

“Audience Phantasm” for Media from Viewpoints of Islamic Republic of Iran (IRI) Authorities’

Amir Abdolreza Sepanji

Assistant Professor of Communication and Media Studies

Abstract: Analyzing the image of audiences presented by IRI’s authorities including: policy makers, powerful official, religious leaders, and media officials and comparing it with theories have brought up by experts in the field of communication may consider media activities from all angles in Iran. Accordingly, as the abovementioned authorities’ viewpoint of audiences exposed to media messages keeps distance from the true nature of media activities, media-message receivers and their current position in the booming market of media, as termed by Mohsenyan-e Rad as “Message Bazaar”, there will possibly be disastrous social, cultural, political, and even economic consequences with regard to media uses. So, the present article aims at the viewpoint by IRI (Islamic Republic of Iran)’s authorities concerning the characteristics and general nature of audiences and terms it as “Audience Phantasm”. It firstly notes that there will be consequences such as audience distancing themselves from local and official media in this country, if policy makers and media officials’ imaginations of audiences become far from related bare facts have happened in the era of global media and the nature of audiences. After that, the article reviews the history and definition for the term “Audience”, and introduces the “Uses and Gratifications Theory” and “Audience Phantasm” phenomena as theoretical-research principles based on which it presents the characteristics of audiences. This article expresses the IRI’s authoritative audience phantasm with regard to audiences: that based on the available analyzed data, IRI’s authorities categorize audiences as passive and impressionable individuals, who have sat in front of “Menbar” and the tribune of oration or speech, they need protection from powerful media contents. The article, presents “Deep-Content Analysis”, a mixed research method, as its research method. It consecutively offers main results within a qualitative and quantitative analytical framework of the statements drawn out of the IRI’s authoritative viewpoints. **Note:** “Audience phantasm” is a phenomenon have seen in the Islamic countries, like Iran, and because of it the authorities and governors seeing the audiences like who have sat in front of “Menbar” (the medium that uses in the Moslem mosques and Islamic ceremonies) and the tribune of oration or speech.

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Introduction

Analyzing the image of audiences presented by IRI’s authorities including: policy makers, powerful official, religious leaders, and media officials and comparing it with theories has brought up by experts in the field of communication, may consider media activities from all angles in Iran. Accordingly, as the abovementioned authorities’ viewpoint of audiences exposed to media messages keeps distance from the true nature of media activities, media-message receivers and their current position in the booming market of media, as termed by Mohsenyan-e Rad as “Message Bazaar”, there will possibly be disastrous social, cultural, political, and even economic consequences with regard to media uses.

This paper is working on comparing the image of Iranian top authorities about “audiences” with Use-based theories regarding the users and audiences of media through special focus on knowledge communication field theories, especially theories based on Use – the concept that believes “audiences” are active consumers and users of media content; it

also extracts the image of communicatees from the viewpoint of Islamic Republic authorities.

Statement of the Problem

Since there is an overlap between government administrators and managers of media along the way of creation and development of media in Iran history and particularly after the Islamic Revolution in 1979, this review has tried to analyze the opinions of authorities of the Islamic Republic of Iran, formerly mentioned, about “the audience, receiver, destination, consumer, communicatee...”, as one of the elements of communication.

According to surveys, in Iran the chief of the IRIB, as the largest broadcasting media of the country – administering dozens of national and provincial and satellite radio and television networks – would be appointed as the chief of the Parliament – one of three legislative branches and also the center of lawmaking in Iran¹. Or the Minister of Culture and Islamic Guidance would be appointed as the

¹ Ali Larijani

president of IRIB². Also the head of the office of IRIB's president may achieve the Ministry of Culture and Islamic Guidance³. Similarly, in another era, the brother of previous president and head of the Expediency Council would be appointed as the president of IRIB⁴; or many PMs and government managers may lead the Press Administration⁵. While none of these people may have special expertise in communication sciences and mass media⁶. Therefore, we can say that fields of government, religion, and media management have a lot of overlaps in Iran and also the answer to this question is ambiguous that: "Do these two domains (politicians and executives of Islamic Republic media) know the nature of media? Or are they aware of mysteries and tricks of communication process or what the call as "audience"? However, due to the variety of elements of communication process and extensiveness of the above question subject, this article reduces it and just asks that: "How much do the authorities of the Islamic Republic know the characteristics, traits and actions of receivers of "audiences", and also "To what extend the opinions about the media in macro level and also policy making and guiding the people's thinking is affected by their look at this image?"

Lack of detailed understanding of the nature and type of media and how communicatee act against them, while there are lots of media content available for active and critical receivers, can lead to escape of receivers from domestic media that are close to the government and large budget resources as well as national wealth are spent on their setup and run operation. Irreparable consequences will be followed by the escape, focusing on them was the researcher's main motivation in addressing the present issue.

In his studies, Mosenyan-e Rad has raised the hypothesis that authorities' to look at "audiences" can be considered as "Audience phantasm" (Mohsenyan-e Rad, 2008:83).

