UNIT-7 PRIVATE SERVICE BROADCASTING IN INDIA

UNIT STRUCTURE

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7.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

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

- describethe growth of private satellite channels in India
- elucidate the operations of major satellite TV channels in India
- analyze the impact of satellite television channels on Doordarshan (DD).

7.2 INTRODUCTION

In this unit, we are going to discuss about the growth of private television channels in India, arrival of satellite and cable television, different channels based on education, entertainment, news and history. Through this unit we are also going to discuss on major issues associated cable television and its contribution in digital convergence, impact of private channels on the functioning of Doordarshan.

7.3 GROWTH OF PRIVATE TELEVISION

With new economic policy Indian Economy has witnessed a major shift in year 1991. Due to this policy,different sectors have received major attention from the global investors. Private television in India has witnessed a major leap during the period. It has gained immense popularity due to its impressive package of entertaining programs private television in India has its root from the late seventies. Prior to the growth of cable television and private television network, Indian audiences don't have enough choices and their television viewing is limited within the corridors of Doordarshan. During that period there was rapid growth of video cassette recorder sales. The momentum for the growth of private television came in year 1990 with beginning of the Gulf War. At this stage, private television in India was restricted to the major metros and in urban society.

Some cable operators who had been running their Hindi and English movie channels added dishes and started to depend on CNN into homes. This spurred the demand for cable TV, making it a lucrative business and it attracted more individuals to the industry. With launch of Star TV (Satellite Television of Asia Region) and Zee TV the cable television network made its inroads among the larger audience segments in India. The Zee TV and STAR signed an agreement in year 1995 to promote each other's content on their respective networks. The STAR programs ads began to appear on Zee TV network. Due to this agreement Star TV network was prohibited from creating Hind-language programs, so STAR mainly focused on English-language imported programming.

In the first half of 1992, almost 4,500 households have cable networks. That figure increased to almost 9,450 homes daily in the second half of the year, according to a study conducted by market research firm. From a mere 412,000 urban households in January 1992, the number of homes with private television channels went up to 1.2 million by November 1992. The number of homes estimated in 1993 was 3.3 million according to a survey. This is estimated to have gone up to 7.3 million by January 1994, according to one estimate. In end of 1994, the number of homes

with cable television reached 11.8 million out of a total of 32.4 million TV owning homes. It its initial stage it was run by a small group of entrepreneurs. But with the advancement in technology and growing demand of private broadcasters different players came to this circuit. Incablenet - managed by the Hinduja group, Siticable - a joint venture between Zee TV promoter Subhash Chandra and Rupert Murdoch's News Television, Asianet, Hathway Cable and Datcom, Ortel Communications and RPG Netcom - a company promoted by the RPG group were some of the prominent private television groups. While the Hindujas claim to have invested close to Rs 2000 million into their network building, Siticable planned to go for a higher figure of close to Rs 2500 million. Internationally reputed cable networking companies United International Holdings, TCI and Falcon Cable of the United States started venturing into the private broadcasters market in India. Falcon Cable made a joint venture with the Hindustan Times publishing group in New Delhi called India Information Technologies Ltd. The programming of these private television networks offers movies, soap operas, talk shows etc. Due to the popular programming pattern the private television networks garnered much wider attention in comparison to DD. Sun TV was the first private channel in South India and it was launched in year 1992. It has extended its footprint in the four South Indian languages namely, Malayalam, Kannada, Tamil and Telugu. The Raj Television Network was started in 1994 and is still an important player in the South Indian cable TV provider space. The Raj Television Network operates two channels in Tamil - Raj TV and Raj Digital Plus. The content distributed by these two channels includes music videos, movies, and other entertainment programs for the entire family.The Hyderabad daily newspaper Eenadu started its own channel named Eenadu TV on 27 August 1995. The network later added regional channels in other Indian languages and built a large local news network. In latter period the channel added other regional segment in other Indian languages and build large local news network.

7.4 ARRIVAL OF SATELLITE CABLE TELEVSION

Under the new economic policies the government of India allowed

private and foreign broadcasters to engage in broadcasting business in India that lead to the growth of satellite cable television in India. The economic reforms of 1991 made liberalized access to communication technology that allowed foreign media companies and Indian companies to mark their venture into cable television business.

