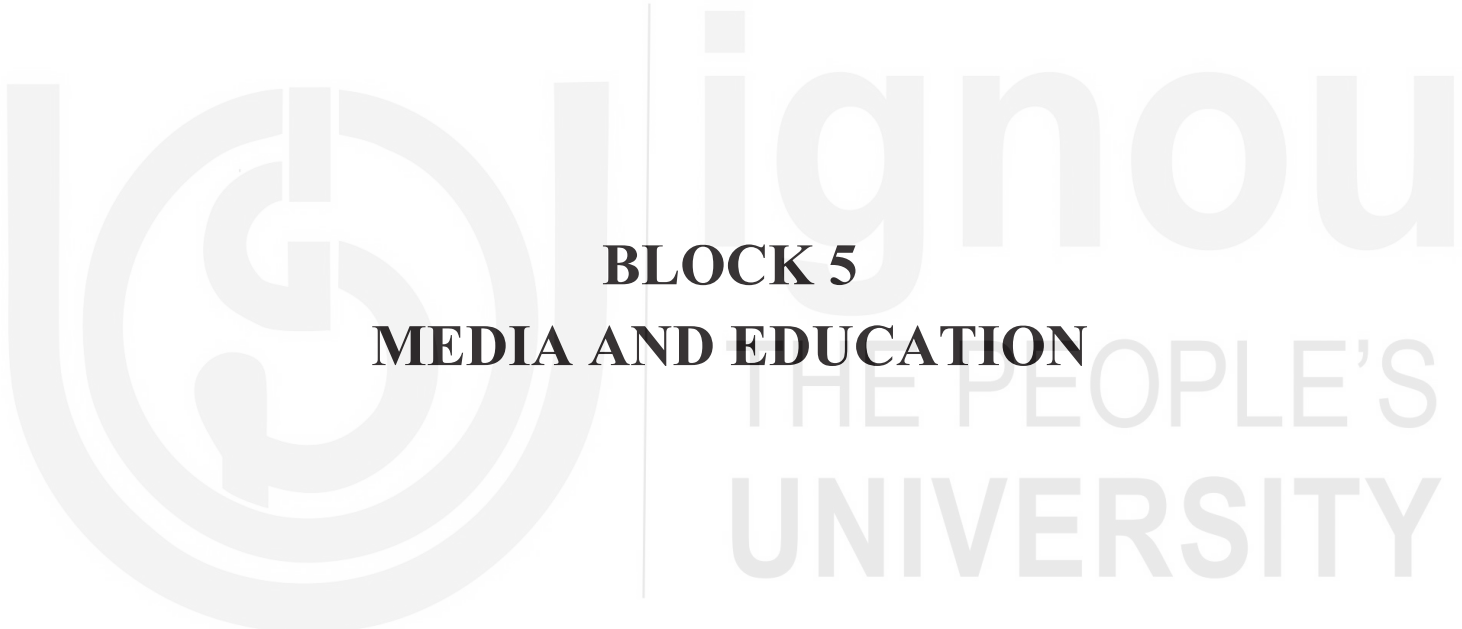


The background of the page features a large, light grey watermark of the Open University logo. It consists of a stylized 'U' on the left and the text 'Open University' on the right, with 'THE PEOPLE'S UNIVERSITY' written in smaller letters below 'Open University'.

BLOCK 5

MEDIA AND EDUCATION



UNIT 11 MEDIA INFLUENCE IN EDUCATION*

Structure

11.0 Introduction

11.1 Role of Media in the development of Education

11.1.1 Knowledge gap caused by Media

11.2 Usage of Media as a Teaching Aid

11.2.1 Audio-visual aids in Education Sector

11.2.2 Electronic Media

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Learning Objectives

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

- identify the role of media in the development of education sector in India,
- describe various digital libraries, repositories and government initiatives that provide academic and professional content, and
- explore the academic resources online to access information for usage.

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11.0 INTRODUCTION

Mass media such as print media, electronic media and the new age digital media are said to have a strong influence on people's lives. They are a means of transmitting messages, creating content, sharing information, gaining knowledge and communication in the contemporary society. Different forms of mass media and the new age digital media are becoming an inseparable part of the society due to social and technological advancements happening at an exponential pace. Previously, the mass media was used in the form of descriptive and individualised use as there was no coherent idea of usage of the media in the educational development. However, with the advent and development of technology, excessive usage of social media, and different digital media platforms, scholars are interested in exploring the topic of media and education. Mass media and digital media are easy ways to communicate and transmit information through a single digital device rather than using different devices to do a particular task. The influence and the power of media cannot be underrated. Mass media is no longer new but the new age digital media still stand as a new player in the field and its usage could transform the education sector in the country. Media and digital media have the power to reach a large number of people quickly and spread information without any hindrance. Thus, it is becoming a significant socialisation and social change agent in the world.

The traditional education system is a good way of learning; however, globalisation has changed the way of gaining knowledge, learning and doing things. Mass media and digital media has a direct and significant impact on our daily lives, it is becoming more significant and can be used for promoting education. They are making waves through the new processes and techniques of learning in which the learner also has a major role to play. The education sector is developing whereby different devices and platforms are used to educate people and to educate oneself. Mass media, digital media and new age informative digital platforms process ensures availability of information and content anywhere without inhibition of physical space and time. The use of the new media and platforms has opened up new avenues for productive and creative learning, especially in the area of social networking and organizational communication. But it is still trying to make its way in the education sector for teaching and learning purposes. In every part of the globe, the usage of digital media has introduced creativity, excellence, speed, collaboration, and added the element of fun to learning. Digital media is thriving among students and teachers as they can use different digital devices at home to access different platforms for learning. Thus, education sector can be developed by introducing new media platforms and bringing in advanced technological tools in order to teach more people better and more rapidly. But the use of the media for education in India is still at the infancy stage. In this unit, we would like to explore some of these aspects.

