Media Habit - An Engagement with Current Trends In Media Consumer Preferences

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Abstract

Communication is the basic need of every human being. In the communication process, some medium is needed for the message to reach the goal. These mediums are said to be the means of media, through which the message can be delivered to more people in less time. Mass Media are used as channels of mass communication. The main purpose of media is to inform, educate and entertain. Also to motivate the community to accept new ideas and technologies so as to enhance their quality of life. The mass media plays a very significant role in every one’s life and thinking. According to oxford dictionaries ‘Media treated as singular or plural the main means of mass communication (broadcasting, publishing, and the Internet) regarded collectively. ‘Their demands were publicized by the media’ the word media comes from the Latin plural of medium. The traditional view is that it should therefore be treated as a plural noun in all its senses in English and be used with a plural rather than a singular verb’. Due to our dependence, it has become a part of our daily habit. Just as there a habit of eating, drinking, speaking and doing other things. Dependency on media is for various purposes. If someone uses the media for information, then some for entertainment, it is a time pass activity for some. Some people use it to increase their contact and connect with others. Today Media has become the need and habit of every person in some form.

Keywords- Media habits, Mass media,

Introduction

Cory Janssen, Media is the collective communication outlets or tools that are used to store and deliver information or data. According to Dictionary.com. The word media is defined as "one of the means or channels of general communication in society, as newspapers, radio, television etc.." Business dictionary defined media as “the Communication channels through which news, entertainment, education, data, or promotional messages are disseminated. Media includes every broadcasting and narrowcasting medium such as newspapers, magazines, TV, radio, billboards, direct mail, telephone, fax and internet. Media is the plural of medium and can take a plural or singular verb, depending on the sense intended. Data storage material divided into three broad categories according to the recording method: (1) Magnetic, such as diskettes, disks, tapes, (2) Optical, such as microfiche, and (3) Magneto-Optical, such as CDs and DVDs .”

John Robert Colombo (1994), The term media in its modern application relating to communication channels is traced back to its first use as such by Canadian communications theorist Marshall McLuhan, who stated in Counterblast (1954): "The media are not toys; they should not be in the hands of Mother Goose and Peter Pan executives. They can be entrusted only to new artists, because they are art forms.” By the mid-1960s, the term had spread to general use in North America and the United Kingdom. (Mass media, in contrast, was, according to H.L. Mencken, used as early as 1923 in the United States.)
Steven Colemen, says ‘Mass media is the means used to communicate to the general public. Mass media means technology that is intended to reach a mass audience. It is the primary means of communication used to reach the vast majority of the general public. The most common platforms for mass media are newspapers, magazines, radio, television, and the Internet. The general public typically relies on the mass media to provide information regarding political issues, social issues, entertainment, and news in pop culture. Through media, news outlets have a major influence on the general public and a major impact on the public’s opinion on certain topics. In many cases, the media is the only source that the general public relies on for news. When Neil Armstrong landed on the moon in 1969, mass media made it possible for the public to witness this historical event. Media also plays a critical role in educating the public; educational programs exist on channels. The Internet also plays an essential role in educating the general public. With the information on the Internet, one could learn anything from something’. Media succeeded in creating a common culture.

Kevel J. Kumar, (2010, page 50). As generally interpreted the ‘mass’ media are the press, cinema, radio and television. But books, magazines, pamphlets and direct mail literature and posters also need to be included in the label. They are so termed because their reach extends to vast heterogeneous masses of the population living in a wide and extensive area of a country. The means they employ to communicate messages to the masses are technological- printing machines, records, cameras, fax machines, cable, modems, computers and satellite. Their communications are thus interposed and ‘mediated’, they are not as direct or face-to-face as interpersonal exchanges.

