Informational uses between sociology representations and practices Models, Uses and Expectations Usages informationnels entre représentations et pratiques sociologiques Modèles, Usages et Attentes

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Abstract:

Information and communication technology at the social level has led to the creation of a new type of converged and interactive multi-media community. Where the time cycle of technical development has become very short due to the communication revolution. The second half of the twentieth century witnessed highly technological forms of merging between the phenomena of the information explosion and the communication revolution, especially the use of the electronic computer and its various uses in storing and retrieving a summary of what was produced by human thought.

In light of these transformations and technological developments, the virtual public sphere has been closely linked to the Internet, as it represents the opportunity for individuals to exchange ideas, information, and common and homogeneous interests, and to be a wide field for free expression of their opinions away from their real societies.

In the context of information interactions and exchanges, our topic is a sociological presentation of informational uses according to some explanatory models for these uses, and the disclosure of the most important future expectations for information and communication technology transformations.

Keywords: Explanatory models, Informational uses, Expectations, Information and communication technology.

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Introduction:

The nineteenth century witnessed the mass communication revolution, which was completed in the twentieth century, which became known as the century of information, where electronic inventions followed at an amazing speed, in terms of the merger between satellite technology and computer technology, the latter known as the computer, which is the pinnacle of the human mind in terms of inventions embodied in the Internet. The latter, known as the computer, is the pinnacle of the inventions produced by the human mind, embodied especially in the Internet, which brought humanity into an interactive era without borders and communication restrictions.

As communication is one of the skills that an individual acquires in communicating his ideas, opinions and messages to others, it has become more than just the exchange of messages between individuals, it is highly related to the emotions and intentions behind these messages.

For this reason, the importance of effective communication stands out with its benefits and advantages that help individuals build their personalities, achieve their goals, and fulfil their needs. As we delve deeper into the process of media and communication transformations and developments, it has moved in an accelerated line towards the stage of electronic communication. This is the technology by which various information and data are transferred in the form of electronic signals between different countries of the world.

This technology has helped to develop the existing levels and forms of communication, and has provided a great deal to benefit from them and employ them in the fields of communication and media, through some of the distinctive characteristics of these media communication systems, such as interactivity, diversity, integration, and transcending cultural, temporal, and spatial boundaries.

In conjunction with the novelty of some studies in this field, especially Internet communication, research on the causes and motives of use has topped the most important recent trends, by extrapolating its results within the framework of theories in the field of humanities and social sciences, which has resulted in what is called virtual communities whose members gather around

goals that are close to their real communities. These goals have been achieved by using well-known online media sites, which in turn have provided thousands of other sites that provide an integrated media service in the real world.

Hence, the importance of this topic in revealing the broad expression of the fields of media and communication, and how ideas, information, experiences, expertise and attitudes are transferred from one individual to another.

In this context, we tried to research the topic of information uses through a sociological approach that explains the reality of these uses between representations and practices. We have employed the most important theoretical models explaining the uses of media and communication and their applications in the field, as well as the most important future expectations of the virtual transformations brought about by the uses of information.

Based on these research orientations, the main question of our topic is as follows: What are the theoretical and applied conceptualisations of information uses?

1. The most important theoretical models explaining the uses of media and communication

A model is an attempt to present in symbolic form the underlying relationships between the variables that make up a particular event or system. Models are symbolic tools that help us understand the phenomenon or system, while trying to understand the relationship between the basic elements of the phenomenon, with the aim of organising information, developing scientific research, prediction and control. (Hassan Emad Makkawi, Leila Hussein Al-Sayed, 1998, p. 36, 37.)

1.1. Information Seeking Model

This model attempts to identify the determinants of behaviour by revealing the behaviour of individuals in their quest for information. Among the most important factors influencing the behaviour of individuals when seeking information are the following:

- Individuals seek information that reinforces their current attitudes and opinions; they choose information that reinforces their expectations, attitudes, and emotions.

- The individual seeks to fulfil his/her interest by exploiting and employing as much information as possible to satisfy daily and immediate needs.

- The individual is constantly trying to meet and satisfy his/her own preferences and needs, which are also based on entertainment, so he/she seeks to obtain this information for entertainment purposes, whether by acquiring books that he/she enjoys reading and browsing, or watching radio or television programmes during his/her free time.

