TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY OF MOMBASA

SCHOOL OF HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNICATION STUDIES

UNIVERSITY EXAMINATION FOR:

DIPLOMA IN MASS COMMUNICATION

HMC 2101: MASS COMMUNICATION

END OF SEMESTER EXAMINATION

SERIES: AUG 2019

TIME: 2HOURS

Instructions to Candidates
You should have the following for this examination
-Answer Booklet, examination pass and student ID
This paper consists of **FIVE** questions. Attemptquestion ONE (Compulsory) and any other TWO questions.
Do not write on the question paper

QUESTION ONE

1. (a) Explain the meaning of the following terms:

  (i) Virtual community   (2 Marks)

  (ii) Third-party effects   (2 Marks)

  (iii) Spiral of silence   (2 Marks)

  (iv) Public sphere   (2 Marks)

  (v) Public opinion   (2 Marks)

  (vi) Mass communication (2 Marks)

  (vii) Convergence   (2marks)

  (viii) Digitalization   (2marks)

  (ix) Public Interest   (2marks)

  (x) Cyber Space   (2marks)

b) Explain THREE types of audiences (6 marks)

c) List FOUR characteristics of mass media audience (4marks)

QUESTION TWO

Discuss Agenda setting theory in terms of

    (a) THREE principles of agenda setting   (12 marks)

This theory refers to how the media's news coverage determines which issues become the focus of public attention.

First introduced in 1972 by college professors, Maxwell McCombs and Donald Shaw, they found in surveying North Carolina voters during the 1968 U.S. presidential election that what people thought were the most important issues were what the mass media reported as the most critical.

Thus, agenda-setting theory was born, built on the notion that the mass media sets the agenda for what people should care about.

Core Assumptions

The agenda-setting theory rests on two basic assumptions.

The first is that the media filters and shapes what we see rather than just reflecting stories to the audience. An example of this is seeing a sensational or scandalous story at the top of a broadcast as opposed to a story that happened more recently or one that affects more people, such as an approaching storm or legislative tax reform.

The second assumption is that the more attention the media gives to an issue, the more likely the public will consider that issue to be important. Another way to look at it: Mass media organizations aren't telling us what to think or how we should feel about a story or issue, but are giving us certain stories or issues that people should think more about.

There is psychological and scientific merit to the agenda-setting theory. The more a story is publicized in the mass media, the more it becomes prominently stored in individuals' memories when they're asked to recall it, even if it doesn't specifically affect them or register as a prominent issue in their minds.

Types of Agenda Setting

There are three types of agenda setting:

- Public agenda setting: when the public determines the agenda for which stories are considered important
- Media agenda setting: when the media determines the agenda for which stories are considered important
- Policy agenda setting: when both the public and media agendas influence the decisions of public policy makers

Criticisms

One of the issues with the agenda-setting theory is that it is difficult to measure.

Research on the theory has been largely inconclusive in establishing a causal relationship between public prominence and media coverage. And in 2018, with the worldwide influence of the internet and social media, where almost everyone can find news they're looking for instead of being constrained by just relying on one or two sources, it's harder to convince others that the mass media is setting the agenda.

In addition, the theory doesn't work for people who have already made up their minds. For example, someone might believe that his or her elected official was the right choice for office, despite numerous compelling reports to the contrary presented by the mass media.

(b) FOUR components of agenda setting.   (8 marks)

to people and (2) these channels determine the priority with which individuals regard salient issues [28]. Rogers and Dearing [29] proposed an agenda-setting model that comprises three components: media agenda, public agenda, and policy agenda. Each of these agendas represents issues that are the chief concerns of a particular stakeholder. The interrelationship among these components forms the core of agenda-setting theory [30]. Figure 1 shows the process of agenda setting among the three Kozel et al [32] developed agenda setting in the context of public health and health promotion through the process of health promotion agenda-setting [12,32,33,34]. Agenda setting is about the interrelationship of the domains of policy, media, and public agendas; health promotion agenda-setting is about how health issues move through agendas to the point that they become actionable by policymakers [35]. Health promotion agenda-setting shifts the focus from the traditional health education target of individual risk behavior change to the formulation and adoption of innovative health policies which advocate for the public's health at population level [12,32]. Kozel et al [12,34], in response to an identified gap—the omission of agenda setting from health promotion planning models relating to innovation and diffusion—have developed a model of the health promotion agenda-setting process. The construction of this model includes the interrelated constructs of the media, policy, and public agendas with the integration of the seven responsibilities of health educators: assessment, planning, implementation, coordination, evaluation, acting as a resource person, and advocating for health [34]. Through the development of health promotion agenda-setting, including main components according to Rogers and Dearing's model [29]. As indicated in the model, media agenda setting refers to traditional media organization decisions on which issues to discuss through their channels. Public agenda setting revolves around the issues that are considered important to the general public. Policy agenda setting involves official organizations or government agencies that determine which issues are important and worthy of discussion [31]. lessons learned from its practical application, a range of factors has emerged that enhances the diffusion of health promotion and disease prevention innovations [33]. These include characteristic factors such as demographic descriptors; design factors such as strategies and methods used; and mechanism factors such as shared vision, synchronicity, salience, and social justice [33]. Kozel et al [33] identify ten key activities for agenda setters to use in practice, two of which are tailoring strategies to prioritize a health issue in a population and sustaining salience of an issue in the domains of policy, media, and public agendas. The application of health promotion agenda-setting in practice enables a comprehensive, planned, innovative, and sustainable course of action which facilitates prioritization of public health problems and the identification of alternative solutions [12]. Health promotion agenda-setting contributes to health promotion leadership and provides a mechanism through which to improve the formulation and adoption of health policy. In addition to the work by Kozel and colleagues on the development and application of health promotion agenda-setting, the concept and components of agenda setting have been used in public health and health promotion in a range of areas [36-42]. Understanding, researching, and implementing the use of ...