The main purpose of the media is, precisely, to communicate, but according to their type of ideology, it can specialize to inform, educate, transmit, entertain, form opinion, teach, monitor etc. The concept of media is one that is used to refer to all media in which an idea or message can be transmitted. Today, however, the concept is commonly related with certain media, more specifically with newspapers or magazines, television, radio, internet, graphic publications. In the last century, a revolution in telecommunications has greatly altered communication by providing new media for long distance communication. Analog telecommunications include some radio systems, historical telephony systems and historical television broadcasts. Now Digital telecommunications allow for computer-mediated communication, telegraphy and computer networks. Modern communication media now allow for intense long-distance exchanges between larger numbers of people (many-to-many communication via e-mail, Internet forums, and teleporation). On the other hand, many traditional broadcast media and mass media favour one-to-many communication (television, cinema, radio , newspaper, magazines, and also social media). Electronic media usage is growing, although concern has arisen that it distracts youth from face-to-face contact with friends and family. Electronic media now comes in the form of tablets, laptops, desktops, cell phones, mp3 players, DVDs, game systems, radio and television. Technology has spiked to record highs within the last decade, thus changing the dynamic of communication. The meaning of electronic media, as it is known in various spheres, has changed with the passage of time. The term media has achieved a broader meaning nowadays as compared to that given it a decade ago. While internet is arguably one of the most effective tools in media for communication tools such as e-mail, Skype, Face book etc., have brought people closer together and created new online communities. We're living now in an era of cage free content. Yet media producers still have a terrible habit of caging their work within the medium they happen to understand.

Pahwa, 2006, Media has changed radically in the last few years. A new media called Internet has invaded our lives & managed to capture most of our attention. The Indian youth uses the Internet most
for email, then chat. Online shopping, gaming, dating/match-making and travel are rather low in the list. keval J. Kumar, (2010, page 49) ‘ In essence, the mass media are the tools or technologies that facilitates dissemination of information and entertainment to a vast number of receivers. They are the tools of large- scale manufacturers and distribution of information and related messages. While cinema, radio, television, cable and the press can easily be recognized as ‘ mass media’, it requires some stretching of the established meaning of the term to include recent technologies ( sometimes termed the ‘ new media’) such as pagers, iPods, cellular phones, computers, electronic mail and the internet as ‘ mass media’.

Due to the constant use of the media, it has become a habit for us as a habit today. For this reason someone has a habit of reading newspapers daily, someone is dependent on TV for their entertainment and information. There is a regular listener of radio. At the same time, due to technological advances, the internet has become very popular and necessary among the specialty youth, whether it is needed for work or seeking information or staying in touch with people. Every man has somehow been associated with some media in some form. The beginning of human communication through designed channels, vocalization or gestures, dates back to ancient cave paintings, drawn maps, and writing. The Persian Empire (centered on present-day Iran) played an important role in the field of communication. It has the first real mail or postal system, which is said to have been developed by the Persian emperor Cyrus the Great (c. 550 BC) after his conquest of Media (From Wikipedia).

Media Habits definition and format

Media habit describes as a media and habit in two forms. While the habit has been analyzed by a number of writers on psychological terms, the media has been defined as Print, Electronic, and New Media. After the advent of the new media- Internet, television and radio are sometimes being defined as a traditional media. Thus media habit can be seen on the basis of the use of many forms of media, their preference pattern, choice and interest. Research on the uses and effects of media has been a fertile area for study over the past five decades. Yet, most of the research has focused on individuals rather than family systems. Some researchers have begun to consider media within an ecological or systems framework. Media use is often said to be a habit, especially when people use media repeatedly or in similar situations every time. Skillful programming is supposed to synchronize daily habit and media habits of the recipients. The term habit also attracted scientific interest over the years. The question of media selection a process are performed thoughtfully and with higher reflection or habitually and automatically touches upon one of the most discussed topics in audience effect studies. Habit as “learned sequences of acts that have become automatic responses to specific cues, and are functional in obtaining certain goals or end states” (Verplanken and Arts, 1999). Graybiel, A.M, (2008) In other words, habits are “sequential, repetitive, motor, or cognitive behaviors elicited by triggers, that, once released, can go to completion without constant conscious oversight”. Habits are defined here as the behavioral response of script-based processing (Arts, Verplanken 1999).Verplanken, B. and Orbell , (2010) The strength of a habit is associated with the frequency of the behavior. LaRose,(2010) Habits can also govern media use. Having learnt a behavior in previous performances, processing in simplified by reliance on scripts, and habit strength increases (Friedrichs 2002). Habit formation and habit persistence as foundations of addiction have been a popular topic in economic studies on consumer behavior (Messinis 1999).
Historically, habit has been measured by assessing the frequency of past behaviour (Sheeran, 2002). Lally et. al (2010), A social media habit might be opening Face book minutes after closing it, or swiping the cell phone on, without any intended purpose. Habits are learned through context-dependent repetition such as brushing teeth every day. Goodman (1983) stated, “The family system can be seen to include the family unit and the television. Family members interact with each other and with the television, both individually and as a family unit” (p. 408). This is expected to positively influence consistent media usage and to guarantee permanent television rating, steady sales numbers, and a continuous and predictable audience (Cooper, 1996). There are many domains in socio-technical research where understanding habit formation and evolution would be valuable. Media habit defined (after LaRose, 2010; Verplanken & Wood, 2006) as a form of automaticity in media consumption that develops as people repeat media consumption behavior in stable circumstances. How might repeated social networking evolve from a “good” habit that merely indulges a personal media preference into a “bad” habit with potentially harmful life consequences that might rightfully be termed compulsive, problematic, pathological, or addictive? And, is social networking any more or less problematic than other popular Internet activities?

