students to use different types of media such print, electronic or multimedia for gaining information. This learning experience will offer a positive environment and students can be prevented from accessing the unwanted messages disseminated from media. They will also learn to make wise use of media in the media driven society in their future.

The itemwise finding of the present study ascertained higher intensity index for the item such as resource centers for media education should be established to provide facilities to the schools for teaching media education. This shows, all the three groups perceived the need of establishing resource centers to provide facilities to the schools for teaching media education to the students. Teachers, parents and media professionals must have realized that for successful implementation of media education adequate resource facilities are essential and resource centers is the only place which can provide various resources relevant for teaching media education in schools. Resource centers should have screened and evaluated resources for teaching media literacy skills, such as books, videos, CD-ROMs and curriculum programs to effectively teach students to learn - to access, analyze, evaluate and create media in all its forms.

This implies that the bodies involved in designing educational curriculum such as NCERT should consider the teaching and administrative strategies suggested, as guidelines to successfully implement media education curriculum for VII to IX standards. Teachers and school administrators, both should take the initiatives in incorporating media education in the school curriculum of VII to IX standards.

5.2.4 Role of Teachers in Imparting Media Education to Children

The teachers, parents and media professionals had more favourable perceptions regarding the role of teachers in imparting media education to students in standards VII to IX. This shows all the three groups perceived that in today's media saturated society, teachers can play a significant role in developing critical understanding among students in standards VII to IX about whatever they see, hear or read.

The world is saturated with images from television, billboards, and computer pop-up advertisements that advertise a range of products and services. As a result, children are bombarded with a vast variety of images to interpret and make meaning of in their lives. Therefore teachers, parents and media professionals must have realized that teachers must think of new ways to help students interpret these mass media messages, while connecting their media education backgrounds to classroom instruction. Because of the increased flow and availability of information, teachers must teach students how to analyse what they find through multiple media sources. For example, students can be asked to browse through a particular magazine and thereafter have discussions on specific features of the magazine's cover, its range of articles, features and advertisements, and identify the categories of persons who are the targeted readers of the magazine and how advertisements are made

attractive or effective. In Texas, teachers are expected to teach "basic principles of media literacy and provide students with opportunities to apply these principles in interactions with the media"

The result of the present study ascertained higher intensity index for the item such as teachers can play important role in imparting media education by encouraging students to contribute in school magazines. This may be because teachers, parents and media professionals think that if students are encouraged to contribute in school magazines, they will get the opportunity to express their own viewpoints, raise voices against societal issues and also get practical experience of different steps, process involved in production of print media such as page-making, layout and designing. This experience will help them to become competent enough for right utilisation of media. Teachers are best suited to find the potential among each student and channelise their capability to the right direction. All the students taking media education may not develop into potential writers, journalists, but one of the initial steps to sow seeds in the target group of children can be to encourage them to contribute in the school magazines.

Itemwise, teachers can play important role in imparting media education to students by becoming media literate showed higher intensity index. Teachers, parents and media professionals must have understood that, before imparting media education to children, at first, teachers need to be media literate themselves; then only, the efforts of imparting media education to students will be in right direction. Teachers are required to undergo a specialist training programme intended to prepare them in the specific aims, content and pedagogical methods of media education. Otherwise inadequate knowledge about media education would often leave them ill equipped to deal with the more sociological or practical dimensions of media education that most countries believe are important.

Finding of the present study ascertained higher intensity index for the item related to the role of teachers such as teachers can play important role in imparting media education by encouraging students to think critically about whatever they see, hear or read. Teachers, parents and media professionals must have realised that as students bring to the classroom, media related information and share their experiences, teachers can play significant role in training students to discriminate what is good and what is for them in whatever they see, hear or read. The challenge of the teachers is to help students navigate the sea of messages flooding in their lives through media. The teachers can encourage students to think critically by helping them to process the information of media messages, eliminating the futile ones, and channelising the relevant and useful information to develop their knowledge. For example, teachers can teach students to raise certain basic questions while analyzing an article on political issue in a magazine such as who created this message? what is their purpose? who is the target audience? what techniques are used to attract your attention? how current is this information? what might we need to know that is not addressed? how different people may react differently to the it? The more the students are encouraged to ask questions the more alert they can be about accepting or rejecting the messages.

