

# **Intra and Inter-Cultural Diversities in the Era of Globalization: Transnational Television in India**

**Dr. Mira K. Desai**  
**S.N.D.T. Women's University, Mumbai-India**

## **Abstract**

The paper reports the findings of an exploratory study of two linguistic communities from the western part of India. The communities chosen for the study were *Marathi*, rooted traditionally in the soils of the state of Maharashtra, and *Gujarati*, belonging to the neighbouring state of Gujarat, which became minority language group in Mumbai after bifurcation of Bombay State in 1961.

The study examines influence of transnational television on value orientations of individualism and consumerism across these two linguistic communities. In spite of differences in material conditions of the communities, there were similarities in value orientations of individuals indicating inter-cultural similarities. The patterns of media consumption as well as transnational television viewing varied significantly mainly due to socio-economic differences. The findings did not support the premise of cultural-media imperialism in the context of India.

## **Background**

Television as a medium of mass communication is an integration of technology, culture, commerce and politics. As a cultural product using audio-visual codes it projects the cultural values of their producers and the social reality in which they are produced. Viewing television is not merely an act of consumption but is "rather complex process of decoding cultural meanings" (Wang et al., 2000:4).

Developments in satellites and telecommunication infrastructure led to enormous growth of television across the globe in the last decades of twentieth century. Statistics show 73.4 percent rise in television sets per 1000 persons around the world between 1980 and 1997. The growth is enormous in "developing countries (92 percent) and marginal (2.2 percent) in industrial countries" (UNESCO, 2000: 303). This led to two viewpoints. One, concerns about influence of so called "first" world media content on the populations in the "third" world, and secondly, bridging of geographical and political boundaries leading to better understanding about other cultures. The cause of concern was also because unlike other mass media, television reaches the household directly.

## **Cultural-media imperialism: The conceptual shift**

1960s literature on communication and media concentrated on social and development role of media. 1970s was more critical bringing in evaluation of the role of media. NWICO- New World Information and Communication Order; the term originally coined in 1973 Conference of Non-Aligned countries brought about the concept of cultural-media imperialism. UNESCO led the debate of restructuring international information and communication systems by initiating studies on communication flows across the globe.

The earlier television flow studies lead to theoretical formulation of Media imperialism mainly from media institution perspective. The audiences remained absent in the imperialism premise as there was assumption that since there is a supply, so there would be consumption of television content. It was in 1994 UNESCO feeling the need to "to include the analysis of viewer consumption with regards to country of reception, instead of studying only the sources of television flows" initiated a study covering five European and four Asia-pacific countries. "By the 1990s several scholars of globalisation had begun to address consumption and the formation of transnational consumption communities, as key issues and foci for study" (Griffin, 2002).

Varied concepts like Cultural dependency, cultural imperialism; media imperialism (Schiller 1976, Boyd-Barrett 1977; 1998, Lee 1980) communication imperialism, electronic colonialism etc. came into being.

Cultural imperialism includes broader social, cultural, economic and political contexts while media imperialism refers mainly to media industries. All these concepts dealt mainly with the flow of transnational television programs from West to the other parts of the world.

## **Audiences and cultural-media imperialism**

Post-1990s witnessed onslaught of Transnational television also referred to as “international satellite broadcasting”, “television without border”, “cross border television”, “transborder television”, “global television” or “satellite television”. That lead to unique process of communication where though most audiences were located within confines of one country the media became transnational creating transnational audiences.

“There is virtually overwhelming evidence that cultural messages are differently received and interpreted, and that meaning can be produced locally at the point of reception...(but) exact influence of television on communities is shown in the ambiguous nature of research results” (Robertson, 1994: 46). Ware & Dupagne (1994) conducted meta-analysis of studies on the effects of U.S. television programs on foreign audiences. They concluded that U.S. imports have a small but statistically significant influence on foreign audiences and measures dealing with preference for American goods and attitudes toward America displayed the largest effect size.

International studies about influence of transnational content reveal “influence to be more diverse than so far acknowledged” (Kang & Morgan, 1990), “audiences are interested in cultural proximity” (Straubhaar et. al., 1995), “for news and information programs, sitcoms and films, the judgment varies with country” (Goonasekera & Lee, 1998) and “the general findings of nearly all empirical studies point to the fact that viewing global television has little influence on viewers, not to say changing their deeply entrenched values” (Lee, 2000:188).

