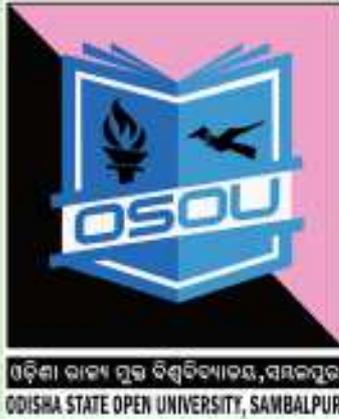ଓଡ଼ିଶା ରାଜ୍ୟ ମୁକ୍ତ ବିଶ୍ୱବିଦ୍ୟାଳୟ
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Odisha State Open University
Sambalpur

Journalism & Mass Communication (JMC)

Concept of Communication Theory

Journalism & Mass Communication

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JOURNALISM & MASS COMMUNICATION

JMC-07

CONCEPT OF COMMUNICATION THEORY

Block

1

Concept of Communication Theory

Unit-1

Importance of Communication Theory, Wwo Step Flow & Multistep Flow Theory, Individual Difference Theory,

Unit-2

Selectivity & Gatekeeping Theory, Diffusion of Innovation Theory, Personal Influence Theory

Unit-3

Authoritarian Theory, Libertarian Theory, Communist Media Theory, Social Responsibility Theory

Unit-4

Development Media Theory, Democratic Participation Theory, Communication Convergence.

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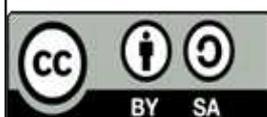Media Academician   Media Academician

Material Production :

Dr. JayantaKar Sharma
Registrar
Odisha State Open University, Sambalpur

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JMC-07

Block

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UNIT – I

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1.1   LEARNING OBJECTIVES

In this unit we will briefly study the history and importance of mass communication Theory. We will also discuss three early theories of Mass Media: Hypodermic or Bullet Theory, Individual Differences Theory and Personal Influence theory.

1.2   INTRODUCTION

Mass Communication has an influential role in modern society. The Theories of Mass Communication explains the impact of mass media on society and public. The study of mass communication has led to the formulation of many theories. Since early 1900s, the mass communication theories are ever changing, because of changing technology and academic focus. Let us discuss why we should study Mass Communication Theory.

1.3   IMPORTANCE OF MASS COMMUNICATION THEORY

Mass Communication has been evolving through the ages. The immense technological change has completely changed or reinvented the way mass media is distributed and consumed today. New communication technologies are rapidly filling the gap between telephone and television. Technologies today are allowing the consumer more and more control over the creation and consumption of media. This has led to immense changes in the way the media industry affects us in our social relationships and our personal lives. According to Chaffee (2001) 'Contemporary media allow a greater quantity of information transmission and retrieval, place more control over both content creation and selection in the hands of their users, do so with less cost to the average consumer.'

A Mass Communication theory thus helps us understand these changes and its impact on our lives. Mass Communication theorists are, therefore, social researchers who try to apply scientific methods to study human behavior.

Mass Communication theory strives to formulate statements or propositions that will provide some explanation about usage, effect and impact of media on mankind.

The theory seeks to explain the effects of mass communication on society, audiences and people. These effects can either be intentionally or unintentionally applied to the messages by the sender.

Theory tries to explain the uses to which people put mass communication. Studying uses recognizes the active role of the audience within the process of mass communication.

Mass Communication theory also seeks to explain learning from the mass media. It tries to find answers to questions like: How do audiences learn from the media? Is it positive or negative? Do media send a message to the audience? Definite answers are still being searched by communication scientists.

Theory explains the role of mass media in shaping audiences values and opinions. Like it or not audiences do learn from the media, they take on the views expressed in the media or seek out media sources which agree with and reinforce their own views.

Mass Communication theories help us in finding out the relation of mass media with power, its effect on politics, economics, culture and society, relation and effect of mass

media on the masses. Let us briefly learn more about them:

a) Mass Media and Power

Media has the power to bring change and set agenda. Mass communication has the power to give a voice to an opinion and spread it. It is a powerful weapon of controlling information flow in the hands of its owners. It can give representation to the unrepresented. Then mass communication theories seek to study media and the power it wields.

b) Mass Media and Politics

Mass media has a great impact on the politics of a country and the world. It is known as the fourth pillar of a democracy. A free and fair press can spread correct information to the society. Media has the power to reshape political power. Media acts as the messenger of diverse political views. Media can be used to spread propaganda as during the World War I and II.

c) Mass Media and Economics

Media consumption, production and its distribution is highly dependent on economical conditions. The process of globalization has increased by the proliferation of satellite channels, easy access through the internet and international print media. Economics plays an important part in how media is transmitted, what makes news and what does not make news. Today controlling information has become more expensive than disseminating information.

d) Mass Media and Culture

Mass Media reinforces stereotypes and the established social norms of a society. It can also bring in new ideas and break old traditions. Mass media can show a particular culture as subservient to another. Today, mass media is creating a global or convergent culture.

e) Mass Media and the Masses

The relationship between mass media and masses is changing rapidly. Earlier, news was created and the masses consumed it. Today, the consumer is the news creator and transmitter. The reader can not only pick or choose the news they want to see, they can provide instant feedback and create news. Media creates a liberating effect on people.

1.4 BRIEF HISTORY OF MASS COMMUNICATION THEORY

Mass Communication or Media theory can be divided into broadly four distinctive eras from the beginning in early 19th century. The history of Mass Communication theories can be broadly divided into four eras: The Era of Mass Society, The Era of Limited Effects, The Era of Cultural Theory and The Era of Meaning Making Perspectives on Media.

i.   The Era of Mass Society

The idea of mass society developed at the latter half of 19th century, when rapid industrialization, large scale migration took place. The social thinkers blamed the media for negative influences of industrialization. The dominant perspective was Mass Society Theory. The idea that the media are corrupting influences that undermine the social order and that 'average' people are defenseless against their influence. The theory argues that media subverts and disrupts the existing social order. The audiences were considered as passive beings.

Behaviorism and Freudianism were combined to create propaganda theories which found the average person incapable of rational self control. The propaganda theories found people to be very susceptible to manipulation by media.

Harol Lasswell's Propaganda Theory borrowed this pessimistic vision of media and their role in creating modern social order. Lasswell argued that during troubled period people were easily affected by even crude forms of propaganda.

The theories that emerged during this time were Hypodermic needle theory or Magic bullet theory.

ii.   The Era of the Scientific Perspective/ Limited Effects Theory

Beginning in 1940's, Paul Lazarsfeld and other researchers started a scientific approach towards mass communication. He carefully used empirical social research methods. He advocated conducting carefully designed, elaborate surveys and even field experiments to observe media influence and measure its magnitude.

By mid-1950's the empirical media researchers after interpreting the data collected found that mass media was not all powerful. But various other factors such as personal relationships and attitudes helped in resisting media. They found very little evidence to support mass society theorist. They concluded that the effect of media was limited on

an individual; this was later known as the Limited Effects Theory.

During the middle of 1960's the debate between mass media society and limited effects was over with the empirical evidence in support for the latter. Many communication scientists stopped looking for powerful media effects and concentrated instead on documenting minimal, limited effects.

The limited effects theory says that change in attitude due to media effects is therefore limited and rare. The World War II provided the best laboratory for propaganda research and Attitude Change theories. Carl Hovland and his team did intense experiments on attitude change.

One of the central tenants of attitude change theory, cognitive consistency, was adopted by mass communication theorists who gave rise to the Dissonance theory. The theory argues that when confronted by new/conflicting information people experience a kind of mental discomfort.

According to Kapler, selective processes protect media consumers from its impact. Attitude change researchers studied three types of selectivity: selective exposure, selective retention and selective perception. Information Flow theory, John Klapper's phenomenistic theory or reinforcement theory are some of the other theories of the age.

The limited effect communication researchers felt that there was nothing left to study. But many disagreed and the limited effects theory was challenged from various fronts.

iii.   The Era of Cultural Theory

European social theorists known as the neo-Marxists argued that media helped dominant and social elites promote their ideas favourable to their interests. During 1960's and 1970's neo-Marxists in Britain developed two schools of social theory known as the British cultural studies and political economy theory. The British cultural studies focused in mass media and its role in promoting hegemonic worldview and a dominant culture among various subordinate groups in the society. While, the political economy theorists study the economic control by the elite class and show how it affects the mass media. In 1970's, American scholars began study on popular culture including television by adapting variety of theories and research methods. Horace Newcomb in his books *Television: The Critical View* and *Television: The Most Popular Art* summarizes the work of popular culture researchers, emphasizing that popular media content,

specially TV programmes are much more complex then they appear on surface.

iv.   Emergence of meaning making perspectives on Media

With the emergence of new technologies there has been a sea change in the way people consume media. These new perspectives can lead to the emergence of fourth media era. New perceptive are transforming about how we think about media effects, with researchers compellingly arguing that media influences individuals and impacts their social world. Framing theories and media literacy movement bring into focus how new media has powerful effects and is challenging the individuals beliefs and attitudes.

Contradicting the Limited Effects Theory at the centre of the new perspectives is the content creating and sharing audience. Media effect can be long term and are many ties a direct consequence of audiences' intent. Therefore, media is being used to serve a purpose such as gather information, seek entertainment or manage moods. Thus the various meaning-making perspectives claim that the people are using media to create meaning, to intentionally induce desired results leading to both intended and unintended results. There is a need to further study such intended and unintended consequences of media use.

1.5 HYPODERMIC OR BULLET THEORY

The Hypodermic needle theory or magic bullet theory is one of the earliest theories on media. The theory was developed during the WW II and is a reflection of the fear generated by media propaganda during those times. The hypodermic needle theory states that media has a direct, immediate and powerful effect on the audiences. The theory is a linear communication theory which postulates that media messages are directed injected into the brains of the audiences.

The theory suggests that mass media could directly influence a large number of people by 'shooting' or 'injecting' them with the information. The theory graphically suggests that the message in media is the bullet fired from media gun straight into the viewer's head. Or the hidden messages in media are injected into the individual passive audiences.

The Hypodermic needle theory was derived from three major events.

First, in 1927, Harold Lasswell, an American political scientist and propaganda theorist published a book called Propaganda Technique in World War. Writing about the

effect of propaganda during World War I, Lasswell wrote that "Wilson brewed subtle poison", which was "injected into veins of a staggering people"

Second, the Payne Fund Studies, conducted between the years 1929-1932 to study the effect of movies on children also supported the idea that mass media had a great impact on the viewers. Although the studies were criticized for not following proper scientific methodology they are one of the earliest and most comprehensive media studies. The studies found that movies had wide influence on children behaviour.

