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**Affiliated to the University of Madras
Approved by the Government of Tamil Nadu
An ISO 9001:2015 Certified Institution**



DEPARTMENT OF VISUAL COMMUNICATION

SUBJECT NAME: MEDIA CULTURE & SOCIETY

SUBJECT CODE: BVC-DSC09

SEMESTER: V

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Unit I

Identifying Audience Characteristics

Identify the audience characteristics and remember them **Why study media? (Media Education)**

Media education is the process through which individuals become media literate – able to critically understand the nature, techniques and impacts of media messages and productions.

Studying **media production** means looking at:

- Technologies: what technologies are used to produce and distribute media texts?
- Professional practices: Who makes media texts?
- The industry: Who owns the companies that buy and sell media and how do they make a profit?
- Connections between media: How do companies sell the same products across different media?
- Regulation: Who controls the production and distribution of media, and are there laws about this?
- Circulation and distribution: How do texts reach their audiences?
- Access and participation: Whose voices are heard in the media and whose are excluded?

Studying **media languages** means looking at:

- Meanings: How does media use different forms of language to convey ideas or meanings?
- Conventions: How do these uses of languages become familiar and generally accepted?
- Codes: How are the grammatical 'rules' of media established and what happens when they are broken?
- Genres: How do these conventions and codes operate in different types of media contexts?
- Choices: What are the effects of choosing certain forms of language, such as a certain type of camera shot?
- Combinations: How is meaning conveyed through the combination or sequencing of images, sounds, or words?
- Technologies: How do technologies affect the meanings that can be created?

Studying **media representations** means looking at:

- Realism: Is this text intended to be realistic? Why do some texts seem more realistic than others?
- Telling the truth: How do media claim to tell the truth about the world?
- Presence and absence: What is included and excluded from the media world?
- Bias and objectivity: Do media texts support particular views about the world? Do they use moral or political values?
- Stereotyping: How do media represent particular social groups? Are those representations accurate?
- Interpretations: Why do audiences accept some media representations as true, or reject others as false?

- Influences: Do media representations affect our views of particular social groups or issues?

Studying **media audiences** means looking at:

- Targeting: How are media aimed at particular audiences?
- Address: How do the media speak to audiences?
- Circulation: How do media reach audiences?
- Uses: How do audiences use media in their daily lives? What are their habits and patterns of use?
- Making sense: How do audiences interpret media? What meanings do they make?
- Pleasures: What pleasures do audiences gain from media?
- Social differences: What is the role of gender, social class, age, and ethnic background in audience behavior?

Understanding Media

Mass Media: “Media generally defined, is, “the main means of mass communication, esp. newspapers, radio and television regarded collectively;

Mass: Mass can be defined as, “a large number of human beings, collected closely together or viewed as forming an aggregate in which their individuality is lost.” Important to note is the social hoes on “the masses,” as a congregation, they are more than neutral “populace, the ordinary people, esp. as viewed in an economic or political context.” three key dimensions that transition a medium to a form of mass media, “address, availability and access.”

Characteristics of Mass Media

1. Communication is Mostly One Way
2. Audience Has Great Deal of Choice
3. Reach Large and Vast Audiences
4. Aim Messages to Attract Largest Audience Possible
5. Influence Society and Are, In Turn, Influenced by Society

Media’s Effects on Individual

There is no doubt that the media influences us. To state some examples to prove this claim, try answering these questions

- Do you feel like attempting a stunt from a movie?
- Do you base your fashion on what you see the celebrities are wearing?

- Do you copy the hairstyle of your favorite famous personalities?
- Have you ever attempted to walk model-like in an attempt to imitate those ramp models in fashion shows?

The media affects the way we act and think. It has a profound influence on the behavior of individuals. When people try to imitate something we had seen or heard, are they capable enough to distinguish between right from wrong?

Young people often imitate their role models blindly. What is being highlighted in the entertainment industry is the wrongdoings of these celebrities whom the young people idolize. And because they are heroes in the youth's minds, they are still celebrated despite the bad behavior they have been showing to the public.

They satiate the people's hunger for trivial information and rumors. They create buzz by hyping the issues with flowery words and provoking descriptions. Controversies are created left and right to get the attention of people.

Another negative influence of media is eating disorders.

A significant number of youth nowadays are suffering from eating disorders attributable to unhealthy lifestyles that are emerging. The television programs, movies, and even print materials often showcase this lifestyle as fun activities despite their negative effect on health. Media hypes the acceptability of vices.

It has also been observed that children nowadays do not do the same activities as children of before. Instead of reading books, studying, playing outdoors with other children, and engaging in social activities

They end up being cooped up in their rooms watching television. And because of technological advancements and the availability of gadgets to young people, these children end up spending a significant amount of time in front of their computers and handheld video games.

Because Internet is readily available to children, they end up reading and learning things, which are not suitable for their age. They get exposed to indecency and inappropriate acts.

Media's Effects on Society

There are positive and negative influences of mass media, which we must understand as a responsible person of a society.

People need news/information for various reasons, on one hand it can be used to socialize and on the other to make decisions and formulate opinions.

In present era of globalization, majority of people in the society depends on information and communication to remain connected with the world and do our daily activities like work, entertainment, health care, education, socialization, travelling and anything else that we have to do.

A common urban person usually wakes up in the morning checks the tv news or newspaper, goes to work, makes a few phone calls, eats with their family or peers when possible and makes his decisions based on the information that he has either from their co workers, Tv news, friends, family, financial reports, etc.

We need to be conscious of the reality that most of our decisions, beliefs and values are based on what we know for a fact, our assumptions and our own experience

We have put our trust on the media as an authority to give us news, entertainment and education. However, the influence of mass media on our kids, teenagers and society is so big that we should know how it really works. The media makes billions of dollars with the advertising they sell and that we are exposed to, every single moment. We buy what we are told to buy by the media. After seeing thousands of advertising's we make our buying decisions based on what we saw on tv, newspapers or magazines. These are the effects of mass media especially in teenagers, they buy what they see on tv, what their favorite celebrity advertise and what is acceptable by society based on the fashion that the media has imposed on them.

There are some positive and negative influences in young people of our society due to these ad campaigns in the media. Here is a positive influence example, if there is a quiz show on education that is getting a lot of attention by the media and gains popularity among your friends and society, you will more likely want to actively participate and watch these quiz shows.