Transnational television consumption by Indian audiences has been studied mainly from three dimensions: identity and nationhood (Muppiddi 1999, Gupta 1998, Fernandes 2000, Mcmillin 2001, Butcher 2002) media reach and access (Yadawa 1992, Sharma 1999), audience profiles and their concerns (Rao & Raghavan 1996, Rao & Melkote 1998, Datta & Alwe 1999, Mankekar 1999, Varma 2000, Johnson 2000, Gupta 2000, Monterio & Jayasankar 2000). Indian studies revealed that “other technologies are also influencing the readings and subsequent understandings of transnational television programming in India” (Butcher 2002), “while there is a sense of guilt associated with the act of watching television, the viewers seems to be using television programs to redefine their life-styles in various ways” (Gupta, 1998: 136), “the Indian value systems, and culture are strong enough to withstand any outside undesirable influences” (Joshi, 1998).

## **The study**

Audience reception study of 400 *Gujarati* and *Marathi* speaking households was carried out in 2002. Individual respondents in 20 to 50 years age group were interviewed using respective language tools. Apart from profile, media habits and transnational television viewing behaviour validated scales of individualism and consumerism formed integral part of the interview schedule. The study was aimed at empirically examine theoretical formulation of cultural-media imperialism.

The study was based on two assumptions: language is the most recognisable part of culture and linguistic communities in India represent intra-cultural groups for comparison. Secondly, transnational television essentially foreign-origin, English language channels represent values of individualism and consumerism as they project Western world view contrary to collective and responsibility value orientations of the Eastern cultures.

The locale of the study was Mumbai, commercial capital of India. “In both popular and academic literature Bombay is typically characterized as India’s most modern City” (Patel, 1995). The reason for choosing these two communities had been that after the bifurcation of the States in 1960, the Gujaratis (people who speak Gujarati language and who originally belong to the neighboring State of Gujarat) have now become a migrant community to Mumbai. They migrated to Mumbai mainly for trade or business

opportunities way back in early nineteenth century. Marathis or Maharashtrais (people who speak Marathi language and who are residence of Maharashtra State) is the local community. Together Gujaratis and Marathis constitute majority of the Mumbai district population. The study covered fifty geographical localities including 171 housing colonies/*Chawls*/ flats/slums from five administrative wards of Mumbai city. In all 1037 Gujarati and 1015 Marathi individuals resided in the 400 households were covered.

Data collection reconfirmed the fact that act of viewing television is associated with lot of guilt and most often initially the viewers under-reported volume of television watched by them. Besides though the data was collected using tools made in respective languages, about one fifth of the viewers preferred to answer English schedule, as they were not comfortable to respond/write in their mother tongue of which majority were Gujaratis. This also had to do with Indian colonial past which has made English second language for most Indians.

## **Profiles of the communities**

The profile of the viewers clearly indicated that Gujaratis had better educational and socio-economic status compared to Marathis. Gujaratis were mainly business/professional community, and had better language efficiency compared to Marathis. The mean age of the viewers was 32 years with no significant difference across communities. Not a single Gujarati viewer had education below tenth standard as against six percent Marathi viewers had studied below fifth standard including three Marathi women who were illiterate. Three fourth of the Marathi viewers had studied in their mother tongue compared to half of the Gujaratis. Two fifth of Gujaratis had studied at English medium schools as against ten per cent of Marathis. Age data indicated interesting trend among Gujaratis where more than half of the younger age group (20 to 30 years of age) studied in English medium schools compared to one fifth of their older (40 to 50 years of age) counterparts. But one fourth of older Marathis studied in English medium compared to one fifth of their younger counterparts.

Gujaratis were mainly into “business” or “profession” while Marathis were mostly in service. Analysis indicated that more Marathi males work at younger age compared to Gujaratis. Almost equal proportion of Gujarati and Marathi viewers were students. Majority of the viewers were Hindus and their proportion was almost equal in both the linguistic communities followed by respondents belonging to Buddhist, Jains, Parasis and Muslims religions. Marathis were either Hindu or Baudh as against diverse religious backgrounds of Gujaratis.