11.1 ROLE OF MEDIA IN DEVELOPMENT OF EDUCATION

Media has had a profound impact in the training of the teachers, journalists, producers, other professionals and children. It has helped in enhancing learning and educational opportunities by playing a double approach for the user (role being played, in the beginner's position, and sometimes in an educator's position). As discussed earlier, one the most significant roles played by the media is development of education and community sectors. They help in recognising other people's cultures, attitudes, castes, creeds, ethnicities and socio-economic backgrounds, so that they can communicate and work with each other in an effective manner. Thus, media has helped in becoming familiar with the obstacles faced by the people of different cultures and backgrounds. It's significance in the development of educational opportunities is depicted in numerous areas which is discussed in box 11.1.

Box 11.1 Mass media contribution in strengthening educational opportunities and spreading awareness

The purpose of mass media (such as television, radio, cinemas and magazines etc.) is entertainment but it is also used to acquire knowledge. The increase in population and development of lifestyle has intensified the demand for entertainment. But ***magazines, newspapers and articles also make provision of knowledge*** as well as entertainment for the individuals who seek pleasure in reading.

Media makes people aware and increase their knowledge about ***news and current affairs***. There are a lot of individuals who are interested in acquiring knowledge about different fields such a weather, politics, war, health, finance, science, fashion, technology, diet and nutrition, crime and violence, education, industry, business, management, employment opportunities and so forth. This can be obtained from radio, television, social media platforms and various kinds of magazines and articles.

Digital media plays a significant role in ***informing the public with regard to politics***. They are likely to get news updates and notifications even if they personally do not follow accounts handled by news channels. Posts, messages and notifications on digital platforms related to politics and news can be shared by friends or by the people one follows on social media. Therefore, uninterested individuals can also learn about the current news or get updates without intentionally acquiring knowledge. Hence, digital media opens up possibilities for passive learning. Boukes (2019) mentioned that it is harder to avoid acquiring knowledge from media platforms especially when media environment becomes predominant with news updates, notification and bulletins. But media platforms are extremely fragmented so acquiring knowledge from media depends upon the amount of time an individual is using on social media and how saturated these media platforms are with current affairs/politics/educational content or other information etc. People can learn from social media platforms but only if they are exposed to these platforms and if they pay attention to this information. Thus, the power of

traditional and digital media is regarded to be widespread and massive and it can be utilized in an efficient manner to educate people with less cost.

Various authorities, organizations, social media platforms and agencies make use of the power of media to **spread informative messages to the public**. This may include warning against a storm, or an epidemic (for example COVID-19, AIDS, HIV, Polio), delay in arrival or departure of flights and trains, and so forth. Media have helped in transforming and spreading awareness about various sectors, and one of them is public healthcare. It has provided a unique opportunity for sharing health-related information which has led to the advancement of communication strategies in healthcare and enhanced community perceptions of immunization programs. Social media is a widely accepted platform for sharing health related information and discussing public health issues. Facebook, blogs, twitter etc. is widely accessed by people to gain information about health-related information and these platforms eventually became extremely significant for gathering knowledge about health-related problems such as polio (Orr et al., 2016). Obregon and Colleagues (2009) mentioned that social media platforms were accessed by India and Pakistan to achieve their polio eradication objectives and to engage the population in spreading awareness about polio.

Source: Subrahmanyam, K., & Smahel, D. (2010). Digital youth: The role of media in development. Springer Science & Business Media

Box 11.1 summarises media and its impact on learning opportunities and the positive effects of media platforms. Studies have supported that the exposure of content on digital media functions as a pathway to information such as warnings, news and politics (Boulianne & Theocharis, 2020). The online spheres provide individuals with unlimited sources, types, and variety of information they continuously circulate information about political events, current affairs and trending news. These platforms are rich sources of information; therefore, the possibilities of learning are endless. But, the abundance of options and unlimited sources of information eventually shrink the individual's choices for educational and informative content. The **'pull-media nature of the internet'** makes it unlikely that individuals will watch informative content on internet. Studies suggest that people while on digital media platforms will be more interested in content that is related to social relationship or content shared by friends and family (Heinonen, 2011).

Some studies have also contradicted the educational opportunities provided by the digital media platforms. They have demonstrated that they do not necessarily increase knowledge in individuals as they do not meet the prerequisite conditions to learning that are: (1) Post or content that contain informative/educational content, (2) Individuals intrinsic motivation to pay attention to the post and content (Kruikemeier, 2011). So, for example: social media platform such as Twitter has an architecture that is "sending oriented" (unidirectional) which means that people share and re-tweet a lot of news and content which will eventually be received by people not following journalistic accounts. Another example is Facebook which is in contrast to Twitter's architecture as it is "bi-directional". Its algorithm favours

communication about personal, social matters of friends and family over current affairs and worldwide news. Thus, the audience usually use this platform for social purposes rather than using twitter which is an information-sharing community. Muller and colleagues (2016) mentioned that rather than informing people about current affairs and news, these media platforms may distract them and do the contradictory. The study demonstrated that individuals acquire a *heuristic of feeling informed* by scrolling through social media platforms (Muller et al., 2016). By viewing new headline, post and content related to news/current affairs a cognitive schema is activated that is associated with an impression that someone has learned something informative or educational on social media, irrespective of the fact that the content is actually being read or not. Most of the social media users do not read the content posted on social media platforms but scrolling through such content evokes a perception that it is pointless to inform themselves more about the content from other platforms. Thus, usage of social media platforms boost *a false heuristic inference* of being informed, which is the likelihood of acquiring knowledgeable content related to news, current affairs or events happening around the world. The feeling of already being informed may deject other sources of information that may actually provide the necessary content to update oneself (Müller et al., 2016).