Thirdly, a classic application of the theory was seen in 1938, a radio dramatization of HG Wells' War of the Worlds by Orson Welles and Mercury Theatre broadcast lead to mass hysteria where thousands believed that they were been attacked by Martians. Hypodermic Needle Theory talks of **direct influence effect** and describes the information is like a magic bullet injected into the targeted audiences mind. Hence media is dangerous and has a major impact on the consumer. It is like a drug that gets into the audiences mental system. Hypodermic theory believes that media can manipulate audiences at will. If an idea is constantly repeated the audiences tend it believe it, according to the theory. The Hypodermic theory is similar to mass society theory.

The limitations of the theory are that it considers media as all powerful and audiences are helpless before its assault. It also suggests that all consumers of media are same consumer media in a similar manner. Although the theory is no longer considered valid but it still has great influence about how we think about the influence of media.

1.6 PERSONAL INFLUENCE THEORY

The personal influence theory was derived from the classic study of United States Presidential elections in 1940 by Paul Lazarsfeld, Bernard Berelson, and Hazel Gaudet. The two step flow of information hypothesis was derived from The People's Choice study conducted in 1944 by these three social scientists. These researchers hoped to find media directly affected the audience opinions. They were surprised to find this was not the case and personal contacts were mentioned more frequently than radio or newspaper as affecting their voting preferences. The informal discussions with political opinion leaders helped the voters finalize their voting preferences. The personal influence or two step theory, therefore, contradicts the hypodermic needle or magic bullet theory which states that people are passive consumers of media and are directly influenced by mass media.

1.6.1 Two step flow Theory

Paul Lazarsfeld and Elihu Katz are the founders of the Two Step Theory and their book *Personal Influence* (1955) is the handbook of the functional theory. The two-step theory claims that majority of people are indirectly influenced and informed by the media through opinions leaders in the society. The majority of people from their opinion based on the analysis and interpretation of media messages. 'Opinion leaders' are influential and well informed personalities who when exposed to a specific media content interpret it and form their own opinion. They now pass on this opinion to people in their social circle who become the 'opinion followers'. These opinion leaders have access to elite media sources as opposed to general main stream media.

The two step flow of communication model hypothesizes that ideas flow from mass media to opinion leaders and from them to a wider population. The two step flow of information 'personal influence' means the process intervening between media's

direct message and the audience's reaction. These opinion leaders are similar to ones they influence in interests, personality, and socio-economic status. They hold a respected position in the society who relies on them for ideas, information and guidance. They influence others to change their attitudes and opinions.

1.6.2 Multistep flow Theory

The Two Step Flow Theory gave way to the Multi Step Flow Theory. It was observed that the influence from the media can be multi directional and it is not necessarily downwards but can be upwards or even backwards to the media as well. The Two Step Flow led to the change in name basically because of the opinion leaders who are more than just a second hand. This caused the description "Multi Directional" because the multistep had to do with more than one opinion leader, they could be two, three, four, five or even six people. Many a time, the information reaching the audience is altogether different from the original piece of information. That is, opinion leaders who pass the information add their own interpretation to it giving it a new meaning and making the information distorted.
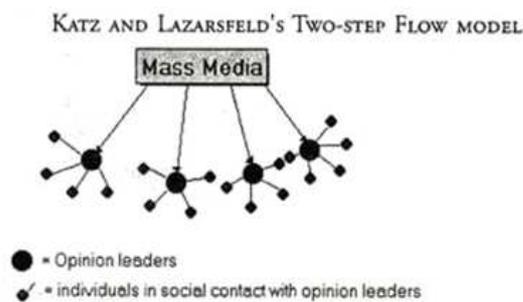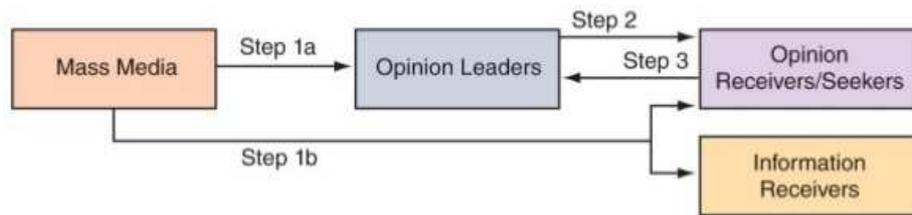
In the figure Step 1a and 1b information through/from mass media flows simultaneously to the Opinion Leaders, Opinion Receivers/Seekers, and Information Receivers. Opinion Seekers are those who solicit information and advice from Opinion Leaders. Information receivers are those among the masses who neither influence nor are influenced by others). In Step 2, both information and influence are transmitted from the Opinion Leaders to the Opinion Receivers/Seekers. Step 3 completes the two-way exchange and illustrates the transfer of information and influence from Opinion Receivers to Opinion Leaders.

The audiences here are active because they send feedback to the media suggesting, appreciating or criticizing things or events. There is peer to peer discussion as well, where the audiences with similar opinion share insights with each other.

The multi-step flow is also called diffusion of innovations theory which gives it a new dimension and understanding. This predicts that media and interpersonal contacts provide information and influence opinion and judgment. Its focus is on the media letting out information and in a point where the audience may be thrown in imbalance because the message or information is not in consistency with their culture or beliefs. The role of the opinion leaders come to play whereby they engage in face-to-face explanation with the people either to advise them or help them get cognition.

1.7   INDIVIDUAL DIFFERENCE THEORY

Individual differences theory or Attitude change Theory of mass communication proposes that individuals respond differently to the mass media according to their psychological needs, and that individuals consume the mass media to satisfy those needs. The theory gives importance to the individual audiences and states that an individual's values, needs, beliefs and attitudes play a major role in how they react and use media.

The individual difference theory is an important theory based on psychological approach to understand mass media effects. According to this theory, different personality variables

result in different reactions to the same stimuli. In other words, the psychological makeup of a person is very much responsible for how he or she will consume media. Therefore, different people will react differently to same information or message. In other words, reaction of media message or content will differ according to motivation of audience members, their predisposition to accept or reject a given message, their prior believes, values, bias, intelligence level, moods etc.

A category for communication research generally known as attitude change research has focused on the phenomenon that different individuals may receive the same message but act on it quite differently. This research is grouped under the heading of selectivity. The studies of American researcher Carl Hovland in particular concluded that people are very selective in how they use media; in the topics they expose themselves to, in how they interpret information, and in how they retain information obtained through the media.

Thus, the theory points out that people are selective about their use of media. The most important aspects of selectivity are the theories of selective exposure, selective perception and selective retention. Selective exposure and selective perception act as barriers between message and effect, thus limiting the direct impact of mass communication on people.

1.7.1 Selective Exposure theory

Selective Exposure means that people expose themselves and access only those communications which are in accordance with their established beliefs and convictions. They tend to avoid those messages which are against their point of view. People seek out not only topics of interest to them but more importantly viewpoints with which they expect to agree. Thus, they use to the media to reinforce existing biases. On occasions when people seek out opposing points of view, they often do so for the purpose of hearing the arguments so that they can refute it later.

1.7.2. Selective Perception theory

Selective perception observes that people often interpret facts to suit their existing biases. Once the individuals have selectively exposed themselves to the messages in accordance with their preference, they tend 'read into' the message whatever suits their needs. This process is called selective perception.

Selective perception implies that the audience members tend to misinterpret media

messages according to their psychological predisposition. The famous "Mr Biggot experiments" are classic examples which show that prejudiced people misinterpreted the meanings of anti-prejudice propaganda in such a way that it reinforced their existing biases.

People hear what they want to hear and what they expect to hear. Thus the same information may carry different meaning for different people, particularly people with differing political, religious, cultural, ethnic, national or other substantial differences.

1.7.3 Selective Retention Theory

Selective retention notes that people remember messages that support their opinion longer than they remember opposing messages, which often unconsciously are forgotten and set aside. As with selective exposure and selective perception, selective retention is likely to reinforce existing beliefs and attitudes. Such tendencies make it less likely that the media can play a solo role in changing attitudes and behavior.

Melvin L.De Fleur and Sandra Ball Rokeach have concluded, "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 beliefs and supportive of their values".

To sum up, Individual Differences Theory of mass communication proposes that individuals respond differently to the mass media according to their psychological needs, and that individuals consume the mass media to satisfy those needs. The need may be for information (e.g. providing statistics about players and teams), integrative (offering a sense of belonging to a group of similarly interested people), affective (e.g. by providing excitement), or escapist (helping to release pent-up emotions).

Check Your Progress:

1.1 What is Hypodermic Needle Theory ?

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_____

_____

1.2 Explain Two Step Theory of Mass Communication?

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UNIT – II

2.0   UNIT STRUCTURE

2.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVE

In this unit we will learn about the theories which explain how media controls the flow of information. We will discuss as Gatekeeping theory, Agenda Setting Theory and Framing Theories in detail.

2.2 INTRODUCTION

The role of media in the social world is a very important topic for research. The early mass media theorists were concerned with the threat of propaganda in mass media. While, the modern mass media theorist have studies the power of media to create and disrupt social organizations. The theories Gatekeeping, Agenda Setting and Framing, which we will study in this unit, deal with how those in media decide what will be news, which news item will be given more importance and how it affects the audience. How news items are selected while others are rejected? How news is selected due to preconceived notions held by the journalist and editor?
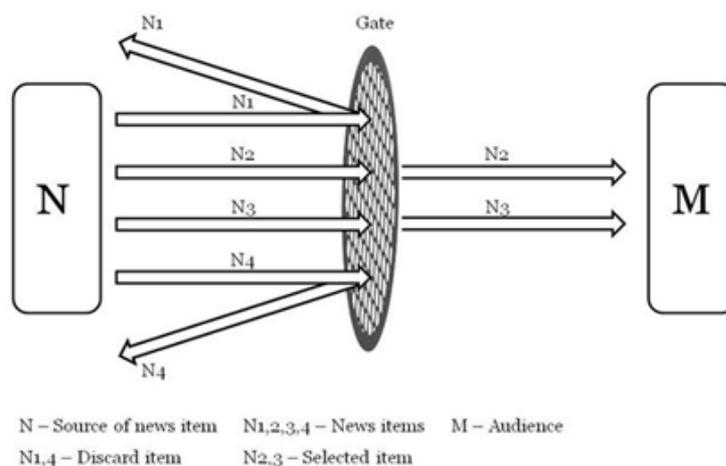
2.3 GATEKEEPING THEORY

The gatekeeper is the person who decides what shall pass through each of the several gates in a process. Kurt Lewin, a German psychologist, recognized that for food to go from a store or a garden to the dining table, there were various decision-making processes it had to pass on the way there. Entering or not entering a channel and moving from one section of a channel to another are affected by a 'gatekeeper'". Kurt Lewin used the term "gatekeeping," to describe a wife or mother as the person who decides which foods end up on the family's dinner table. Lewin's research demonstrated that not all members of a family have equal weight in making household food decisions, and that the wife, who typically shops for and prepares the food controls the gates, based on a variety of considerations. This theory of channels and gatekeepers was known as Lewin's Field Theory of Social Science in 1951.

