UNIT 8: COMMUNICATION APPROACH

UNIT STRUCTURE

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8.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit you will be able to –

- know the communication effects approach of mass communication
- know about mass media and modernisation approach.

8.2 INTRODUCTION

Since the 1940s, a huge exhibit of media innovations have developed that contact a huge audience through mass communication. This exhibit currently incorporates print, film, TV, radio, recorded music, internet, social media, and more.

Researchers have been reading mass communication for quite a long time, however, what models have they used to ponder this wonder? The approaches that researchers took at the beginning are what we currently call as mainstream approaches.

Initially, mass communication was viewed as an instrument to help bind together individuals by forming them into a group. While a few researchers considered mass media to be as positive, others dreaded it as an adverse entity. Also there were concerns about the response of people towards mass communication approaches and processes. For example,

one study found that reactions to savage movies varied, yet those reactions could be anticipated depending on the matters of psychological and cultural difference. It is on these lines of thought that the approaches to the study of mass communication have evolve. In this unit, we shall focus on some of them.

8.3 MAINSTREAM APPROACHES TO STUDYING MASS COMMUNICATION

At the point when researchers understood that not all individuals reacted to mass communications in a similar way, researchers started contemplating it by looking at it straightforwardly; these researchers were said to adopt mainstream approaches to mass communications. These assessments prompted theories, including:

- The hypodermic needle theory – This theory suggested that mass communications' impact on its audience was prompt and amazing, similar to the infusion of a medication.
- The two-step flow model of media influence –This was developed during the 1940s by Paul Lazarsfeld. This theory recommended that mass communication spreads messages in two stages:
- Messages are received by eager media consumers (regardless of whether they are magazine readers, news addicts, or Facebook trollers).
- These eager consumers become 'opinion-leaders', who scatter the message.
- The gratifications model – It stated that individuals shape the importance of media messages to address their own issues.
- The limited effects theory of mass communication – It guaranteed that mass communications accomplishment in conveying messages was constrained.

By the 1950s, mainstream researchers had arrived at three separate (and sometimes conflicting) ends:

- Mass communications could move assessments and practices. For instance, one study demonstrated that broad presentation to TV viciousness desensitized watchers to genuine savagery.
- Those with an absence of access to media have learning holes that fall legitimately along the lines of socio-economic class. Subsequently, mass communications is an apparatus that characteristically keeps influence (and wealth) in the hands of those effectively ground-breaking.
- Mass communications is not only an all inclusive message conveyed everywhere. Rather, it is focused to and characterized by its specialty crowd, their education, income, and culture, etc.

8.4 COMMUNICATION EFFECTS APPROACH

Generally, media effects would in general stress a three-or four-stage model with each stage described by either “significant” or “minimal” media effects. The limits of each stage are liquid, yet are commonly characterized by developing media technologies, the cultural milieu, and the types of methods, perspectives, and ideologies utilized by each stage’s researchers. The primary stage, a huge effects stage, starts during the 1920s and 1930s and regularly consolidates “magic bullet” or “hypodermic needle” representations, as though envoys shoot messages and effects into beneficiaries. In this initial stage, as the tremendous prominence of press, film, and radio encroached into regular day to day existence, media were credited with enormous power in forming conclusion, demeanours, and even behaviour. During this stage, natives and researchers were frightful of the wide, overall effects that rising media like film and radio could have on society.The mass purposeful publicity battles that began during World War I further energized these concerns. Harold Lasswell is frequently referred to as the fundamental figure of the principal period of media effects. Lasswell utilized the contentions of Freudian Psychology, pragmatism, and Political Science to contend that society and people could be adequately constrained by a minority through purposeful publicity.

Indeed, even as these theories were building up, a second and progressively negligible stage was previously starting during the 1930s. This stage was set apart by the development of more sophisticated scientific methods in communication theory. This sophistication brought about studies and experiments that undeniably raised doubt about scholars' prior assumptions. In this stage, the theory of "individual influence" started to characterize media effects theory, and the stage gradually diminished in work of Lazarsfeld's student Joseph Klapper (1960), who contended that the effects of mass communication just fortified inclinations and did not straightforwardly impact them. During this stage, researchers considered there was no immediate or balanced connection between media upgrade and crowd reaction. As more media effects research was delivered, and as a scientific method turned out to be further developed, it was resolved that media effects were not as immediate as at first suspected. This approach began to be known as the limited effects model.