11.1.1 Knowledge gap caused by Media

Studies have observed that media is likely to cause a knowledge gap between different sections of society. There are a number of people who cannot make efficient use of digital media over their inaccessibility of computers, mobile phones and internet access (Kreutzer, 2009). Internet is regarded as the significant part of our lives (especially in today's day and age) as it helps in the establishment of knowledge in different areas. But there are individuals who find it difficult to operate the system due to structural hindrances, technological complications and low command on English language (Hargitta, 2019). People belonging to disadvantaged groups, economically backward sections of the society and marginalized groups do not have the language attainment skills in English to access opportunities, gain knowledge and get involved in discussion on media platforms (Tewathia, 2020). India is on its way to become a digital nation and is using 'online' and digital mediums for daily life activities including admission procedures to schools and colleges. But, due to this digital divide many are left at a disadvantaged position. Therefore, this digital divide is a drawback as digital media requires people to learn, operate and understand the information technology, media platforms and English language to be able to use it efficiently (Tewathia, 2020). Furthermore, studies have demonstrated that people of higher status acquire news, current affairs, and political knowledge etc. at a faster rate than citizens of lower status due to their accessibility and familiarity with media platforms (Zillien and Hargittai, 2009; Fraile et al., 2014). Thus, this topic became more prevalent and research on the learning effect of media exposure

is being examined for different groups of people (Eveland & Scheufele, 2000; Shehata et al., 2015).

With the increasing prevalence of digital media and networking sites, it is of utmost importance to understand the way social media differentially affects the acquisition of knowledge (Yoo & Gil de Zúñiga, 2014). In western societies, people have overcome the first digital divide that is accessibility of internet. However, a second level digital divide that is inequality between people to effectively use the Internet for information purposes rather than for entertainment is emerging. Demitrova and colleagues (2014) stated that knowledge acquisition is conditional on the **opportunities** provided in a medium to learn, **motivation** and the **ability** of the individual. The **OMA framework (opportunities, motivation and ability)** specified that individuals can learn from any platform, or medium but acquiring knowledge depends upon the availability of information and the intrinsic motivation to focus on that information. So, for example, people follow social media platforms that mirror their self-interest, thus learning about current affairs/facts/news and other information is likely to occur in individuals who are intrinsically motivated to gain knowledge in these areas. But social media and other platforms may also discourage individuals to read content on areas such as news, facts or current affairs when they are unintentionally exposed to such content (by their friends or family). This happens due to the feeling of already being *sufficiently informed*. This feeling is formed among individuals which gradually results in negative consequences for the amount of knowledge that individuals eventually acquire. Overall, knowledge acquisition through digital media, or social networking sites will most strongly occur for individuals that have the motivation to learn about news, and current affairs etc., whereas platforms such as Facebook, Instagram and Snapchat may particularly be a source of distraction for individuals who lack interest in such areas of politics, news and current affairs.

Check Your Progress 1

1) Describe the role of mass media in development of education.

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2) What are the advantages of digital media in the education sector?

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- 3) What kind of changes are required in the digital media platforms to bring a change in the education sector?

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11.2 USAGE OF MEDIA AS A TEACHING AID

With the beginning and the introduction of digital media in education, various innovative teaching techniques and methodologies have been used. The institutions are refining and enhancing their system to improve academic rigour. Universities and schools are using digital and social media in the process of making the teaching process interesting and better among students. Box 11.2 elaborates more on the topic of the impact of digital and social media on education. The new education system is not just reliant on chalk and talk, the classrooms are being re-defined and the teachers are drawing on these new, dynamic visual resources that are commonplace in students' lives outside of school. Students are also stating clearly what they expect from the teacher's and how they want to learn:

- To be able to obtain more learning resources- online digital resources
- To be able to access lesson materials from online digital resources
- To use online material to build on their classroom activities; and
- Learning to occur at any time and at any location.

Box 11.2 Role of Digital and Social Media in Education Sector

The use of digital and social media platforms is quickly rising which is also impacting people's lives. It is not only the working professionals who are using digital and social media but there is a heavy rise in the use of social media by the students. They are motivated to learn from their peer or websites online than from adults. With teachers and schools using a variety of software tools and free web applications to improve learning, communication, and engagement of students, the use of social media is distracting their academic performance. Compared to traditional learning method which provides few opportunities for individuals to develop and maintain their own learning activities, learning platforms based on social media place the control of learning into the hands of learners themselves. But technology in the 21st century is bringing dramatic changes as educational institutes are migrating from traditional mediums of teaching to more sophisticated methodologies. The process of integrating technology into education is evolving as it no longer revolves around pen and paper. Some of the ways in which digital and social media has enhanced and improved the education sector are mentioned below:

1. Social media as a part of traditional learning is attractive to students as it encourages participation in the learning process, and enhances both collaborative study and social interaction.
2. Modern day classrooms present everlasting enjoyment as it has enabled learners, teachers and parents to manage teamwork through smart classrooms and build strong communication with each other.
3. Social media platforms offer a variety of tools that learners can mix and match to best suit their individual learning styles and increase their academic success.
4. It also helps in building associations with people, and help students develop leadership skills, organizing events etc. that promotes social change and democratic engagement.
5. It is also easy for people to work together with people from different geographical backgrounds for project assignments using social networks. For example: It is easy for them to make groups on social media platforms or even just use hashtags to exchange inputs regarding the assignment and distribute information.
6. Digital and social media-based communication and learning is increasing and its influence has enhanced the familiarity with media platforms as well as improved teaching-learning process in school, colleges and universities.
7. These platforms increase engagement with teachers and friends outside the classroom as they can communicate with their teachers as a group outside of class and to plan school or other events.

Digital media also has **negative impacts** on students as they waste a lot of time on social media platforms. There is lack of public awareness on the effects of media on education. The profanity, vulgarity, obscenity, or language that circulates on these platforms is harassing and not appropriate for school children. Additionally, it's extremely easy to download and retrieve content on social media without the warning of a teacher, school administrator or even their peers in the event. Thus, the popularity and speed at which information is published and created on digital platforms, has created a negligent attitude among students. Some of the negative effects of digital platform are mentioned below:

1. They are getting distracted from their actual goal in life and becoming habitual of social media.
2. The ease of accessibility on digital platforms is leading to dependency on social and digital media platforms which reduced their creativity and process of learning.
3. Excessive use of social media is distorting their communication skills as they are spending more time behind the screen than face to face interactions.