These activities are good for the society and will promote literary activities in the youth. However a negative influence in teenagers is the use of guns and ammunition by celebrity movie stars, the constant exposure of which would seduce the teen to replicate the same behavior in the real life.

When we watch tv or a action movie we usually see many images of violence and people

hurting others. The problem with this is that it can become traumatic especially in our children as they see it more and more. Our kids that are starting to grow and are shaping their personality values and beliefs can become aggressive or they can lose a sense of distinction between reality and fiction.

Another problem is that real war is used as a form of entertainment by the media, we should make our kids and teen aware that war is not a form of entertainment and that there is no win or lose like in video games, in real war everyone lose.

The media creates the ideal image of beautiful men and women with all the ingredients of a successful person, you can see it in movies and tv. It's a subliminal way to persuade the masses that if you want to be successful and look like them then you have to buy that particular brand or product.

Another negative influence in teenagers, that has grown over the last years is obesity. There are millions of adolescents fighting obesity, but at the same time they are exposed to thousands of advertisements of junk food, while the ideal image of a successful person is told to be thin and wealthy.

The media has a huge impact on society in shaping the public opinion of the masses. They can form or modify the public opinion in different ways depending of what is the objective. For example, Pakistani media influenced the public opinion against the Taliban in Swat by repeated telecast of a video clip showing whipping of a woman by a Taliban.

Before that the public opinion over the military action against the Taliban in Swat was divided, but repeated telecast of this short video clip changed the public opinion over night in the favor of the government to take action.

Other ways to influence are with polls and trends, especially in political campaigns. The candidates that can pay for more tv and media exposure have more influence on public opinion and thus can receive more votes.

Media's Effect on Culture

Mass media has affected the lives of people in many ways.

It seems the advent of mass media has made the cultural policy redundant as performing arts seem to have virtually disappeared for the masses.

The television and print revolutions have granted access to these forms of media to the masses. Villages often have their own newspapers and access to television is readily available to the majority. Bollywood cinema is not restricted to the urban community and is in fact highly popular with the rural masses.

The advent of cassette technology in the 1980s transformed popular music industry from the virtual monopoly of multinational local cassette producers.

Other than changing the social structure and norm, the media revolution has also contributed to the disintegration of so-called 'Indian norms'. There is a chasm between traditional values of chastity and dressing conservatively and the TV values of stylish and often skimpy dressing and more liberal values, including dating before marriage and other 'western norms'.

Other than dress; many other aspects of culture have been sacrificed in favour of western influences. Folk music and travelling singers have given way to cassettes and compact discs

The traditions of storytelling has also taken a back seat due to cassette playbacks of discourses and the ease with which printed material is cheaply

Television has reached a stage where even religious discourse is broadcast, negating the need for temple visits and religious-social gatherings.

Infrastructure and the mass media influences that it has brought with it have created a culture where person to person interaction has nearly stopped. Information is relayed to us through media channels, radio, television, books and newspapers

Eight functions of mass media

- 1) Inform (a teacher function)
- 2) Surveillance (a watcher function)
- 3) Serve the economic system
- 4) Hold society together (act as sort of a cultural glue)
- 5) Entertain
- 6) Act as a community forum
- 7) Set the agenda
- 8) Service the political system

Media Audience Analysis

Before writing anything, describe an audience by:

- Identifying audience characteristics,
- Assessing their objectives and needs,
- Planning for subgroups within the audience.

Conducting the Audience Analysis

Conduct either a formal -- based on surveys and questionnaires -- or an informal -- based on discussions -- analysis to create an audience profile.

Formal Audience Analysis

- Conduct surveys,
- Use structured interviews,
- Gather questionnaires.

Informal Audience Analysis

Gather information about the audience by talking with people who will read the final document. For example, when writing

- Product documentation, talk to people who use the product (or a similar product).

When interviewing marketing and development staff,

- Ask open-ended questions and follow up on incomplete answers.
- Ask about the users' backgrounds: how they work, why they will read the document, and what they need from it.
- Attend meetings at which the product or service will be discussed.

Find out about the audience by reading

while writing. Before you begin writing consider such important audience characteristics as

- Educational and professional background,
- Knowledge and experience levels,
- English-language ability,
- Reading situation.

Educational Background

Ask for information about educational background to assess the audience's reading ability and its willingness to read. A college-educated audience should be able to read more difficult texts than a high school- or grade school-educated audience.

Professional Background

Know the basic requirements of the jobs the readers perform. Do not confuse a job title with professional functions. For example, readers of technical and science writing could perform many professional roles at the same time:

- Scientists can be doctors, engineers, programmers, or technicians.
- Legislators can be judges or lawyers.
- Any professional could be a manager.

Knowledge and Experience Levels

Use professional and educational background to determine the audience's knowledge and experience on a subject. Use this information to evaluate what readers know and what information they need.

- Categorize readers as a single-level audience if they are members of a specific group. While it is difficult to assign readers to such exclusive groups, a useful distinction can be novice, intermediate, and expert.
- Novices have minimal knowledge or experience, and may even fear the product or subject. In reference information they want basic concepts and procedures. In instructional materials, novices need to see quick results; successful experiences reassure them.
- Intermediate audiences have some knowledge or experience. For example, if a document shows how to operate a drill press, an intermediate audience may have experience with similar equipment.
- Experts are typically very knowledgeable. For example, an expert using software documentation may be a programmer who uses many of the software's applications.

Reading Context

Consider the physical and psychological conditions under which the audience reads the document:

- A scientific article, for instance, may be read in a relaxed atmosphere at home or in an office.
- A spreadsheet software tutorial may be read on the job, at the keyboard, while dealing with interruptions.
- A heavy-equipment maintenance manual may be read while repairing the equipment in the field.

Identifying Audience Objectives and Needs

Use audience objectives and needs to shape how you approach the document:

- Objectives reflect what the audience wants to do after reading the document; for example, install a videotape recorder.
- Needs indicate questions the audience will have that the document should answer. Readers may not even know they will ask these questions, but the writer must

anticipate them--and supply answers.

Audience objectives may be long-term, short-term, personal, or job-related.

Creating an Audience Profile

Use the audience characteristics, objectives, and needs to develop an audience profile, or of each subgroup of a diverse audience. To create the profile:

- Group related features in a written sketch of the typical reader,
- For a diverse audience, do a profile for each kind of reader,
- Form mental images of these composite people,
- Provide the kind of information and presentation the readers need to achieve their goals.

