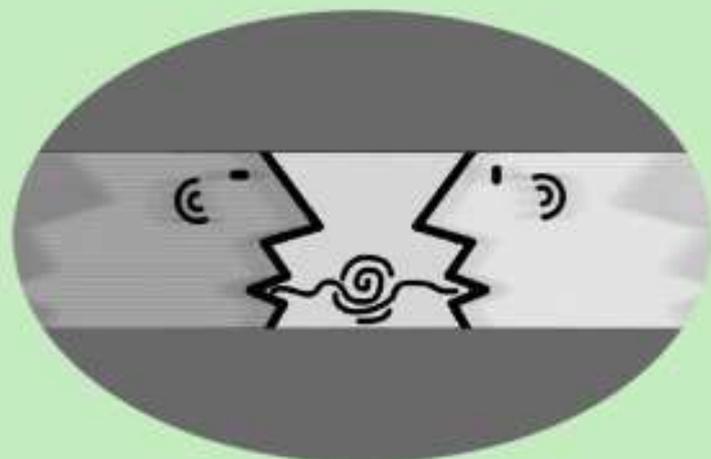ଓଡ଼ିଶା ରାଜ୍ୟ ମୁକ୍ତ ବିଶ୍ୱବିଦ୍ୟାଳୟ
ସମ୍ବଲପୁର
Odisha State Open University
Sambalpur

Journalism & Mass Communication (JMC)

Communication Effects Theory

Journalism & Mass Communication

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JOURNALISM & MASS COMMUNICATION

JMC-07

COMMUNICATION EFFECTS THEORY

Block

4

Communication Effects Theory

Unit-1

Magic Bullet Theory, Uses and Gratification theory

Unit-2

Spiral of Silence, Cognitive Dissonance Theory,

Unit 3

Agenda Setting Theory, Communist theory and related theories.

Unit 4

Cultivation Analysis

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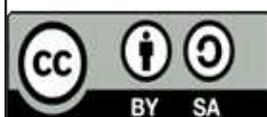Odisha State Open University, Sambalpur

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4 Content

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UNIT – I

1.0   UNIT STRUCTURE

1.1   Learning Objectives

1.2   Introduction

1.3   Magic bullet theory

1.4   Uses and gratification theory

1.5   Check your Progress

1.1   LEARNING OBJECTIVES

The objective of this unit is to understand how the message hits directly on the mind of the audience without their prior knowledge and how it affects their behavioural pattern. We will discuss about effect of mass media on individual and the society.

After reading this unit you will be able to understand:

- ■   The Magic Bullet theory
- ■   The Uses and Gratification theory

1.2   INTRODUCTION

If there is news in TV Channel that war has been declared, the public gets panicked or if there is news regarding upcoming flood people move to safer places. The messages sent by the media certainly have an influence in the society and audiences.

With growing popularity of mass media and use of propaganda, early media studies focused effects of the mass media on society and individuals. The researchers use behavioural sciences to figure out the effect of mass media and communications on society. These studies are based on the postulation that mass media have effects on the public and individuals.

In this unit we will study one of the early communication theories such as the magic bullet theory that explains the effects of media on society and the audience. These

theories assumed the audience to be passive receivers of messages and ignored their abilities to learn and choose, and did not consider the role of external factors in the process of mass communication. We will also discuss about uses and gratification theory that explores the motives for media consumption and the consequences associated with use of that media. The audience is not passive but use media as per their social and psychological needs.

# 1.3 MAGIC BULLET THEORY, USES AND GRATIFICATION THEORY

Before the First World War there was no separate field of study on communication, but research of mass communication was accumulating. It was the outcome of World War I propaganda efforts, the magic bullet or hypodermic needle theory evolved. Clearly defining the magic bullet theory is like a gun firing a bullet (message) through gun (medium) into the audience (receiver). The hypodermic needle, an injection (medium) injected (message) into the audience (receiver). An appropriate message designed to trigger a desired response. Both the metaphors imply that the media causes individual

Hypodermic needle theory

to form ideas and act upon the message received. A bullet and a needle suggest a powerful and direct flow of information from the sender to the receiver.

ARCHITECT OF THE THEORY

The study of media effects began intensely in the year 1920s and 1930s. The hypodermic needle theory, also known as magic bullet theory was considered as one of the first general theories which explained the effects of media on mass audience. The theory was introduced by Harold Lasswell in 1920. It was published on the book "Propaganda technique" during the world war. The hypodermic theory is termed differently by different scholars for e.g. the "bullet theory", (Schramm. 1971), the hypodermic-needle" theory (Berlo, 1960) or the "Stimulus-response" theory (DeFleur and Ball - Rokeach, 1989). Harold has tried to expose the media effects and the thinking of individuals living in that era. Using the metaphor as a reference Harold explained the tenets of the
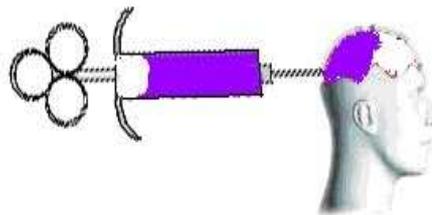
theory by comparing the medium with bullet. Mass media messages act as a bullet or as a needle, shooting directly in the minds of the individuals and consequently change in the behaviour of the public.

According to McQuail (2010) argues that the study of mass communication is based on the hypothesis that the media has effects on the mass audience. Similarly different

Harold Lasswell

communication scholars have categorised the effects differently depending on the nature and purpose of the media messages. There are many ways to influence people, for example, in hot summer season media genre advises to dress light colour clothes and we dress accordingly. Sometimes media also promote violence in the society. The news cast prompts for violence and the minds are full of temperament by the media portrayals. Another well-known communication researcher Ball-Rokeach (1984) has moved to the diagram of communication starting with the phase of signs and signals to the age of speech and language to the period of print media.

The factors which contribute to this "strong effects" theory of communication:

♦ The fast rise and popularisation of radio and television.

♦ The emergence of the persuasion industries, such as advertising and propaganda.

♦ The Payne Fund studies of the 1930s, which focused on the impact of motion picture on children.

♦ Hitler's monopolisation of the mass media during World War II to unify the German public for the Nazi party.

♦ The rise of radio and television- gave people a perception that whatever is in media is true to the knowledge and blindly people agreed to receive. The radio and television showing the all the current events, entertainment, war, dramas and comedy. It was a complete injection of infotainment which audience enjoyed positively and accepted it without any hesitation.

♦ The advertising propaganda- was a successful form of information relating to a product. The advertisers need target mass audience for their product for a

wider reach instantly and media served the advertisers. On the other hand the telecasters get profit from the advertisers on free air service.

♦ The Payne Fund studies of 1930s developed by the Motion Picture Research Council to study the impact of motion pictures on children to see if the magic bullet effect was controllable. This particular study was set up to discover the effect in five areas: Information, attitudes, emotions, health and conduct.

♦ Hitler monopolised the mass media in the belief that he could use it to unify the German public behind the Nazis in the 1940s. Nazis produced number of films about their achievement which made great impact in Germans mind. Similarly U.S.A. also reciprocated with the propaganda to portray Germans as evil force for Americans.

Here in (Fig 1) all the cases the media audience accepts the messages directly without any rejection.
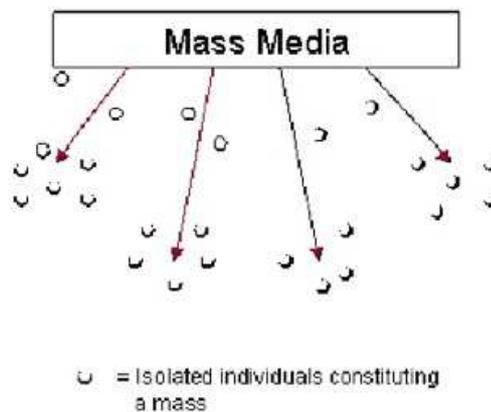
Fig. 1. Media messages acting as bullets on isolated individuals' constituting a mass.

As mentioned by Katz and Lazarsfled (1955) in the figure.1 above that the individuals are isolated people living in the society but they embody masses and the effects of media messages on them are uniform, direct and immediate. Harold has used the words 'bullet' and 'needle' to explain the tenets of the theory. He claimed that the messages from the media, which was the only source of infotainment, was injected directly but uniformly in the minds of the heterogeneous audience just like an injection injected or bullets fired in the body in order to have an immediate results. Magic bullet theory assumes that he audience is singular and passive.

EXAMPLE

The theory was tested on 30th October 1938 when a radio broadcast "War of the Worlds" fake news created by newly formed mercury theatre and Orson Wells. It created a panic that the aliens' invasion in American city called Grover's Mill, New Jersey. It became a 'Panic Broadcast' and changed broadcast history, social psychology, civil defense and set a standard for provocative entertainment. Approximately 12 million American people and one million seriously believed to desert the locality as alien invasion is underway. Due to this broadcast the whole country was in chaos.

Media theorist has classified the "war of the worlds" broadcast as the archetypical example of the magic bullet theory. This is how the theory worked, by injecting the message directly into the bloodstream of the public and attempt to think uniformly. The example showed that he effects of the broadcast could manipulate a passive and ignorant public.

CRITICISMS

♦ The message flow is always from sender to receiver or top to bottom.

♦ The audience is passive and susceptible and is easily influenced by the message which might not be true every time. But the reactions of people differ. Some people can be passive whereas some people might not believe in media.

♦ The theory has been proved to fail by many studies like "The People's Choice" research for voting pattern and political behavior during the time of Franklin D. Roosevelt. The study showed that the pattern was affected by media in minimum amount but was more affected by interpersonal communication. Studies show that media has selective influence on mass.

♦ The theory is not taken as empirical (verifiable by observation or experience rather than theory or pure logic).