The next and third stage corresponded with the ascent of TV in the period after World War II. While it was never again practical to come back to the theories of Lasswell and his peers, it was again conceivable to investigate the long haul effects of media as noteworthy. The attention was on aggregate change, and media effects theory stressed direct effects models, which later developed the spiral of silence theory, was one of the stage's researchers who required an "arrival to amazing mass communications." In this stage, the appearance of TV during the 1950s and 1960s brought forward an arrival to the idea of amazing mass communications. These researchers censured the more seasoned, psychology-oriented strategies, and rather supported techniques that considered long haul media effects, likewise alluded to as total effects.

Starting during the 1990s, a potential fourth stage has developed. The new stage denotes an arrival to the negligible models of media effects and places exceptional accentuation on constructivist models. At this point an increasingly egalitarian approach to deal with media effects had developed in prominence, and this has been referred to as the social constructivist approach. This approach argues that much of what the media do includes

the development of the real world, with the public choosing whether or not to receive the media's perception. Numerous contemporary theorists still allude to media effects as having only three stages, and the historical backdrop of media effects remains a challenged space, particularly as new theories and strategies call into question the findings of prior researchers. Scholars have progressively propounded elective models of media effects theory so as to extend and raise doubt about the different cycles of the phase model. Lang and Lang (1993) contend against the phase model and rather propound a model that underlines investigations of combined effects. Perse (2001) sets alternative model based on four kinds of media effects: direct, conditional, cumulative, and cognitive transactional. Perse's model shows a more nuanced understanding of the interchange of media content factors and audience factors, paying little heed to time period. Neuman and Guggenheim (2011) examined 50 years of communications research and argued that media effects theory is characterized not by phases, but by six expansive theoretical zones: persuasion theories, active audience theories, social context theories, societal and media theories, interpretive effects theories, and new media theories. These theoretical zones cover significantly and show the differing and broken approaches utilized by media effects researchers.

8.5 MASS MEDIA AND MODERNISATION

Most communication practices in the Third World development writings were seen in relation with modernisation theory. At both the macro level and micro levels, communication was seen as a product and reinforcement of financial growth and development. At macro level, communication researchers lined up with this viewpoint that encouraged "free streams" of media and data innovation content (news, publicizing, stimulation, and information) and equipment, as they saw these products as essential for Third World development and support in the worldwide economy. At the micro level, they upheld influential advertising crusades (in regions, for example, agribusiness, populace and wellbeing) as the most proficient intends to change traditional people and social orders.

Hence, during the 1950s, while rural sociologists were occupied with considering the modernising job of communication in provincial networks, political researchers, financial analysts and social psychologists were spreading out the elements of mass media and estimating their impact in the modernisation of developing nations. In the research and compositions on modernisation, communication was something beyond exchange between the source and receiver. It filled in as a social framework satisfying certain social capacities. Along these lines, the mass media came to fill in as agents and lists of modernisation in the Third World countries. Other than this macro-level analysis of the job of mass media, researchers too drew on communication effects research and on models portraying social-psychological attributes of people that were viewed as vital for an effective change from a traditional to a modern society.

Daniel Lerner's book, "The Passing of the Traditional Society" outlines the significant thoughts under the early mass media and modernisation approach. Lerner's model, more or less, reiterated the improvement of Western Europe and North America from a feudal or traditional stage to modern, military-industrial societies. His social development model comprised of the accompanying segments: (i) a core of portable people whose psychological orientation made it simpler to acknowledge quick changes in their own lives and the general social framework, (ii) a supreme mass media framework that fortified and quickened societal and individual change by scattering the new thoughts and demeanours helpful for modernisation, and (iii) the relationships between the significant files of urbanization, education, media presentation, and monetary and political investment to build up a modern Western-type society.

Traditional society was considered non-participant. Individuals were conveyed by family relationship into networks, detached from each other, without an urban-rural division of labor. In this manner individuals developed very few needs. Thus, people's perspectives were constrained to their physical horizons and their choices included other known individuals in well-known circumstances. On the other hand, in the modern society, individuals experienced proper tutoring, read newspapers, were paid in money for

occupations they could lawfully change, utilized money to devour products in a free and open market, and were allowed to vote in elections and express feelings on issues outer to their own lives. Researchers distinguished and clarified a psychological pattern in people that was both required and fortified by the modern society: a portable character. This individual was outfitted with a high limit with respect to recognizable proof with new parts of his/her condition and disguised the new demands made by the larger society.

