

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The journey of man from medium to media in the last two centuries has changed the world and human in many parlances. And still the wheel of fortune is rolling, rolling and rolling. Who are living can only imagine what future will serve to them in respect of media technology. Today everybody sings the raga of new media technology. If we are living in the era of new media technology, then what term must be phrased for the coming technologies of future? Terms like old media and new media are already fading in the current time. Earlier there were hot and cold media terminologies. It seems that it is easier for the engineer to develop an advanced media technology than the academicians to coin a new term for that, just Joking. Ok, let's come to the present, we are rolling in the roller-coaster of media available to us. Until or unless we are not letting loose ourselves.

There are many who believe in the existence of God or there are some who don't. Hence there is not a single opinion among men about the Supreme Almighty. But today no-one denies the fact that media has an effect, more or less on every aspect of life. Some are chasing (using) the beast (media) or some are chased (used) by the beast (media). In both the cases beast is there. And media is not less than a beast.

In this research the researcher is interested in finding the relationship between the media and the individual. How individual uses the media. And because he is using it, one can't deny that it has no effect on him. Is the individual using the media according to his will or he is addicted to it. Hence there is a question. Is individual riding the media or is media riding the individual? There are many answers given by the media experts and everyone has its own logic and concept.

What this study is about?

This research 'A study of uses and effects of mass media on individuals' incorporates two different approaches, which are interrelated to each other. The first one is 'Uses of mass media by the individual' and the other one is 'Effect of mass media on individual'. Researcher will proceed to the two, one by one. But first it is important to look at what mass media is? And what are new emerging trends which pose a challenge for the so called traditional media.

MASS MEDIA

The mass media, the vehicles of mass communication, are many. The prominent ones which have become household names are newspapers, magazines, books, radio, films, television, and, more recently, satellite TV and cable TV, new media technology with internet as leading one. All media are expensive and need huge organisations to collect, process, formulate and disseminate information, views, entertainment and advertising to enormous, scattered, heterogeneous audience simultaneously (IGNOU, 2004).

Experts have also divided the mass media as per their invention and their impact on the human kind. *First wave* refers to the invention of printing which led to 'the tendency to see reality in discrete units. It allows the individuals to withdraw, to contemplate and mediate outside communal activities. Marshall McLuhan, the Canadian media sociologist, considered it as 'extension to eye' (McLuhan, 1969). *Second wave* refers to the inventions of telegraph, the telephone, photography, movie camera and projector which made it possible to store sound and moving pictures. Radio proved to be the extension of ears. In McLuhan's words, "if the movie was the mechanization of movement and gesture, TV was the electronification of the same." *Third wave* started with the invention of computers, and the concept of information storage and retrieval have brought about mind-boggling changes in the processing of information and communication. *Fourth wave* refers to the rapid diffusion of multimedia, paging and cellular telephony and above all, the Internet has given rise to the 'Age of Information' (Kumar, 2007).

The mass media has assumed a significant role in our life. Individually or collectively they cater the needs of different audiences who have desired specific preferences. Some have interest for entertainment, or some other on vide diasporas of sports, plays, serials, dance, music etc. Others may have greater interest in news and views.

Every medium has certain strengths in its own perspective in serving people and each has gone through several stages of development with pressure and competition from newer communication technologies.

Print Media

It includes newspapers, magazines, books and other printed materials which have generally served the literate society for long. Their growth, however, was slow in the beginning but gained pace as the demand of the education and information increased rapidly, they evolved quickly and flourished greatly. The twentieth century has seen the rapid growth of the newspaper industry and, to withstand the challenges posed by newer electronic communication, newspapers have adopted the latest technology, like computerization to speed up the production process and improve their quality. In parlance to the competition from the other media newspapers have added coloured Sunday and Saturday supplements to serve specific segments of the society.

Electronic Media

These are radio, television, satellite TV, cable TV, cinema etc. which are essentially entertainment media. They provide instantaneous communication and their impact is greater. They need electrical power for speedy delivery of messages across distances and to the masses that are geographically, culturally, intellectually, and emotionally separated from one another. Electronic media are quicker than print media, the latter takes more time for mass production and delivery to a wide dispersed population.

One of the best advantages that radio has over other media is that it can serve and entertain audience who is engaged in any other activity. For instance, people can listen to it while working at home, in the fields and factories and while travelling.

However, the radio medium has suffered a setback in the recent times under the dynamic impact of TV; it has lost a lot of its listening audience, especially urban population which can afford TV and video for entertainment. But during the crisis it is the radio that people turn to for news because it can report with speed. Therefore, radio's importance has not diminished but has rather enhanced because it is easy to handle while at work, or during a walk or travel. With the coming of the FM, radio in the society is gaining its lost ground. Now the main target of its program is the young generation. FM RJ's with their new style of vocal ascents and presentation have given it a new life.

Television, unlike other forms of mass media, has now become one of the most powerful media of mass communication. With a modest beginning in the 1930s, it has grown into a massive network of mass information and mass entertainment in the world today. The attraction of the 'visualness' of the medium, the capacity to beam images of actual events, people and places, is so great that people remain glued to the TV set for hours (IGNOU, 2004). The grip of foreign networks over millions in metropolitan cities and small towns is getting tighter as they offer many channels transmitting different programmes simultaneously round the clock. Audiences now have multiple choices ranging from news and information to entertainment of wide variety. Besides being exposed to actual events, audiences of TV enjoy package full of fiction, drama, culture, sex, crime, violence, to mention just a few.