Unit II

What is Audience Analysis?

Audience analysis is the process of examining information about your listeners.

In everyday conversations you adapt your message to your audience. For example, if you went to a party the night before, you would explain the party differently to your friends and family. To your best friend you might say, "We partied all night and there were tons of people there." To your mother you might say, "Oh, I had fun with my friends." And to your significant other you might say, "It was fun, I had a great bonding time with my friends." In each of these situations, you are adapting your message to your listening audience.

Demographic Analysis

Involves age, gender, culture, ethnicity, race, religion, and educational level. As college students we watch the same kinds of shows and listen to the same types of music and have a common history. Age is a very important factor and can be very helpful in picking a topic.

Gender is another characteristic. It is important to find out the ratio of men to women in the class. Also, make sure that you do not use any sexist language, stereotypes or make jokes about gender. If you were to insult men in front of a class of 12 men, then in most cases these 12 men are not going to listen to you for the rest of your speech. You may have also lost your credibility.

Culture is the shared knowledge, behavior, attitudes, beliefs, values, and norms of a group. It is very important to be sensitive to students of other culture's feelings. You may do or say something that may offend them. Ethnicity is a person's national or religious heritage.

There may be a student from China Town in Chicago, or a student from Little Italy in New York.

Religion. Be very careful when you speak about different religions because people feel very strongly about their beliefs.

Education background of your listeners can help your choice of vocabulary, language style, and your use of examples.

Psychological Analysis

Addresses the audience's attitudes, beliefs, and values.

An attitude defines what a person likes or dislikes. When you choose a topic, it is important to find out your audience's attitudes toward the subject. If you are doing a speech on rap, does your audience like rap.

A belief is what you believe to be true or false. You may believe that rap is destroying the minds of young teenagers. And a value is "a person's beliefs or standards."

Environmental Analysis or Situational Analysis

- finding out things like the seating arrangement, the number of people likely to attend, and the room lighting.
- The way the seats are arranged will affect the audience's response.
- It is also important to know how many people will be there for the speech. And the way the room is lighted will affect the way the audience responds.
- If it is dark and the speaker is showing overheads, there will not be conversation. But if the room is light and open, the audience may feel free to talk.
- The seating arrangement, the number of people and the room lighting are all factors that will affect the speech.

Questionnaires and Interviewing

There are many ways to obtain the answers to these questions in each section. You can gather information by handing out questionnaires or by interviewing your fellow students with open ended and closed ended questions. An open-ended question is unrestricted.

Active Audience and Passive Audience

An active audience is one that actively engages with the text. They do not simply accept every media message. They question what they see and develop their own interpretation of a media product based on their life experiences, education, family and cultural influences.

‘Bottom up’ theories generally assume an active audience. Theories such as “Uses & Gratification” and “Postmodernist theory” assume that audiences are active.

A passive audience does not actively engage with a media text. A passive audience is one that does not question the message that the media is sending and simply accepts the message in the way the media outlet intended.

‘Top down’ theories of media influence tend to assume that audiences are passive. Theories such as “Bullet/Hypodermic” and “Agenda Setting Function” assume audiences are passive.

The uses and gratifications model

Blumler and McQuail (1968) and Lull (1995) see media audiences as active. Their uses and gratifications model suggests that people use the media in order to satisfy particular social needs that they have, e.g. Wood (1993) illustrated how teenagers may use horror films to gratify their need for excitement. Blumler and McQuail identify four basic needs which people use the media to satisfy.

Diversion – people may immerse themselves in particular types of media to make up for the lack of satisfaction at work or in their daily lives, e.g. women may compensate for the lack of romance in their marriages by reading Mills and Boon romantic novels. Some people even have alternative lives and identities as avatars on websites such as Second Life.

Personal relationships – media products such as soap operas may compensate for the decline of community in our lives, e.g. socially isolated elderly people may see soap opera characters as companions they can identify with and worry about in the absence of interaction with family members. Cyber-communities on the Internet may also be seen by users as alternative families.

Personal identity – people may use the media to ‘make over’ or to modify their identity. Social networking websites, such as Facebook, allow people to use the media to present their particular identities to the wider world in a way that they can control.

Surveillance – people use the media to obtain information and news in order to help them

make up their minds on particular issues.

Marxists are critical of this model because they suggest that social needs may be socially manufactured by the media and may therefore be 'false needs'.

The two-step flow model

Katz and Lazarsfeld (1965) suggest that personal relationships and conversations with significant others, such as family members, friends, teachers and work colleagues, result in people modifying or rejecting media messages.

They argue that social networks are usually dominated by opinion leaders, i.e. people of influence whom others in the network look up to and listen to. These people usually have strong ideas about a range of matters. Moreover, these opinion leaders expose themselves to different types of media and form an opinion on their content.

These interpretations are then passed on to other members of their social circle. Katz and Lazarsfeld suggest that media messages have to go through two steps or stages. The opinion leader is exposed to the media content.

Those who respect the opinion leader internalize their interpretation of that content.

KEY POINT -

Consequently, media audiences are not directly influenced by the media. Rather, they choose to adopt a particular opinion, attitude and way of behaving after negotiation and discussion with an opinion leader. The audience is, therefore, not passive, but active.

However, critics of this model point out two problems.

There is no guarantee that the opinion leader has not been subjected to an imitative or desensitizing effect, e.g. a leader of a peer group, such as a street gang, might convince other members that violence is acceptable because he has been exposed to computer games that strongly transmit the message that violence is an acceptable problem-solving strategy.

People who may be most at risk of being influenced by the media may be socially isolated individuals who are not members of any social network and so do not have access to an opinion leader who might help interpret media content in a healthy way.

According to Gerbner, the main thing that people saw on television was violence and he was especially concerned that it “cultivated” the view among people that the world was a violent place

However, they found significant inequalities in victimhood with older people, women and minorities particularly at risk.

So even though minorities were under-represented on television, when they appeared, they were much more likely to be victims of violence

Gerbner classified people into two groups:

Heavy watchers (over 4 hours per day)

Light Watchers (less than 2 hours per day)

He predicted that heavy viewers saw the world as more dangerous than light viewer

Hypodermic Needle Theory:

The media (magic gun) fired the message directly into audience head without their own knowledge. The message cause the instant reaction from the audience mind without any hesitation is called “Magic Bullet Theory”. The media (needle) injects the message into audience mind and it cause changes in audience behavior and psyche towards the message. Audience are passive and they can’t resist the media message is called “Hypodermic Needle Theory”.

