Research for Media
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Master of Communication and Journalism – 2019
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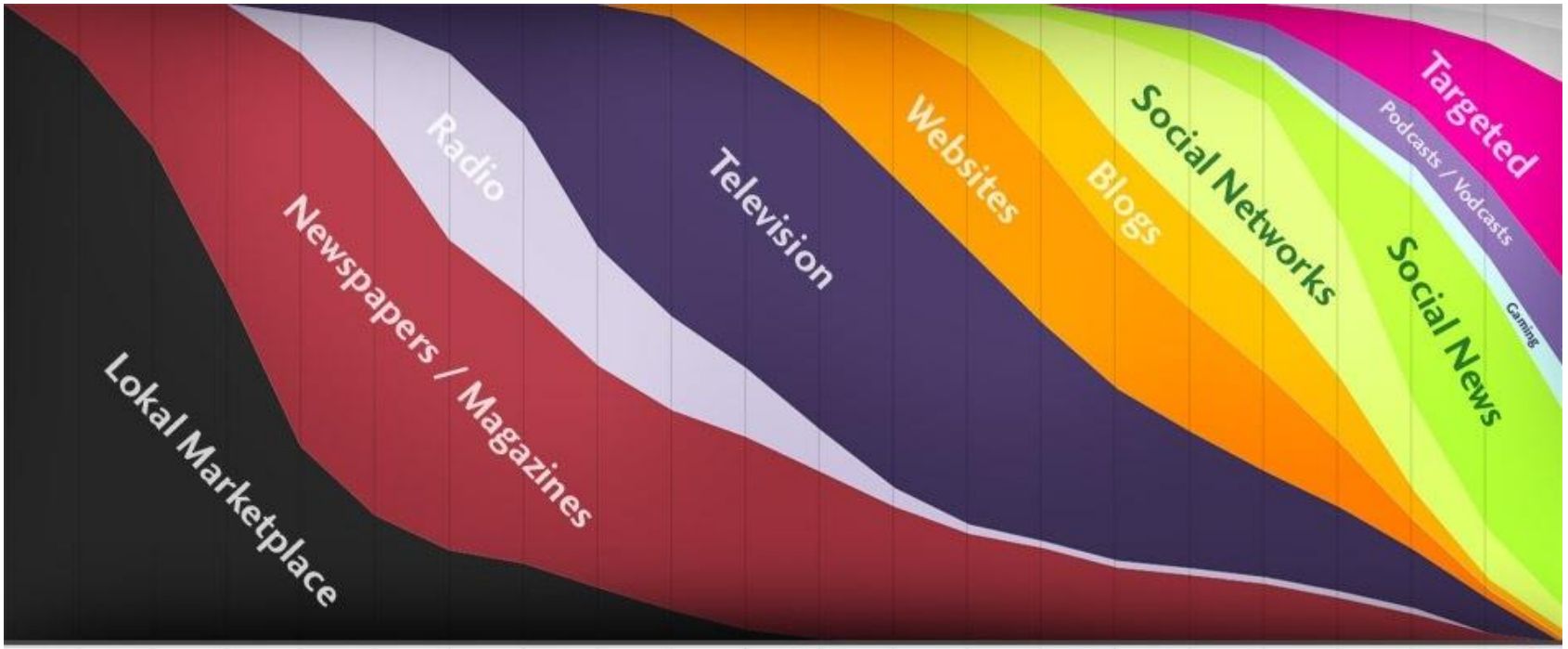
Mass Media Research - Introduction



Basic Questions

- What is research?
- What type of things/problem do mass media researchers investigate?
- Research in mass media – discovering something in the mass media related areas

What is Research?

- “A search or investigation undertaken to discover facts and reach new conclusions by the critical study of a subject or by a course of scientific inquiry” (*The New Shorter Oxford Dictionary*)
- “Diligent and systematic inquiry or investigation into a subject in order to discover or revise facts, theories and applications" (*Random House Dictionary, 2nd ed.*)

What is Research?

- "A studious inquiry or examination; esp. critical and exhaustive investigation or experimentation having for its aim the discovery of new facts and their correct interpretation, the revision of accepted conclusions, theories or laws in the light of newly discovered facts, or the practical applications of such new or revised conclusions, theories or laws" (*Webster's Third New International Dictionary*)

Important Steps in the Research Process

- Selecting the Area of Research
- Defining the Problem
- Research Design
- Data Collection
- Data Analysis & Interpretation
- Report Writing and Presentation

Selecting the Area for Research

- Should be one in which the researcher is interested
- Should be of academic and social relevance
- Competency (not mastery)

Defining the Problem

- Involves the development of a statement of the problem to be investigated
- A statement of a problem is a clear and concise statement, which specifies the precise problem or question for which an answer is to be sought in the research undertaking.

Research Design/ Methodology

- A logical task undertaken to ensure that the evidence collected enables us to answer questions or to test theories unambiguously as possible.
- Refers to the structure of an inquiry.
- Gives direction and systemises the research.

Data Collection

- Collecting relevant and specifically useful information from people and surroundings
- Interviews, questionnaires, observations, participations, case studies, reports etc.