The itemwise finding of the present study ascertained higher intensity index for the item related to the role of teachers such as teachers can play important role in imparting media education by explaining students the difference between real and unreal messages. Teachers, parents and media professionals must have been worried with children's unrestricted and uncontrolled exposure to media messages. So there is a need to protect the young, productive and budding minds from the harmful effects of media.

Therefore all the three groups must have realised that the only way to build defense mechanism against ill effects of media is to explain students the difference between reality and fantasy. Now as students bring to the classroom varied types of information, teachers can lead discussions by comparing the different ways information is presented by the media. These discussions will encourage students to better understand biases and why certain information is not included. This will help them to understand the difference between real and unreal. For example, teachers can explain students how costumes, camera angles, and special effects used to frame violence in movies can fool them. This information will encourage them to develop an awareness of violence when they see it and understand its consequences through their own experience.

Findings of the present study ascertained higher intensity index for the items related to the role of teachers in imparting media education to students such as guiding students to collect information on any particular topic reported in any particular media and discuss about reporting of the event in a particular media. Teachers, parents and media professionals must have realised that to develop skills of critically analysing and evaluating all types of media messages that students come across, teachers need to guide students how to collect information from a specific media and discuss in details about its reporting. As one of the classroom activities, teachers can discuss with students about content of the information collected on a particular issue or event from media such as whether any political or economic values are communicated in the message, what ideas, values are being sold in the message, who is in control of the creation and transmission of this message, what economic decisions may have influenced the construction or

transmission of this message etc. This enriched discussion will build competence among children to examine critically whatever they see, hear or read, and to understand world in a better way.

Findings of the present study affirmed higher intensity index for the items related to the role of teachers in imparting media education to students such as guiding students collect information on a particular topic from different types of media and compare the ways different media present the same information in different way. Teachers, parents and media professionals must have felt that if students are guided on how to collect information on a event or issue from different types of media, and how to compare the ways different media report the information on the same issue or event in different way, then students become competent, critical, and literate in all media forms so that they control the interpretation of what they see or hear rather than letting the interpretation control them. Experience of difference in the media presentation, will make them more able in judging the credibility of the source and ultimately whether to accept or reject the messages. For example, teachers can guide students to discuss the contrast ways in which information about a specific topic are presented in newspaper articles, TV news report such as what is emphasized, what is left out, what techniques are used to present the information, compare the amount of time, space devoted to the topic in different media from same time and discuss why the difference occurs, analyse different conclusion that might be drawn by people exposed to information presented in one medium versus another, discuss the strengths of different media to best get across a particular message and also ask them to produce reports about a particular topic using different forms of media or manipulating the same information and visuals to convey different messages.

This implies that teachers should impart media education to students in standards VII to IX. Based on the findings of the role of teachers in imparting media education to students, a manual should be developed to guide teachers to play their role effectively.

5.2.5 Role of Parents in Imparting Media Education to Children

Among all the selected aspects of media education, perceptions of teachers, parents and media professionals regarding the role of parents in imparting media education to children in standards VII to IX scored highest intensity index. Teachers, parents and media professionals must have thought that as children spend most of their time for media consumption (surfing internet, watching television) at home and consequently are easily influenced by the media messages, so media education for children needs to start at home. All the three groups must have felt that media education can be successfully imparted to children only when along with teachers, parents also take the initiative in mediating children's interaction with media at home.

Teachers, parents and media professionals must have realised that the school's role in the media education process is certainly irreplaceable, but by no means exclusive. Much can be planned and done with the same aim in mind within the family. It is to a large extent within the family fold that children are born and grow up, and receive the first tender loving care, and learn to live with people different from themselves from their parents. It is from parents that children learn to listen and to speak and, in this way, to say what they think and how they feel. Several surveys have found that among the values endorsed by the members of society, parents emerge as the most important or one of the most important.

Looking back at the content of television programming that one could access from cables and satellite, the amount of advertisement, violence, and other unhealthy behavior and scenes broadcasted for the viewing of the children, it is the role of parents particularly to teach their young children about media education. The finding of the study was supported by Berk (1994) who stated that "despite setting limits, reducing and carefully choosing channels for children viewing, it is suggested that parents discussed with their young children about what is right and what is wrong, especially on aggressive behaviors. This is because when adults express disapproval of on-screen behavior, raise questions about the realism of televised information, they teach children to evaluate television content rather than accept it uncritically." (Cited in Ron, 2003) For example, as young children are easily influenced by television commercials that are targeted to them parents should watch the television commercials together with their children and create a discussion about the program being watched. It is important for parents to encourage their young children to wonder about advertisements, the advertiser's motives, and the effects of consuming the advertised products, so that they understand the real meaning of advertisement, as well as preparing them to be a better consumer.