Both theories are deals with impact of media messages in audience mind and how audience reacts towards the message without any hesitation.

Example:

In 1930, Newly formed mercury theater and Orson Wells join together and created a fake news bulletin about aliens invasion in American city called Grover’s Mill, New jersey. They broadcast this news bulletin in between the radio program called “The War of the Worlds”. The “Panic Broadcast” was reached merely 12 million American people and one million were seriously believed. Due to this broadcast the whole country was in chaos.

Study:

“People’s Choice” a study conducted by Lazarsfeld in 1940 about Franklin D. Roosevelt election campaign and the effects of media messages. Through this study Lazarsfeld disproved

the Magic Bullet theory and added audience are more influential in interpersonal than a media messages.

What is a moral panic?

The term moral panic was popularized by Cohen (1972) in his classic work *Folk Devils and Moral Panics*. It refers to media reactions to particular social groups and activities that are defined as threatening social consensus. The reporting creates anxiety or moral panic amongst the general population which puts pressure on the authorities to control the problem and discipline the group responsible. However, the media concern is usually out of proportion to any real threat to society posed by the group or activity.

Agenda setting theory

The media can and does have a strong effect on what people think about. By highlighting certain events repeatedly, they create a sense of urgency about those issues even though this is not always an accurate reflection of reality.

Reality is what is actually happening in the world pertaining to the economy, society, politics and science. The media selectively highlights certain events and gives them prominence.

The criteria for the selection depends very much on the ideology of the media editors and their vested interests. By highlighting certain events an uncritical audience will perceive and construct the mediated reality as reality. One example is the royal wedding of Prince William to Kate Middleton, which mesmerized the world, including parts of the world that have no connection to the British monarchy. Discerning audiences may well ask why the wedding of two people, who are in no way related to them, is important enough to justify worldwide media attention, or indeed, how and why it might be relevant to them?

The agenda setting theory was formally developed by McCombs and Shaw (1972) when they studied the US Presidential Election.

Unit III

Media as Text

All media products are 'texts'. When you read, watch, play, listen to a media text, you make meaning of the sounds and imagery presented. This process of making meaning or understanding the media text is called DECODING

Codes have symbolic value. For example in our society wearing a pair of glasses (glasses are the code) symbolizes, or connotes, that you are clever.

TV drama, magazines and videogames use these symbolic codes to generate character types and character archetypes.

- What visual codes are at work?
- What connotations do the visual codes have?
- What visual codes are in this picture from?
- How is the male character represented?
- How is the female character represented?
- Does the representation of both characters tell us anything about the AUDIENCE?
- Do the codes reinforce a stereotypical portrayal of women in the media?
- What codes are at work on these front covers?

According to Stuart Hall there are 3 ways to DECODE a media text:

- 1) Preferred or Dominant Reading = the way the producer of a text intended the text to be understood.
- 2) Oppositional Reading = where the preferred or dominant meaning is recognized but rejected for cultural or political reasons.
- 3) Negotiated Reading = where the reader agrees with elements of the text, but not all.

Marxist Media Theory

The dominant class not only owns the means of material production, but also controls the production of the society's dominant ideas and values. (**Dominant ideology**) To maintain their power, Media serves as a **vehicle of ideology**, This theory says Media acts like a factory (**Culture Industry**) to churn out mass products

Properties of mass products:

- - commodification – Audience as Commodities
- - standardization – Standardising audience
- - massification – Generalising audience as mass

Hegemony: not only political and economical control but also the ability of the dominant class to project its own way seeing the world so that those who are subordinated by it accept it as '**common**' and '**natural**'

- We all live in societies where there are power structures.
- According to Gramsci's theory of hegemony, these systems of power cannot be maintained by force alone.
- People have to do things, willingly and happily, in their everyday lives that keep the powerful people on top.

Everyday behaviours that keep corporations in power

- - People wearing designer clothing
- - People shopping at chains instead of local stores
- - Schools serving fast food in cafeterias
- - Women displaying huge diamond engagement rings.
- - People celebrating days that have been manufactured by Hallmark, like Grandparent's Day

Criticisms on Marxist theory

- It assumes the audience is passive and easily manipulated by media producers.
- Rather than having one clear message that supports dominant values and ideology...
- Text meanings are contradictory.

Ideological Struggle: The media is constantly losing and re-winning the consent of the audience.

Semiotics:

The theory of signs. Signing is vital to human existence because it underlies all forms of communication

Within semiotics, anything that is used for human communication is defined as a sign: gestures, facial expressions, poetry, rituals, clothes, food, music, Morse code, marketing, commercials, film, etc

Write down words/phrases/ideas associated with it Think about a heart.

-Blood Pump Muscle Life Red Emotions Feeling Strength Body Love Centre Care Organ
Courage Bravery Sincerity Determination

But what are we actually thinking about?

How does this poster use visual codes (color, lighting etc.) to communicate and appeal to its target audience?

1. Identify the technique. e.g. The text uses lights surrounding Bond.
2. What is the effect? E.g. The text uses lights surrounding Bond to make him look angelic; as if he is on the side of good.
3. What is the effect on the audience? E.g. the text uses white lights surrounding Bond to symbolize angels' wings, making him look heroic, and suggesting to the audience that he is on the side of good. 'Other worldly' in that he has powers above the average male.

(Refer Class notes on Camera shots and angles in semiotics topic)

Psychoanalysis

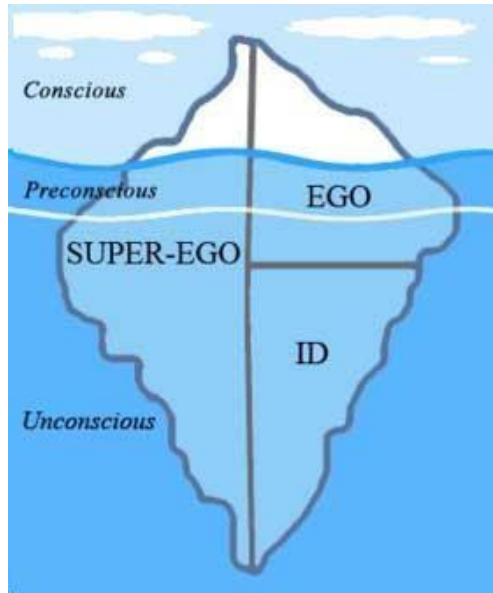
The unconscious mind acts as a repository, of primitive wishes and impulse kept at bay and mediated by the preconscious area. For example, Freud (1915) found that some events and desires were often too frightening or painful for his patients to acknowledge, and believed such information was locked away in the unconscious mind. This can happen through the process of repression.