Marriages being an important institution of Indian society, majority of the viewers were married where proportion of married Gujaratis was little more compared to Marathis. Age and marital status analysis indicated “early marriage age” among Gujaratis compared to Marathis. One third of the viewers who were “unmarried”, majority were below 30 years of age. Majority of the viewers was residing in Mumbai for generations of which interestingly proportion of Gujaratis was little more than Marathis. Majority of those in Mumbai for generation reported to be staying in same locality or even same house for many years.

The viewers reported varied abilities in seven Indian (Gujarati, Marathi, Hindi, Bengali, Tamil and Kannada, Kokani) and four foreign languages (English, French, Russian, German) besides one dialect (Kutchi). Except 0.05 per cent all the viewers were bilingual or trilingual. Very high percent of Gujaratis as well as Marathis reported familiarity with English at reading, writing and/or speaking level. It was also found that younger age groups across both the communities had higher language efficiency scores compared to older age viewers. Educational level had no direct relation to language efficiency as one illiterate Marathi woman of 45 years could speak four Indian languages and understand English because she had worked as maidservant for varied linguistic households. About one third of the viewers reported high “exposure to English” as to have exposure at any two of the four dimensions examined under the present study: familiarity with English as a language, studied in English medium School, speak in English at Home, and Use English media other than television.

The average family size was five members with favorable gender ratio in both the communities. About one third of households across both the communities had children below 12 years. Almost half of the Gujarati families were adult families while one-fourth of the Marathi families had youngsters (13 to 18

years). Data about language “most frequently spoken” at home revealed that majority of the viewers converse in their mother tongue at home. Ten percent households converse in English along with their respective mother tongue. Only four percent Gujaratis and 1.5 percent Marathis speak “only in English” at home mainly reported so by women who want to improve the language of their English-medium school-going children.

Socio-Economic Status (SES) indices constituted scoring of total 18 items using weighted mean for household appliances, status possession, number of nature of television set ownership, education of the head of the family and monthly family income reported by the viewers. Majority of lower SES were Marathis while majority of middle and in upper SES viewers were Gujaratis.

More than half of the Gujaratis reported membership to their community organizations as against one fourth of Marathis. More of lower and upper SES Gujaratis reported community organization membership contrary to that of middle SES Marathis. Gujaratis as migrant to Mumbai maintain their identity in metropolitan environment contrary to local community; Marathis supporting that “as the world becomes an electronic village, the world’s people cling even more strongly to their native cultural identity” Doyle (1992: 98).

### **Media consumption across communities**

Apart from television, the most used in-house medium by the viewers was newspaper. Electronic (radio, Tape-recorder, VCR/VCP/VCD) and “new” media (computer and Internet) were used more by Gujaratis also due to the ownership of appliances for media access. In general, males used more of newspaper and new media while females used books and magazines. More of Marathis youngsters (20 to 30 years) used print media compared to their Gujarati counterparts who used more of “new media”.

Film viewing in theatres was the most popular outside house media mainly among Gujaratis as most reported to be going to cinema-halls to watch films compared to their Marathi counterparts. Almost half of Marathis as well as Gujaratis go for Plays/Dramas. One fifth of the viewers reported to be using the Internet in cyber-cafes or at work place in absence of access at home. Electronic media was used more by younger age group compared to their older counterparts.

Since television viewing can not be isolated from the other media behaviour of the viewers, they were asked about frequency of usage, language, names, nature of content and time spent with each medium apart from television. Readership of 33 **newspapers** and 88 **magazines** was reported of which magazines in special interest category (29) were the most read. Fiction was more popular among book readers compared to non-fiction. Close to half of the viewers did not listen to **radio** at all and 29.5 percent listened to it everyday. Close to 10 percent of the viewers listened to tape-recorders or even car radio. In spite of the fact that one third of the viewers own **VCR/VCP/VCD** only one fourth reported to be using it mostly once or twice a month for watching variety of programs. About one third of the viewers owned **computer** at home but total two fifth reported to be using it either at work place or in educational institutions and total one third reported to be accessing **Internet**. In terms of language of media consumption little less than half (45.82) of the viewers reported to be using “only Indian language media” while the remaining used Indian language media in combination with English.

The “time spent” data indicated that daily average time spent on media “including television” was three hours, but if television was excluded the time was one hour twenty minutes indicating high amount of time spent on television by all the viewers. Gender analysis revealed that women spent little less time on television compared to men though both spent more or less same amount of time on media other than television.