N – Source of news item   N1,2,3,4 – News items   M – Audience
N1,4 – Discard item   N2,3 – Selected item

Gate Keeping Theory

2.3.1 Process of the Gatekeeping model:

1. Information moves step by step through channels. The number of channels varies and the amount of time in each channel can vary.

2. Information must pass a "gate" to move from one channel to the next.

3. Forces govern channels. There may be opposing psychological forces causing conflict, which creates resistance to movement through the channel.

4. There may be several channels that lead to the same end result.

5. Different actors may control the channels and act as gatekeepers at different times.

The gatekeeper is the decision-maker, he or she decides which information will go forward, and which will not. In other words a gatekeeper in a social system decides which of a certain commodity – materials, goods, and information – may enter the system. Gatekeepers can also be seen as institutions or organizations. In a political system there are gatekeepers, individuals or institutions which control access to positions of power and regulate the flow of information and political influence.

The gatekeeper's choices made by are a complex web of influences, preferences, motives and common values. Gatekeeping is inevitable and sometimes it can be useful. Gatekeeping can also be dangerous as it can lead to an abuse of power by those at the helm since they have the authority to decide which information to discard. A gatekeeper acts as a filter and he or she can stall certain information based on their biases and prejudices. Therefore, gatekeeping responsibilities in any organisation should be often guided by some set of standard criterion.

2.3.2 Gatekeeping in Mass Media

Gatekeeping is the process through which information is filtered for dissemination, whether for publication, broadcasting, the Internet, or some other mode of communication. Gatekeepers in media play a crucial role as they are able to control the public's knowledge of the actual events by letting some stories pass through the system but keeping others out. Gatekeeping occurs at all levels of the media structure—

from a reporter deciding which sources are chosen to include in a story to editors deciding which stories are printed or covered, and includes media outlet owners and even advertisers. Individuals can also act as gatekeepers, deciding what information to include in an email or in a blog. Decision making in media shows that is based on principles of news values, organizational routines, input structure and common sense. Gatekeeping is vital in communication planning and almost all communication planning roles include some aspect of selection.

Gatekeeping in media occurs at various levels, namely:

1. Individuals – Decisions are made by personal choices of the journalist and editors choose the news item to be used.

2. Routine practices of Communication Work – Decisions are made according to a pre-established and generalized set of practices. The themes used in media are in a pattern and media is bound by deadlines time for each category.

3. Communication Organizations –Each media organisation has its on agenda and believes. These media organizations exist within an environment of social institutions that affect the gatekeeping process. The selection of news depends upon the views of the media organisation.

4. Social Institutions –Social institutions and people connected with them have great influence on the news. When routine events vary to a degree they are culturally available as news items.

5. Societies – Culture, indicators of social significance, including political, influences selection decisions affecting the extent to which different parts of the world are covered and how they are covered.

Although Lewin had originally applied Gatekeeping to the food chain, he then added that the gatekeeping process can include a news item passing through communication channels in a newsgroup.

David Manning White seized upon Lewin's comments and turned it towards journalism in 1950. White developed the research agenda for media gatekeeping. In 1949, Manning asked a wire editor whom he named as Mr. Gates to keep all copies that

came into his office from three wire services for a week. Gates agreed to provide an explanation of why the stories which were not used were rejected. White from his study concluded that the selection of news items was "highly selective" and the wire editor was very influential in selection as well as rejection of news items.

In 2001, Pamela Shoemaker, Martin Eichholz, Eunyi Kim, and Brenda Wrigley studied the forces in news gatekeeping in relation to coverage of Congressional bills. Surveying both journalists for their personal characteristics and editors for evaluating newsworthiness, Shoemaker and her colleagues found that only newsworthiness had a significant effect on the amount of coverage given to a bill, thus their first hypothesis was supported as well as the idea that newsworthiness would be more important than personal characteristics.

According to Pamela Shoemaker and Boris Johnson, gatekeeping is the "process of culling and crafting countless bits of information into the limited number of messages that reach people every day, and it is the center of the media's role in modern public life. This process determines not only which information is selected, but also what the content and nature of the messages, such as news, will be."

While Shoemaker et al.'s study focused on traditional news rooms, Jane Singer has been interested in how gatekeeping translates to how traditional newspapers use online tools. In both the 2000 and 2004 Presidential elections, she studied how the Internet was changing the process for newspapers, contending that, "the power of gatekeepers seems to diminish in a modern information society. The Internet defies the whole notion of a 'gate' and challenges the idea that journalists (or anyone else) can or should limit what passes through it"

2.3.3 Features of Gatekeeping Theory

- It is a process of selection and rejection of news items as per media requirement like limited time or space.

- Media through gatekeeping plays the role of a watchdog.

- The function of gatekeeping is surveillance.

- Gatekeeping sets standards for newsworthiness in media.

- Editor or the gatekeeper changes news according to his or her subjective perspective.

- Gatekeeping is also affected by many external factors like organizational policies, culture, national policy, social institutions etc.

- In gatekeeping information moves in a step by step manner.

- Gatekeeping is also used as a social control for media influence.

2.3.4 Audience Gatekeeping

Today with the advent of Web 2.0 users have begun playing a greater role in producing and sharing online news items via online social networks such as Twitter and Facebook. Shoemaker and Timothy Vos theorized such practice as "audience gatekeeping". According to them (2011), audience gatekeeping is the process in which users "pass along already available news items and comment on them" based on the user's own set of criteria about the newsworthiness" According to them the audience role is not to create news but to filter and deliver existing content to other audiences. They pointed out that the audience was left out, they called for, "audience's gatekeeping , referring to audience member providing information to each other about their favoured news item." Kwon et al. (2013) adapted the theory of audience gatekeeping to explore what channels are mainly adopted for Twitter audiences to filter and share news contents. Kwon et al. (2013) also found that re-processed news items by user-generated content websites, or social media, are more frequently adopted by Twitter users than the direct news times from traditional mass media organizations, confirming the empowering role of ordinary online users in retelling and redistributing news agendas to networked publics.

2.3.5 Criteria for News Selectivity

Selection of correct news is very important for a media organisation. If there are riots going on within communities in a country, then if media tries to side with one community things can get worse. Doris Garber in her book Mass Media and and American politics has given five criteria while choosing a news story. According to her journalists rely on five criteria when choosing a news story.

1. **Strong Impact**: Local stories impact the public more than unfamiliar international events. In order to attract attention, journalists inflate news and present them as situations that could happen to anyone. They turn rare international crises into everyday scenarios, personalizing stories and losing the main significance of them.

2. **Conflict**, violence, disaster, or scandal: Murder is news, brutal murder is bigger news. Topics such as murders, wars, shootings, or hurricanes captivate the attention of the audience. Newspapers containing violence outsold other newspaper chains that contained less violence.

3. **Familiarity**: News stories gain more attention if they have issues pertaining to the public or if they include familiar situations concerning a large audience. Journalists try to turn international events or crises into stories that can relate back to their current audience. We all like to know about people or places we are familiar about. News oragnisation also do follow up stories on events they have covered earlier. People tend to retain a lot of information about celebrities and tend to care about the personal intimacy of other's lives.

4. **Proximity**: People prefer news that is local, close in proximity, so do the journalists. Newspapers have dedicated pages for local news. People pay closer attention to local news than international or national affairs. Local media outlets do well because they focus most of their stories on local events.

5. **Time and novelty**: Anything new or novel is interesting and such news will attract attention. News should be something interesting that does not occur every day or an event that is not a part of people's lives.

2.4   DIFFUSION OF INNOVATION THEORY

Everett M Rogers, an eminent American communication theorist and sociologist in his book Diffusion of Innovation in 1995 described how innovation was adopted by individuals in a multi step flow through various intermediaries and at different time zones. Earlier diffusion research was done by French sociologist Gabriel Tarde in 1903 who has described diffusion as S shaped.

According to Rogers, diffusion is the "process by which an innovation is communicated through certain channels over time among the members of a social system". While, innovation is "an idea, practice, or object, that is perceived to be new by an individual or other unit of adaptation". Diffusion of innovation theory predicts that media as well as interpersonal contacts provide information and influence opinion and judgment.

E. M. Rogers (1995) argues that innovation occurs in four stages: invention, diffusion through social system, time and consequences. The information flows through networks. The nature of these information networks and opinion leaders determine whether an innovation will be adapted or not. Besides opinion leaders who exert influence on audience behavior there are other intermediaries known as the Change Agents and Gatekeepers. The rate of adoption of an innovation also varies with time. The Adopters are divided into categories according when they adopt an innovation. The five adopter categories are: (1) Innovators, (2) Early adopters (3) Early majority (4) late majority and (5) laggards. They flow a standard deviation curve, very little early adopters or innovators are only 2.5% who take up the idea in the beginning. The Early adopters 13.5 %, the early majority is 34% while late majority is also 34% and finally the last 16 % are the Laggards.
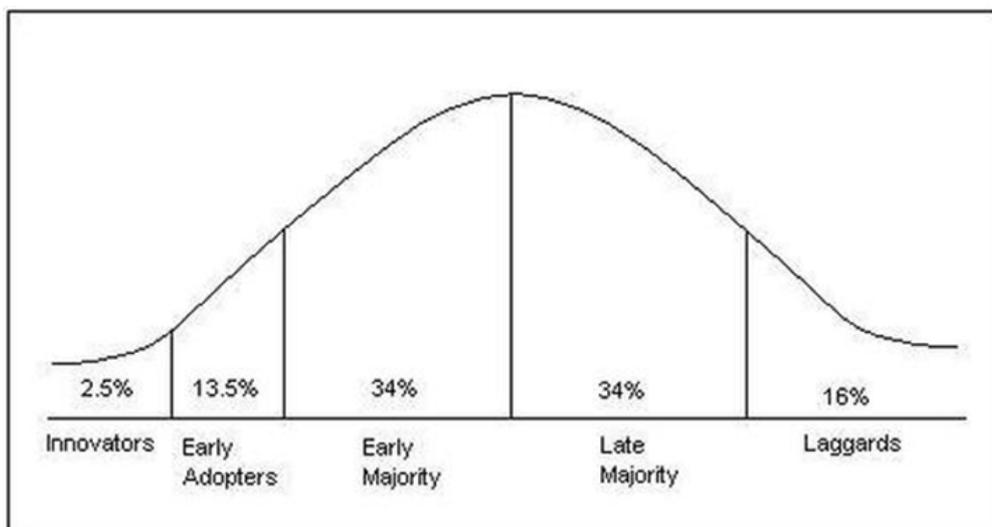

Figure : Adopter categorization based on innovativeness

E M Rogers (1995)

Each individual must go through a five step process to reach a decision for adopting an innovation.

