M.J.M.-28
Digital Media

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Content

DIGITAL MEDIA

S.No.	Chapterwise Reference Book	Page

BLOCK-1: NEW MEDIA AND SOCIETY

BLOCK-2: SOCIAL MEDIA IN INDIAN SCENARIO

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QUESTION PAPER

June – 2023

(Solved)

DIGITAL MEDIA

M.J.M.-28

Time: 3 Hours] | **[Maximum Marks : 100**

Note: Answer any **five** questions. All questions carry equal marks.

Q. 1. Describe the effects of digital media on macro and micro level in the society.

Ans. Ref.: See Chapter-2, Page No. 21, Q. No. 6.

Q. 2. Explain the ICT policies and regulatory framework in India from 1994 till date.

Ans. Ref.: See Chapter-4, Page No. 40, 'ICT Policies of India'.

Q. 3. Justify how interactivity and content sharing are important facts of social media that make it unique.

Ans. Interactivity and content sharing are two fundamental aspects that distinguish social media platforms from traditional forms of communication and content dissemination. These aspects have significantly contributed to the widespread adoption and success of social media. Here's a justification of their importance:

Social media platforms enable real-time interactions between users, breaking down geographical barriers and allowing people to connect and communicate with others across the globe. This interactivity fosters engagement, as users can comment on, like, share, and react to posts. This engagement goes beyond passive consumption, transforming users from mere spectators into active participants in the digital realm. This sense of participation and engagement builds a sense of community and belonging, making users feel more connected to each other and the platform itself.

Content sharing is at the heart of social media's success. Users have the ability to share various types of content, including text, images, videos, links, and more. This sharing mechanism exponentially amplifies the reach of content, as one person's post can be seen and shared by numerous others. This viral nature of content sharing enables ideas, trends, and information to spread rapidly and globally. Moreover, it gives individuals and businesses a platform to showcase their creativity, expertise, and viewpoints to a wider audience, potentially increasing their influence and impact.

Social media platforms thrive on user-generated content, which provides an authentic and diverse perspective. Unlike traditional media, where content is typically created by professionals, social media encourages ordinary individuals to share their experiences, opinions, and creativity. This user-generated content adds authenticity and relatability to the platform, as people connect more readily with content that is created by their peers or people they can identify with.

Social media's real-time nature allows for immediate communication and responses. This is particularly important in situations where timely information dissemination is crucial, such as during emergencies or breaking news events. People can share updates, insights, and reactions almost instantly, contributing to the real-time flow of information.

Interactivity and content sharing also enable platforms to gather data about user preferences, interests, and behaviours. This data can be used to tailor content and advertisements to individual users, creating a more personalized experience. This customization enhances user engagement by presenting them with content that aligns with their interests, increasing the likelihood of interaction and sharing.

Interactivity and content sharing enable platforms to tap into the collective intelligence of their user base. Users can ask questions, seek advice, or share information, harnessing the power of crowdsourcing. This collaborative approach often leads to innovative solutions, diverse perspectives, and valuable insights.

Q. 4. Explain the role of social media in promoting arts, culture and education.

Ans. Ref.: See Chapter-8, Page No. 90, 'Social Media, Arts, Culture and Education'.

Q. 5. Describe the core media literacy skills as proposed by Jenkins NML framework.

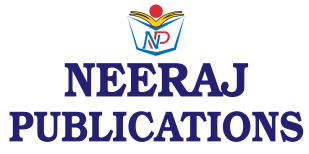**Ans. Ref.:** See Chapter-10, Page No. 111, 'New Media Literacies (NML) Framework'.

Q. 6. What is the relationship between democracy and digital media?

Ans. Ref.: See Chapter-12, Page No. 131, 'Linkages Between Democracy and Digital Media'.

Q. 7. Explain the need of health communication and the role of various media in strategizing for health communication.

Ans. Ref.: See Chapter-14, Page No. 153, 'Need for Health Communication' and Page No. 161, Q. No. 4.

Q. 8. Explain the digital media business model and its critique with examples.

Ans. Ref.: See Chapter-16, Page No. 177, 'Digital Media Business Model' and Page No. 178, 'Critique of Technology Aided Business Model'.

Q. 9. Trace the journey of evolution of digital media.

Ans. Ref.: See Chapter-16, Page No. 177, 'Evolution of Digital Media'.

Q. 10. Write short notes on any four of the following:

(a) **Health Belief Model.**

Ans. Ref.: See Chapter-14, Page No. 161, Q. No. 5.