- Based on individual and cultural differences, the personal characteristics of media users differ, so that each user seeks to obtain information in line with his or her personality characteristics.

- Society influences the process of grooming individuals to use different means of communication, due to the societal influence structure based on shaping the way the public uses and prefers a particular and distinctive medium, for example in obtaining a global news source. Consequently, society becomes the country's dominant influence on the media.

Louis Donohue and his colleagues propose a flow model for obtaining, avoiding and processing information, which assumes the existence of motivational stimuli that work to identify the situations or issues that require individuals to seek information in accordance with their real-life image, so that they can compare it with their values, knowledge and culture, in order to achieve the ability to deal with these situations and issues, and to achieve their ability to satisfy their needs and the way they deal with information and how they are satisfied in seeking it. (Saleh Abu Isbaa, Iman Ibrahim, 2017, p. 15, 16.)

1.2. Usage and Satisfaction Model

The uses and gratifications model provides a set of concepts and evidence that emphasises that individuals' attitude towards the media is more powerful than personal, social and demographic variables. (Saleh Abu Isbaa, 1995, p. 88.)

Edelstein and his colleagues argue that the establishment of the uses and gratifications model came as a reaction to the notion of the media's overwhelming power, which gives a positive characterisation of the media audience. Accordingly, the uses and gratifications perspective does not consider audiences as passive recipients of mass communication messages, but rather individuals consciously choose the means of communication to which they wish to be exposed, and the type of content that fulfils their psychological and social needs through the available information and entertainment channels.

Katz and his colleagues argue that the uses and gratifications perspective relies on a set of basic assumptions, the most important of which are:

- Audience members are active participants in the mass communication process, as they use the means of communication to achieve intended goals that fulfil their expectations.

- The use of means of communication expresses the needs perceived by audience members, so that individual differences and social interaction factors control this, due to the diversity of needs and their difference according to the expectations of individuals.

- Emphasise that the audience is the one who chooses the messages and content to achieve their satisfaction. Individuals are the ones who use the means of communication, not the means of communication that use individuals.

- Individuals are able to identify their needs and motivations, and therefore they themselves choose the means that fulfil all needs.

- Prevailing cultural norms can be inferred from the audience's use of the means of communication, rather than relying solely on the content of the messages. (Hassan Emad Makkawi, Laila Hussein Elsayed, Op. cit., p. 241.)

Rosengren presents the set of elements that make up the uses and gratifications perspective, which begins with the development of biological, psychological and social needs in humans, where these needs interact with individual characteristics and the social framework surrounding the individual,

resulting in various individual issues, but also potential solutions to these issues. These needs interact with individual characteristics and the surrounding social framework, resulting in a variety of different individual issues, but with potential solutions to those issues.

According to these theoretical conceptualisations explaining the uses and gratifications model, the basic dimensions of this perspective are determined by:

- The assumption of an active audience that controls the choice of the means that deliver the content, because the element of activity or effectiveness of the audience refers to basic indicators such as selection, taste, and interests... In other words, the impact of the means of communication is through selection, which depends on individual differences in the nature of the response.

- Many of the needs directed towards the use of communication media are related to the presence of the individual in an interactive social environment. This is called the psychosocial origins of media use. (Ismail Mahmoud, 1998, p. 256.)

- The need to link the motives of the audience's exposure to the media to interpretive frameworks, on the basis that the audience's experiences with the media are active and interpretive experiences. The interpretive framework assumes that the audience has a goal to pursue when exposed to the media, either for utilitarian or ritualistic reasons.

- Individuals expectations of media vary according to individual differences and different cultures. In this regard, Edelstein and colleagues comparative study of university students' expectations of media in US, German, Japanese, and Hong Kong societies indicates increased expectation of gratification from the use of newspapers and television, as opposed to decreased gratification from feature films and official reports. The results suggest that students' differing expectations reflect the dominant culture of the society. German students, for example, use radio, educational sources, and official reports more than university students in the other societies studied, as well as books and personal notes more when faced with an issue, so students have different expectations for solving the issue from different communication sources.

