

Patterns of media use in an urban setting are related to media gratification processes, but the relationship of media use to the needs of the media users is a complex one. Television, newspapers, and books are perceived as the most helpful media sources of need gratification, while radio, magazines, and films are perceived as less helpful. Use of the media is, in general, related to their perceived helpfulness. However, use of the media is not clearly related to the expressed needs of the audience members. The media appear to form two groups, books, magazines, and films as contrasted to radio, television, and newspapers. This dichotomy appears to be based not only on content but on availability and accessibility.

USING THE MASS MEDIA Need Gratification and Perceived Utility

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Recent mass communications research has turned to the study of the *functions* the media serve rather than the *effects* the media have on their audience. This move away from "effects" studies is a move away from a treatment of the audience as passive toward a notion of an active audience, and audience which puts the media to some use. This move is not an outright rejection of effects studies, but an attempt to place the results of these studies in the context of user characteristics. One of the characteristics of a media user is his or her needs. Does an audience member select from among the media and within a medium to satisfy his or her needs?

Many studies purport to show that the media do gratify needs. However, other authors, such as Elliott (1974), have questioned the validity of much of this research. The

present study is an attempt to overcome the difficulties pointed to by Elliott; it addresses the question of an active audience and seeks to uncover whether the media audience is selective in its use of the media in accordance with the audience members' needs.

Studies in both the United States and Great Britain have explored the functions served by the mass media. McQuail et al. (1972) studied the pattern of gratifications derived by listeners and viewers of a radio serial and television news, adventure, and quiz programs. A cluster analysis of the needs identified as being fulfilled by these diverse programs suggested a fourfold typology of needs relating to diversion, personal relationships, personal identity, and surveillance. Thus, for example, audience members indicated that they used television and radio to escape the boredom of everyday life, to have something to talk about with others, to compare the people and events in the programs with their own experiences, and to keep in touch with the main events in the world. In the United States, Robinson's (1972) review of a series of related studies of viewing behavior suggests a similar description (utilitarian, ego-defensive, value expressive, informative) of the possible functions of television.

A further development in the functional approach was suggested by Katz et al. (1973). In their Israeli study, they examined the potential linkages between media-related needs and the audience members' evaluations of the role of the various media in gratifying these needs. This study explored the need gratification derived from the use of television, radio, newspapers, books, and films. Respondents were presented with 35 media-related statements and asked to indicate, for each medium, its helpfulness in satisfying the stated need. The respondents were also asked to specify nonmedia sources of gratification. Among the major findings was the observation that nonmedia sources of gratification, such as family, friends, and holidays, were more helpful than the various media in satisfying important needs. However, the media were said to be useful in gratifying "escapist" needs and in providing a means for

comparing oneself to others. Television was the least specialized of all the media and was perceived as useful for "killing time," but not necessarily in an escapist manner. Other media had specialized functions with regard to gratifying self-referent needs. For example, "knowing oneself" was best served by books while "self-confidence" was gratified by newspapers. Needs relating to keeping informed about the world were seen to be best served by newspapers, radio, and television in that order. Finally, the respondents perceived some interchangeability among the various media in terms of the functions served. Thus, there was a circular relationship among the media; from television to radio, newspapers, books, cinema, and back to television.

These findings, however, are for the most part concerned with the *perceived* functions of the media and, although they are of interest, do not throw any light on the functions that the media may, in fact, serve. They do not show that the audience member actively selects from among the media in accordance with his or her needs. As Katz et al. (1974) point out, there are several assumptions which are basic to uses and gratifications research. Paramount among these assumptions and of most relevance here are (a) the audience is largely active and goal directed in its use of the media, and (b) the initiative for selecting particular media to gratify specific needs rests with the audience member.

However, as pointed out above, reviewers such as Elliott (1974) and McGuire (1974) have questioned whether the research to date has really provided evidence for an active audience selecting from among the media in accordance with the needs of its members. In order to fully and properly explore the functions of the media, individual audience members' needs must be related to each's selection and use of the media. Some of the difficulties and doubts expressed by these reviewers and to which this article is addressed are related to this omission in previous works. We see this omission as one of two errors.

An example of the first error is the argument that because newspapers are *perceived* to gratify information needs and

because these needs can be identified in the audience members, then newspaper reading actually gratifies these information needs. In other words, the pattern of needs and media-related gratification is often proposed without investigating media use on the part of the audience and the relationship of use to the needs of that audience. When media use is investigated with reference to audience needs, the second error occurs.

