

# MASS COMMUNICATION

- **MASS COMMUNICATION**
- When Christopher Columbus discovered America on October 12, 1492 the king of Spain knew of it five months later. When Abraham Lincoln was assassinated on April 14, 1865 Europe heard the news 12 days later. Mass media has revolutionised the manner in which messages ideas and even ts are communicated.
- Mass communication is the process of delivering information ideas and attitudes to a sizeable and diversified audience. This is done through the use of media developed for that purpose namely newspapers, magazines, radio, television, websites, social media networks.
- Characteristics of mass communication
- Mass medium: an important characteristic of mass communication is the presence of mass media like news paper, radio, television, magazines, books, website and social media networks. A mass medium makes it possible for message to reach far beyond the immediate proximity of the sender.
- Anonymous: the participants (sender and receiver) in the mass communication process are usually unknown to each other
- Delayed feedback: feedback is the information that is sent back by the receiver to the source. In mass communication feedback is slow. It is impossible to have instant feedback from everyone who receives the message because of the vast number of people involved in mass communication.
- Gate keeping: mass communication implies a gate keeping function on the part of the communicators such as reporters and editors. In their capacity as people who control the flow of news they may limit, expand or recognise information.
- Universal access: mass communication experience is a public one. Everyone has access to it. it cannot be restricted to anyone on account of colour race sex and other difference.
- Rapid: messages are sent to the audience as soon as they are received by the communicators.
- **FUNCTIONS OF MASS COMMUNICATION**
- Inform: mass media carry out this function by keeping us informed about the latest news in our region and a round the world.
- Entertain: mass media design their programmes to entertain. They attempt to entertain, to capture the attention of large number of people. Mass media help us to pass time and to relax with family and friends.
- Educate: media is a great teacher and educator. Most of the information that we have obtained is not from classroom but from mass media like newspapers, magazines, radio, television and internet. We have learnt a lot on music, politics art films sociology computers and host of other subjects from the media and not from the school or college classroom.
- Reinforce: media function to reinforce or make stronger our beliefs, attitudes, values and opinions.
- Change or persuade: media do not function primarily to change our behaviour. But media can be used to form public opinion, influence voting behaviour, change attitudes, moderate behaviour.
- Focus attention: mass media have the ability to focus public attention on certain issues, problems and events at a given time.
- **DYSFUNCTIONS OF MASS COMMUNICATION**
- Undesirable consequences of the media are generally termed as dysfunctional effects. They are also referred to as negative functions of media.
- For example, public health campaign is basically good and desirable. But, such messages can cause fear and pandemic among the public.
- Ethicizing: it is an important function of media. Media enforces and reinforces social norms in society in a variety of ways. Along with the positive aspect of this function, there can also be negative impact.
- Narcotizing: it is one of the chief social consequences of mass media upon audience. Repeated reporting of crime stories in the media can desensitize people who are fed with an overdose of crime news.