Here it should be noted that of late 1980s, many researchers and theorists of communication concluded that the term respondent, based on its traditional sense, for audiences, is something not correct. They have inclined to medium and

transmission views in communication studies according which media simply pass the message to their users. Thus, "being the audience" could be as ordinary as other different roles that people have during their life time, so not important it would be (Bird, 2003:4). In the era that communities have been media-saturated, it is not possible to talk about strong influence of media, however, in communities that still have not saturated, the media can be attractive and thus effective (Ibid:168).

In a society like Iran, the phenomenon of media saturation is happening at once, due to increasing access to satellite programs and multimedia tools. For example, there are more than a hundred television and radio Persian-language channels, which are broadcasting serials, movies or music clips in Persian or with Farsi subtitles 24 hours a day; Or more than 4000 non-Persian-language television network and thousands of radio channels that are accessible in Iran through satellite receivers, or hundreds of thousands Internet websites. A phenomenon that was unbelievable for Iranian TV viewers or radio listeners, a few years ago. This domain has been so much expanded that one of Iran's Parliament members has expressed, more than 80 percent of the Iranian people watch satellite network programs⁷.

Review of Literature and Theoretical Principles

In this section, the theoretical principles and research background will be discussed. About the theoretical principles of this paper, it is worth mentioning that in addition to studying historical background the "audience" concept (or any other title and concept) in literature of communication sciences, the main idea of this thesis is the Uses and Gratifications Theory. While in the review of literature, it is necessary to consider the researches that have studied the image of audience in the minds of the communicators, policy-makers, and managers of media in Iran and whole world. However, according to various studies, no research on this issue has been done inside Iran and abroad.

It should be noted that characteristics of "audiences" have been extracted, according to the review of literature in the field of communication sciences and the theories based on the use concept, in order to answer the main research questions.

A) The history, Definition and Characteristics of "audiences"

Since Aristotle's time, many names and profiles have been proposed for receivers including: hearers (Aristotle, 1370: 6 and Aristotle, 2004:17), audience,

² Ali Larijani

³ Seyed Mohammad Hosseini

⁴ Mohammad Hashemi Rafsanji

⁵ There are numerous examples like 1- Morteza Nabavi, Resalat Newspaper manager-in-chief that was minister and also parliament member at a period of time, 2- Seyed Mahmood Doaei, member parliament and Etela'at Newspaper manager-in-chief and ...

⁶ Ali Larijani has philosophy PhD. and Seyed Mohammad Hosseini has political sciences PhD.

⁷ According to Fatemeh Ajorloo, a parliament Member from Tehran cited in Fararoo site, quoted from Rectangle Weekly at July 6, 2010 (text code: 51941)

receiver (Shannon – Weaver), communicatee from Havland's definition, the destination in the communication model of Wilber Schramm, or in his revised model of communications in 1973, both of them considers the communication side as the source, user or consumer in the communication model of Vindahl, decoder based on Stuart Hall model (MacQuil and Vindahl, 1388), and "Paa-Menbary" an Iranian slang used in mosques and religious delegation (someone who sits across the Menbar and listens to the speech).

Historically, in his Rhetoric Aristotle uses the term "audience" for calling listeners or hearers, where he refers to hearers of lectures in the ancient Greece (Aristotle, 1370: 6 and Aristotle, 2004: 17). However, his recommendations just include speakers and ignore everything about the listeners. Meanwhile, his model has been studied as the first practical model of communication in different related texts. The model includes sender, message and audience (receiver/communicatee), which indicates a linear relationship between the sender and the audience.

Encyclopedia of Communication (2008) explains meaning of respondent as follows: audiences are people exposed to mass media messages (Marco Dahl, University of Dusseldorf). Audience is the essential part of mass communication processes and has been the main concern from the outset of communication researches. In mass communication, the concept of audience refers to a group of people who receive messages of the media or have received already. Consequently, the audiences are a participating group in the process of mass communication, but normally don't involve in creating content (Donsbach, 2008: 250).

According to Encyclopedia of communication, the traditional audiences were of ancient Greece and Rome, gathering in stadiums and theaters to participate in programs of literary, dramatic, musical or matches and circuses. Even referring to MacQuil (1385) is not helpful to explain the media audience before considering the number of print books and reading them by readers, at the end of the sixteenth century. But the new printing technologies, development of visual and auditory media and factors such as increasing ability to "read" in the second half of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth century, eventually lead to formation of what we now call the audience. Traditional audiences differ from mass media audiences because the media audiences don't gather at the site of receiving or production of content (Ibid).

Media & Audiences also stated: With the emergence of the information age, understanding of everyday life began and studying the media audience became important. It was not only because of more

information released through the media, but also the integration of old and new media technologies. Today, "being an audience" is even more complicated. The media environment is very diverse and even upset. Some day, there was a TV and a radio, in average, in every house; while today there is many of each. Then, listening and watching were collective activities of the families, while now individual hearing and seeing the media and simultaneous use of several different media has become normative in the families (Ross & Nightingale, 2008: 1).