New Media Technology

New communication technologies are of more recent origin. Interactivity is their distinguishing feature. New communication technologies can also be understood as those which are capable of much higher degree of interactivity than that offered by the traditional communication technologies. They are more knowledge intensive. Unfortunately, they are much less accessible in the less developed parts of the world. Their rate of obsolescence, that is, the rapidity with which the technology in question gets outdated and replaced by yet newer technologies, is much higher. Therefore, people encounter new forms of technology every few years. The potential and possible application areas of these technologies and the future trends of technological growth are aspects which interest any student of communication (IGNOU, 2004).

New characteristics on which relative assessment of the various technologies is compared

The various media are now relatively assessed on the following new characteristics. The one who will have more adaptability will last longer.

Interactivity

While interactivity is a property in which the new communication technologies, as a rule, excel over the traditional ones, some of them are evidently much more interactive than others. The strength of the new technologies, in this regard, is that their interactivity is much more extensive and is not necessarily limited to just two individuals as in the case of telephone. All the traditional media are now conditioning themselves so that they can register their presence in the new media developing era.

Asynchronicity

The term asynchronicity refers to that property of the medium whereby the simultaneous presence of all the participants in a communication exercise is not compulsory. For example, in a computer network, facilities like “store and forward” enables the message to be retrieved at a convenient time other than the one at which the message has actually been sent. Thus, while real time exchange of communication is possible through such a technology, it offers the added flexibility of asynchronicity. The degree of asynchronicity varies from one technology to other.

Demassification

Traditional media are instances of one to many kind of communication. Therefore, they are unsuitable where the communication needs are more individualized. Demassification refers to the extent to which a given technology can lead itself to such individualised communication.

Books are now available in kindle addition format, television on demand, radio on internet, newspaper and magazine with online addition. All are competing

with each other and simultaneously using the myriad of new technology for their makeover.

Mass Media Emerging Trends

With the incoming of technology new trends have evolved. The traditional media is also competing in the war of survival for the fittest with new media technology by becoming flexible and modern with time. Instead of struggling, they are in a process of makeover so that they can tackle every tide of the ocean of technology. Some of the new trends are:

Audience Segmentation

Media audiences are becoming less “mass” and more selective. For many of us today, time is becoming a commodity. Everyone is busy for the bread and butter of their life. Working places are far away. With nuclear family culture, there is no one at home to take care of children and hence child rearing also takes much of time. Only a small time is left for media. And everyone wants to cut the cake according to its desire. Hence with the scarce time available, media users move to selective special interest content. Secondly there are more media to choose from. Numbers of newspaper, magazines, radio networks, channels of television and other options from new media technology have limited the time for an individual medium. Finally, the advertisers are also targeting class audience or niche audience. And hence going for mass messages they are searching for the prospective consumers of their products, therefore, promoting such special user interest media.

Convergence

What the new technology has done prominently is to combine two and more other technology. For example, the same computer screen can be your television screen, your personal home theatre, a music recorder, a photo album, your textbook and workbook simultaneously, video caller and much more. Similarly, what mobile can do today is not important to be discussed. If medium has to survive then it must

be flexible enough to be converged with other. One who walks alone will have a short journey.

Increased Audience control

The following is from the March 28, 2005, edition of the media journal *Advertising Age*. “We are in era of consumer controls his or her media. Technology is first of all becoming wireless free. With the advent of superior batteries you can operate electronic devices for more than a day. With pocket media in the form of mobile or iPod, technology has handed the power to choose the exact nature of their entertainment” Audience members are more in charge of what they want to see or hear and when they want to do it. Time shifting is one such uses of the media.

Multiple Platforms

“Everything everywhere” is the new code for success of media companies. They are in a hurry to adapt to the changing world of media technology. The strategy is to make content available to consumers in every available format, on every platform, through every device, at every time, at every place and on every moment. No one wants to lag behind.

User Generated Content

User generated content (UGC) or peer production has been the most celebrated trend over the past few years. The evidence is everywhere. Whether it is Youtube, facebook, WhatsApp, Flickr, MySpace, Instagram or others. The user of the media has now himself become the content producer. This is a new era in digital democracy, where everyone is now not only receiver of the content but himself a manufacturer. And all this becomes handy due to the availability of the user friendly technology.

Mobile Media

Mobile media is another manifestation of the “anywhere” characteristics of multiple platform. With the availability of the small screen in hands and computer,

wireless internet, an individual has the possession of every type of media, every type of content, everywhere.

USES OF MASS MEDIA BY THE INDIVIDUAL

There are many paradigms to study mass communication. The **functional approach** emphasizes the way that audiences use mass communication and the benefits people receive from media consumption. A functional analyst would go to know several things. First, why do people audition for the show, especially those who have little or no singing talent? What makes individuals a good or poor judge of their own talent? Second, why do people watch this show? What makes them identify with some contestants and not with others? Does voting give them a sense of participation in the program?

A second paradigm, which many have labelled the **Critical/Cultural approach**, exemplify the underlying power relationships in media exposure and stress upon the many meanings and interactions that audience members find in media content. A critical/cultural researcher would be interested in another question. This researcher would observe that in addition to how the contestants will sing, the judges also comment on their appearance and personal background. Moreover when someone is judged, he or she is evaluated just like any other commodity. Some of the desirable qualities possessed by contestants might be white teeth, attractive hair, a good complexion, and a slender built- all of which advertise merchandise can help people achieve. Every vote rings up calling fees and text message fees for the program and the phone company. A critical analyst would analyze this and other subtle methods by which the program encourages capitalism.