(b) **ICT enabled education and private sector.**

Ans. Ref.: See Chapter-13, Page No. 143, 'ICT Enabled Education and Private Sector'.

(c) **Digital media and news values.**

Ans. Ref.: See Chapter-12, Page No. 133, 'Digital Media and News Values'.

(d) **Media representation.**

Ans. Ref.: See Chapter-9, Page No. 100, 'Representations and Presentations'.

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DIGITAL MEDIA

Internet as a Medium

<div style="text-align:right;">(1)</div>

INTRODUCTION

In the first year, you learned about different mass media entities like newspapers, radio, and television. Newspapers have a limited lifespan and a geographical reach. Electronic media, such as radio and television, have limitations in terms of satellite reach but are better than print media. The Internet, however, transcends these boundaries and has a global reach. It has multiple dimensions and can be used for personal and professional purposes. Mass media requires a channel and a medium. Print is the channel for newspapers, while news stories are the medium. Electronic waves are the channels for electronic media, and programs are the medium. Bandwidth and broadband serve as channels for the Internet, while information pockets are its medium. This unit covers the concept of cyberspace, the basic structure of the Internet, and computer-mediated communication. The Internet enables the formation of virtual communities based on common interests. The unit explores the various communication dimensions of the Internet.

CHAPTER AT A GLANCE

INTERNET AS A MEDIUM OF COMMUNICATION

Information and Communication Technology (ICT) has provided us with a powerful communication tool that merges our information and dissemination needs. In the past, mainstream media outlets were the primary means of society-wide communication, but they mostly operated in a top-down model with limited participation options. However, the advent of ICT has revolutionized communication, creating a platform known as cyberspace. Cyberspace encompasses all dimensions of digital and online media platforms and offers a horizontal model of communication without hierarchical barriers. Users can access information and communicate not only with friends, relatives, and colleagues but with the entire world. These significant changes in our communication platforms require academic understanding.

Conceptual Framework of Cyberspace

Cyberspace, a term coined in 1984 by William Gibson, refers to the platform through which we engage in various activities using computers or mobile devices. It is a conceptual space where data, relationships, and communication are manifested through computer-mediated technology. Cyberspace is characterized by its lack of physical boundaries and its use of computer networks, particularly the Internet, to connect people globally. In this virtual environment, individuals interact and take on different avatars, meeting face-to-face under new definitions. Information sharing and common interests are central to cyberspace, fostering communication and community formation. Interactivity and time-shifting capabilities enable convenient access to content and participation from anywhere and at any time, transcending geographical limitations. The online environment allows users to have more control over their experiences and engage in discussions at their convenience, even across different time zones.

Functional Dimensions of Cyberspace

Cyberspace is a socially constructed space that provides a new arena for social, political, economic, and cultural interactions. Users have the freedom to adopt various roles and engage in activities ranging from professional encounters to intimate connections. It is a multi-faceted environment where public and private communication coexist, allowing users to argue, fall in love, strategize, exchange knowledge, and engage in a wide range of activities. Cyberspace is a repository for collective memory, encompassing popular culture, narratives, and virtual experiences. It overcomes geographical limitations and serves

as an arena of power. However, communication in cyberspace is predominantly textual, which filters out demographic and socio-economic information, limiting the depth of relational meaning. Nevertheless, the revolution in global networked communications has enabled the formation and cultivation of interpersonal relationships, overcoming the fragmented nature of mass society. Computer-mediated communication (CMC) acts as a cohesive force, allowing users to customize their social contacts and organize efficient social interactions. Despite its limitations, CMC facilitates tremendous information exchange power and serves as a platform for relationship-building.

Characteristics of Cyberspace

Computer-mediated communication (CMC) lacks important aspects of face-to-face communication, such as the ability to hear intonation and see non-verbal cues. This leads to difficulties in understanding jokes, conveying confusion, and coordinating informal discussions. Simultaneous feedback in spoken conversations plays a crucial role in maintaining interaction, but CMC lacks this feature, resulting in discontinuity and difficulty tailoring messages to recipients' interests. The "cues filtered out" theory suggests that CMC has low social presence due to the absence of paralanguage, pitch, stress, tempo, and volume, leaving conversations in a "social vacuum." Words in CMC fail to fully express their intended meaning without the subtleties of speech and non-verbal cues, making it challenging to convey messages accurately. The standards of behaviour established in verbal communication are not clearly indicated in purely textual information.

