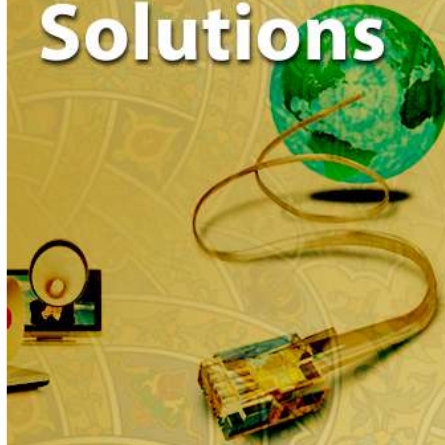


Misuse of electronic media

Problems & Solutions



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**An excerpt from Anwaar-e-Khitabat
(10) about a widely recognized
problem.**

Almighty Allah has granted human beings the treasure of knowledge and distinguished humankind over all other creation. Human beings do have the instinct of following others, but at the same time they also have the urge and ability to explore, to perform research and think out things. It is because of this urge and ability that human beings have been progressing on the path of knowledge since time immemorial. This journey is still going on. In every era, human beings have progressed as per the needs of that particular age.

In the last couple of decades, human beings have progressed exponentially in the field of technology and communication. There have been wonderful inventions and astounding discoveries, i.e. TV, internet, cellular phoning, etc.

Because of these new inventions, life has become much more comfortable. Particularly in the field of communications, many comfortable and dependable means of communication have been developed. Through TV, internet and other electronic media within seconds a message can be sent around the world. Now directions, distance and the like don't pose any problem at all. Distances have been bridged over. It is as if we are meeting someone face to face.

Through these facilities, business also has been transformed from a local or at most regional scale to an international scale. Investors can gain the required information about any company, the schemes and other details of investment in a matter of minutes. They can invest their money as per the Shariah in whatever business they want. There are no difficulties in transfer of funds, etc. Neither is there any need for travel for this purpose nor any fear of money being laid to waste en route.

Internet is the biggest means of communication. Contacting people living in different parts of the world, educating/instructing them, business on an international level, contact between banks and other financial institutions worldwide, all this is done through the internet. An individual can sit in a corner of the house and go through the libraries of the world which are present on the internet. Thus, there are many individual, social and economic advantages of the internet and it has become an international necessity.

There are many advantages of electronic media and similarly, and in fact more than this, are those harms which occur because of the misuse of electronic media. Communications, telecasting, broadcasting, webcasting, etc. have become really fast. These are those tools which are judged as per the way they are

being used. If they are used for good purposes, then their use is good. If they are used for evil purposes, they become means of evil.

TV is a means of audiovisual communication. Programs which have lewdness and indecency are also telecast through it and similarly, religious, educational and cultural programs are also telecast through it. If one absolutely avoids the indecent and lewd shows and only religious, educational and cultural programs are telecast on the television, then there is no harm in keeping a TV and watching it. This aspect of watching TV is beneficial to all. However, if it is used to watch movies, lewd and indecent programs then it is harmful from the worldly and spiritual point of view, impermissible and forbidden.

For this reason, the method Islam uses to stop corruption of the society is to close the very sources from where indecency spreads.

Watching TV is like using our eyes. The way using eyes to see something permissible is permissible use of eyes and seeing something indecent and lewd is to use the eyes for wrong purposes and thus impermissible and forbidden, in the same way the Shariah ruling for TV, internet, etc. will also depend on its use. If what they are being used for is permissible, then using them is permissible and if they are used for

forbidden and indecent things, then their use is forbidden.

There is a universally accepted principle of Fiqh (Islamic jurisprudence):

Translation: Affairs are with their aims. (Al Ashba Wan Nadhaair, Pg. No. 22)

In whatever way these things are used for good and permissible things in the society, at a much faster rate than that, they are being used to promote indecency and moral degeneracy in the society. Through this lewd literature is being promoted. Indecency and nudity are being spread. Vulgarities have become rampant in the society. Modesty does not seem to have any place in the electronic media at all.

