

NATIVE MEDIA IN INDIA

COMMON COURSE IN ENGLISH

III SEMESTER

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UNIVERSITY OF CALICUT

SCHOOL OF DISTANCE EDUCATION

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SCHOOL OF DISTANCE EDUCATION
STUDY MATERIAL
III SEMESTER
COMMON COURSE IN ENGLISH
NATIVE MEDIA IN ENGLISH

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MODULE I

1. CONVERGENCE OF MEDIA MODULE 1

The nineteenth century England witnessed the industrial revolution, characterized by massive streamlined production. Even in those times, the print, visual and cyber media existed independently. But in today's world, everything is going digital and there is a visible convergence of all these media.

What is convergence?

Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) defines convergence in the simplest manner using three circles. The first one represents print media which includes books, newspapers and journals. The second circle includes the visual media which encompasses films, documentaries and the likewise. Internet and cyber media are the components of the third circle. According to MIT, these three circles existed distinctly earlier. But now the three circles overlap- they come together and the current situation is one where they cannot exist independently. The writer of this piece, Sashi Kumar uses an example from his experience to delineate this convergence. At Asian School of Journalism, he asked a fresh batch of 200 students that how many of them read newspapers. On hearing this question only four hands shot up in the air. Though the initial thought about it was shocking, on second thoughts he came to an understanding that the romantic idea of sipping the morning tea and reading the newspaper is of the bygone era. However he says that this experiment does not mean that the present generation is ignorant. They are connected to the vast arena of information through internet. They would know about the issue and all the possible interpretation on it and around it. He uses the example of hyperlink, where one can navigate from one news to another by a single click or touch. Thus the mobile or the tablet or the computer screen converges newspaper, radio, television and internet.

Problem Area:

When one especially looks at the situation India is in, there is a major problem in achieving a complete convergence in India. India is the second largest populous country where rural and urban divide is enormous. The urban population is highly privileged as far as digital penetration is concerned. Nevertheless mobile phones especially are sinking into rural areas. When the most ordinary persons have access to mobile phones and other gadgets, it empowers them. We are aware of the new mission by our government called "Digital India". This is also for attaining the same goal of convergence in the rural area.

Social media:

In contrast to the formal media, social media though informal is dynamic and fast changing and has much impact on today's society. All the discussions and issues are taking place in the social media which even led to the uprisings for democracy in Tunisia, Egypt and other countries. In the recently constituted 16th Lok Sabha election also, we see the thorough campaigning for the party and canvassing for vote through Facebook, Twitter and Whatsapp.

Social media versus formal media

Sashi Kumar prefer social media to formal media due to its dynamic nature. He also says that formal media will have a lot of agendas. For example formal media might only celebrate the achievements of a certain political party and constantly criticizes the other party. Social media does not have such polarizing tendencies and offers a platform that's is democratic, where everyone's voice is registered. In addition to that mass movements like Occupy Wall Street happened only due to the existence of social media. The emergence of an alternate party like AAP also owes it to social media. It attracts the ordinary people and helps them to build tempo. Otherwise in a heavily competitive world, it would be so hard to emerge as the ruling party with comparatively meagre funding.

Oral and Literary Media

It is impossible that one should be literate to use social media. He takes up the example of Kerala where we are close to 100% literate. However he stresses on the fact that oral tradition has a greater base than written tradition in general. He takes the example of television, where one does not need to be literate to attain information from TV. In social media also there is video streaming where information can be attained using videos. Thus he gives more weight to oral tradition. He even takes an example from Greek mythology. When the Greek God Hermes invented writing, the Egyptian ruler Thoth commented that even though it is a wonderful invention, memory would become more and more redundant. He does not totally undermine writing. He agrees with the contribution of writing to modernism and the glorification of human beings. But writing denotes absence, he says. One does not need to write to a person who is beside him/her. Speech and hearing when imply presence, and writing is for the absent person.

Oral tradition and Convergence

Oral tradition is being molded in such ways that they occupy a part of convergent technology in media. However oral tradition is not being seen in the same degree in every media. It is prevalent in social or the informal media. But it has not been seen widely in formal media. However, we are living in a time of convergence taking place at a much faster rate. Sashi Kumar says that the say is not distant where media would rule the converging world. It would be the place of the common people. He also acknowledges people who are allergic to social media and have not joined it. However, even they are caught up in the grand plan of convergence – a web that knits the whole world across the seas.

Questions

1. What is media convergence?
2. Differentiate between oral and literary tradition
3. What did Thoth comment on the invention of memory?

2. YOUNG INDIANS HAVE BECOME MORE SUPERSTITIOUS

This is an interview with an eminent cosmologist Jayant Vishnu Narlikar, who along with his mentor developed the conformal gravity theory. He talks in this interview about the increasing superstition the new generation is holding on to. Firstly, he responds to question on the attitude of Indians towards science. According to him this could be divided into two: scientific research and scientific temper. He quotes Jawaharlal Nehru, who had reiterated in his *Discovery of India* that Indians should scientifically align themselves. Unfortunately, that has not materialized even after 6 decades of India's independence. He contrasts this to the increase in superstitious beliefs especially among the urban folk. They proudly display their brand new smart phones and other gadgets but simultaneously indulge in the euphoria that god-men are creating.

