

## Quadrant II – Notes

Paper Title: Mass Communication

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Module Name: Growth of Television in India - Scope of Television as a Medium - Impact of TV on the other media - Popular TV formats

Module No: 7

### **Growth of Television in India**

Television was initially introduced in India in the year 1959. In the beginning, it functioned as a branch of the All India Radio service, before the establishment of *Doordarshan* as a national television network, operating as a separate department under the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting. Television started out by broadcasting twice a week for an hour a day on such topics as community health, citizens' duties and rights, and traffic and road sense, later on, expanding to educational programmes. The expansion of the television broadcasting system in India occurred gradually, with the opening of television stations in Bombay, Srinagar, Amritsar, Calcutta, Madras and Lucknow from 1972-1975.

The Satellite Instructional Television Experiment (SITE) in the mid-1970s triggered a sudden rapid growth of television in India. The SITE was launched with the help of an American satellite to broadcast educational programmes to villages across six states - Orissa, Bihar, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka.

Then, in the year 1982, with the help of INSAT-1A, the first of India's domestic communications satellites, *Doordarshan* was able to create a national network with regional stations. This was also the year colour broadcast was introduced to Indian television. Globalisation and liberalisation policies in India in the early nineties introduced international and private channels through satellite television.

Presently, though there are numerous channels and satellites, the Indian television industry is facing severe competition from online video streaming services.

### **Scope of Television as a Medium**

As mentioned earlier, television, as a medium, was regarded as being closely related to the radio. However, while the radio exclusively relies on broadcasting sound to the audience, the television is an audio-visual medium, broadcasting images and sound to the audience.

Television has a wide reach, capable of transmitting messages to large audiences. This positions the TV as an important medium for advertising and business.

However, ultimately, this is a medium of mass communication, and thus, it ought to address issues and problems of all sections of society. The TV as a medium should increase the citizens' access to information. Thus, like most mass media, television as a medium fulfils the three main functions of providing information, education and entertainment to the people.

However, besides these key features, there are other features that characterise television as an important and useful medium. One of the most important characteristics of television is that the TV is a medium of immediacy, capable of being a live medium. This means that TV provides an ideal medium for transmitting live visuals of news, information and other events from across the world.

### **Impact of TV on other media**

Since television is a medium of immediacy, the occurrence and experience of world events can be reported directly in real-time. The broadcast of events as they were happening brought the world into people's living rooms and changed their understanding of the world around them. Since the news was now available immediately, television changed the way people interacted with other media sources of news such as newspapers and radio. In contrast to the live and immediate news on television, newspapers provided delayed news. Similarly, radio broadcasts only conveyed the news through the medium of sound, but the TV showed people the news through visuals and images.

As mentioned earlier, the medium of television has become very important for advertising and business. The success of advertising on television has directed other mass media to improve themselves in an attempt to achieve similar success rates.

The accessibility of the TV and the wide variety of TV shows and programmes available could potentially affect the number of people going to the cinema to watch a film. However, it must be noted that, in turn, the growth of online video streaming services has adversely affected TV viewership.

### **Popular TV formats**

A TV format is that which can be used as the basis of a new programme. When a TV format is adapted, borrowed, copied or taken as inspiration, the new programme emerges as a series of episodes that are sufficiently similar to seem like instalments of the same programme and sufficiently distinct to register as new and different. Formats are almost invariably based on programmes that were successful in other national territories and are therefore likely to repeat this success in the new territory. Therefore, one can understand a TV format as the overall concept and branding of a copyrighted television show. The most common formats are game shows and reality shows, many of which are remade in multiple markets with local contestants.

Here are some examples of popular TV formats.

*Pop Idol* was a British music competition television series created by Simon Fuller, which saw its format being adapted by territories across the world - The show has become an international TV franchise since, spawning multiple Idol series worldwide, such as *American Idol*, *Australian Idol*, *Arab Idol*, *Canadian Idol*, *Indonesian Idol*, *Indian Idol*, etc.

*Who Wants to Be a Millionaire?* is a British television quiz show. Its success led to adaptation in many other countries, all of which follow the same general format, though with variations in gameplay and lifelines provided. Examples: *Kaun Banega Crorepati?* (India), *Ke Hotey Chay Kotipoti?* (Bangladesh) *Qui veut gagner des millions?* (France), *Who is the Millionaire* (Vietnam), etc.

*Big Brother* is a Dutch reality competition television franchise created by John de Mol Jr., first broadcast in the Netherlands in 1999, spread to over 54 franchise countries and regions. - *Big Brother Australia*, *Big Brother Canada*, *Big Boss* (India), *Pinoy Big Brother* (Philippines), etc.