GRATIFICATION AND AGENDA SETTING THEORY

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USES AND GRATIFICATION THEORY

Perspective

UGT differs from other media effect theories in that it assumes that individuals have power over their media usage, rather than positioning individuals as passive consumers of media. UGT explores how individuals deliberately seek out media to fulfil certain needs or goals such as entertainment, relaxation, or socializing. In other words we can say this theory suggests that media have no power over audiences, instead audience are highly active in their media usage, seeking out media that will fulfil their certain needs and creating their own individual meanings. So it says that media have no or little power in its circumstances and audience are highly active group of users, so it turns the media a tool to gratify certain needs.

History

Uses and gratification theory builds off of a history of communication theories and research. Its beginnings lie in researchers' studies of radio listeners in the 1940s. Other research at that time looked into children's comics and the absence of newspapers during a newspaper strike.

This theory originally came about in USA in the 1940s as the way of disapproving the bullet theory or hypodermic needle theory which suggest that an intended message was directly received and wholly accepted by the receiver.

HAROLD LASSWELL (an AMERICAN Political Scientists and Communication Theorist) questioned the HYPODERMIC NEEDLE MODEL and proposed that the media served four functions. He said the media has four different uses and audience have needs so they have to be filled.

These four functions according to Lasswell are as follows

- ## *SURVEILLANCE*

In the idea of surveillance the audiences are need to be informed that what is happening in the world.

e.g Watching news bulletins, twitter, sports, Facebook

in this audience uses media to keep them up to date about the world.

- ## *Personal Identity*

Audience find model of behaviour in the media, learning from and comparing themselves to others and thereby discovering who they are.

e.g Celebrity interviews, Cooking shows, makeup tutorials

Audience watching the interviews of people who they respects and watching cooking videos or makeup tutorials, they take on some of those abilities or feelings and bring it to their own personal identity.

- ## *Personal relationship*

In this when we are watching characters of our favourite shows, we gain empathy by twitching them and form a relationship with the characters

e.g soap operas, reality elimination

- ## *Diversion*

In this the audiences uses media as the form of escapism and entertainment. A means for passing time.

e.g action films, reality tv shows, reading listless

so from this LASSWELL ideas in 1940s theorists can't settled them in few decades and they wasn't since 1974 where BLUMER KATZ and GUREVITCH expanded LASSWELL's research, suggesting that audience have the power to determine what the media provides for its gratification. FOR EXAMPLE if a tv show does not fulfil an audience need than they will not watch it.

SO According to Lasswell research USG history can be described as falling within a series of stages:

Stage 1

In 1944 Herta Hertzog interviewed people who listened to soap operas and determined that they sought three different types of gratification from this form of entertainment. These three types of gratification were emotional, wishful thinking, and learning.

In 1954 Wilbur Schramm developed a formula for determining which media an individual might select all contribute to the foundation for modern developments of this theory. This formula took into account the amount of gratification an individual expected to get out of a certain form of media and the amount of effort the individual would have to exert to get it.

In 1970 Abraham Maslow posited that USG was an extension of the needs he had himself organized into his Hierarchy of Needs.

Stage 2

In 1969 Jay Blumler and Denis McQuail studied the United Kingdom 1964 election and categorized people's motives for watching certain political programs on television. These audience motivations formed the foundation for their research in 1972 and led to USG later on.

In 1972 Jay Blumler, Joseph Brown, and Denis McQuail proposed four uses of media: diversion, personal relationships, personal identity, and surveillance.

In 1973-74 Blumler, Brown, and McQuail were joined by colleagues Michael Gurevitch, Hadassah Haas, and Elihu Katz. The six conducted collaborative research on how people viewed mass media.

Stage 3

UGT researchers today are exploring predictive and explanatory possibilities of the theory by connecting media usage with individual factors. There is particular interest in the link between why media is used and the gratification received. Overall, UGT has been crucial to a shift that focuses on the media user and their agency in the field of mass media studies.