- Exposure to the media and the subsequent saturation of various uses. (Al-Mousa Essam, 2009, p. 204.)

1. 3. Media Dependency Model

This model rejects the aforementioned supportive assumptions in the use and gratification model, which targeted the beneficiary and neglected the influence of the media. Therefore, this model focuses on analysing media influence by focusing on the integrative relationship between the audience, the means of communication and the broader social system within a set of interactive personal and organisational factors and variables, which would make this model in harmony with the basic idea of the use and gratification model. However, the difference remains directed towards the impact of media in conditions of social stability, because individuals are forced to re-evaluate their opinions and make choices under conditions of change and conflict, which increases the dependence of individuals on these media in order to face the challenges of societal beliefs and practices. (S.J. Ball-Rokeach and Melin Defleur, 1992, p. 242.)

This model includes three types of influences: Cognitive, Affective, and Behavioural. These influences associated with mass communication combine in a functional way that greatly influences the audience's reliance on the information provided by the media. This is what the authors of this model (S.J. Ball-Rokeach and Melin Defleur) adopted, where the justification for adopting this model is based on the fact that contemporary communication theories are oriented to the small level (the individual) and neglect the large level (society).

Accordingly, this model focuses on the dependent relationship between the media system as a whole and one of its parts, such as television, press and radio. The individual relies on the media to obtain guidance for his daily behaviour in various fields and domains. He also relies on the media for guidance for his social behaviour, such as his relationships with others, and entertainment is a necessary goal in all societies.

The proponents of this model emphasise that the power of the media stems from its control over the sources of information that individuals need to reach their personal goals. The more complex society becomes, the wider the range of personal goals that depend on media information sources. Audiences

may rely on books and magazines for social understanding, or on radio programmes for news and weather, for example, in order to get to work. (IBID, p. 419, 420.)

2. Brief presentation of a field study on communication media and youth culture

Identifying the objectives of the university student's use of the means of communication, and recognising the satisfaction of the psychological and cognitive needs that these means achieve, is important and necessary to understand the way in which the student deals with these means that have an educational, recreational and educational dimension, as well as representing the main field of his cognitive and cultural formation and his social and political upbringing.

In this context, some field studies have been conducted on communication media and their relationship with youth culture, which mainly centred on researching the extent to which university students follow communication media and the impact of their use on their culture.

The focus on this type of study is to identify the type of knowledge that the student is interested in, through the use of various means of communication, and to identify the areas of fulfilment of the student's gratifications, thus revealing the importance and role of the means as a source of the university student's culture.

Conducting such field studies leads us to conclude that the process of understanding these technical and technological uses is done through symbolic models that we use in our thinking to assimilate and understand phenomena, their basic components and the relationship between those components.

If we ask any individual a question: Why do you spend so much time exposed to the media ? Most individuals would respond without hesitation: We are exposed to the media for information, for entertainment, or to get away from reality. In other words, the media has played a sterilising role for the majority of society most of the time. We use media for a variety of purposes, each of which defines a list of expectations from which we choose a particular medium at a particular time.

When thinking about the functions of the media for the individual, we find that, according to previous studies in this field, they are related to each other and are intertwined, the most important of which is monitoring the natural and social environment or seeking information in order to develop our self-concepts. This can only be achieved through social interaction, which helps us achieve emotional liberation and escape from stress and alienation resulting from a lack of a sense of security and psychological comfort.

Although communication scholars have not reached a full and accurate understanding of the effects of the media on the psychological, moral, economic, political, cultural and educational aspects of people's lives, they have narrowed it down to a base of research findings that help in understanding these issues. One of the main tasks of media scholars is to compile scientific findings on the effects of communication media on those who deal with them, which have been mainly limited to the deterioration of the level of public cultural taste and the increase in rates of indifference in violating laws, which has contributed to the general moral collapse. On the other hand, these means act as a censor or guardian of freedom of expression, without losing sight of their role in entertainment, amusement, and informing us about the news of the world and the environment around us.

Considering these tasks, Wirner and Tankard point out that research into the types of needs fulfilled by media use began as early as the 1930s. Numerous studies were conducted from this perspective on books, radio series, daily newspapers, popular music, and cinema films in order to identify the reasons why people use the media and the consequences for public opinion. During the years of the Second World War, a wealth of information became available about the uses and gratifications of media.