Parents can educate their children about the media messages in at least two meaningful ways. First, they can become active participants in children's exposure to media messages. For example, when parents and children watch television together, parents can encourage children to evaluate programs and advertised products, and can promote quality consumption. Second, parents can mediate the effects of media by developing rules to guide their children's media consumption. Such rules will limit the impact of media on children even when parents are not present. Various studies

revealed that children, who received parental mediation learned more from television content, better understood the distinction between television and the “real” world, were more skeptical of television and had less stereotyped understandings of sex roles. (Valkenburg, Kremer, 1998, cited in Erlbaum, Singer and Singer, 2000, p. 2.)

The finding of the present study ascertained higher intensity index for the item related to role of parents in imparting media education encouraging children to ask questions about what they see, hear or read. Parents can make important contribution by taking responsibility for what their children watch, hear or read. Teachers, parents and media professionals must have felt that if children are encouraged to ask questions about the media messages, they will become skeptical towards whatever they see, hear or read. They will learn to examine each and every message before deciding whether to accept or reject the message. The parents can encourage children to question on the key media related issues such as who owns media?. What kinds of themes are present in media content? What role do the media play in an individual's life? What influences can media have on one's thought, feeling and behaviour.

The items related to the role of parents in imparting media education to children such as subscribing good books, magazines and educational CDs for their children, and encouraging children to use media for educational purposes showed higher intensity index. Teachers, parents and media professionals must have felt that if parents subscribe good books, magazines and educational CDs at home and encourage children to use media more for educational purposes, children will automatically learn to make wise and appropriate use of media and they will become less prone to the risk for negative impact of media. Subscription of good books, magazines and

educational CDs at home and encouragement for children to use media more for gathering information, knowledge will prevent them from viewing or reading a negative media message, encourage them to look for positive images and help them analyse every message threadbare to adopt the good aspects while discarding the evil ones.

The itemwise finding of the present study ascertained higher intensity index for the item such as parents can play important role in imparting media education to children by becoming media literate, showed higher intensity index. Teachers, parents and media professionals must have realized that before imparting media education to children, first, parents need to be media literate themselves. For effective media education practices they need to be critical about the messages constantly disseminated from the different media genres. They need to learn how to question in whatever they see, hear or read. For example, parents need to learn to raise questions about the articles in newspapers on techniques used to attract the attention of the reader on the particular article, and influence of the article on readers etc. This learning will help parents to know the right technique of imparting media education to their children.

In the present study, the item related to the role of parents in imparting media education to children such as discussing with children the content of media messages showed more favourable perceptions of teachers, parents and media professionals. All the three groups must have realised that parental discussions on the media consumption of children have a protective influence on children's risk for negative impact. If parents encourage children in discussion about the media content such as question and criticise the commercials for their stereotypes, manoeuvres and claims, children are

less likely to be negatively influenced. For example, parents can discuss with children about what the advertising message really says regarding the product, the use of “puffery” to make the product look better in advertisements, including the use of sound effects, make up, use of celebrities in advertising to give products credibility and attract attention of audiences. This itemwise finding was supported by Austin, Fujioka and Piketon (2000) carried out an experimental study on the role of interpretation processes and parental discussion regarding the media’s effect on adolescents’ use of alcohol. The potential risk of frequent exposure to persuasive alcohol portrayals via late-night talk shows, sports, music videos, and prime-time television for underage drinking was moderated by parental reinforcement and counter-reinforcement of messages.

This implies that parents should impart media education to children in standards VII to IX. Based on the finding of the role of parents in imparting media education to children in standards VII to IX a manual can be developed to guide parents to play their role effectively.