1. Knowledge

2. Persuasion

3. Decision

4. Implementation

5. Confirmation

The decision to adopt an innovation is done through cost benefit analysis where the major obstacle is uncertainty.
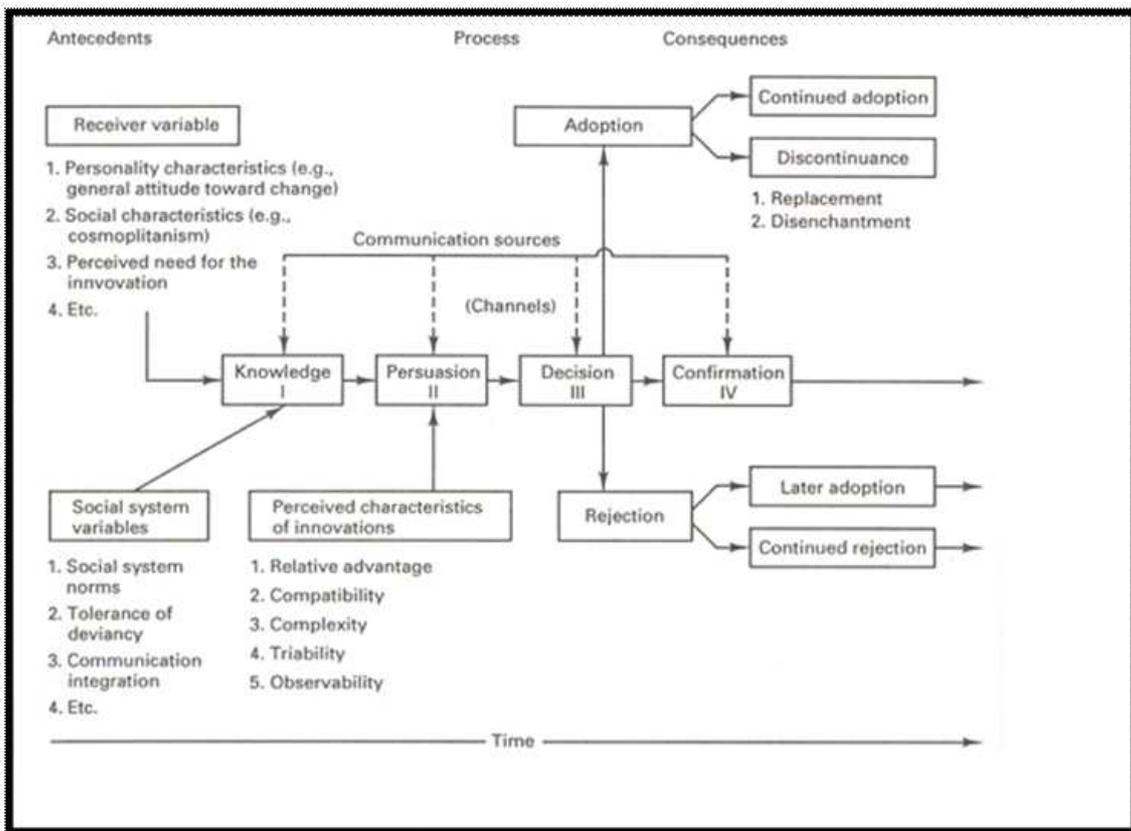
Thus, both the two-step and multi-step flow theories are clearly opposed to the idea of mass media having a direct influence on its audiences. There are many external factors, social relationships and interpersonal communication that affect how the message is accepted by the masses.

2.5 AGENDA SETTING THEORY

Agenda setting describes a very powerful influence of the media – the ability to tell us what issues are important. In the 1970s Maxwell McCombs and Donald Shaw took a different direction when they looked at the effects of gatekeepers' decisions. They found the audience attaches how much importance to give to a news item from the emphasis the media places on it. McCombs and Shaw pointed out that the gatekeeping concept is related to the newer concept, agenda-setting. It is the mass media that sets the 'agenda' of any event like an election campaign. Media determines the important issues to be followed by the audience in an event.

The idea of agenda-setting was first presented by Walter Lippmann in his 1922 book, Public Opinion, where he argues that the mass media are the principal connection between events in the world and the images in the minds of the public. He said that average people simplified the complex environment and events into simple "pictures" in their minds and they could not be trusted to make political decisions based on them.

Taking clue from Lippmann, in 1963, Bernard Cohen observed that the press "may not be successful much of the time in telling people what to think, but it is stunningly successful in telling its readers what to think about. And it follows from this that the world will look different to different people," Cohen continues, "depending not only on their personal interests but also on the map that is drawn for them by writers, editors, and publishers of the paper they read." Cohen took a mass society perspective and revised it to make it compatible with limited-effects perspective. Cohen's idea later led to formalization of agenda-setting theory by McCombs and Shaw.

McCombs and Shaw interpreted agenda setting as, "In choosing and displaying news, editors, newsroom staff, and broadcasters play an important part in shaping political reality. Readers learn not only about a given issue from the amount of information in a news story and its position…The mass media may well determine the important issues –that is, the media may set the 'agenda' of the campaign."

Agenda-setting theory describes the ability of the news media to influence the importance of topics on the public agenda. Agenda setting theory predicts that if a news item is covered frequently and prominently, the audience will regard the issue as more important.

In the 1968 "Chapel Hill study", McCombs and Shaw demonstrated a strong correlation coefficient between what 100 residents of Chapel Hill, North Carolina thought was the most important election issue and what the local and national news media reported was the most important issue. By comparing the salience of issues in news content with the public's perceptions of the most important election issue, McCombs and Shaw were able to determine the degree to which the media determines public opinion.

Agenda-setting describes the way that media attempts to influence viewers, and establish a hierarchy of news prevalence. Agenda-setting is the creation of public awareness and concern of salient issues by the news media. Two basic assumptions underlie most researches on agenda-setting: first, the press and the media do not reflect reality; they filter and shape it and second, the media concentration on a few issues and subjects leads the public to perceive those issues as more important than other issues.

One of the most critical aspects in the concept of an agenda-setting role of mass communication is the time frame for this phenomenon. In addition, different media have different agenda-setting potential.

2.4.1 Types of agenda-setting

The research on the effect of agenda setting compares the salience of issues in news content with the public perceptions of the most important issue, and then analyses the extent of influence by guidance of the media. There are three models assumed by Max McCombs: the awareness model, the priorities model and the salience model.

Most investigations are centered on these three models. In the research, the dependent variables are media agenda, audience agenda and policy agenda as listed in the following part. Rogers and Dearing identify three types of agenda setting:

i   Public agenda setting, in which the public's agenda is the dependent variable (the traditional hypothesis)

i   Media agenda setting, in which the media's agenda is treated as the dependent variable ("agenda building")

iii   Policy agenda setting, in which elite policy makers' agendas are treated as the dependent variable ("political agenda setting")

Rogers and Dearing argue that mass communication research, has focused a great deal on public agenda setting and media agenda setting, but has largely ignored policy agenda setting, which is studied primarily by political scientists. As such, the authors suggest mass communication scholars pay more attention to how the media and public agendas might influence elite policy maker's agendas i.e., where the policy makers get their news from and how this affects their policies.

2.4.2 Limitations of Agenda setting theory

Agenda Setting Theory suffers from certain limitations as the media effects theory seems well suited for election campaigns and news but not for other types of content. The theory based on causation can easily be turned around and it can be argued that it is the audience that picks the agenda and media simply responds to the public opinion. Although the theory suffers from many limitations it has inspired further research and is relevant today.

2.5 FRAMING THEORY

The concept of framing is an expansion of the agenda-setting tradition; it focuses on the gist of the issues at hand rather than on a particular topic. The basis of framing theory is that the media focuses attention on certain events and then places them within a field of meaning known as a frame. Framing has a powerful influence on individuals and it has now been expanded to organizations as well.

Briefly, framing theory suggests that how something is presented to the audience called "the frame" influences the choices people make about how to process that information. Frames are abstractions that work to organize or structure message meaning. The most common use of frames is in terms of the frame the news or media place on the information they convey. They are thought to influence the perception of the news by the audience, in this way it could be construed as a form of second level agenda-setting – they not only tell the audience what to think about (agenda-setting theory), but also how to think about that issue (second level agenda setting, framing theory).

The theory was first put forth by Erving Goffman, a Canadian American sociologist, under the title of Frame Analysis. In his book F*rame Analysis: An Essay on the Organization of Experience (*1974) Goffman's attempt to explain how conceptual

frames – ways to organize experience – structure an individual's perception of society. This book is thus about the organization of experience rather than the organization of society.

A frame is a set of concepts and theoretical perspectives that organize experiences and guide the actions of individuals, groups and societies. Frame analysis, then, is the study of the organization of social experience. To illustrate the concept of the frame, Goffman gives the example of a photo frame: a person uses the frame or the structure to hold together her picture, which represents the content of what she is experiencing in her life.

2.5.1 Types of Framework

The most basic frames are called primary frameworks. A primary framework takes an individual's experience or an aspect of a scene that would originally be meaningless and makes it meaningful. One type of primary framework is a natural framework, which identifies situations in the natural world and is completely without human influences. The other type of framework is a social framework, which explains events and connects them to humans. An example of a natural framework is the weather, and an example of a social framework is a meteorologist who predicts the weather. Focusing on the social frameworks, Goffman seeks to "construct a general statement regarding the structure, or form, of experiences individuals have at any moment of their social life".

He put forth the ideas that people interpret what is going on around their world through their primary framework. This framework is regarded as primary as it is taken for granted by the user. Its usefulness as a framework does not depend on other frameworks.

Goffman therefore states that there are two distinctions within primary frameworks: natural and social. Both play the role of helping individuals interpret data, so that their experiences can be understood in a wider social context. The difference between the two is functional.

Natural frameworks identify events as physical occurrences taking natural quote literally and not attributing any social forces to the causation of events. Social frameworks

view events as socially driven occurrences, due to the whims, goals, and manipulations on the part of other people. Social frameworks are built on the natural frameworks. These frameworks and the frames that they create in our communication greatly influence how data is interpreted, processed, and communicated. Goffman's underlying assumption is that individuals consciously or unconsciously use these frameworks on a daily basis.

2.5.2 Framing Techniques

Framing techniques according to Fairhurst and Sarr (1996) are:

- **Metaphor**: To frame a conceptual idea through comparison to something else.