Education has become more inclusive, but the quality has taken a steep. There are countless students in each class and it is very hard for the teachers to talk something outside the syllabus which might distract the decorum of the class, and it is painstaking to bring it to normal owing to the sheer number. The students are also overburdened with syllabus, the TV shows, computer games and social media. They do not have time for recluse or self-introspection. They are just crammed with a lot of information that they cannot comprehend analyze. In addition to that, on the government's side, the budget allocation for Research and Development (R & D) in a science and technology has decreases and is a measly 0.8 percent. It is imperative that the government allocate greater funds to the scientists, else India would always lag behind in original scientific research.

Talking about the media, it is disturbing that when a solar eclipse occurs, it has animated panel discussions on it by calling an astrologer and a scientist! That is the irony of the situation. Most of the media houses have their in house astrologers. In a survey it was found out that the vernacular newspapers reserve more space for science related news than the English language dailies. The ones who read the English dailies, who usually hail from upper class societies are indeed the most disinterested in scientific news and are apparently more superstitious than the grass root people. India has many space age superstitions still prevalent like the Bermuda triangle and flying saucers which were demystified long ago but has not infiltrated the Indian psyche. Indians are always lovers of fables and fantasies, but such tales with no scientific basis is detrimental to the youth and is against the Fundamental Duty envisaged in our constitution which is to develop a scientific temper. He also talks about E.M Forster and the close friendship they had while in Cambridge. He was 28 then and Forster 80. Narlikar says he had a bell connected from Forster's room which Forster rang at any time of health emergency. Though they were from two different generations, they bonded very well and Narlikar considers him as one of his greatest inspirations.

Answering the question of the comet Swift Tuttle hitting the earth in 2126, Narlikar replies that it can be reverted by using a nuclear device which will deflect the comet. However, he said that he was more interested to see the way people would respond to it. When the superstitious world took its conventional way, the scientific world was quick in talking about the methodologies to avert the danger.

Questions

- 1. How has media amplified superstitions?**
- 2. Comment on Narlikar's relationship with Forster.**

3. INDIA DID NOT GET ANYTHING WRONG

This is an interview with the world's richest person and Microsoft ex-CEO Bill Gates who is currently steering a huge philanthropic movement under the name Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. Like his earlier times on business he is shuttling from one country to another with a busy schedule. However, the purpose is different. Earlier, he wanted to sell his product but now he is extending his hands to the deprived and the underprivileged. He contrasts his earlier visits to India saying that it only shows the rosy side of the country and he would not have delved into Bihar or would have understood the plight of the poor in the cities. He talks about the complacent attitude of the rich in India but do not acutely complain them for it. He says that it is the same in any plush locality all over the world that they do not have a clear picture about the poverty and hardships of the majority. Only if people voluntarily step out from their comfort zones, they could realize the turmoil of the vulnerable.

Earlier at Microsoft, there was this brimming energy about the American dream on software. Bill Gates is not reducing it into nothing. Nevertheless the monetary discussions now is much simpler since he is not asking money from anyone, he wittily remarks. He does not downsize his Microsoft job and passionately speaks about it as the best job he could have in his 20s and 30s. But now with his partner and wife Melinda, he is of the opinion that in his 40s, this is the best job he can do.

To the question that is people would be afraid of the foundation like they were of Microsoft due to its sheer vastness, Gates retorts saying that Microsoft just sold products in a highly competitive industry. Apple and Google and others are its huge contenders. He does not understand the fear factor. Switching on to his foundation he says that it is imperative that more and more people come to the forefront to allay poverty and sickness. He also had congratulatory words for India's growing health sector and also added that the government should not shy away from contributing to research and development in communicable diseases which mostly hit the poor who cannot afford exorbitant out of the pocket spending. He also suggests that schemes like NRHM, which has a huge workforce should be adequately skilled and the scale of measurement of parameters of health should be conducive to the local health environment.

He also takes a jibe against the cynical attitude of the people that the government is indulging in excessive pilferage. The people should be proactive about the schemes and policies of the government. Simultaneously the government should also be upkeep and improvise on its strategies. On the question why he chose to concentrate more on HIV than TB, he responds that TB is more entangled in the Indian society and is manifested at different levels. But AIDS is more lethal and there are chances of a slow epidemic of AIDS which was seen in a nascent stage in Mumbai. AIDS could also be managed more specifically by eliminating different sections of people and zeroing in on sex workers and the likewise. He does not deteriorate India's standing. On the contrary he says that it is pretty good and is on the road to improvement. He takes the example of Kerala and how well it has performed on the various parameters of the Human Development Index. He says simply that the key to India's development would lie in the transformation of UP's HDI into Kerala's. Moreover, he advocates people to pay more taxes universally, so that more money can be put in activities pertaining to social justice.

He also says that it would be very hard for him to choose between Microsoft and the Foundation. Both were born out of his passion. Microsoft had been this fanatical passion of his youth which helped him a lot to build the foundation. The foundation on the contrary has a beautiful romantic justice to it. He humbly says that reducing India's child deaths from 1.7million to 1 million will be the biggest gift he can ever get and is not keen or enthusiastic about a Nobel prize in comparison to the satisfaction of the former.