Sigmund Freud emphasized the importance of the unconscious mind, and a primary assumption of Freudian theory is that the unconscious mind governs behavior to a greater degree than people suspect.

The id comprises two kinds of biological instincts which Freud called Eros and Thanatos.

Eros, or life instinct, helps the individual to survive; it directs life-sustaining activities such as respiration, eating and sex, the energy created by the life instincts is known as libido.

In contrast, Thanatos or death instinct, is viewed as a set of destructive forces present in all human when this energy is directed outward onto others, it is expressed as aggression and violence. Freud believed that Eros is stronger than Thanatos, thus enabling people to survive



rather than self-destruct.

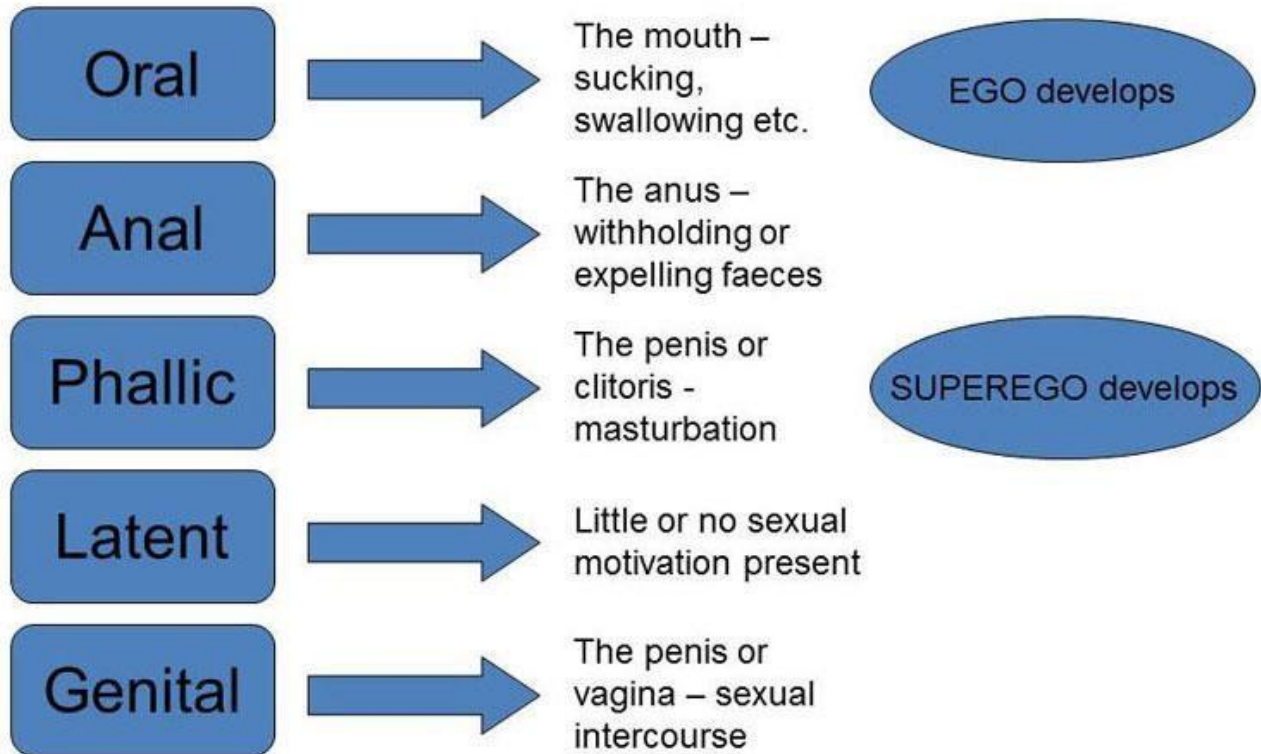
The ego develops from the id during infancy. The ego's goal is to satisfy the demands of the id in a safe and socially acceptable way. In contrast to the id the ego follows the reality principle as it operates in both the conscious and unconscious mind.

The superego develops during early childhood and is responsible for ensuring moral standards are followed. The superego operates on the morality principle and motivates us to behave in a socially responsible and acceptable manner.

For example, the superego can make a person feel guilty if rules are not followed. When there is conflict between the goals of the id and superego, the ego must act as a referee and mediate this conflict. The ego can deploy various defense mechanisms to prevent it from becoming overwhelmed by anxiety.

Mechanism	Description	Example
Repression	Repression is an unconscious mechanism employed by the ego to keep disturbing or threatening thoughts from becoming conscious.	During the Oedipus complex aggressive thoughts about the same sex parents are repressed
Denial	Denial involves blocking external events from awareness. If some situation is just too much to handle, the person just refuses to experience it.	For example, smokers may refuse to admit to themselves that smoking is bad for their health.
Projection	This involves individuals attributing their own unacceptable thoughts, feeling and motives to another person.	You might hate someone, but your superego tells you that such hatred is unacceptable. You can 'solve' the problem by believing that they hate you.
Displacement	Satisfying an impulse (e.g. aggression) with a substitute object.	Someone who is frustrated by his or her boss at work may go home and kick the dog,
Regression	This is a movement back in psychological time when one is faced with stress.	A child may begin to suck their thumb again or wet the bed when they need to spend some time in the hospital.
Sublimation	Satisfying an impulse (e.g. aggression) with a substitute object. In a socially acceptable way.	Sport is an example of putting our emotions (e.g. aggression) into something constructive.





Unit IV

Media and Realism

1. **Realism** The media always mediate or encode reality. It is therefore impossible to gain a first-hand direct experience of the world via the media, no matter how “transparent” their representation of reality is.
2. Even live sports coverage and the News involve selection and manipulation of images that affects the “reality” of the text. However, audiences expect what they see, listen to or read to have some connection to their own lives and experiences, or to appear to be based upon some recognizable reality.
3. We often judge how successful a text is by measuring it against our own experiences. What is “real” therefore can become a subjective and controversial concept, as what one person considers being realistic may not be considered so from another perspective.
4. there are 4 criteria often used to assess the reality of a media text:
 - Surface realism** – this means the details have to be right. So a film set in the 60s would need the right costumes, hairstyles, sets, etc
 - “Inner” or emotional realism** – the audience need to feel that they can identify with

the situation characters are in and share or feel their emotions.