CMC's limitations outweigh its success when compared to offline social structures, according to Mackinnon (1995). Since CMC lacks physical reality, users must rely on explicit written language, symbols, analogy, and metaphor to convey meaning, emotion, and physical qualities. However, these recreations are only metaphors and cannot fully mirror the external world. Anonymity is a notable aspect of networked CMC environments, allowing users to conceal their offline identities and have greater control over self-presentation. Unlike face-to-face communication or phone conversations, where identities are revealed through visual cues or tonal differences, CMC primarily relies on textual messages that offer minimal information about social identities. False identities, including different genders, are common in online communities, challenging the notion that message content reveals the speaker's nature. Rheingold (1995) describes how the online world lacks visual cues and encourages experimentation with multiple virtual personae. The lack of clarity in authorship and the anonymity crisis have significantly affected online-based research. Researchers cannot confirm the demographics of site users or validate identities due to the limitations of current technology. Without social norms for validating computer information, trust in computer networks remains uncertain.

TYPES OF INTERNET-BASED COMMUNICATION

The World Wide Web (WWW) has transformed the way people communicate in their daily lives, overcoming time and space barriers. Various aspects of society, such as e-business, online learning, e-governance, and online social movements, have established meaningful connections with internet technologies. This interconnectedness has led to increased information flow across national boundaries, contributing to the creation of a "global village." The internet enables a wide range of communication processes in fast, cheap, and far-reaching ways, eliminating intermediaries and facilitating the free exchange of uncensored information. It has profoundly impacted various aspects of human social activities. Within the internet medium, users can independently explore various possibilities, including exchanging emails, transferring files, searching databases, participating in real-time conferences, and engaging in discussion groups. Computer-mediated communication (CMC) is a type of communication facilitated by computer technologies, encompassing synchronous and asynchronous forms. Synchronous CMC involves real-time communication between multiple users, similar to telephonic or face-to-face conversations, while asynchronous CMC involves non-simultaneous communication.

Asynchronous computer-mediated communication (CMC) includes email and social media postings, where messages can be sent and received at one's convenience. Synchronous CMC requires both parties to be online simultaneously, often involving text, audio, or video-based chat or discussions. CMC is believed to create opportunities for education, participatory democracy, countercultures, and legal challenges regarding privacy, copyright, and ethics. Initially, it was thought that CMC would overcome time and space barriers without centralized control. CMC's global reach and multilingual context have

the potential to influence social relations, offering greater freedom of expression. The internet provides a technological infrastructure for CMC, allowing virtual co-presence and the formation of virtual communities, although, human relationships are essential for their establishment.

Dynamics of Communication Process in CMC

Computer-mediated communication (CMC) eliminates social and cultural dominance in group dynamics. It allows individuals with strong articulation skills to play a dominant role, regardless of social status. CMC breaks down boundaries and hierarchies, providing equal participation and obscuring visual and verbal status distinctions. Power and social status are not significant factors in online activities. Online communities are participant-driven, with thoughtful conversations that allow everyone to express their opinions without domination. Participants in CMC establish group-specific norms, values, and meanings, forming relationships and maintaining desirable social climates. While relationships take time to build in CMC, social information can be gained through online interaction, and offline interactions may occur if opportunities arise.

People often seek virtual worlds and online communities as a substitute for the loss of casual gathering places in their offline lives. These virtual environments fulfill a unique need for community and provide forums for discussions on a wide range of topics. The worldwide reach of these communities allows enthusiasts to stay updated on the latest developments in their areas of interest. When discussing important and sensitive topics that resonate with a cross-section of society, these digital forums attract significant attention from a large number of members.

Cohesive Force of Online Group Communication

In cyberspace, individuals have the freedom to create their own virtual communities that operate outside the jurisdiction of legal systems and nation-states. These online communities consist of members from various time zones, who share beliefs in free speech, individualism, equality, and open access. The impact of online communities on human interaction is significant, as the availability of fast and efficient communication through the Internet affects the organization of communities and interactions on a global scale. However, it's important to recognize that virtual communities do not simply replicate offline norms and rules, but they also don't emerge in isolation from existing social contexts.

FORMS OF COMPUTER-MEDIATED COMMUNICATION

Joseph Walther conducted a notable study on computer-mediated communication (CMC) and identified three types: impersonal CMC, interpersonal CMC, and hyper-personal CMC. This classification reflects the evolution of research and understanding of human relationships in the context of computer-mediated interactions. The advancement of technology has played a crucial role in shaping and developing theories about human relationships in CMC.

