

Mass media influences the way people live culturally

[Media](#), [Advertising](#)



| Mass media influences the way people live culturally, discuss 4 mediums using any two media theories you have studied | All mediums whether moving or still, mechanical or electrical, in black, white or colour, text or with pictures, diagrams or cartoons can substantially improve communication. These are effective when communicating with an audience or mass that must read, listen or watch. All these help put messages across convincingly, hence they have an influence on culture as what you read, listen to and watch might make a shift in the way an individual behaves. This discussion will help look at different medium channels and how they have impacted on culture and the community in general. The media influence has grown so much with the advancement of fast moving technology. When we start talking of mediums, we look at aspects like the telegraph, radio, newspaper, different magazines, television and the internet. The society we live in currently needs information and communication. Whether the media conveys the positive or the negative information, people still depend on it like never before. The media today is either building or disfiguring the community it exists in. The media offers all sorts, from entertainment, healthcare, education, personal, relationships, travel and anything else that the human mind can think of and get involved in. When one wakes up in the morning, they check their time by switching on the television set or tuning in to the radio. From the same person buys a daily newspaper local or international to have a look of the headlines and see what is happening in and around the environment we exist in. What we need to be aware of is that most of our beliefs, discussions and values are based on what we know for a fact, our daily lives depends on the media to get the current news and facts about

what is important and what we should be aware of. People of this world have put so much trust on the media to give us news, entertainment and education. The influence of media should be observed from a very tender age of the children as it either moulds or destroy these young brains in preparation for adulthood. The whole society needs to be aware of how this so called media works so that any media influence can be assessed and evaluated. According to research, [www. google. com](http://www.google.com), of all the different media distribution channels, the most influential channel has been the television. People are constantly exposed to thousands of images of violence, advertising, sex, celebrities and much much more, in fact it is known that a child is exposed to about 40, 000 adverts each year. So no wonder it is so very important to be aware of what the children watch each day. Parents and or guardians should also try to look at things from different angles and not just from one the media gives. Most of the times, movies, magazines and documentaries that are highly advertised are the ones that people buy and they also make the most sales. After an individual sees thousands of advertisements being aired, then one reaches a purchasing decision to buy the newspaper, movie or documentary. These are the effects of mass media on people, they buy what they watch on television and also what their favourite popular person advertise or is seen wearing automatically becomes acceptable in the culture of the person watching. Hence media influences the way people culturally. Mass media is a significant force in modern culture, particularly in America. Sociologists refer to this as a mediated culture where media reflects and creates the culture. Communities and individuals are bombarded constantly with messages from

a multitude of sources including TV, billboards, and magazines, to name a few. These messages promote not only products, but moods, attitudes, and a sense of what is and is not important. Mass media makes possible the concept of celebrity: without the ability of movies, magazines, and news media to reach across thousands of miles, people could not become famous. In fact, only political and business leaders, as well as the few notorious outlaws, were famous in the past. Only in recent times have actors, singers, and other social elites become celebrities or "stars." The current level of media saturation has not always existed. As recently as the 1960s and 1970s, television, for example, consisted of primarily three networks, public broadcasting, and a few local independent stations. These channels aimed their programming primarily at two-parent, middle-class families. Even so, some middle-class households did not even own a television. Today, one can find a television in the poorest of homes, and multiple TVs in most middle-class homes. Not only has availability increased, but programming is increasingly diverse with shows aimed to please all ages, incomes, backgrounds, and attitudes. This widespread availability and exposure makes television the primary focus of most mass-media discussions. More recently, the Internet has increased its role exponentially as more businesses and households "sign on." Although TV and the Internet have dominated the mass media, movies and magazines—particularly those lining the aisles at grocery checkout stands—also play a powerful role in culture, as do other forms of media. What role does mass media play? Legislatures, media executives, local school officials, and sociologists have all debated this controversial question. While opinions vary as to the extent and type of

influence the mass media wields, all sides agree that mass media is a permanent part of modern culture. Three main sociological perspectives on the role of media exist: the limited-effects theory, the class-dominant theory, and the culturalist theory.

Limited-effects theory The limited-effects theory argues that because people generally choose what to watch or read based on what they already believe, media exerts a negligible influence. This theory originated and was tested in the 1940s and 1950s. Studies that examined the ability of media to influence voting found that well-informed people relied more on personal experience, prior knowledge, and their own reasoning. However, media "experts" more likely swayed those who were less informed. Critics point to two problems with this perspective. First, they claim that limited-effects theory ignores the media's role in framing and limiting the discussion and debate of issues. How media frames the debate and what questions members of the media ask change the outcome of the discussion and the possible conclusions people may draw. Second, this theory came into existence when the availability and dominance of media was far less widespread.

Culturalist theory The culturalist theory, developed in the 1980s and 1990s, combines the other two theories and claims that people interact with media to create their own meanings out of the images and messages they receive. This theory sees audiences as playing an active rather than passive role in relation to mass media. One strand of research focuses on the audiences and how they interact with media; the other strand of research focuses on those who produce the media, particularly the news. Theorists emphasize that audiences choose what to watch among a wide range of options, choose how much to watch, and may choose the mute

button or the VCR remote over the programming selected by the network or cable station. Studies of mass media done by sociologists parallel text-reading and interpretation research completed by people who study language. Both groups of researchers find that when people approach material, whether written text or media images and messages, they interpret that material based on their own knowledge and experience. Thus, when researchers ask different groups to explain the meaning of a particular song or video, the groups produce widely divergent interpretations based on age, gender, race, ethnicity, and religious background. Therefore, culturalist theorists claim that, while a few elite in large corporations may exert significant control over what information media produces and distributes, personal perspective plays a more powerful role in how the audience members interpret those messages. The effects of the media can be positive or negative for example, if there is a sport that is getting a lot of attention by the media and gains popularity in the society, you will more likely want to practice the sport and be cool with all your friends. The result is that you will have fun with your friends and be more healthy because of the exercise you are doing. However a negative influence can be the use of cigarettes by celebrity movie stars, the constant exposure of sex images, the excessive images of violence and exposure to thousands of junk food adverts. Young people are in a stage of life where they want to be accepted by their peers, they want to be loved and be successful. The media creates the ideal image of a beautiful men and women and tells you what are the characteristics of a successful person, you can see it in movies and television . Its a unconscious way to tell you that if you are not like them you are not cool yet so its time to

buy the stuff they buy and look like they look. Another negative influence in teenagers that has grown over the last years are anorexia and obesity. There are millions of adolescents fighting obesity, but at the same time they are exposed to thousands of advertisements of junk food, while the idea image of a successful person is told to be thin and wealthy. Also more women are obsessive with losing weight even when they are not obese, there are many thin women that want to look like the super models and thin celebrities so they engage in eating disorders which leads to severe health issues and even death. The media channels that are effective are the television, radio, magazines and the newspaper. References Mass media and society, James Curran & Micheal Gurevitch Understanding Media effects , Jack M. McLeod, Gerald M. Kisicki and Zhongdang Mass communication theories, Denis McQuail [www. google. com](http://www.google.com). — What are media effects on society?