

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter is divided into two parts: relevant theories and previous studies. The former consists of information seeking behavior, knowledge, attitudes theory and demographic characteristics while the latter contains five research studies concerning people's behavior as it is affected by mass media.

2.1 THE RELEVANT THEORIES

2.1.1 Theories of information-seeking behavior

With the onset of the information age, people have been flooded with news and information. To understand people's behavior in receiving news and information, an approach to information seeking will be used to explain why people choose to access information or media.

Schramm (1973, pp. 105-109) indicates that how people select the medium and messages when seeking information depends on their needs, convenience, habits and chance. Besides, culture, as well as environment also affects this behavior. Where they grow up and what they can afford, for example, influences available channels of communication or patterns of using those channels.

Schramm suggests 'fraction of selection' as a key approach to describe the how each person chooses to receive some information and ignores others.

Promise of reward = Probability of selection

Effort required

While the upper term — promise of reward—is connected with the content of message and its potential to fulfill individual needs, the lower term— effort required— is related to the ease and accessibility of using of communication channels. From the equation above, people tend to expose themselves to information easily obtained and/or which meets their needs.

Schramm's idea is in accordance with Atkin's (1973, pp.205-239) which explains that whether or not people choose to seek information relies on their

evaluation of the reward value in comparison to the cost of seeking or avoiding. In cases where the former exceeds the latter, they will receive information, and vice versa.

People also seek information for behavioral adaptation. When they are uncertain of how to deal with some task or situation, they will seek information to solve such problems. The higher level of uncertainty or unawareness, the more information they require for adaptation.

In brief, the need for seeking information is generated from:

1. the difference between the current level of knowledge of the individual and the standard level he/she is attempting to reach
2. the difference between the current level of knowledge of the individual and the level they want to achieve.

Technological changes contribute to media development. New media such as the internet and their classic counterparts have each disadvantages in influencing people's decisions to choose to expose themselves to each medium (Rayner, Wall & Kruger, 2001, p. 10-11).

Table 4 Advantages and disadvantages of each mass medium

Property Medium	Portability	Demands on attention	Choices available	Interactivity	Cost
Radio	high	low	wide	low	low
Newspaper	high	medium	wide	low	medium
Magazine	high	high	wide	low	high
TV	low	medium	limited	low	low
Internet	low	high	wide	high	high

From: *Media Study: The Essential Introduction* (p. 10), by P. Rayner, P. Wall, & S. Kruger, 2001, London: Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group.

2.1.2 Knowledge, Attitude and Practice Theory (KAP)

Knowledge, attitude and practice all have an effect on one another. Studying each variable and the correlations among them helps us to understand the behavior and attitudes about receiving news and information. This theory will be used to analyze the correlation between behavior and attitudes about receiving health news and information.

Berlo (1960) states that there are six ingredients in the communication process: communication source, encoder, message, channel, decoder, and communication receiver. In some situations a communication source and an encoder are the same person called the source, likewise, for a decoder and a communication receiver which is called the receiver.

Knowledge

Communication and knowledge have a close relationship; communication is a result of knowledge and vice versa. To reach maximum communication efficiency, the sources must know what they want to communicate which has an effect on source credibility in the receiver's viewpoint. Moreover, they should be aware of the communication process and receiver's behavior.

Similarly, the receiver should understand the code, have primary knowledge of the message content, and the nature of communication. If not, they possibly misunderstand the message and fails to achieve highest self-benefit.

Attitude

There are three kinds of source attitudes that influence the success of communication:

Attitude toward self. Sources should have good self-evaluation. Their attitude toward themselves can shape the way their message created and communicated.

Attitude toward subject matter. A sources' positive attitude toward the message is able to draw attention and stimulate interest in the receiver leading to communication efficiency.

Attitude toward receiver. The attitude toward the receivers has an impact on the message as well as the response of the audience to the message. If it is positive, the receiver tends to accept what the message conveys willingly. On the contrary, if negative, they probably resist.

In terms of the receivers, also, they should have a favorable attitude toward self, subject matter and the sources; or the communication will not be efficient.

Rogers (1973) indicates that, with regard to the correlation between attitude and communication, communication has three significant effects on receiver:

1. Change in receiver's knowledge,
2. Change in receiver's attitude and
3. Change in receiver's behavior.

2.1.3 Demographic approach

Demographic factors, such as age, gender and education level have an influence on an individual's attitudes and behavior. Thus, the relationship between demographic characteristics and the media exposure of people should be examined and used to explain behaviors and attitudes about receiving health news and information. Thees can be demonstrated as follows:

Age People at different ages have different needs and interests in a lot of aspects including desires and preferences in information exposure. Adults tend to expose themselves to more serious content than youngsters do (ปรมะ สดเวทิน, 2538, น. 114-115 ; ชุบล เบ็ญจรงค์กุล, 2534, น. 64-68).

Gender Parama Satavatin (ปรมะ สดเวทิน, 2538, น. 114) says that omen have a greater tendency to be persuaded than men do, in addition, men prefer to rely on logic and can remember information better than women.

Education Well-educated people are inclined to access to many kinds of media particularly electronic ones. However, they are hard to convince; adequate supporting evidence is required before they trust the message conveyed (ปรมะ สดเวทิน, 2538, น. 117).

Income Income is largely related to education. Higher-educated people usually earn a high income; similarly, low-educated people get paid less. People

with high income have important job titles so they have to seek more information to reach their career goals. Printed media meets high-income people's needs since it is portable and needs to be read, translated and analyzed skills which this group of people has. In contrast, low-income people prefer television in the form of entertainment programs. The messages that television conveys require less reading translating and analyzing. (ยุบล เบ็ญจรงค์กุล, 2534, น. 64-75)

In spite of the fact that there are other demographic variables such as marital status, occupation and religion, the main demographic factors generally applicable in a communication media study are the four mentioned above. (ยุบล เบ็ญจรงค์กุล, 2534, น. 72).

2.2 RELEVANT STUDIES

Since one of theory this study is based on is the demographic approach, research studying the connection between demographic characteristics and media exposure should be investigated. In addition, the theories above state that attitudes have an impact on behavior; consequently, studies that survey people's attitude toward mass media should also be examined.

In a study by Sumalee Limtang (สุมาลี ลิ้มตั้ง, 2547) on media exposure to the uses of naturopathy of naturopathy by people in Bangkok, it was found the gender, age and occupation of respondents was significantly related to what kind of media they choose to access while education and income were not.

In Supaporn Promdeechart's study (สุภาภรณ์ พรหมดีชาติ, 2541) on the satisfaction of television audiences, it is found that gender, age, occupation and education had no connection with the frequency of television exposure; the only demographic factor influencing on behavior was income. She also found that there were not enough health programs on television and people preferred short documentaries to other types of presentations. This research concentrated on the information-receiver side in terms of behavior and attitude similar to this study.