♦ There are many media options with the growth of media outlets today. The theory is not applicable in today's world

1.4 USES AND GRATIFICATION THEORY

Most of the communication theories discussed on the effects of media on the people. But it is theory which explains of how people use media for their needs and gratifications. In other words it is focused on the audience and taking them into more consideration rather than the actual message itself by asking, 'what people do with the media' rather than 'what media does to the people'. This theory is contradictory to the magic bullet theory which states that audience in passive where as Uses and Gratification Theory (UGT) states that audience are active and its media use is goal oriented. UGT is an audience centered approach to understand mass communication.

In 1944 Herta Herzog began to look at the earliest form of uses and gratification with her work classifying the reasons why people choose specific types of media. For her study, Herzog interviewed soap opera fans and was able to identify three types of gratification. The three gratifications categories, based on why people listened to soap operas were emotional, wishful thinking, and learning. In 1969 Jay Blumer and Dennis McQuail studied the 1964 election in the United Kingdom by examining people's motive for watching certain political programmes on television. By categorising the audience's motive for viewing certain programme, they aimed to classify viewers according to their needs in order to understand any political mass-media effects. The audience motivations they are able to identify helped lay the groundwork for their research in 1972 and eventually uses gratification theory.

ARCHITECT OF THE THEORY

The theory was propounded by sociologist Elihu Katz and communication professor Jay Blumler in 1970, which concerned with the people use media for gratification of their needs. According to the theory, media users choose their choice of media contents and consume to gratify various psychological needs. In other words we can say that this theory states what people do with media rather than what media does to people. This theory is contradictory to the magic bullet theory which states that audience is passive whereas UGT states audience is active. Its purpose is to explain how and why people use media.

Jay Blumer   Elihu Katz

The theory explains the user/audience-centered approach. In general when we discuss in group we refer media for the topic hence we gratify so much from the media. While discussions our reference from media does not only help us to gain knowledge but in many other ways also. There are several needs and gratification for the media consumers and they are categorized into five categories:

1. Cognitive needs

People use media for acquiring knowledge, information and understanding. Among the audience some have the intellectual needs to acquire knowledge this is not common to all only certain people have their need, each person have their own needs which vary accordingly. E.g. current event or quiz programme on TV, in order to acquire knowledge and information you will watch the contents to upgrade your knowledge level. It satisfies your needs of knowledge and information. You might search on internet, findings from the print media and so on to make use of these to gain more knowledge. Particularly for the internet users they can search any information related contents on any topic under the run with no time restriction.

2. Affective needs

Here people look for all kinds of pleasurable and emotional experience. People use media to satisfy their emotional needs. E.g. in soap and drama has more kind of emotional experience through good and bad scenes on it which people relate and satisfy their needs. Whereas media gives pleasurable experience through movies, fantasy and entertainment contents.

3. Personal Integrative needs

It strengthens the self-image and self-esteem. People use media to reassure their status, gain credibility, and stabilise in the society. e.g. media contents like advertisements of furniture gives them the realisation to improve the furniture at home, fashion ads which makes them reassure that their status should go with the current life style, similarly jewelry ads makes women to feel special among men and thus media helps us to do so.

4. Social Integrative needs

It strengthens the needs of the family, friends and relations in the society. People in these days do not get time for social gatherings or get together with their family and friends. Instead different media contents help them to meet online. e.g. through various

media shows they make communicate with the far people instantly. Phone in friend shows, chat shows, etc. Another example is you may not watch the particular serial but your friend is watching, hence you also watch to have common topics to discuss. In modern times people are using the media for social integration by using social networking sites such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, whatsapp etc.

5. **Tension Release needs**

Sometimes people use media to escape from the tensions around and diverse mind from complicated issues. E.g. people tend to relax through watching TV, listening to Radio satisfying their needs by entertaining and relaxing from all the tensions. People watch movies to divert their mind and to gain pleasure. Watching TV is more preferred because it is bouquet of infotainment. It helps in gaining knowledge, generating ideas, participation, sensationalise, controversy, and make realistic through recent reality shows.

Table 23.2 Needs Gratified by the Media

NEED TYPE	DESCRIPTION	MEDIA EXAMPLES
Cognitive	Acquiring information, knowledge, comprehension	Television (news), video ("How to Install Ceramic Tile"), movies (documentaries or films based on history, e.g., *The Other Boleyn Girl*)
Affective	Emotional, pleasant, or aesthetic experience	Movies, television (sitcoms, soap operas)
Personal integrative	Enhancing credibility, confidence, and status	Video ("Speaking With Conviction")
Social integrative	Enhancing connections with family, friends, and so forth	Internet (e-mail, chat rooms, Listservs, IM)
Tension release	Escape and diversion	Television, movies, video, radio, Internet

Source: Adapted from Katz, Gurevitch, & Haas, 1973.

MASLOW'S HIERARCHY OF NEEDS

In an outcome of Abraham Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs published in 1954, this was an extension of the needs and motivation theory. The basis for this argument was that people actively looked to satisfy their needs based on hierarchy. From the bottom-up the pyramid contains biological/physical, security/safety, social/belonging, ego/self-respect and self - actualisation at the top. The fulfillment of each lower level need leads to the individual looking to satisfy the newer level of need and so on till he reaches the superior-most need of self-actualisation.
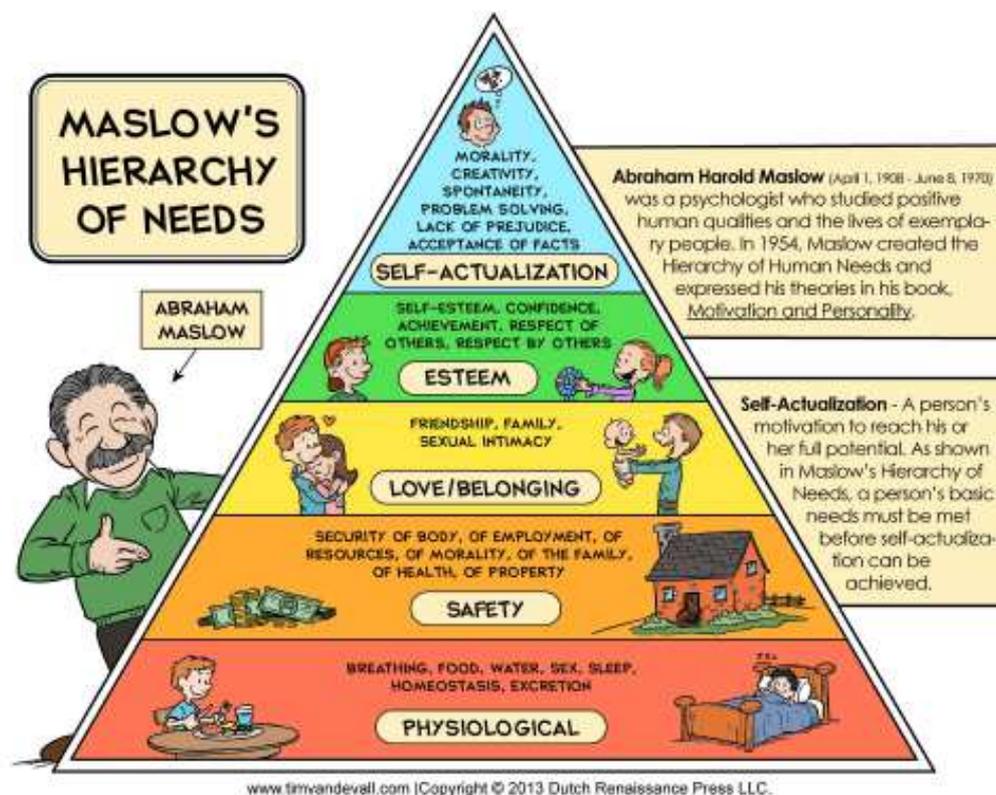
Each of us is motivated by some needs. Our basic needs are inborn and Abraham Maslow's Hierarchy of needs explains how needs are motivated. It explains that all are interconnected; the most important is the obvious needs for survival itself. When the lower order is fulfilled the next needs are fulfilled to satisfy the lower needs.

The UGT approach is used for many other purposes, as media users have choices with the increasing media contents. Lull's television research found media is used for many reasons, e.g. Families use television for relationship building, intimacy, and for structuring the day. In general researchers have found four kinds of gratifications:

i   **Information** - we want to know about the society and the world around, which satisfy the curiosity inside us. The contents like news, current events and documentaries give us the knowledge of the world.

i   **Personal Identity** - we watch television contents very seriously sometimes because some models or characters inspire us and we tend to follow the behaviour. For example, we may identify the characters that we see in soap. The characters help us to decide what we feel about ourselves. Wen the character of the action is successful we feel better about ourselves.

iii **Integration and social interaction** - we use the media in order to know more about the circumstances of other people in our surroundings. Watching a

show help us to sympathise and empathise with the lives of other people. It helps us to understand the situation people going through. Sometimes our condition relates with the character and tends to think about the character as our friends and relatives.

iv **Entertainment** - sometimes we simply use media for enjoyment, relaxation, or pass the time.

In 1972 Denis McQuail, Jay Blumer and Joseph Brown suggested that there are four basic and personal categories of needs:

1. Diversion: The need to escape from everyday life and to relax.

2. Personal relationships: using the media for interaction, fulfill their need for companionship and to form relationship with others in the society.

3. Personal Identity: We sometimes tend to use media to find out about ourselves, learn behaviour, values texts and Identity with the characters around.

4. Surveillance: Using media to find out what is happening around us. e.g. current events, news, weather reports etc. tells us what has been going on in our daily life.

EXAMPLE

Teenagers and young adults, tend to be interested in celebrities and music. To know about this buy a latest magazine. i.e. Fashion Magazine.