The adage is that the world has become a global village. This is no doubt true, but the big question is to what extent our society has drawn benefit from it. Through this, western culture has been spread effectively. Even among those people who were not touched by this, the electronic media has vitiated their atmosphere.

There has been much harm because of indiscriminate use of internet and using it against the principles of the Shariah. Culture and society both have been

marred. The moral standard of the society has been lowered considerably and the minds have been polluted.

Misuse of radio

Each and every tool of electronic media is proving to be harmful instead of beneficial. In this era of globalization, protecting against misuse of electronic media is highly necessary to create a virtuous society.

Radio has once again become popular. FM radio seems to be popular all over the world. It is freely used when people are in leisure or waiting at bus stations, waiting rooms, like traveling in a bus, etc. As this comes very cheap, it is even more freely used.

At various times in the day youngsters spend their valuable time in listening to these radios as "time-pass," as a result of which they become careless in their responsibilities and their time is being wasted in listening to indecent songs, etc.

Misuse of TV

There is a huge network of TV channels which promote indecency/nudity at every step. Every program, movie and even cartoon has a plot of romance between a guy (male) and a girl (female) and

their mutual relations. Due to all these, sexual anarchy is spreading among the youth of the society.

Are cartoons fine for children

Even cartoons, which are made especially for children, have indecency. They have plots involving romance. Childhood is such an impressionable age, that everything the child sees is imprinted in the mind and the heart. Whatever the child listens to, he/she starts repeating it. The Holy Prophet (Sallallahu alaihi wa sallam) has instructed us to take special precautions for children so that their minds are not polluted. He (Sallallahu alaihi wa sallam) has instructed us to separate the beds of the children when children reach the age of 10. As given in the following Hadith:

Translation: You order your children to offer Salaat when they reach 7 years of age. At the age of 10, punish them on not doing so and separate their beds. (Sunan Abu Dawood, Hadith No. 495)

Even though at the age of 7 the Shariah is not binding on them, for their instruction and training, they should be ordered to offer Salaat and other forms of worship so that performing worship becomes second nature to them and they acquire the habit of standing before their Lord Almighty and prostrating before Him. If at the age of 10, children are careless about Salaat, they

should be dealt with strictly and should be beaten lightly.

In the same Hadith, the orders of separating their beds i.e. making them sleep separately, is also given. This shows that not only they should be taught good deeds, but also precautions should be taken to save them from all forms of indecency so that children grow up with chastity and virtuousness.

There are no two opinions about the fact that regardless of religion, race, community, every person realizes the importance of instructing the children in morals and ethics. If there are no morals it will surely result in corruption, quarrels and even fights in the society. Families are separated and bad traits start taking root in children themselves. Reformation of which is impossible except with virtuous character and true ideology.

It is very important that along with teaching children high morals, they should also be protected against bad traits and habits. They should be saved against sexual licentiousness, lewd gazing and movie watching. If children fall prey to any of these habits, especially watching movies, it will no doubt hurt their religion and the inward aspect of their being (Batin) will also be tainted but apart from all this the children will also be debased in the eyes of the world.

If by watching cartoons, our children start entertaining sexual thoughts at that young an age or start loving the semi-nude dresses, it is not entirely out of question that by the time they reach adulthood, they will be on the brink of the abyss of moral anarchy. These buds will lose their fragrance even before they turn into fully grown flowers.

TV channels are harmful for women

It seems as if special arrangements are made to spoil the character of women. There are umpteen programs on the TV channels wherein the inside happenings of a household are shown, the intimate relations between a husband and a wife are portrayed, the domestic wars between the daughter-in-law and the mother-in-law are shown. In all these channels, the characters, the story and everything else are fictitious.