Questions:

- 1. How does Bill Gates differentiate his position at Microsoft and at the Foundation?**
- 2. What is his take on India and its social schemes?**

MODULE II

1. SATYAMEVJAYATE

A developing nation which is on its way to surpass China as the most populous country, the young India is still struggling to eliminate basic vulnerabilities like poverty and illiteracy let alone providing with an entertainment allowance or facility. Thus it is television sets which occupy tiny spaces in the living rooms of the common people that have revolutionized normal conversations. *SatyamevaJayate* is one such program which indeed showcases the philanthropic aspect of the entertainment industry. It has played an immense role in making people aware of what goes on in the society clandestinely, behind closed doors, where screams are suppressed and silence rules. The man who is steering the show is none other than Aamir Khan who has a larger than life image in the public psyche, since Bollywood is as much glorified as it is inbuilt in people's hearts. So when the legend itself comes out of his way and uses extremely simple language to make the people understand the atrocities happening around, it has a huge impact.

One of the episodes called *Break The Silence* is an eye-opener for every one beyond the divisions of class or status. It showcased the real life experiences of the victims of child sexual abuse. It was shocking to know that until 2012, there was no law in the IPC to criminalize these pedophiles on specific grounds. Child abuse is gender neutral was another insight. The heartbreaking stories of many inculcated in the audience not only emotions of pain but also of the need for affirmative action. However, the show could have been completely comprehensive if they included women pedophiles. The show was only concentrating on the victims who were both girls and boys, but failed to put forward that even women engage in child sexual abuse. Nonetheless the episode was a brilliant one where the host came up with tactics that could be used to educate or make the children aware of the "dangers" lurking around which would be really helpful to the parents who are often helpless due to the lack of words in the child lingua franca for it.

Another episode, *Every Life is Precious* throws light on to the health sector in India. The show referred to statistics that show the redundancy in public health sector and on the contrary a fast multiplying private health sector. The private medical colleges take in exorbitant donations from medical students which leads to the secondary exploitation of the patients by the doctors by prescribing unnecessary medications and diagnosis tests. This episode brought into focus the serious issue of medical negligence and reiterated that a prominent share of our GDP should be spend on medical sector with complementary health insurance which will reduce out of the pocket spending on health. India is a pharmaceutical giant and it is high time that the country goes on a progressive route where health care is totally inclusive.

The episode *Dignity for All* shows our complacency and rudeness towards an injustice that we perceive in our everyday lives. The idea of manual scavenging and dry latrines are as old as human origin. The manual scavengers are called as chamar, who are mostly placed in the 5th rung of the caste hierarchy. Even after the prohibition of this gross deed by enacting a law, the system continues to exist. The most paradoxical example is that of the Indian railways which is the largest open toilet in the world. The episode was pertinent in making us understand the plight of the humans suffering from a historical injustice, their crime being an accidental birth in the lowest caste. Doing away with the caste system in paper as well as walking the talk is the need of the hour.

Break The Silence

One shocking issue unraveled by Aamir Khan on the show about less-talked about Child Sexual Abuse. Parents always believed that a child is safest at home, but if home turns out to be the place that torments or haunts their children, then where do we turn our heads. Tears kept on flowing as the stories of agonized and painful incidents bore by victims kept on disentangling. According to a survey conducted in 2007, there were 53 percent of children who were sexually abused at a very young age and it embodies both the genders. Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Assam and Delhi had reported the highest percentage of such incidents at that the time of the survey.

The survivors who came forward and unfolded the grave and afflicting truth of their lives were Cinderella Prakash and Harish Iyer. Cinderella bore the abusive torments by a 55 year old relative of her, at the age of 12. She could not divulge the truth to her parents, only choice was to run away from the abuser every time he stepped into her house. On the other hand was Harish, who endured his suffering for 11 year span and was traumatized to the core. He tried disclosing it to his mother but was shunned to stay silent as his mother thought about what the world would say. She now regrets why she didn't she pay heed earlier which could have saved up her child's years which were meant to be memorable but were made horrid by a certain relative who not only molested Harish alone but also brought along others and all Harish could do was stay mum. But one day he accumulated all his courage and with a sudden adrenaline rush blurted out a big "No" which was the end to the torturing times he had through. The flabbergasting fact was that out of the 53.22 % sexually abused children, 53 % were boys. In maximum cases the abuser is someone close to the family and they very smartly play their moves so as no one gets to know their filthy crime.

Anuja Gupta of NGO RAHI (Recovering and Healing from Incest) stated the reasons as to why children don't speak up against such maltreatment, it is because parents on one hand say that they are keeping an open forum for their children to tell them anything, and on the other hand, they themselves don't talk about such things. Nishit Kumar of the agency Childline, talked about the Anchorage shelter case which is being battled in courts since last 11 years and even reveals another dumbfounding fact that there are no laws under the Indian Constitution dealing with Child Abuse and there are many loopholes in the judicial machinery. There were more victims who spoke of their agony on AV and shared how their haunting past has affected their present lives. The surprising revelation by experts was that the abuser sub-consciously thinks that he is not committing any crime and the child knows what is happening with him/her and also enjoys.