As it is apparent from the above text, in this study the researcher is following the functional approach of the mass communication discipline. Functional approach in its simplest form holds the something, is best understood by examining how it is used. In mass communication this means examining the use that audience make of their interaction with the media. Further in this approach before researcher begin examining the functions and uses of mass communication. It must be kept in mind that it is possible to conduct this analysis on at least two levels. On one hand, researcher could take the perspective of a sociologist and look through a wide-angle

lens to consider the functions performed by the mass media for the entire society. This approach is sometimes called **macro analysis**. This viewpoint focuses on the apparent intention of the mass communication and emphasizes the manifest purpose inherent in the media content. On the other hand, researcher could look through a close-up lens at the individual receivers of the content, the audience, and ask them to report on how they use mass media. This approach is called **micro analysis**.

Let's focus on how the individual uses mass communication (**micro analysis approach**). At the individual level the functional approach is given the general name of the **uses and gratification model**. In its simplest form the uses and gratification model posits that audience members have certain needs or drives that are satisfied by using both non media and media sources. This research is more concerned with media-related sources of satisfaction. The knowledge of these uses and gratification typically comes from surveys that ask people questions about how they use the media. Now it seems important to have a look on the uses and gratification model.

USES AND GRATIFICATION MODEL

The uses and gratification approach was first described in an article by Elihu Katz in which he was reacting to a claim by Bernard Berelson that the field of communication research appeared to be dead (Katz, 1977). Katz argued that the field was dying was the study of mass communication as persuasion. He pointed out that most communication research up to that time had been aimed at investigating the question "What do media do to people?" Katz suggested that the field might save itself by turning to the question. "What do people do with the media? Later along with his two colleagues, Jay G. Blumer and Michael Gurevitch, he continued to expand the idea. The uses and gratification approach views the audience as active, meaning that they actively seek out specific media and content to achieve certain results or gratification that satisfy their personal needs.

In a study by Katz, Gurevitch and Hass, they viewed the mass media as a means by which individuals connect or disconnect themselves with others and found that people bend the media to their needs more readily than the media overpower them (Katz, 1973). Along with colleague Jay G Blumer, Katz published a collection of essays on gratifications in which were entitled The Uses of Mass Communication.

They took a more humanistic approach to looking at media use. They suggest that media users seek out a medium source that best fulfils the needs of the user and they have alternate choices to satisfy their need (Blumler, 1974).

Blumler and Katz's take a non-prescriptive and non-predictive perspective on media effects. They postulate that individuals mix and match uses with goals, according to specific context, needs, social backgrounds and so on. Thus, they are seen as active participants in the media consumption process. According to Derek Lane "uses and gratification theory suggests that media users play an active role in choosing and using the media. Users take an active part in the communication process and are goal oriented in their media use. The theorist says that a media user seeks out a media source that best fulfils the needs of the user. Uses and gratification assume that the user has alternate choices to satisfy their need (Uses & Gratification, 2010 n.d.).

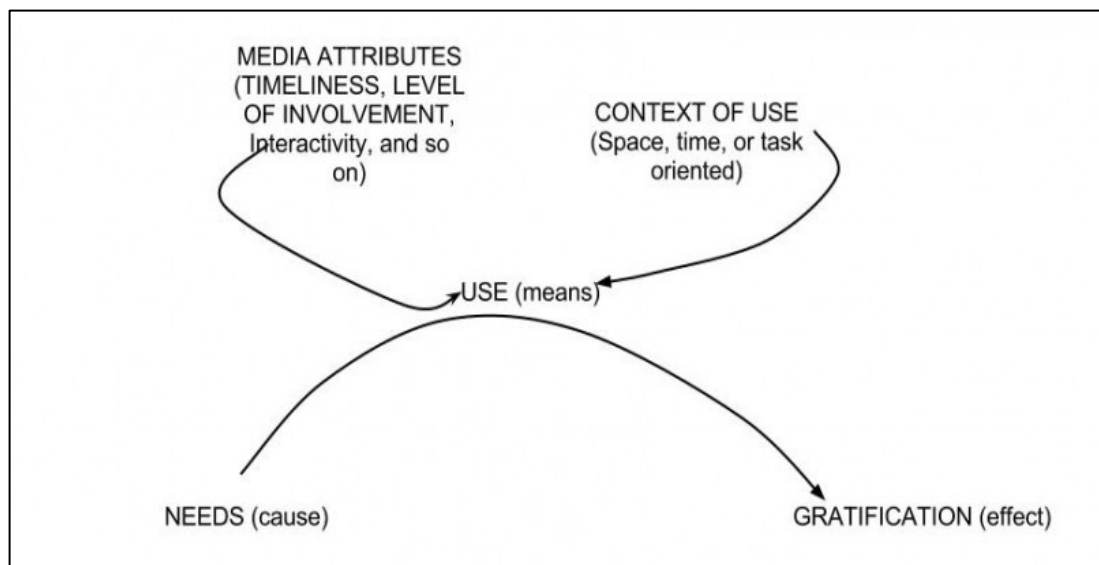


Figure 1.1: Uses and gratification core concepts

Five basic assumptions were stated in a study of Katz, Blumer, and Gurevitch as follows. They provide a framework for understanding the correlation between media and audiences:

1. The audience is conceived as active, i.e., an important part of mass media use is assumed to be goal oriented...patterns of media use are shaped by more or

less definite expectations of what certain kinds of content have to offer to the audience members.