Diversion: Fashion magazine is a great way to escape from everything that is going around us. As you sit back and relax and read about all the current trends from hot celebrity gossips to events in the society.

Personal Relationships: By reading Fashion you can find out about the facts of relationship and where I stand, which can keep you up to date about your friends and their relationship level.

Personal Identity: In such a magazine they advertise opportunities for readers to get involved and be part of this. We try to follow the celebrity lifestyle to create an identity.

Surveillance: It allows individuals to keep update of our favourite celebrity and latest happenings in his/her life.

CORE ASSUMPTIONS

Media Affects

The uses and gratifications theories point to a second set of premises that make clear their belief that people's use of media and the gratifications they seek from it are inextricably intertwined with the world in which they live. Katz and his colleagues (1974) originally wrote that "social situations" in which people find themselves can be "involved in the generation media related needs" in five ways.

(i)   Social situations can produce tensions and conflicts, leading to pressure for their easefulness through media consumption.

(ii)   Social situations can create an awareness of problems that demand attention, information about which may be sought in the media.

(iii)   Social situations can ruin real life to satisfy certain needs, and the media will act as substitutes or supplements. In other words sometimes you will depend on media to be the best for judgment.

(iv)   Social situations often bring out values, their affirmation and reinforcement which are facilitated by the consumption of related media materials.

(v)   Social situations demand familiarity with media; these demand must be met to sustain membership in specific social groups.

CRITICISMS OF USES AND GRATIFICATION THEORY

♦   The theory does not show media as important.

♦   The theory does not believe in the power of media and how media can influence human needs and gratification unconsciously.

♦   The model is audience centered and shows audience as an active participant.

♦   Critics think that the theory does not meet the standards to be called a theory and can only be taken as an approach to analyze as research relies on recollection of memory.

♦   The theory ignores the use of media in social structures.

♦   Audience might not always be active.

Check Your Progress:

1.1 What are the factors "strong effects" that contribute in the Magic bullet theory?

_____

_____

_____

1.2 What are the personal needs of the media on contemporary generation?

_____

_____

_____

1.2 What is Maslow's Hierarchy of needs?

_____

_____

_____

■ ■ ■

UNIT – II

2.0   UNIT STRUCTURE

2.1   Learning Objectives

2.2   Introduction

2.3   Spiral of silence theory

2.4   Cognitive dissonance theory

2.5   Check your Progress

2.1   LEARNING OBJECTIVE

The objective of this unit is to understand how the pressure group dominates over the minority voice to maintain the status quo. On the other hand the pressure group sometimes faces contradictory decisions. An experience which holds for the two or more contradictory beliefs, ideas, or values at the same time and how to avoid such attitudes and beliefs.

After reading this unit you will be able to understand

- ■   The spiral of silence theory

- ■   The cognitive dissonance theory

2.2   INTRODUCTION

People have different voice. Some people may have opinion which is not the same as the opinion of majority of people. In such cases, people having opinion different from that of the majority people prefer to remain silent. Such bevaviour is explained by the Spiral of Silence theory of mass communication, originally proposed by German political scientist Elisabeth Noelle-Neumann in 1974. However, the congnitive dissonance theory is more relevant when there exists two or more incompatabile beliefs simulateosuly. This theory, adopted from social psychology, seeks to explain how people reduce psychological discomfort and achieve emotional equilibrium in the face of inconsistent

beliefs or behaviors. Lets discuss these two theories, which are related to opinion, in detail.

2.3 SPIRAL OF SILENCE THEORY

In 1980, The U.S. presidential election seemed too close to call. Polls reported that President Jimmy Carter and opposition Ronald Reagan were in a virtual dead heat during the last two months of campaign. But according to Elisabeth Noelle-Neumann, professor of communication research at the University of Mainz in Germany, most pollsters asked the wrong question. Instead of asking, Who do you plan to vote for? they should have asked, Who do you think will win the election?

Elisabeth Noelle-Neumann

They would have discovered that even while voter preference was holding equal, the expectation that Reagan would win was growing from week to week. In Carter's case, the night before the vote, Democratic pollster Pat Waddell went to president and sadly announced that the contest was over. Millions of votes were taking part in a last minute swing for Reagan. After the poll result the Democratic Party had a landslide for Jimmy Carter.

ARCHITECT OF THE THEORY

Elisabeth Noelle - Neumann (19 December 1916-25 March 2010). She was a German political scientist propounded the theory of "Spiral of silence" in 1974. In 1940 she worked as a journalist for a Nazi newspaper Das Reich, where she wrote many articles for the newspapers, but she was banned after three years in 1943 when she put unfavourable photos of Franklin D. Roosevelt for better looking ones. In 1947 Neumann and her husband found "Public Opinion Organisation" in Germany where she was a president of "World Association for Public Opinion Organisation" in 1978 to 1980. During the Nazi regime she studied on Jews society where she found that they were suppressed of all the rights. Adolf Hitler treated Jews community as an absolute minority which made them absolute silent due to the fear of isolation or separation.
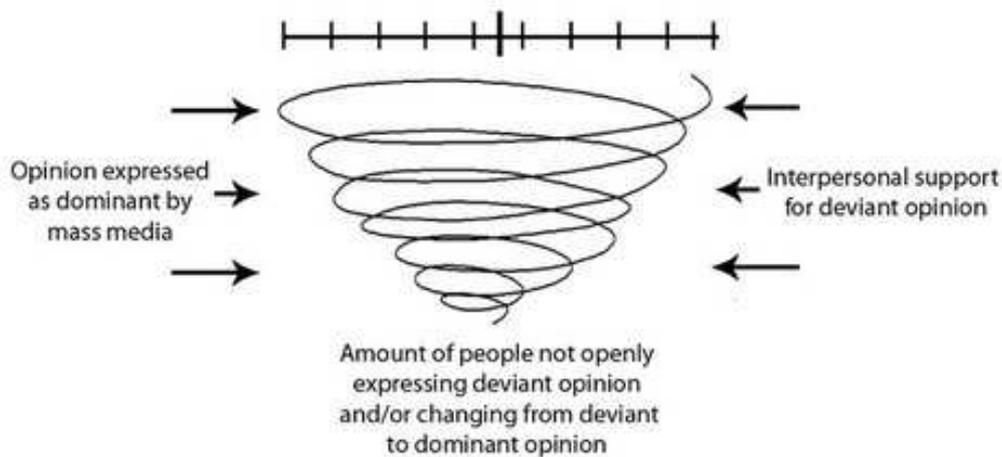
Figure 1. Spiral of Silence

Neumann's "Spiral of Silence" was an attempt to understand the public opinion and how it is formed. She wondered why the Germans supported wrong political party that lead to nation's downfall, defeat, humiliation, and ruin in the 1930s-1940s. The term spiral of silence refers to how people tend to remain silent when they feel that their views are in the minority. The fear of separation or isolation from the people those around them, they tend to conceal their viewpoint to themselves when they think they are in the minority group. This process is called "Spiral of Silence". Nobel peace prize winner, Mother Teresa affirmed Noelle-Neumann's analysis: "The worst sickness is not leprosy or tuberculosis, but the feeling of being respected by no one, of being unloved, deserted by everyone."

The model (Fig 1.) is an explanation of how perceived public opinion can influence individual opinions and actions and why people often feel the need to mask their views/opinions/preferences. It's based on the three premises:

1.   People have a "quasi-statistical organ" (a sixth sense), sensing the climate of opinion. Science has fixed five bodily receptors through which people can sense their environment: eye (sight), ear (sound), tongue (taste), nose (smell), skin (touch). It is the quasi-statistical organ-a sixth sense that tallies information about the society in general thinking and feeling. It is like people equipped with antennae.

2.   The fear of isolation and know what behaviour will increase their likelihood of being socially segregated. A social being, most people are afraid of becoming isolated from their environment. They would like to be popular and respected. In order to

avoid being isolated and in order to lose popularity and esteem, people constantly observe their environment very closely. They try to find out which opinions and modes of behaviour are prevalent, and which opinions and modes of behaviour are becoming more popular. They behave and express themselves according to the environment and public.

the **spiral of silence** effect.

3.   People are restrained to express their minority views, mainly because of the fear of rejection. The fear of being negatively evaluated by others, people are afraid of being rejected, or isolated, from the society or environment. Hence due to this fear, the minority views or opinion is kept quit or suppressed from becoming widely spread in the public. For not being supported of the minority views or opinion the willingness of others to express that particular opinion and eventually silencing the opinion together.

EXAMPLE

In an organisation when a new rule is introduced, most of the employees had to agree even though they have an objection over the rules. Majority of them accepts to follow the imposed rule though few employees are not satisfied. But they cannot oppose or express their objection publicly. The reason;

   i.   They might not get full support.

   ii.   Fear of isolation like fired from the job.

   iii. Fear of rejection may make them alienated from the group.

   iv.   They may try to save their job by suppressing or avoid personal statement in public.

CORE ASSUMPTIONS

The powerful role of mass media

In today's world mass media and other media technologies have affected the minority opinion in a new way. Fifty years ago, the media consisted of broadcast and print media only, but today the media society is webbed of World Wide Web. According to Neumann believed the media accelerates the muting of the minority in the spiral of silence. Although every human is equipped with quasi - statistical organ with which they could analyse the climate of opinion, that early warning system requires some data to process. Direct observation gives us only a few portion of information which we use; the print and electronic media provides most of the information worldwide. Hence we believe media is with the majority opinion and we follow the majority inspite of the personal objection. In 1991 Gulf War the U.S. was supported in a large mass for the war. It was a conscious view or media coverage contributed to the spiral of silence that dampened opposition to the war? In a survey it was found that people who were asked directly were less supportive of the war than media depicted of popular support for war. As a result those who watched television and perceived that the public supported the war, the people against the war were automatically followed the perceived view to support the war. This study supports the spiral of silence and suggests that the people are more affected to the media perspective and follow according to it for the fear of isolation.