Towards the end, as Aamir had promised in the beginning of the show that the latter part of the show must be watched by the youngies even if the former being very hard-hitting for young minds shouldn't be, there was a workshop ,with children youngest being 5 and oldest being 10 years, educating them about "Good Touch, Bad Touch" via means of diagrams with three danger areas on their bodies being-chest, between the legs and bottom. He gave them pointers and asked them to confide their trust in someone whom they can trust implicitly and ask them to be their "Bodyguard", scream if they feel they are in danger and run to the nearest safe place where they can seek shelter in times of danger.

There is a bill underlying in the Parliament and still to become a law, Aamir appealed to the masses to give him support in pleading the Government to pass the law of Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Bill in Parliament and pledge their support against child sex abuse. Sri Devi who was the inspirational star that had positive effects on the survivor Harish Iyer and helped him pass those

years of excruciating pain both mentally as well as physically, along with his German Shepard dog, pleasantly surprised Harish and his each reaction was eye-pleasing. She also signed the letter which Aamir would send to the Parliament, requesting to pass the Bill as soon as possible

Every Life is Precious

The Fourth Installment of Aamir's reality check on society and awakening series of Satyamev Jayate, dealt with the greedy medical practitioners who have made the whole Indian Medical system their business grounds and are exploiting people's blind trust on them. It was an episode of shocks rather than tears. We always have heard and believed that Doctor is someone next to God, God's incarnation on Earth, but if the same person breaks our trust into millions of pieces and stamps it under their feet, how vulnerable are we supposed to feel. The profession is riddled with unscrupulous doctors and hospitals out to make big bucks at the cost of patients and in a nation like India where still 65% of the population cannot afford to afford medical treatment such scenario worsens with each passing day.

The show opened with the dreadful stories of patients and their families who have been a victim of the money-making game so that Doctors could extract money out of them. VS Venkatesh could have healed the infected finger with an antibiotic in spite he had to undergo 4 surgeries, and spent around 2 lakhs for no required reason. Arvind Kumar had spent around 1.5 lakhs for just tests and could have healed with Rs.15 ORS packet. Such fraudulent practices left all flabbergasted, with the crude and cruel methods doctors in India have adopted.

Major Pankaj Rai's wife, Seema, was suffering from a kidney ailment. Without her family's consent, the doctors took her to the operation theatre for kidney and pancreas transplant. Major Rai had to pay around Rs 8.25 lakh for the surgery and Seema lost her life too. Doctors didn't even inform the family about her demise and the switched off their mobile phones. This is sheer irresponsible and unaccountable behavior on part of the doctors. Owner of a Path lab in Mumbai, Dr. Anil Pichad used to overcharge his patients and used to give "cuts" to Doctors, has after a personal tragedy determined to be a corruption free individual, he performs all tests at a very low rate as compared to others. The shocking stories of women in Kowdipally village of Andhra Pradesh who were asked by doctors to get their uterus removed, for more than half of them it was not even required, put light on how the doctors exploited these poor farmers who had to sell of their lands, take loans, etc in order to derive money out of them.

Major General (Retd) Som Jhingon, was the ex-chairman of Medical Council of India, who resigned after being disillusioned by the way the body functioned. He said it was only about money, money and money and MCI of India, is full of corruption with its roots spreading out at a pacing rate. Dr K.K. Talwar, Chairman, Board of Governors, Medical Council of India revealed that since 2008 there is not even one case where the license of a doctor have been cancelled. Dr Talwar had no satisfying reply to Aamir's questions. Aamir had laid before him the statistics of England for the years 2008-10, how many licenses had been permanently cancelled of Doctors in England, and in India it's been not even one.

Dr Devi Prasad Shetty, founder and chairman, Narayan Hrudayalaya group of hospitals, Bengaluru explained that under their various schemes every farmer pays only Rs 10 per month and the Government adds around Rs.30 or more to it so that the costs are born not solely by the farmers but jointly. And such cheap operation rates are possible because the no. of operations performed in Dr. Shetty's hospitals are around 35 per day, so that makes it more cost-effective. Likewise, Dr. Samit

Sharma, IAS, Managing Director, Rajasthan Medical Services Corporation revealed the use of Generic medicines and runs a shop which sells such medicines which are in no way inferior to the branded ones. Aamir, with the help of Dr. Shamit Sharma from Rajasthan, enlightened viewers by informing them about generic medicines that are available at affordable cost. Dr CM Gulhati, Editor, Monthly Index of Medical Specialties says that health services aren't a priority in India. He said the government should spend at least six percent of the GDP on the health services.

The episode was well-packaged and executed and the statistics disclosed were astounding. Like always the show ended on a musical note with beautiful composition by Ram Sampath and his team.

On Gender Issues

Since its launch in 2012, STAR India's groundbreaking social awareness series *SatyamevJayate* has become the premier platform through which Indians can discuss their society's most pressing issues. The series features Bollywood star Aamir Khan in conversation with victims, activists, and experts, as they explore such subjects as the caste system, alcoholism, and political corruption. On April 22 at the 6th annual [Women in the World Summit](#) in New York City, Khan spoke at length about how the show has addressed women's rights issues over the course of its three-season run.

Speaking in conversation with ZainabSalbi, founder of the nonprofit Women for Women International, Khan explained that women's issues have been a part of *SatyamevJayate* since the very first episode, which addressed the issue of [female feticide](#). That episode alone, streamed digitally and broadcast on multiple STAR channels in six local languages, was watched by roughly 50 million people, and now, years later, its effects are still being felt.