2. In the mass communication process much initiative in liking need gratification and media choice lies with the audience member...individual and public opinions have power vis-à-vis the seemingly all powerful media.
3. The media compete with other sources of need satisfaction. The needs served by mass communication constitute but a segment of the wider range of human needs, and the degree to which they can be adequately met through mass media consumption certainly varies.
4. Methodologically speaking, many of the goals of mass media use can be derived from data supplied by individual audience members themselves-i.e., people are sufficiently self-aware to be able to report their interests and motives in particular cases or at least to recognize them when confronted with them in an intelligible and familiar verbal formulation.
5. Value judgments about the cultural significance of mass communication should be suspended while audience orientations are explored on their own terms (Katz, 1974).

Katz, Blumer, and Gurevitch also commented that, although previous researches on gratifications detected diverse gratifications that attract people on the media, they did not address the connection between these gratifications (Katz, 1974). They suggested that uses and gratification research concern with following aspects:

1. The social and psychological origins of
2. Needs which generate
3. Expectations of
4. The mass media or other sources which lead to
5. Differential exposure(or engaging in other activities),resulting in
6. Need gratification and
7. Other consequences, perhaps mostly unintended ones (Katz, 1974).

Uses and gratification theory attempts to explain the uses and functions of the media for individuals, groups, and society in general. There are three objectives in developing uses and gratification theory:

1. To explain how individuals use mass communication to gratify their needs. “What do people do with the media”.
2. To discover underlying motives for individuals’ media use.
3. To identify the positive and the negative consequences of individual media use.

At the core of uses and gratification theory lies the assumption that audience members actively seek out the mass media to satisfy individual needs (Technology uses, n.d.).

Uses & Gratification has endured for more than 50 years and still inspires cutting-edge research. The theory attempts to explain that everyone consume a variety of media messages. Some of them are important and some are not. It is difficult to assume that they all have a homogenous effect on them. If one need to find out the effect, then first he has to find out the need of the user, which is to be gratified with the media. Until then one will find nothing. These are some of the assumptions of uses and gratification concept.

FUNDAMENTAL ASSUMPTION OF USES AND GRATIFICATION THEORY

People use media for their own purposes

The theory’s fundamental assumption was unique and revolutionary at the time Katz proposed it: *The study of how media affect people must take account of the fact that people deliberately use media for particular purposes*. Before it, there was a general perception that media audiences are passive, who can be easily targeted through magic bullets. In uses & gratifications, audiences are in a control of the situation and hence the active approach gained the momentum. They decide which media they want to use and what effects they want the media to have.

In the history of the media theory, uses and gratification had taken a totally different route away from the point that powerful messages have uniform effects on large audiences. Instead, the theory emphasizes that it is the personal media choices of the consumers who use media to fulfil different purposes at different times.

People want to gratify needs

Just as people eat in order to satisfy certain cravings, uses & gratification assumes that people have needs that they seek to gratify through media use (Rubin, 2009). Note the close connection between the concepts of *media use* and *gratification from media*. The deliberate choices people make in using media are presumably based on the gratifications they seek from those media. Thus, *uses* and *gratification* are inseparable from each other. In 1974, he wrote an essay with Jay Blumler and Michael Gurevitch, which states: “In the mass communication process much initiative in linking need gratification and media choice lies with the audience member. This places a strong limitation on theorizing about any form of straight-line effect of media content on attitudes and behaviour (Katz, 1974).”

Media compete for your attention and time

The uses & gratifications approach directly acknowledges the competition. Not only do media compete with each other for your time, they compete with other activities that don't involve media exposure. Uses & grats researchers have discovered that some people experience high levels of anxiety when they think about talking face-to-face; they don't enjoy these sorts of interactions or find them rewarding (Zizi, 2000). Meeting face-to-face just doesn't gratify their needs. In contrast, extroverts express a clear preference for one-on-one conversations over spending time with media (Finn, 1997).

To find the apparent causes of media competition is not that much important as to find out the need and motive of such competition. Where someone is feeling more relaxed in watching film the other one is in listening music or the third one is in reading.

Media affect different people differently

A basic concept of uses & grats is that the same media message doesn't necessarily affect everyone in the same manner. That's because media audiences are made up of people who are not similar to each other. In terms of media effects, the differences matter.

Myself is very frightened while watching a horror movie while my elder brother finds it more entertaining and adventurous. But we are both fond of watching sports program. While I am more comfortable in watching news now and then, he changes over to Discovery and National Geographic channel frequently. Again we both like Amitabh Bachchan's films. This similarity and dissimilarity is not easy to answer as we both are in a teaching profession and had lived entire life together under very similar conditions.

As it turns out, few people voluntarily expose themselves to scary movies in order to experience fear. Fear is a negative emotion and, in general, people want to avoid it. However, some people are willing to tolerate fear. Others are willing to endure fear to experience a sense of mastery over something threatening— much like the effect of riding a roller coaster. Still others might actually enjoy the adrenaline rush that accompanies a scary movie and the intense relief that comes when the film is over (Glenn, 2000).

