UNIT 9: ROLE OF MASS MEDIA IN POPULATION CONTROL

UNIT STRUCTURE

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9.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit, you will be able to-

- describe the concept and importance of mass-media
- identify the different types of mass-media
- discuss the role of different mass-media in population control.

9.2 INTRODUCTION

The present day world is facing two general problems- 'information explosion' and 'population explosion'. Information explosion means explosion of knowledge. At present, social and technological changes are taking place rapidly throughout the globe. As a result of that there is rapid expansion of information which is termed as knowledge explosion. Again, with the explosion of knowledge, there is also population explosion. The

student population is immensely increasing year by year due to the growth of population and democratisation of education with varying levels of motivation and aspiration. Both 'information explosion' and 'population explosion' have posed critical problems for education because more things to be learnt and more people to be taught. Today, there is a cry for 'more education to more people in less time'. For solving these problems successfully, educational technology consisting of various media of mass communication is essentially required. Mass media will help in both qualitative improvement and quantitative expansion of education. Mass-media are tools for the transfer of information, concepts and ideas to both general and specific groups of people. In this unit, we shall, discuss the concept and importance of mass media and also explain the types of mass media. Finally we shall highlight the role of different mass media in population control.

9.3 CONCEPT OF MASS-MEDIA

Mass media is the means used to communicate to the general public. The source from which majority of the general public uses to get their news and information is considered as mass media. Mass media means technology that is intended to reach a mass audience. It is the primary means of communication used to reach the vast majority of the general public. The most common platforms for mass media are newspapers, magazines, radio, television, and the Internet. The general public typically relies on the mass media to get information regarding political issues, social issues, entertainment, and news. Some of the most popular forms of mass media are newspapers, magazines, radio, advertisements, social media, television, Internet, and films/movies. Mass communication refers to the technology that is used to communicate to a large group, or groups of people in a short time frame.

A mass media may be defined as any means, agency, or instrument through which ideas, attitudes, impressions or images are simultaneously communicated to a large number of people. Mass-media have proved to help in classifying concepts, stimulating group and individual activities,

developing a collective awareness, changing attitudes, imposing a new structure or organisation on certain subjects and encouraging originality and creativeness. It is known as 'message multipliers'. Marshall Mcluhan calls media "extensions of man". Again G. H. Kreps and B. C. Thornton opined media as "people's ability to communicate, to speak to others far away, to hear messages, and to see images that would be unavailable without media."

In the words of Locatis & Atkinson, "Media is the means (usually audio-visual or electronic) for transmission or delivering messages. Media includes such things as prints, graphics, photography, audio communication, television, simulating games and computer."

Main functions of mass-media are mentioned below:

- One important function of mass-media is to influence and generate public opinions. Different mass media can influence the mind and heart of the people and change their opinions about different aspects of life.
- Another important function of mass media is to give vital information about different aspects to a large section of people.
- Mass-media is a very important source of entertainment. Maximum numbers of mass-media are a good source of entertainment.
- Mass-media is the vital agency for advertisement. Advertisements are of great interest to everybody.

9.4 IMPORTANCE OF MASS-MEDIA IN POPULATION CONTROL

Mass-media plays an effective role in disseminating knowledge and attitudes regarding population issues. The subject-matter of population education includes a large amount of facts and figures regarding population, health, environment, education, food and nutrition, economic development etc. All these information needs to be communicated to the students studying in schools as well as youth out of school. Importance of mass-media in population control can be summarised with the help of following points:

- Mass-media minimise the problems regarding size of objects or contents to be taught. If the content is too large or too small, then it cannot be presented before the students, it can be presented through various kinds of mass-media.
- In teaching learning process, the problem of distance can be removed by mass-media. This distance may be between teachers and the taught, classroom and the place of object to be taught etc. All these problems of distance can be removed by the use of mass-media.
- Mass-media minimise the problem of time; some events have already taken place in the past and will take place in future. They can be presented effectively by the use of media. All historical plays and films present the past whereas films based on future prediction present the future.
- There is a popular saying that:

  I hear, I forget.

  I see, I remember.

  I do, I understand.

  Mass-media helps to increase the retention of what is being learnt.

From the research conducted by Cobun (1968), it is found that:

10% of what they READ

20% of what they HEAR

30% of what they SEE

50% of what they HEAR and SEE

70% of what they SAY

90% of what they SAY and DO.

- Mass-media helps in forming clear images in the mind of the students. When we see, hear, touch, taste and smell, as our experiences are direct, learning becomes more natural and realistic.
- Mass-media increases the pace of learning by making effective use of various senses in learning. Researcher Cobun (1968) found in his study that:

  1% of what is learned is from the sense of TASTE

  1.5% of what is learned is from the sense of TOUCH

3.5% of what is learned is from the sense of SMELL

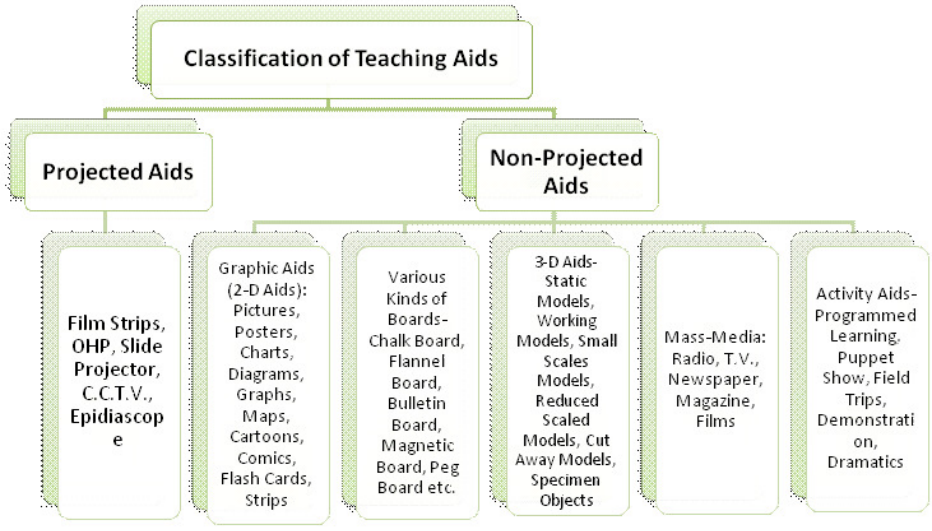
11% of what is learned is from the sense of HEARING

83% of what is learned is from the sense of SIGHT

- Mass-media provides variety of experiences. There are many sources to get the experiences in different ways. Variety of experiences helps in understanding the concepts.
- Mass-media act as a good motivator. Students work with more interest and zeal and become more attractive.
- Mass-media helps to reduce verbalism which is a major weakness of our present education system. There is a famous saying in this regard 'one picture can speak more than thousand words'.
- Mass-media increases the participation of students in learning and makes him independent.

9.5 TYPES OF MASS-MEDIA

There are different division of mass-media. One important classification of mass-media is mentioned below:





CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 1: Define mass-media.

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Q 2: Mention one important function of mass-media.

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Q 3: Write two points of importance of mass-media in population control.

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Q 4: Mention different kinds of projected aids.

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9.6 ROLE OF DIFFERENT MASS MEDIA IN POPULATION CONTROL

Mass-media help to disseminate population and health news and this has reduced the world's population considerably. They facilitate short term, intermediate and long term objectives of people. Short term objectives include exposing people to population and health concepts, creating awareness and knowledge, altering outdated or incorrect information and enhancing public service announcements. Intermediate term objectives include all of above as well as changes in attitude, behaviour and perception of social norms. Long term objectives include all of those mentioned above and in addition to focussed restructuring of perceived social norms.

In the classroom, the teacher can make use of large variety of mass-media for the teaching of different types of lessons in population education. These media are- field trips, models, pictures, charts, maps, diagrams, graphs, films, film strips, radio, black board, bulletin board, globe, school museum, gramophone, tape recorder, slide projector, epidiascope etc. These media are not only helpful in classroom teaching, but also help in creating awareness among masses about population issues. Role of some mass-media like newspaper, radio, television, other audio-visual aids are discussed in this unit.

9.6.1 Role of Newspaper

Newspaper is a media that plays an important role in spreading population awareness among masses inside the classroom as well as outside the school. The newspaper is not simply a newspaper, but also a view paper because different views of the World are included in the newspaper for reading purpose.

Role of newspaper in population control are mentioned below:

- Newspaper can create public opinion on various issues related to population growth, family planning and sex education.
- It provides up-to-date information and news about population related issues with visual materials like pictures, graphs, cartoons, diagrams, tables etc.
- Newspaper publishes different types of slogan with diagrams to create awareness among the masses.
- Different special articles are published in newspaper on the occasion of 'World Population Day' to create awareness among the people about the dangerous situation created by population growth in the world.
- Newspaper gives detail knowledge about population situation, its causes and consequences, it distributes messages for population control in the country.

9.6.2 Role of Radio

Radio is the greatest invention in the modern era which has gained tremendous popularity as an informal agency of education. It is the most potent medium of mass communication having social and moral values. In the words of R. G. Reynolds, "Radio is the most significant medium for education in its broadest sense that has been introduced since the turn of the century. As a supplement to classroom teaching its possibilities are almost unlimited. Its teaching possibilities are not confined to the five or six hours of the

school days. It is available from early morning till long midnight. By utilising the rich educational and cultural offerings of the radio, children and adults in communities, however remote, have access to the best of the world's stores of knowledge and art. Someday its use as an educational instrument will be as common place as text-books and black-boards."

Different role of radio in population control are mentioned below:

- Radio enriches the population programme of school.
- All types of information such as information relating to environment, population growth, food, health, nutrition, culture, science and technology, government policies and programmes are supplied by radio with latest information.
- Radio helps to widen the outlook of the students about the world and its population problems. In India, some of the programme broadcast from the radio concern family planning.
- Phone-in-programme of radio help the masses to clear confusion about different population problems of their areas and also know about sex related diseases.
- Different population related plays and talks broadcasted in radio act as supplementary materials of instruction to enhance the understanding of the masses.