Khan said that since that first episode aired in 2012, census figures showing 914 girls born compared to 1,000 boys in the states of Maharashtra and Rajasthan (the worst states on record in terms of gender ratio) had changed radically. Today, the ratio has improved by 50 to 60 points, and local leaders have pointed to *SatyamevJayate* as a major contributing factor.

As the show has gone on, it has continued to consistently address issues facing women and girls in India, from domestic violence to the dowry system to sexual violence and rape. In its most recent season, which aired on STAR in the fall of 2014, one episode framed violence against women as not just a women's issue but as a [men's issue](#).

"Unless we redefine what it is to be a man, things aren't going to change," Khan said to Salbi. "You cannot raise a boy telling him not to cry. You are in effect distancing him from emotion and then you are surprised when he grows up and beats his wife." The talk also gave Khan a chance to reflect on the success of the show, which has garnered an audience of an estimated 517 million viewers and raised more than \$45 million for its NGO partners. "No one would have imagined that a show that speaks of such heavy topics would be so popular across the country," Khan said. "And the fact that it's so popular really speaks well of Indians today. We have issues, we have problems, but we want to move ahead and improve ourselves. That's what the success of the show tells us."

Questions:

1. What is the impact of social reality shows on society?
2. Write a note on *SatyamevJayate*?
3. What do you think about child sexual abuse?
4. Do you think there is gender divide in the modern India? Comment.
5. What is the impact of mushrooming of private medical colleges taking in exorbitant capitation fees on the health fabric of the society?

2. TELEVISION COMMERCIALS

Television commercials are one of the best advertising method in the modern world. Earlier, a company flaunting itself in a TV advertisement enjoyed great fanfare. Nevertheless, these days, there are many options for advertisers other than television. A detailed look into the advantages and disadvantages of television advertisements will show great insight

Advantages:

1. High reach: A single advertisement via satellite reaches millions of viewers at the same time
2. Low cost per contact: The humongous cost paid by the company to TV channels may be misleading because it reaches millions of people thus the per-capita expenditure of the company is very less.
3. High intrusion value: The advertisements that appear on TV are not in boring prints, but carry high quality videos with catchy statements, trendy music and vibrant colors. This would bag the reader's attention involuntarily.
4. High frequency potential
5. Quality creative opportunities
6. Segmentation possibilities through cable outlets

Disadvantages:

1. Greater clutter: Nowadays advertisements steal a lot of time frame and hence viewer's attention span is less. Moreover if the advertisement series is lengthy, the viewer might as well change the channel. Thus the advertisements figuring in the middle segment will have less recall. Most viewers use the DVR to cope up with clutter where they record the program to watch it at a later time.
2. High cost per advertisement
3. Low recall due to clutter, which is already mentioned in point 1
4. Channel surfing during commercials

These days to engross the readers' attention advertising companies are trying out creative tactics using the four mass communication tools- advertising, sales promotion, events and experiences and publicity. One example in the book is about the Zoozoos by Vodafone which first came in 2009 IPL tournament. The Zoozoos created a talk among the viewers and they eagerly waited for the heavy bottomed, funny looking characters. Many advertising companies are emulating Vodafone Zoozoos these days. Thus Television advertisements, in fact have a huge impact on the viewers choice.

Questions

1. What are the advantages of Television advertisements?
2. What are the disadvantages of Television advertisements?
3. How has the Zoozoos made an impact in the advertisement arena?

3. ONLY AN AXE AWAY

The film narrates the history of a unique campaign to save the Silent Valley from destructive development. The Silent Valley was declared a National Park in 1984. The Kerala State Electricity Board plans to build a dam on the fringes of the Silent Valley National Park at Pathrakkadavu, across the river Kunthi. Nature lovers are concerned that the proposed dam will harm the pristine evergreen forests in the valley. This film shares the anxieties of the people of Kerala about the future of the Silent Valley. Only An Axe Away is a well-researched documentary on the struggle to preserve the Silent Valley. The struggle to save Silent Valley from hydroelectric projects has been well documented by the media. But *Only An Axe Away*, by activists P. Baburaj and C. Saratchandran, who were at the forefront of the protests, takes one behind the scenes and makes a case for the bio-diversity of the valley to be preserved for future generations. The film begins with a visual showing the consequences of deforestation at Attapady near Silent Valley, which is also known locally as Sairandhri. The makers then go on to chronicle the first protests to save the forests in the 1970's when the Kerala State Electricity Board attempted to build a dam across the River Kunthipuzha that carves the valley. The film documents one of the first studies done of the valley by the Kerala Forest Research Institute (KFRI), which revealed the rich bio-diversity and several species of plants and animals that are not known to exist anywhere else in the world. The early activists and researchers are given plenty of minutes to make their case, and the activists include a number of big literary figures who played a major role in the protests — poets Sugathakumari and P.V. Krishna Warriar. As a result of the vociferous protests, the project was dropped and the Silent Valley National Park was formed which protected 89.5 sqkms of tropical rainforest. But the spectre of the forests drowning emerged again in 2002 when the Pathrakadavu Project was announced just 500 metres from the park boundary. The film documents the second series of protests and questions the model of development that India is pursuing. The makers also take pains to illustrate that it is just not environmental activists who are up in arms but also local people. Locals who depend on the river for their livelihoods are again given generous minutes and one man even threatens to blow up the dam. Overall the documentary is well-researched and that is a result of the directors' involvement in the struggle. If there is one negative, then it has to be the visuals of the valley, which could have been better.