Source: Boateng, R., & Amankwaa, A. (2016). The impact of social media on student academic life in higher education. *Global Journal of Human-Social Science*, 16(4), 1-8.

Check Your Progress 2

1) What is OMA framework?

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2) How can media shrink individual's choices of information?

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3) Explore the impact of social and digital media on students' academic lives.

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11.2.1 Audio-Visual Aids in Education Sector

These *audio-visual aids* are effective tools that encourage the learning process and appeal to the mind by contributing to the learning process through representations. They are also termed as multi-sensory materials as they are supplementary devices by which the teacher, through the application of more than one sensory network is able to illuminate, establish and correlate concepts, and interpretations. They encourage the student, through the use of colour, moves or recorded messages or even the content which attract the intention and interest of the learner (Nadji,2016). The utilization of audio-visual aids in the classrooms helps in the achievement of structured teaching. The advantages of audio-visual aids are:

- 1) This method will help in escaping the traditional one-way communication that characterises it and can be utilized appropriately as complex direct interpersonal communication.
- 2) It helps the learners with realistic experience which helps in building focus, and concentration as well as help in the understanding of the phenomena.
- 3) It aids in stimulated thinking and understanding.
- 4) Audio-visual aids enhance the objectives of the class and give students additional ways to process subject information.

- 5) They concretize the knowledge that is presented by the teacher and help in making the learning experience energetic.

The educators know that they are one of the most important aids in the class as it can make the class effective, easy and enjoyable. They help in the communication of ideas between persons and groups in various teaching and training situation. **Carter. V. Good** defined audio-visual aids as those that help in completing the triangular process of learning that is motivation, classification and stimulation. Educators use different videos for creating effective, vitals lesson plans and activities. It is a difficult task but they should keep in mind some points to make the audio-visual aids more effective which are:

- 1) The aids should match the *need and maturity* level of student.
- 2) Student must be able to *relate the aid* with the subject matter that is being taught by the teacher.
- 3) Aids used must be able to *appeal and encourage the involvement and participation of student in classroom* by awaking all the sensory organs of learner to encourage observation and discussion.
- 4) Aids used must match *the real-life examples* so that they are relatable.
- 5) Aids must be used at *suitable time* during teaching.
- 6) *Problem and possible areas of discussion* must be briefed to the student before introducing aid in class.

Oyesola (2010) suggested that for the effective use of audio-visual aids the subsequent points should be taken into attention:

- 1) The projector or laptop used to play the audio-visual aids must *be placed in such a manner that all the students can watch*.
- 2) Teaching aids should be used to *achieve specific objectives* which should be mentioned to students before the aid presented.
- 3) Teaching aids must be used *proficiently and skilfully* to attract students' attention.
- 4) *Technical quality* of the aid should be good.
- 5) The *frequency of using audio-visual aids* should be taken into consideration.

In recent times, the audio-visual aid, such as videos on YouTube are used to help explain educational concepts. Box 11.3 elaborates on the use of audio-visual aids such as YouTube in classroom.

Box 11.3 YouTube in Classroom

Audio-video sources have emerged as a conventional educational distribution medium due to reduced cost of production. These **instructional aids** allow access to a camera, a computer to create and distribute video. The video can easily be brought into classroom to create a network of learners. The researcher developed a network called the '**Three I's Framework**' that is **image, interactivity and integration**, to provide practical tools to help educators with their pedagogical design and growth of video streaming resources for online learning. Their goal with this framework was to provide an understanding of the role of video and change it from- a demonstration tool to a more focused networked learning tool.

Strategies for using YouTube:

Videos are becoming popular sources of lesson planning. They are important sources of information as it is necessary to have 'true life information' such as videos because it motivates the classroom and makes it more interesting. The teachers have stated that they use videos for two major reason- (1) To enhance their material, and (2) To obtain up-to-date information on things such as photos and videos.

There are ways to optimize the use of YouTube as an educational tool in the classroom:

1. Short videos between one- and four-minutes are ideal when used for teaching purposes.
2. YouTube videos are informative, humorous, interesting and engaging and they are preferred by students as they use this platform on a regular basis.
3. YouTube videos can be played in short segments with pauses, allowing students to ask questions or to think critically about the content they've just viewed.
4. Students should also be encouraged to take notes while watching videos. The video can be replayed and the notes can be discussed with the teacher and students.
5. The teacher can pause the video in between and encourage the students to discuss the content of the video.
6. The teacher should give students the responsibility when viewing a video so that the instructor can introduce questions to go along the video to make the content clear and meaningful.
7. The video can have activities to go along, in order to make the content interesting and engaging for the students.
8. Teacher should also follow up after the video is done with questioning to summarise the information from the video.

Even though YouTube is used to introduce new concepts, disseminate information and close lessons but studies stated that teachers should be **cautious when using videos from YouTube** (Downes and Bishop, 2012). They should ensure that the material from this platform is credible, accurate and meaningful and support their teaching content. Moreover, copyright and online content protocols can be elaborate, confusing and difficult to understand as they differ from each school/university regulations. Thus, teachers be well-informed about these policies and how they need to be aware of their actions. Another challenge is that videos can be unreliable and difficult to find, thus teachers should be cautious about it and should also have a backup plan.

Source: June, S., Yaacob, A., & Kheng, Y. K. (2014). Assessing the use of YouTube videos and interactive activities as a critical thinking stimulator for tertiary students: An action research. *International Education Studies*, 7(8), 56-67.