9.6.3 Role of Television

Television is a unique media for human education as seeing is always more effective than reading and hearing. Television is regularly viewed in most of the families. There are hundreds of channels transmitting different types of programmes round the clock. Television can be an important central media in providing functional, formal, non-formal and informal education to the masses. Television helps in bringing social and cultural changes. Now-a-days, television is used in the classroom for direct instruction. Different functions of television on population control are mentioned below:

- Through television, many important things and resource materials of population education may be brought into classroom that would be unavailable under normal conditions.
- Television is a time saving device. Different teaching materials of population education can be acquired easily through T.V.
- Television draws the attention of students on a particular topic of population education. As it is an audio-visual device, the students can see and hear a particular population related topic in T.V. and thus it attracts their attention.
- Television makes the different abstract ideas of population education like fertility, mortality, sex related disease appear concrete and life like.
- Television is very effective means of modernising the outlook and attitude of people.
- Television provides need based population education to the illiterate people also.

9.6.4 Role of Audio-Visual Aids

Audio-visual aids are devices which can be used to make the learning experience more concrete, more realistic and more dynamic. In the words of C. V. Good, "Audio-visual aids are anything by means of which learning process may be encouraged or carried on through the sense of hearing or sense of sight". Different audio-visual aids play effective role in population control. Some such aids are briefly discussed below:

- **Charts:** Charts are very effective in teaching population education. While teaching population education, cause and effect charts are applied to show the relationship between population growth and socio-economic development, food and nutrition, quality of life and standard of living etc. The narrative charts are used to show events in a process such as chronological events in population policies and programmes

in India, process of urbanisation, process of institutionalisation of population education, stages of demographic transition of population etc. Again the tabulation charts are used to show the numerical data of population for making comparisons.

- **Graphs:** Graphs are pictorial representation of numerical data. Population growth rate, mortality rate, fertility rate etc. can be presented through line graph. Again population composition such as male-female ratio, literate illiterate ratio, occupational composition, religious composition, age composition of population etc. can be shown through circle graphs.
- **Maps:** Geographical details like boundaries of continents and countries, important location, distribution of population etc. can be conveniently and accurately represented through maps.
- **Pictures:** Another important visual material used in imparting population education is picture. Pictures of overcrowded places, slums, clean and dirty place, large habitant and small habitant places, small and large families, child marriage, environmental pollution etc. serve a very useful purpose as illustrative media.
- **Films or Motion Pictures:** Realistic presentation of facts is possible through motion pictures or films. They may be used for communicating ideas, attitudes, experiences, human relations etc. to the masses. This media is prove to be very effective in population education. This is highly popular audio-visual aids. Films capture slices of reality and tell a story in a language of masses. Government used films for family planning and family welfare programmes as a best practice. Films or motion pictures depicting population events, mortality, fertility, migration, unemployment, over-crowding, child marriage etc. are very useful supplement to the classroom teaching.
- **Bulletin Board:** This is a fixed board hanging inside or outside the classroom. Generally it is used for various types of articles,

pictures, cartoons, posters, maps, slogans, news items, tables etc. Teachers used this board for display of different types of articles, pictures, cartoons, posters, maps, slogans, news items, tables related to population issues. Teacher encourages the students to collect different materials related to population issues to be displayed on the board.

- **Pamphlets:** Pamphlets are used to spread population and health related messages. It is readily found in most of the health agencies, offices of private practitioners, health-care institutions and voluntary health organization.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 5: Write the views of R. G. Reynolds regarding educational significance of radio.

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Q 6: Write about the role of bulletin board on population control.

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9.7 LET US SUM UP

- There is a cry for 'more education to more people in less time'. For solving these problems successfully, educational technology consisting of various media of mass communication is essentially required.
- Mass media means technology that is intended to reach a mass audience. It is the primary means of communication used to reach a vast majority of the general public.
- Some of the most popular forms of mass media are newspapers, magazines, radio, advertisements, social media, television, Internet,

and films/movies.

- Mass-media is a very important source of entertainment. Maximum numbers of mass-media are a good source of entertainment.
- Mass-media plays an effective role in disseminating knowledge and attitudes regarding population issues. The subject-matter of population education includes a large amount of facts and figures regarding population, health, environment, education, food and nutrition, economic development etc.
- Mass-media helps in forming clear images in the mind of the students. When we see, hear, touch, taste and smell, as our experiences are direct, learning becomes more natural and realistic.
- Newspaper as a media plays an important role in spreading population awareness among masses inside the classroom as well as outside the school.
- All types of information such as information relating to environment, population growth, food, health, nutrition, culture, science and technology, government policies and programmes are supplied by radio with latest information.
- Television draws the attention of students on a particular topic of population education. As it is an audio-visual device, the students can see and hear a particular population related topic in T.V. and thus it attracts their attention.
- Audio-visual aids are devices which can be used to make the learning experience more concrete, more realistic and more dynamic. Different audio-visual aids play effective role in population control.



9.8 FURTHER READING

1) Aggarwal, J. C. (2013). *Population Education.* New Delhi: Shipra Publications.

2) Akhtar, Parveen R. (2014). *Environmental and Population Education.* Guwahati: Assam Book Depot.