MacQuil in *Audience Analysis* uses three different interpretations to the audiences which other texts are referred to, namely: the audience as a mass, audience as a group, and audience as a market. Then he studies the future of media audience in the era of new media. He mentions to four major changes due to these advances: 1) broadcasting radio and television programs via satellite and cable facilities, 2) rapid expansion of new ways of recording, storing and retrieving the video and audio files, 3) transnational TV programs and increasing the rate of TV programs import and export, and 4) the increasing possibility of interactive use of many media, using computers (MacQuil, 1385: 5-3).

In *Audience Analysis* (chapter 8), he says that the audience era has reaches to its final step and introduces new theories supporting his claim, because the distinction between sender and receiver, which was previously necessary to define the audience, is no longer valid. Consequently, many new types of audiences have emerged that ignore old patterns of media. So, in the electronic and interactive new media the audience is no longer regarded as listener, consumer, communicatee or a passive aim, but he can play the following roles: a seeker, an advisee, a stroller, a responsive, a companion or a talky; and according to Bandini (1995), users in turn re-invent the technologies. All of these have lead to increasing the audience power and less power of media (Ibid: 199-186).

B) Different Views and Comments about the Audience

Ideas referring to audiences in mass communication include three main groups (MacQuil, 1385):

B-1) Passive Audience-based Perspective: From 1900 to 1930, this perspective has been common in communicative societies that believe in audience as a passive creature, condemned to accept sent messages. Some theories have been mentioned in this group such as: Social Learning Theory by Alfred Bandura, Dependency theory of Rokeach and DeFleur, Injected Theory by C. S. Chakotin, Magic Bullet Theory

(Practically the same Injected Theory) and Agenda Setting.

B-2) Perspectives based on Active Audience: in this class of theories, activeness and hardness of audience against the messages in the communication process would be emphasized. The following theories can be considered in this group: Uses and gratification Theory, Theory of Flow or two-stage Impact of Communication by Katz and Lazarsfield, Theory of multi-stage impact of communication by Wilber Schram, Ardent Audience theory by Raymond Baron, and Theory of Strenght by Lazarsfield and Berlson.

B-3) Perspectives based on Intelligent Audience: In addition to believe in audience activeness in the communication flow, these theories consider him/her effective on the source of message. These theories include: Network Communication Theory, Habermas Communicative Action, Theory of Discussion Theater by Bual, and Theory of Equivalent and Interactive Communication by Gronik and Hunt.

C) A Review on Elements and Components of USE-based Theories

One of the theories based on the concept of USE, is Uses & Gratifications Theory raised by Katz, Blumer, Vindahl and Gruvich. Bird (2003) also believes that the USE model is proposed by the Vindahl (Bird, 2003: 21). About the pattern of "uses and gratification of media", it is noteworthy that MacQuil classifies it as one of the research traditions in the field of audience phantasm and considers it as a functionalist model (MacQuil, 1385: 103 and McQuil, 2005: 409-414).

In *Audience Phantasm*, chapter 5, following the uses and gratification approach for media, MacQuil has classified the main types of human needs as: information, comfort, accompanied, having fun and escape. He also explains that this approach has been used to study the attractiveness of new electronic media and telephone applications. As already mentioned, the first researches with this approach has been done in 1940s, but it was also returned to in 1960s and 1970s (MacQuil, 1385: 107-105).

MacQuil considers four basic assumptions for this approach: 1) selection of media and content is usually an intellectual and purposeful activity focused on specific pleasures. So the audiences are active and their presence is logically explainable. 2) All audiences are aware of media needs that are capable of motivational presentation and rooted from individual and social shared conditions. 3) In a general overview, personal use of the media is more important in gathering audiences, rather than aesthetic or cultural principles (Ibid: 105), and 4) all or most of the factors influencing the formation of audiences (motivations, expected satisfaction, media

selections, and background variables) can theoretically be determined. In 1974, He offers a model about the process of media selection from Katz, Blumer and Gruvich. He also points out to the Rosengern model in the same year that shows the use of media and its relation to human needs and problems (Ibid, and Ibid, 2005).

Criticism to this approach related to some research and operational shortcomings (non-theoretical), such as finding a reasonable and stable relationship between interest – preference, and also practical selection and final evaluation in gratification approach of the media which are too difficult. In this case, Blumer separates two concepts of social origins (fields) (e.g. education and social class) and continuous social experience, too. He believes that social origins or fields are predictably correlated with expectations and media applications. While, the role and the consequences of continuous experience, related to social effective status on gratification the media, is hardly predictable (Ibid: 105).

Katz and Guruich and Blumer (1974) relate studies with this approach to:

1 - Social and Social Psychology Roots 2 - Needs that 3 - Expectations from 4 - Mass media or other sources creates and leads to 5 - Distinctive patterns of media exposure, resulting in 6 - Related satisfaction with needs, and 7 – Some other consequences that may often be unwanted (Severine and Tankard, 1381: 22).

Two other researchers have suggested the same kind of pattern with the following elements:

1 – Audience is active.
2 – Audience initiatively satisfies the needs and chooses the media
3 - The media compete with other sources of needs satisfying (Ibid).