SPIRAL OF SILENCE AND NEW MEDIA

Internet is a new media which connects to the whole world at a time from a single venue without mobility of an individual. The new media such as social media sites are the arena where an individual can express their opinions freely. Whether it is a gay right

issues or personal issues they share their personal views inspite of any perceptions of the majority. Still some people are not comfortable or do not like to share their opinions because it may get rejected by the popular opinion and fear of isolation from the group makes them to be a null opinion. According to a Forbes article, Micheal Hickins wrote that people live in echo chambers online. The opinions we see on the timeline reflect our own beliefs. Echo chambers are enhanced by the algorithms used on social media that show people what they want to see. The spiral of silence and echo chambers collide to each other because they do not allow for "diversity of opinion", especially on social media. The loudest voices may not reflect the actual majority opinion that opposed the popular views. In 2016 U.S. election is an example of how the popular opinion does not reflect the majority opinion. Social media should be place where people can share their opinions freely but fear of rejection ceases them from doing so. Most of the times spiral of silence paralysis the wealth of varied perspective of an individual's freedom of speech.
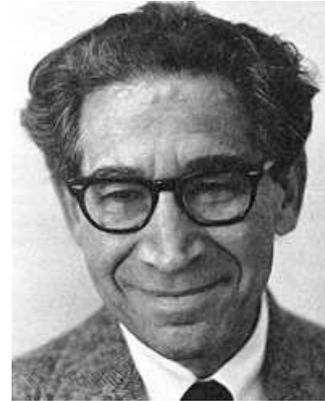
CRITICISMS OF SPIRAL OF SILENCE THEORY

♦ Individual personality differences influences in people voicing their opinions or not. Shameless or over-confident people can speak anything they like even if they fall on the minority group.

♦ Other aspects like a person's political inactiveness prevents spiral of silence to work, even if he is in minority.

♦ People's fear to be isolated from their immediate small social circle, like their family and friends, is more pronounced.

♦ People will find other group of people who share similar opinions if they want.

♦ Culture also plays a great role in the behavior of people to speak against anything. Individualistic cultures promote freedom of speech, whereas collectivist cultures want conformation to groups.

2.4 COGNITIVE DISSONANCE THEORY

When the college goers are forced to do which they do not want to do such as gambling or hurting someone, dissonance is created between their cognition and behaviour. The individual is going through forced compliance because he or she is performing actions that are inconsistent with his or her beliefs. After the incident or action happened, the action cannot be changed as a result the behaviour cannot be restored since it was in the past. But the dissonance will need to be reduced by re-evaluating their attitude to what they have done. They might rationalise by telling themselves it will be worth it in the end, that it will make them lot of friends, or that it

Leon Festinger

will help them make great networking connections for the future. Similarly, cognitive dissonance has been used to control large populations. During world war II, campaigned were made to tell American people to donate their pots and pans, which were said to have been used for ammunition, tanks and planes. People's dissonance of giving up their belongings was rationalised with the feeling of nationalism for the war effort.

ARCHITECT OF THE THEORY

Almost half of the century ago social psychologist Leon Festinger developed the cognitive dissonance theory in 1957. This was the most popular and accepted contribution to the field of psychology. Cognitive dissonance is popular in the among psychologist as well as communication scholars. In the 1950s to explain how members of a cult who were persuaded by their leader, that the world is going to destroy by 21st century and that they alone were going to be rescued by aliens, actually increased their commitment to the cult when it did not happen. The dissonance of the thought of being so stupid was so great that instead they revised their beliefs to meet the obvious fact; that the aliens had, through their concern for the cult, saved the world instead. Hence the theory suggests that all humans have an inner drive to hold all our attitudes and beliefs in harmony and feel positive with in our own selves, so we can avoid disharmony. More specifically, cognitive dissonance refers to a situation involving conflicting beliefs

or attitudes in which produces an internal discomfort. Naturally, we try to fix this discomfort by altering our attitudes, behaviours and beliefs.

The theory was obviously stood the test of time in that it is mentioned in most general and social psychology textbooks today. According to the theory, there is a tendency for individuals to seek consistency among their cognitions (i.e beliefs and opinions). When there is an inconsistency between attitudes or behaviours (dissonance), something must change to eliminate the dissonance. In the case of a discrepancy between attitudes and behaviour, it is most likely that the attitude will change to accommodate the behaviour. In simple words it is the feelings of dissonance occur when a person's beliefs differ from their actions. Dissonance can make a person uncomfortable, and the cognitive dissonance theory of communication states that discomfort motivates individuals to change either their belief or actions to make the two match.
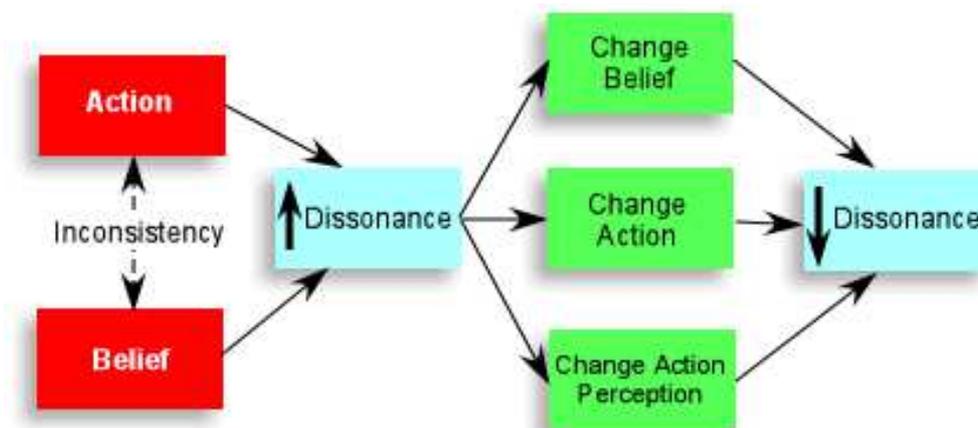

Figure 1. Conceptual design of Cognitive dissonance theory

Cognitive Dissonance theory is based on three fundamental assumptions

1. Humans are sensitive to inconsistencies between action and beliefs. According to the theory, we recognise, at some level, when we are acting in a way that is consistent with our beliefs/attitudes/opinions. In effect, there is a built in alarm that goes off when we notice such an inconsistency, whether we like it or not. For example, if you have belief that it is wrong to cheat, yet you find yourself cheating on a test, you will notice and be affected by this inconsistency.

2. Recognition of this inconsistency will cause dissonance, and will motivate an individual to resolve the dissonance. Once you recognise that you have violated on of your principles, according to this theory, you won't just say "oh well". You will feel some

sort of mental anguish about this. The degree of dissonance, of course, will vary with the importance of your belief/attitude/principle and with the degree of inconsistency between your behaviour and this belief. In any case, according to the theory, the greater the dissonance the more you will motivate to resolve it.

3. Dissonance will be resolved in one of three basic ways:

(a) Change beliefs: Perhaps the simplest way to resolve dissonance between actions and beliefs is simply to change your beliefs. You could, of course, just decide that cheating is o.k. This would take care of any dissonance. However, if the belief is fundamental and important to you such a course of action is unlikely. Moreover, our basic beliefs/attitudes/opinions all the time, since we rely a lot on our world view in predicting events and organising our thoughts. Therefore, though this is the simplest option for resolving dissonance it's probably not the most common.

(b) Change actions :A second option would be to make sure that you never do this action again. God knows that guilt and anxiety can be motivators for changing behaviour. So, you may say to yourself that you will never cheat on again, and this may aid in resolving the dissonance. However, aversive condition (i.e.. guilty/anxiety) can often be a pretty poor way of learning, especially if you can train yourself not to feel these things. Plus, you may really benefit in some way from actions that's inconsistent with your beliefs. So,the trick would be to get rid of this feeling without changing your beliefs or your actions, and this leads us to the third, and probably most common, method of resolution.

(c) Change perception of action: A third and more complex method of resolution is to change the way you view/remeber/percieve your action. In more colloquial terms, you would "rationlalise" your actions. For example, you might decide that the test you cheated on was for dumb class that you didn't need anyway. Or you may say to yourself that everyone cheats so why not you? In other words, you think about your action in a different manner or context so that it no longer appears to be inconsistent with your actions. If you reflect on this series of mental gymnastics for a moment you will probably recognise why cognitive dissonance has come to be so popular. If you're like me, you notice such post-hoc reconceptualisation (rationalisations) of behaviour on the part of others all the time, though it's not so common to see it in one's self.