At the end of the day, this individual had a high level of compassion. Empathy was basically the ability to see oneself in the other individual's circumstance. Lerner expressed that compassion satisfied two significant undertakings. To start with, it empowered the individual to work effectively in the modern society, which was always showing signs of change. Second, it was a key ability for people needing to move out of their traditional settings described by a feudal framework with respect to ownership of land, hierarchy based kinship and a trade economy. Compassion enabled the individual to disguise the procedure of modernisation by not just having the option to adapt to change, but also expecting and demanding it.

The second component in Lerner's model was the mass media. They played out a uniquework - by presenting people to new individuals, thoughts and frames of mind, they quickened the procedure of modernisation. In the West, especially in the United States, mystic versatility started with the development of physical travel. The development of physical or geological versatility implied that more individuals directed more noteworthy ability in envisioning themselves as odd people, living in odd circumstances and times than peopled in any past historical period. The advancement of mass media quickened this procedure significantly more. The prior increment of mystic experience through transportation was duplicated by the introduction to intervened understanding through the mass media. Accordingly, the mass media were significant agents of modernisation. Individuals in the Third World could extend their compassion by introduction to the mass media, which demonstrated them new places, behaviour and cultures. In short, the mass media had the capability of blowing the breezes of modernisation into

detached conventional networks and supplanting the structure of life, qualities and behaviour there with ones found in the modern Western society.

Therefore, the mass media worked as both an index and an agent of modernisation in the predominant discourse on development. The social change happened in three stages. First, also the most essential, was urbanization. In the second stage, literacy rates started to rise significantly. With expanding paces of urbanization, literacy and industrial development in the third stage, there was an incredible spurt in the development of the modern mass media. Lerner expressed that the mass media frameworks prospered distinctly in social orders. In this way, the mass media worked as a significant agent of modernisation. There was a close proportional connection among literacy and mass media exposure. The educated built up the media, which thus quickened the spread of literacy.

These developments set off an ascent in political support, (for example, casting a ballot)found in all propelled Western societies. While these speculations left the information gathered in the Middle East, Lerner recommended that the historical arrangement of these progressions was normal, as exemplified in the development of the Western societies.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q1. What is hypodermic needle theory?

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Q2. What is gratifications model?

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Q3. What is limited effects theory of mass communication?

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8.6 LET US SUM UP

- Since the 1940s, a huge exhibit of media innovations have developed that contact a huge audience through mass communication.
- At the point when researchers understood that not all individuals reacted to mass communications in a similar way, researchers started contemplating it by looking at it straightforwardly; these researchers were said to adopt mainstream approaches to mass communication.
- Initially, mass communication was viewed as an instrument to help bind together individuals by forming them into a group.
- The hypodermic needle theory suggested that mass communications' impact on its audience was prompt and amazing, similar to the infusion of a medication.
- The gratifications model argued that individuals shape the importance of media messages to address their own issues.
- The limited effects theory of mass communication guaranteed that mass communications' accomplishment in conveying messages was constrained
- Mass communications does not only imply an all inclusive message conveyed everywhere. It is focused to and characterized by it's speciality crowd, their education, income, and culture, etc.
- Lasswell utilized the contentions of Freudian Psychology, pragmatism, and Political Science to contend that society and people could be adequately constrained by a minority through purposeful publicity.
- Perse sets alternative model based on four kinds of media effects: direct, conditional, cumulative, and cognitive transactional. Perse's model shows a more nuanced understanding of the interchange of media content factors and audience factors paying little heed to time period.

- Neuman and Guggenheim examined fifty years of communications research and argued that media effects theory is characterized not by phases, but by six expansive theoretical zones: persuasion theories, active audience theories, social context theories, societal and media theories, interpretive effects theories, and new media theories.
- Daniel Lerner's book, "The Passing of the Traditional Society" outlines the significant thoughts under the early mass media and modernisation approach.
- Lerner's model, more or less, reiterated the improvement of Western Europe and North America from a feudal or traditional stage to modern, military-industrial societies.



8.7 FURTHER READING

1) Bryant, J., & Zillmann, D. (Eds.). (2009).*Media effects: Advances in theory and research*. Mahwah,NJ: Erlbaum.

2) Rogers, E. M. (1976). Communication and Development-The Passing of the Dominant Paradigm. Communication and Development: Critical Perspectives. Rogers (ed.). Beverly Hills: Sage Publications. pp. 121-148.



8.8 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Ans to Q No1. The hypodermic needle theory suggested that mass communications' impact on its audience was prompt and amazing, similar to the infusion of a medication.

Ans to Q No2. The gratifications model stated that individuals shape the importance of media messages to address their own issues.

Ans to Q No3. The limited effects theory of mass communication guaranteed that mass communications' accomplishment in conveying messages was constrained.