Interest in these studies continued in the 1940s through the work of Lazar sfeld, Staton, and Burleson. In the 1950s in the work of Relles, Friesen, Maccoby, and in the 1960 in the work of Schramm, Leal, and Parks (Hassan Emad Makkawi, Laila Hussein Elsayed, Op. cit, p. 240.)

The process of identifying the university student's needs that are satisfied by the use of media requires answering the following questions:

- Why does the student follow a certain media more than others? What are the gratifications achieved by this follow-up?

- What are the student's preferred means of pursuing their favourite topic?

- Where does the student seek more information about the issue they are facing?

- Does highlighting a cultural issue in a communication medium increase the student's interest in it?

- What advantages do these mediums give him/her, especially in improving his/her performance?

- To what extent can a student discuss certain topics in a lecture that have been reported in the media?

- What are the reasons why university students follow certain programmes and not others?

-To what extent do these programmes contribute to enhancing the university student's culture?

These questions constitute the summary of the issue of a field study on communication media and youth culture, conducted by Dr Saleh Abu Isbaa and Dr Iman Ibrahim, a study conducted on Jordanian university students, as it starts from a theoretical basis that believes that individuals use media to achieve certain gratifications, and that they seek to obtain certain information through specific communication means.

Hence, the importance of this study stems from the fact that it provides us with direct information about the students who use the media. (Saleh Abu Isbaa and Iman Ibrahim, Op. cit., p. 10.)

As for the methodological aspect of this study, it is a descriptive survey study that focuses on the study of students in four Jordanian public and private universities. One thousand questionnaires were distributed to Jordanian university students, and the sample was random and quota to represent different study levels and multiples disciplines in all faculties.

A questionnaire consisting of questions that provide general data about the sample members and 25 questions targeting a set of themes related to the aforementioned questions was used. (IBID, p. 39, 41.)

The results of this study summarised that the main role of mass communication media is TV and the Internet and their effects on the university student's culture.

Thus, the role of the university professor has greatly diminished in front of other means of communication, as the results of the study highlighted that the percentage of university students who discuss issues is small compared to those who do not discuss, and that the book has taken a marginal and low role in many of the topics followed by the student, except for religious topics. The percentage of those who did not read an external book in six months in many subjects does not exceed 50 per cent of the sample.

Therefore, one of the most important suggestions of this study was to conduct more research in the audio field to obtain information and rely on the media and its saturation, because research in these areas provides a better understanding of the recipient. The most important suggestions for the university student were to conduct more field research to reveal the areas that the student seeks to obtain, the reasons that make the student rely on the media and the impact of these media on the student's social relations and academic achievement, and the university student's use of the Internet in his social relations and academic achievement. (IBID, p. 136.)

3. Future prospects for virtualisation in human communication

In light of these technological transformations and the new generation of the Internet, users and experts reflect on the causes, consequences, harms, forms of benefit and future expectations of the virtual transformation in the process of human communication, because this change is not limited to the name only, but goes beyond it to a third world that combines the real and the digital, and has implications for communication through social networks. It is like turning the Internet into a three-dimensional environment. The role of the user is not limited to looking at it in front of his screen, but to enter this environment himself until he becomes one of its elements and disconnects his

senses from the real world during his stay in the virtual world that contains all the elements of remote communication. Instead of sitting at the game console and watching the game on the screen, you can participate as an in-game player, or have dinner with your family while living thousands of miles away from them, where everyone interacts with each other through their digital avatars.

This virtual world can be accessed via smartphones, computers, virtual reality headsets, augmented reality glasses, and consoles. The user can then live a near-real experience, in which these smart technologies act as an intermediary between the user and the physical sensation. The user can see the objects around them in three dimensions through the glasses, and can feel physical sensations, such as the sensation of falling in life or punching the face or others, through the sensors in the jackets and gloves they wear, thus obtaining a more realistic experience, even if it is indirect.