THE EXPERIMENT

There have been 100s, if not 1000s, of experiment that have examined cognitive dissonance theory since the theory's inception, but the seminal experiment was published in 1959 (Festinger & Carlsmith, 1959). This experiment is very interesting viewed within a psychological /historical context because it involved a direct test of a "mentalist" theory versus a behaviourist theory. Cognitive dissonance is based on abstract/internal/mental concepts, which were, of course, anathema to the behaviourists. Festinger and Carlsmith set up an indigenous experiment which would allow for a direct test of cognitive dissonance theory versus a behavioural/reinforcement theory.
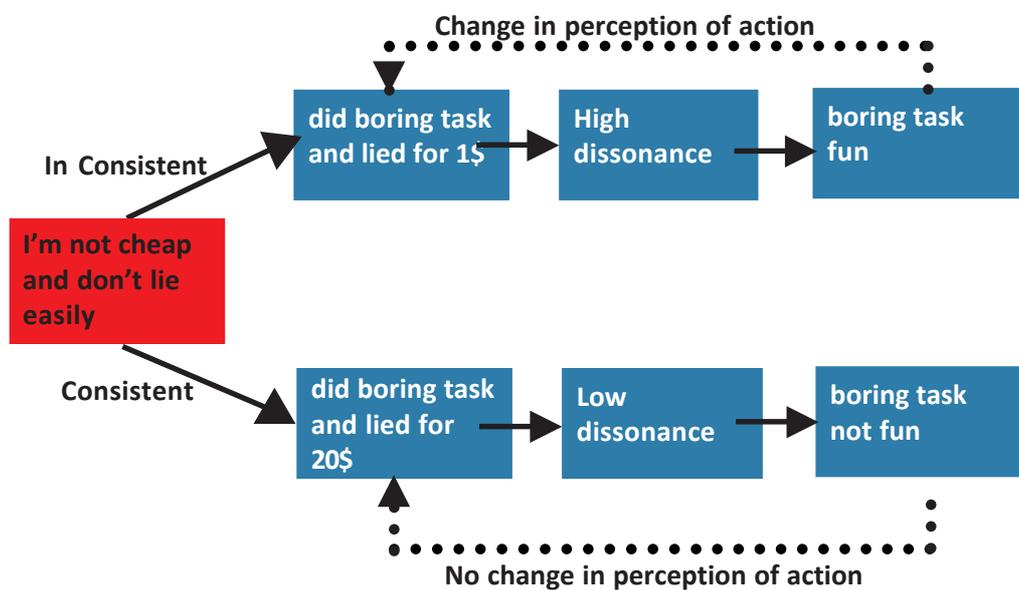

Figure 2. Cognitive dissonance theory and the Festinger & Carlsmith (1959) experiment.

In this experiment all the participants were required to do what all would agree was a boring task and then to tell another subject (who was actually a confederate of the experimenter) that the test was exciting. Half of the subjects were paid $1 to do this and half were paid $20 (quite a bit of money in 1950s). Following this, all subjects were asked to rate how much they liked the boring task. This latter measure served as the experimental criterion/the dependent measure. According to the behaviourist/reinforcement theory, those who were paid $20 should like the task more because they would associate the payment with the task. Cognitive dissonance theory, on the other hand, would predict that those paid $1 would feel the most dissonance since

they had to carry out a boring task and lie to an experimenter, all for only $1. This would create dissonance between the belief that they were not stupid or evil, and the action which is that they carried out a boring tasked and lied for only a dollar (figure 2). Therefore, dissonance theory would predict those in the $1 group would be more motivated to resolve their dissonance by reconceptualising/rationalising their actions. They would form the belief that the boring task was, in fact, pretty fun. As you might Festinger's prediction, that those in the $1 would like the task more, proved to be correct.

EXAMPLE

In a class all the students are good in acting performance except X. He tried hard to fit among other students but he failed in the performance. No matter of his hard attempts he failed and unable to match them. After passing through mental dissonance he come up with the conclusion that acting performance is not his cup of tea, it's a boring job and just a wasting of time for him. Here Mr. X could not perform something or he could not

attain what he wanted to so his mind went through cognitive dissonance and finds a solution as the theory explains.

One more example which is very familiar is the story of a fox who wanted to have the grapes. The grapes were more than his reachable height. When his attempts were failed to reach he came up with the conclusion that the grapes were not sweet and they tastes utterly sour. It reduced the anxiety of the fox and he went away.

In the story of the fox, we could find how someone can come up with cognition that helps him to attain mental harmony. Making excuses is a kind of rationalisation that we does to reduce our mental dissonance. Making excuses is the best example for this theory and we are very well known for our ability to make excuses.

CONCLUSION

The theory suggests that our mind has a tendency to avoid clashes and tensions through various methods and attain harmony. The dissonance will be on its highest on the matters regarding the self-image. We possesses with a powerful drive to maintain the

cognitive steadiness and reliability which may sometimes become irrational. The cognitive dissonance has many useful applications in the field of education, in motivating students to engage in educational and co-curricular activities. Knowledge of these dynamics would be beneficial not only in the fields of motivation, persuasive psychology, and physiotherapy, but perhaps, more importantly, in many real life situations as well like consumer behaviour, promoting healthy and pro-social behaviour etc.

CRITICISM OF COGNITIVE DISSONANCE THEORY

There was a lot of dispute on the particular theory which developed later. Psychologists questioned the underlying process and its "fundamental legitimacy". No one could agree if subjects actually felt dissonance or if experiments just assumed they were feeling dissonance.

There are also questions now if the communication theory always applies. In some cases, feelings of dissonance do not motivate changes in subjects' attitudes or actions.

Check Your Progress:

2.1 What does the spiral of silence focuses on?

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2.2 People tend to share opinions with those who agree rather than those who disagrees them. Justify

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2.3 Define Cognitive dissonance theory.

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2.4 How do you dissolve your dissonance when you make some mistake
   unconsciously

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UNIT – III

3.0 UNIT STRUCTURE

3.1   Learning Objectives

3.2   Introduction

3.3   Agenda setting theory

3.4   Communist theory

3.5   Check your Progress

3.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVE

The objective of this unit is to understand how the media has taken as a part of life to part of the mass. The media owner of the state and the country runs the media as per their wish and propagates the fixed agenda to control the mass. Media is supposed to work for the betterment of the people but media owner shows the audience what it comprehends as an important issue. The news item is supposed to create awareness and informative but the media contents are spoiled for the purpose of profit making. The contents are pre decided by the media players.

After reading this unit you will be able to understand

- Agenda setting theory

- Communist theory and other related theories like Authoritarian theory, Libertarian theory, and Social responsibility theory

3.2 INTRODUCTION

The mass media helps us aware of the far and near incidents as well as keep informed of political, financial, social and cultural happenings. Mass communication is defined in "Mass media, mass culture" as the process whereby professional communicators use technology device to share information over great distances to influence large mass. Somehow it plays a key role in national integration. But have we ever thought

what if media is biased and we are misguided? But how do we get misguided even we see things live through media? The answer to this is, we are fed with media content and we gratify accordingly. Thus in this unit we will be able to understand the theory of Karl Marx in 19th century and the philosophy of Plato (407-327 BC) for the mass communication stated long back that the role of media is to serve for the people. They have forecasted if the media is misused it will lead to corruption and misguidance for the general people. In this unit how the theorist coined the name and what lead them to think for the mass communication. These theorists being from other field contributed so much for the mass communication. We will get to know what made them to think for the mass media and what was the state that made them to originate such theories?

3.3 AGENDA SETTING THEORY

Agenda setting is defined in "Mass Media, Mass Culture" is the process whereby the mass media determine what we think and worry about. It describes the ability (of the news media) to influence the compulsory voters/right holders of topics on the public agenda. It is like when news is played regularly it creates the level of importance and public starts prime concern on the content; as a result audience will consider the issue as the most important. And it's the fact that media only shows the audience what it wants to pursue. Setting an agenda is also influenced by a person's perception to certain beliefs. For example, a person who is highly sensitive to political issues would regard political news as very important content and he will make that agenda for discussions. People have a choice to believe in media or not but people think of uncooperative and cooperative of an issue which happens to affect in their daily life. If the issue of rise is petrol price, it will get more coverage which automatically makes a place in our mind. So any issue people think as important is highly dependent not only on the length of broadcast but also from its position and amount of information. For instance in newspaper people prefer front page news as most important rather than other pages. There are news which covers frequently in various media, such news get more value. Media shows the news in its own perspective views adopted by the audience and deprive the audience from self-thought. Agenda setting comes after gatekeeping, which is editing news by gatekeepers, like editors, before it reaches to the audience. The common assumption of agenda setting is that ability of the mediator

influence the visibility of the events in the public mind has been part of our culture for almost half of the century. Therefore the concept of agenda setting in our society is for the press to selectively choose what we hear in the media.

ARCHITECT OF THE THEORY

The idea of the agenda setting role of media was written in an old book called Public Opinion by Walter Lippmann (1922). The author titled his first chapter as "The world outside and the pictures in our heads". Lippmann was the person who argues that mass media creates picture and keeps us informed of the world. However he has anticipated that pictures made by media are sometimes unclear and incomplete.

The notion that the news media influence the "picture in our heads" was put to an empirical test in 1972. Dr. Maxwell McCombs and Donald Shaw along with G.Ray Funkhouser prepared a mass media theory known as Agenda setting theory in 1968. A study was conducted in North Carolina with strong demonstrated correlation between what 100 residents of Chapel Hill for presidential election based on Lippmann's theory. It was named as 'Chapel Hill study' which was highly covered by local and national media. It was all over the media and reported as the most important event.

The study tested the notion that the mass media influence public perception about the important issues of the day through their daily selection and display of the news in their news bulletin etc. The basic purpose of the McCombs and Shaw's study was to investigate a link between the content of the news agenda and the public agenda. Secondly, they wanted to know the effects on people that resulted from the media messages. The theory was a scientific approach; it explained why people prioritise certain issues. It predicts the priorities of the media audience according to the news media content. The conclusion was published as an article in 1972 in "Public Opinion Quarterly" which was later revised in 1976. The study correlated what people thought and media showed as most important issue in the election. Throughout this study the researchers found out that there was a relationship between the media agenda and public agenda. For example, a media stressing on what type of work each gender should do, completely neglecting the idea of gender equality, as a result the content shown to public will generate the similar mindset. Media steer public that they should

focus their attention what is shown to them. This way political and marketing reality is set by the media.