Questions

1. How well does *Only an Axe Away* put forward the concerns of nature lovers in Kerala?
2. Are such documentaries serving the purpose of conserving nature, comment.

MODULE III

1. THE INTERNET AND YOUTH CULTURE

Some time ago, one of the most debated topics in various panels was whether television is a good or bad influence on the adolescents and the youth. The debate continued without reaching a fixed conclusion. After sometime this faded away because something more appealing and more pervasive took up the scene. That is the internet which has become a huge web that envelops almost all the gadgets we use. Hence, the question these days is the role of internet on adolescents and this is exactly what Gustavo S Mech is going to deal in his essay *The Internet and Youth Culture*.

He did an extensive study looking at the literature on the internet by the youth. The literature here means anything and everything contributed to the many websites, be it just comments, posts, statuses, various blogs, poems, articles, opinions and the likewise. While doing that he discovered that there are various angles through which one can look at the impact of internet on the youth. Out of these different perspectives he picks out two major perspectives. They are firstly, technological determinism and secondly, social construction of technologies. Now let us look at the two phrases in detail.

TECHNOLOGICAL DETERMINISM:

This can be begun with an illustration. Some time ago, when computers were trying to hit the Indian consumer market, it was a gadget which occupied a space in the living room of houses. As a matter of fact, whatever the children pondered on the computer were almost always under adult supervision. However, gradually things began to change when the size of the computers drastically reduced and laptops and palmtops flooded the market. The internet also transformed greatly. Earlier when one needed the heavy modem which was not portable, now we have multiple accesses to internet like wi-fi, li-fi and cellular internet facilities like 2G, 3G and 4G.

Apparently computers and internet have thus moved from the living room to the bed room. The generation that has grown up with internet in their bedroom is the youth and adolescents of this time. When we say the phrase technological determinism it is exactly this crowd that we are taking into consideration. They are called 'net generation', 'millennium generation' and 'digital natives.' For them these digital spaces are inevitable for fostering their interaction and also for building up their own identity. In the modern times, it is said that if one does not have a presence in the many social networking sites, then he/she is invisible and irrelevant.

This acute digitization of their bedroom has led to the development of totally different values, behavioural patterns and ideologies among them compared to the earlier generations. They are more artistic and animated in their presentation, thanks to the immense potential for animation and entertainment that these gadgets offer. Moreover they are characterised as optimistic and talented with a flair for team work. They rely completely on the internet for vaster information and do not greatly use the traditional sources like libraries.

Thus technological determinism in a nutshell means the individual existence of technology that has the potential to condition the social environment and thus drive social change by itself. This social change will happen immaterial to whether the society wants the change to come

SOCIAL CONSTRUCTION OF TECHNOLOGIES:

This is a concept that is opposite to the technological determinism idea that we have dealt with in detail. Earlier under technological determinism, we said that a technology is all pervasive and potent in shaping the social characters. But Gustavo S Mech intervenes and warns that one should

not stick to that idea only and there are many perspectives to be looked upon. There could not be one angle, but multiple angles about the impact of internet. The second angle, which thus works opposite to technological determinism as said earlier, propounds that it is the society which shapes technology and not always vice versa. Different social groups differ in the meaning they attach to technology and the utilities they extract using these.

Most importantly they can be seen as social products that determine hierarchy and power structure of a society. Not everyone is equipped to own every kind of technological gadgets and thus these gadgets are intricate indicators of the class and power struggles in a society.

Moreover, it is not just the internet giants who can determine the way the 'millennium generation' thinks. On the contrary, the internet has become a platform where people can mobilise themselves and discuss on various liberal, free thoughts and act upon them. One such example is the Arab Spring being experienced in the WANA(West Asia North Africa) nations, where ordinary people have risen above the authoritarian dogma using social media like Facebook and Twitter.

Thus by analysing the two perspectives it is clear that, one cannot stand alone, but both are equally important forces. Technology can shape the society and the society can adapt the technology for its own purposes are the nutshell of the discussion so far.

THE INTERNET AS CULTURE AND AS CULTURAL ARTEFACT:

The problem in understanding technological determinism and technology as socially constructed as two angles that go hand in hand is due to certain vagueness about internet as CULTURE and internet as CULTURAL ARTIFACT INTERNET AS CULTURE:

Internet as culture like cultural determinism stems from the idea that a person who uses the internet is insulated from all social connections that he had made in the real world. Thus it totally differentiates between the real world and the virtual world and believes that there is no connection between the two. A person in the virtual world can thus be a totally different person, with a completely changed identity. She/ He can choose his friends from any corner of the world and converse with them on likeminded topics, and do not have to stick with their physical friends of the social world. The youth can explore their real self which is hidden due to many social boundaries in the real world.

However this has technical problems. A person in the virtual world is not in almost all the cases completely shut out from the real world. Hence like SOCIAL CONSTRUCTION OF TECHNOLOGIES, internet is an artefact of culture. Simply internet is not only spelling out a culture with its own rules, but internet culture is also a product or an artefact created knowingly or unknowingly by the society. It is used as a means of communication and medium of expression to cater to the needs of the offline real world. The digital information and exchanges are explicitly linked to the social, political, cultural, economic and imaginary constructions of experiences in real time.