1.2.2 Electronic Media

Electronic media such as videos, radio and television also have a profound impact in educating people. These mediums are so effective that people listen to what the media says, with no check or validation. These mediums are working exceptionally well by training individuals with the goal of substantial learning from everywhere throughout the world. **Television, radio and other electronic media** has helped people to learn about different subjects, cultures and themes of the world. For example, radio has evolved over the centuries and played an essential role in the field of education. The immediacy, accessibility, and the simplicity of this medium has emerged as a success especially in rural India. It has been a preferred medium of mass communication as it is easily understood by the laymen and the intellectual alike. It has been used in non-formal education settings and mostly for people who are school drop outs, people who cannot read and write, and farmers etc. In traditional educational setting, radio was used along with the aid of printed texts for those pursuing primary, secondary and higher education.

Another electronic media that is considered as a device for sustained learning but an endless distraction is **television**. It has ended up being extremely successful medium for education but it fails to provide the sense of depth and “existence” found in everyday life. Nonetheless, it gives an individual with audio and visual aids and it has more effect than the radio. This medium has changed the standpoint of individuals as they turned out to be more aware and more informative than people who do not watch television. Moreover, there is evidence that has been found of the influence of television narratives on the construction of values (Krijnen and Meijer, 2005). Media stories and television stories wield enormous moral power as they offer occasions for the discussion of dilemmas and different situations that go well beyond the “imagined situation”. Television viewing can be educational when the learner can differentiate fiction from reality and when they can differentiate between an imaginary story and a real one. Moreover, for children, the teacher or caregiver should make an effort to watch television with them. They should also show confidence in their own capacity to influence them by questioning the content they are watching or by selecting the content on television that stimulate their development. Content on television has a huge educational impact on children as the media consumption patterns remains consistent throughout life. Thus, educators, parents and teachers should focus on the educational impact and the programmes that infants, toddlers and children view. The educational impact of television on children are mentioned below (Valdivia, et al., 2012):

- 1) Looking at television screen increases with age as toddlers and children gain more control over their ability to selectively assign their attention during the first five years of life.
- 2) Learning from television is incidental and difficult task for children. Children are limited in their cognitive abilities, real-world knowledge,

and experience. Thus, the integration of educational and entertaining content while watching television will reduce the cognitive demands of viewing and strengthen children's comprehension.

- 3) Children around nine months are regularly exposed to television, consuming an average of one to two hours of television each day. Although infants and toddlers are video deficit, which means they demonstrate a deficit in learning from television compared to learning from an equivalent live display. But repeating content on television can help in content learning by providing them with more occasions to encode information.
- 4) Caregivers and educators can help in verbal labelling that is co-viewing or doing a voiceover for the content they are watching. This helps children by scaffolding the viewing experience, highlighting important events onscreen. Research demonstrated that parents and educators who labelled objects on screen (for example: that's a puppet or the colour is green) and questioned their children (For example: what is that shape?) while co-viewing, had better attention and response to program.
- 5) Educators and parents should choose content that has features such as enhanced reality, that is, bright colours in set designs, use of animation, puppets and child characters so that the child can relate with enhanced attention.
- 6) Humorous content in educational programmes for children in the age bracket of 5-6- year-olds can increase attention and information acquisition as the programme becomes engaging.
- 7) By the age of 4, children can understand cinematic montage that is the changes in the characters perspective, time and change of place. They can interpret simple transition scenes, point of view and camera shots that are not explicitly shown but implied to the audience. These advancements can help in the child's ability to appreciate transformations in time and space, and increase consciousness of their own and others' opinions and unique viewpoints.

11.2.3 Print Media

Printed text books, articles and classroom 'hand-outs' do not hold the same lustre as internet connected screens, audio-visual content and games, suggesting the impact of digital media on educational pedagogy. But continuous and prolonged hard work for fast and efficient information led to the setting up of printed media including newspapers. Even today 2.3 billion people read a newspaper in print regularly that is more than the number of people who use internet or have the capability to access content on telephones and laptop.

Newspaper is a source which has updated information and is considered a treasure of knowledge on the local, state and global level issues. It is a valuable source for generating interest in reading, and as an aid in self-

education. They are a source for vast information and knowledge for students and they can help in developing specific reading interests related to specific subjects and issues among the children. Newspaper articles, columns, and news have always been used to improve education quality and provide the students the opportunity to specialise in certain subjects such as politics, public relations, commerce, and law etc. The importance and usefulness of newspapers cannot be denied in 21st century as with the rapid development of technology and the flow of information, a lot of information is unverified and false. Thus, newspaper, articles and books provide us with verified, authentic information as they are published after rigorous research and confirmation through valid sources. This is one of the most credible sources of information and it has shaped the way people learn, think, and act in modern society. Studies have mentioned that newspaper are a great and valuable source for teaching and learning resources for secondary and higher school students. They develop children's creativity, basic skills, personality, attitude, behaviour and child's capacity of reading and writing. Thus, print media has played an important role in education as it has assisted in the learning process by educating learners holistically by enlightening the mind, and improving people rationally, morally and socially.

Check Your Progress 3

- 1) What are the negative impacts of social media platforms?

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- 2) What should be considered for using audio-visual aids in classrooms?

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- 3) What is the impact of radio and television in the educational sector?

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- 4) Is newspaper still a relevant source of media for educational development?

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11.3 ONLINE/VIRTUAL LEARNING

Online and virtual learning are becoming popular in the education sector over the last few decades. They are being recognized by higher education systems as they are a cost-effective way to provide education and improve performance. The rapid increase of internet connectivity has propelled the growth of online/virtual based learning platforms all over the world. The concept of online or e-learning is a combination of various features of virtual learning, distributed learning, and open-source learning. During the last few decades, the Indian education system was based on traditional modes of teaching where students and teachers relied on knowledge gained from books. But the rapid advancement of technology in education sector has brought a revolution by creating additional digital platforms, which add to the resource availability for students and teachers. This has made education more reachable and created a lot of opportunities for educational start-ups to adopt effective teaching and learning pedagogies to cope up with the trends in education sector.