As mentioned in theories of communication there are two levels of agenda setting theory:

1. Media uses objects or issues to influence the people what people should think about.

2. Media focuses on the characters of issues how people should think about.

Agenda setting theory is used in political ad, campaigns, business news, public relations (PR) etc. The main concept associated with the agenda setting theory is gate keeping. Gate keeping controls over the selection of contents discussed in the media. Public cares mostly about the product of a media gate keeping. It is especially editors and mangers and external influences. These external influences may be from government officials, non-media sources, and highly influential individuals. For e.g.: News comes from various sources, editors and managers choose what should appear and what should not that's why they are called gatekeepers.
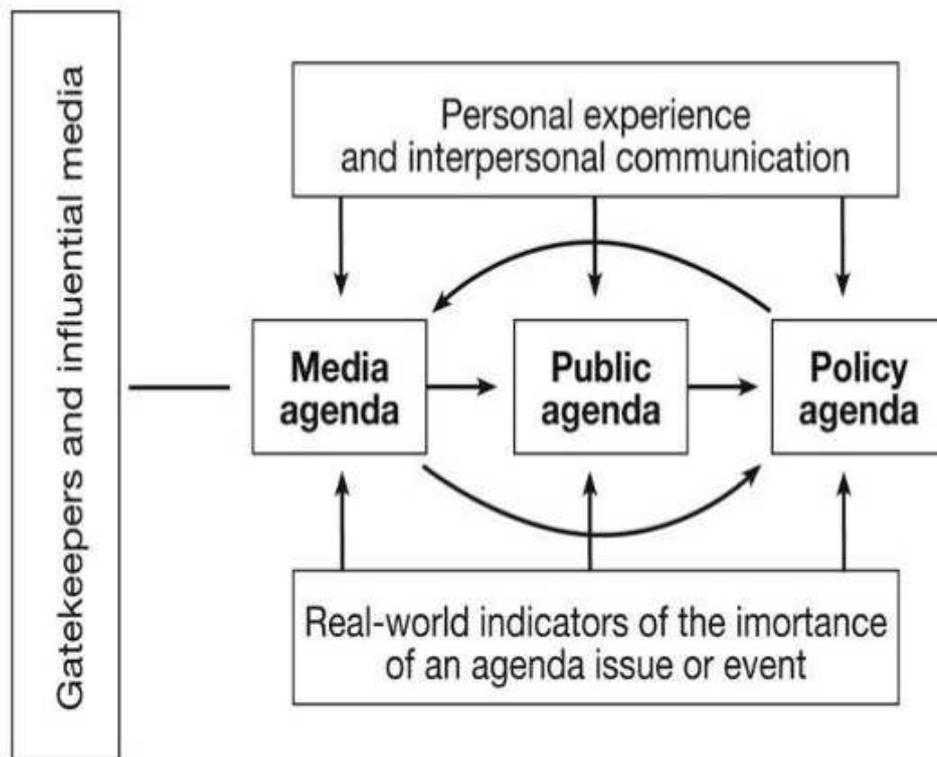
Priming

Revised version of the theory, "Media tell us how and what to think about". In simple words, media is giving utmost importance to news so that it gives people the impression that is the most important information. This is done every day the particular news is carried as a heading or covered every day for months. Headlines, special news features, talk shows, discussion forums, expert opinions are used. Media primes news by repeating the news and giving in more importance e.g. Religious issue.

Framing

By the mid of 90s, agenda setting theory evolved and scholars began to argue that the media do influence the way we think as a result of a specific process known as Framing. According to James Tankard, a media frame is the "Central organising idea for news content that supplies a context and suggests what the issue is through a use of selection, emphasis, exclusion and elaboration. News frame make the world look natural. They determine what is selected, what is excluded, what is emphasised. In short, news presents a package world. Framing talks about how people attach importance to certain news for e.g. in case of terrorist attack, win and loss in sports, media frames the news such that people perceive it in different way. When we talk of India-Pakistan issues in India is different compared to Pakistan, so it's the respective media of the country who creates the perspective of the country for the audience and the nation.

EXAMPLE

The Clinton scandal (International news) and the Coal-gate scandal (National news) are some of the prime examples.

The former US President Mr. Bill Clinton and Monica Lewinsky, an intern, created media frenzy and became sensational news for years. Media of each country gave full coverage from print to electronic news; it was a top and priority news for many days. The media influenced the mindset of the people so much and news got viral to result in a presidential impeachment. And later, Clinton was acquitted for the crime.

The Coal-Gate scandal in India was supposed to be the biggest corruption in the nation. From Prime minister to local administrator was part of the scam. The Scam was so deep rooted that the government partly collapsed of the fallacy. In the investigation

the incident got viral and the government and its officials were tangled. The media prioritise the news and made it a sensational coverage for a few days. Every channel and campaign was hooked of the news which result a poor governance of the country.

CORE ASSUMPTION

Agenda setting is the creation of the public awareness and concern of salient issues by the news media. Two basic assumptions underlie most research on agenda-setting: (i) the press and the media do not reflect reality; they filter and shape it; (ii) 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 the phenomenon. In addition different media have different agenda setting potential. Agenda setting theory seems quite appropriate to help us understand the persuasive role of the media (for example on political communication systems).

CRITICISMS OF AGENDA SETTING THEORY

♦   Agenda setting of any media or news article is difficult to measure.

♦   Surveys and studies are very subjective and not very accurate. There are too many variables to consider.

♦   People have many options to read the same stories from different angles due to new media nowadays. So people have various choices on what to see or hear.

♦   Nowadays, media uses two way communications unlike when this theory was developed.

♦   Agenda setting has many benefits as media influences public and public influences policy.

♦   People might not look at the details and miss some important points resulting in misunderstanding.

♦   Media effect does not work for people who have fixed mindset.

♦   Media is not able to create information but is able to change the priority of the information to the public mindset

3.4   NORMATIVE THEORIES

In the book called "four theories of the press" (1956) by Fred Siebert, Theodore Peterson and Wilbur Schramm proposed of the theory called Normative theories. It describes an ideal way for a media system to be controlled and operated by any government, authority, leader and public. Normative theory was pronounced in USA during "Cold War" regime with communist and soviet. Often it was called as western theories of mass media. In the Normative theory it describes about 'four theories of the press' which are known as 1.Communist theory or Soviet Media theory, 2.Authoritarian theory, 3.Libertarian theory and 4.Social Responsibility theory. These theories are more concern about the ownership of the media and who controls the press or media in the country. These 'four theories of the press' were evolved from many sources rather from a single source. Media practitioners, social critics, and academicians are also involved of the sources in development. These theories are different from other theories because normative theories of press are not providing any scientific explanation or prediction. They are focused on the relationship between Press and the Government than press and the mass audience.

3.4.1   COMMUNIST THEORY OR SOVIET MEDIA THEORY

  The communist theory of mass media came into being along with the concept of communism. George W.F. Hegel and later, Karl Marx with Engels were the people who thought of the theory in 19th century. Mass media in the view of Karl Marx was supposed to be responsible for socialist system of governance and communist media was supposed to help in implementing social policies. The communist and Marxist government rule and communist theory of mass communication was practically used by then Soviet Union (Russia) in 1917. Thus, the theory is also known as Soviet Theory of Mass Communication.

According to this theory the government has controlled all the media with absolute power over it. Media and government propagated its ideology through media control. The ownership of media is with the state and the country which fulfilled their propaganda. The communist party owns all the media of the country. Media being a service for the people started doing what communist party tells them to do. Deterring the growth of

communism is taken as crime. Citizens are taken to be irrational and stupid and masses are kept away from the government function. They were limited to government propaganda and basic information only. Whatever rulers said becomes the ruling idea.

Features of the theory:

♦ Media followed communist ideology of governance and political system.

♦ Media was used to transit propaganda and for the transmission of social politics.

♦ Media was taken as government instrument.

♦ Media was fully controlled and owned by the state.

♦ Criticism for the party became a crime.

CRITICISM OF COMMUNIST THEORY

♦ Propaganda based information was delivered only, which might be false.

♦ Criticism of the government did not get good feedback of governance.

♦ The more restrictions lead to more crime.

♦ Leaders were taken as the greatest and citizens were of least importance.

♦ The media could not play the role watchdog.

3.4.2 AUTHORITARIAN THEORY

Authoritarian theory states that all the power of communication is under the control of government and elite authorities of the government. The authority holds all the power and rights to permit any media and control it by providing license to media and make censorship. Here media are not allowed to print or broadcast anything, which could undermine the established authority. This theory is considered as the dictatorship government as well as dictatorial nations. It is believed that state information to the public may cause to be a national threat. Thus, the theory is justified by saying that the state is mightier that individual rights where state controls the media, especially in the times of war and emergencies.

Features of Authoritarian theory

♦   Direct control of the media by government and authorities.

♦   Power exercised to control media.

♦   Media has no power to criticise the government, its work, decisions and policies.

♦   Media cannot offend the ruling parties.

♦   Punishments and threats are befitted to the people who move against government norms.

♦   Cancellation of media license if media does anything wrong against the government.

♦   Limitations of media publishing and broadcasting.

♦   Authority uses it for party propaganda and an instrument to strengthen the power of the government.

Examples

♦ Few countries blocked wiki leaks website from its country to maintain the internal security because wiki leaks are not ready to compromise with government censorship and realising classified documents against government.

♦ Taliban government practiced authoritarian media approach in Afghanistan. Burmese media also made to follow authoritarianism till 2011. Media who published against the government is punished and imprisoned. Today it is applied in developing countries in the form of National Security Act and Officials Secret Act.

♦ Many writers and authors been imprisoned for publication against the views of government. Publications were banned like Salman Rushdie's Satanic Verses due to censorship, showing Authoritarianism.

♦ There are countries that still follow the authoritarian in media like Israel, Bahrain, Qatar, Syria, Uzbekistan, Belarus, Zimbabwe, China, North Korea, Iran, etc.