As already discussed, in an article criticizing Bernard Berlson (1959) claim regarding the decline of mass communication studies, Alyhv Katz (1959) for the first time claimed that research in the field of audience persuasion been ended, because many of these researches believe that mass communication has no considerable impact on persuading people. Katz believed that mass communication research should be focused on what people do with media. In this case, researches of Berlson in 1949, Riley and Riley (1959) and Lazarsfield and Stanton 1942-1949 is mentioned (Ibid: 423).

According to Blumer and Katz, Uses and Gratification approach was introduced at the peak of functionalism in audience research, when the sociological theory was still under the influence of Merton theory that affect European perspectives on media research. At this time, Uses and Gratification

Theory was introduced as a personal perception of mass communication (Ross & Nightingale, 2008: 29).

However, the main anchor in the Uses and Gratification theory is the assumption that mass media is just to satisfy the needs of audiences and media influence shown by the incidences indicates the satisfaction of their needs. This was the first approach that emphasized on the active audience and asking "what people do with media" – instead of what media do with people– shifted the positions in research. Instead of focusing on effect of media on humans and their needs, Uses and Gratification Approach exploits Cyborg hypothesis about the human which was originated from individualism Ideology. In other words, based on this theory, audiences are not influenced by the industrial culture (the opposite of thinkers such as Adorno and other thinkers of the Frankfurt School). Overall, confessing to the media as an industry, Uses and Gratification approach is open to challenge with scholars of political economy look (Ibid: 30-31).

D) A Review of Audience Phantasm Concept

The main idea of "Audience Phantasm" was taken from an article by Mohsenyan-e Rad in 2008 and then it was proposed in the Global Communication Association (GCA) conference held at Sultan Qaboos Oman University (20 and 21 October 2008) for the first time, entitled "Pathology of "Audience Phantasm" in Media: Globalization and the Era of after Global Village". Subsequently, it was published at *Global Media Journal* (Volume 8, Issue Spring 2009) in 2009. The complete edition was published in the scientific - research quarterly of "cultural studies" in 1387. In short, the coiner of this term regards "Audience Phantasm" as the imagination of authorities in some countries about "audiences" and also their belief about the media. They focus on theory of injection and think that media has similar functions and characteristics like Menbar⁸. Providing the evidences, he believes that this phenomenon is more prevalent among the Islamic countries governments, like Iran (Mohsenyan-e Rad, 1387 and Mohsenyan-e Rad, 2009).

He states that belief in Magic Bullet or Injection Theory lead the media decision makers of underdeveloped countries in 1950s and 1960s, to launch propaganda activities within their borders on one hand, and focus on censorship, banning the foreigners' propaganda, on the other hand. In fact, media decision makers and policy makers in countries such as Iran, continue to imagine

"audiences" as the audience of menbar (Mohsenyan-e Rad, 1387: 83).

Mohsenyan-e Rad regards audience phantasm as a kind of daydreaming which based on Atkinson, is a normal position in consciousness likes other "Collective Unconsciousness", not a bad habit or an emotional disorder. In his opinion, people with audience phantasm consider apparent similarities between an old media like Menbar and new media and communication technologies, based on "similarity theory"⁹ in psychology; they fancy the same audience of Menbar sitting across the media. He relates this whim to stay in the era of Injection Theory and believe in "control illusion" (Ibid: 84).

In the next section, Mohsenyan-e Rad deals with the consequences of audience phantasm and mentioning the fact that according to various statistics, Iran is one of the youngest countries in the world, refers to the evidence that indicates: 1 – decrease of radio and television native consumption due to content dissatisfaction, and 2 – inclination to foreign media, both by youngsters and Iranian public. Then, he refers to perplexity of audience phantasm fans in the global village and quotes remarks of some prominent figures in the Islamic Republic. In addition to deep concern of officials, he concludes that the combination of audience phantasm and loss of control over foreign media and its availability among Iranian people, has established a veil which prevents free relationship of communication specialist and media decision makers in Iran. It's because of audience phantasm axiom in their minds which is different form axiom of communication experts (Ibid: 105-95). Emphasizing on the role of selective communicatee in the message bazaar, Mohsenyan-e Rad believes his role more effective than the communicator. Because an active consumer's share is more than a gatekeeper's as the Communication Pattern of White refers. It's a kind of displacement caused by strengthened selectiveness power. (Ibid: 110-105).

E) Concluding the Characteristics of "Audiences" from the Viewpoint of New Communication Theories (Especially the USE-based Theories) in the Current Era

This section categorized the characteristics of "audiences" or the communicatee, based on current communication theories, and especially use-based theories discussed in the previous steps.

The attributes are as follows:

⁹ The theory expresses conditions in which human suppose their met wishes as their own direct result of behaviors, so they imagine having the power of situation control.

⁸ The Media used by Muslims at mosques and religious centers for religious propaganda.