5.2.6 Role of Media Professionals in Imparting Media Education to Children

The teachers, parents and media professionals had more favourable perceptions regarding the role of media professionals in imparting media education to students in standards VII to IX. Media professionals are the ones who are involved in shaping the entire media world. So, teachers, parents and media professionals must have realised that media professionals’ knowledge and expertise can be of great help to students in developing better understanding about media functioning. All the three groups must have believed that media professionals can help children to

learn as much as they can about the media so that children can make informed choices as media consumers, gain maximum benefit from the diversity the media offer and have active participation in the media and in media development. The obligation of media professionals at all levels and in all media is to raise awareness in the media professions about the rights of children and how they can be protected and promoted by good professional practices or harmed through inappropriate policies or actions. Advocates of media education frequently suggest that the media professionals can play a greater role through the provision of more explicit programmes of media education via broadcast or non-broadcast means and help in shaping the media education by preparing and presenting the relevant media messages. (Pungente, 1996, cited in Grahame and Simons, 2004, p. 52).

In the present study the item related to the role of media professionals in imparting media education such as media professionals can play important role by using media to create awareness among people regarding the need of media education showed higher intensity index. Teachers, parents and media professionals must be knowing that media education can be successfully introduced in the schools only when all the members of the society become aware of the need of media education for children. Each of the members of society need to understand that media education is important for children for correct interpretation of media messages and here lies the role of media professionals. Media professionals can propagate the information regarding importance of media education for children at mass level and media can be used as an effective medium for this purpose.

Itemwise, the results of the present study showed higher intensity index for the item such as media professionals can play important role in imparting media education by designing appropriate content for media education, revealed higher intensity index. Teachers, parents and media professionals must have realised that for successful implementation of media education in school the first and foremost step is to design the content for media education which is relevant and appropriate for children. Now, as media professionals are directly involved with preparing and presenting the media messages, so their knowledge and expertise can be a great help in designing an appropriate content for media education.

The itemwise finding of the present study ascertained higher intensity index for the item such as media professionals can play important role in imparting media education to students by conducting workshops for teachers, parents to create awareness on media education.

The teachers and the parents contribute the maximum in shaping a child's personality. They are, therefore, the right persons to impart media education to children. But initially at least, the teachers and parents themselves will have to be sensitized for the need for media education and to continue to provide necessary guidance in future. The teachers, the parents along with the media professionals must have felt that the media professionals are best suited for the job. The media professionals can conduct workshops for teachers and parents to share their experience with them and use their expertise to explain the details of how media education can make children wise consumers of media. Such workshops can be conducted by the media professionals periodically to keep the teachers and parents conversant with latest developments in the media world, the technical and technological progresses being made in the field of media and the ever-changing impact of the media on the society.

In the present study the item related to the role of media professionals in imparting media education such as media professionals can play important role in imparting media education by contributing towards development of resource centers for media education. Availability and adequacy of resources are essential component of successful implementation of media education curriculum in schools. As media professionals are able to illuminate in details media practices and the ways in which particular texts are produced and general knowledge about media, so media professionals can play active role in developing resource centres for media education by arranging for appropriate educational materials such as CDs, books, equipments required for teaching media education to students.

The itemwise finding of the present study ascertained higher intensity index for the item such as media professionals can play important role in imparting media education by conducting workshops for students on techniques of production of different types of media, and conducting training programme for teachers on effective methods for imparting media education. Being in media profession, media professionals are largely involved in shaping the media world. So, teachers, parents and media professionals must have thought that media professionals possess reserves of expertise and resources which could be invaluable in providing knowledge regarding the media production techniques to both teachers and students. Media professionals keep themselves up-to-date with issues and developments in the media and this can be properly briefed to students. They can talk engagingly about the media texts which they produce and can cast critically informed eye upon their own practices. Moreover, media professionals can also provide teachers certain practical tips for imparting media education to students through the training programmes.

This implies that that the media professionals should take the initiative in imparting media education to students in VII to IX standards. They should be involved in designing an appropriate media education curriculum for students in VII to IX standards. The schools should involve them to guide teachers, parents and students in their respective roles in media education.

5.3 Overall and Aspectwise Perceptions of Teachers, Parents and Media Professionals regarding Media Education in relation to the Selected Variables

Sex of parents

The perceptions of parents regarding overall, importance of media education, content for media education and role of media professionals differed significantly in relation to their sex. The female parents had more favourable perceptions regarding overall, importance of media education, content for media education and role of media professionals in imparting media education to children in comparison to the male parents. This indicates that overall and aspectwise female parents perceived the media education curriculum for children in standards VII to IX.