People can accurately report their media use and motivation

If the theory has to survive, then researchers had to find a way to uncover the media that people consumed and the reasons they consumed it. For these purposes, the most obvious way to collect data involved asking people directly and recording their answers. There is now a long tradition in mass communication research that asks people to report the amount of time they devote to different kinds of media. The early research on uses & gratification can take a good deal of the credit for starting that tradition (Blumler, 1969). The main problem is that whether people are really able to report about their media consumption habits or not. Sometimes people are true in predicting their particular use of media and sometimes even they are in jeopardy. While some scholars have attempted to show that they can trust people's reports of the reasons for their media consumption, this tenet of the theory continues to be debated.

CRITICISMS OF USES AND GRATIFICATION RESEARCH

Although uses and gratification approach holds a significant status in communication research, the research of the approach receives criticisms both on its theory and methodology represented.

McQuail commented that the approach has not provided much successful prediction or casual explanation of media choice and use. Since it is indeed that much media use is circumstantial and weakly motivated, the approach seems to work best in examining specific types of media where motivation might be presented (McQuail, 1994). The researcher Ien Ang also criticized uses and gratification approach in such three aspects:

1. It is highly individualistic, taking into account only the individual psychological gratification derived from individual media use. The social context of the media use tends to be ignored. This overlooks the fact that some media use may have nothing to do with the pursuit of gratification - it may be forced upon us for example.
2. There is relatively little attention paid to media content, researchers attending to why people use the media, but less to what meanings they actually get out of their media use.
3. The approach starts from the view that the media are always functional to people and may thus implicitly offer a justification for the way the media are currently organized (CMSS Infobase, 2003).

Since it is hard to keep track of exposure patterns through observation, uses and gratification research focus on the fact relied heavily on self-reports (Katz, 1987). Self-reports, however, are based on personal memory which can be problematic (Nagel, 2004). As such, the respondents might inaccurately recall how they behave in media use and thus distortion might occur in the study.

During the last several decades, U&G researchers have continued to conceptually refine their perspective. Nevertheless, critics such as Stanford have assailed perceived deficiencies such as the confusing of operational definitions and

the analytical model, a lack of internal consistency, and a lack of theoretical justification for the model offered (Stanford 1983). Stanford complained, “the discussion ranges far from the results, which do not support their theoretical underpinnings”. Likewise, media hegemony advocates have contended that the U&G theory overextends its reach in asserting that people are free to choose the media fare and interpretations they want. Conceded that U&G is an “intelligent splice of psychological motivations and sociological functions, [but nonetheless noted that] materialism, reductionism, and determinism, as well as foundational empiricism, are all firmly in place” ((White, 1994)

Thus, much contemporary criticism of U&G challenges assumptions that include (a) media selection initiated by the individual; (b) expectations for media use that are produced from individual predispositions, social interaction, and environmental factors; and (c) active audiences with goal-directed media behaviour (Wimmer, 1994).

Outside of the United States, particularly in non-Western countries, even a diffused notion of an active audience has limited acceptability and U&G scholars differ in their methodological approach. For example, Cooper (Cooper, 1997) noted that Japan’s communication researchers view media’s individual-level impact as a limited effects perspective, in that media serve only to reinforce pre-existing attitudes and behaviours.

One criticism of the uses and gratification approach is that it is focused too narrowly on the individual. It relies on psychological concepts such as need, and it neglects the social structure and the place of the media in that structure. One answer to that criticism has come from Rubin and Windahl who have proposed a synthesis of the uses and gratification approach and dependency theory. Their “uses and dependency model” places individuals within societal systems, which help shape their needs (Rubin, 1986).

The uses and gratification approach has drawn some criticism, particularly of being non-theoretical, for being vague in defining key concepts (for example’ “needs”), and for being basically nothing more than a data-collecting strategy (Elliott,

1974) .Very little has been done to explore the antecedents of gratifications sought (Palmgreen, 1982).

Finally it can be concluded that as the uses and gratifications assumed that people deliberately go to the media is not completely true. People often seem to be making their way through the mass communication environment while on a kind of “automatic pilot” (Donohew, 1984). This view suggests that much use of mass communication might involve a low level of attention, and, in fact, might be appropriately labelled ritualistic or habitual. Many people much of the ‘time might not be interested in surveillance or personal guidance as much as ‘they are just interested in some mildly pleasant stimulation.

MEDIA EFFECTS

Meaning of media ‘effects’

‘Media effects’ are understood by different people differently. Everyone has its own perspective or vision to the word. It is precisely called as meaning of a word lies in the mind of the people and hence each will have its own meaning. A person, researcher or professional has certain individual and social arena to perform. He delineates the meaning of everything in all aspects related to his part of globe.

A Media effect means different things to different people. A psychologist, for example, has ‘psychological’ effects in mind when talking to media effects; the sociologist, the ‘social’ effects, the anthropologist, the ‘cultural’ effects, the political scientist the ‘political’ effects, the economist the ‘economic’ effects, the preacher, the ‘moral’ effects, the advertiser, the ‘market’ effectsand so on (Kumar, 2007).

Nature of mass media effects

Two social scientists, Bernard Berelson and Morris Janowitz, once summarised knowledge about the effects of mass as, “The effects of communication are many and diverse. They may be short-range or long run. They may be manifest or latent. They may be strong or weak. They may derive from any number of aspects of the communication content. They may be considered as psychological or political or

economical or sociological. They may operate upon unions, values, information levels, skills, taste, or over behaviour (Bryce, 1966).”