In terms of education, less educated viewers spent more time on “media including television” while more educated people spent more time with “media other than television”. In terms of age middle age group (30 to 40 years of age) spent least amount of time with media compared to the other two age groups mainly due to their work compulsions. It was found that Gujaratis used more number of media less frequently while Marathis media usage frequency and duration was higher. Interestingly the data indicated very high correlation ( $r=0.857$ ,  $p=0.01$ ) between amount of time spent on television and time spent on other media.

## Television-set in the household

Close to one fourth of the Gujarati families had more than one television set at home compared to ten percent Marathis. Even six percent Gujarati and two percent Marathi households had more than two television sets. Though most of the television sets across communities were colour with remote control, more of Gujarati households had “with remote” television sets compared to Marathi households. Fifteen percent of Marathi households had Black & White (B&W) television sets as against only 2.5 percent Gujarati households. The range of accessible channels in the television set varied from six to 250. It needs to be noted that an average C&STV household in Mumbai can access more than 200 channels but in absence of channel capacity of the television set frequent tuning is required.

More than half of the Gujarati households had cable connection for more than eight years against one fourth of the Marathi families indicating longer years of transnational television exposure among Gujaratis. More than one third of the Marathi households opted to cable connection in “last two years”. Average household monthly expenditure for cable connection was Rs. 125 (approx. 2.5\$) in the range of Rs. 70 (1.4\$) to Rs. 500 (10\$) across communities.

Close to half of the viewers across communities cited “need for variety in television program” as the reason for taking cable connection indirectly indicating their fatigue with national public service broadcaster, *Doordarshan*. Interestingly more of Gujaratis reasoned “for entertainment/time pass” while more Marathis stated “not to go to neighbours” as reason for taking cable connection. About seven percent viewers across both the communities took cable connection “for social conversation” confirming television’s role of “social cementing”.

Close to ten percent of Gujaratis and Marathi households reported to be disconnecting cable connection for variety of reasons negating “hooked passive audience premise”. The reasons for disconnecting cable were examinations of children, television set was not working or money was not paid to cable operator. Yet all of them accepted the heavy dependence on cable connection once it was taken. When the researcher interviewed a male respondent on a holiday whose cable connection was not functional he very emotionally expressed, “*I feel like a handicapped person and I do not know what to do without cable*”.

Television was viewed mostly “only at night” by one third of the households. About fifteen percent of the viewers reported to be watching television from “late evening” onwards. Television viewing is still a “family” activity across communities. Little more than half of the viewers across both the communities viewed television along with their family members.

In general across communities “head of the family decided” what was to be viewed on television. More of middle SES Gujaratis and lower SES Marathis accepted the role of head of the household in decision-making compared to other SES class. Sixty percent of the viewers agreed to the statement “television was a reason for fights among the family members”, mainly belonging to lower and middle SES households. Most of the viewers while responding to the statement at some point became defensive and insisted that there were no open fights but there were disagreements. About one fifth of Gujarati and one third of Marathi households had partially resolved the tension by creating timetable for TV viewing. More of lower and upper class Marathi families agreed to the statement that they have “devised a timetable for who will watch, what and when” compared to upper class Gujaratis who more often had multiple television sets.

Across communities television is viewed by surfing channels when advertisements appear in the middle of the programme. SES was found to be correlating with the surfing. For majority of the households watching sex and violence on television as a family was still a taboo. Majority of the viewers reported that they have “yet not got used to watch sex and violence on television as a family” of which more of them were men. Viewers reported to be changing channels or mute the volume to counter embracement caused due to scenes of sex and violence mainly on transnational television programs.

## Individual television viewing behaviour

All the viewers watched television “almost every day” for an average of 210 minutes except one upper SES Gujarati woman of 38 who watched TV “once-twice a month”. More of women watch television “daily” compared to men across both the communities.

Interestingly more than half of the viewers confirmed to the uses and gratification premise by stating that “they watch television because they want to watch specific programs” compared to others who watch it “for time pass or have got habituated to watch TV” or because “television was ON in the house”. More than one fourth of the viewers agreed that television had become their habit. Many of them even commented that even if they knew that they were wasting time, viewing has become more of the ritual for them. Evening and night were the most preferred time of the day for majority of the viewers.