- **Stories** (myths, legends): To frame a topic via narrative in a vivid and memorable way.

- **Tradition** (rituals, ceremonies): Cultural mores that imbue significance in the mundane, closely tied to artifacts.

- **Slogan, jargon, catchphrase**: To frame an object with a catchy phrase to make it more memorable and relate-able.

- **Artifact**: Objects with intrinsic symbolic value – a visual/cultural phenomenon that holds more meaning than the object it self.

- **Contrast**: To describe an object in terms of what it is not.

- **Spin**: to present a concept in such a ways as to convey a value judgement (positive or negative) that might not be immediately apparent; to create an inherent bias by definition.

Framing as well as Agenda Setting theory focus on how media draws the public's eye to specific topics – in this way they set the agenda. But Framing takes this a step further by showing that the way in which the news is presented creates a frame for that information. This is usually a conscious choice by journalists – in this case a frame refers to the way media as gatekeepers organize and present the ideas, events, and topics they cover.

Framing is subjective as each of us has our own frame of communication. It is also unavoidable part of human communication. Therefore, Framing is the way a communication source defines and constructs any piece of information.

Check Your Progress:

2.1 What is the limitation of Agenda Setting Theory?

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2.2 Define Innovation and Diffusion.

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UNIT – III

3.0   UNIT STRUCTURE

2.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVE

In this Unit we will learn and understand the four types of Media systems in the world. The unit will give you a complete idea about Normative Theories of Media, namely The Authoritarian Theory, The Libertarian Theory, Soviet-Communist Theory, and Social-Responsibility Theory.

3.2 INTRODUCTION

Normative theories explain how media operates or is expected to operate in a certain set of socio-political scenario. Since the mass media in any society is controlled by its needs and policies, therefore each society creates its own separate media system. The earliest theories were propounded by Western theorists Siebert, Paterson and Schramm in their book Four Theories of the Press (1956). These were termed "normative theories" by McQuail in the sense that they "mainly express ideas of how the media ought to or can be expected to operate under a prevailing set of conditions and values." Each of the four original or classical theories is based on a particular political theory or economic scenario. These Four Theories of Press can explain the different media systems in the world. They are, The Authoritarian Theory, The Libertarian Theory, Soviet-Communist Theory, and Social-Responsibility Theory. Later two more theories were added which we will learn in the next unit.

3.3 AUTHORITARIAN THEORY

Authoritarian theory was developed in the 16th and 17th century in England. The Authoritarian Theory placed all forms of communication under the strict control of a governing elite or authority. This authority was justified as a means to protect and preserve a divinely ordained social order. In many countries the media was controlled by the monarchy who granted permission and licenses to the media practitioners. The media operated under a strict control of content by the state and there is a general lack of freedom for the public to criticize state policies according to Jennifer Ostini.

Under an Authoritarian media system, ownership of the media can be either public or private. Ownership of printing media are mostly private, while broadcast and cinemas usually remain in the hands of the government.

In the Authoritarian set up the control is arbitrary and erratic. In some places a lot of freedom is available to the press where they can express minority views and culture, as long as they do not pose a threat to the leadership. Authoritarian theory does not give priority to cultivation of a homogenous national culture.

The Authoritarian Theory describes the situation where states view the mass media as an instrument to promote its agenda. The role of the media is to mainly educate citizens, and acts as a propaganda tool for the ruling party.

The main difference between the Authoritarian theory and the Soviet-Communist Theory is that while the former allows both private and public media ownership, the latter allows strictly only public media ownership. Another difference is that while the Authoritarian media are mainly use to maintain societal status quo, a Soviet-Communist media is often used to bring about societal changes.

Thus the term Authoritarian Theory refers to an arrangement where press is subordinate to state power and the interests of a ruling class. The theory says that press and other media should always be subordinate to the established authority and should do nothing to undermine it. Media should avoid offence to the majority moral and political views. Attack on authority, deviation from official policy, or immoral publications can be criminal offences. It promotes censorship in advance and punishment for deviation externally set guidelines.

Relationship between the State and Media in Authoritarian System

This type of Authoritarian set can be found in a dictatorship, but these tendencies can be found in a democracy too. This can be specially seen in emergency or during war times. In India broadcast media is controlled directly by the government and works under its guidelines. Films are under the Censor Board. The press which is free in the country was suppressed during the Emergency period. The provisions of Officials Secrets Act can be used by the authorities to deny any publication from publishing any news.

Till 2011 the Burmese media has been under an Authoritarian system and always portrayed itself as supportive of the country's previous military junta. Other countries whose media are practicing the Authoritarian Theory include, North Korea, China, Iran, and Saudi Arabia.
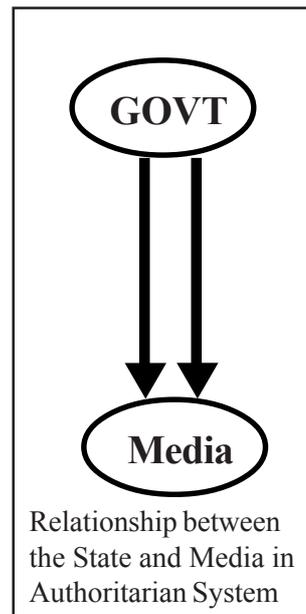
3.4 LIBERTARIAN THEORY

The Libertarian Theory is also known as the Free Press Theory. As the name suggests it calls for full freedom to the press. This theory is according to Siebert et al is based on individual's fundamental right to freedom of speech and expression. This theory provides

the impetus towards a free media in a democracy. Simply put a person should be free to put forward and publish his or her views without fear. It is therefore an extension of other rights such as the allowing the public to hold opinions different from majority views, discuss freely, organize, assemble and express them.

3.4.1 Origin of Libertarian Theory

The Libertarian Theory originally came from liberal thought in Europe from the 16th Century. This seeds of the theory arose as resentment against the times when the feudal lords had complete control over the lives of the commoners grew. This age was rocked by major social upheaval. The Protestant Reformation had a great impact

Relationship between the State and Media in Libertarian System
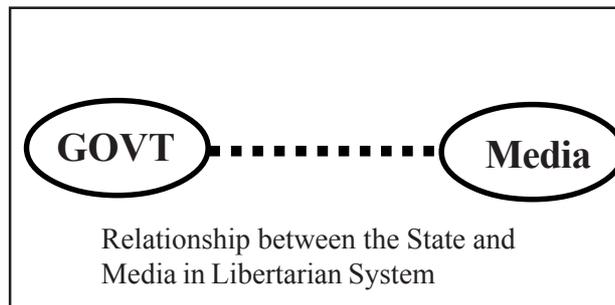
on the demand for personal freedom in thoughts and beliefs. Many early followers of this theory were Protestants fighting the Church restrictions on the freedom to communicate. They believed that if no restrictions were imposed on individuals communication then they could follow their conscience, communicate accordingly and ultimately find the truth.

3.4.2 Features of Libertarian Theory

The Libertarian Theory describes societies that provide media with unrestrained freedom, especially from government control, so that they are free to report a variety of views according to Krishnammurthy Sriramesh. There is no control or censorship. Under a libertarian media system, ownership of media is mainly private.

Under the Libertarian Theory, the media's purpose is to inform, entertain, sell, and serve as a "watchdog", keeping the government in check. Libertarian Theory involves some innate distrust of the role of the government and the state (Jennifer Ostini, undated), and a belief that everybody has rights to information. The theory also sees people as rational enough to decide what is good or bad and hence the press should not restrict anything. Even negative contents may provide audiences with knowledge. Libertarian thoughts are exactly the opposite of the Authoritarian Theory.

Libertarians (McQuail 1987, Seibert, Peterson and Schramm 1956) argued that if individuals would be freed from arbitrary limits on communication imposed by church and state, they would "naturally" follow the dictates of their conscience, seek truth, engage in public debate, and ultimately create a better life for themselves and others.

The Libertarians believe that unrestricted public debates and discussions are very important ways of creating a healthy society. They feel that the state authorities have a tendency for preserving archaic laws and orders to curb free flow of information and free media.

United States was one of the first countries to adopt the Libertarian principles, in its Declaration of Independence and the Bill of Rights. The latter asserts that that all individuals have natural rights that no government, community or group can unduly infringe or take away. The Libertarian Theory is best elaborated in the First Amendment to the American Constitution which states that, "Congress shall make no law…abridging the freedom of speech or of the press. It is simply an absolute right of the citizen."

Another example of a country whose media system are application the Libertarian Theory would be Finland. In 2011, the Finnish press was ranked as "freest in the world" according to Freedom House, an organisation promoting freedom around the world. Freedom of expression and access to information is guaranteed under Article 12 of the constitution. Every citizen has the right to reply and to have falsely published information corrected. Other countries are Netherlands, and to a lesser extent, Hungary.

3.4.3 Restrictions in Libertarian Theory

We must remember that the freedom given to free press is not absolute and there are many restrictions to on the communication consumed by the public and published by the media. These restrictions are in the form of defamation laws, there are also cases were judges stay the publication of any information regarding a sensitive case. There are laws and regulation to protect against vulgarity, fake and harmful advertisements, child pornography etc. Sedition laws also can put a gag to any publication which is considered provoking anti-national feelings by the administration. The limits to press freedom are changing and negotiable. During times of war or emergencies press freedom

is restricted. New media technologies also pose new questions on their regulation. Thus the debate over communication freedom is never ending.

Laws have been put in place to restrict press freedom to safeguard other equally important laws guaranteed by the Constitution. The fundamental question is that complete press freedom cannot given if it is violating human rights. But the question arises that whether the laws made to protect the fundamental rights of individuals and enforce limits to press freedom can be misused to censor media?

3.5 SOVIET-COMMUNIST THEORY

Under the Soviet-Communist Theory or Marxist Theory, the state owns or in some way controls all forms of mass media directly. The media's authority falls in the hands of a small group of party leaders. The role of the media in countries applying the Soviet-Communist Theory is to act as an instrument of the ruling party to unite people of the state, and to carry out plans of the party and state, bringing about societal change.

3.5.1 Origin of Marxist Theory

The Soviet-Communist Theory originated from the teachings of Karl Marx with mutations at the hands of Lenin and Stalin after the 19th century. Karl Marx writings were a great influence even on those who opposed it. Marxist ideas formed the touchstone for European social theory after World War-II. In 1970s and 1980s, Marxism was outright rejected or viewed with suspicion in USA and Britain, but theories based on Marxist theories gained acceptance.

 Karl Marx developed his theory in later part of 19th century, the theory an altered version of Mass Society Theory. Marx took a materialistic position which proposed that human beings control and shape the social world with the use of physical and technological resources available to them.