This second error concerns the confounding of a number of variables. Use of the media has been shown to be related to a number of situational and social variables. For example, Belson (1975) has shown that cinema attendance is related to age; teenagers use the cinema not only for entertainment but for a dating venue. In Australia, Kippax and Murray (1977) and Edgar (1977) have shown that heavy users of television tend to be found among the lower socio-economic groups. Women and the old of both sexes watch more television than others, as they are at home more. Western and Hughes (1972) show that newspapers are read most often by middle-aged males. The circumstances surrounding television and radio use are the same; these media are easily accessible. More resources, both financial and educational, are obvious concomitants of cinema attendance and book reading; there is an active seeking out. These situational variables and the circumstances in which the various media are turned to and used may have some bearing on the origin of needs, as needs, also, are probably related to situational characteristics. However, of more importance here, to show that audience members select certain media *in order to* gratify their needs, the relationship between media use and audience members' needs must be shown to be independent of these situational and social variables. If selection and use are directly related to audience needs, then and only then can one claim an active, goal-directed audience.

The present study is designed to overcome these two errors; its aim is to discover whether the audience is largely goal-directed in its selection and use of the media. The first

part of the study replicates the Katz et al. (1973) study; it examines media-related needs and the *perceived* helpfulness of the media in gratifying these needs. The second part of the study examines the relationship between the media-related needs and the use of the media and also the relationship of media use to perceived helpfulness. In both parts of the study, demographic and situational variables and the part they play are examined.

METHOD

PROCEDURE

A list of 42 media-related needs was assembled by modifying the list of needs used by Katz et al. (1973) to suit Australian conditions. The list was enlarged to incorporate the typology of media-person interactions proposed by McQuail et al. (1972) and Robinson (1972). A pilot study was carried out to insure that the four clusters of needs found in previous research were represented. This pilot study suggested that 30 of the original 42 needs were adequate. These needs are shown in Table 1.

The 30 need statements were presented to respondents, who were asked to rate the importance of each need on a four-point scale from "important" to "not at all important." It was felt that respondents could easily cope with a four-point scale and that such a scale might provide a little more information than a three-point scale. Next, the respondents were asked to estimate the extent of their use of each of six mass media: radio, books, film, television, newspapers, and magazines or journals. Then, for each need rated as important, the respondent was asked to rate the "helpfulness" of each of the six media in satisfying that need. In addition, the respondent was asked whether anything else besides these media was helpful in satisfying this need. Demographic information obtained on each respondent included age, sex, educational level, and occupation.

TABLE 1
A Priori Classification, Factor Loading, and Perceived Importance of
Thirty Media-Related Needs

Need	% Rated Importance	Factor Loading	
		≥.40	≥.30, <.40
1. Need to release tension	47.1	-	III
2. Need to improve quality of my life style.	34.0	III	-
3. Need to feel that I am using my time well	43.2	I	-
4. Need to share my experiences with my family and friends	53.9	I	-
5. Need to feel that I am needed	44.7	I	-
6. Need to understand what is going on in the world	49.0	II	-
7. Need to enjoy what the world has to offer	41.7	III	II
8. Need to feel proud of Australia as a a nation in its own right	40.3	II	-
9. Need to be happy	73.8	I	-
10. Need to be stimulated	35.4	III	-
11. Need to feel that others think as I do	8.7	-	IV
12. Need to obtain useful information about daily living	32.0	II	-
13. Need to feel that I am doing my part to make Australia a better nation	26.7	II	-
14. Need to avoid feeling lonely	39.3	IV	I
15. Need to know more about the Australian people and their way of life.	25.2	II	-
16. Need to be entertained	27.2	IV	-
17. Need to strengthen family ties	37.4	I	-
18. Need to understand the relationships within my family	47.6	I	-

TABLE 1 (Continued)

No.	Need	% Rated Importance	Factor Loading	
			≥ .40	≥ .30, < .40
19.	Need to have confidence in the way our country is governed	48.1	II	-
20.	Need to feel that other people have confidence in me	36.4	I	-
21.	Need to know more about the Australian government	30.6	II	-
22.	Need to feel satisfied with the Australian way of life	26.3	II	-
23.	Need to understand my friends	41.3	I	-
24.	Need to have discussions with my friends and others	45.6	I	III
25.	Need to feel that I have a purpose in life	58.0	I	-
26.	Need to strengthen my faith in God	36.9	I	II
27.	Need to have discussions with my family	46.6	I	-
28.	Need to know what the world thinks about Australia	23.9	II	-
29.	Need to understand myself	49.0	I	III
30.	Need to enjoy the good life in Australia.	34.5	II	IV

SAMPLE

A representative sample of the adult (18 years and older) population of the Sydney metropolitan areas was obtained by systematically selecting respondents from randomly sampled Census Collector Districts. A total of 206 persons (98 males and 108 females) was successfully interviewed. Comparison of the demographic characteristics of the sample with census statistics indicated only minor variation (i.e., slightly younger and better educated).