Through the satellite cable television, programmes are 'piped' to 'viewer' sets from an ideally placed common antenna. In India, most of the high altitude buildings such as hotel industry, public and private sector companies pioneered the distribution of cable television. Cable networks across the country have installed satellite dishes to pick up the television channels of STAR-TV and Doordarshan and to re-transmit them via cable to around 20 million homes. During the period of 1990s, there were over 200,000 cable networks in the country. Two significant names in the cable industry business were SitiCable (of the Zee TV Network) and INCABLENET (Hinduja Group). In Bombay alone, INCABLENET has 600,000, and SitiCable has 400,000 cable connections under their control. Small time cable operators control a mere 200,000 connections.

Zee TV was the first private owned Indian channel to broadcast over television. After few years, channels like CNN, Discovery Channel and National Geographic Channel made its entry in India. Star expanded its bouquet introducing STAR World, STAR Sports, ESPN and STAR Gold. Regional channels flourished along with a large number of Hindi channels and a few English channels. By 2001 HBO and History Channel were the other international channels to enter India. Between the years 2001-2003, other international private channels such as Nickelodeon, Cartoon Network, VH1, Disney and Toon Disney entered the boundaries of India. In 2003 news channels started to boom. Music channels had a great popularity in India, since its inception. Movie based channels; and soaps started dominating Indian private channels. The service of STAR is more than 300 million viewers in 54 countries and is watched by approximately 100 million viewers every day. STAR's revenues have increased from $220 million in 2003 to $245 million in 2004. STAR has emerged as India's second-largest media company after Bennett, Coleman & Co. Ltd. which is the publisher

of Times of India. ZEE TV was founded by Subhash Chandra and it became India's first Hindi private channel. This network carries broadcasts in Hindi and other regional languages of India and it is a part of the Essel Group. Another television channel mainly focusing on entertainment segment COLORS was launched on 21st July 2008. It basically focuses on fictions, daily soaps, reality shows and movies. With the growth of satellite cable television, different production houses started mushrooming in Bombay. Houses such as Balaji Telefilms, Endemol India, Wizcraft Television, Deepti Bhatnagar Productions, Playtime Creations, Sphere Origins are the significant names.

With the arrival of cable television Indian audiences got an opportunity to asses multiple channels with multiple choices. Cable television's inception has created meteoric shift on the broadcasting situation-programming, advertising and broadcasting formats underwent rapid change.

7.5 CHANNELS BASED ON EDUCATION, ENTERTAINMENT, NEWS AND HISTORY

With the arrival of satellite cable television,India witnessed a different set of television programming that provides multiple channels and multiple choices. Channels dedicated to educational programme broadcasting plays a significant role in social transformation. These channels serve larger audiences from urban to rural belts. Ever since the inception of television in India, one major responsibility entrusted on this medium is to support for the education system in the country. STV (School Television) was started in October 1961to support school formal education. The primary school telecast was undertaken in year 1975. After this step various educational projects were launched for primary education. On 15$^{th\ August}$ 1984 UGC started its CWCR (Country-Wide Classroom Project) and production facilities at 6 universities across India. . The CWCR programmes are telecasted on Vyas-24 hour's higher education channel and for one and half hours on DD1, DD Bharathi pertaining to health line and culture and for 4 hours on Gyandarshan. These programmes have created their own niche audience

on higher education in various parts of the country. In year 2000 a dedicated educational channel 'Gyandarshan' got started. CWCR shared time with IGNOU and NCERT. 2004, January 26th,' Vyas' (GD4) a dedicated 24 hours higher education channel started. 'Vyas' was another 24 hours channel launched in 26th January, 2004 and dedicated towards higher education.