LaRose, R. (2010), LaRose concludes, a stable situation is required for the formation of media habits but not necessarily for their subsequent activation. The ubiquity of media products and their multiple connections to each other, to people in one’s life, and to a host of cultural symbols may account for the relative context independence of media habits compared to other behavioural domains. That is because media consumption behaviours and the scripts in which they are embedded have a wider range of cognitive associations connected to them than many other types of behaviours so that virtually any object, event, person, mood state, or memory may follow a chain of mental association that activates habitual media consumption behaviour. However, it is assumed that media use is seldom completely controlled by habits. Rather, a combination of both decision making routes seems plausible. Livingstone (2002), One characteristic of today’s media environment is its changeability where new techniques enable new forms of media consumption.

Q. Lisa Bu (2008), A media use habit could cover a wide range of media usage levels. For example, people who watch network evening news once a day at the same time everyday have a television use habit, but their frequency of television news use is low. In contrast, people who watch cable news whenever possible every day do not have a television use habit but their frequency of television news use is high. The second interesting pattern is that television use habit and television use frequency are related to online news use differently, negative for habit but positive for frequency. According to Lange, Ryan, A great deal of concern has been focused on the potential dangers of youth use of the internet, particularly in regards to use displacing other activities such as sports. We can use an examination of internet habits as an example of how media habits in general may function. Media consumption patterns in modern times and pointed out that newspaper industry had witnessed decline due to the dominant television medium and Internet based communication resources and services. Different media played different roles in an individual’s news consumption, differing by purpose, subject or mood. Other than this levels of trust apportioned to media thus differ markedly – not all sources are the same?

Review of literature
Livingstone and Tim (2008) examined the contribution of media consumption to civic participation and pointed out that three important factors namely likelihood of voting, interest in politics, and actions taken in response to a public issue of concern to the respondent had a bearing on the civic participation. Narasimhamurthy, (2014) The use of web has become one of the most famous and important features among University students. Students have very much interested in using web for their daily habits. They usage of web in the entertainment function was described as relatively new and growing. Further the web has become a core part of everyday life and specific routines or habits have developed around web usage, just as with earlier mass media such as newspapers and television. The web was also characterized as convenient, customizable to personal interests, and giving students control over content. Some of the students expressed that it gives us what we want, when we want it. majority of University students use web for academic purposes while sizeable number of respondents said they use web media for chat with friends and even some times family members and relatives also.

M. Gautham, (2006) study reveals that the consumption of the media is extremely high among the legislators of Karnataka. In terms of degree of consumption, the usage of newspapers is the highest, followed by television, magazines, and radio.

DR. Laldinliana (2012) the respondents devote more time for TV viewing on weekends (37.03%) compared to on weekdays (32.82%). It appears that about 82% of the respondents who own TV were in the habit of watching the two local channels with their family members. As TV has become everybody’s product almost in every family, it has emerged as a more powerful medium than the print medium in terms of its reach and impact.

