

# DIPLOMA IN MEDIA & COMMUNICATION

## MCG 601 FUNDAMENTALS OF MEDIA RESEARCH

WEEK 1

# Key Topics

- Introduction to Research
- What is Research?
- The Development of Mass Media Research
- Media Research and Scientific Method
- Methods of Knowing
- Characteristics of the Scientific Research Methods
- Research Procedures
- Selection of Research Topics

# Lesson Objectives

- At the end of the lesson, students should be able to :
  - Define the meaning of research
  - Identify the development of mass media research
  - Evaluate the determination of relevant topics for the research proposal

# Introduction to Research

- Two most common questions asked about research are :

## 1. What is mass media?

- ④ The term mass media refers to any form of communication that simultaneously reaches a large number of people through certain media
- ④ E.g. : Radio, Newspaper, TV, Internet, Magazines, Billboards, Films, Recordings, Books, Hand phones, etc.

# Introduction to Research

2. What types of things do mass media researchers investigate?

- Ⓢ Communication model
- Ⓢ Sender (Organization)
- Ⓢ Channels (media)
- Ⓢ Receiver (Audiences)
- Ⓢ Feedback (Responses, Influences, Reactions, etc.)
- Ⓢ Noise (Interruptions)

# What is Research?

- In an attempt to **discover something** or to **understand a phenomenon** in order to be **credible** and **reliable**
  - Two basic questions a beginner researcher must learn to answer :
    - ✓ How to use research methods and statistical procedures?
    - ✓ When to use research methods and statistical procedures?

# What is Research?

- Research is about **asking questions**. The right kind of questions that is **relevant** to the phenomenon we want to **understand**
- 5W's and 1H :
  - ✓ What
  - ✓ Why
  - ✓ Who
  - ✓ Where
  - ✓ When
  - ✓ How

# The Development of Mass Media Research

## PHASE 1 – The Medium

- What is it?
- How does it work?
- What technology does it involve?
- How is it similar / different from what we already have?
- What functions or services it provides?
- Who will have access to the medium?
- How much will it cost?

# The Development of Mass Media Research

## PHASE 2 - Uses of the Medium

- How does the audience use the medium in real life?
- Do they use it for information, to save time, for entertainment or some other reasons?
- Do children or adults use it? Why?
- What satisfactions / gratifications does new medium provide?
- What other types of information / entertainment does new medium replace?
- Is there anything else that we have known / found? Is it something new / not found before?

# The Development of Mass Media Research

## PHASE 3 – Examine the Effects of the Medium

- It investigates the sociological, psychological and physical effects of the medium
- E.g. : how much time do people spend with the medium? Does it change people's perspective? What do the users of the medium want, hear or see? Does the technology cause harm? If any, in what ways?

# The Development of Mass Media Research

- Old paradigm of “giant media”
- What about the new media that has expanded our options for entertainment and information content (cables, channels, satellite, videotapes, CD, VCD, DVD, MP3, Web-casting, PC’s, etc.)

# The Development of Mass Media Research

- Will examine how media scholars have conceptualized the role of media during this and the last century
- Presented with grounded perspectives on what media can do for you and to you
- Provide the review of the roles and potential of the media and to understand their influences
- Presented the challenges of the new technology

# The Development of Mass Media Research

## PHASE 4 – Involvement of the New Media

- To determine the extent the new medium can be involved
- E.g. : Can the medium provide more than just entertainment and information?

# Media Research and Scientific Method

- Scientific method means that the study is organized, objective, controlled, and qualitative or quantitative analysis of one or more variables
- All research begins with basic questions about a specific phenomenon

# Media Research and Scientific Method

- Q : Why viewers select one channel over the other channels?
- Q : Which section of the newspaper do people read most often?
- Q : Which types of magazine covers attract most readers?
- Q : What types of radio format will attract the largest number of listeners?