In GEC (General Entertainment Channel) segment there are numerous channels both in Hindi and other regional languages. Among the significant names are STAR, Zee, Viacom 18, Sony, Raj TV, Sun TV etc. These entertainment channels assembles various programming formats such as soap operas, talk shows and interviews, reality shows, comedy, crime shows, bollywood and regional movies. Increasing penetration of television has given broadcasters more and more opportunity to grab large markets and the audiences. Digitization of technology has helped in opening up wider opportunities for the broadcasters. Now they have a larger audience pool, open to consume new content in more advanced platform. Even in Assam also there are assamese entertainment channels. Due to the advent of local entertainment channels more and more audiences are getting contents in regional languages. That creates wider market opportunities for the local masses. Most of the advertisers focus on GE segment as it gives them wider reach. Indian film industry dominated the entertainment television programming in India. Most of the national entertainment channels rely heavily on films to attract audiences. During the early period of 90s DD was a significant player in entertainment segment. Hum Log (1984), Ramayana (1987-88) and Mahabharata (1988-89) marked their popularity among the wider Indian masses both in urban and rural belts. Star TV's STAR PLUS channel offers broad-based English language entertainment programs. Another unique feature of Indian television programming has been the use of "Hinglish", which offers programs in English and Hindi on the same channel. It basically targets the sizable middle class populations who have knowledge of both English and Hindi.

In year 2000, the television Industry has witnessed the growth of 24 hour news channels. *AajTak* of India Today group was the first channel to start 24 hour news channel. The number of news channel increased

from 11 in 2002, to 36 in 2006. Especially in the last decade proliferation of news channel has carried out in a significant manner. The popularity of programs on crime, Bollywood and night life have boosted the viewership of news channels. The democratic political structure of India has also provided enough ground that helped in the growth of news channels in India.Due to the advancement in the technology and the availability of manpower the cost of launching a good 24-hour news channel dropped from Rs 215 crore in 1998, to Rs 150 crore by 2003. Currently, the amount is in the range of Rs 50-60 crores.On average, a channel takes three to four years to break even. The falling cost of technology has been matched by a rise in revenues generated by news channels. Technology has cut costs and time. There are a host of hardware and software technologies available for non-linear editing, graphics and scheduling that makes this whole process shorter and more flexible. The advertisement revenue for news channels is expected to grow at about 12-14% a year. Currently there are number of news channels in English, Hindi and other regional languages. Some of the major news channels in English language are NDTV 24X7, CNNNEWS18, NEWSX, TIMESNOW, HEADLINES TODAY. In Hindi News segment news channels such as AAJTAK, NDTV INDIA, INDIA TV, ABP NEWS are major names. Assam has also witnessed a rapid growth of regional news channels such as NEWSLIVE , DY365, NEWS18ASSAM, PRAG NEWS, PRATIDIN TIME. Advertising revenues and subscription fees are the traditional sources of income generation for channels. The new streams that channels have started to explore include rebroadcast rights and program sales, on-the-ground events, brand extension to merchandise and multi-media tie-ups, amongst others. With globalization, various news broadcasting companies are striving hard to adapt their products for local markets and tastes. These transnational companies are coming up with various regional programs that target regional market. Along with the line of economic development, market factor and cultural issue also determine the success of standardized global products. International news broadcasting organization such as BBC used the platform of Etv News channels for telecasting its programme Global India for regional

audiences. While going through the history channel segment, History TV18 is a pan-Indian television channel broadcasting programmes related to historical events, infotainment and persons. It is owned by a joint venture between A+E Networks and TV18. This channel is available in eight languages English, Hindi, Bengali, Gujarati, Telugu, Urdu. Another television channel Epic is an Indian television channel that focuses on Indian History, folklore and mythology genre. It airs programmes in Hindi and English and it was launched by Epic Televison Network Private Limited on 19th November, 2014. There are very select channels provides programme on the theme of Indian and World History; Doordarshan and its regional channels feature few programmes on this theme.

7.6 MAJOR SATELLITE TV CHANNELS- STAR TV, ZEE, SONY, MTV INDIA, and NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC CHANNEL

STAR TVstands for Satellite Television Asian Region and it's owned by 21st Century Fox.In the year 2009, News Corporation reorganized Star Asia into Star India, Star Greater China and Fox International Channels. Rupert Murdoch's News Corporation played a significant role in strengthening STAR-TV in India to compete with Zee TV. Murdoch has deep influence on the financial resources. Star TV also enjoys its access to the imported popular programmes which News Corporation produces for its Fox Network in America. These programmes are Baywatch, X-Files which gained major momentum among the Indian audiences. While discussing the motive of purchasing Star TV by Rupert Murdoch Author Shiau Hong-chi claims that Murdoch's view was based on the theory of media globalization. His main strategy was to broadcast American shows for Asian Audience with as little as effort possible. But due to the cultural and societal variances the plan was unsuccessful and Star TV had to come up with local programmes to maintain its media and entertainment businesses.