ANALYSIS

A factor analysis (principal components) was used to examine the interrelationships between the needs. NUCROS, a contingency table analysis, was used to examine the relationships between demographic characteristics of the sample the media-related needs, use of the media, and perceived helpfulness of the media. In order to test overall relationships between these sets of variables, MANOVA, a multivariate analysis of variance was used. Unless otherwise stated all probabilities quoted refer to MANOVA.

RESULTS

The results are best discussed in two sections. The first section, "media helpfulness and need gratification," deals with the perceived helpfulness of the media and the relationship of this variable to need gratification. It replicates the Katz et al. (1973) study.

The second section, "media use and need gratification," examines the relationship between media use and need gratification and the relationship between media use and the perceived helpfulness of the media.

MEDIA HELPFULNESS AND NEED GRATIFICATION

Clusters of Important Needs

Respondents were asked to rate, on a four-point scale, the relative importance of 30 media-related needs. The data presented in Table 1 indicate that the most important need (i.e., rated as important by the most respondents) is the need "to be happy" (9) which was rated as important by 73.8% of the respondents. Other important needs are the "need to feel that I have a purpose in life" (25), the "need to understand what is going on in the world" (6), and the "need to understand myself" (29). The least important need is the "need to feel that others think as I do" (11). Only 8.7%

of respondents indicated that this need was important to them.

An empirical clustering of the 30 needs provides a description of the interrelationships. A principal component factor analysis yielded four factors (see Table 1).

The 13 needs contained in FI (3, 4, 5, 9, 17, 18, 20, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, and 29) are those concerned with self and family and friends. The factor appears to incorporate both personal identity needs and social contact needs. The FI needs are among the most important, with a mean rank order of need importance of 9.85.

Factor II is composed of 10 needs (6, 8, 12, 13, 15, 19, 21, 22, 28, and 30) which are directly concerned with society and the world. This factor appears to be an information factor. The mean rank order of importance of these needs is 20.3.

Factor III is made up on 3 needs (2, 7, 20) and needs 1, 24, and 29 have small loadings on this factor. This factor seems to be concerned with hedonistic needs and self-gratification and stimulation. The mean rank order of importance of these 3 needs is 18.3.

Factor IV is composed of only two needs, 14 and 16, although needs 11 and 30 have small loadings on this factor. This factor also seems to be concerned with hedonistic needs, although it appears to be less intellectual and more escapist and insecure in flavor than FIII. The mean rank order of importance of these two needs is 20.5.

These four factors account for 41% of the variance. The first factor, a social/self factor, is the most important factor and accounts for 22.1% of the variance. The second factor, the information factor, which is rated as far less important, accounts for 10.1% of the variance. The two remaining factors are concerned with self-gratification and entertainment.

Needs and Demographic Characteristics

Sex. Males have fewer important needs than females. Males rated 9 needs as important while females rated 12

needs as important. The females place somewhat more importance on FI and FIII needs than do the males, whereas the males emphasize FII and FIV needs (MANOVA: $p < .047$). Females rated as more important needs concerned with having discussions and sharing experiences with family and friends and the need to feel that "I am needed," while males were more concerned with information needs and entertainment.

Age. Those aged 51 and over have more important needs than the younger age groups. The median number of important needs for the older age group was 15 while for the younger age groups the median ranged from 9 to 11. The young placed more emphasis on self-gratification and entertainment (FIII and FIV), while the older age groups placed more importance on social and self needs (FI), and on information (FIII). However, in general, there is no significant overall relationship between age and importance of needs (MANOVA: $p < .861$), although there is a slight trend in line with the NUCROS results for the young to place more emphasis on FIII needs, ($p < .076$).

Education. The better-educated have marginally more important needs than those with fewer years of schooling. The educated place more emphasis on information (FII) and also on self-gratification (FIII), while the uneducated (FII) place more importance on (FI) needs (MANOVA: $p < .035$).

Occupation. Those of the respondents who were either pensioners or retired had more important needs than did any other occupational group. Pensioners/retired persons had a median of 15 important needs as compared with 11 for all other occupational groups, except students who rated 12 needs as important. However, as in the case of age, there is no overall relationship (MANOVA: $p < .800$).