In programs, non-Mahram men are shown. Only this is enough to spoil an Islamic society, but what is worse is that these programs spoil the thinking of the women. That lady who was all obedience and respect to her husband and mother-in-law is now learning how to disobey and taunt them. The lady who would not hurt anybody is now ready for (useless) argumentation.

Today in the name of equality and independence, these TV programs lead women to believe that their stay in the house is akin to being imprisoned in 4 walls with iron chains. They are persuaded to come out of this “imprisonment” and walk along with men and become equal partners in each aspect of life.

With these tempting slogans, women have been brought out from the peaceful and chaste atmosphere of the home and are exposed on the roads, in markets, clubs and parks. Women are excessively burdened with various exhausting works in the offices and call centers. They have been reduced to a means of fun in shops and hotels and a source of advertisement for various products. It is worth mentioning that women on whom Islam had placed the bejeweled crown of greatness and majesty, who had been given the garment of modesty and other great qualities, who had been given the robe of honor of chastity, alas! this same woman has been reduced to a showpiece and a toy in newspapers, TV, Internet and other media.

They have been exposed in theaters, parks and clubs and have been made a source of sexual entertainment and a means of fulfilling the base desires of the flesh.

It is doubly unfortunate that she has been made to do all this in the name of women’s freedom.

When the woman stays in her own house like a queen and takes up the responsibilities of caring for her husband, children, parents, brothers and sisters, then it is labeled as an imprisonment, but when the same woman goes out of the bounds of modesty to cook for other men, clean the rooms of non-Mahram (people with whom marriage is possible) people, serve unknown people in hotels and airplanes, welcomes customers in showrooms and supermarkets, gathers their necessary items, obeys the whims and caprices of the superior officer in offices, then it is called freedom and honor!

If somebody sins considering it a sin, then it is only a sin. However when women are exposed in the name of freedom, then the magnitude of the sin increases greatly.

Harms of TV for youth

Youth are the asset of any nation. Small children and old people do not have the requisite strength and capability to do great things. However, the youth are perfectly endowed with strength and capability to complete missions. The changing of times does not put a dent in their courage and enthusiasm. But what would happen if the same youth forget their responsibilities?

TV has everything that is needed to destroy the character and more. Be it news, drama, film, ads or anything else, the TV screen is never free of indecency. Almighty Allah has ordered us to not even approach any indecency:

And do not draw near to shameful deeds (whether) open or hidden. Surah An'aam-151

There are strict warnings for those who want to spread indecency. Almighty Allah says in the Holy Quran:

Indeed those who like that lewdness should spread among the Muslims, for them is agonizing punishment in this world and in the Hereafter. And Allah knows (the intentions of such people) and you do not know. Surah Noor (24:19)

As lewd gazing leads to many sins, Almighty Allah has prohibited us from that.

There is a Hadith in Musnad Imam Ahmed:

Translation of Hadith: It has been narrated on the authority of Hadhrat Abu Hurairah (May Almighty Allah be well pleased with him) that the Holy Prophet (Sallallahu alaihi wa sallam) said: Every part of the body plays its part in adultery. Eyes commit adultery and their adultery is by watching and seeing, hands

commit adultery and their adultery is by holding and grasping, legs commit adultery and their adultery is by walking, the mouth commit adultery and their adultery is by kissing. The heart desires and lusts and the private parts confirm it and commit adultery or refuse it and refrain from adultery. (Musnad Imam Ahmed, Hadith No. 8752)

Young men are naturally attracted to women. When they see indecency, their minds are affected by it. These TV programs attack their minds multiple times in a day. Slowly, their young minds start relying on it for their enjoyment and satisfaction. The result is that their bodies and their minds become weak.