By the 1999, STAR group came up with other channels in addition to other channels with which it started its network: a. STAR Plus b. STAR

Sports c. Channel V d. STAR Mandarin (for Chinese viewers). In February 1998, Star News was launched and the broadcasting nature of Star News was bilingual (English and Hindi). It was initially run by STAR India with the support of NDTV in its production part.From 2003 onwards Star News becomes a dedicated 24 hour news channel. In 1998, English language entertainment channel Star World was launched. Programmes such as*Kaun Banega Crorepati?* (Who Will Become a Multimillionaire) added mileage to the popularity of STAR-TV. It attracted a huge audience of 100 million cable viewers. With the vivid nature of programmes Star TV has become a significant player in Indian television.

Zee TV started its functioning in year 1992, and has gained enough momentum while competing with Star TV and Doordarshan. In the late 1990s Zee TV has advertising sales approximately equal to those of Doordarshan. This satellite television channel owned and operated by Zee Entertainment Enterprises. Zee airs programme in Hindi and other regional languages and it is also available in various nations of Southeast Asia, Europe, Middle-East, Africa and North America. Subhash Chandra is the founder and owner of Zee Television. There are few popular programmes of Zee TV such as *Sa Re Ga Ma Pa, Shabaash India, Dance India Dance*.

The idea of Zee TV was born during Gulf War. Chandra while watching CNN in the chamber of Ashok Kurein, advertising executive expressed his desire to launch a television channel like CNN. Ashok Kurein replied that he would assist him in executing his pan. The value of Zee's stock rose by a 15,000 percent in seven years after the company went public in 1993.

Sony Entertainment Television is a Hindi language based entertainment channel and it was launched in year 1995. It is owned by Sony Pictures Networks India Pvt. Ltd. a sister concern of Sony Pictures Entertainment. While competing with its contemporary entertainment channels Star and Zee, Sony rose rapidly to the second position superseding Star TV and behind only Zee TV. Few of the sister channels are Sony Max, Sony Max2, Sony LIV, Sony Mix, Sony BBC Earth etc. Zee TV and Sony programmes are watched in about 75 percent of homes in Mumbai and Delhi. Programmes such as *C.I.D*. and *Kapil Sharma Show* are popular

television programmes of Sony Entertainment Channel. In year 2016 Sony unveiled its new logo and reshaped its brand identityto gain competitive edge over its contender.

MTV India was launched in year 1996 and is now part of Viacom 18 media private limited. It is a joint venture between Viacom Inc. And Network TV 18. MTV is one of the oldest music television channels in Asia. With passing the channel has come up with various reality shows apart from music albums and Hindi movie songs. Relaity programmes such as *Roadies, Splitsvilla, Coke Studio* are well known names among youths. MTV India is one of the most popular music channels in India as well as across Indian subcontinent like Banglasdesh, Nepal and Sri Lanka. Various globally acclaimed brands such as Pepsi, Levi's, Elle 18, Coco Cola, Phillips, Perfetti advertise on the platform of MTV India. It has also promoted philanthropic activities such as The Race against AIDS and Walk for Life campaigns in Delhi and Mumbai. MTV India in association with SONY Music organized concerts with Western pop idols like Diana King and Ricky Martin. MTV India features a remarkable trait of hybridity of culture when a foreign private channel appears Indian and embodies western. In year 1998, MTV India received most outstanding brand of the year award at the All India Advertising Awards Ceremony.

National Geographic Channel is owned by 21st Century Fox and National Geographic Society. The first National Geographic Channels was launched in year 1998 in the Europe and Australia. After the gap of one year National Geographic Channel was launched in Asia. In its initial stage in Asia it was functioning with STAR TV. Currently, the channel has its presence in more than 143 courtiers and viewed in more than 160 million homes. With moving time Channel also launched its other segments such as Net Geo Music, Net Geo Junior, Net Geo People, Net Geo Wild, and Net Geo Kids. NGC has bunch of popular programmes such as Banged up Abroad, Cosmos: A Space-time Odyssey, Brain Games, Taboo, and Science of Stupid.