Napoli, Julie and Ewing, Michael T (2011), This study provides insight into the media habits and internet practices of teenagers and young adults in Western Australia. The results indicated that 64% of respondent’s watch endless than two hours of television per day, 26% watched between three to four hours and the remainder (10%) watched television for more than five hours. The most frequently read forms of print media were newspapers, shopping catalogues and fashion magazines.

D.A. Gentile, D.A. Walsh , (2002:78) “A normative study of family media habits” documents family media habits in six areas: electronic and print Media Use, parental Monitoring of children’s media, parental Consistency regarding rules for children’s media use, parents ‘reports of observable Media Effects on their children, parents’ Knowledge about media and media effects, and how much children participate in Alternative Activities to electronic media. studied the family media habits, including the use of television, movies, videos, computer and video games, the Internet, music and print media. The study revealed that the parents had understood the negative impact of violent video games, television programs and movies on the children. For example, children watching at least 10 hour of television per week, children’s school performance declines as their amount of television watching increases. It is not sufficient to base these debates and studies on discrete statistics such as how individuals use media or how often a television is on in a given household. Media is not a discrete variable within the family environment; it is part of the rich interplay of variables that makes family life complex and formative. It is the most comprehensive study of family media habits conducted to date, in that it measures multiple aspects of family, parental, and children media habits. Many family media habits predict children’s
school performance. Furthermore, having TVs in children’s bedrooms is correlated with lower scores in all six areas, as well as with lower school performance.

Svensson, Anette, 2014, Other media forms both the male and female participants spent time consuming in their spare time were film and TV series, where the males spent 377.51 and the females 423.24 minutes/person/week on film and 348.41 and 455.77 minutes/person/week, respectively, on TV series. The females consumed an average of 195.93 minutes/person/week on a blog/Twitter/diary, while the males consumed 645.24 minutes/person/week on computer games/console games in their spare time. Females listen to music, watch TV series and read blogs/tweets/diaries to a greater extent than the males, while males play more computer/console games than the females.

Jad Melki, (2010) this pilot study surveyed 2,744 university and high school students in Jordan, Lebanon, and the United Arab Emirates. It asked about their media consumption and production habits, and about their attitudes towards certain media. Almost all surveyed participants had used online social networking and most used it for fun, to connect with family. With a majority saying they spent an hour or less per day on news. The vast majority received most of their news from television and word of mouth (friends and family). More than half said they used media for over three hours per day for entertainment purposes. Television topped the list of most frequently used media for entertainment, followed closely by mobile phone texting, listening to music on a PC, talking on a mobile phone, and listening to music (on other devices). According to television Habits Males were more likely than females to watch sports, documentaries, game shows, newscasts and political talk shows, while females were more likely than males to watch music videos, drama series and cartoons.

Everette E. Dennis, Justin D. Martin, Robb Wood with Marium Saeed, (2016) A survey is designed to know about the media use in the middle east countries- Egypt, Lebanon, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Tunisia and United Arab Emirates. Television remains an important source of entertainment in the region, but is losing ground to the internet. About eight in 10 national internet users in the region use Facebook and What's App, the dominant social media platforms. TV viewing has declined. The decline is most notable in Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and Egypt between 2014 and 2016. The share of internet user’s, passing time online daily jumped 11 percentage points (63% in 2014 vs. 74% in 2016). Women are more likely than men to watch TV everyday while internet users of both genders are equally likely to go online every day. Newspaper readership dropped across the region between 2014 and 2016. Most national internet users check news online. More men than women read newspapers in all countries, except in Tunisia and the UAE. Among internet users, more men than women consume news online. The biggest gender gaps are in Lebanon and Qatar where more men than women read online news by 12 (Lebanon) and 10 (Qatar) percentage points. Egypt is the exception, where approximately 90% of both men and women check news online. Relatively equal portions of men and women read news online daily in Tunisia, Saudi Arabia, and the UAE.