Plausibility of the plot – for example, the high volume of dramatic murders and disasters in soaps often are seen as implausible.

Technical and symbolic codes for realism – There are certain techniques that are used to enhance the realism of texts technically, such as the handheld camera, subtle or unimposing music, surround sound, even real time

5. A knowing audience increasingly, audiences are becoming more and more media savvy. This means that they are more aware of the process of mediation and therefore do not accept everything as reality. However, we do still “suspend our disbelief” and adjust our perceptions to genres we know cannot be real, such as science fiction and cartoons.
6. We accept the conventions of these types of genre and perhaps discard some of our criteria for a real text. Some audiences also enjoy postmodern texts, which deliberately emphasize that they are constructed or surreal,
7. How does the episode of Big Brother 2007 infer a sense of reality? What factors suggest that it has been constructed/mediated?
8. Voiceover/narrator – guiding audience through the show
Title sequence
Talking heads
Edited – aspects of host that
9. The Secret Millionaire
Clear premise that this is a game
Shaky handheld camera – sound
wind etc
Invisible camera adds to realism
Shabby clothes/swearing
Talking heads at end
– reality broken after money given Millionaires house – edited together cleverly

Media as Consciousness Industry

The media as consciousness industry:

Shaping our perceptions and ideas about, i) who we are, ii) what we want, iii) which groups we belong to.

The commercial mass media: not news backed up by advertisements; „the commercial mass media are advertisements which carry news, features and entertainment in order to capture audiences for advertisers”

- The prime item on the agenda of consciousness industry is producing *people*... who are ready to support a particular policy, rather than some other policy”
- „Control over the means of informing people is the basis of political (and commercial) power”; Alfred Sauvy: „the power to build television stations is like the medieval

power to build castles along the Rhine”

Social construction of reality by media

• We all have a construct: the picture we have built up in our heads —since birth—through observations and experiences, of what the world is and how it works, a major part of those observations and experiences come to us

pre-constructed by the media, much of what we know and believe about the world we have learned through the media

1. THE MEDIA, rather than ourselves, are constructing our reality, For example, our impression of a city or country, as shaped by the media, may be quite different from the impression we get when we actually visit the place

Another Example: **Laugh Tracks!** Television shows often superimpose “audience laughter” when they deem appropriate. Would the shows be as funny without the tracks?

2. The previous examples were constructs of “reality” through selection.
3. Media creators select certain images and information to create a unified picture
4. However, this reality is also created through omission
5. Media creators omit (leave out) certain images and information to create a

limited picture That means, for every 20 minutes shot, viewers see 1 minute of what was recorded.

Questions producers ask themselves:

1. What content will have the most audience appeal?
2. What material looks best?
3. How should a person, object, animal, or event be presented?
4. What will grab—and hold—the audience’s attention?

Effects of Social Construction of Reality

- The media content takes elements of culture, magnifies them, frames them and feeds them back to an audience, thus, "imposing their logic in creating a symbolic environment."
- Mass media not only suppress information, but also often deliberately create disinformation.

- The mass media, seldom give us a range of information and views which might allow us to approach a story from a different angle,
- mass media content—both news and entertainment—is shaped, pounded, constrained, encouraged by a multiple of forces"

Audience Positioning

All media text has a series of encoded signs and messages, the audience decodes these messages

Different audiences will decode them differently, Media texts and the industries are acutely aware of their audiences

The relationship between media and audience is fluent and changing, Audiences are not a mass and their responses are complex and sophisticated

- Audiences are made up of individuals
- Either PASSIVE OR ACTIVE

Active Audience

- this audience responds to and interprets the media text in different ways and actively engages with the messages.

Passive Audience

- this is an audience that does not engage actively with the text. They do not question the text and therefore accept the preferred reading without challenge. They therefore might be more affected by the messages contained within the text.

READINGS....

- ENCODERS (Producers) create texts with a PREFERRED READING

(the meaning they WANT the audience to take from it) which the audience then DECODES

- However audiences may not take the preferred reading, they may however take an OPPOSITIONAL or NEGOTIATED

- **PREFERRED READING:** When the audience accepts the dominant reading of the text. This is usually if the text reflects the ideas and beliefs of the audience.

• **OPPOSITIONAL READING:** When someone makes a conscious rejection or subversion of the preferred meaning.(I.E. a bank robber may reject the concept that the police are the “goodies” in THE BILL as they believe their reasons for committing crime are fair and they connect with the criminal on screen rather than the heroes and heroines of the Police force.)

• **NEGOTIATED READINGS:** When someone understands the meaning but it doesn't relate to them so it is of no interest to them to decode it. (A teenager who is not interested in Politics watching A Question time discussing the issues of Junior Doctors may well understand the points of views being raised but has no interest in the matter therefore they will not be persuaded or dissuaded to either POV being raised in the programme.)

Look at the following media texts and who would take the preferred/oppositional/negotiated reading? Why?

You are going to produce a new television programme. Decide on your TARGET audience? How are you going to attract your TARGET audience? What Channel would your programme be broadcast on and why? Who might take an oppositional reading to your programme? Put together a short presentation with pictures answering the questions above.

Audience as Reader

Imagine that you recently had a car accident and you were partially responsible. If you had to write and tell your parents about the accident, what might you say? Imagine how you might tell the story differently if you were telling your friends about what happened. How might this version be different from the one you tell the insurance company? What details would you emphasize? Are there some details you might tell your friends that you might not emphasize or even mention at all in your letter to your parents or the insurance company? Would the order in which you told the various details be different? As you can see, this illustrates the way that we customize our writing to appeal to a specific audience.

Assignments are often designed with a particular audience in mind. For example, if you are writing a business or legal memo, your intended audience is probably people with whom you work, perhaps your boss or your co- workers. If you are writing a proposal of some sort, the

intended audience may be a professional but not someone with whom you are intimately acquainted. Just as what you say to your parents and friends might be different than what you say to the insurance company, what and how you report information may vary depending on the audience.