In general, the old, females, and the better-educated of the sample have more needs than others. Females place more emphasis on needs relating to understanding self, friends, and family (FI) and also on self-gratification needs

(FIII). Males place more emphasis on information needs (FII) and on entertainment (FIV). The better-educated also stress information needs (FII). Occupation and age are related to some specific needs but there is no overall trend, although the young, to some extent emphasize self-gratification needs (FIII).

Need Importance and Perceived Helpfulness

Most needs are not perceived as being fully met by the media. Sources of gratification other than the media are mentioned for each need and the percentage of respondents naming these extra satisfiers varies from 75% for need 9 to 23% for need 21. The least important needs, the information needs (FII), are among the best satisfied by the media. Only 17.5% of respondents rate the media as unhelpful for these needs. Entertainment needs 14 and 16 (FIV) are also reasonably satisfied by the media, and only 12.5% of the respondents rate the media as unhelpful. On the other hand, the most important needs (FI), those concerned with personal identity and social relationships, are least satisfied by the media (44.4% rated the media as unhelpful for these needs). For those needs related to self-gratification (FIII), 29.1% rated the media as unhelpful. Respondents found, as might be expected, that needs related to friends and family and to some extent to self were not fully satisfied by the media. They named such things as personal relationships, talking, discussion, and sharing experiences as other sources of gratification.

In general, television, newspapers, and books are perceived as the most helpful media. If the mean evaluation of each medium for each need is calculated, the following pattern emerges (see Table 2). Television has an overall mean helpfulness rating of 2.70; newspapers, 2.63; books, 2.48; radio, 2.39; journals, 2.32; and films, 2.00.

Television is perceived as satisfying a large number of needs; four of the thirteen FI needs, five of the ten FII needs, one of the FIII needs, and all of the FIV needs. Its perceived

function appears diverse. It is perceived as the most helpful medium for entertainment in spite of the film's entertainment role, it plays an integrative role with friends and family, and it is also perceived as helpful in providing information about Australia and the world.

Newspapers are perceived as satisfying eight needs; six of these are associated with FII, and two with FI (6 and 24). All eight needs are concerned with understanding, knowledge, and credibility, and six are directly concerned with Australia and the world. Newspapers are not perceived as satisfying any emotional needs, but are seen to serve an informational function.

Books are perceived as satisfying ten needs; seven of the thirteen FI needs, and three FIII needs. Thus, although books are not noted for gratifying information needs, they are perceived as satisfying needs related to personal identity and self-gratification.

Radio, although not perceived as a major satisfier of any one need, is relatively helpful in satisfying needs related to information (FII) needs. It is also seen as moderately satisfying FIII and FIV needs. Magazines appear to be as diverse in their function as television, and no clear pattern emerges. Films are perceived as the least helpful of all the media and are ranked second only once; they are seen to serve need 16—the need to be entertained.

Media Diffusion

Television is the most diffuse of the media. It is perceived as satisfying needs associated with understanding the self, with emotional gratification and escape, and with information. Radio and journals also are perceived as serving diffuse needs. On the other hand, books and newspapers are perceived as more specialized; self and social needs are perceived to be best satisfied by books and information needs by newspapers. Films are not perceived as helpful, and it is therefore difficult to comment upon the specificity of the cinema.