3.1.   Metaverse as a new communication revolution

According to these changes and transformations, we can call this third world a virtual island or a three-dimensional electronic trap, that is, a three-dimensional environment in which we embody and spend time together anywhere and at any time, sharing experiences with each other virtually such as sports, attending parties, work, study and business, within the framework of a science fiction trail that results in the so-called metaverse as a new communication revolution.

This concept or idea was originally introduced by science fiction author Neal Stephenson in his novel - The Snow Crash, published in 1992, which describes a virtual space in which individuals interact through avatars, becoming the new Internet revolution and the sixth generation of communications (future travellers), which is what major countries such as America, China, Canada, Britain, South Korea and Finland are seeking with huge investments and significant research funding to achieve it before 2030. (Hisham Al-Ghuli, 2022, p. 159, 160.)

For this controversial and highly anticipated technology, which has caused a stir in the digital worlds, it needs advanced means that future meta

stores may provide as a necessary preliminary step to get started in the virtual world of metaverse.

Metaverse is divided into two words, the first of which is meta: meta means beyond and vers means universe, which in Arabic means beyond the universe, a term that refers to the alternative digital world that users interact with in a three-dimensional digital environment, and is not limited to games, but also includes all aspects of life, with the possibility of creating VR homes, as it is a shift in the world of communication.

Metaverse is an optional world built according to the desires of its users, where individuals can create their own world. Zuckerberg has divided it into three worlds or horizons as he calls them: home horizons, work horizons, and world horizons. It is a new mechanism that refers to efforts to combine virtual and augmented reality technology in the new world of the Internet.

Experts believe that the metaverse has many of the expected characteristics of a virtual world that will impose its characteristics on society, with its positive and negative aspects:

- A Virtual world: The most important feature of metavers, you can explore it using your computer, game console, mobile phone, etc. The idea is that this makes you feel more present in metavers, and presumably less present in the everyday world.

-**VR (Virtual Reality)**: You need a VR headset for this, and the idea is to become so immersed in the virtual world that you feel more present, at least until you bump into something that is still present in the everyday world.

-**Persistence**: It means that the virtual world is available whenever we want to visit it, and you can change it by adding new virtual buildings or other objects. Most importantly, the changes remain in effect the next time you visit.

-**Connection to the real world**: In some metaverse visions, virtual objects in the virtual world represent real objects in the real world. (IBID, p. 164, 165.)

In general, there is no denying the role of technology and its developments over the decades, changing the reality and lifestyles of most societies. The implications of these new dynamics, which the future world will

produce for the human nervous system, and the impact on mental and physical health may be incalculable. The development of media and communication sciences and the speed of changes brought about by social media in society increase the intensity of psychological pressures and their reflection on the human body, which is reflected in the occurrence of the social isolation gap. In other words, the breakdown of social cohesion and disconnection from reality.

3.2. Information control and technological vigilance

The current era has obliged the linking of many concepts to each other to form the modern meaning that indicates the reality of the development of societies, and one of the most prominent of these concepts is the meaning of vigilance and its association with technology, that is, following the technical development associated with the activity of the organisation through the various vigilance functions embodied in law, commerce, economy, finance and strategy. The vigilance function for an organisation began with a partial monitoring of the environment in which it operates through information internal to the organisation, such as accounting for customers and suppliers. This information was collected by representatives of the organisations, then evolved into participation in exhibitions and salons and regular follow-up of specialised journals to keep track of developments. This information also materialised through modern means such as wireless communications, satellites, the Internet, data banks and databases, and everything that facilitates the collection of information.

Organisations may assign specific people from among the employees to follow all developments in the field, even outside the country in which they operate, in addition to what has become known as economic espionage. (Jean-mac Auriac, Andre Cavgnal, 1996, p. 91.) This leads us to uncover the concept of economic intelligence, which is defined as the set of coordinated activities for the search, processing, distribution and protection of information useful to economic agents, obtained in a systematic manner under the best conditions of quality, time and cost.

This confirms the importance of information, which has become an essential element in the strategy of organisations and in the restructuring of the

forms of construction and function within the organisation. It is also a key driver of development in a difficult and complex competitive environment.

Therefore, the control of information through vigilance allows the organisation to monitor its production systems and control its environment in order to ensure the quality of its products, reduce costs, achieve good customer follow-up and sustainable innovation. (Emmanuel Pateyron, 1998, p. 13.)