The reason for this finding may be because the female parents are more sensitive towards different societal issues as compared to the male parents. Blakemore, Baumgartner, and Keniston, (1988) also found that 'Women are more devoted than men in family issues and attend to them more closely.' There is some evidence of gender differences and gender stereotype that suggests women may be perceived as more ethically sensitive than men. Schein's (1975) work revealed women to be perceived as more helpful and more aware of others' feelings.

They are more observant, critical in their thinking process and may foresee the future of children better. Female parents 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 thus think that media education is the most needed tool to minimize the negative influence of media on children and at the same time to encourage students to use media for educational purposes.

Mass media exposure of teachers and parents

The perceptions of parents regarding overall, importance of media education, content for media education, strategy for implementing media education, role of teachers and media professionals in imparting media education to children differed significantly in relation to their mass media exposure. The parents who had more exposure to mass media had more favourable perceptions regarding overall, importance of media education, content for media education, strategy for implementing media education, role of teachers and media professionals in imparting media education to students in comparison to the parents having less exposure. This means that overall and aspectwise parents who had more exposure to mass media, perceived the media education curriculum for children in standards VII to IX.

The perceptions of teachers regarding overall, importance of media education, content for media education, and role of teachers in imparting media education to students differed significantly in relation to their mass media exposure. The teachers who had more exposure to mass media had more favourable perceptions overall, importance of media education, content for media education, and role of teachers in imparting media education to students in comparison to the teachers having less exposure. This indicates that overall and aspectwise, teachers who had more exposure

to mass media, perceived the media education curriculum for children in standards VII to IX.

Mass media, be it print, electronic or multimedia provide wide variety of information to the public. The quality and quantity of an individual's exposure to the different types of mass media have significant effect on the individual's understanding of the content of the media messages. So, more exposure to media; develops and individual's ability to critically analyse the media messages and better understand the hidden meanings beneath the surface of the messages. According to Potter (1998) 'More exposure to media translates into higher knowledge and more insights about the world.' Outside the "bookish knowledge," a person learn about various new developments, problems existing in the society and other latest issues only through one or the other form of the media, be it newspapers, magazines, scientific journals, radio or television. More the exposure the person has to the media forms, more he or she will increase the level of knowledge and this will help to develop a better insight about the world around.

Therefore, teachers and parents who had more exposure to mass media must be aware of the harmful content of the media which is greatly affecting the young and fertile minds of children. They must have realised that to guide children for right utilization of media in the media driven society, media education has become a necessity for today's children.

Teachers' and parents' opinion about importance of media

Overall and aspectwise, perceptions of parents differed significantly in relation to their opinion about importance of media. Overall and aspectwise, parents having more favourable opinion about importance of media had more favourable perceptions as compared to the parents having less

favourable opinion. This indicates that that overall and aspectwise, teachers who had more favourable opinion about importance of media, perceived the media education curriculum for children in standards VII to IX.

On the other hand, perceptions of teachers regarding importance of media education and content for media education differed significantly in relation to their opinion about importance of media. Teachers having more favourable opinion about importance of media had more favourable perceptions as compared to the teachers having less favourable opinion. This means that teachers having more favourable opinion about importance of media, perceived the importance of media education and content for media education curriculum for students in standards VII to IX.

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). An individual's opinion about media plays a significant role in shaping his perception about media information. Therefore, the teachers and parents having more favourable opinion about the importance of media must have believed that media can be of great help for children. Today with the technological innovation, media whether print, electronic or multimedia are easily accessible. To build among children a positive feeling about media there is a need to develop a deep understanding about media functioning and media education is the only tool for providing children knowledge about media.

Sex of media professionals

The perceptions of media professionals regarding their role in imparting media education to children differed significantly in relation to their sex.

Female media professionals had more favorable perceptions regarding role of media professionals in imparting media education to children as compared to the male ones. This means that female media professionals perceived their role in imparting media education to students in standards VII to IX.