III effects of Internet

The benefits of advantages of internet are no doubt huge, but it is also a staggeringly huge means of spreading indecency. Using internet, a girl very conveniently starts a "relationship" with a non-Mahram guy. Through e-mail and chatting, their "relationship" becomes even more intimate. Even members of the family are not as close as this guy and girl get close to each other. Islam has declared even (unnecessary) talk between a non-Mahram guy and girl as prohibited. We have to greet someone with Salaam before we talk, but in light of the Holy Quran and the Hadith, the Fuqaha (jurists) have declared

greeting a young girl/woman with Salaam as forbidden.

Even the voice of women is included in Hijab, but through voice chatting, non-Mahram boys and girls talk to each other without any reservations and don't feel any shame in doing so.

Not only this, but during chatting, they comfortably see each other. Modesty is being destroyed this way, but their eyes are not lowered. Alas! Nomadic life would have been better than use of internet in this manner. Rustics who live in villages are many times better than these "sophisticated" people.

In the same way through video calling of mobile phones, boys and girls see each other. For this neither computer, etc. is needed nor any other trappings.

All this is being done in spite of the fact that the Holy Prophet (Sallallahu alaihi wa sallam) has warned against lewd gazing. There is a Hadith in Kanz Ul Ummal of Imam Ali Muttaqi Hindi and in Jame' Ul Ahadith Wal Maraseel of Imam Suyuti (May Allah shower His mercy on them):

Translation: Hadhrat Abu Umama (May Almighty Allah be well pleased with him) narrates from the Holy Prophet (Sallallahu alaihi wa sallam) that He said: You

keep your gaze down and guard your private parts, otherwise Almighty Allah will change your faces. (Mo'jam Kabeer, Hadith No. 7746; Jame' UI Ahadith Wal Maraseel, Hadith No. 18309; Kanz UI Ummal, Hadith No. 13082)

The Holy Prophet (Sallallahu alaihi wa sallam) said:

Translation: Whoever looks at a non-Mahram woman with lust, on the Day of Judgment, molten lead would be poured in his eyes. (Hidayah, Kitab UI Karahiyya, Vol. 4, Pg. No. 458)

The warnings mentioned in these Hadith for a man seeing a non-Mahram woman also hold good for women who express their beauty before a non-Mahram man and allow him to see their beauty.

These relationships formed through the internet become so strong that they don't stop at mere talking or chatting but things come to such a turn that they meet each other and even form sexual relationships. Those matters which started with use of free time in a manner not permitted by the Shariah, ultimately lead to serious transgression of the rules of the Shariah.

Boys and girls having relationships (sexual or otherwise) with each other is strictly forbidden. Be it

the use of internet or any other method, the rules of the Shariah cannot be broken at all.

Almighty Allah says in the Holy Quran:

These are the limits (set) by Allah. So, do not exceed them. And those who exceed the limits prescribed by Allah, it is they who are the wrongdoers. Surah Baqarah-229

There is a Hadith in Sahih Bukhari and Sahih Muslim:

Translation: When an adulterer is committing adultery, he is not a true believer at that time. (Sahih Bukhari, Hadith No. 2475; Sahih Muslim, Hadith No. 211)

The Holy Prophet (Sallallahu alaihi wa sallam) has expressed the vile nature of adultery by declaring it the worst sin after Shirk (associating others with Almighty Allah). He (Sallallahu alaihi wa sallam) said:

Translation: After Shirk, there is no sin viler than the drop of semen which was cast into a womb, which was not lawful for that man by the Shariah. (Jame' Ul Ahadith Wal Maraseel, Hadith No. 20456)

Having sexual relationships without Nikah is a grave sin and angers Almighty Allah.

Factors which encourage sexual licentiousness

- Lack of Islamic education.
- Carelessness in raising children.
- Company of such people.
- Sexual education in schools.
- Watching TV and films.
- Misuse of internet.
- Misuse of voice chatting.
- Misuse of webcam.
- Misuse of cell phones, etc.