Impersonal CMC

During the early stages of computer-mediated communication (CMC) in the 1990s, the available technologies primarily supported text-based communication such as emails, text chat, and Usenet groups. Research conducted during this time focused on the limitations of "scant social information" in CMC, where nonverbal cues were minimal or absent. Early findings suggested that in impersonal CMC, group tasks were accomplished more effectively due to the absence of social power structures in text-based communication. However, subsequent research challenged the concept of impersonal CMC in various ways, leading to a more nuanced understanding of CMC dynamics.

Interpersonal CMC

Interpersonal computer-mediated communication (CMC) aims to replicate face-to-face (f2f) communication settings online. Participants in interpersonal CMC make efforts to mimic f2f interactions and adapt various cues, such as smileys, to facilitate communication. However, due to the inherent differences between online and offline communication, interpersonal CMC typically requires more time to achieve the desired outcomes of communication settings.

Hyper-personal CMC

In the hyper-personal computer-mediated communication (CMC) environment, every aspect of the communication process, including the sender, channel, receiver, and feedback, is used deliberately and effectively. A key feature is selective self-presentation, where individuals present themselves in a way that creates an idealized image to the receiver. Communication is ongoing, and the sender-channel-receiver-feedback cycle is constantly maintained to uphold the idealized perspectives and impressions of each other.

VIRTUAL COMMUNITIES

An online or virtual community is a gathering of people who communicate and exchange messages through digital networks, based on common interests rather than geographical proximity. These communities are formed in cyberspace and allow individuals to connect and interact using computer bulletin boards and networks. Virtual communities have advantages over offline communities, as they provide broader access and the ability to directly engage with like-minded individuals on specific topics of interest. The concept of virtual communities emphasizes the formation of personal relationships through ongoing public discussions in cyberspace. Unlike traditional mass communication, virtual communities offer a more democratic platform with distributed access and interactive possibilities, enabling community formation online. While the technological infrastructure supports virtual communities, human interaction and a sense of commonality are essential for their sustainability. The formation of virtual communities relies on shared practices, adherence to guidelines, and the presence of pre-existing forces such as temporal structure, external contexts, and participant characteristics. Participants in virtual communities can be classified into different categories, including lurkers, novices, regular participants, leaders, and those transitioning out of the community.

ACTIVITIES

Q. 1. Use any internet archives to visit the earlier generation USENET based online community and observe its past activities. Based on your observation, write a brief report [400 words].

Model Answer/Guidelines: Here're some general information about USENET and its earlier generation online community based on historical knowledge.

USENET, which stands for "User's Network," is a worldwide distributed discussion system that was widely used in the early days of the internet. It originated in the late 1970s and was popular throughout the 1980s and 1990s. USENET provided a platform for people to engage in text-based discussions and share information on a wide range of topics through newsgroups.

In its early years, USENET was primarily accessed through dedicated newsreader software. Users subscribed to specific newsgroups, which were categorized based on different interests or subjects. Within these newsgroups, users could post messages and participate in threaded discussions. The discussions covered a vast array of topics, including technology, science, arts, politics, and more.

USENET had a decentralized structure, with servers around the world replicating and distributing messages to ensure widespread availability. This architecture allowed for robust and resilient communication, even in the event of server failures or network disruptions.

The community within USENET was diverse, with participants from various backgrounds and locations. It fostered a sense of anonymity, as users were often identified by pseudonyms or email addresses rather than their real identities. This anonymity allowed for open and unrestricted discussions, although, it also presented challenges related to trust and accountability.

USENET played a significant role in shaping the early online culture and was instrumental in the development of internet-based communities. It served as a platform for knowledge sharing, collaboration, and the exchange of ideas.

However, it's important to note that USENET's popularity declined over time with the rise of the World Wide Web and more user-friendly internet technologies. Many of the newsgroups and discussions that once thrived on USENET have since migrated to web-based forums, social media platforms, and other online community platforms.

In conclusion, USENET was an influential early-generation online community that facilitated text-based discussions and information sharing. Although, I cannot provide specific observations from internet archives, the historical significance of USENET in shaping online communities and fostering open discussions cannot be understated.

Q. 2. Enrol yourself in an online community that exists through any popular social media platform. Observe its activities for a fortnight, give your assessment - that should reflect your understanding of the theoretical concepts [400 words].

Model Answer/Guidelines: Here's a general assessment based on theoretical concepts and common observations of online communities.

Online communities that exist through popular social media platforms have become increasingly prevalent in today's digital landscape. These communities bring together individuals with shared interests, passions, or goals, allowing them to interact, share information, and engage in discussions.