ABLE 2
and Perceived Helpfulness
of the Six Media

RANK	PERCEIVED HELPFULNESS (RANK)						Jrnls.
	Books	Film	N.P.	T.V.			
1	2.99(1)	2.05(6)	2.71(2)	2.38(4)		2.51(3)	
2	2.33(3)	2.00(5)	2.40(2)	2.43(1)		2.17(4)	
3	1.79(3)	1.44(6)	1.80(1)	1.80(2)		1.67(4)	
4	2.59(3)	2.31(6)	2.43(4)	2.82(1)		2.41(5)	
5	1.88(3)	1.64(5)	2.03(2)	2.30(1)		1.82(4)	
6	2.44(1)	1.79(5)	2.02(4)	2.20(2)		2.03(3)	
7	1.97(1)	1.50(6)	1.71(3)	1.70(4)		1.78(2)	
8	2.38(1)	1.80(5)	1.84(3)	1.83(4)		1.88(2)	
9	2.71(3)	2.34(6)	2.29(1)	2.73(2)		2.34(4)	
10	2.45(1)	1.69(6)	2.07(3)	2.09(2)		1.96(4)	
11	2.65(1)	2.54(6)	2.03(5)	2.12(2)		2.04(3.5)	
12	2.04(3.5)	1.99(6)	2.55(2)	2.65(1)		2.17(4)	
13	2.05(5)	1.99(5)	2.07(3.5)	2.09(2)		2.07(3.5)	
14	1.93(6)						
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Factor 2	3.40(2)	2.92(4)	2.08(6)	3.68(1)	3.39(3)	2.87(5)	
	2.85(3)	2.34(5)	1.93(6)	3.22(1)	3.11(2)	2.46(4)	
	2.20(2.5)	2.55(5)	1.93(6)	3.45(1)	3.20(2.5)	3.67(4)	
	3.23(3)	2.13(6)	1.43(6)	2.65(1)	2.53(1)	2.15(4)	
	2.43(3)	3.00(4)	1.61(6)	3.38(2)	3.49(1)	2.68(5)	
	3.11(3)	1.95(5)	1.71(6)	3.05(1)	2.94(2)	2.27(4)	
	2.55(3)	2.25(5)	1.85(6)	3.48(1)	3.33(2)	2.37(4)	
	3.17(3)	2.17(5)	2.07(6)	2.89(2)	2.98(1)	2.38(4)	
	2.37(5)	2.68(4)	2.42(4)	3.40(2)	3.43(1)	2.53(5)	
		2.33(6)		2.76(2)	3.15(1)	2.49(3)	
Factor 3	2.41(4.5)	2.73(1)		2.04(6)	2.66(2)	2.41(4.5)	
2	2.49(5)	2.71(3)		2.44(6)	2.82(2)	2.92(1)	
7	2.86(3)	3.30(1)		2.85(4)	2.68(6)	2.74(5)	
10	2.76(3)	3.05(1)		2.22(5)	2.17(6)	2.94(2)	
Factor 4	2.87(2)	2.58(3.5)	2.32(6)				
14	3.11(3)	2.57(6)	3.20(2)				
16	1.88(4.5)	1.88(4.5)	1.80(6)				
(11)							

In Table 3 are presented the correlations of helpfulness for each media pair. A high correlation indicates that the two media were perceived as either helpful, in satisfying these needs. To

There is a strong relationship between them; they may be considered substitutes. The form has a large correlation with media, then it may be described as a form in Table 3 indicates that journals are the most diffuse media in terms of changeability with the other media. Books and films, and to some extent newspapers, are the most specialized. However, this diffusion/specialization are interrelationships among the perceived help of various media and does not consider variety of medium.

The data in Table 3 also suggest that each medium is perceived as interchangeable with other media. Thus, television is perceived as most similar to radio and newspapers. News papers are most similar to radio and television; books are similar to journals and film; and films are similar to books and journals.

Summary

The needs expressed by the respondents can be described in the following terms: The two most important needs are those related to self-identity and social contact (FI) and self-gratification (FIII). These needs appear to be most strongly felt by females. The remaining needs are more important concerned with information (FII) and entertainment (FIV). The information (FII) and entertainment (FIV) are also place more importance on the entertainment function is perceived as the most gratifying of the function is diverse, and it is perceived to satisfy all four factors. Newspapers and books are also satisfying a large number of needs, but their

TABLE 3
Matrix of Correlations of Perceived Helpfulness
for Six Media

	Radio	Books	Films	N.P.	T.V.	Journals	Average Correlation
Radio	-	.52	.55	.85	.92	.88	.74
Books		-	.61	.27	.31	.68	.48
Films			-	.31	.56	.79	.56
N.P.				-	.87	.75	.61
T.V.					-	.82	.70
Journals						-	.78

functions appear to be more specific; books gratify self-identity needs and newspapers information needs.

Radio, journals, and films are perceived as the least helpful of the media. Both radio and journals are diffuse and are perceived to satisfy needs from all four factors, while films are perceived to satisfy entertainment needs.

MEDIA USE AND NEED GRATIFICATION

Media Use

The use of radio, books, cinema, newspapers, magazines, and television varies according to sex, educational status, occupations, and age.

With regard to radio, it can be noted that most respondents listen to some radio, with approximately 46% listening 6 to 20 hours per week. Those who are retired and students listen significantly more than other occupational groups, but there are no other demographic differences ($p < .037$).

Most respondents (62%) read no more than one to four books per month, and 15% do not read. Demographic variables are strongly related to book reading. The better-educated and the upper and middle income earners read

significantly more than other groups, ($p < .001$). Also, there is a trend for females ($p < .032$) to read more books than males, and for the young ($p < .006$) to read more than the old.