QUESTION THREE

Discuss FIVE functions of Mass Communication (20 marks)

QUESTION FOUR

Discuss the process of Mass Communication. (20 Marks)

QUESTION FIVE

a) Explain ANY THREE catergories of new media. (8 Marks)

i). Social networking sites

Most of us are familiar with social networking sites like Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn. These platforms help us connect with friends, family, and brands. They encourage knowledge-sharing and are all about personal, human-to-human interaction.

A social networking site is a Jill of all trades. Users can share thoughts, curate content, upload photos and videos, form groups based on interests, and participate in lively discussions. They're built around the user and everything that's important to them and their social circles.

ii) Social review sites

What's one of the first things you do when planning a trip or buying a new product? If you're anything like us, you'll head straight to the reviews.

Review sites like Yelp and TripAdvisor display reviews from community members for all sorts of locations and experiences. This eliminates a lot of the guesswork that goes into booking a restaurant or hotel. Not sure it's the right thing for you? Check out the reviews and you'll know.

iii) Image sharing sites

Visual content like images, infographics, and illustrations capture our hearts, eyes and imaginations. Social media platforms like Instagram, Imgur, and Snapchat are designed to amplify the power of image sharing.

Users create, curate, and share unique images that spark conversation and speak for themselves. A picture can be worth a thousand words to your business. Use these sites to:

iv) Video hosting sites

YouTube revolutionized the way we watch, create, and think about video. It transformed the medium into something accessible. Recent improvements in tech and connectivity helped video go the rest of the way.

Video hosting platforms like YouTube and Vimeo help creators put together content and share it to a platform optimized for streaming. This accessibility makes video a super important medium

v) Community blogs

Sometimes an image or post isn't complex enough for the message you've got to share, but not everyone on the internet wants to run a blog from a self-hosted website. That's a lot of work.

Shared blogging platforms like Medium and Tumblr give people a space to express their thoughts and help connect them with readers.

These community blog sites provide an audience while allowing plenty of room for customization and self-expression. Use them to:

b) Describe SIX characteristics of new media. (12 Marks)

i) Digital

With the growth of digital technology in the 1990s, the vast majority of information is now converted, stored and transmitted as binary code (a series of 1s and 0s.). Qualitative information has today become 'digitalised'.

Digitalization what allows so much information to be stored in compact hard disks or micro memory cards and it is also what allows for the near instantaneous transmission of information via cable and satellite.

Digitalization has also resulted in 'technological convergence', or the convergence of different forms of information (text, audio and visual) into one single 'system' – most web sites today offer a fusion of text and audio-visual information, and our mobile devices allow us to perform a variety of functions – not only reading text and watching/ listening to videos, but also searching for information, sending messages, shopping and using GPS functions.

Analogue is the opposite of digital. It is stored in physical form and examples include print newspapers, records, and old films and T.V. programmes stored on tape.

ii) Interactivity

'Old media' tended to be very much a 'one way' affair, with audiences on the receiving end of broadcasts, for the most part able to do little else that just passively watch media content.

New Media however is much more of a two way affair and it allows consumers and users to get more involved. It is much more of a two way form of communication than old media.

Increased interactivity can be seen in simple acts such as liking a Facebook post or commenting on news piece or blog. However some users get much more involved and create their own blogs and videos and actively upload their own content as 'prosumers'.

New Media seem to have fostered a more participatory culture, with more people involved and the roles between consumer and producer of media content becoming ever more blurred!

iii) Hypertextual

Hypertext, or 'links' are a common feature of new media, which allows users more freedom of choice over how they navigate the different sources of information available to them.

In more technical terms, links in web sites offer non-sequential connections between all kinds of data facilitated by the computer.

Optimists tend to see this feature as allowing for more individualised lifestyle choices, giving users the chance to act more independently, and to make the most of the opportunities new media markets make available to them.

iv) Global Networks

Digital Media has also facilitated cultural globalisation – we now interact much more globally and via virtual networks of people rather than locally.

These networks allow for 'collective intelligence' to increase – they allow us to pool our resources much more easily and to draw on a wider range of talents and sources of information (depending on our needs) than ever before.

NB one question to ask about networks is what the main hubs are, through which information flows. This has implications for power.

v) Virtual Worlds

New Media presents to us a very different reality from face to face to 'lived reality' – for most of us this means a very fast paced flow of information with numerous products and people screaming for our attention.

However, this situation has only existed since the mid 2000s, and it must be remembered that New Media reality is virtual reality.

This is especially true when it comes to social media sites which give users the opportunity to present themselves in any way they see fit, and while most users don't go full Cat Fish, most people choose to present only one aspect of themselves.

vi) Simulation

Simulation goes a step beyond the 'virtual' nature of New Media as usual. Simulation is most obviously experienced computer games which provide an immersive experience for users into a "virtual life" that is simulated through digital technology.

These virtual worlds are synthetic creations that ultimately rely on algorithms which set the parameters through which events in the gaming environment unfold.

Examples today include not only online RPG games, but also driving and flight simulations.

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