These phrases also finally establish the interrelationship and interdependence of the two features of the internet where a person can have a different identity online, but is always linked to the society he/she lives in. The internet need not be seen as a new world. People have just put the old wine in new bottles. They thus do the old things in new ways expanding communication to greater realms. Youth are using Instant Messaging (IM) services and other applications to carry out the same activities they were doing in the past. Thus only the media has changed but the cause and actions stay intact.

YOUTH AND THEIR PARTICIPATION IN MEDIA

Nowadays, internet users are not passive users of the internet. They have become active after the advent of Web 2.0. For instance, take the example of Wikipedia which is a massive online storehouse of information. The success of this online encyclopaedia is not only due to its creators, but also due to millions of users who keep on adding new information, editing existing data and deleting false ones. This type of intervention where users can also play a prominent part in creating information is thus gaining greater attention. This type of data is called UGC (User Generated Content). There are more common examples of UGC like YouTube videos, MySpace data, various blogs and the likewise.

There should not be a misconception that all youth are engaged in adding information onto the internet. For most of them internet offers a platform for socialising and building relationships that are outside their families and communities. Statistically, 93 percent have email operations, 68 percent engage in instant messaging applications and 55 percent are on social networking sites compared to 28 percent having online journals.

It is not true that people only converse with other people who are far away using IMs. When they get back from college or work they keep in touch with their peers using IMs like Whatsapp and Hike. These IMs bring in an effective **Micro co-ordination**. It is a concept by which real time and space can be fixed and changed and again fixed using various IM applications on mobile phones and thus can easily co-ordinate a meeting.

There are different kinds of social media and it is an interesting question that how the youth finds time to stay connected with the web amidst their busy schedule. The answer to this is **multitasking** where people switch from one app to another constantly. That is they may simultaneously check e-mails, while texting their friends on Whatsapp, listening to an audio book meanwhile. A less formed multitasking had existed in earlier days like students did their homework listening to music, but now it has gone to an all new level.

A study conducted in the US revealed that multitasking is not common when the primary media is television. When the primary media becomes the computer multitasking just shoots up where they browse, chat, watch videos at the same time.

EFFECT OF MICRO CO-ORDINATION AND MULTITASKING:

Most people believe that these activities might overload the youth and also expose them to strangers. But the results are far from that. Studies have shown that most of the people in social networking sites use them to keep in touch with their real friends. Only ten percent are strangers and 90 percent are acquaintances. It is also reported that the number of friends they have on their profile is important because that shows their social standing.

Internet is a fluid space which has so much opportunity. It should not only be seen as a world of its own, but also as a place where the real and virtual interact and create many dimensions of information and capacitates the individual simultaneously.

Questions:

1. What is meant by technological determinism?
2. Explain social construction of technologies.
3. What is micro co-ordination?
4. Explain multitasking
5. Is multitasking rampant in television or internet? Why?

2. WRITING ONLINE: WEBSITES, BLOGS AND SOCIAL NETWORKING

Social media largely comprises materials in writing than audio or video. So a good command over writing is absolutely necessary in making the content appealing and clear. The matter should be professional, credible and linkable. The writing must be: Clear: Readable and Understandable Concise: Straight to the point and efficient Consistent: Reliable, dependable Thus the 3Cs are the words one should keep in mind before writing an online piece.

First priority: The Reader

One has to always keep in mind that the whole exercise of writing in the blogs or websites or social media is for other people to understand what one is talking about. So the writer should always have the reader in mind and elucidate the material in their points of view. It is imperative to understand that in this technologically active world, they have a very short attention span and equally less time. They need to quickly grasp the information and move on. They would be only scanning for the information so the writer should be precise and legible in his information.

Writing for Websites:

It should be understood that people who read you website are not mostly doing it to engage in some fun reading, but for relevant information. They would only glance through sentences and hence, if information is not given quickly they would switch to other sites. The tips for good website etiquette are as follows:

- Choose keywords first
- Include a title on every page
- Use sub headings
- Keep paragraph and sentences short
- Use white spaces
- Use bullets and numbers
- Use short sentences and avoid using a lot of technical jargon
- Use sans serif fonts like Arial which is easy to read on a screen
- Proofread to eliminate errors

Writing for blogs

A blogger's life depends upon her/his catching other's attention to one's own creativity or thoughts.

- Do your research
- Have a catchy headline
- Start with a great introduction
- Stay focussed and do not digress from the topic
- Keep it social, casual and friendly
- Use the right tone
- Do not over promote yourself in your blogs
- Use pictures
- Be consistent
- Make a commitment, learn from your mistakes and keep writing great content

Writing for social networking sites:

Now social media is gaining so much prevalence. Gone are those days when one kept a diary. Now people spill their lives on social media. So cultivating social media etiquette is very important. Here are the tips for a good status update.

- It should be short
- Be genuine and avoid too much information
- Be generous by giving the readers information that will guide them
- Be grateful. A simple gesture like a thank you could make a huge impact
- The post should be like you are speaking to one person and not many
- Be clear, do not be vague
- Use correct punctuations
- Do not overuse the exclamation marks
- Ask questions
- Do not boast
- Do not write ill about others
- Be unique and have posts that are different from others
- Do not use the SMS language in your posts. The Facebook posts go out to a wider audience and will not create a good impression of you.