Marathis spent more time with television compared to Gujaratis. One fourth of the viewers (mainly Marathis) watched television three times in a day i.e. either “morning or afternoon” and evening and night. In general it was found that viewers watched more television on weekends (mean= 4 hours) compared to weekday (mean=3.3 hours). But Gujaratis weekend time spent on television was similar to Marathis weekday time spent.

When asked about programs watched most regularly two fifth of the viewers reported names of Family Soaps (labelled as Serials) and game shows followed by one fourth watching films or film-based programs. Interestingly one third males also reported to be watching serials regularly along with other family members. Everybody at the time of the present study were hooked to the popular soap operas telecast on mainly three private satellite channels; STAR, Sony and Zee TV. In terms of age, middle age viewers (30 to 40) used television for non-fiction content like sports, religious, news and current affairs etc. while younger age group was mainly into film and film-based content.

Interestingly when asked the “most watched genre” more than half of the viewers reported to be watching family drama/serials followed by one fourth watching news and current affairs category. The gender difference was very sharp as seventy percent of females watched family dramas as against thirty percent males. One third of the males watched news and current affairs programs as against ten percent of women. The programme preference pattern did not vary across communities.

Forty percent of the Gujaratis as against ninety percent of Marathis watch television channels in their respective mother tongue. Sixty six percent of the viewers watched one-language programs i.e. Hindi on television followed more than one fourth watching programs in two languages, most often mother tongue and Hindi or English and Hindi. More of Gujaratis watched “one language” programs compared to Marathis. About eight percent of the total viewers reported to be watching “only English” programs on television while about one fourth watching English programs in combination with other languages. Four percent viewers reported to be watching programs in three to four languages on television revealing complexity of media usage.

The viewers were separately asked if they watched television programs in their mother tongue. Majority of Marathis (86.5%) watch television in their mother tongue as against less than half of the Gujaratis (41.5%). The reasons given by the Gujarati viewers for not watching Gujarati channels were lack of quality, primitive nature of content, absence of novelty in story and treatment etc. All including many Gujarati viewers expressed that Marathi language television channels had better quality.

Indianized and Indian-origin channels like STAR, Sony, Zee, SAHARA, and SAB were found to be most popular. Only ten percent viewers reported to be watching “foreign/English” channels exclusively. Usually the viewers reported to be watching general entertainment and news channels of both Indian and foreign origin. More than half of the viewers reported viewership of “foreign” channels like BBC, CNN, English movie or sports channels etc. but if viewership of sports channels was excluded, the proportion became one third suggesting popularity of sports content rather than channel mainly among men. Local cable network was found popular with ten percent viewers. Additional data of “last week recall” indicated that majority of the viewers had watched one of the “foreign channels” mainly movie or music or even infotainment, mostly not reported when asked about “the names of the channels watched by them”. It also

is mainly to do with “surfing” viewership than “viewing per se”.

## **Influences of transnational television**

In order to understand perception of audience about influence of television in general and transnational television in particular, the viewers were asked to specify influences in the context of change on six dimensions of their personal life (physical self- looks or fashion, awareness about world affairs, buying decision, reading habits in mother tongue, religious activities and overall thinking patterns), five dimensions of their family life (social visits, family interaction, interaction with the head of the family, occasions of family gathering and frequency to eat ready to cook food) and open-ended question about influence on society.

The viewers were asked to state if they felt “any change” had occurred because of transnational television. Majority of the viewers accepted the role of television in “their understanding of world affairs” followed by half of them perceiving its role in their buying behaviour. Half of the women felt that television had influenced their “thinking” than men. One third of the young and middle (up to school) educated viewers felt that television had made them more “conscious about their physical self” in terms of look, fashion, clothing or style. One fourth of Marathis expressed that their reading habits in their mother tongue as well as personal religious activities had been influenced because of television compared one fifth of Gujaratis. Many also expressed that their religious activities had increased by watching the “religious” channels or mythological serials. In general, more of Marathis perceived television’s influence on their “personal self” compared to Gujaratis. Younger age groups, women and middle educated (undergraduates and graduates) viewers were the ones who perceived more influence on “personal self” compared to other viewers.