Evidence suggests that men and women differ on sensitivity to ethical issues. Khazanchi (1995, cited in Ambrose and Schminke, 1999) found that women were better able to recognize ethical issues and unethical actions. The female media professionals have inherent motherly instinct among them which make them feel protective for the children. Being in the profession, it is easier for the female media professionals to realize the harmful impacts of the media contents on the children compared to their male counterparts. They also more freely and more frequently inter-act with the children and experience the adverse effects of the media contents, not only of the news channels but also of the "entertainment channels." It is not difficult for the female media professionals to realize that what was being dished out by the television channels in the name of "entertainment" by blindly following the western culture, more often than not are perverse social practices that should either be stopped or should be re-positioned in the Indian context. They may be feeling that if the media contents can not be changed, at least the children through the media education become enlightened enough to guard against their harmful effects. Similar deterioration is also increasingly being seen in the print media. In a bid to attract young readers, the newspapers, periodicals and other publications have started printing juicy reports and pictures bordering with obscenity. The female media professionals positioning themselves as mothers naturally feel worried and concerned for the future of the children and advocate for media education to

arm them with the vision to thwart any adverse impact. They must have also felt that media professionals can teach children how the different media messages are constructed, the influences of these messages on people, different techniques used to attract the audiences. This knowledge will protect children from the harmful effects of media as well as to help them to make appropriate use of media. Therefore, Female media professionals had more favorable perceptions regarding role of media professionals in imparting media education to children as compared to the male ones.

Age of media professionals

The perceptions of media professionals regarding the content for media education for children in VII to IX standards differed significantly in relation to their age. Media professionals who were middle aged; had more favorable perceptions regarding content for media education than the older ones. This means that media professionals who are middle aged, perceived the content for media education curriculum for students in standards VII to IX.

Middle aged media professionals are more flexible, energetic and entrepreneurial and intimidated by new technologies than the older ones. They have more contemporary media interests and involvement. They are open to new pedagogies and the possibilities offered by interdisciplinary programmes. With the advent of technological advancement, the demands and requirements of the media profession is also changing. So they must have thought that if proper knowledge about media is imparted to children from the school life itself, then children who are interested in entering into media field will become technically more competent to direct their effort towards constructive contribution in shaping the media world. Moreover, the middle-aged media professionals must have also seen media education as

the best possible tool to block the harmful effect of the present media contents and look for a better future hoping that they could still be around and themselves play an effective role in the restoration of the prestige and respect of the media profession.

Whereas, media professionals of the older age are less energetic, flexible and less concerned with the future. Being at the fag end of their career, they have already established themselves in their profession through their practical experiences. They donot 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 have realised the requirement of critical appreciation of the media through media education.

Type of media organisation

In the present study it was found that perceptions of media professionals regarding overall, importance of media education and role of media professionals in imparting media education to children differed significantly in relation to the type of media organization they were working in. Media professionals working in government organizations had more favourable perceptions regarding overall, importance of media education and role of media professionals in imparting media education to children in VII to IX standards, as compared to the media professionals working in non-government organizations. This indicates that overall and aspectwise, media professionals working in government organizations perceived the media education for students in standards VII to IX.

There is difference in the work pattern, work requirement and the work atmosphere in the government organization vis-à-vis the non-government or private media organizations. Even though the government organizations are not in direct competition with the nongovernmental organisations, the government organizations virtually serve as the content providers to the private media groups, especially in the electronic media sector. Therefore, the non-government media organizations have to, at least to some extent, face competition with the private channels. At the same time, the media professionals working in government organisations have to function under some constraints; they can not afford to, and are not allowed to go all-out on certain issues. They have to keep in mind the broad policy frame-work of the party in power and the social constraints of the day. The non-government media group on the other hand, facing stiff competition among themselves, often tends to jump all barriers to be “the first” among the competitors and often tend to overlook the social constraints.

The mushrooming growth of the electronic media in the private sector has not only changed the concept of “news” but it has also devalued the once-sacred “news” which should have some element of “new” development conducive to the social requirement. In non-government media organisations, traditional definitions of news values have been called into question. They have high profit expectations through raising advertising and subscription rates. Efforts to make organizations more market –oriented have eroded media professionals' capability to maintain control over the values that guide their work, resulting in “de-professionalisation” of media profession.