Questions:

1. What are the etiquettes to be followed in writing on social media?

3. HOW GOOGLE HAS CHANGED OUR LANGUAGE

Google is not an unknown term in the techno-savvy world. It is lesser known by its primary meaning which is one followed by one hundred zeroes. Nevertheless, now it is associated with entire gamut of searching and acquiring of vast amount of information of various kinds at different levels. Thus the computer giant company google is a constant companion of every person these days and they quickly resort to 'googling' any information that they need. The phrase 'googling' has thus been inducted to the language and is a highly used verb especially among the youth.

This is just like generations ago, the term Xerox was inducted from the photocopy machine company name to the act of photocopying. Similarly, aspirin, the name of an analgesic or pain medicine started to be widely used for any analgesic and the most common band-aids replaced adhesive strips. This itself shows that language is in constant fluidity, welcoming all kinds of adaptations and new words. This flexibility of language adds to its beauty. Sometimes words already adopted from mythology is subjected to double transformation while engaging with technology. One such example is the word narcissist evolved long back from the character Narcissus of the Greek mythology who was obsessed with his own beauty. Recently this term has undergone a change to denote people who are extremely preoccupied with themselves and constantly search their names on search engines. They are called narcissurfers which is indeed a blending of narcissism and surfing.

Google had played a pivotal role in bringing into the forefront a plethora of urban words formed recently. The company thrives because of its service that provides free information to people without any discrimination. It sells advertising which is linked to the information that you access. You would have seen these as pop ups while you browse for an information. Google also offers its platform in many languages. It has programs and applications that can translate subjects from one language to another. The indexing and retrieval of information by Google is top notch which makes it faster, easier to access and simple. However while google was expanding to other languages, the indexing and retrieval of Asian and African languages were not easy. This was carried out with the help of Basis Technology which offered google tools for searching in Asian languages. Thus Google continues to grow rapidly and widely across borders and cultures changing the very conventions of the world.

Questions:

1. How has google transformed from being a noun to a verb?
2. Talk about the fluidity of language.
3. What do you mean by narcissurfers?

MODULE IV

QUALITY OF VIDEOS UPLOADED IN THE SOCIAL NETWORKS AND ITS IMPACT ON THE AGE GROUP OF 18-25 YEARS STUDENT COMMUNITY

Internet is a vast platform, which people access for different reasons. Google is a widely used search engine, Facebook and twitter are social media sites, LinkedIn is a professional and business network and YouTube is a site which is a library of videos. YouTube not only has videos uploaded by individual users, but has collaborated with many media corporations like BBC, CNBC and the likewise. Thus YouTube targets both individuals and multinational production companies for increasing the audiences. Statistically, 60 hours of video is uploaded every minute on YouTube. Over 4 billion videos are viewed per day and over 800 million unique users visit YouTube each month. The videos are brimming with entertainment, news and information that a new term infotainment could be used to describe these videos. This is about to become “the biggest learning cycle in human history.”

The youth of today are very skilful in using technology. They have showed their mettle especially in using social media. They are referred to as Gen Y or generation why, which has followed generation X pertaining to their inquisitive or questioning nature. The study of emerging adulthood of this generation is very important to analyze behavioral patterns. This group comprises people who have their own identity, thanks to social media, but has not reached a financial security. But the self-identity is dominant and allow individuals to express their individuality. This age group of 18-25 is influenced by global parameters due to their vast interconnectedness with social media. They do not believe in a static world and asserts that that the world should be continuous and dynamic, that is always subjected to changes. They also believe that individuality is very important and each individual belonging to a group has a prominent role to play in bringing about change.

Being internet-savvy is also a boon in the education field. One can listen to interviews, lectures and presentations by experts in faraway places. Moreover, one can connect to many universities webpages and get what one wants. In addition to that, the best part of internet is that it is accessible, affordable and less time consuming. One can also showcase one’s talents by uploading a video on YouTube or Facebook. There are many self-made celebrities who have emerged from small towns with no sufficient platforms, using the prowess of social media. This platform is also used by human rights organizations and other civilians to showcase human rights violence and the extent of natural and manmade disasters and urge the world to extend solidarity with them.

As a matter of fact, as every issue has two sides, internet also has some disadvantages. Firstly, now a days, the youth wants to have the smartest phones available in the market but will not be always financially independent to make that choice. They resort to the EMI options, but ultimately is short of cash. Secondly, their morning starts with social media and their nights end with it. However what they are looking for is almost all the time information that is not useful for their overall moral and social development like pornography, defamation and materials encouraging criminal conduct. What one requires is prudence in sorting out the material one needs and eliminating all the nonsensical information. Otherwise social media has the potential to devour you.

Questions:

1. What are the characteristics of Generation Y?
2. How is Generation Y different from Generation X?
3. What do you mean by the term infotainment?
4. How is being techno – savvy a boon in the world of information and technology?
5. How has social media helped small towners to achieve great heights?
6. What are the disadvantages discussed about internet?
7. What is the solution put forwarded to eliminate the disadvantages?