- a) External Intrapersonal and intrinsic attributes of each communicatee
- b) Individual and social issues of each communicatee
- c) Different motivations of each communicatee due to media satisfaction
- d) Particular demands of each communicatee from media content
- e) Categorization of communicatees into subgroups, based on the media content, release time, and other attributes
- f) The communicatees' critical look is necessary for persuading them.
- g) Communicatees' Activeness
- h) The communicatee's increasingly selectiveness and control over the on-use content
- i) Dynamism and Changeability of communicatees
- j) Communicatees purposefulness in using media
- k) Ineffectiveness or low effect of media content for communicatees
- l) Management and prediction of communicatees by the media is less believable.
- m) The effect of communicatees' background and social environment on how they use media
- n) The effect of communicatees' individual attributes on How they use media including, sex, family, job, education, income, lifestyle (in special cases)

F) Main Research Questions

Regarding the review of literature, main questions of the research are as follow:

- 1) Based on the Islamic Republic of Iran authorities, what are the characteristics and conditions of people exposed to mass media?
- 2) Based on audience-centered theories, on one hand, and viewpoints of above-mentioned authorities, on the other hand, how do the conditions, characteristics, and responses of people exposed to the media overlap and differ from each other?

Methodology

In addition to library and documentation methods, "deep content analysis" has been used as the methodology of this research, which is a mixed of qualitative and quantitative methods research. In mixed research methods, which has been introduced as the third paradigm of methodology, both qualitative and quantitative methods will be

combined in one study (Christensen, 2004). "Charles Teddlie" considers the mixed methods as the third movement in the course of development of social sciences research methods.¹⁰

"Deep content analysis" is also one of the mixed methods of qualitative and quantitative research which is performed by MRP Iranian software. In this method, two types of data can be extracted:

A) Quantitative data containing codes that is defined in "quantitative content analysis" for content, resources, times, persons, etc.

B) Spoken data containing statements and keywords, that former represents keywords extracted from "coding units" (statements) and the first places as central statement in discourse analysis. Therefore it is necessary that more experienced encrypt, as judges and analyzer, study deeply the text and extract statements that is gist of their perceptions from the text. Each of these statements is a numerical data which plays a qualitative data role and would be entered to the computer. MRP software analyzes statements and keywords as independent data, along with type A data. Then, following many kinds of matrix and speech intengencies, text would be analyzed. (Mohsenyan-e Rad, 1389).

Accordingly, efforts have been centered on providing evidences and quotes related to concepts "audience" and "audience phantasm" from 1383 to end of 1388 (2005 - 2010). Next, by identifying those statements of prominent governmental figures that contain their imagination about features and characteristics of "audiences", various statements and keywords is extracted and analyzed using MRP software.

Regarding the use of "deep content analysis" in this paper, we should mention that according to the Practical Guide of Software MRP, "deep content analysis" has been performed as an integration of topic requirements and this study's questions. In this way, both clear concepts and differences patterns and also hidden implications of concepts would be studied. Unlike other forms of content analysis in which coding of text was performed by categorizations based on the theoretical framework of research; coding is based on keywords (Mohammad Zamani, 1388: 43). The present method inventor calls it: reverse coding method. Firstly, some statements were extracted from the text, and then according to the qualitative research strategy, other variables are marked. Then the key words are extracted from the text content and Code Sheet is designed based on frequency of ordered key words and focusing on them. Thus, subjective categories will change to objective categories. Since Code Sheet design is

¹⁰ Two other methods are Quantitative and Qualitative.

performed after the extraction of keywords, unlike analyzing the qualitative method, it is called reverse Code Sheet (Mohsenyan-e Rad, 1389: 194).

Statistical Population

The study population of this search, which is the actually the search field for building a purposeful sample includes all messages, speeches, news, and written dialogues of Islamic Republic of Iran prominent government figures, from the beginning to 1383 to the end of 1388 Hijri. Of course, these people have been selected according to their responsibility and assertions in the period mentioned. On this basis, Islamic Republic of Iran prominent government figures investigated include:

- Leader: Leader of the Islamic Republic of Iran was Ayatollah Ali Khamenei in the period studied.
- President: In the period studied, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad's remarks have been collected.
- Several of the Ayatollahs: including Ayatollah Safi Golpayegani, Makarem-e Shirazi, and Noori Hamedani, in the period reviewed
- Parliament Members of 7th and 8th periods
- Representatives of the Assembly of Experts at the 3rd and 4th periods
- Chairman, deputies, directors of networks and provincial general managers of IRIB: in the period reviewed, President of IRIB were Ali Larijani and Ezzatollah Zarghami
- Priests in various Cities
- Minister, relevant deputies (journalistic, artistic and cultural) and also Provincial Director Generals of Culture and Islamic Guidance Ministry: In the period studied, Mohammad Hossein Saffar Harandi and Mohammad Hosseini were appointed as Culture Minister.
- Secretary, deputies, governors, mayors and provincial Director Generals of Ministry of State: ministers in the period reviewed were: Mostafa Pour-Mohammadi, Ali Kordan, Sadegh Mahsooli and Mostafa Mohammad Najjar.
- Managers and editors in chief of newspapers like Kayhan, Resalat, and Fars News Agency: in the studied period, Hossein Shariatmadari and Morteza Nabavi were respectively managers in chief in Kayhan and Resalat, and Mehdi Fazaeli was the CEO of Fars News Agency. While Mohammad Hossein Saffar Harandi and Kazem Anbarlooe were editors in chief of Kayhan and Resalat.
- Commanders and higher officials of Iranian Revolutionary Guards: in the period reviewed, Rahim Safavi and Mohammad Ali Jaafari were commanders of Iranian Revolutionary Guards.