# Methods of Knowing

- There are several approaches in answering research questions. They are as follows :
  - **Tenacity** : (logic) that something is true because it has always been true
  - **Intuition** : an inside feeling of oneself
  - **Authority** : belief in trusted sources (E.g. : consumers will pay more for new TV satellite to receive more channels because the company has promised it)

# Characteristics of the Scientific Research Methods

- There are FIVE basic characteristics :
  1. Scientific Research is made public
    - ✓ The result of the research is made public
    - ✓ It is easily accessible
    - ✓ Scholars can verify such research findings

# Characteristics of The Scientific Research Methods

## 2. Science is objective

- ✓ Procedures are developed such that variables are able to be measured
- ✓ E.g. : To measure the appeal of TV commercial, researchers might count the number of times a viewer changes channels during a commercial
- ✓ Observations must be measured

# Characteristics of the Scientific Research Methods

## 3. Science is empirical

- ✓ Researchers are concerned with knowledge that are measurable
- ✓ Must be able to perceive and classify what they study and reject metaphysical and nonsensical events (E.g. : UFOs)
- ✓ Researchers must link abstract concepts to the empirical world through observations, which are done through measurements

# Characteristics of the Scientific Research Methods

## 3. Science is empirical (cont.)

- ✓ Operational definitions are important
- ✓ E.g. : The definition of concepts that are able to be measured
- ✓ E.g. : If you try to measure change in behaviour, how do you describe the behaviour, etc.?

# Characteristics of the Scientific Research Methods

4. Science is systematic and cumulative
  - ✓ It is a building block that leads to a development or construction of theory
  - ✓ Theory is a set of propositions that present a systematic view of a phenomenon described through relationships among concepts
  - ✓ It attempts to explain that phenomenon

# Characteristics of the Scientific Research Methods

## 5. Science is predictive

- ✓ It is concerned with relating the present to the future
- ✓ It has the ability to predict a phenomenon based on supported available data

# Research Procedures

- The following is a typical research process :
  1. Select a problem
  2. Review of the existing literature and theories
  3. Develop research questions / hypotheses
  4. Determine an appropriate method / research design
  5. Collect relevant data
  6. Analyze and interpret the results
  7. Present the results in an appropriate form. Answer the research questions
  8. Provide useful suggestions and recommendations

# Selection of Research Topics

- How? Where to begin?
- Suggestions : Refer to
  - Journals
  - Magazines and periodicals
  - Research summaries
  - Internet
  - Observations
  - Archive data

# 1. Determine Relevant Topics

- The following questions must be addressed :
  - Is the topic too broad?
  - Can the problem be investigated?
  - Can the data be analyzed?
  - Is the problem significant?
  - Can the results of the study be generalized?
  - What cost and time are involved in the analysis?
  - Is the planned approach appropriate to the project?
  - Is there any potential harm to the subject(s)?

## 2. Literature Review

- The following questions must be addressed :
  - What types of research have been done before?
  - What has been found in the previous researches?
  - What suggestions other researchers made for further studies?
  - What has not been investigated?
  - How can the proposed study add to our understanding / knowledge of the area?
  - What research methods were used in previous studies?

# 3. Research Questions / Hypotheses

- General questions
- Specific questions

# 4. Data Analysis & Interpretation

- Are the results accurate?
- What about the factors of validity?
- **Internal validity** – such as history, maturation, testing, instrumentation, statistics, experimental mortality, sampling, demand characteristics, biasness

# 4. Data Analysis & Interpretation

- **External validity** - how well the results of the study can be generalized across population, setting and time
- Cook & Campbell (1979) make THREE suggestions to overcome the question of validity :
  1. Use random sample
  2. Use heterogeneous sample or replicate study several times
  3. Select the sample that is representative of the group so that the results could be generalized

# 5. Presenting the Results

- Answer all the research questions you set earlier
- Use relevant qualitative and quantitative representations of the findings
- E.g. : Use statistical representation or description