Example of research paper on a research into the fact that media have direct effe...

Media, Television

Abstract

Whether the effects of media on society are direct or limited has been a topic of debate for quite a long time. The effects of media touch on all classes of society. The effects of media touch on such spheres as the political sphere, the religious sphere, the education sector, the business sector as well as the entire corporate practice. Contrary to the assumptions of the limited effects theory, the effect of the media on society is direct. In other words, the media affects the society directly. This paper seeks to validate this argument through focusing on the scholarly views and expert opinions of renowned authors and specialists in the social sciences. Further, the paper bases its key arguments on the results of the empirical research executed through the use of respected books and resourceful scholarly reviewed articles on the topic of media and society. The research, just like the scholarly opinions indicate that the media impact directly on the society since what the media broadcasts and portrays is a reflection of the society. It is for this reason that the media have been described as the mirror of society.

Introduction

The effect of media on society has been a topic of study for more than a century today. The distribution of information through various media dates back to the times of ancient Greek. The information that was distributed back then related to politics and religion, as well as other scientific studies. The medium used to distribute such information to the general public was literature that was in most cases written by hand. The authorities were not in

favor of the roles of media on society as they accused such writers and institutions of inciting the public. The role of media was condemned by the authorities for having corrupted the youth of the day. Today, the media face various criticisms and are perceived differently among the members of the society. While some argue that the media have limited effects on society, others hold that media affect the society directly and that such media as televisions and advertisements are a mirror of contemporary society. The fact all spheres of life are such that they can be perfectly compared to what is viewed in the cinemas and other television programs means that indeed, media directly affect society. The main objective of this research paper was to prove the fact that the media impact directly on the society. The paper will as well seek to establish the manner in which media had transformed various elements of society.

Literature Review

According to Wood et al (1991) the most prominent media started operating in the year 1881. The first newspaper was written and distributed among urban residents. The newspaper, which was updated with the most recent happenings, was written on a weekly basis and sold to those that were interested in knowing the most recent happenings in such fields as politics. Arguably, the newspaper as a medium of information was quite limiting since it was only effective in a literate society. Steeves (1997) observe that the newspaper as a medium of mass communication was seen as a discriminatory ways of putting information across to a society made up of the literate, the semi-literate, as well as the illiterate. According to McQuail

(1997), the government of the day was against the freedom of the media with claims that the media were responsible for incitement and moral corruption.

The following limitations of the print media, technology opened up for such inventions as the radio and the audio-visual media. As such, the radio became a novel medium of communication in the year 1920. According to Burton (2004), the radio was initially meant for military communications. The military personnel used the radio to communicate during missions, war times and even as they kept vigil on ordinary duties. Castel (1996) observes that the use of stereo as a channel for mass communication began in about 1930. During this time, the radio was the most popular medium since it could serve both the literate and the illiterate effectively. The medium became a widely used tool for effective mass communication in the 1940s as it gained global acceptability.

As technology advanced, the television was invented in the year 1945. This was the first form of audio-visual medium as it used the cathode ray tube. The television, according to Klimmt and Vorderer (2003) gave a touch of entertainment to the distribution of information and mass communication. With the coming of the television, such entertainment elements as movies and music became popular. Deephouse (2000) argues that when people talk of the effects of media on the society, they are referring to the effects of television on society because, according to the scholar, television is the most commonly used ways of broadcasting as well as the most commonly preferred source of entertainment. Additionally, the television has content from all over the world. Brosius and Engel (1996) argue that after the

discovery of television, everything in the industry of mass communication moved too fast and soon, the average human being could access computers and digital television as it the case today. Also known as the satellite television, the digital TV is one of the greatest inventions in the world of mass communication.

Brosius and Engel (1996) observe that, gone are the days when television sets were owned by a just a couple of homes in the neighborhood. Television is a necessity in the contemporary world. TV is no longer a luxury like it was a decade ago. As technology keeps on advancing at an unusually high speed, so does the taste of the average person change from the use of manual methods to the digital ways of going about things. Digital devices are becoming affordable and accessible by day. For instance, today, the cheapest satellite TV can be found on the internet (Vorderer, 2003). The satellite television has revolutionized the international entertainment scene. This new idea is gaining popularity among the human race at an unusually high rate. This can be attributed to the fact that the satellite technology is becoming more affordable than it was in most countries a few years ago.

It is common knowledge that the digital television is rapidly replacing the terrestrial audiovisual systems in many countries across the world. This popularity of the outpost system can be attributed to its price and qualities. The most striking feature about the system is that it has excellent picture clarity and high quality sound reception. The satellite technology, also referred to as the outpost system, has not only added value to the entertainment scene, but also enhanced learning in children (Burton, 2004). It has been described as a learning tool for the young ones. This is because

the audiovisual aspects of the television make the learning process attractive. The kids can easily get whatever is taught.

The views of various scholars and members of society, on the impacts of TV and other kinds of media on society, are highly varied. For instance, some scholars hold opinions that are purely pro media. The pro media scholars and members of society are the people that Bittner (1997) describes as revolutionary members of the public. In his view, the people that hold anti-media ideas are pessimists and are presumably resistant to change. Change, according to Wood et al (1991), can only be achieved through effective communication among the members of society that are of unequal capabilities. For instance, it is only through media that members of a third world society can borrow innovative ideas from the developed nations.