It is the availability of resources and control over technology that determines what people's achievements.

 Marx said that the problems due to urbanization and industralisation were caused by the actions of the powerful elite class. Marx proposed that the workers should rise

against capitalists and demand an end to exploitation. They should band together to seize the means of production to construct an egalitarian democratic social order called Communism. According to Marx media is one of the means many modern technologies that should be controlled and used to advance Communism.

3.5.2 Features of Soviet-Communist Theory

The Soviet communist theory is also known as social media theory. The Russian Media were reorganized after the revolution of 1917. This theory is derived from the the teaching of Marx and Engles. The theory desires that the media should be under the control of the working class and serve their purpose,

Media should be completely state own and private media strictly prohibited. Media must work for positive functions in society, related to education, information, mobilization and motivation.

Media should promote and project society according to Marxist principals,

They must promote progressive movements in the country and abroad

Relationship between the State and Media in Soviet-Communist System
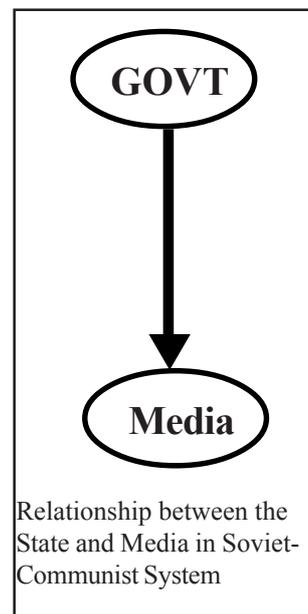
The media is ultimately controlled by the State and integrated with other instruments of political life. They must:

1. Act with responsibility

2. Evolve and follow norms of of profession

3. Media should be responsive to people' hopes and aspiration.

The media is not subject to arbitrary interference as in case of Authoritarian regimes.

Soviet media theory is imitative of Leninist principles which based on the Carl Marx and Engel's ideology. The government undertakes or controls the total media and communication to serve working classes and their interest.

Theory says the state have absolute power to control any media for the benefits of people. They put end to the private ownership of the press and other media. The government media provide positive thoughts to create a strong socialized society as well as providing information, education, entertainment, motivation and mobilization.

The theory describe the whole purpose of the mass media is to educate the greater masses of working class or workers. Here, the public was encouraged to give feedback which would able to create interests towards the media.

According to authoritarian theory, the media controlled and censored by the ministries in the country but libertarian is fully free without any intervention of any authority or government, Social responsibility theory – press freedom in one hand but other hand they controlled the press by raising question and Soviet media theory, the whole control of the media is under the leader of the nation.

Soviet media theory looks similar like authoritarian theory but the core part is different from each other. In authoritarian theory is a one way communication, there is no feedback allowed from the public but in Soviet media theory is a two way communication at the same time the whole media is controlled or works under the leadership. Soviet media theory allows some restriction based on the nation interest rather than personal benefit.

Under communist theories like soviet media theory, the journalist or press is a supporter of the leadership not a watchdog. Also under the Soviet-Communist system, the media reports less on the bad things that happen under communism, and emphasizes the bad things that happen in democratic areas, David McHam's Communication Law Center.

For example, when the Russian's media was still under the Soviet-Communist system, the official communist paper "Pravda" portrayed the ideology that "Communist is good" by praising Stalin's non-aggression pact with Hitler, and avoided reporting about the Chernobyl disaster as it may raise concerns about the safety of Soviet nuclear plant. Pravda reported about the incident only two days later after constant urging from Sweden. (Tiffany Gabbay, 2012)

Technically, currently, no country's media is completely under the Soviet-Communist system. However, certain countries' media possess characteristics of a Soviet-

Communist media system. One example is the North Korean media. The North Korean media is very much- if not, entirely, controlled by the government. For a really long time, there were no independent journalists in North Korea, radio and television receivers are locked to government-specified frequencies. The media also covers up on the negative things that happen under the communist leadership, not revealing the dangers and hardships North Koreans face.

3.6 SOCIAL-RESPONSIBILITY THEORY

Social Responsibility theory is an outgrowth of the Libertarian Theory. However, the Social-Responsibility Theory does not assume that anyone can use the media to publish anything like the Libertarian Theory. Instead, this theory requires the media to adhere to professional standards and codes of conduct when exercising their editorial freedom.

3.6.1 Origins of Social Responsibility Theory

The Social Responsibility theory origin is the Hutchins Commission on Freedom of Press report in 1947 in United States. The commission was set up in 1942 to study the role of press amidst calls for greater government control of media; it was funded by Henry Luce CEO Times Inc. The members of the commission consisted of leaders from different areas of society like academics, politics, heads of social groups.

While majority of the Commission members had sympathy for Chicago School of though which opposed market place of ideas notion and argued that unregulated media would be a weapon at the hands of the socially dominant groups to suppress the weak. The press could also be used to gain personal political power. Hitler use of national media to promote hatred against Jews was held up as an example.

To prevent such tyranny by majority and to provide pluralistic mandate to the media the some Commission members recommended formation of a Press Council as a watchdog. But this was objected by other members as they felt this could lead to state control of media.

Ultimately, the Hutchins Commission members refrained from recommending any central agency and put their faith on the Media practitioners, calling for redoubled efforts towards public service.

According to Curran 1991, The Commission endorsed professional responsibility. The Hutchins Commission asserted journalists commitment to higher goals ---neutrality, detachment and a commitment to truth. Pluralism of information and opinions can be recreated through "internal pluralism" and a commitment to inform.

The synthesis of ideas put forward in the Hutchins Commission Report was known as the Social Responsibility Theory of Press according to Seibert, Peterson and Schramm.

3.6.2 Features of Social Responsibility Theory

The most important feature of Social-Responsibility Theory is that it gives the onus of nurturing cultural pluralism to the media. Thus media is made responsible for its acts of omission and commission. The media must self regulate itself at every step to become a voice of all sections of the society.

Social Responsibility Theory is a radical statement for instead of demanding freedom for press it imposes the responsibility on the media owners.

Relationship between the State and Media in Social Responsibility System
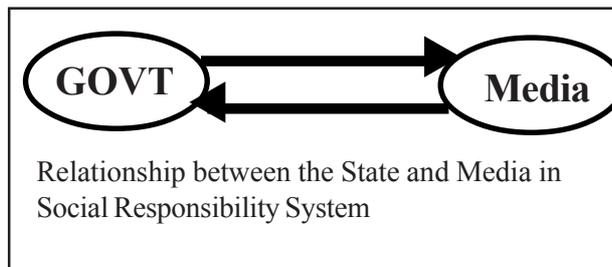
The theory appealed to the idealism of the media owners and demanded pluralism as a service even at the cost of reduced profits.

The Social Responsibility Theory calls the media professionals as the front line fighters for preserving democracy from totalitarianism.

Under the Social-Responsibility Theory, ownership of media is mostly private and practice self-regulation according to standards, codes and guiding principles. The media is relatively free of arbitrary government controls.

Under a Social-Responsible media system, the role of the media is to serve the public, and in order to do so, should remain free of government interference. The idea of this theory is that the media has a moral obligation to provide adequate information for citizens to make informed decisions.

However, the different media can retain a liberal notion of healthy public disclosure. The media is also expected to represent the diversity of cultures they represent, and should have high standards for professionalism, truth, and accuracy.

3.6.3 Principles of Social-Responsibility Theory

Dennis McQuail (1987) has summarized the basic principals of Social Responsibility Theory as follows:

Media should accept and fulfill certain obligations to the society.

These obligations are mainly to be met by setting high or professional standards of informativeness, truth, accuracy, objectivity, and balance.

In accepting and applying these obligations, media should be self regulating within the framework of law and established institutions.

Media should avoid whatever might lead to crime, violence, or civil disorder or give offence to minority groups.

The media as a whole should be pluralist and reflect the diversity of their society, giving access to various points of view and to rights of reply.

Society and public have a right to expect high standards of performance, and intervention can be justified secure public good.

Journalism and media professionals should be accountable to the society as well as employers and the market.

One example of a country that practices the Social-Responsibility Theory is the United States of America. The USA has a Bill of Rights that states that the "Congress shall make no law… abridging the freedom of speech, or the press." (Lorne W. Craner, 2008). This bill entitles the media to freedom and at the same time, put across a trust the congress has for the media to be responsible for its freedom. Such trust encourages the media to be responsible for the information it publishes. Countries who have a Social-Responsible media system include, France, Germany, and Japan.

Check Your Progress:

3.1 What is Authoritarian Theory?

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3.2 Write about the Origin of Libertarian Theory.

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UNIT – IV

4.0 UNIT STRUCTURE

4.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

In this Unit we will study two more normative theories of press: Development Communication Theory and Democratic Participant Media Theory. We will understand the need for alternative theories for media structure for developing countries. We will

also discover the need for public participation in media. Finally we will discuss the new phenomena of convergence and its impact on Media.

4.2   INTRODUCTION

Media theorists found that the "four theories of press" had limited application for the Third World countries as they were vastly different from the Western countries. Therefore, two more theories were later added to the non-aligned countries of Asia, Africa and Latin America, who were committed to social and economic development on their own terms. The two theories were Development Communication Theory and Democratic Participant Media Theory. Communication or Media convergence is the merging of mass communication outlets – print, television, radio, the Internet. This has created a global platform as well as new divisions among the rich and the poor.

4.3   DEVELOPMENT COMMUNICATION THEORY

Development communication refers to the use of communication to facilitate social development. The fast changing economic and political conditions in the third world countries gave rise to a new approach Development Communication Theory, where communication is used to propel development in a country.

Development communication engages stakeholders and policy makers, establishes favorable environments, assesses risks and opportunities and promotes information exchanges to bring about positive social change through sustainable development. Development communication techniques include information dissemination and education, behavior change, social marketing, social mobilization, media advocacy, communication for social change and community participation.

4.3.1 Concept of Development

Development is a highly debated term with the concept often being confused 'modernisation', 'progress', 'industrialization' and 'growth'. Development is a socio-economic phenomenon which is necessary and inevitable. Development is seen as a goal for the society. The concept of development is usually couched in economic terms. The economic goal is often described in terms of an increase in the Gross National Product or GNP, the sum total of goods and services produced by the country annually.

These goals have been criticized as inadequate. One of the big major problems of underdeveloped countries is the lopsided distribution of available goods and services.

In short, development really means developing people. One of the banes of modern mass production techniques — despite their obvious benefits — is that they tend to dehumanize people and turn them into "masses".

Mass communication, as commonly understood, tends to treat people in same way. Thus it is often used as a tool for manipulating "public opinion" as if people were things to be manipulated. People can develop by becoming conscious of what they can be and what they can do – and by being helped to be and do what they ought.