The Digital India campaign launched in 2015 by the Government of India as a national programme to promote electronic service delivery has dramatically transformed and digitally empowered India. One of the aspects of the initiatives was to promote *online education in India* and to provide a more holistic method of teaching with emphasis on interactive engagement, participation and innovation rather than reliance and dependence on only book-based learning. Many higher educational institutions provide personalised and multidisciplinary courses to students and teachers across India. There are three segments of higher education in the country that is undergraduate level, post graduate level and doctoral level. University Grants Commission (UGC) is the central monitoring authority which provides affiliation to the universities. There are also individual agencies such as All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE), Medical Council of India (MCI), etc. that are responsible for the regulation, organisation and growth of higher education in India. These regulatory bodies along with UGC and the Government of India through its Ministry of Education (MoE) have started emphasizing on the promotion of online learning in higher education. Several schemes have been introduced under the Digital India campaign to promote online education which include Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs), Study Webs of Active Learning for Young Aspiring Minds (SWAYAM), The National Mission on Education through Information Communication Technology (NMEICT), National Digital Library (NDL), and The Free and Open-Source Software for Education (FOOSE) and Annual Refresher Programme in Teaching (ARPIT).

11.3.1 Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs)

It was developed by National Knowledge Commission in 2009 with the aim to make education reachable to all. It connects different research and

educational institutions by the means of internet. MOOCs is not only designed to meet needs of the learners but is also expected to serve the purpose of professional and educational training for almost 500 million people by 2022. It has gained popularity due to its innovative courses and attract large number of students with the aim of providing educational/knowledge to all with nominal fees. The advantages of MOOCs are:

- i) Individuals can pursue their area of interest while continuing their job, or studying (some other course).
- ii) Individuals from varied geographical background can come over and join MOOCs without physical distance as a barrier.
- iii) MOOCs help in sharpening skills required in a particular area or domain.
- iv) MOOCs help you recognise and acknowledge the concept of “self-learning”.

The disadvantages of MOOCs are:

- i) They fail to provide face-to-face or one to one interaction between a learner and instructor which comes with a huge set of benefits.
- ii) They are self-motivated courses so intrinsic motivation is required to complete the course.
- iii) They can never replace traditional classroom teaching environment.
- iv) They can never be as interactive as a classroom environment.
- v) MOOCs are not best for courses where labs are needed for experimentation.

11.3.2 SWAYAM

SWAYAM (Study Webs of Active Learning for Young Aspiring Minds) is a programme initiated by the Ministry of Education (MoE), Government of India and All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE) with the help of Microsoft. The goal is to provide the best teaching learning resources to all the people by bridging the digital divide for students who have previously remained untouched by the digital revolution in India. This platform is designed to accomplish three principles of education policy that are **access, quality and equity**. The courses offered include school level, undergraduate, post graduate and other professional courses and which are free of cost. Moreover, people can also opt for certification and credits on the completion of the course. The courses are interactive in nature and they have been prepared by more than one thousand teachers across India. The courses hosted on SWAYAM provide smart delivery of e-content using four quadrant approach:

- i) Video lecture,
- ii) Specially prepared reading material that can be downloaded/printed

- iii) Self-assessment tests through quizzes, assignments, tests, and
- iv) An online discussion forum for clearing the doubts.

Another most cost-effective means to encourage e- learning is Swayam Prabha that has a set of 34 educational channels that function through DTH services (Direct to Home) throughout the country. These channels are devoted towards broadcasting educational programmes 24X7 basis by means of GSAT-15 satellite. The motive is to make available high-quality education programme for the students through Swayam Prabha channels.

11.3.3 National Mission on Education through Information and Communication Technology (NMEICT)

It is a centrally sponsored scheme by the MoE to deliver high quality interactive course modules using Information Technology in higher education. The goals of NMEICT are:

- i) Content generation,
- ii) Low-cost access to research and development, and
- iii) Providing e-learning facilities in higher education institutes.

NMEICT is trying to reach rural and urban areas of the country by providing single window access to technology by bridging the gap in the skills. The e-content is based on the programme that includes all the disciplines of humanities, social sciences, fine arts and natural science. The mission undertook a few projects namely, Sakshat, Spoken Tutorial, Talk to a Teacher, Vidya Mitra, A-VIEW, e-Yantra, Virtual Labs, and FOSSEE.

- i) **Sakshat:** It is managed by a Content Advisory Committee and have representatives from IGNOU, Delhi University, Kendriya Vidyalaya Sangathan, Navodyaya Vidyalaya Sangathan, National Institute of Open Schooling (NIOS) and NCERT. It was launched in 2006 and has a repository (e-books, e-journals, digital repository, digital library with open sources materials), Virtual Class, Spoken Tutorial, A-View, Talk to a Teacher, Vidya Mitra, e-Yantra, Virtual Labs, FOSSEE and Swayam Prabha.
- ii) **Spoken Tutorial:** It is an educational portal that provides and permits free and open source software (FOSS) in various Indian languages. It is an initiative by IIT Bombay under NMEICT to promote information technology literacy for education and evolve the employment potential of the country.
- iii) **Talk to a Teacher:** Another initiative by IIT Bombay under NMEICT through which students can attend the engineering courses taught at professors at IIT Bombay. The aim of this initiative is to provide quality engineering education for students at free cost. The classes are recorded and then offered through this portal.

- iv) **A-VIEW:** Amrita Virtual Interactive E-Learning World (A-VIEW) has been developed by Amrita University with IIT Bombay under NMEICT. This is a collaborative multi-modal, e-learning platform which supports audio-visual streaming so that teachers can interact with students. This is free, open and has built in white board option and provides 2D and 3D animations that can give the learner a near life, akin to a real experience.
- v) **FOSSEE:** The free and open-source software in education is an initiative by IIT Bombay to improve the quality of education and reduce dependency on registered software in educational institutions. The available FOSSEE are Scilab, Python, sAIM, OSadag, DWSIM, Open FOAM, Open Modelica, OR tools, Open PLC, R, among others.