DEFINITION

MARK LEVY and SVEN WINDAHL provide a good description of what it means to be an "active consumer" of media:

> "As commonly understood by gratifications researchers, the term "audience activity" postulates a voluntaristic and selective orientation by audiences toward the communication process. In brief, it suggests that media use is motivated by needs and goals that are defined by audience members themselves, and that active participation in the communication process may facilitate, limit, or otherwise influence the gratifications and effects associated with exposure. Current thinking also suggests that audience activity is best conceptualized as a variable construct, with audiences exhibiting varying *kinds* and *degrees* of activity.

EXAMPLES

The examples of gratification theory is given below

- Mobile usage

Mobile phone have many uses and gratification attached to them, people use mobile phone due to following uses and gratification

- Affection/sociability
- Entertainment
- Instrumentality
- Psychological reassurance
- Fashion/status
- Mobility
- Immediate access

Uses and gratifications do, however, differ based on location and audience:

- Using mobile phones on buses, cars, and trains is related to the UG of mobility and immediate access
- Talking to business partners is related to the UG of instrumentality

- Talking to family members is related to the UG of mobility and affection

The specific function of text messaging has been studied [15] to find its uses and gratifications and explore any potential gender differences. The researchers proposed seven uses and gratifications; they are listed below, from highest to lowest ranked according to the study's results:

- Accessibility/mobility
- Relaxation
- Escape
- Entertainment
- Information seeking
- Coordination for business
- Socialization/affection seeking
- Status seeking

- Social media uses

Use of social media is also an example of uses and gratification theory. People use twitter, Facebook, instagram, snap chat, whatSapp and other social networking sites for their gratification. Users have motivations of the following overall

- Social and affection
- Need to vent negative feelings
- Recognition
- Entertainment
- Cognitive needs
- Academic purpose

- Watching ENTERTAINMENT MEDIA

Research has shown that media taken in for entertainment purposes (i.e., movies, songs, television, etc.) have a wide range of uses and emotional gratification. People watch different kinds of entertainment programs for the sake of time pass, mood changing, to escape from hectic routine, for sensation seeking or excitement and much other purpose. People watch media according to their own needs. Some people watch dramas because they like to watch

them they have gratification for dramas however some people have gratification for news or movies or other entertainment media.

- ONLINE GAMING

Some people plays online games because they have gratification for it.

AGENDA SETTING THEORY

DEFINITION

Agenda-setting theory describes the "ability of news media to influence the importance placed on the topics of the public agenda"

PERSPECTIVE

Agenda setting is a process whereby mass media is determine what audience think and worry about, such as tv news, web news, newspaper, social media, articles etc.

This theory suggests that the media does not tell audiences what to think but rather what to think about. Revision of the theory also suggests that the media may encourage an audience how to think about an issue.

In this regard media holds some power in terms they can set the agenda for the public issues of the time, in this audience are active but only with in the agendas set by the media, so the audience thinks but only in terms of what media tell them about the issue.

HISTORY

The theory was created in 1972 by McCOMBS AND SHAW, who found a coorelation (Influential relationship) between how often and to what extent a media covered a news story, and the degree to which the public perceived an issue to be important.

Their research centred around news reports during a recent presidential election and as such focus on this kind of influential in terms of news media.

They attest that influential "gatekeepers"in the middle used **selection, omission, and framing** to decide what issues will be presented and how (or from which angle) they will be presented. This encourage the public to believe an issue is important, which in terns shapes political policies. Here gatekeepers means particular influential figures in the media.

So the terms means

- **Selection**

When influential media makers decide what to INCLUDE in a media broadcast.