The viewers were asked about nature of change on family where higher proportions reported negative influences of transnational television on family. One fifth of Marathis perceived positive influence of transnational television while similar proportion of Gujaratis reported that influence of negative nature. Majority of the viewers expressed that transnational television in particular had reduced “social interaction”. It needs to be noted that transnational television essentially mean multi-channel 24-hours broadcasting unlike public service broadcaster in the past. Contrary to that few viewers reported increasing “family get-together and interaction” crediting it to ongoing family soap operas portraying joint family values.

The viewers were asked to express their opinion about influence of transnational (popularly known as satellite) television on Indian society. Majority of the viewers expressed that there was some influence. One fourth of the Gujaratis compared to fifteen percent Marathis felt that television had negative influence. The viewers described negative influence mainly in form of losses to children in variety of ways, concerns for violence and vulgarity and loss of social life.

One fifth of the viewers reporting positive influence of transnational television expressed widened perspectives about the world, social cementing role of television and role of television in helping present generation children learn to speak English, know more things and greater aware about the outside world not known to them in their childhood. One fifth of the viewers maintained that the influence was both negative as well as positive.

The Viewers were asked to name any programs/television channel they felt “indecent” and therefore not suitable for family viewing. One third viewers expressed their concern for transnational television content and felt that Government should ban these channels. More of Gujaratis compared to Marathis found one or other television content indecent for their family. The range varied from popularly viewed family soaps to English films/programs, horror shows or channels like Fashion TV, MTV or Channel V. The reasons for labelling a particular programme or channel “indecent” were mainly vulgarity, violence, unsuitability to Indian culture and perceived influences on children.

## **Values and transnational television**

“Transnational” television was defined as “foreign” English-language television. Viewership of English

television in itself indicated dynamic nature of audience reception. Eight percent of the viewers exclusively watched English language programs on television and about one fifth of them reported to be watching them along with other languages. When asked about programs/channels watched regularly more than one third named English channels excluding Sports channels as “viewed regularly”. When it came to “last week recall” majority of the viewers had watched either of the “foreign” movie, music or infotainment channels in the last week.

Almost half of Marathis and little more than one fourth of Gujaratis reported of not using English media at all. Multilingual media consumption was observed across mother tongue. Though usage of English print media (especially for newspaper and magazine) was high, audiovisual media like films and television were accessed often in Hindi rather than in English. Viewing English television was directly associated with education ( $r=0.362$ ,  $p=0.01$ ) and inversely associated with age ( $r= -0.0219$ ,  $p=0.01$ ). English exposure prior to television had direct association with viewing of English television programs ( $r = 0.537$ ,  $p=0.01$ ) Those exposed to “English” as medium of instruction at school, conversed in English at home or used non-television English media were watching English television much more ( $r = 0.472$ ,  $p=0.01$ )

Scores of individualism and consumerism were found to be correlated to each other ( $r=0.0272$ ,  $p=0.01$ ) and there was no significant difference found between the scores of two linguistic communities. Daily average time spent on television had correlation with consumerism ( $r = 0.207$ ,  $p=0.01$ ) as well as individualism ( $r = 0.095$ ,  $p=0.05$ ). Consumerism was also found to be directly correlated with total English television ( $r = 0.159$ ,  $p=0.01$ ) and inversely with age ( $r = 0.176$ ,  $p=0.01$ ). Number of years of cable exposure and total English television viewing were found positively correlated ( $r = 0.222$ ,  $p=0.01$ ) and so as the viewership of English channels ( $r = 0.151$ ,  $p=0.01$ ). It was also found that those who were using non-television media in English were not watching much of television ( $r = -0.161$ ,  $p=0.01$ ) and mostly belonged to upper SES. SES was significantly associated with education ( $r = 0.587$ ,  $p=0.01$ ), usage of non-television English media ( $r = 0.554$ ,  $p=0.01$ ), years of cable exposure ( $r = 0.514$ ,  $p=0.01$ ) and inversely associated with daily time spent on television ( $r = -0.196$ ,  $p=0.01$ ).

Upper SES viewers own and got exposed to much more English media content but spent much less time with television and those watching more transnational television were found to be more consumerist and individualistic. Influence of transnational television on the cultural values can not be associated to television viewing behavior alone as the data revealed media consumption and audience reception are complex processes.