3.4.3 LIBERTARIAN THEORY

The theory originated from the libertarian thoughts from 16th century in Europe after the invention of the printing press and after the press movement. It was advocated by many renowned personalities like Lao Tzu, John Locke, John Milton, John Stuart Mill, Thomas Jefferson, etc. and is still famous in every part of the world. The libertarians are against the authoritarians thoughts. International trade and urbanisation undermine the power of aristocracy which leads to various social movements and raised Protestants reformation that demands individual freedom of live and thoughts from any control. Thus theory believes in freedom of thought and individualism. There should not be any control or censorship of the authority and everybody has the right to voice their views. The government should not overpower or hold control over the media. There should be free access to people for the interpretation and decide which information they need

and to broadcast. The press should maintain the free flow of information even criticising the policies.

Features of Libertarian theory

- Freedom of Press gives more power to media to reveal the real things happening around without any censorship or suppression of authorities.

- Competitive exposure of alternative viewpoints.

- Media works as a watchdog and criticism on the government policies are freely accepted.

- Journalist and media professionals ought to have full autonomy within the media organisation.

- It is accountable to the law for any consequences of its activities that infringe other individual's rights or the legitimate claims of the society.

- The protection of dignity, reputation, property, privacy, moral development of individuals, minority groups, evens the security of the state no infringement accepted from the media.

Example

In India right to information gives liberty of all the information and freedom of press utilises is properly. Through freedom of press and right to information many schemes were disclosed of misutilising government funds. In the coal-gate scam where from top to bottom of the government officials were involved in the scam. The press exposure to such information helps people to identify what is happening in the bureaucracy and it helps to choose a better government.

Criticism

Such an extensive freedom is also a problem as all people have the freedom to speak, right to information, which may lead to breach of official information. If anything went wrong no one will take the responsibility. The ethics in multicultural or pluralistic societies vary from place to place; hence there is always complaint against the media of each other's society.

3.4.4 SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY THEORY

In mid-20th century most of the developing countries and third world nations have used social responsibility theory of press which is associated with "the commission of the freedom of Press" in USA at 1949. In the book of "four theories of press" (Siebert, Peterson and Schramm) it is stated that pure libertarianism is obsolete out dated, that paved for the libertarian theory to replace social responsibility theory. Social responsibility theory of mass media changed the way the press published news from "objective" reporting (facts reporting) to "interpretative" reporting (investigative reporting). Before this theory, facts were never represented and without any interpretation. The audience never got to know the interpretation behind the news and it caused a social disorder. Interpretative reporting and investigative reporting started to uncover the reality behind every case.

Thus the fact provided by the press are analysed by the public and get true information and justifiable news. This helps maintain harmony and revealing social evils like corruption and discouraging other bad conducts. It is considered as a tool for social development. The theory helped in creating professionalism in media by setting up a high level of accuracy, truth, and information. The commission of press council also includes some tasks based on social responsibility of media, which are as follows:

(i) Formulate the code of conduct for the press.

(ii) Improve the standards of journalism.

(iii) Safeguarding the interest of journalism as journalist.

(iv) Criticise and make some penalty for violating the code of conduct.
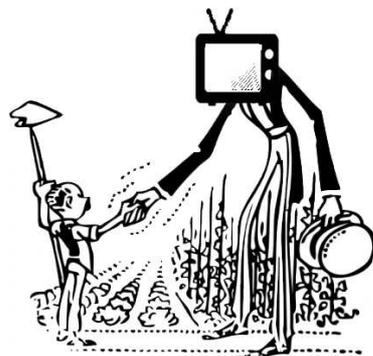
Features of social responsibility theory

- Media should accept responsibilities towards society

- Media should fulfill responsibilities by setting professional standards with regards to the supply of information and the truth, accuracy, objectivity and balance in their reporting

- Media should apply self-regulation

- Media should avoid publicising information which led to crime, violence and social disruption, as well as information that offends religious or ethnic minorities

- Media collectively should represent all social groups and reflect the diversity of society by giving people access to variety of viewpoints and opportunity to react on media contents.

- Society entitled to high standards and intervention justifiable if the media fail to meet these standards.

Examples

News on health issues in the media can be taken as a media acting as social responsible. The media gives all the information related health hazards and epidemics. It creates awareness on health problems like malaria, diarrhea and others to cure them. There have been many instances where news were misunderstood and create panic in public by various media. Advertisements on harmful substances like alcohol and cigarettes are considered wrong according to the social responsibility theory.

Exposing on corruption of the government institutions by media is also part of the social responsible theory, it act like a critic to the government and its policies. But there are instance when too much of freedom has affected the reputation of some politicians and personalities through irresponsible journalism and leading conflicts in the party. Hence forth the responsibility is a huge duty not for media but applies to common man of the nation.

Criticism

- Avoids the conflict situation during war or emergency by accepting the public opinion.

- Media could hardly play the role of monopoly because the public can raise the question against misleading information.

- Media standards will improve.

- Media will take responsibility of all the class audience rather serving higher class society.

- Media may work independently but certain shares are hold by the government and other public organisation.

Check Your Progress:

3.1 Sum up the results of the key "Chapel Hill" study of the media and public opinion.

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3.2 What are the regulations formed for media in communist party?

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3.3 Differentiate between the Communist theory and the authoritarian theory

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UNIT – IV

4.0 UNIT STRUCTURE

4.1   Learning Objectives

4.2   Introduction

4.3   Cultivation Theory

4.4   Cultivation Analysis

4.5   Check Your Progress

4.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

In this unit we will discuss about cultivation theory which examines the long term effects of television viewing. By the end of this unit you will be have thorough understanding about Cultivation Analysis.

4.2 INTRODUCTION

In Mass Media the role of television broadcasting was enormous. Through television the mass gets the picture in reality of the happenings. The television has decreased the audience in the field because it started catering of the field event directly to home. It has created a virtual arena of sports ground, cinema ambience, and information hub. Hence there are minimum chances of audience to the field instead at home luxury audience enjoys all the sports event, entertainment, concerts and live chat shows. Television was a luxury item of daily life because it gives you everything in a click of your finger button sitting over your sofa set. But have we ever thought that this television set will make us sick someday? Never, but the excess of anything is dangerous to health. Television has made himself an informative box to idiot box. Watching television was supposed to be informative but it is now seen as wastage of time. It has made a negative remark for the society. The audio video informative medium has been blamed for change in human behaviour. In the present world people have great faith on television rather than internet, radio, newspaper and film?

Cultivation theory research on the process of television as a system of messages and tries to understand its function and consequences on an audience. These messages are compliment to each other and are organic and coherent in nature. Cultivation analysis focuses on the impact of television exposure on audience over a long period of time.

4.3   CULTIVATION THEORY

Cultivation theory sometimes referred to as the cultivation hypothesis or cultivation analysis. It was originally proposed by Professor George Gerber and Larry Gross at University of Pennsylvania. In 1960 he began research project on television viewership and its influence. It was published in 1976 - Living with television: The violence profile in Journal of Communication. In the study it states that high frequency of television viewership are defenseless to the media messages and high exposure of media content through television make a belief that they are real and vivid.

George Gerber & Larry Gross

Heavy viewerships are exposed to more violence and therefore are affected by the Mean World Syndrome. The theory argues that the media generally presents an image of the world that does not exist in reality. Television present an exaggeration of fantasy of what it exists. The constant exposure to media cultivates specific values, beliefs, attitude and nature of the individual. Therefore people end up unconsciously shaping their thought process and behaviour based on what they consume.
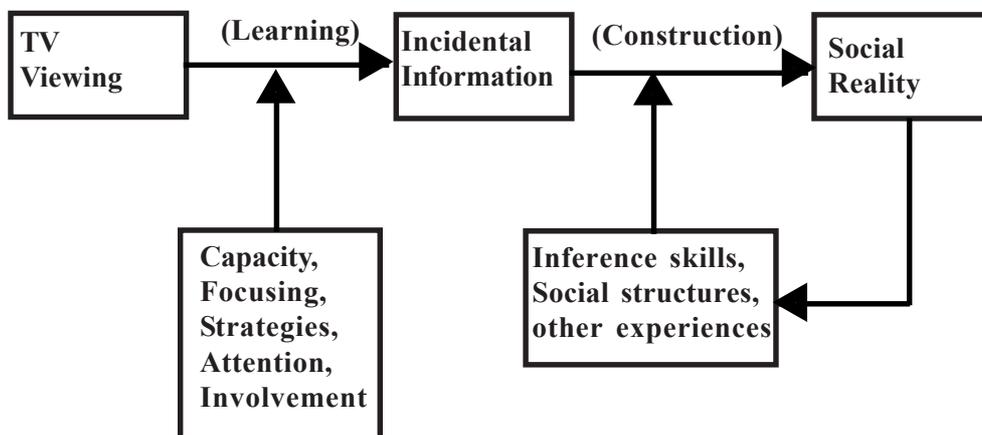
Figure1: Conceptual design of Cultivation theory

4.4 CULTIVATION ANALYSIS

Various study have been conducted that those watch television more frequently, they often create the tendencies of being depressed and lonely, sense of alienation, feeling of mistrust and think the world is not for them, a malicious space. Gerbner and his colleagues made research on identifying television as shaping the society. In this research by cultivation theorists involved large scale of public opinion poll and surveys regarding issues as the amount of violence in everyday life. For example, Cultivation analysis has been applied to crime (Signorielli, 1990), fear of victimization (Sparks & Ogles, 1990), attitudes toward racism (Allen & Hatchett, 1986), feelings of alienation (Morgan, 1986), anxiety (Zillman & Wakshlag, 1985), gender stereotyping (Carveth & Alexander, 1985; Preston, 1990), affluence (Potter, 1991), the aged (Gerbner et al., 1980), American stereotypes (Tan, 1982), civil liberties (Carlson, 1983), divorce (Potter, 1991), materialism (Reimer & Rosengren, 1990), values (Potter, 1993), and health issues (Molitor, 1994; Potter, 1991).