Early Development of Effects Research

Because of the sustained social and scientific interest in effects, this area has more of an identifiable, if contested history than most other subspecialties. Effect theories range from one extreme position of all-powerful wide-ranging effects of the media, to the opposing extreme position where the media have no effects at all. At the one extreme are writers and researchers like Marie Winn, who take the media, especially television, to be a ‘plug-in drug’; at the other extreme is Joseph Klapper who concluded from his longitudinal research that media succeed only in ‘reinforcing’ old attitudes, habits, and beliefs (Klapper,1960). In between, are the ‘negotiation’ or interaction theorists who suggest that effects, like meanings of media texts, are ultimately ‘negotiated’ by the audiences. This is sometimes termed the mediation perspective. Most media theories deal directly with the ‘effects’ of the contents of programmes on opinions, attitudes, perceptions, beliefs and social behaviour. As summarized by McQuail four phases of media effect may be singled out (McQuail, 2000).

Phase 1: All-powerful media.

From about 1900, when an identifiable research specialization was emerging to 1940, the media was widely thought to be able to shape both opinion and behaviour through propaganda (Lasswell, 1938). However, ‘this view was based not on scientific investigation but on observation of the enormous popularity of the press and of the new media of film and radio’. The media were thought to be able to shape public opinion and to sway masses towards almost any point of view desired by the communicator. It was later termed as the ‘magic bullet theory’, hypodermic needle theory, etc (Ravindran, 1999).

Phase 2: Theory of powerful media put to the test.

The theory of powerful media was put to test in the period beginning from 1930s to 1960s. The series of Payne fund studies in the US in early 1930s marked the

beginning of this academic media research. Studies began to suggest that at least no direct link could be established between media stimulus and audience response. It was P. Lazarsfeld, his colleagues and students who were in the forefront of this type of research. Klapper provided an influential digest of findings which seemed to support this position (Klapper, 1960). Joseph Klapper concluded, "Mass communication does not ordinarily serve as a necessary or sufficient cause of audience effects but rather functions through a nexus of mediating factors.

Phase 3: Powerful media rediscovered

In part through a reassessment of the same evidence Chaffee and Hochheimer in 1985 the 1960s witnessed a return to hypotheses about media power. Such hypotheses were also fuelled partly by the arrival of television, partly by research on various cognitive and structural impacts, over and above effects on individuals' attitude, and partly by the rediscovery of critical social theory (Chaffee, 1985).

Phase 4: Negotiated media influence.

Since around 1980, a turn to understanding media as necessarily constructing meanings, with implications for social structure as well as individual agency, has been in evidence. The tradition was developed to the view that media has no effect on the individual who has no use of the media or its content.

Hence a cyclic process of classifying media effects research is still in progress and the final bell is still not called. With new media technology and user friendly approach it neither seems easy for the coming media researchers.

PROMINENT MEDIA EFFECT THEORIES

Hypodermic or Bullet Theory

This theory reflects the fear or awe of mass media being used for massive propaganda as during World War II when it was thought to have direct and powerful influence upon audiences. The media were seen as manipulating audience at will. As the name "Bullet" suggests, the messages were thought to have magic bullets that were shot directly into the receiver. It assumes those receivers as passive and

defenceless and takes whatever is shot at them. It also means that the media are extremely powerful institutions and media consumers are naive and malleable.

Psychological or Individual difference Theory

The psychological approach to understand communication effects gives rise to many theories among which an important one is individual difference theory. According to this theory, different personality variables result in different reactions to the same stimuli. In other words, an individual's psychological mechanism accounts for his reactions to media messages. In other words, the reaction to media content differs according to motivation of audience members, their predisposition to accept or reject a given message, their intelligence, beliefs, opinions, values, needs, moods, prejudices, perceptibility, etc. Melvin L. De Fleur and Sandra Ball-Rokeach have concluded that "from the vast available content, individual members of the audience selectively attend to, interpret and retain messages, particularly if they are related to their interest, consistent with their attitude, congruent with their beliefs and supportive of their values (Melvin, 1981).

Personal Influence Theory

The theory is the outcome of a classic study of the 1940 presidential elections in the United States by Paul E. Lazarsfeld and others in the book, "The People's Choice". The findings revealed that no voter seemed to have been directly influenced by the mass media. It turned out that the interpersonal relationships and not the mass media are the deciding factor. Particularly 'opinion leaders' had more influence on the decision making than direct use of mass media. This led to two-step and multi-step flow concepts of media effects (Lazarsfeld, 1944).

Reinforcement: Limited Effects Theory

Joseph Klapper and others, for example, believed that media reinforce existing values and attitudes. Only then, after all, can programmes of the media be popular with a majority of social groups which have an interest in the perpetuation of their own traditions and statuses (Kumar, 2007). Lazarsfeld and Merton held that the mass media 'cannot be relied upon to work for changes, even minor changes, in the social structure' (Merton, 1957).

Narcosis and Catharsis

Lazarsfeld and Merton, mass communication theorists argue that media have a 'narcotizing dysfunction' that distracts audience from real problems and in fact prevents their doing anything about them. In other words, mass media have a drug like addictive effect, lulling audience into passivity and a sense of elation. First proposed in 1948, the theory states that the audience become abstained from decision and action. He comes to mistake knowing about problems of the day for doing something about them.

Closely related to the narcosis theory, is the catharsis theory of media effects. Seymour Feshbach, the main exponent of the theory, argued that the media may have a 'cathartic' effect on people that somehow purges them of many anti-social and unfulfilled desires, frustrations and feelings of hostility (Feshbach, 1961).