## **Cultural-Media imperialism and audience reception**

Keeping the findings of this micro study of two sub-cultures it can be concluded that the premise of transnational television sweeping local culture or language preferences of audiences is completely baseless. In spite of the socio-economic profile differences of the communities no significant difference was found between the value-scores of individualism and consumerism.

Gujaratis as more “cosmopolitan” community with better SES were found to be more close to their cultural-community affiliations, perceiving negative influence of satellite channels on family and more concerned about the programming content of transnational television. Marathis were found to be having stronger affinity for their mother tongue in form of medium of instruction at school, media usage and home language yet were more positive about influence of private television channels on personal self.

Television viewing was a group activity taking place in late-evenings and night amidst family routines like dinner, conversations, studies or even cooking. Indianized channels or channels of Indian-origin were most popular than any other channels. In spite of fears of media imperialism actual consumption of English language television was still limited but longer years of transnational television exposure showed increase in English television viewership. English television viewing also had much to do with socialisation of viewer at school, at home or in other non-television media usage.

Indian language television channels or many channels of Indian-origin continued to be most popular as compared to transnational channels. In spite of fears of media imperialism *actual* consumption of transnational television was limited. Viewers in the 20 to 30 years of age group, mostly students, having



English language background (having studied in English medium, conversing in English at home and using media other than television in English) watched transnational television more frequently compared to others. They were found to be having higher degrees of individualism and consumerism also. But programme preferences were found to be changing with age and longer years of transnational television exposure.

Based on the media consumption of newspapers, magazines, books, radio, television, computer, Internet, films in cinema halls and plays in theatre, it was found that media consumption is interplay of socio-cultural, economic and demographic variables having intra-cultural diversities. The media consumption was found to be diverse and inter-cultural activity. The study lend evidence to the concepts of "cultural proximity, cultural capital and economic capital" for transnational television consumption.

But it is difficult to conclude that English television programs promote a particular value system because today, "transnational media coexist with domestic, and compete with audiences; domestic production can become even more commercial, garish and explicit than the western "originals" as noted by Sereberny-Mohammadi (1991: 181). In the era of globalisation, transnational television consumption in India suggests inter-cultural similarities of programme preferences, television consumption patterns and value orientations, but intra-cultural diversities of socio-economic profiles and so media consumption.

## References:

- Al Nick, John J.(1983). *Communication policy and the political process*, London, Greenwood Press.
- Boyd-Barrett, O. (1977) "*Media Imperialism: Towards an international framework for the analysis of media systems*" p- 116-135 In Curran, J. & Gurevitch, M. (eds) *Mass communication and society*, London: Edwards Arnold.
- Boyd-Barrett, O. (1998). "*Media Imperialism Reformulate*", Ch-9, p-157-176 In Thussu, D. K.(ed.) *Electronic Empires- Global media and local resistance*. London: Arnold.
- Butcher, M. (2002) "When STAR Came to Town: Cultural Change and Transnational Television in India". New Delhi: Sage.
- Datta V & Alwe M (1999) Impact of Satellite television on family interaction patterns, *Contemporary Social Work*, Vol. XVI, October 1999, p-87-91.
- Fernandes L (2000) Nationalizing 'the global': media images, cultural politics and the middle class in India. *Media, Culture & Society*, Vol. 22, issue 5, p- 611-628, Sage.
- Goonasekera A.& Paul S (1998) *TV Without Borders-Asia Speaks Out* Singapore, Asian Media Information and Communication Centre
- Griffin Michael (2002) From Cultural Imperialism to Transnational Commercialisation: Shifting Paradigms in International Media Studies, *Global Media Journal*, Fall 2002, Vol.1, issue 1, [http://www.lass.calumet.purdue.edu/From\\_Cultural\\_Imperialism.htm](http://www.lass.calumet.purdue.edu/From_Cultural_Imperialism.htm)
- Gupta N. (1998) *Switching Channels: Ideologies of Television in India*, Oxford University Press, New Delhi
- Johnson Kirk (2000) *Television and Social Change in Rural India: A Study of Two Mountain Villages in Western Maharashtra*, Sage, New Delhi.
- Joshi S. R. (1998) *Transborder Television in India* In Goonasekera et al. 1998, p-3-37
- Kang, J.G. and Michael Morgan (1990) *Culture Clash: Impact of U.S. Television in Korea* in Martin and Hebert (ed.) *Current issues in International Communication*, p-293-301, Longman, New York.
- Lee C.C. (1980) *Media Imperialism Reconsidered: The Homogenizing of Television Culture*, Sage,

London.

