

UGT Application Discussion

NAME

Western Connecticut State University

The Uses and Gratifications Theory explains that people are not passive recipients of media; instead people are active with media and use different types of media for each of their specific needs. The Uses and Gratifications Theory can be applied to my daily interaction with media. This theory assumes that people actively use media to accomplish their goals, each person chooses a specific medium in media based on their needs and that there are five needs. These five needs are cognitive, affective, personal integrative, social integrative, and tension release (Eckstein, 2016). I consider myself to be an extremely active media consumer on a daily basis. During the summer I watch the morning news on the television, I listen to Spotify, I go on Instagram and Facebook, I go on different news websites, I watch either television programs or Netflix at night, in the car I listen to different radio stations, I read articles that pop up on my newsfeed, I online shop, I search on Google, and I use my phone for texting and making calls. By using a large scope of different media mediums on a daily basis I am able to satisfy the five needs that the Uses and Gratifications Theory mentioned. My cognitive needs, of gaining knowledge and learning new information, are met through my use of the television where I watch the morning news and my use of the Internet where I read more news articles. My affective needs are satisfied when I watch Netflix or certain television programs at night. Watching *The Bachelorette* and *Outdaughters* every week makes me happy. My personal integrative needs are gratified through online shopping and the “likes” that I get on Facebook and Instagram. These “likes,” for a short period of time, make me feel like others are interested about what is going on in my life and that they care, even though most of them probably do not. The social integrative needs I have are fulfilled through the use of my cellphone and Facebook messenger. Through texting, phone calls and the

messenger application I am able to talk to my friends, my boyfriend, my cousins and my mother all while staying in my home. My last need, tension release needs, are mainly satisfied by my use of Spotify and my I-phone for music. Listening to music has always helped me relax and when I am able to run and listen to music I am able to de-stress. This use of my I-phone to listen to music to relax is in line with the results of Li Zeng's study. In the results that Li Zeng discovered, participants in her study used MP3 players to pass time, relax, and as a way to have fun (Zeng, 2011, p. 105). The selection of MP3 players and I-phones as a media medium used to satisfy tension release needs upholds the theory's explanation that people are active with media and not just passive recipients. The Uses and Gratifications Theory shows that people are not passive recipients to media; instead people are active with media and use specific media mediums to accomplish specific goals and needs (Eckstein, 2016). The Uses and Gratifications Theory is heuristic, has a large scope and is testable. Since this theory covers all mediums of media, and since media is constantly evolving, its scope is broad and this theory has been applied to several studies (Eckstein, 2016). Also, through Li Zeng's article it has been shown that this theory is testable and applicable to research ideas. This theory is not logically consistent and its utility has been questioned (Eckstein, 2016). This theory makes it known that people actively use media to satisfy specific needs, but just because this is known is not extremely helpful. It is hard to apply this theory to daily life.

References

Eckstein, J. (2016, June 13). *Uses and Gratifications Theory*. [PowerPoint slides].

Zeng, L. (2011). More than Audio on the Go: Uses and Gratifications of MP3 Players. *Communication Research Reports*, 28(1), 97-108.
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