Tom Moring et. Al (2011) study say that media language choice is not only a matter of taste or purpose, but also a consequence of several background variables exploring objective factors of ethno linguistic vitality. Just to highlight a few, the language of media is different in a monolingual family and a bilingual family; in a local linguistic environment where most people speak the minority language or in one where the majority language is dominant. The reality of selection when choosing entertaining programs in the mother tongue, for example – is markedly different in areas where there are 2, 5 or 10 TV channels are available in the minority language.
Suping Z.hang, (2007) This study enriches the uses and gratifications theory by testing uses and gratifications theory with a multi-ethnic population. It suggests cultural background would lead to different reasons for using media. Meanwhile, the educational level also contributes to various media use motives. As the uses and gratifications theory suggests, psychological conditions closely correlate to mass media consumption motives. Study suggests that psychological variables, not demographic backgrounds are the primary factors which influence immigrants’ media use patterns. In other words, psychological factors have more evident impact than demographic factors on immigrants’ media use patterns. Demographic variables like gender, ethnic background, educational level and length of residence have little significant influence on an individual immigrant’ mass media use time.

BBC Media report, (2014) majority of young people in Cambodia has access to TV, radio or mobile phone at least once a month. Levels of access to TV and radio are the same, the frequency of use dicers substantially. The TV audience is much more likely to be watching daily compared to the radio audience, suggesting that the TV audience is easier to access because they engage more frequently. Evenings are the peak time for TV and radio use, though radio also peaks early in the morning and around lunchtime too. Generally, women are less likely to have access to TV and radio compared to men; rural young people are less likely to have access than their urban counterparts and those with lower incomes have less access than those with higher incomes. Mobile phones are mostly used for calls, accessing radio and texts. There is near equal access for males and females, urban and rural and all age groups. Income group does show markedly different patterns for access for mobile phones, however. Radio is behind TV in terms of use. TV and radio are the most common sources of information regarding civic management issues and current affairs; however, social contacts – although not used so commonly as sources – are the most trusted sources of information on such issues.

Monika Fodor and others (2013), The expected change of media consumption habits according to age groups we observed that 15-20 year olds had mentioned in bigger extent compared to the sample and other age groups that they would be reading several daily newspapers in five years’ time. 21-25 year-olds stated just the opposite about their daily newspaper reading habits; the ratio of responses was the biggest of who said that they would read less daily papers. The biggest consumer groups of online free contents seem to be the current groups of 31-40 and 41-50 year-olds. Above 50 year-olds are also becoming more open towards free online contents, which cannot be said about those of over 60s. The most susceptible group to pay online content is that of today’s 15-20 year-olds; and there were above-the-average numbers of 21-30 year-olds who said they would consume these contents to a bigger extent. Printed magazines will be read by the biggest numbers of 21-25 year-olds, who mentioned this in higher than average numbers compared to the sample average and any other age group.

Media use in the European Union report, Fieldwork: November (2012) Television is still by far the most popular medium with Europeans. 87% watch it every day or almost every day. Radio remains the second most widely used medium by Europeans. There are pronounced differences between countries: at least seven out of ten respondents listen to the radio every day or almost every day in Belgium (71%), Germany (70%) and Ireland (70%), while far fewer do so in Romania (28%), Portugal (26%) and Bulgaria (25%). More than seven out of ten Europeans read the written press at least once a week (71%). The older the respondents are the more likely they are to read the written press every day or almost every day. A clear majority of Europeans also use the Internet at least once a week (69%). More than half of Europeans now use the Internet every day or almost every day (54%). If we focus on the “first” source of information, television is still in the lead (62%), but the Internet (13%) is now ranked slightly ahead of the written press (12%). Radio remains in fourth place (8%).
online social networks at least once a week. The frequency of social network use has therefore increased.

**Dr. Puja Walia, Sarika Ahluwalia,** TV is the most preferred media among youth but presence of Internet in youths cannot be ignored. Internet offers a great potential for the marketers.

**Maryam Vaziri, (2016),** The data analysis revealed the nature and extent media habits of Iranian students in Mysore city. The study reveals that the consumption of the media is not much high among the Iranian students in Mysore city. In terms of degree of consumption, the usage of Internet is the highest, followed by television and mobile. Respondents do not attach much importance to magazine and radio. The usage of e-mail and social networks as tools of communication is high. The number of respondents employing the SMS as a mode of communication is high. Iranian people do not pay attention to media mostly they cannot achieve to whatever information they need from the media. They prefer to get news about world issues from international media. Some of them follow Iranian news from Iranian channels itself. Results show Internet, Mobile and TV are most useful here for Iranian people. It needed more close relationship with Iranian to take their attention to the media by give them some opportunities and get familiar with their interests, considers and way of getting information.