Mass communication can, but does not necessarily, provide stimulus for development but has to be programmed as such.

Therefore, Mass communication at the service of development — or "development communication" – should seek to elicit a human, and ultimately a social response in the people whom it seeks to serve. Only the communication that cultivates rather than smothers this free human response is one that can bring development.

4.3.2 Development Communication Theory

The concept of Development communication emerged as a field of mass communication post World War-II when newly freed countries in Asia, Africa and South America started asserting their independence, self reliance and non alignment.

Earlier other countries had to replicate a single form of development process which was practiced in some specific countries. Thus, development was linked with Westernization. Development was at first based on the developmental theory of westernization but later had its own basis in the developmental theory of modernization.

Development communication began with considering people as audiences who were to be influenced one way. The unilateral communication flow was criticized for cultural imperialism. The socially engineered messages were disseminated as a propaganda to control the culture of the poor countries by glorifying the conditions of the rich nations. The theory focused on passive audience which was not participatory. This gave the

notion that development was being, like the developed countries, one way influence. The theory suffered from certain weaknesses, as it is blamed for enforcing westernization more than modernization. Cultural hegemony also occurred through development communication implementation.

The UNESCO sponsored International Commission for the Study of Communication Problems, The MacBridge Report published under the title, Many Voices, One World, in 1980 gives an analysis for world communication problems. Some of the common conditions were:

- There was an absence of communication infrastructure.

- Heavy dependence on developed countries for hardware and software.

- Commitment of these societies for economic, political and social development as a primary national task.

- Development of countries awareness on their similar identity and interest in international politics.

The overriding objective of the developing countries was to use mass media for nation-building. The colonial rule had massive bureaucracy and skeletal transport and communication systems. Centralised economic planning, large scale industrialization and the development of mass media appeared to be most effective way of catching up with the developed countries.

The major emphasis of development communication theorists has been to use media for national development. The agenda of the national media according to them should be to promote national development programmes like population control, literacy drive, and poverty. But the effectiveness of this theory depends on how governments exercise their rights to interfere in media and how they use censorship, subsidy, and direct control.

Then, communication was said to be horizontal. Today, development communication is about working for local development and creating opportunities. Its objective is to uplift the quality of life of people not only economically but also socially, culturally, politically, etc. by using the tools of development communication. The theory later

became known for its use in the developing and under developed countries. The concept of participation was later added which paved the way for model to be used for social change, development communication and democratic-participant communication theory.

4.3.3 Benefits of Development Communication

- It has development roles and objectives.

- Its main aim is to help people.

- Development Communication avoids manipulation or propaganda

- It Generates genuine response and feedback from the audience

- Self-responsibility and self-determination

4.3.4 Features of Development Communication

Development communication is an educational process. It aims at developing social consciousness, personal responsibility towards one's fellowmen, one's community and country.

Development communication implies respect for the human person, respect for his intelligence and his right to self-determination.

The role of mass communication is to help, not to take over or substitute for, his thinking. It serves him by providing the facts on which to base a sound judgment, and the inspiration to carry out his resolve.

Thus, development communication is a social process as it seeks the human response of people in society for betterment.

4.3.5 Development Communication in India

Development communication is an essential feature for the Indian situation as we are still a developing nation with a large population next only to that of China. It is important to note that we do possess an enormously large amount of resources of all kinds including human and natural ones. But we are yet to achieve the kind of universal

development of masses which should have been the optimum given the country's situation.

Development journalism in India started with the rural radio broadcasts in 1940s. These early programs focused on the use of indigenous languages –Marathi, Gujarati and Kannada. India's earliest organized experiments in development communication were known as Satellite Instructional Television Experiment (SITE) conducted in 1967 by UNESCO expert mission in collaboration with the Indian government Accordingly, one full year of free satellite was loaned by NASA starting from August 1975. The purpose of the study was to study the use of satellite for national development. The four hour telecast were beamed everyday from earth stations at Delhi and Ahmadabad with programmes focused on education, health, agriculture and family planning. Around 2400 villages across six states namely Orissa, Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh and Karnataka received these programmes.

During same time a similar project was started with one hour programmes being aired by Doordarshan and the Space Application Centre in a small district of Gujarat called Kheda. Kheda Communication Project around 600 community TV sets were installed and owned by the community in 443 villages. The United Nations Development Program (UNDP) donated low cost transmitters and satellite earth stations to this project. The project believed that communication was a powerful tool towards accelerating development, changing mindsets, bringing social change and educating the masses.

The Community FM Radio concept is an ideal example of this development. It is interesting to note that even though the Indian community radio (CR) movement is not in an encouraging status yet, it started way back in 1951 during India's initial Plan years. The Song and Drama Division under The Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, sponsors development and private troupes and conducts nearly 20,000 performances each year. They promote and encourage development based programmes.

Private media also since the pre-Independence era has actively promoted development. Some newspapers and magazines are completely development based like Down to Earth magazine, Yojana, Kurushetra, while others like the Hindustan Times Chhatera project and The Hindu news paper have bring out development related news.

4.4 DEMOCRATIC PARTICIPATION THEORY

The "sixth theory of press" known as the Democratic Participant Theory was started by grass-root level media in 1960s. It emerged because of the dissatisfaction with four classical models such as Libertarian theory, social responsibility theory, etc. The democratic-participant theory believes media should be totally democratic and be easily accessible or participatory to the general public. Crass commercialism and private and public monopolization, centralization of press and top down approach in the media is harmful for a society. The press should stand for equality; it should take a pluralistic, decentralized and bottom-up or horizontal approach.

4.4.1 Concepts of Democratic-participant Theory

The major concept in Democratic Participant theory is participation and full circular communication. Media is said to be important in rural settings and in the cultures that are degrading with time. The theory is believed to conserve and revive local cultures by promoting the right to information (global and local), right to express (feedback), right to use new technologies (means of communication), freedom to local data, freedom to take part in social action, etc. In the process, it expects the government to provide funds, trainings and subsidies after identification if they have financial or technical difficulties.

Denis Mcquail (1987) cited the Developmental media Theory and Democratic participant theory as two new normative theories in his work. The Democratic participant theory advocates the support of media for cultural pluralism at the grassroot level. Media was used to empower and energize plural groups. As opposed to the social responsibility theory which believes that mass media can work upliftment of those in the fringes, the democratic-participant theory believes "small" media directly run by the groups have the answer to this problem. Government subsidies should be provided to these small groups if they are not able to gather the finances. Existing media small media should be encouraged and funded.

The democratic-participant theory is more relevant in liberal democratic developed countries than developing and least developed countries because the countries in

transition from underdevelopment and non-democracy are alleged to lack the infrastructures and professional skills needed for free media in democracy.

The theory considers local information, feedbacks and social action in community level to be the roles of media. It discourages uniform, monopolized and commercialized media culture. Rather, it wants local non-institutionalized media to provide the information relevant to small groups of population.

This theory makes interaction between the media and the audience possible as the population is less. It also encourages feedback which is only possible in small groups and communities. The model is completely non-political and does not bolster political control; its main objectives being encouraging national development, supporting local culture and maintaining a good relation with other countries.

It also promotes equality between various genders, classes, castes, races, etc. controlled by the group. This focus on equality is known **as association mode** which is the opposite of **command mode** (sender superior to receiver).

4.4.2 Major Features of Democratic-participant Theory

- Encourages horizontal and bottom up approach in media

- Supports democracy, existing political rule, national socio-economic development efforts and to implement policies

- Media has supportive rather than critical role

- Government controls some aspects if media does not act as it should by the process of registration, licensing, censorship, by preparing guidelines for media, monitoring, etc.

- Self regulation of media is also encouraged

- More applicable to new media

- Development of creativity and innovation in small media

- Replacement of media from big media houses to small media

- ■ Participation and interaction of media and audience (as both are from the same group of population)

- ■ Different communities, groups and organizations can think of possessing their own media

- ■ The theory is not very authoritative unless the press hinders the work of the government.

- ■ There are the concepts of equality, inclusion and equal access which makes it eliminate marginalization.

Most Scandinavian countries practice some form of democratic-participant theory. It is also present concepts in community newspapers, community radios and televisions. Even, underground and alternative press are examples of this theory. Many countries have started following the theory in mass media such as Yugoslavia, Kosovo, Ghana, Bangladesh, Nepal, India, US, UK, etc. Community radio is mostly popular in South East Asian countries.

Some of the weaknesses of Democratic-participant Theory of Mass Communication is that criticizing the government is not considered to be productive role of media. Also, local media might lack professionalism and skills. The small local media might not be able to compete with media giants.

4.5 COMMUNICATION / MEDIA CONVERGENCE THEORY

The theory of Media Convergence posits that new technologies bring together different mediums and consequently redefine the media environment. According to the theory, changes in communications and information technologies reshape and change everyday life, altering patterns of creation, consumption, learning, and interpersonal interaction. New technology redefines media content and alters human interaction with social institutions such as government, education, and commerce.

The old mass media technologies were stand-alone and isolated radio, television, cinema, the press, publishing, computers, etc. This stand-alone identity was reinforced by the

governments, institutions and universities. Telecommunications, computer science and communications were kept separate. The modem, a device which changes analogue to digital signals and vice- versa brought the change. The computers and telecommunication technologies could talk to each other. With the advent of internet and World Wide Web interaction and exchange of information was possible across different platforms, this is known as Convergence. Digitalisation, miniturasation, satellite communication, digital compression, optical fibre user friendliness, low costs all aided media convergence.

Media convergence is the merging of mass communication outlets – print, television, radio, the Internet along with portable and interactive technologies through various digital media platforms.

Media convergence allows mass media professionals to tell stories and present information and entertainment using a variety of media.

Converged communication provides multiple tools for storytelling, allowing consumers to select level of interactivity while self-directing content delivery.

4.5.1 Convergence of Culture

Henry Jenkins popularized the concept of convergence culture in his 2006 book of the same name. In "Convergence Culture," Jenkins analyzes many aspects of media convergence currently redefining the technological, economic, aesthetic, organic, and global media environment. According to Jenkins, convergence is both a "top-down" and "bottom-up" phenomenon. When a new technology is created, both the manufacturers and the users of the product influence the way it is used. Thus, no matter how much thought and planning a manufacturer puts into a product, consumers will ultimately decide its fate in the cultural marketplace.

Jenkins by convergence means the flow of content across multiple media platforms, the cooperation between multiple media industries, and the migratory behavior of media audiences who would go almost anywhere in search of the kinds of entertainment experiences they wanted.