Lee P.S.N. (2000) Television and Global Culture: assessing role of Television in globalisation, ch-11, P-188-198 in Wang et.al. (2000).

Mankekar Purnima (1999) *Screening Culture, viewing politics- Television, womanhood and nation in modern India*: Oxford University Press, New Delhi

McMillin D (2001) Localizing the global: Television and hybrid programming in India, *International Journal of Cultural Studies*, Vo. 4, Issue1, p-45-68.

Melkote S.R. et al. (1998) *International Satellite Broadcasting in South-Asia- Political, Economic and Cultural Implications* Lanham, University Press of America

Monterio & Jayasankar (2000) Between Normal and the imaginary: the Spectator- Self, the Other and Satellite Television in India, Ch-15, p-301-321 in Hagen & Wasko (2000).

Muppiddi S R (1999) *The Uses & Gratifications of DoorDarshan & Eenadu TV- A study of a regional Indian television audience*, Ph.D. Dissertation, School Bowling State University, Bowling Green

Patel S & Thorner A (1995) (Ed.) *Bombay- Mosaic of modern culture*, Oxford University press, Delhi, 1995

Rao & Raghavan (1996) *Social effects of Mass Media in India*, Gyan Publishers, New Delhi.

Rao S. & Melkote (1998) Viewing of DoorDarshan by Cable Subscribers in Bangalore India: Is there a difference with non-subscribers?, Ch-10, p-181-203 in Melkote et.al (1998).

Robertson, R. (1994) *Globalisation or Glocalisation*, *Journal of International Communication*, Vol.1, issue1, June, p 33-52.

Schiller H.I. (1976) *Communication and Cultural domination*, Armonk, International Arts & Science Press, New York.

Sereberny-Mohammadi, A (1997) *The Many Faces of Imperialism*, Ch-3, P-49-68 in Golding and Haris (1997).

Sharma (1999) Kitne Sach hai channelo ke sarvekshan ke dave, *Cable Quest*, issue II, Vol. 1, 15<sup>th</sup> June to 14<sup>th</sup> July 1999, p-33-41.

Straubhaar Joseph (2000) Culture, Language and Social Class in Globalisation of Television, ch-12, P-199-224 in Wang Et.al. (2000). Just switch Just switch off! *Television: Creating the modern women*, *Social Scientist*, Vol.28, p-322-32

Straubhaar Joseph, Consuelo Campbell & Kristina Cahoon (1995) From National to regional Cultures: the five cultures and television markets in NAFTA Just switch Just switch off! *Television: Creating the modern women*, *Social Scientist*, Vol.28, p-322-323

Tomilson (1991) *Cultural Imperialism: A Critical introduction*, Pinter Publisher, London.

UNESCO (1994) *TV Transnationalisation: Europe and Asia*, Papers on mass communication No.103, Edited and abridged from reports by P. Sepstrup and A. Goonasekara, UNESCO, Paris.

UNESCO (2000) *World Culture Report, Cultural Diversity, Conflict and Pluralism*, UNESCO, Paris.

Varma A (2000) Impact of Watching International Television programmes on Adolescents in India- A Research Note: *Journal of Comparative family studies*, 31(1), Winter, p-117-126

Wang G, Jan Servaes & A Goonasekera (2000) *The Communications Landscape, Demystifying Media Globalisation*, Routledge, London.

Ware W & Michel Dupagne (1994) Effects of U.S. Television Programs on Foreign Audiences: A Meta Analysis, *Journalism Quarterly*, Vol 71, No.4, Winter 1994, p-947-959

Yadawa (1992) Open Skies for TV, Survey conducted by Dr. J S Yadawa, Director IIMC, September-October 1992 quoted in Bhatta (1994).

## **About the Author**

Mira K. Desai (S.N.D.T. Women's University, Mumbai, India) is an associate professor teaching media and communication at the Post Graduate Department of Extension Education, S.N.D.T. Women's University. She has done her master's in development communication as well as master of arts in distance education and has finished her doctoral research on transnational television and linguistic communities in Mumbai in January 2004. She is one of the vice presidents of Global Communication Research Association based at Macquaire University, Sydney, Australia.