The kind of events and developments that were not considered as news and did not merited publications in newspapers, have become important “breaking news” for both electronic and print media. It is not easy to find

something “new” all the time but the requirement of the electronic media to run the twenty four hour seven days a week news channels have forced the electronic media to devalue the news content and often forced the channels to overlook or even deliberately ignore the harmful impacts of the contents on the viewers, specially the children. They tend to serve the “juicy” stories to attract viewers oblivious of the fact that it may impact the children adversely or may even cause social tension. The media professionals in the government organisations must be well aware of the situation and the harmful impacts the private media channels are creating on the impressionistic mind of the children. It is not possible that the media professionals in the non-government organisations are not aware of the harmful impacts, but the zeal for competition must have forced them to ignore it. Naturally the media professionals in the government organisations more vehemently support media education to train the children to be aware of the harmful impacts as well as to make wise use of media. They must have also realised that being in the media profession media professionals possess immense knowledge and expertise regarding the media and it's functioning and this knowledge can be of great help to children.

Type of employment of media professionals

The perceptions of media professionals regarding the importance of media education for children differed significantly in relation to their type of employment. Media professionals who were employed had more favourable perceptions regarding importance of media education in comparison to the freelancers. This indicates that media professionals who were employed perceived the importance of media education for children in standards VII to IX.

Media professionals who are employed are attached with particular organisation. Their work environment and work pattern are totally different from freelancers. Employed professionals have an up-to-date experience and knowledge of the day-to-day workings of the media and they are able to illuminate the media practices, and the ways in which particular texts are produced with a specificity of detail beyond the scope of 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. Therefore they must have realised that if from early stage proper knowledge about how media messages are shaped, the different techniques used for construction of media messages, can be imparted to the children, and then can be better equipped to play their role more responsibly as citizens of future. Moreover, the children entering into media field will be able to direct their efforts towards constructive contribution in shaping the media world in future.

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.

Sex, and educational qualification of teachers, teaching experience, type of school teachers are employed in, educational qualification and occupation of parents and experience in media profession of media professionals

In the present study, the overall and aspectwise perceptions of teachers, parents and media professionals were not significant in relation to sex, educational qualification of teachers, teaching experience, type of school teachers were employed in, educational qualification and occupation of parents and experience in media profession of media professionals respectively. This means teachers, parents and media professionals from the respective categories of variables had equally perceived that media education should be introduced in the schools for children in VII to IX standards. They must have realised that today, media education has become a priority for children because of the extent of media's influence in children's life. If children are never taught how to make information from media, they cannot be expected to absorb media effectively. Students require a tool to confront and overcome the problems of today and tomorrow, and media education is the tool which promotes critical thinking skills necessary to understand the complex issues facing modern society. Media education can empower the students to interact positively with the society. This empowerment can occur when they realise the possibilities of their interaction and develop the tools with which to interact.

Conclusion

Overall, and aspectwise, teachers, parents and media professionals had more favourable perceptions regarding media education for children in standards VII to IX. Thus the study on perceptions of teachers, parents and media professionals ended on the conclusion that media education should be introduced in the school curriculum of VII to standards.

Media exposure among young children has been an on going issue as it is found to effect their development in various areas. This problem is getting more worrisome as the percentage and amount of hours of media exposure among young children is increasing. Due to this increasing negative influence of media on children, teachers, parents and media professionals have felt the urgent need to take steps for protecting the young minds against negative impact of media as well as to guide children for appropriate use of media and as such all the three groups have realised the importance of media education for children in standards VII to IX. Schools are the best agent for imparting media education to children. A growing number of parents and school teachers are becoming aware that media education should be part of teaching and the activities carried out in the schools.

In the present study, teachers, parents and media professionals perceived the content suggested for media education as appropriate for VII to IX standards. The content for media education curriculum focused on an overview of media such as different types of media, role, influence and function of media, critical analysis of media, discussion on media related issues, analysis of media advertisements and production of different types of media.

Teachers, parents and media professionals also perceived the strategies for implementing media education as appropriate for VII to IX standards.

Teachers, parents and media professionals perceived their role in imparting media education to children in VII to IX standards. Among all the selected aspects of media education, perception of parents regarding the role of parents in imparting media education scored highest intensity index. Children's spend most of the time in viewing television and accessing internet at home and consequently are easily influenced by the media messages. So, media education needs to start at home. The research studies show increasing guidance from parents is atleast as important as simply reducing media violence. Children may learn negative behaviour pattern and values from various types of media messages. And parental guidance is needed to help children sort out these influences and developed ability to make sound decisions on their own.