7.7 CABLE TELEVSION THE BACKBONE OF DIGITAL CONVERGENCE

India has over 167 million households with television sets out of which 161 million have access to satellite television (TAM Report-2015). In year 2000 the number of households covered via satellite cable television connection was 35 million homes. The growth of digital broadcasting is due to the introduction of multi-phase digitisation policy by the government. Section 9 of the Cable Television Networks (Regulation) Amendment Ordinance is in the process of Digital System mandatory. In year 2015 Government of India initiated Digital India mission. Government targets to strengthen the nine Pillars of Digital India initiative. The Broadband Highway is also one of the important segments into it. With the strengthening of cable networks system across the nation the revolution of digital communication services will grow in a rapid scale. With the convergence of mass media platforms, personal computers and telecommunications opportunity the Indian government will allow to offer Internet, telephony, home-shopping and other interactive services through television set. Ordinary telephone lines are not capable enough to carry high bandwidth signal with the growth of cable technology the data carrying capacity through the optical fibre technology has gone higher. Heavy investments are being made in India to make the most from the existing cable infrastructure and to work on the digital pipelines for the transfer of video, audio and data for the potential subscribers. Zee network has invested $500 million from1999 to 2004 to become a media entertainment giant.Vijay Bhatkar of CDAC has invested $ 100 million in building a nationwide internet and cable network. Videsh Sanchar Nigam Limited has also signed a deal of $ 300 million with the Power Grid Corporation to build a high tension line across the nation. Entrepreneur like Mohan Tambe of Innomedia Technologies from Bangalore started Cable TV-based Home and Office Interactive Services (CHOIS) which allows multiple facilities of interactive services through set top boxes. The services such as pay-per-view, video-on-request, rail and bus bookings, voice mail are the major services.CHOIS service is

commercially launched through cable operators across India in Infotainment pattern. This provide viewers a whole some of Information, entertainment and other opportunities of public service. In current scenario most of the Indian households owns a personal computer. The personal computers pave the way for the digital convergence of cable, telecommunication and internet services for the larger audiences in India. With the widening of digital Internet connectivity to the millions of Indian households and access to the cable television technology through a home based television set India can grow in a more rapid manner.

7.8 IMPACT OF PRIVATE CHANNELS ON DOORDARSHAN

Private channels in India ventured into the Indian market since the 1990s. The growth of private television channels such as STAR, Zee, and SONY had created significant challenge into the popularity of Doordarshan (DD) among the Indian audiences. But due to its presence in urban and rural belt Doordarshan still holds a significant stake in viewers in comparison to the private broadcasters. The private broadcasters with their innovative and market-driven programme content targeted the audiences from the urban region, leaving DD with an audience of villagers. The threat from the private broadcasters forced DD to make several significant changes in the programming pattern. During the 1990s DD launched a separate channel known as DD-2 (Metro) aimed at urban audiences, 15- regional channels, a sports channel, a 24-hour news channel and an international channel. Doordarshan also started broadcasting 2.5 hours of Music Television on DD-1 and other cartoon programmes. DD also agreed with the CNN for exchange programmes related to technical assistance and purchase. Due to the immense competition from the private broadcasters, the role of Doordarshan as a public broadcaster focused towards education and development, devoted towards primarily a commercial broadcaster. In the 1990s, Doordarshan placed decreasing emphasis on its role as a catalyst for social change, promoting national integration, enhancing maternal health and child health and working for the promotion of literacy standards. Instead,

it became more concerned with the advertising dollars and reconfigured itself with various plans and programmes to withstand the competition from private broadcasters. To grab international audiences and to compete globally with private broadcasting networks DD launched its International channel DD India. This channel mainly targets Indian audiences living abroad with its social, cultural and political programming. In a bid to revive DD's viewership and to compete with private broadcasters, Prasar Bharati made the significant advancement in the field of technology. The advancement in the broadcast technology of DD News helped in racing with other private news channels. Doordarshan also revamped its prime-time evening slot with new entertainment programmes that help in competing with other private entertainment channels.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q1. Write a short note on the growth of private television channels in India.