- **OMISSION**

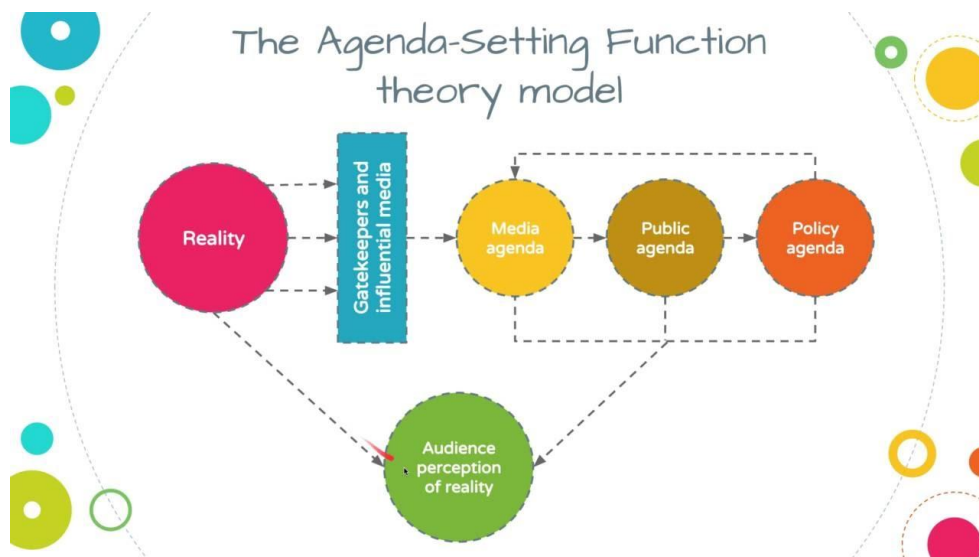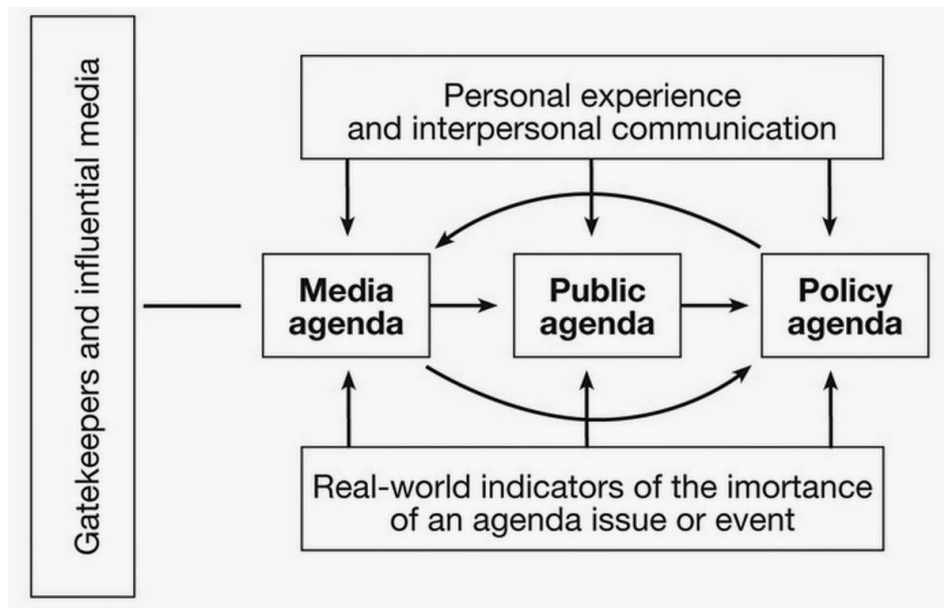When influential media makers decide what to EXCLUDE in a media broadcast.

- **PRIMING**

The amount of time allocated to an issues, or whether it is covered at all. This sets the stage of audience to understand how important an issue is.

- **FRAMING**

When a media broadcast EMPHASISES certain points and DOWNPLAYS, other in a news story

The Agenda-Setting Function theory model

 The concept of agenda setting was launched by McCombs and Shaw during the 1968 presidential election in Chapel Hill, North Carolina. They examined Lippmann's idea of construction of the pictures in our heads by comparing the

issues on the media agenda with key issues on the undecided voters' agenda. They found evidence of agenda setting by identifying that salience of the news agenda is highly correlated to that of the voters' agenda. McCombs and Shaw were the first to provide the field of communication with empirical evidence that demonstrated the power of mass media and its influence on the public agenda. The empirical evidence also earned this theory its credibility amongst other social scientific theories.

TYPES OF AGENDA SETTING

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[9] identify three types of agenda setting:

1. public agenda setting, in which the public's agenda is the dependent variable (the traditional hypothesis)
2. media agenda setting, in which the media's agenda is treated as the dependent variable ("agenda building")
3. policy agenda setting, in which elite policy makers' agendas are treated as the dependent variable ("political agenda setting").