The role of parents, teachers and media professionals are indeed vital. The need for strengthening children's critical faculties in choosing the right media has never been urgent as now. By approaching media issues, with critical thinking activities, students can be given the tools to think rationally for themselves in a media-driven world. Interactive media education can provide children with the ability to express themselves through different forms of media – a valuable skill for the present, and the future.

On the basis of finding of the present study on media education following can be concluded.

1. Future seems to be brighter for the introduction of media education in all the schools. Media education should be introduced in the school curriculum of VII to IX standards.

2. The content for media education curriculum for VII to IX standards should include overview of media such as different types of media, role, influence and function of media, critical analysis of media, discussion on media related issues, analysis of media advertisements and production of different types of media.
3. To successfully implement media education in the school curriculum of VII to IX standards, media education should be integrated with others schools subjects.
4. There is a need for collaboration between teachers, parents and media professionals to develop a common understanding about media education. This understanding should not only be developed among the three groups, but other members of the society should also be a part to this.
5. The school authorities should take initiative in incorporating media education in schools for students in VII to IX standards.
6. Teachers, parents and media professionals should play the key role in imparting media education to children in standards VII to IX.

5.4 Suggestions on the basis of results of the present research

On the basis of findings of the present study, suggestions are as follows:

- Examining bodies such as NCERT should introduce media education in the school curriculum of VII to IX standards as an integrated subject. In the present study the suggested content for media education for VII to IX standards should be considered as the guideline by education planners while designing the media education curriculum for VII to IX standards.

- Government regulators should provide funds for adequate infrastructure facilities, equipments required for implementing media education in the schools for VII to IX standards on regular basis.
- Teachers, parents and media professionals should develop a common understanding regarding the importance of media education. For this purpose, workshops, seminars should be organised in the schools by the school authorities where each of them will share their point of views and developed a common understanding regarding the best possible ways of imparting media education to children. The media researchers and education planners should also be invited to share their views on media education.
- The researchers, media professionals and educational planners all should be involved in developing a resource guide emphasizing various activities and techniques for imparting media education. This resources guide will help both the teachers and parents to know the appropriate technique of imparting media education to children in standards VII to IX. The findings of the present study should form the guideline for developing a resource guide.
- Before imparting media education to children teachers and parents both need to learn the appropriate techniques of imparting media education. Therefore school authorities should organise workshops to orient them.
- Parents should talk and discuss about media messages at home. Discussion is essential for protecting children from media violence. A free flow exchange of thoughts while watching television or reading newspaper of after gives children important skills to judge media content. For example while co-viewing, parents and children can

count the number of violent acts in advertisements, cartoon, action – adventure movies and discuss how the programme or movie or advertisements can be improved with less violence.

- Teacher should apply critical thinking strategies in the classroom while teaching media education to students in standards VII to IX. If students are encouraged to think critically about the media messages, this will stimulate open questioning and encourage students to be intellectually curious about the world.
- Media clubs can be setup in the schools which will provide students a platform to not only understand media but also express themselves through media by playing an active role. Teachers can conduct various activities for students under the media club. This activity may be discussing the content of both print and electronic media, encouraging and guiding students to prepare a thought provoking newspaper which carries used editorials, features on any particular issue, screening of good films, video, listening to good audio programmes, organising talks on media related issues to provide students opportunity to interact with the media professionals.
- Media professionals should
 - guide NCERT to design the content for media education curriculum for VII to IX standards.
 - orient teachers and parents regarding the effective methods of imparting media education to children in VII to IX standards through workshops, training programme.
 - telecast media education programmes for students in VII to IX standards on a regular basis.

5.5 Recommendations for further studies:

- A module for media education can be developed and it can be tried out in the schools to find its effectiveness on the ability of pre-adolescence and older-adolescence group to critically analyse the media messages. The study can be conducted with the variables such as their sex, academic achievement, emotional quotient, self-esteem and parenting style (authorative, neglecting, indulgent).
- Based on the present study, the future researchers can design educational CD based on the content for media education for students in VII to IX standards and find its effectiveness.
- An exploratory study can be conducted on the perceptions of college students regarding the need of media education in schools with variables such as their sex, emotional quotient, academic achievement, self-esteem.
- An experimental study can be conducted on the effectiveness of parental mediation on children's media consumption with variables such as work status of parents, type of occupation of parents, socio-economic status and parenting style.