Knowing your audience helps you to make decisions about what information you should include, how you should arrange that information, and what kind of supporting details will be necessary for the reader to understand what you are presenting. It also influences the tone and structure of the document. To develop and present an effective argument, you need to be able to appeal to and address your audience.

When writing an academic paper, try to remember that your instructor is not the only member of your audience. Although the instructor is often the only person who will read the finished product, customizing a paper to his or her level of knowledge can run the risk of leaving out important information, since many instructors know far more about your topic than the average reader would. In addition, omitting information that your instructor already knows can result in a weak or unbalanced paper.

However, if you assume that your reader is less knowledgeable than you, you are likely to provide more details and better explanations, which usually results in a much stronger paper.

While it is important to consider your

instructor's needs when writing your papers, especially if he or she specifies particular requirements that you must meet, you should consider whether there is a specific intended audience for your assignment.

- What is the relationship between the writer and the reader? If you are in a position of authority over your readers, as might be the case if you are writing some sort of employment memo, your tone might be more instructive and authoritative. However, if you are writing to

someone with more power than you, such as your boss, your tone should be more formal and polite. You would make suggestions rather than issue directives, for example. Always be polite and respectful to a reader!

- How much does the reader know? Does the reader have more knowledge or less knowledge than you? Are they familiar with the jargon or terminology of this specific discipline, or will you need to define terms? Do they have the background knowledge (including the history of the topic or issue) necessary to understand your topic, or will you need to provide background information? You might also consider what information you can leave out. You want to make sure you provide all the information the reader needs, but you don't want to bog down the reader with information he or she already knows.
- Is the audience likely to agree or disagree with you? It's important to think about this before you begin writing, so you can write in a way that appeals to your audience. Sometimes you will be addressing an audience that agrees with you, so you'll be emphasizing why their point of view is a productive or beneficial one, and perhaps arguing in favor of a course of action or particular outcome. You'll want to reinforce their opinion, but try to avoid flattery or excessive compliments, since this can make you sound insincere.

On other assignments, you will be writing to an audience that already has a particular opinion or stance on your topic, and your goal will be to change their minds or alter their points of view. You might be required to write to an audience that is opposed or even hostile to your ideas. Avoid telling an audience that their opinion is wrong or incorrect; instead, try to communicate why a

change of opinion would be beneficial to them.

- What will the reader do with the information? Will the reader be making a decision or taking a course of action based on the information you provide? If so, have you included all the

information necessary for that person to make an intelligent decision or take action? Have you anticipated questions the reader might have and provided answers for them?

Unit V

Popular Culture

- Popular culture may be defined as *the products and forms of expression that are frequently encountered or widely accepted, commonly liked or approved, by a particular society at a given time.*
- Popular culture allows large heterogeneous masses of people to identify collectively.
- It serves an inclusionary role in society as it unites the masses on ideals of acceptable forms of behavior.
- Consuming pop culture items often enhances an individual's prestige in their peer group.
- Examples of popular culture come from a wide array of genres, including popular music, print, cyber culture, sports, entertainment, leisure, fads, advertising and television.
- Sports and television are arguably two of the most widely consumed examples of popular culture, and they also represent two examples of popular culture with great staying power.
- Sports are played and watched by members of all social classes, but the masses are responsible for the huge popularity of sports. Some sporting events, such as the World Cup and the Olympics, are consumed by a world community.
- Popular culture is usually distinguished from folk and high culture. Folk culture, however, represents the traditional way of doing things. Consequently, it is not as amendable to change and is much more static than popular culture.
- Folk culture is local in orientation, and non-commercial. In short, folk culture promises stability, whereas popular culture is generally looking for something new or fresh.
- Conversely, folk culture rarely intrudes upon popular culture. There are times when certain elements of folk culture (eg Turkish rugs, Mexican blankets and Irish fairy tales) find their way into the world of pop culture. Generally, when items of folk culture are appropriated and marketed by the popular culture, the folk items gradually lose their original form.
- A key characteristic of popular culture is its accessibility to the masses. It is, after all, the culture of the people. High culture, on the other hand, is not mass produced, nor meant for mass consumption. It belongs to the social elite; the fine arts, opera, theatre, and high intellectualism are associated with the upper

socioeconomic classes. Items of high culture often require extensive experience, training, or reflection to be appreciated. Such items seldom cross over to the pop culture domain. Consequently,

- Urbanization is a key ingredient in the formation of popular culture. People who once lived in homogeneous small villages or farms found themselves in crowded cities marked by great cultural diversity.
- Industrialization also brought with it mass production; developments in transportation, advancements in building technology; increased literacy; and the emergence of efficient forms of commercial printing, representing the first step in the formation of a mass media.
- All of these factors contributed to the blossoming of popular culture.

Folk and Popular Culture

Definition of Culture

A group of belief systems, norms and values practiced by a people, Recognized in One of two ways, People call themselves a culture, Others can label a certain group of people as a culture.

How are local cultures sustained?

1. Assimilation of certain groups destroyed local culture
2. Local culture was sustained through customs
3. Two goals of local cultures: keep other cultures out; keep their culture in

Diffusion of Popular Culture

1. It is characterized with Rapid Diffusion of Clothes
2. Characterized by income and job characteristics
3. Improved communication
4. Exposure to folk dress due to increased travel + television
5. Jeans-know why + how jeans became a part of popular culture
6. Snack foods and beverages
7. Preference based on what is made, grown or imported locally
8. It is also affected by background
9. It is dependent on income and

advertising **Role of TV in diffusing**

Popular Culture Significant custom

because:

1. Television is the most popular leisure Time activity
2. TV is considered to be the most important means by which culture is diffused
3. As the invasion of alien culture happens through television

Why Does Globalization of Popular Culture Cause Problems?

1. Threat to Folk Culture
2. Rising income increases demand for items valued in popular culture
3. Can lead to domination on folk culture
4. Loss of traditional values (clothing)
5. Change in traditional role of women
6. Can also cause problems in less developed nations-increase in prostitution

Environmental Impact of Popular Culture

1. Modifies nature
2. Uniform landscapes-seen to generate product recognition + greater consumption

Negative Environmental Impacts

Inefficient use of
resourcesPollution

Popular culture produces a lot of waste.

Culture and Sub-Culture

Although the two share many similarities, there is a clear difference between culture and subculture. In every society, there exists a culture. Culture can be defined as the ways of life of the people in a particular society.