Above mentioned cases include Internet and archival sources in the internet.

Time period for mentioned cases, begins form 1383 (2005) until the end of the year 1388 (2010).

Sampling and Sample Size

According to deep content analysis, the method used in this paper to analyze the statements (referred to in the previous section), and random sampling methods that are uncommon in such ways (for reasons described in "how the method was run"); this study uses purposeful sampling. Meanwhile, according to the principles of qualitative research, in such researches, collecting and interpreting data will be simultaneously performed.

Techniques Used to Analyze Data

Quantitative data processing (nominal, rating, distance and relative variables) and also qualitative variables (explicit and implicit statements) are performed in the following steps:

- 1- Extract of keywords from every statement and transfer to MRP
- 2- Reverse Coding through changing keywords into numerical codes, in order to set the tables of the two explicit and implicit statements
- 3- Thematic and paragraph categorization of statements and qualitative analysis on them

However, it has to be said that: the statement which is the base of this research is a written or oral sentence, the speaker or writer offers it with news, attributive or affirmative intonation. Each statement consists of a single thought or idea that could be right or wrong, but not simultaneously right and wrong. (It should be noted that "prohibitive" has been considered as "affirmative") (Bryjanyan, 1373: 840, Arian Pour, 1366: 1054 and Searle, 1385: 29).

As a result, different parts of IRI authorities' speech in this paper has been fractionated into statements (given the instruction that was presented earlier) that shows the research objectives and indicates audience phantasm points of views or the media-related functions.

Overview of Research Findings

This section qualitatively analyzes the statements extracted from IRI authorities' perspectives during the period studied. It should be noted that in total 371 statements has been extracted about the research subject from the IRI authorities, during the period studied. Classification and sorting the categories of the statements (codes) have been finalized by extracting keywords from each statement and also in depth study of extracted keywords. The codes have been studied based on several issues including: audience phantasm, media effects,

sensitivity of media, media as a weapon of war, the media as sacred, the media as Menbar, religious functions and effects of media, influences and moral functions of media, effects and cultural functions of media, media influences and intellectual functions, effects and behavioral functions of media, and media influences and political functions. Given the categorization and sorting done by reverse coding and through MRP software, qualitative analysis of statements was performed.

Based on the cases mentioned and according to the detailed results obtained, a summary of findings is presented in the following.

From 371 statements and keywords extracted, the first frequency rank is devoted to the second categorization, as it is "indirect audience phantasm". The second rank is dedicated to category 26, as "functional expectations of the media for training "audiences". Category 15 has the third rank, as "negative effects of media on audiences thoughts". Fourth is devoted to category 16, which refers to "negative implications of media on the people across the media (audiences) thinking". In the fifth, there is the third category as "emphasis on media effects".

The least frequent categories are, respectively, 13, 30 and 14; titled as: "Negative effects of media on culture of audiences," "implicational expectations of media for audiences' culture" and "negative cultural yields of media for audiences".¹¹

According to examples raised by IRI authorities based on each concept, the second category concepts (indirect audience phantasm) include: induction of lies by the media, raising conflicts between people through the media, creating pessimism through media, creating division and hatred through the media, the damages of media for the people, the spread of Evil-doings by the media, illegal problems in enjoying some of the media content for audiences, prohibition of satellite, foreign media's conditional use, reversing events to show people through the media, following up the interests of audience in IRIB, message engineering for audience, vaccinating the audience by the media, censorship: i.e. giving too much information to the audience, inappropriateness of West media programs for our people, targeting the public by West media, growth and excellence of audience through the media and media; physician of community. The views were presented by the followings (and the highest prevalence relates to IRIB authorities): the leader of the Islamic Republic, head and members of government, IRIB authorities, Religious authorities/ ayatollahs, affiliated media's

head officials, the Islamic Consultative Assembly, Army officials and priests.

As can be seen, following the "indirect audience phantasm", there are concepts implicitly indicates to passivity and helplessness of audiences and the necessity of supporting them against the media and their content. If the two concepts of categories 1 and 2 merge; they cover more than 11% of the statements which indicate that during the period studied, the subject has been successively mentioned by the prominent authorities of the Islamic Republic of Iran. Viewpoints following the category 1 mainly related to the authorities and priests. It means that among the prominent Islamic authorities, some categories like IRIB authorities, ayatollahs and priests are more audience phantasm toward people across the media.

Regarding the concept of direct audience phantasm, it should also be said that concepts explicitly express the audience phantasm from the IRI authorities P.O.V.: audience intrinsic passivity, cheated audience, the audience inability to understand the depth of stories, comparing the effect of media on audience and enemy invasion, stimulating the audience by media, comparing the effect of media with the atomic bomb.

However, the following points are important about the sorting of categorizations codes.