Almost half the respondents (44%) do not go to the cinema. The young ($p < .001$) and the upper and middle income earners ($p < .001$) see more films than the other groups and, as is the case with books, the elderly make very little use of this medium.

Almost all respondents (98%) read at least one newspaper per week and of these 35% read eight or more per week. Males read significantly more newspapers than females ($p < .002$) and the better-educated ($p < .002$) and the old ($p = .011$) read significantly more newspapers than do others. Housewives read fewer newspapers than do other occupational groups ($p < .004$).

Again, a large majority of respondents (83%) watch television—between 6 and 40 hours each week. Approximately 27% watch 21 or more hours per week while only 3% watch more than 40 hours per week. Those who watch most are the older ($p < .009$), the less-well-educated ($p < .005$), housewives, retired persons, and the low income earners ($p < .001$).

Almost half the sample read between one and four journals/magazines per month. The better-educated ($p < .058$) and the upper and middle income earners read more than the other groups ($p < .006$); and females read more than males ($p < .029$).

In general, books, films, and to some extent magazines are selected by the same type of respondent—i.e., the younger, better-educated, and the upper and middle income earner. Radio and television are used, in general, more often by housewives, the elderly, and the retired, and to some extent by the lower income earners. Newspapers do not fit in with any of the other media and are read more heavily by males, those who have retired, and the upper and middle income earners.

The dominant patterns of media use can be further elaborated by examining the interrelationships among the media in terms of extent of use. The data presented in Table 4 indicate that certain media are used in a similar manner. For example, high use of television is significantly related to a similar use of radio, but negatively related to reading books. Moreover, extensive use of books is positively related to film attendance. Patterns such as these demonstrate the similarity of the various media in terms of use. This "usage" description approximates the earlier "functional" description of two groups of interrelated media.

Media Use and Perceived Helpfulness

Media use is related to the perceived helpfulness of *some* of the media. In 20 of the 30 possible cases (NUCROS), book reading is significantly and positively associated with the perceived helpfulness of books. In other words, those who rated books as helpful actually read more. Similar associations exist for journals and films. The strength of the relationship declines for television, radio, and newspapers. For television, in 17 of the possible 30 cases, there is a positive and significant association between the perceived helpfulness of television and actual viewing behavior. For radio, there are 15 such relationships, and for newspapers only 4.

Thus, the use of the media, with the exception of newspapers, is related to their perceived helpfulness in gratifying certain needs, but it must be kept in mind that the result may, in part, be due to the influence of demographic variables, which are associated both with perceived helpfulness ratings and media use.

Media Use and Need Importance

Although the above findings demonstrate a relationship between media use and their *perceived* helpfulness, they do

TABLE 4
Use of Relationships Among the Six Media

	Radio	Books	Film	N.P.	T.V.	Journals
Radio	-	-.344*	.329	.220	.403*	.288
Books		-	.343*	.240	-.374*	.258
Films			-	.177	.323	.341*
N.P.				-	.323	.207
T.V.					-	.269
Journals						-

* $P \leq .05$

Kendal Contingency Coefficient

not necessarily imply that there is any direct link between media use and need importance.

There are some significant relationships between specific needs and media use (NUCROS), but these are complex because in some instances (e.g., television, newspapers, and radio) the needs satisfied range over several factors.

For books and cinema, and to some extent journals, the relationships are less complex. More books are read by those who consider FIII needs important and less by those who consider FI needs important. A similar but not as strong a relationship holds for magazine reading. More films are seen by those who rate FIV needs important and fewer by those who rate FI needs important.

In other words, it appears that for some of the media (i.e., books, journals, and films), there is a meaningful relationship between need importance and media use. However, it may be claimed that these relationships are simply a function of demographic variables rather than any need-related selection process. In order to clarify the relationship between media use and need importance, the demographic variables need to be held constant. When a multivariate analysis (MANOVA) was used to control for demographic

variables, the relationship between media use and need importance is not strong ($p = .065$). The univariate F tests associated with the MANOVA analysis show that this result is due to a relationship between need importance of FIV and film and book use (see Table 5). This result, in general, confirms the interpretation of the NUCROS results. Those who consider FIV needs important go to more films and read fewer books than those who place little importance on FIV needs. There is no relationship, when demographic variables are held constant, between the use of radio, newspapers, television, or journals and need importance. Nor is there any significant relationship between factors FI, FII, and FIII and any of the media, although there is a slight trend suggesting that those with self-gratification needs (FIII) read more books than those who place little importance on these needs.

