**Media and communication research**

**Need**

The convergence of traditional media industries and newer technologies has created a new communications environment that impacts society and culture. We are in the midst of another shift in media, and the transformation it is making to the culture we all share and the media industries that reﬂect it. Our uses of media are evolving and our habits are changing as yesterday’s necessities become today’s luxuries. We spend more time with movies, video games, online entertainment, and cell phones, pervades all aspects of the daily lives of our students (Wimmer & Dominic, 2015).

The need of research is to prepare students to cope with that environment, as both critical consumers of media and aspiring media professionals. We reach for that need by providing an approach to mass media that integrates traditional media (magazines, books, newspapers, music, radio, film, and television) and newer media (cable, satellite, computer media, interactive television, the Internet, and cell phones), and emphasizes the intersection of technology, media, and culture (ibid). These are changes that affect our society as well as those across the globe and our students need to learn about them in their introductory courses to prepare them to be productive citizens.

**Importance**

It has been concerned with gathering data that can help us answers/questions about various aspects of a society, which enable us to understand the illness of society. We are in many ways “consumers” of research results. To use the findings intelligently, we need to be able to judge the adequacy of the scientific method.

It starts with observing the facts, then progresses through theories—certain principles that explain and predict individuals, attitudes and behaviors and emotions.

**Note:** To understand the philosophy of media and communication research we need to simplify it as under:

1. Sustainable try to explore the effects of mass media on segmented individuals of society. Or gathering data through the use of well designed questionnaire to address the illnesses of society in the light of people opinions and suggestions (survey research).

2. (a) Media Coverage to conflicts: to explore the trend (priority) among media content towards social issues in terms of news stories photographs or statements, and (b) media treatment to conflicts resolutions: exploring media experts opinions about different social burning issues or currents affairs in terms of favorable, neutral, and unfavorable stances (content analysis).

**Definitions**

**Note**: Research has been defined in a number of different ways, and while there are similarities, there does not appear to be a single, all-encompassing definition that is embraced by all who engage in it.

* Media research is utilized to investigate facts, reconfirm the results of previous experiments, provide solutions for existing or new issues, support theories, as well as propound new theories. Furthermore, research involves knowledge building, carrying out experiments to find out the cause and effect of something as well as to provide the basis for further studies (Zelius; et al. (2017).
* Kothari, (2004) describes research as “a scientific and systematic search for pertinent information on a specific topic.”
* Research also involves creativity that is carried in a systematic way in order to improve knowledge which consists of human knowledge, culture, and society, (OECD 2002).
* "Any creative systematic activity undertaken in order to increase the stock of knowledge, including knowledge of man, culture and society, and the use of this knowledge to devise new applications" (Research and development UNESCO Definition ( *2018)*.
* **Research** is "creative and systematic work undertaken to increase the stock of knowledge". It involves the collection, organization, and analysis of information to increase understanding of a topic or issue. Research projects can be used to develop further knowledge on a topic, or for education. To test the validity of instruments, procedures, or experiments, research may replicate elements of prior projects or the project as a whole (Thomag, 2014).
* Research is a process of steps used to collect and analyze information to increase our understanding of a topic or issue". It consists of three steps: pose a questions, collect data to answer the questions, and present an answer to the questions (Creswell, 2008).
* Research in more detail as "studious inquiry or examination; *especially* : investigation or experimentation aimed at the discovery and interpretation of facts, revision of accepted theories or laws in the light of new facts, or practical application of such new or revised theories or laws” *(*Merriam-Webster.com. Merriam-Webster, Inc. *2018)*

**Objectives**

* To gain familiarity with a social phenomena and to active insight into it
* To portray accuracy of the characteristics of particular individuals, situations and groups
* To determine the frequency with which something occurs
* To improve an academic excellence

**Motivations: What makes people to understand research?**

* Desire to get a research degree along-with consequential benefits
* Desire to face the challenge in solving the unsolved problem (economic, social, professional and practical).
* Desire to get intellectual excitement of doing some creative work
* Desire to be a service to society

**How it is possible**? It needs to activate the two basic tools: (a) human senses, which permit to observe what is happening, and (b) human mind, which allows us to predict about what we have observed. The last one requires to find-out reasonable answers to the questions of how and why?

**Key points**

* Research simply means search for knowledge
* Careful inquiry through search for new facts in any branch of knowledge
* Defining and re-defining problems, formulating hypothesis and suggesting solution, gathering, organizing, and evaluating data
* Search for knowledge through objective and systematic method and finding workable solutions to social and academic problems
* Search again, to take another more careful look, or to find out more, or to discover something new.
* **Reason**: something may be wrong with what we have observed. Or there is likely something more than meets the “eyeball.”

# Six sequential working model

1. Identifying the research problem.
2. Formulating the problem statement
3. Defining the terms in problem statements.
4. Selecting an appropriate methodology.
5. Observing relevant empirical data.
6. Analyzing and presenting the data

**Key Elements**

**Construct**

Construct is a broader level concept that has three distinct characteristics: **a)** it is an abstract idea that is usually broken down into dimensions represented by lower-level concepts, or a combination of concepts. **b)** it can’t be observed directly. **c)** it is usually designed for particular research purpose so that it exact meaning relates only to the context in which it is found.

For example, the construct “involvement” has been used in many advertising studies, and that is difficult to see directly, and it includes the concepts of attention, interest, and arousal (excitement, stimulation) (Wimmer & Dominic, 2015).

**Variable**

A phenomena or event that can be measured or manipulate (influence/operate). The empirical counterpart (matching part) of a construct is called variable. It links the empirical world with the theoretical one. Variable can have more than one value along a continuum. For example variable “satisfaction” with pay-per-view of TV programs can take on different values, a person can be satisfied a lot, somewhat, little or not at all. Variables are labeled marker variables, because they seen to define the construct under study. How it is done and how they are measured? Variables are classified in terms of their relationship with one another.

**Independent variables**

They are potentially influenced some other factors: person information, feeling, attitude, opinion and behaviors and systematically varied by the researcher in view of research study’s nature.

**Dependent Variables**

They are observed and their values presumed to depend on the effects of the independent variables. Or the dependent variable is what the researcher wishes to explain. Keep in mind that the distinction between types of variable depends on the purposes of a research study

**Concepts**

Concept is a term that expresses an abstract idea formed by generalizing from particulars and summarizing related observations (Wimmer & Dominic, 2015).

**Validity and Reliability**

Finallywe need to ensure validity and reliability for recognition of the study among experts in the field. **Validity** is the degree to which we are actually measuring what we intend to measure.

**Reliability** is the extent to which a result is stable and consistent.