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Q.2: How far the growth of private channels impacts the functioning of Doordarshan?

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Q.3: What are the different categories of tv channels operational in India?

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Q.4: Which are the major private news channels functioning in India?

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7.9 LET US SUM UP

Let us summarize some of the important points of this unit in the following way-

- The momentum for the growth of private television came in year 1990 with beginning of the Gulf War.
- With launch of Star TV (Satellite Television of Asia Region) and Zee TV the cable television network made its inroads among the larger audience segments in India.
- With the growth of satellite cable television, different production houses started mushrooming in Bombay. Houses such as Balaji Telefilms, Endemol India, Wizcraft Television, Deepti Bhatnagar Productions, Playtime Creations, Sphere Origins are the significant names.
- During the 1990s DD launched a separate channel known as DD-2 (Metro) aimed at urban audiences, 15-regional channels, a sports channel, a 24-hour news channel and an international channel. Doordarshan also started broadcasting 2.5 hours of Music Television on DD-1 and other cartoon programmes. DD also agreed with the CNN for exchange programmes related to technical assistance and purchase staff-training.

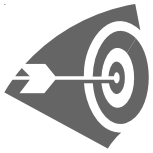


7.10 FURTHER READING

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7.11 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Ans to Q. No 1: Private television in India has its root from the late seventies. Prior to the growth of cable television and private television network, Indian audiences don't have enough choices and their television viewing is limited within the corridors of Doordarshan. The momentum for the growth of private television came in year 1990 with beginning of the Gulf War. Zee TV was the first private owned Indian channel to broadcast over television. After few years, channels like CNN, Discovery Channel and National Geographic Channel made its entry in India. Star expanded its bouquet introducing STAR World, STAR Sports, ESPN and STAR Gold. Regional channels flourished along with a large number of Hindi channels and a few English channels. By 2001 HBO and History Channel were the other international channels to enter India.

Ans to Q. No 2: The growth of private television channels such as STAR, Zee, and SONY had created significant challenge into the popularity of Doordarshan (DD) among the Indian audiences. The private broadcasters with their innovative and market-driven programme content targeted the audiences from the urban region, leaving DD with an audience of villagers. The threat from the private broadcasters forced DD to make several significant changes in the programming pattern. During the 1990s DD launched a separate channel known as DD-2 (Metro) aimed at urban audiences, 15- regional channels, a sports channel, a 24-hour news channel and an international channel. Doordarshan also started broadcasting 2.5 hours of Music Television on DD-1 and other cartoon programmes. DD

also agreed with the CNN for exchange programmes related to technical assistance and purchase.

Ans to Q. No 3: There are different segments of television channels active in India. The popular categories are entertainment, news, sports, educational, lifestyle, movie and infotainment. Technological advancement and satellite revolution had escalated the growth of television channels in India.

Ans to Q. No 4: News and infotainment has become a major source for revenue generation in television industry in India. Apart from Doordarshan there are multiple private broadcasters associated with this segment. The important names in this segment are India Today Group, Times Group, NDTV, ABP group and News 18. From year 2000 India's television industry has witnessed rapid expansion of 24x7 news channels. To compete with various private news broadcasters DD has also started DD News.



7.12 MODEL QUESTIONS

A. Very short questions

Q.1 : Who is the owner of Zee Televsion?

Q.2 : What is the full form of STAR group?

Q.3 : Which DD channel is dedicated for International audiences?

Q.4 : What is the function of CHOIS service?

B. Short Questions (Answer each question in about 150 words)

Q.1 : Write a short note on the impact of Doordashan with the advent of private television channels in India.

Q.2: Explain the role of educational channel in India.

Q.3 : Write a short note on following TV channels: a. Star TV b. Zee Group .

C. Long Questions (Answer each question in about 300-500 words)

Q. 1: Write a detailed note on the growth of private television channels in India.

Q.2 : Explain the growth of digital convergence in India and how cable television technology has helped in its advancement.