**Roberts et al. (2005),** These results suggest that 6-6 1/2 hours may represent a ceiling in the amount of time young people can or will devote to using media. Relatively large differences in time spent with TV, video games and computers emerge when comparing kids who have them in their bedroom with those who don’t. Video games are clearly gender-typed. Boys are much more likely than girls to play video games on any given day. Clearly, in homes where the TV plays a central role in defining the environment, all media exposure increases. Except for time spent reading, the least contented kids report more media exposure than those classified as belonging to either the moderately or highly contented groups. The amount of time young people have available to devote to media seems to have reached some kind of ceiling, but the amount of media messages to which they are exposed apparently has not. In homes where there is some attempt to control amount of viewing, content viewed, or both, kids watch less TV, play video games less, listen to less music, and spend less time on the computer.

**Vahlberg V (2010)** explained on “A Survey of Three Studies about Youth Media Usage” this report, commissioned by the Newspaper Association of America Foundation as part of its long-standing emphasis on young newspaper readers, reviews three of the most significant recent studies.

**Factors Influencing Media Habits**

There are so many factors influencing media habits some are demographic factors and some are based on situation and conditions. Some time our media habits depend on environmental factors, our beliefs and tradition and sometimes effect from circumstances. **Bogart (1972:37)** studied the media habits of whites and blacks in Africa and stated that the impact of aging was a major factor which influenced the media consumption habits in African society. The scholar suggested that people should be empowered to cultivate better social relations and media habits in modern times regardless of racial differences. **Melki (2010:137)** analyzed the media habits of youth in three countries and noted that country of residence, gender, age group, education level, and income level had a bearing on the media habits of youth in the study areas. The study revealed that the respondents had cultivated different media habits in modern times due to demographic background. Youth should be given proper orientation on the cultivation of healthy media habits.
Olube, Friday Karttey (2013), Although blacks and whites surveyed exhibit similar socio-demographic qualities, there exists between them a substantial differences in the choice of electronic and print media. The use of television by both groups differs significantly, too. However, blacks and whites show no statistically significant difference in interpersonal communication choice and use patterns. The amount of media use and its correlation with personality features of the recipient (Finn, 1997). Increased media usage (in terms of amount) is correlated with poorer social relationships, fewer social interactions, lower reading scores, and poorer school achievement (e.g., Dorr & Rabin, 1995; Stanford Institute for the Quantitative Study of Society, 2000). According to Fishman and others, the overall effect of media tends rather to undermine than support minority identity as mainstream media accelerate language shift and assimilation of minority communities (Fishman 2001: 473–474, Busch 2001: 35 ff, Cormack 2007). Delener and Neelankavil (1990) compared the media usage of Asian and Hispanic immigrants, reporting clear-cut and unique media preferences of the two subculture groups. The most important media in reaching Hispanics were television and radio. By comparison, Asians on the whole preferred newspapers and specific television shows, especially feature movies and variety shows.

Conclusion
It can be seen that with the ever increasing, expansion of media and the advent of new technology, today all are connected to the media in some form, whether they are readers of newspapers or magazines or TV viewers or the Internet Consumer. Every person's must use the media in some form. At the same time, increasing dependence on media resources, changing interest in programs, likes and preference have helped people's media habits and they have also done the work of reforming and they are influenced and attracted in some form. It is the result of the changing media habits of the people today that people are getting increasingly inclined towards TV and the internet, dependence on it and the time spent on it. Therefore, internet is a sustainable solution to overcome the "gap" between developed and developing countries as both will get a chance to learn from each other. We can say that media, through media and communications psychology, has helped to connect diverse people from far and near geographical location. It has also helped in the aspect of on-line or internet businesses and other activities that have an on-line version. All media intended to affect human behavior is initiated through communication and the intended behavior is couched in psychology. Therefore, understanding media and communications psychology is fundamental in understanding the social and individual effects of media. The expanding field of media and communications psychology combines these established disciplines in a new way.

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