Summary

Media use is best predicted by demographic variables: sex, age, education, and occupation. It is also associated with perceived helpfulness. There is a very clear pattern. Books and films and, to some extent journals, are used by the better-educated, the upper and middle income earners, and the young. The use of these three media is also strongly associated with their perceived helpfulness.

Radio and television are used more by the old and the less well educated, and there is a moderate association between the use of these two media and their perceived helpfulness. Newspapers are read more by males, the old, and the better-educated, but the relationship between the use of this medium and perceived helpfulness is very weak.

However, need importance is not a good predictor of media use except in the case of entertainment needs. It appears that, for those for whom entertainment needs are important, films are not only perceived to serve this need but are used to gratify it. There is also some suggestion that those with strong self-gratification needs not only perceive books as gratifying, but also read them. No other relation-

TABLE 5
Media Use and Need Importance
(MANOVA: $p \leq .065$)

(a) <u>Univariate F tests:</u> (Factors as co-variates)		
<u>Variables</u>	<u>P (\leq)</u>	<u>Standardized Discriminant Function</u>
Radio	.429	.189
Books	.044	.455
Films	.004	-.819
Newspapers	.866	.269
Television	.941	-.120
Journals	.453	-.114
(b) <u>Univariate F tests</u> (Media as co-variates)		
<u>Variables</u>	<u>P (\leq)</u>	<u>Standardized Discriminant Function</u>
Factor I	.925	.196
Factor II	.407	-.091
Factor III	.262	.263
Factor IV	.003	-.962

ships exist between the use of the media and need importance. Although journals, radio, and television are perceived to satisfy certain needs, it appears that they are not specifically selected and used to gratify these needs.

These results suggest the possibility that the relationship of media use to need importance is modified by both the diversity of the functions served by the media and the availability of the media. Where the media serve diffuse needs, as in the case of television, radio, and journals, the relationship is obscured. It is also obscure in the case of those media which are widely available and within "turning on" distance, as in the case of newspapers, radio, and television. In general, it appears that only for those media

where an effort is required to reach them, books and film, is the relationship between use and need importance clear.

CONCLUSIONS

NEEDS AND IMPORTANCE

An empirical clustering of the 30 media-related needs resulted in four factors which were perceived as differing in the degree of "importance" in the respondent's daily life. The most important needs were those contained in FI. This factor is composed of 13 needs whose referent is "self" or "family" and "friends" and are chiefly concerned with achieving "knowledge and understanding" and "credibility and status" such as the need to "share my experience with my family and friends." The next most important factor was composed of needs relating to self-gratification and stimulation (FIII)—for example, the need to "enjoy what the world has to offer." The two equally low-importance clusters of needs were those 10 needs concerned with "society and the world" as a referent for gaining "knowledge, information and understanding" (FII) such as the need to "know what the world thinks about Australia," and 2 needs related to clearly hedonistic concerns for obtaining emotional gratification for oneself and escape from life pressures (FIV)—i.e., the needs "to be entertained" and "to avoid feeling lonely."

The clustering of needs obtained in this study corresponds to the broad empirical and theoretical categories described by Katz et al. (1973), McQuail et al. (1972), and Robinson (1972). For example, the McQuail description of needs relating to "personal identity" and "personal relationships" is, in the present study represented by the factors FI and FIII. The third factor, FIII, also incorporates some notion of self-gratification. The second factor, FII, which is concerned with understanding Australia's role in the world, is similar to the surveillance/information functions identified by McQuail et al. (1972), Robinson (1972),

and Katz et al. (1973). Similarly, "diversion" (McQuail et al., 1972) and "escapist" (Katz et al., 1973) needs are represented by the fourth factor, FIV. These needs appear to be concerned with passive entertainment, rather than with "active management of time" as in the Katz study, although the self-gratification needs, FIII, are in some ways closer to this notion. However, as we will discuss below, despite the similarity of need clusters, the importance attached to these needs seems to vary in different culture contexts.

PERCEIVED FUNCTIONS OF THE MEDIA

Although the media are not the sole or best source for gratifying the needs examined in this study, they do play a significant role in the audience member's life. Television is perceived as the most helpful medium, followed by newspapers, books, radio, magazines, and films in that order. The various media can be grouped in terms of their perceived functions and helpfulness in gratifying specific needs. In this study, two major groups of interrelated media emerge: television-radio-newspapers, and books-magazines-cinema. However, despite the interchangeability of these media, they can be differentiated on the basis of the *types* of needs served by each medium.