The narcosis and catharsis theories represent extreme views. So does Earnest Van Den Hag's view that 'mass communication, taken together are demeaning, debasing and de-personalizing instrument of manipulation at worst; middle class hedonism at best'. Yet another extreme theory is that Frederic Wertham which says that the content of media is 'corruptive in general and specifically teaches materialism, brutality, antisocial behaviour and callousness towards other humans'.

Incidental Effects

In contrast, Aldous Huxely took the stand that media indeed do teach people things, but most of them are of no consequence; they also have effects, but mostly in unimportant and trivial facets of our lives although we may think that they are important. These trivial facets are fashions, mannerism, mating habits, and food habits.

Cultivation Theory

This theory is developed by George Gebner, is based on the assumption that mass media have subtle effects on audiences who, unknowingly, absorb the dominant symbols, images, and messages of media (Gebner, 1967). He calls it "cultivation of dominant image pattern". He and his team undertook a content analysis of television

programmes, looking at portrayals of gender, violence, the family, portrayal of minorities, and then matched these with actual situations, behaviours and attitudes in American society. According to this theory, a long, persistent exposure of TV is capable of cultivating common beliefs about the world. Gerbner and his team attempted 'to move beyond the analysis of effects on individual behaviour and to analyse communication systems at a social structural level.

Technological effects- McLuhanesque Perspective

"The medium is the message", wrote Marshall McLuhan, setting the controversy over media effects on its head. No matter what the contents of programmes, he argued, people will watch television; it commands their attention as no other medium has. He warned that "the electronic media are transforming every aspects of man`s life and re-structuring civilization, not so much by the content of their messages, as by the nature itself of television, movies, computers, and other media McLuhan, 1964)."

Agenda-Setting Theory

The term is coined by Maxwell McCombs and Donald L. Shaw in the context of election campaign where politicians seek to convince the voters about Part`s most important issues. The Agenda-setting theory maintains that the media are more successful in telling people "what is to think about" than in telling them "what to think" (McCombs 1972).

The Spiral of Silence Theory

The supposed agenda setting role of media is related to what Elisabeth Noelle-Neumann, a German media sociologist, calls the 'spiral of silence'. From her analysis of the election scene in Germany, she assumes that "individual just hate to be isolated from their fellow beings and so tend to follow dominant opinions rather than express their own points of view openly (Neumann, 1984)."

Dependency Theory

Melvin De Fleur and Sandra Ball-Rokeach have proposed an integrated dependency theory of mass communication in which they recognise various psychological and social factors that prevent the media from exercising arbitrary control over their audiences. They describe it like this: “Mass media not only lack arbitrary influences powers, but their personal lack of freedom to engage in arbitrary communication behaviour. Both the media and their audiences are integrating part of the society. The surrounding socio-cultural context provides controls and constraints not only on the nature of media messages but also on the nature of the effects of on audiences.”

OPERATIONAL DEFINITIONS OF TERMS USED IN THE RESEARCH WORK

Ownership of media

Ownership of media for the research work differentiated into personal ownership (Personally owned media) and shared ownership (media is share by the family, group or community members). Former means personal purchase or ownership of the media platform such as TV, Radio, Newspaper, Magazine, Book and Internet access on computer or mobile. Thanks to the technological advances for bringing down the cost of media access. As the cost is decreasing the desire to have personal access of media is increasing. With personal purchase the Individual have more control on the use of the media. In this kind of ownership, power comes in the form of individual and absolute control, which gives the person more secrecy in options. Along with it, the individual can make decisions at his own pace. In Indian families generally a newspaper is bought for the all members, similarly TV and Radio is a family media which is share by all the members. Sharing of media is characterized by less control because of group and community access of the media. The content we access is of the like of group or community.

Mode of engagement

Media engagement is a quality of user experience with media technology. U&G is a media and communications theory that explains media selection and continued use through peoples' needs and satisfactions. In this research work modes of engagement-people here mean how user is engaging himself to the media. It may be alone or with family/friend/people. Modes of engagement-place stand for user experiencing media in home in comfort place or in public place. The user will be more satisfying if it has the control over the media he is using. If he is using it individual he has more control on it. Similarly if one is using it, at his desired place he will feel more enjoyable. Cinema is mostly preferred with family or friends and outside the home. Watching TV is favorite activity at home and it is becoming more entertaining if one get the chance to select channel of his choice. The print media is preferred mostly an individual engagement with not much difference in like as in-home or outdoor reading. In cities most people have to travel a lot and here comes the FM radio and music which help in relaxing the tiredness of the journey, provide companionship and escapism from the crowd.

Preference Order

Many questions in user gratification surveys ask respondents to rank certain aspects of their experience. Ranking questions ask respondents to rank or order a set of options. In user gratification surveys, ranking questions are asked usually in relation to various criteria related to their media habits, likes and dislikes. Ranking scale questions enable survey respondents to rank a set of products or services from highest to lowest – very best to very worst, most important to least important, very satisfied to very unsatisfied. Usually an order scale of 7 or 5 is followed in most of the surveys. The larger the scale there is greater chances of reliability of the outcome. But it also led to the complexity in after survey analysis. That is why a three point preference scale is used. Starting with least preferred than average preferred and most preferred. The purpose of asking respondents for each medium and each variable a specific order of preference is depend on how he orders the asked variable for a particular medium.

Performance

Literal meaning of Performance is the action or process of performing a task or function. There are many approaches to defining appropriate standards that can be employed to evaluate the performance of the various media. Technological performance in term of Greater life, less wear and tear, easy accessibility, mobility is some of them.