11.3.4 National Institute of Electronics and Information Technology (NIELIT)

This is an autonomous Scientific Society under the Ministry of Electronics & Information Technology, Government of India. The goal is to offer industry-oriented quality education and training in the field of information, electronics and communications technology. It provides informational technology training through advanced diploma, MCA equivalent, and M-Tech level courses. It also offers information technology literacy courses such as Computer Concept, Basic Computer Course and in informal sector courses on Information Security, ITeS-BPO (Customer Care/Banking), Computer Hardware Maintenance, Bio-Informatics, and Electronics Design and Technology, in association with State Universities.

11.3.5 National Digital Library (NDL)

It is a digital repository of e-resources of vast amount of academic content in different formats which is designed to hold multi-lingual content that serves the students at all academic levels and disciplines. The goal of this project is to provide single access window to the users, linking national and international digital libraries across globe. It makes resources and content available to students at cost-effective and convenient manner in the form of e-books, audio books, lecture materials, thesis, reports, articles, journals, question papers and their solutions, simulation tools and video lectures in different streams. It has been extremely helpful especially during COVID-19 as it has brought a paradigm shift by ensuring that every citizen becomes technologically empowered through the availability of knowledge resources.

11.3.6 Annual Refresher Programme in Teaching (ARPIT)

It is an online training programme planned to enhance the professional development of university faculty. The training material is circulated through SWAYAM application and the programme focuses on emerging trends in education sector, latest pedagogical practices adopted by the academic institutions and trainings sessions on curriculum development. This

programme is developed by National Resource Centre's (NRCs) to ensure career development of academic faculty of the universities.

Check Your Progress 4

1) List the initiatives by NMEICT

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2) Download the SWAYAM application and explore the services provided by them.

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3) What are the advantages and disadvantages of MOOCs?

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4) Explore the academic resources, repositories and other IT initiatives. Visit their websites and explore them.

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11.4 MOBILE APPLICATIONS

The mobile applications help to provide relevant information and knowledge that is customised as per individual needs. A few mobile applications developed by the agencies of government of India are described below:

11.4.1 e- Pathshala

The e-Pathshala is developed by the NCERT and the MoE with the aim to achieve the sustainable development goal of offering equitable, quality, inclusive education and lifelong learning for all and bridging the digital divide. This application makes educational resources available including textbooks, audio, video, periodicals, and a variety of other digital resources to the students, teachers, educators and parents. This user-friendly app can be used through mobile, laptop, tablet and has features such that the e-books

allow users to pinch, select, zoom, bookmark, highlight, navigate, share, listen to text, using text to speech application so that the user can make notes digitally.

11.4.2 SWAYAM App

As described in the previous section, the application has huge volumes of academic resources free of cost for the teacher, and the student. It can be accessed anywhere and anytime.

11.4.3 IGNOU Student App

The IGNOU Student App is an Official Mobile App of Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU), New Delhi, which provides information to the students on various aspects of their studies and administrative information such as Registration Details, Material Post Status, Identity Card, Grade Card, Hall Ticket information and various other important links along with the self-learning material.

11.5 REFOCUSING TECHNIQUES AND MEDIA USED IN THE CONTEXT OF EDUCATION

The essence of any course is the organization of learning activities that allow the students to reach certain learning outcomes. There is no unique recipe to it, one cannot guarantee what media type would work the best, which online course would be more effective but it is important to ensure that whatever is being described and communicated (in the media or the platform being used) is done in an accurate and clear manner with adequate level of difficulty for students. It should be related to their context as it makes learning more relevant and engaging. Some of these components aiming at concrete learning goals are discussed in Figure 11.1. These are all the more helpful and important in the context of online teaching/learning, especially during ‘forced’ situations such as COVID-19. The main components are as follows (Rapanta et al., 2020):

- Context: learner’s goals, situating everything in the worldview of learner, teacher and the society.
- Tools and resources used: communication channels between learners and teachers, among the learners, mediums that are being used.
- Concrete tasks: encouraging peer collaboration, deciding what activities are to be done etc.
- The relation between above three: how interactive the tools are in the given context of the individual or how necessary it is for the teacher to mediate these resources.