1) categories with positive and demonstrative approach, including 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8 respectively indicate the statements IRI authorities have mentioned about direct and indirect audience phantasm, emphasis on effects and sensitiveness of media, the media as weapons of war, media as sacred and Menbar as media. Providers the following categories, in the period reviewed (from the beginning of 1383 to the end of 1388) were chairman and members of government (President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad and his cabinet), IRIB officials (President and managers of the organization), ayatollahs and priests that indicate the most positive views about people across the media, the media and how the interaction of these two phenomena may be possible. Also note that contents of the following categories, knowingly or unknowingly, are totally based on various aspects of injection theory, definite and profound impact of media and audience passivity-based perspective.

2) Issues with God-fatherly approach to media in various areas, including issues: 21, 23, 25, 27, 29 and 31 respectively refer to God-fatherly demands of IRI authorities from media in the areas of religion, , morals, social issues, culture and politics of audiences. Providers of the following comments were IRI authorities among them ayatollahs, the Leader of the Islamic Republic and IRIB officials showed the most God-fatherly look at the media interact with

¹¹ Statements have been sorted based on frequency and 32 reverse codes in deep-content analysis, shown in article appendixes.

people across the media in different fields. Content of the second group codes are again based on the theory of injection, audience passiveness, and media's deep and firm effects.

3) Issues related to the performance expectations of the media in various areas by the people across the media include the categories: 22, 24, 26, 28, 30 and 32. These categories respectively offer statements based on performance expectations of media in the areas of religion, morality, education, social issues, culture and political issues by the people across the media. In the period studied, providers of these views were the Leader of the Islamic Republic and the ayatollahs, chief of IRIB (Zarghami) and other IRIB officials expecting the highest performance from IRIB for the people across the media in several fields. The content of the following codes are based on the components of the injection theory, audience passiveness, and definite and profound impact of the media.

4) categories with negative approach to the media in various areas include codes: 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19 and 20; these categories respectively refer to the negative impacts and functions of the media in religion, ethics, culture, thinking, behavior and political issues of the people across the media. Providers of the negative attitudes toward the media's effects and functions were mostly ayatollahs and other leading clerics (members of Assembly of Experts and priest), and then the Leader, Chairman and members of the Government (Mahmoud Ahmadinejad).

This view also based on the topics proposed in the theory of injection, audience passiveness, and definite and profound impact of media on people across the media.

In general, cases presented in this section of the paper belong to sorting and conceptualizing a phenomenon called "audience phantasm" which was studied by its numerous instances among the prominent IRI authorities during the period studied.

Discussion and Conclusion

This section discusses the research findings and the answers the questions one by one.

RQ 1- Based on the Islamic Republic of Iran prominent authorities, what are the attributes and conditions of people exposed to mass media?

According to 371 statements extracted from the views of prominent IRI authorities and also based on designed Code Sheet, direct and indirect audience phantasm (codes 1 and 2) reveal these features and conditions; however, categories on the Code Sheet more or less clarify the picture. Issues such as: the effects of media on religion, ethics, culture, thinking,

behavior, and politics issues of people across the media that indicates to communicatees' attributes.

Statements related to direct and indirect audience phantasm consist 11/3% of all the statements and after the negative performance and effects of media on audiences (codes 15 and 16), the highest frequency allocates to the same group.

Regarding the circumstances and characteristics of individuals across the media, 42 kinds of characteristics and P.O.V. have been mentioned by IRI authorities, basic features that covers other items are:

a) Inherent passivity of audience: refers to intrinsic and innate passiveness of audience. This view is based on theory of injection at media imagining the audience as open-mouthed creature that believes everything from the media and does the ordered tasks like sleepers. This look contrasts with new approaches to audiences imagining them as active critic and knowledgeable.

B) Lack of deep perception of audience: focuses on the level of understanding by the people across the media and lack of understanding and deep evaluation against the media and content presented.

C) Elites and publics that are cheated by the media: This feature also originates from views that consider people across the media as passive individuals lacking the analysis power.

D) Vulnerability of young people (as the audience): means that the audience is vulnerable against the media and its content, unable to defend itself. It also pointed out in this section, paragraph A.

E) Stimulating young people (as the audience): i.e. exposing to the media massages, people across the media are stimulated from different aspects and absolute influenced by the media.

F) Creating problems for the audiences and harmful, destructive and negative effects of media on the audience: This feature is also based on definitive and comprehensive effects of media on audience and injection theory. This case should be mentioned that according to the results of analysis of judgment variable of subject statement, all statements extracted from IRI authorities somehow insist to components of audience phantasm, injection theory elements and high importance of media's role in lives of people across the media. Meanwhile, focus on injection theory components is highlighted more than other cases (58 percent of all statements).

RQ 2- Based on audience-centered theories, on one hand, and viewpoints of above-mentioned people, on the other hand, how do the conditions, attributes, and responses of people exposed to the media overlap and differ from each other?