If sexual licentiousness is not curbed entirely, then apart from the spiritual loss, there is a very serious chance of getting incurable diseases. The Holy Prophet (Sallallahu alaihi wa sallam) has said:

Translation: When indecency increases in a community/nation to the point that they perform indecent acts publicly, then plague and other such

diseases will spread among them which were not present in the times of their elders. (Sunan Ibn Majah, Hadith No. 4009)

Western countries have made sexual licentiousness and nudity very common. The way all members of a family gather for eating at the table, in the same way, fulfilling sexual needs before one another is not considered wrong at all.

The sexual licentiousness and sexual crimes in American colleges and universities is setting new records. From the statistics published in the newspapers and other places we know that every year thousands of children are born out of wedlock, a large percentage of them are girls who were less than 20 years old and were students.

Misuse of electronic media and waste of time

Be it radio, TV, cell phones or internet, the person who starts using them ends up wasting a lot of time on them. Using them as per necessity is of course fine, but using them without any purpose leads to other harms among whom wastage of time is a major one. There is a Hadith in Sahih Bukhari:

Translation: It has been narrated on the authority of Hadhrat 'Abdullah Bin 'Abbas (May Allah be well

pleased with them) that the Holy Prophet (Sallallahu alaihi wa sallam) said: There are 2 bounties of Allah about whom most people remain heedless, one is health and the other is leisure. (Sahih Bukhari, Hadith No. 6412; Zujajatul Masabeeh, Vol. 4, Pg. No. 148)

The word “Maghboon” mentioned in the Hadith has been described to have 2 meanings. One is that about these two things most people are in loss and are not drawing benefit from them as they should. They waste their invaluable time and end up suffering losses. The second meaning is that most people are heedless about those two bounties of Allah. They don’t realize that these 2 things are in fact bounties of Allah. That’s why they spend their time doing useless things.

Electronic media and responsibility of parents

It is a very important responsibility of parents to keep the moral education of the kids in mind, they should not give them things that acquaint and familiarize them with indecency. Parents should safeguard their eyes from the nude visuals of the TV. If TV is being used for educational or religious purposes, then the parents should make sincere efforts to reduce and block its harmful effects. The parents should proactively block those channels and cut out those programs which show and promote indecency.

In the same way, the kids should be protected from the ill-effects of the internet. Having an internet connection in the house without any pressing reason is harmful for the morality and character of the kids. If at all an internet connection is necessary, then it should be properly secured so that the children don't use without the supervision of the parents. If the kids are raised in proper Islamic fashion, by the time they grow up, they will be so strong morally that even when alone they will not go towards anything indecent. If they are faced with indecency, they will turn away from it.

It is a responsibility of those who Muslims who are associated with the different electronic media that they should use them as per Islamic precepts. They should not give children and their subordinates all these facilities and leave them unsupervised.

Responsibility of Muslims about electronic media

Today, electronic media is considered to be more potent than print media. If indecency, lack of morality, etc. is being promoted through all these channels, Islam does not decree that these things should not be used at all. Instead, it instructs us to use the same things for promoting good.

It was the custom among the Arabs that when they had to convey any important message, they would stand atop the mountain of Safa and do so. The Holy Prophet (Sallallahu alaihi wa sallam) used the same method when He gave the general call to Islam. Apart from Safa, other mountains were also present. Instead of them, the Holy Prophet (Sallallahu alaihi wa sallam) used Safa only for this purpose. Through this, the Holy Prophet (Sallallahu alaihi wa sallam) has instructed us that we should use those methods which convey our message in the best manner to the largest number of people.

Thus, it is necessary for Muslims to use all the modern means of communication. Print media and electronic media should be used to promote good. The promotion of indecency is going in the whole world in a very systematic manner. Thousands upon thousands of magazines, books, websites, etc. have come into being to cater to this. To quell this, we have to have at least the same number of magazines, books, websites, etc. to promote the pure teachings of Islam if not more. If every major media outlet is used to promote Islamic teachings, then slowly but surely, we will achieve our goal at least to some extent and within a couple of years, this world will change for the better.
