



INTRODUCTION OF AUDIO-VISUAL SYSTEM IN LEGAL EDUCATION

AUDIO-VISUAL SYSTEM has become an integral part of Indian teaching methodology. During the 70's Indians witnessed the television boom in the subcontinent. In India today 50 per cent of the area has been covered under the 'tele-umbrella'. Taking this as an advantage the University Grants Commission (UGC) and National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) have started telecasting their programmes for the promotion of educational value and social change. Prior to the establishment of 'Doordarshan', All India Radio was functioning as the sole media. But after the introduction of television the radio has gone a bit off colour because it cannot provide visuals. Since the audio-visual system has become an integral part of Indian teaching methodology, can it augment teaching in a discipline like law and if yes, how ?

In USA by the time the average High School student has graduated, he or she has been exposed to the television for 15,000 hours and 11,000 hours in the classroom. Television can be found in 98 per cent of American homes and an average family spends 6.9 hours watching it each day.¹ In India, however, less than 10 per cent people have their own television sets and spend nearly 4.3 hours a day watching it. During the last phase of the 70's, students from rural areas were exposed to television.

Audio-visual aids are widely employed in USA in the practice of law,² and most fields of higher and professional education, including medicine, psychiatry and business.³ However Law Schools have not been swept along by this trend. The idea that audio-visual devices can be used to enhance law teaching is certainly accepted to some degree for even the most hardened sceptic would find it difficult to picture a professor, even a law professor, without a black board and chalk close at hand.⁴ Though videotapes are helping student performances in skill-related courses such as trial advocacy, client counselling and settlement negotiations, yet very few empirical evidence exists to suggest that modern media have had little impact on the traditional law classroom.⁵

1. Peter Perlman, "Seeing is Believing—Making Proof more Meaningful", 17 *Trial* 34 (June 1984), citing *Television and Human Behaviour* 1-10 (1979).

2. G. Mahlon, J. Funk and Harry J. Hicks III, "Admissibility of 'Day in the Life' films in Virginia", 18 *U. Rich. L. Rev.* 751 (1984); Guy O. Kornblum, "Videotapes in Civil Cases", 24 *Hastings L.J.* 9 (1972).

3. Ronald Dresnick, "Use of Videotape Recorder in Legal Education", 25 *U. Miami L. Rev.* 543 at 566 (1971).

4. Michael Botein, *Videotape in Legal Education : A Study of its Implications and a Manual for its Use* 3 (1979).

5. Paul R. Baier, "What is the Use of a Law Book without Pictures or Conversations?" 34 *J. Legal Ed.* 619 at 629 (1984).



In India there are more than 300 Law Colleges⁶ imparting legal education. The methodology of teaching is either based on 'lecture method' or 'case book method.' The duration of each class varies from 50 to 60 minutes. The teacher normally delivers a lecture on a particular topic with the help of conventional aid materials such as blackboard and chalk. In the State of Orissa there are 15 law colleges and the number of teachers around 160 to 168. Out of this total, less than 5 per cent of law teachers utilise the 'blackboard'. So practically speaking there is no uniform methodology followed by the teacher. As a result, student's attention, power of retention differs from class to class and from college to college. In USA law students complain of boredom, particularly in the second and third year.⁷ Taking this as a cue the author took samples at different Law Colleges in the State of Orissa and found that out of 10,538 registered students less than 15 per cent are regular in their studies and out of this around 15 per cent from preliminary law class, 38 per cent from intermediate law class and 47 per cent from final year law class complain about boredom. Students often express their dissatisfaction about the teaching methodology. These statistics indicate that students find law an interesting subject in the first year but subsequently this interest gradually comes down to a lower frequency. Now the question before us is, (i) how can we make legal education interesting; and (ii) how to maintain that interest till the last day of the final year ?

'Audio-visual system' may not be the only answer to those questions: but this new system can definitely help law teachers in solving those problems to a greater extent.

Empirical studies have demonstrated that the significance of the sense of sight in the process of learning and retention is 85 per cent while that of the sense of hearing is only 10 per cent and the remaining senses is only 5 per cent.⁸ It was also found that even visuals play a significant role in the minds of handicappers.⁹

Visuals can provide important features like clarity, variety, vividness and speed.¹⁰ Besides this system helps a teacher in retaining the student's attention which is a first prerequisite for the process of learning.¹¹ The audio-visual media can make education more, (i) productive, (ii) individual, (iii) immediate, and (iv) equal for learners and give instruction on a more

6. *Educational Institutions in Commonwealth Countries* (1987).

7. E. Gordon Ges and Donald W. Jackson, "Current Studies of Legal Education. Findings and Recommendations", 32 *J. Legal Ed.* 471 at 474 (1982).

8. Fred Misko Jr., 10 *Dug. L. Rev.* 384 at 406 (1972).

9. Philip Browning, W.A. White, Gary Nave and Pattiz Barkin, "Instructive Video in the Classroom : Field Study", *Education and Training of Mentally Retarded*, vol. 2 pp. 85-92 (Jan. 1986).

10. Vincent R. Johnson, "Audio-visual Enhancement of Classroom Teaching: A Primer for Law Professors", *J. Legal Ed.*, vol. 37, p. 97 (1987).

11. C.R. Carpenter, "Psychological Concept and Audio-visual Instruction", 5 *AV Communication Rev.* 361-69 (1987); Vincent R. Johnson, "The Video Essay Questions : An Experiment in Teaching Professional Responsibility", 50 *Mo. L. Rev.* 591 at 598.



scientific basis.¹² Hence not only can it combat educational boredom but also retain the student's interest, besides giving a new dimension to teaching methodology.

Though this system is getting popular in USA in India it is still considered a new concept. The basic infrastructure is there but unfortunately very little has been done in this direction. The UGC's country-wide classroom programme is today grossly capitalising on subjects like science, management and technology. But legal education has been grossly neglected. Very few network and national programmes¹³ have played important roles in the promotion of legal socialisation.

Presently statistical data are not available as to how many colleges have this system. But in the State of Orissa except one¹⁴ no other Law College has this department.

Even though old timers are sceptical about its utility, in India this new system needs to be introduced keeping a futuristic view. It is worth noting that of late UGC has started providing financial grants to different Law Colleges to open this facility and every law teacher should try to take better advantage of it. Not only can the audio-visual system bring new dimensions in the field of legal education but also it can open new frontiers in the area of legal socialisation.

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12. Jarold E. Kemp, *Planning and Producing Audio-visual Materials* 6 (4th ed. 1980).

13. T.V. serials entitled *Qanooni Salah, Adhikar and Faisla*.

14. Mayurbhan Law College, Baripada is an affiliated Law College under Utkal University having an audio-visual society. The library section contains an audio library section. Lectures on law are normally collected from eminent legal personalities in audio-cassettes and later on duplicated and kept ready for circulation among students.

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