The effects of the media are direct and not limited (Castel, 1996). According to various scholars (Bittner, 1997., Castel, 1996., Brosius and Engel, 1996), saying that the effects of media on society are limited is a serious misconception considering that the media impact on all social classes. The media, according to the above scholars, touches directly on every aspect of daily life. The best example explained by Brosius and Engel (1996), is the fact that children will always tend to act like the super stars in the movies. It is for this explanation, they elucidate, that's the kind of games and plays that the kids in the modern world engage in are based on the ideas from the movies, ranging from violence to trickery. Back in the day, the children engaged in simple games that usually reflected the culture of the society. Similarly, the children acted in accordance to the requirements of the community. Not long ago, the songs chanted by children reflected love and

innocence nurtured among the members of the community (Brosius and Engel, 1996).

Since the media's effects are felt right from childhood, they are said to be directly on the quality of life of an individual from the members of society grow up with the thoughts and ways in mind (Burton, 2004). The effects of media on the society can as well be seen in the cultural syncretism currently characteristic of every culture. Arguably, every culture in the world is not observing the same ways as were observed by the forefathers thanks to the far reaching effects of the media (Castel, 1996). Castel (1996) explains that the perspectives of the media on society, through such forms as movies and the innovative program's impact on the viewers so directly that they become appealing with time. Fundamentally, every child will usually view the movie star as being more of a role model than just an entertainer. Research indicates that the average child would rather emulate the movie star than such societal examples as their teacher or even their guardians (Steeves, 1997).

Bittner (1997) observes that the evils of the media outweigh the positives. He notes that following the televising of such evils as violence, societies that have all along been known to be peaceful have embraced evil ways. Notably, the Indian society, according to Bittner (1997) has been all along considered the most peaceful of all cultures, thanks to their culture that embraces strong religious and ethical beliefs. The teachings of such historical figures as Mahatma Gandhi have little meaning in today's world where media are an integral part of daily life. The manner in which media make such things as ethics appear like obsolescent social aspects is quite amazing. The movies

being aired today would seem obscene if aired a few decades ago. The main reason is because they contained antisocial content. The case is different today. Even the television programs being rated as fit for general viewing are not fit for the consumption of children. The explanation for such a phenomenon is quite simple. The media have different effects in direct ways (Deephouse, 2000).

The effects of media are felt in all fields of human life. Talking about education for example, people can acquire degree certificates from universities operating in other countries, thanks to the introduction of the internet. The internet is a network that enables online communication. The student can learn through correspondence. This is because the internet, as a source of communication and reliable correspondence, has enabled open studies (Burton, 2004). Similarly, the media have impacted on education through enabling the learning process to make use of such things as visual projectors and video demonstrations. Through visual illustrations and ways of giving instruction, the learning and teaching process becomes easier (Klimmt & Vorderer, 2003).

Curran and Gurevitch (2005) argue that mass media have made social life more comprehensive since the all people that can afford a radio or even the cheapest television can access entertainment from all corners of the world. The two scholars argue that the media affect human life directly and in a positive way. The fact that people can use the internet to interact with individuals from all sides of the globe cannot be overlooked. Currently, owning an account on one or two of the social sites seems like a necessity (Curran and Gurevitch (2005). It is through such sites that people get to

interact, and to share information. Through sharing information, social globalism becomes the main consequence. It is through such globalization efforts that advancements can be achieved in various areas of social life. Worth noting is the fact that there exists a great rift in the field of media-society studies. The gap calls for further research and is concerned with the differences between the effects of media on the society of a developed world and the impacts of media on society in a developing world. Notably, the things that the developing world, especially Africa, consider as being grossly immoral were accepted in the developed nations many years ago. For instance, there is a significant difference in time with regard to the acceptance of same sex marriages in the advanced nations and in the third world. Literature and research ought to address such gaps since, following globalism, the programs on television and other media are meant for the global audience. In essence, therefore, further research should be conducted to answer the question, what is the difference between the effects of media on the society of a developed world and that of a developing world.

Methodology

The research was based on the use of books and peer reviewed articles. Such articles included those dealing with the effects on media and society. Similarly such articles included those based on the effects of technology and the various classes of society according to age. Additionally the research made use of the books that were specific on group. For instance, some articles used focused on the effect on media on children.

Findings

The study of the books and peer reviewed articles found out that indeed the effects of media on society were not at all limited. The research as well established that the children between the age of four and ten years were among the most impacted on classes. Thus, the research found out, was because this age bracket was the one that fell for the lure of most television programs such as the action packed violent movies. Similarly, the research into the books and articles indicated that the college students were equally vulnerable considering that they were the most probable to take part in such things as radio shows and music entertainment. The books and peer reviewed articles were informative enough to inform the researcher of such effects as those brought by the social media and online applications.

The ultimate findings indicated that the effects of the media were both positive and negative, and touched on every aspect of society ranging from education to politics. It was, as well, established that media and their effects, both positive and negative, and was an integral part of society. According to most books used in the research, the rate at which the effects of the media are reaching various communities including the aboriginal groups can be attributed to the rate at which technology is becoming advanced and accepted among the populations across the world. Technology and media are inseparable in the sense that media are all products of technology. Fundamentally, then, the effects of technology on the social aspects of life are the same effects of media on the society. The study of the articles and books as well indicated that the more advanced the technology used to create a certain medium, the more far reaching the effects of the medium

are.

Conclusion and recommendations

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