Fourteen features studied in the final part of the theory of research was the conclusion about the

different perspectives of audiences, especially on modern communication theories and USE-concept based theories. In comparison with these profiles, IRI authorities describe “people across the media” (audiences) based on the statements derived from their views:

- 1- Based on categories 1 & 2, and also positive , negative emphases regarding religious, moral, cultural, intellectual, political and behavioral issues (codes 9 to 32), and also an emphasis on various effects and sensitivity of media (codes 3 & 4), they know intrinsic and external features and issues of “audiences” as the same.
- 2- Considering cases reflected in the previous section, they don’t believe in differential personal and social issues for people across the media and think that they are homogeneous individuals with similar issues.
- 3- Based on qualitative analysis and classification of codes, IRI authorities tend not to distinguish “people across the media” based on certain categories of age, gender, employment, education, etc. They see people across the media as common masses.
- 4- Based on existing statements, IRI authorities consider media as a propaganda means with abundant power, and the individual across the media as a passive creature, acceptor and non-purposeful than an active, inventory, critical and purposeful one.
- 5- No changes on selection of “people across the media” have happened and same former media channels (both traditional and modern) are still seen, heard or called by individuals across the media. During the period studied, the subject has spotted from IRI authorities’ remarks about modern media (maximum 3% of statements) and only 3 comments about the Internet and multimedia
- 6- Despite the theories of two-step flow of communication, use-based theories, and encoding and decoding theory which emphasizes unaffectedness or hard acceptance of “audiences”; IRI authorities still insist on deep affectedness of individuals across the media by the media content (see for example, above mentioned negative , positive statements).
- 7- According to the following statements regarding religion, ethics, culture, thinking, behavior, social and political issues, IRI authorities consider them manageable and predictable individuals.

Considering the above evidence, we can conclude that almost no overlap is between the features that the new theories of communication consider for “people across the media” (audiences) and IRI authorities’ views, in the period studied.

Thus, given the available evidence and analysis presented in this study, we can conclude that: in the period studied, IRI authorities consider “people across the media” as the same traditional audience, so their media policies originate from passiveness and affectedness of “people across the media” (the views that the Magic Bullet and the Injection theory call).

Corresponding author

Dr.Amir Abdolreza Sepanji

Assistant Professor of Communication and Media Studies

Email: aasepanji@gmail.com

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Appendixes:

Appendix 1: (Reverse) Code Sheet Analyzing depth content of IRI authorities Views Regarding "People across the Media"

Code	Category Name
1	Direct Audience Phantasm
2	Indirect Audience Phantasm
3	Emphasize on Media Influence
4	Emphasize on Media Sensivity
5	Media as a weapon of war (Direct)
6	Media as a weapon of war (Indirect)
7	Media as sacred
8	Menbar as Media
9	Media Negative Effects on Religious issues of "people across the media"
10	Media Negative Implications on Religious issues of "people across the media"
11	Media Negative Effects on Ethical issues of "people across the media"
12	Media Negative implications on ethical issues of "people across the media"
13	Media Negative Effects on cultural issues of "people across the media"
14	Media Negative Implications on cultural issues of "people across the media"
15	Media Negative Effects on thinking of "people across the media"
16	Media Negative Implications on thinking of "people across the media"
17	Media Negative Effects on behavior of "people across the media"
18	Media Negative Implications on behavior of "people across the media"
19	Media Negative Effects on Political Domain
20	Media Negative Implications on Political Domain
21	Godfather Expectations from media Regarding religious status of "audiences"
22	Implication Expectations from media Regarding religious status of "audiences"
23	Godfather Expectations from media Regarding Ethical status of "audiences"
24	Implication Expectations from media Regarding ethical status of "audiences"
25	Godfather Expectations from media Regarding guidance status of "audiences"
26	Implication Expectations from media Regarding guidance status of "audiences"
27	Godfather Expectations from media Regarding social status of "audiences"
28	Implication Expectations from media

	Regarding social status of “audiences”
29	Godfather Expectations from media Regarding cultural status of “audiences”
30	Implication Expectations from media Regarding cultural status of “audiences”
31	Godfather Expectations from media Regarding political status of “audiences”
32	Godfather Expectations from media Regarding political status of “audiences”

Appendix 2- Table of the Frequency of categories (Codes)

Category (Code)	Frequency	Percentage	Valid percentage
1	13	3.5	3.5
2	29	7.81	7.81
3	23	6.2	6.2
4	16	4.31	4.31
5	13	3.5	3.5
6	13	3.5	3.5
7	13	3.5	3.5
8	3	.8	.8
9	14	3.77	3.77
10	4	1.07	1.07
11	5	1.34	1.34
12	12	3.23	3.23
13	1	.27	.27
14	3	.8	.8
15	24	6.47	6.47
16	24	6.47	6.47
17	6	1.6	1.6
18	7	1.88	1.88
19	4	1.07	1.07
20	13	3.5	3.5
21	14	3.77	3.77
22	17	4.58	4.58
23	5	1.34	1.34
24	10	2.7	2.7
25	6	1.6	1.6
26	26	7	7
27	18	4.85	4.85
28	5	1.34	1.34
29	13	3.5	3.5
30	3	.8	.8
31	9	2.4	2.4
32	5	1.34	1.34
Total	371	100	100

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