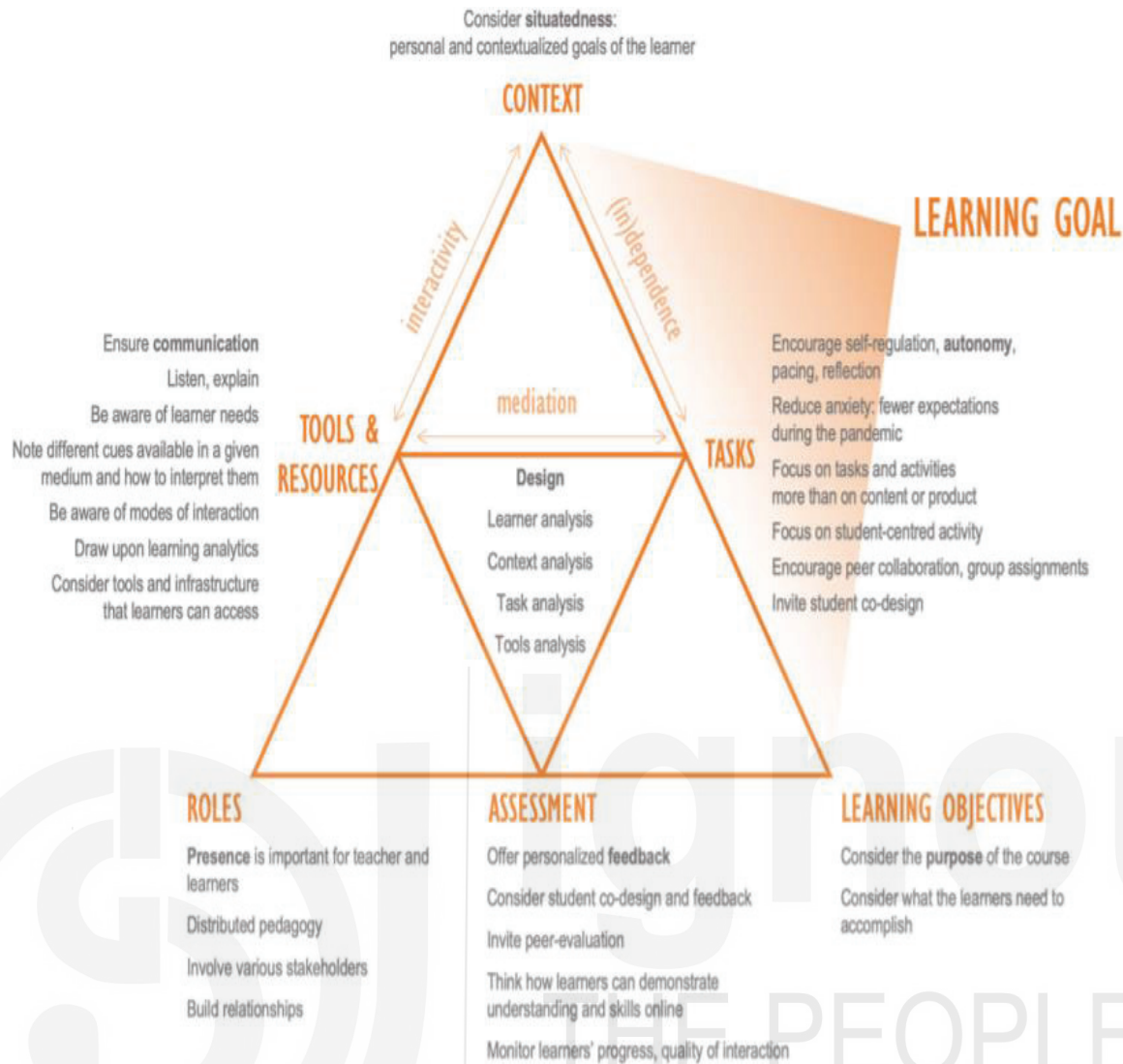


Figure 11.1 Components of a Concrete Learning Goal

Source: Rapanta, C., Botturi, L., Goodyear, P., Guàrdia, L., & Kooole, M. (2020). Online university teaching during and after the COVID-19 crisis: Refocusing teacher presence and learning activity. *Postdigital Science and Education*, 2(3), 923-945

11.6 SUMMARY

Let us review what we have learnt in this unit.

- The advancement of mass media has greatly benefited the education sector of the country as they are affordable, easy to access and proved their potential in spreading awareness and knowledge about the trending local, state and global affairs.
- Electronic media has a profound impact in rural areas for educating people.
- Television viewing is helpful in differentiating between fiction from reality and when they can differentiate between an imaginary story and a real one.

- Television viewing has an educational impact on children as they can impact their cognitive, thinking patterns and learning capacity.
- Newspaper, articles, magazines and books are mediums that provide authentic and verified information.
- Print media help increase children capacity of reading and writing.
- Educators and teachers should be cautious while using digital media platforms to children.
- Online education is the new driving force in education as it promotes lifelong learning.
- Digital media and social media have provided the opportunity to look at new ways of learning.
- SWAYAM, National Mission on Education through Information and Communication Technology, National Institute of Electronic and Information Technology, National Digital Library, ARPIT, are some of the online initiatives for teaching-learning process.
- The initiatives by the Government of India is to make available the various types of academic resources in digital form so that they are accessible from anywhere and anytime.

11.7 KEYWORDS

Instructional Video Any video designed to teach a particular topic e.g. an instructional DVD, or even the ones downloaded from sites like YouTube.

Online Learning The ability to use a computer/laptop or a mobile to stay connected to a network that helps to learn from anywhere, and anytime.

Print Media in Education Education, is a world-wide agenda whereby newspapers and magazines are used to promote education to students in classrooms.

Print Media Include newspaper, books and articles that shape and influence the public opinion.

Teaching Aids This can be divided into three groups that is printed, visual and audio-visual supports that help in the teaching environment.

Visual Learning When learners learn through images.

YouTube A website that contains various videos that can be downloaded by users e.g. cartoon animations, news clips, documentaries and videos.

11.8 REVIEW QUESTIONS

- 1) Elaborate on the power of traditional and digital media in strengthening educational opportunities.
- 2) How media helps in spreading awareness about important topics such as disaster, health related information, or public healthcare?
- 3) What is the “pull-media nature of internet” that shrinks the individual’s choices of information?
- 4) Discuss the following:
 - a) Digital divide leading to hindrances in attainment of knowledge and information from media platforms
 - b) Digital platforms increase the “heuristic of feeling informed”
 - c) Media platforms boost ‘a false heuristic inference’ of being informed
- 5) What are the advantages and disadvantages of audio-visual aids?
- 6) Elucidate the effect of television on children.
- 7) How has YouTube changed the classrooms?
- 8) What are the different ways to optimize and make classroom teaching more interesting by using videos and audio-visual tools?
- 9) Online/virtual learning has changed the Indian education system. Discuss.
- 10) Mention the schemes introduced by the Digital India campaign.

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11.10 ADDITIONAL ONLINE RESOURCES

- *The role of social media in Education*
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_gEUeEGqkrk
- *Audio visual aids in teaching*
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=djQWR7xvAgU>
- *Media and Information Literacy: Evolution of Media*
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=alPvlbaWSRM>
- *Virtual Education During Pandemic*
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9462s8j9kSY>
- *India HRD UGC Initiatives for Online Learning During COVID-9 Lockdown*, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0qBbIPoku3Y>



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