According to Newcomb, three problems exist with Cultivation Analysis. First, television's ideas and the symbols that express them on that medium are not created there. Violence, for example, has different meanings for different people. Second, Cultivation Analysis ignores the wide variety of "organization and expression of these ideas in the world of television" (Newcomb, 1978, p. 281). In other words, violence, for example, is not presented consistently on television as Cultivation Analysis assumes. Third, Cultivation Analysis does not permit the possibility that individual members of the television audience can apply different, individual meanings to what they see on television. As Newcomb argues, "It may be that all the messages of television speak with a single intent and are ruled by a single dominant symbol whose meaning is clear to a mass audience, or to that part of the audience heavily involved with those messages.

Cultivation Analysis assumes that television's portrayals of such things as crime, violence, divorce, and so on are uniform—an especially weak assumption in the modern era of scores of channels. Cultivation offers two related responses to this criticism. First, although there may be many more channels and people may have greater control over selectivity than they once had, television's dramatic and aesthetic conventions produce remarkably uniform content within as well as across genres. Second, because most television watching is ritual—that is, selected more by time of day than by specific program or the availability of multiple channels— and heavy viewers will be exposed overall to more of television's dominant images.

Another concern regarding Cultivation Analysis is that it has done a poor job of clarifying the concept of television's dominance in people's lives. Heavy viewers, for example, may watch very little content that speaks to the issues being examined by a cultivation researcher. Conversely, as W. James Potter (1993) writes, "It is possible for a person to watch very little television and still be influenced by television's messages by picking up those perceptions and attitudes in interpersonal conversations and observing institutions that themselves have been influenced more directly through television" (p. 577). Cultivation Analysis, however, only measures the relationship between the level of viewing and perceptions.

Criticism

Cultivation Analysis has been and remains one of the most influential mass communication theories of the last two decades. It is the foundation of much contemporary research and, as we've seen, has even become an international social movement. Another source of its influence is that it can be applied by anyone. It asks people to assess their own media use alongside their socially constructed reality of the world they inhabit. Imagine yourself as Joyce Jensen preparing to cast an important vote. You may well undergo the same mental debate as she. Yet, think of how even a passing understanding of Cultivation Analysis might help you arrive at your decision and understand your motivations.

Check Your Progress:

4.1 How cultivation theory is concerned with social values?

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4.2 Regular viewership of television cultivates violence. Justify

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LET'S SUMMARISE

1. The magic bullet or hypodermic needle theory defining the magic bullet theory is like a gun firing a bullet (message) through gun (medium) into the audience (receiver). The hypodermic needle, an injection (medium) injected (message) into the audience (receiver).

2. The messages from the media are the only source of infotainment, which gets injected directly but uniformly in the minds of the heterogeneous audience just like an injection injected or bullets fired in the body in order to have an immediate results. Magic bullet theory assumes that he audience is singular and passive.

3. Uses and gratification theory users choose their choice of media contents and consume to gratify various psychological needs.

4. There are several needs and gratification for the media consumers and they are categorized into five categories: Cognitive needs, Alternative needs, Personal interactive needs, Social interactive needs, Social interactive needs and tension free needs.

5. The spiral of silence refers to how people tend to remain silent when they feel that their views are in the minority. The fear of separation or isolation from the people those around them, they tend to conceal their viewpoint to themselves when they think they are in the minority group.

6. According to the theory, there is a tendency for individuals to seek consistency among their cognitions (i.e beliefs and opinions). When there is an inconsistency between attitudes or behaviours (dissonance), something must change to eliminate the dissonance.

7. Dissonance will be resolved in one of three basic ways: Change beliefs, change actions, Change perception of actions.

8. Agenda setting theory describes the ability (of the news media) to influence the compulsory voters/right holders of topics on the public agenda.

9. Agenda setting comes after gatekeeping, which is editing news by gatekeepers, like editors, before it reaches to the audience.

Priming: Revised version of the theory, "Media tell us how and what to think about".

Framing: The media do influence the way we think as a result of a specific process known as Framing.

10. Normative theories describes about the "four theories of the press" they are Communist or Soviet media theory, Authoritarian theory, Libertarian theory and Social responsible theory.

11. They are focused on the relationship between Press and the Government than press and the mass audience.

12. Cultivation theory research on the process of television as a system of messages and tries to understand its function and consequences on an audience

13. Cultivation analysis those watch television more frequently, they often create the tendencies of being depressed and lonely, sense of alienation, and feeling of mistrust and think the world is not for them, a malicious space.

FURTHER READINGS

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ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

1.1.   The major factors that contribute in the magic bullet theory are as follows:

      (i)   The popularisation of TV and Radio.

      (ii)   The successful advertising propaganda of Industries.

      (iii)   The Payne Fund studies of 1930s which focused on the impact of the motion picture on children.

      (iv)   Hitler's monopolisation of the mass media during WW II to unify the German public

1.2.   The personal needs of the media on contemporary generation are as per Denis McQuail, Jay Blumer and Joseph Brown are as follows:

      i)   Diversion: The need to escape from everyday life and to relax.

      ii)   Personal relationships: using the media for interaction, fulfill their need for companionship and to form relationship with others in the society.

      iii)   Personal Identity: We sometimes tend to use media to find out about ourselves, learn behaviour, values texts and Identity with the characters around.

      iv)   Surveillance: Using media to find out what is happening around us. e.g. current events, news, weather reports etc. tells us what has been going on in our daily life.

1.3   Maslow's Hierarchy of needs is a bottom-up pyramid which contains biological/physical, security/safety, social/belonging, ego/self-respect and self - actualisation at the top. It explains that each level has its own needs and each level seeks its needs first and looks for the next level of needs to satisfy till it reaches the top level of need of self-actualisation. The fulfillment of each lower level need leads to the individual looking to satisfy the news level of need and so on till he reaches the superior-most need of self-actualisation. Our basic needs are inborn and Abraham Maslow's Hierarchy of needs explains how needs are motivated through the level of physiological at the bottom, above it is safety, middle is Love/Belonging and above it is Esteem and at the top is Self-actualization.

2.1   The Spiral of Silence theory focuses on how people tend to remain silent when they feel that their views are in the minority. The fear of separation or isolation from the people those around them, they tend to conceal their viewpoint to themselves when they think they are in the minority group. This process is called "Spiral of Silence".

2.2   According to spiral of silence theory people tend to share opinions those who agree rather than who disagrees, for e.g. in an organization when a new rule is introduced some employees do not accept it but when a mass group has accepted, the employee who did not accepted becomes minority and ultimately their views are not granted. They cannot oppose it openly because the fear of rejection and isolation in other words the fear of fired from the job makes them to agree with the new rule.

2.3   According to the theory there is a tendency for individuals to seek consistency among their cognitions (i.e. beliefs, opinions). When there is an inconsistency between attitudes or behaviours (dissonance), something must change to eliminate the dissonance.

2.4   On such mistakes would like to dissolve the dissonance I must apply the three ways to reduce it which are as follows:

(i)   Change one or more of the attitudes, behaviours, beliefs etc. to make the relationship harmonic between two elements.

(ii)   Acquire methods of reducing dissonance through new information which outweigh the dissonant beliefs.

(iii)   Reduce the importance of cognitions i.e. beliefs and attitudes.

3.1   The "Chapel Hill" study is a study conducted in North Carolina with strong demonstrators of 100 residents of Chapel Hill for presidential election based on Lippmann's theory. In this study the notion that the mass media influence public perception about the important issues of the day through their daily selection and display of the news in their news bulletin etc. It investigated on the link between the contents of the news agenda and public agenda. It was found that the messages from the media affect the people. Media generates the agenda for the public.

3.2   Media in communist party took over the control of media; Communist government owned the media contents to propagate the communist party agenda,

3.3   In communist theory the media contents are used to propagate communism whereas authoritarian became dictator of media and they do not allow to print or broadcast anything without their permission. Criticism of the government was a punishable offence for public as well as for the media.

4.1   The term cultivation itself describes the process of fostering something similarly in media the high frequency of viewership leads to develop a virtual world which a viewer think that the media contents are intense and real. As a result the vivid content gives a picture that the media is everything and real in life, other than media world is untrue. Such tendencies divert the social values of a social being living in a cultured society.

4.2   According to cultivation analysis the regular viewership of television cultivates violence because high frequency of viewership creates own virtual world. For them out of the box seems false. The media contents are generally creates an illusion to the audience to attract the viewership. The vivid picture of action and fantasy promote them to replicate and the reaction leads to trouble which is enactment of violence. Such thing misguides the regular viewership instead cultivating good habits. The action series and games in television mostly cultivates violence because they try to replicate as if they think of the character is within them and try to execute them which sometimes resulted to put behind the bars.

■   ■   ■

MODEL QUESTIONS

A. Very Short Type Questions

1. What do you mean by Gratification?

2. Give an example of Spiral of Silence.

3. Who are addicted to television?

4. What is Agenda setting theory?

5. What is cultivation theory?

B. Short Type Questions (Answer each questions in 200 words)

1. What is Uses and Gratification theory?

2. What are the "four theories of the press"?

3. Differentiate communist and authoritarian theory?

4. How agenda is designed for the public?

5. What is the responsibility of media towards society?

C. Long Type Questions (Answer each questions in 500 words)

1. Explain Marlow's Hierarchy of needs.

2. It is Public agenda or Media agenda. Discuss

3. Describe normative theories.

4. How social responsibility of media can improve the viewership?

5. How viewership is analysed?

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Comments

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