Innovation

Innovation is often also viewed as the application of better solutions that meet new requirements, unarticulated needs, or existing market needs. This is accomplished through more-effective products, processes, services, technologies, or business models that are readily available to markets, governments and society. As a technological aspect of various mediums the adaptability and novelty that it can deliver is considered to be innovated. From black to color printing, from picture tube to HDTV, from simple paper to glossy paper, from offline to online, from print to kindle edition new innovation is everywhere.

Convenience

Convenience is the technological specific characteristic property of a medium intended to increase ease in accessibility, save resources (such as time, effort and energy) and decrease frustration.

Reliability

It is the quality of being trustworthy or of performing consistently well. Print mediums are threatened that the electronic medium or new media will fade them away but nothing like happened. Similarly life of every electronic media has improved a lot.

Time shifting

In broadcasting, time shifting is the recording of programming to a storage medium to be viewed or listened to after the live broadcasting. Typically, this refers to TV programming but can also refer to radio shows via podcasts. Video on Demand is

a type of Time shifting. It can be extended to print media where one can read a magazine or morning newspaper when he has a free time.

Social Interaction

Stories depicted by the media helps the audience to gain insight into the circumstances of others, offers them a feeling of participation and a sense of belonging. The media provides the agenda for conversation and assists in the undertaking of social roles.

Attention

Some of the synonyms of attention are observation attentiveness intentness concentration deliberation etc. Hence the action of dealing with or taking special cares of something. Media needs our attention. Even it can be said that they compete with each other for people's attention. Similarly peoples give more or less attention to the media of their choice.

Information

People use the media to inform themselves about their society and the world. Such information may also serve as a source of advice and knowledge on practical issues, and also satisfy their curiosity and interest.

Empowerment

The more we are informed the more knowledgeable we became. It is said that knowledge is power. The western world is more powerful than the east mostly because of availability and exposure of mass media channels. Hence information brings us knowledge and this knowledge when rightfully used empowered us.

Identity

The audience find reinforcement for personal values from the media by seeking role models whose behavior they identify with and sometimes copy and so gain an insight into themselves.

Freedom

Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, adopted in 1948, and states that: Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers. Hence the access to control and use media of your choice gives one the sense of freedom to the user.

Privacy

Prominent communication scholar Jan Van Dijk has presented and structuralized a new framework in understanding society today, one that is based on a network approach, where social relations are formed within a mediated communication technologies. He argued that the nature of society today has shifted from “mass society” to “network society” of which he distinctly outlined the characteristics and differences between the two societies. On the other hand, Toffler, in 1980 had predicted the exact kind of evolution in society. While the shift in society is termed as a “network society” by Van Dijk, Toffler described it as a “demassified society”. Partly this referred to customization, segmentation, and individualization of mass media messages. The time has gone when a family watches a television or listen a radio programme simultaneously. Now exposing to media is became a private activity and no one like interruption in it in any form.

Entertainment

The media provides diversion from problems and unpleasant circumstances. It serves as a relaxant and sexual stimulant, provides cultural and aesthetic pleasure, emotional release and affords the audience something to do.

Time pass

The expressive Indian English word ‘time pass’ means ‘killing time’ or an activity to do so. A lot of time pass is a preferably enjoyable way of using up relatively short periods of time, so that chatting to friends, playing games, watching television or going to the cinema would all be examples of ‘doing time pass’. The

word generally carries the connotation that the activity, even if harmless, is neither serious nor productive, because it is merely intended to kill time and ward off potential boredom, so that, for instance, ‘time pass’ films or TV programmes are just silly or mindless entertainment.

Companionship

Among the early studies of virtual communities, researchers first noted the prevalence of those seeking companionship through participation. For many members, virtual communities provide an opportunity to establish and maintain contact with other people, dispelling loneliness and satisfying the “need to belong,” recognized as a primary motive by social psychologists. Many participants use virtual communities for a range of social support, such as help and advice regarding an affliction or difficulty sharing personal views and accomplishments, finding romantic partners, as well as for entertainment and fun.

Escapism

Escapism is the avoidance of unpleasant, boring, arduous, scary, or banal aspects of daily life by exposing to media. Narratives presented through media, may provide some sort of transient mental retreat for users who feel uncomfortable in their actual lives and social worlds. It can also be used as a term to define the actions people take to help relieve persisting feelings of depression or general sadness.

Enjoyment

Enjoyment as a core of media entertainment experience not only manifests itself in many different ways but also depends on the audience’s readiness and ability to suspend disbelief, to empathize with the characters at play, to engage in parasocial interactions and relationships with the personae, to be present somewhere else and with somebody else, and to have an interest in what the media presents.

Relaxation

In psychology, relaxation refers to a state with the absence of tension and anxiety and is often seen as the polar opposite of stress, anxiety or tension. Some of

the recognized anti-stress relaxation techniques include breathing exercises, muscle relaxation, jaw relaxation, listening to relaxing music, watching a relaxing film or distraction.

Excitement

Excitement is an emotional need. Excitement begins in the brain just like any other emotion. Excitement is a condition of physiological arousal. The human body is always seeking a state of homeostasis, a condition of stability. Excitement disrupts the body's homeostasis -- but only temporarily.

CONCLUSION

There are numerous experts from various disciplines who have contributed and enrich the study of media effect. Mass media are also themselves in a transition phase. In these circumstances it became necessary to look at the previous studies and their relevancy in this changing world.

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