Convergence is a word that manages to describe technological, industrial, cultural, and social changes, depending on who's speaking and what they think they are talking about. In the world of media convergence, every important story gets told, every brand gets sold, every consumer gets courted across multiple media platforms. Right now, convergence culture is getting defined top-down by decisions being made in corporate boardrooms and bottom-up by decisions made in teenagers' bedrooms.

It is shaped by the desires of media conglomerates to expand their empires across multiple platforms and by the desires of consumers to have the media they want where they want it, when they want it, and in the format they want.

This circulation of media content – across different media systems, competing media economies, and national borders – depends heavily on the active participation of the consumer.

Convergence should not be understood primarily as a technological process – the bringing together of multiple media functions within the same gadgets and devices. Instead, convergence represents a shift in cultural logic, whereby consumers are encouraged to seek out new information and make connections between dispersed media content.

The term, **participatory culture,** is intended to contrast with older notions of media spectatorship. In this emerging media system, what might traditionally be understood as media producers and consumers are transformed into participants who are expected to interact with each other according to a new set of rules which none of us fully understands. Convergence does not occur through media appliances – however sophisticated they may become. Convergence occurs within the brains of individual consumers. Yet, each of us constructs our own personal mythology from bits and fragments of information we have extracted from the ongoing flow of media around us and transformed into resources through which we make sense of our everyday lives.

In a culture which some have described according to information overload, it is impossible for any one of us to hold all of the relevant pieces of information in our heads at the same time. Because there is more information out there on any given topic than we can store in our heads, there is an added incentive for us to talk amongst ourselves

about the media we consume. This conversation creates buzz and accelerates the circulation of media content Consumption has become a collective process and can be called **Collective intelligence.**

None of us can know everything; each of us knows something; we can put the pieces together if we pool our resources and combine our skills…. Collective intelligence can be seen as an alternative source of media power. We are learning how to use that power through our day to day interactions within convergence culture. Right now, we are mostly using collective power through our recreational life, but it has implications at all levels of our culture. The play of collective meaning-making within popular culture is starting to change the ways religion, education, law, politics, advertising, and even the military operate.

The concept of Convergence culture which was first coined by Jenkins has gained wide currency. The media convergence directly follows from technological convergence. It comprises: the participation of audiences, the blurring of lines between professional and amateur, breakdown of line between producer and consumer.

4.5.2 Device Convergence

With the convergence of media, we expect the emergence of appliances that will be able to display some sort of standardized media format. These devices will most likely vary in size, intended placement (living room, kitchen, bedroom), and functionality, but will have the common capability of being able to interpret the given converged media format.

Since media will most likely converge to some sort of digital stream with packets of information embedded in it, these information appliances will be able to provide a richer environment for viewing and interaction.

This means that the television in the living room will no longer be just a television, but it will be an "information" appliance. In addition to being able to display video streams, it will also be able to present other types of information-web pages, on-line stock quotes, interactive city maps, virtual lectures, etc.-that are encapsulated in the media stream.

4.5.3 Implications of Communication Convergence:

For video playback, this means the possibility of introducing different encoding and compression schemes into the stream. So a large, entertainment device in the living room may receive a movie in wide-screen format with Dolby Surround Sound, while a smaller device in the kitchen used to get the morning news may only receive the bare essentials.

Consider the idea of private vs. public space. With converged media, one can imagine a scenario in which a user is creating or modifying content on a small "information" appliance like a PDA while sitting in a private meeting. Since the device is using converged media, the user will then be able to instantly upload this work into a public display, like a large video wall in a conference room, for presentation.

Convergence would push for media and devices that would be able to easily accommodate both formats, so that switching hardware during the middle of a presentation will no longer be necessary.

With media convergence, it is possible to get a mix of your favorite songs and be able to play it at home, in the car, and at work, since you are using a common media format that can be read by many devices.

Audio equipment manufacturers are creating devices that have the capability to play more and more audio formats (some stereos have built in tape decks, radio receivers, MiniDisc players, and CD players). This seems to be analogous to the idea of device convergence and an argument for it.

For content providers, the switch to convergent media may initially be expensive, as they will have to invest in new equipment. But in the long run, it will open up more possibilities. As of now, television advertisements are usually very elaborate, but the experience is passive. Viewers cannot simply click on them if they want more information or want to purchase the item being mentioned as they can on the Internet. With converged media, it would be possible to integrate both types of advertisement into one, allowing for both elaborate presentations and complex interactions.

For content providers, media convergence also implies that creative content will only have to be created once, not several times for the varying media formats. This too, will save content providers time and money in the long run.

The addition of informational bits to the media stream, in combination with these all-in-one devices, will allow content to be more customized to the viewer's needs and wants. The device may have some sort of filtering agent that only displays advertisements that are of interest to the viewers.

Check Your Progress:

4.1 What are the benefits of Development Communication Theory ?

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4.2 What is Media Convergence Theory?

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FURTHER READINGS

1. McQuail's Mass Communication Theory By Denis McQuail, SAGE Publications

2. Mass Communication Journalism by Bright Publications

3. Mass Communication: Theory and Practice in the 21st Century by Diwakar Sharma, Deep and Deep Publications

4. Dynamics Of Mass CommunicationTheory And Practice by Uma Narula Atlantic Publishers

5. https://www.utwente.nl/en/bms/communication-theories/sorted-by-cluster/Mass%20Media/

ANSWER TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

UNIT - I

1.1   The Hypodermic needle theory or magic bullet theory suggests that mass media could directly influence a large number of people by 'shooting' or 'injecting' them with the information. The theory graphically suggests that the message in media is the bullet fired from media gun straight into the viewer's head. Or the hidden messages in media are injected into the individual passive audiences.

1.2   The two-step theory claims that majority of people are indirectly influenced and informed by the media through opinions leaders in the society. 'Opinion leaders' are influential and well informed personalities who when exposed to a specific media content interpret it and form their own opinion. They pass on this opinion to people in their social circle who become the 'opinion followers'. These opinion leaders have access to elite media sources as opposed to general main stream media.

UNIT - II

2.1   The major limitation of Agenda Setting Theory is that it is well suited for election campaigns and news but not for other types of content. The theory based on causation can easily be turned around and it can be argued that it is the audience that picks the agenda and media simply responds to the public opinion.

2.2   Diffusion is defined as "process by which an innovation is communicated through certain channels over time among the members of a social system". And innovation is "an idea, practice, or object, that is perceived to be new by an individual or other unit of adaptation".

UNIT - III

3.1   The Authoritarian Theory placed all forms of communication under the strict control of a governing elite or authority. This authority was justified as a means to protect and preserve a divinely ordained social order. The media operated under a strict control of content by the state and there is a general lack of freedom for the public to criticize state policies

3.2   The Libertarian Theory originally came from liberal thought in Europe from the 16th Century. This seeds of the theory arose as resentment against the times when the feudal lords had complete control over the lives of the commoners grew. This age was rocked by major social upheaval. The Protestant Reformation had a great impact on the demand for personal freedom in thoughts and beliefs. Many early followers of this theory were Protestants fighting the Church restrictions on the freedom to communicate. They believed that if no restrictions were imposed on individuals communication then they could follow their conscience, communicate accordingly and ultimately find the truth.

UNIT - IV

4.1   The benefits of Development Communication Theory are as given under

- It has development roles and objectives.

- Its main aim is to help people.

- Development Communication avoids manipulation or propaganda

- It Generates genuine response and feedback from the audience

- Self-responsibility and self-determination

4.2   The theory of Media Convergence posits that new technologies bring together different mediums and consequently redefine the media environment. According to the theory, changes in communications and information technologies reshape and change everyday life, altering patterns of creation, consumption, learning, and interpersonal interaction.

MODEL QUESTIONS

1.   Give a brief history of evolution of Mass Communication theory.

2.   Why is Mass Communication Theory important? Discuss.

3.   How relevant is Hypodermic Needle Theory or Magic Bullet theory relevant today?

4.   Difference between Hypodermic Needle Theory and Personal influence Theory.

5.   Write an essay on Two step flow Theory and Multistep theory.

6.   Write a note on Individual Difference Theory.

7.   What do you understand by Gatekeeping Theory? How relevant is gatekeeping today?

8.   What are the criteria for news selection by a journalist?

9.   Write an essay on Agenda setting theory.

10. Briefly explain the concept of Framing Theory. What are its limitations?

11. What do you understand by Normative Theories of Media? What is the various kinds of normative theories?

12. The Authoritarian Theory of media best describes the media under a dictatorship regime. Comment.

13. How has Karl Marx affected the Soviet Communist Theory?

14. Social Responsibility theory is a radical media theory. Discuss

15. Elaborate on the features of Libertarian Theory.

16. What do you understand by Development Communication? Can development take place through communication?

17. Write a note on development Communication in India.

18. What are the major features of Democratic-participant Theory?

19. Media Convergence Theory. What is the impact of communication convergence on media today?

■   ■   ■

Comments
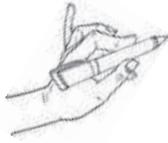
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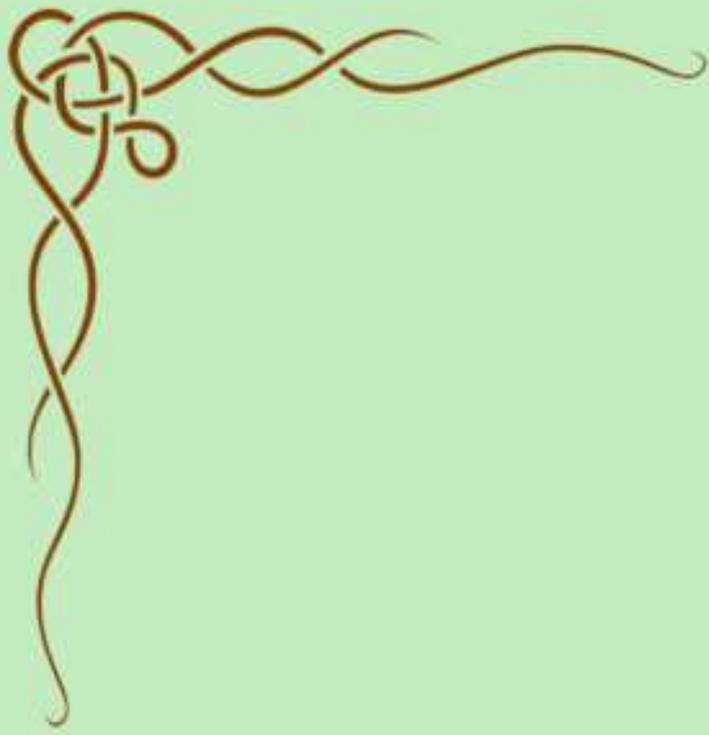
Odisha State Open University, Sambalpur
www.osou.ac.in
e-mail: info@osou.ac.in