In this context, information has become a term that almost loses its semantic weight due to its frequent use, as information varies according to its nature, uses and utilisation. It can be categorised into:

- Developmental information, such as reading books and articles and obtaining new concepts and facts, with the purpose of improving the scientific and cultural level.

- Achievement information, through which the individual obtains concepts and facts that help him in accomplishing his work and projects or making decisions.

- Educational information, which is represented by students' readings during the stages of their scientific life for courses and educational materials.

- Planning information, where the individual conceptualises the work he intends to do, or the project he plans through sufficient and appropriate information before embarking on its implementation.

- Recreational information, where this type of information takes different forms that reflect the hobbies of its owners.

- Intellectual information, which consists of ideas, theories and hypotheses about the relationships that may exist between different elements of the issue.

- Research information that includes experiments, their conduct and results, which can be obtained from one's own experiences or those of others.

- Systematic stylistic information, which includes the practical methods that enable the researcher to carry out his/her research accurately. This type of information includes the methods that are used to obtain the correct information and data from research, and to test the validity and accuracy of this data. (Munir Ismail Al-Sayed, 2021, p. 241.)

Thus, information plays an important role in human progress and advancement, as it is the driving force to help humans deal with reality and solve the problems they face. This importance can be summarised as follows:

- It is the key element in making appropriate decisions and solving problems.

- It has a major role in enriching scientific research and the development of science and technology.

- It is of great importance in the fields of economic, social, administrative, cultural, health and other development.

- It contributes to building information strategies at the local and international level.

- It helps in transferring expertise to others, solving issues and utilising available knowledge. (IBID, p. 243, 244.)

3.3.   Improving Information Literacy

It is essential for everyone to have the ability to utilise information technology within the framework of knowledge provided during compulsory education. In order to drive the information technology revolution, we need to improve the information technology culture of students by introducing information technology at the higher education levels, which will be reflected in strengthening the professional structure of the citizen who will be the driving force for the growth of an advanced information society. This brings us closer to a new concept, in which teamwork and networks are more valuable in bringing about social changes and shifts in the knowledge base of society, as technical networks allow interaction between students, experts and information sources, with the possibility of continuous shared knowledge building and capacity development.

From a purely educational point of view, the role of networks is of great value within the mass society. They offer the student many possibilities of interaction and activity with all the indicators and variables of the information revolution.

If we want to use the communication tools of information technology, we need a change in time structure and methodological depth. The teacher can

organise his/her time, as the use of computers facilitates the educational process. There is also the need to change the time structure of the school year, so that these changes allow students to progress through the curriculum according to their abilities. Here, technology is a loyal ally of the teacher and the organisation. Regulations are broken, and curricula are restructured and deeply revised to allow for the delivery of large doses of knowledge.

In this context, educational institutions need to adapt to these changes in response to the demands of society. (IBID, p. 218, 219.)

Conclusion

Human societies are living through an unprecedented knowledge and technological revolution, thanks to the Internet, which has imposed itself on the global level, as it has become a method of daily interaction and a mode of knowledge exchange between different peoples of the world. The rapid spread of the Internet has made it one of the landmarks of the modern era or what is known as the era of the information revolution.

The tremendous development of the global communications network has forced those involved in science in general, including students and researchers, to take advantage of the information provided by this network, especially when taking into account the speed of information transfer and the possibility of communication between researchers across different regions of the world. The explosion in information and communication technology has reduced the mental and cognitive isolation of the human being to a minimum, through which it is possible to follow the news, obtain information, spread culture and facilitate work in all fields and fields, through the applications and technical means produced by modern technology.

Given the rapid development of virtual spaces on the Internet, we can affirm that the phenomenon of social networking has become a comprehensive and highly influential practice in the lives of individuals and groups.

Finally, a virtual third world has emerged, dominating the real reality little by little, allowing the creation of a virtual world across different spaces of the third dimension of the Internet, allowing individuals to converge or meet, work,

education, entertainment, shopping and business within it and through smart devices distinguished in science-fiction and centred in human communication between the real and digital worlds.

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