It is through the culture that people learn of the accepted and expected codes of behavior. For instance, when a child is born, he is not only dependent but unaware of how to behave. It is this culture that teaches the child to behave in an accepted manner.

On the other hand, subculture refers to the ways of life that exists within the main culture. These are unique to specific groups of people. This is the key difference between culture and subculture as the main culture is shared by all members but the subculture is not. Subculture is only shared by segments in the society. Let us examine the difference between the two terms.

What is Culture?

Let us begin with the culture. As explained in the introduction culture refers to the ways of life of the people in a particular society. This includes the values, norms, mores, taboos, ideas, attitudes, etc. Through the components of culture, one can state that culture defined the accepted patterns of behavior in a particular society.

It raises awareness among the people as to how to behave in particular situations and places. Culture is not something that exists only for a limited period of time; on the contrary, it is passed on from one generation to another.

Small children are taught their culture by parents and various other social agents such as schools, religious leaders, etc. This process is referred to as socialization. This provides the child with knowledge on how to behave in the society.

In every society, culture plays a huge role as it lays a clear impact on the lives of the people. Now, let us move on to the next word, subculture.

Sub Culture

Subculture refers to the ways of life that exists within the main culture.

In a single society, there can be many different cultures based on ethnic groups, religious groups, etc. This highlights that although the people share a common culture of which everyone is a part of; within this culture there are sub-sections as well of which the individuals are a part of.

In some cases, there can be a clash between the main culture and subculture. This creates a difficult condition not only for the individuals but also for the very society as well.

Let us comprehend this through an example. In most universities, there are subcultures. These include particular ways of accepted behavior and codes of ethics. Ragging is one such practice that is a part of the University subculture.

Although this is followed only by the university students who belong to the subculture, this can create a clash with the culture of the society. In such instances, the main culture can have a huge impact on changing the subculture. As you can observe although culture and subculture are connected to one another, there is a clear difference between the two.

People's Culture versus Popular Culture

Folk Culture (People's Culture)

1. It is Small
2. It Incorporates homogeneous population
3. It is Typically rural
4. Cohesive in cultural traits
5. It Works to preserve those traits in order to claim uniqueness
6. Nonmaterial culture: beliefs, practices, aesthetics and values of a group of people

Popular Culture (Pop Culture)

1. It is Large
2. It Incorporates heterogeneous populations
3. It is typically urban
4. It experiences quickly changing cultural traits
5. Popular Culture is practiced by people across identities and across the world

High Culture vs. Popular Culture

There are so many subcultures that it would be extremely difficult to identify all of them. And, though some subcultures are basically like an open group that anyone could join, others are only available to some members of a society.

For example, the term high culture is used to describe a subculture shared by the elite in a society. In fact, many associate the word 'culture' with high culture - someone who attends the ballet and collects museum-quality artwork is often considered 'cultured.'

High culture isn't considered to be better by sociologists - just interestingly different from popular culture, which is the dominant subculture shared by the majority of a society's population. The elements of popular culture have mass accessibility and appeal.

For example, high culture includes expensive restaurants that serve caviar and play classical music. This isn't typically appealing to the bulk of citizens in the U.S. On the other hand, popular culture includes cheap fast-food restaurants that serve hamburgers and play top 40 pop music. These restaurants are so appealing that they are everywhere you look.

HERO WORSHIP

Before the release of a Rajinikanth film, the fans perform certain rituals. The 150-ft cutouts of Rajini's film posters are washed with milk and garlanded, and an offering of a coconut split in two is made. This ritual, called Abhisheka, is usually performed by Hindus for their gods in temples.

Everywhere around the theater, extreme respect, nay devotion is demanded of everyone present there. Anyone who even comes close to disrespecting their hero, the magnitude of punishment varies between a serious verbal onslaught to a proper beating by a mob of fans who won't hold

back.

This is just the tip of the iceberg. Crazy forms of hero worship can be seen in India. For instance, actors like Rajinikanth, Amitabh Bachchan and Khushboo and political figures like Sonia Gandhi and M.G. Ramachandran have had temples built in their name. Regular aartis are performed for these heroes for the sake of their prosperity and well-being.

Why Hero Worship is prevalent in India

Providing exact reasons for hero worship in India is challenging, as no real study has concluded anything substantial or concrete. But it can roughly be attributed to a complex combination of factors.

Worship during Childhood

As kids growing up in India, we're taught to worship gods or god-like figures. The teachings begin with mythology, where we're introduced to characters like Ram, Sita, and Laxman from Ramayan and Krishna from Mahabharat.

The stories bathe these characters in reverence and devotion, and our parents, grandparents and relatives, reverently believe in these gods and worship them. Children growing up in such households pick up these mannerisms from their families.

Somewhere during a child's pre-teenage to teenage years, they get introduced to god-like figures in Bollywood. They see actors on screen, punching all the bad guys in their face, loving someone wholeheartedly, being funny and leaving everyone in splits, being morally correct even in the most trying of times, and most importantly, being loved by everyone (except the bad guys).

On seeing this, children begin to think of actors as perfect human beings and as role models for life. And then as time passes, this habit grows into hero worship

You can see the same pattern in the case of other celebrities, too. Rajinikanth, for instance, had a humble beginning. He worked as a carpenter, coolie and bus conductor, struggling massively during this time, before rising to fame as the most successful and revered of South Indian actors.

His presence, both on screen and off screen, reminds people that they too can have such a rags-to-riches story. He also makes them feel like he's one of them. That he's not had a silver spoon growing up and he's fought his way up. This inspires people.

Let's not forget that hero worship also keeps us locked down in a pathetic state, where we expect a hero to save us. This tendency has been observed in Indian cricket for years. For close to 24

years, India expected Sachin to bail them out of every tricky situation. If he happened to fail at critical junctures, the team would find itself in hopeless situations and we would, more often than not, lose the game.

This same idea could be extended to everyday life. We are infuriated at being thrown around in the car because of potholes but always expect someone else to stand up and take action. We see a woman being eve-teased right before our eyes on the road but wait for someone else to get their hands dirty. The need for a hero, rather than be one yourself, is troubling.

Instead of worshipping heroes, what if we instead looked at heroes as a source of inspiration and wisdom? What if we thought of them more as role models than as god-like figures? We'd be able to produce so many more heroes that way. You and I could be heroes, and it's only possible if we start believing more in ourselves rather than sit idly and worship others.