Needs related to the self and to personal relationships, FI, are perceived as best served by books, television, and, to a lesser extent, magazines. An interesting dichotomy of perceived helpfulness emerges within this factor; outward expressions of self through family and friends are perceived as best served by television, while inward expressions of self are best served by books. Books are also perceived as the best satisfier of self-gratification needs, FIII. Knowledge about Australia's role in the world, FII, is perceived as best obtained through newspapers and television and, to a lesser extent, radio. Entertainment needs, FIV, are perceived as best served by television.

The diffuse character of some media can be seen in the fact that television, for example, is perceived as serving three need factors. Moreover, this pattern can be elaborated

by reference to the average helpfulness index derived from intercorrelations of each media pair for all needs. In this instance, the most specialized medium is books, while television, radio, and magazines have a high intercorrelation and hence are the most diffuse in terms of need satisfaction.

CULTURE CONTEXT

Of the three major aspects of "uses and gratifications research" examined in this study (need importance, media use, and perceived helpfulness) only "need importance" appeared to be responsive to cultural variation. For Israeli respondents, strengthening knowledge, understanding, and credibility, and status with regard to society, the state, and the world were among the most important needs. In contrast, Australians endorsed the importance of needs related to self-expression and self-gratification in the context of strengthening relations with family and friends and self-validating experiences.

The marked similarity in the perceived role of the mass media in these two cultures can be demonstrated by the overlapping patterns of need gratification and media helpfulness. For example, in both studies, television was identified as a diffuse medium, serving a wide variety of needs. Similarly, in both studies, newspapers were perceived as having a specialized function in gratifying needs relating to knowledge about society and the world. Moreover, needs related to knowing oneself and self-gratification are perceived as best served by books in both cultures.

A final similarity across cultures lies in the perceived inter-changeability of the various media: In Israel and Australia, television was perceived as most similar to radio and newspapers in terms of helpfulness in gratifying needs. Moreover, in both cultures, the media groupings seem to be related to aspects of the context of use—namely, the ubiquitous nature of television, radio, and newspapers.

Thus, in spite of cultural differences with respect to need importance, the model linking needs with perceived media

gratification proposed by Katz et al. (1973) is confirmed by the Australian study. However, in the present study, this model has been extended to examine the extent of use of the media and its relationship to perceived helpfulness in the need gratification process. It is to this that we now turn.

SPECIFIC AND DIVERSE MEDIA USE

Although the use of a particular medium is associated with its perceived helpfulness, with the exception of newspapers, it does not seem the media use is, in general, directly tied to the needs of the audience members. For example, although television is perceived as serving entertainment needs, its use is not clearly related to the strength of importance of these needs. The exception to this general result is film. It does not appear, therefore, that the audience actively selects any particular medium to serve any particular need or needs.

Elliott (1974) has argued that the media are neither the sole nor the best sources of gratification for the wide variety of media-related needs studied and that the diffuse quality of some media precludes the possibility of identifying the specific functions of a particular medium for any individual. And, indeed, Elliott's argument receives some support from the results of the present study. For example, it has been demonstrated that need importance and media use are not clearly related, with the exception of films which do appear to serve an entertainment function. Moreover, although newspapers are perceived to have a specific function, that of gratifying information needs, there is no relationship between the use of this medium and the strength of the need for information or knowledge. Similarly, books are perceived to have a specific function with respect to self needs, but, once again, this need is not clearly related to book use. The remaining media—television, radio, and journals—are perceived as serving diverse needs. And it appears that this diversity, as Elliott argues, makes it difficult to identify the specific functions that these media may serve for any particular individual.

Further, it appears that this diffuse quality of television and radio is related in some way to the ubiquity or ease of access of these media; they have a certain "taken-for-granted" quality. Thus, in one sense, media selection seems to be best predicted by demographic variables rather than by the specific characteristics of each medium. And yet, as in the case of film, when these media characteristics are clearly perceived by the audience member and the medium is not readily available, a closer relationship between media use and need gratification emerges. However, when we confront a diffuse medium, such as television, description of the need gratification process requires specification of the characteristics of both the media user and the medium used.

What this study has shown is that there is, for most mass media, no direct relationship between selection, consumption or use, and need importance. It may be that there is no relationship between the *quantity* of use and need gratification. Rather, a far more complex relationship may exist between the *quality* of use and need gratification via the demographic and social characteristics of the audience members and the characteristics of each medium. The media may not be the sole or the best sources of gratification, but the results of this study do demonstrate a relationship, albeit not a clear one, between media use and the perceived functions of the media in the need gratification process.

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