Analysis of Data

- Organising the data so that useful information can be extracted from it.
- Summarising the data and carefully bringing out the conclusions
- Charts, graphs, textual write ups of data are all different forms of data analysis

Report Writing/Thesis

- Presenting your research
- Rules and regulations from ‘Title page’ to ‘References’

A Good Research is a blend of science and art – a blending of scholarly and scientific procedures with creativity which results in an original piece of work.

Basic Questions

- A beginner in research must learn to answer 2 questions:

1. How to use research methods and statistical procedures?
2. When to use research methods and statistical procedures?

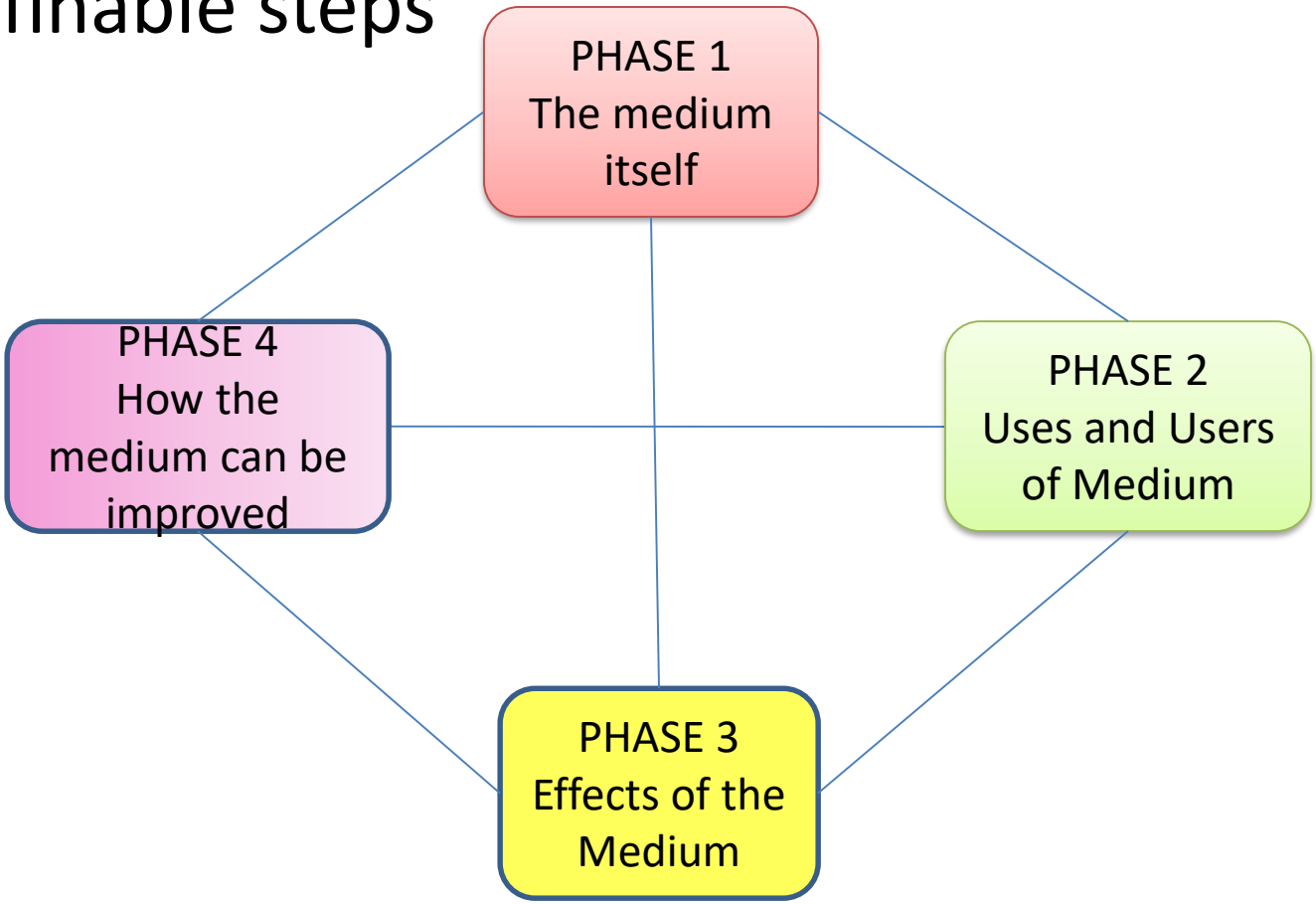
- Focus on the applications first

Results of research

- To advance our understanding of mass media
- For decision-making in the media
- For theoretical development in the field of media
- Eg.
  - Analyse media effects on consumers
  - To understand audience behaviours

Development of Mass Media Research

- Definable steps



4 social forces behind the growth of Mass media research

1. World War 1 – prompted the need to understand the nature of propaganda
2. Realisation by advertisers in the 1950s and 60s that research data are useful in developing ways to persuade potential customers to buy products services
3. Increasing interest of citizens in the effects of media on public, especially on children
4. Increased competition among the media for advertising money

Media Research & Scientific Method

Scientific Research

- Organised
- Objective
- Controlled
- Qualitative or quantitative empirical analysis of one or more variables

Methods of Knowing

- Tenacity – something is true because it has always been true
- Intuition (a priori approach) – something is true because it is ‘self-evident’ or “stands to reason”
- Authority – because of the belief in a trusted source
- Science – approach of learning as a series of steps

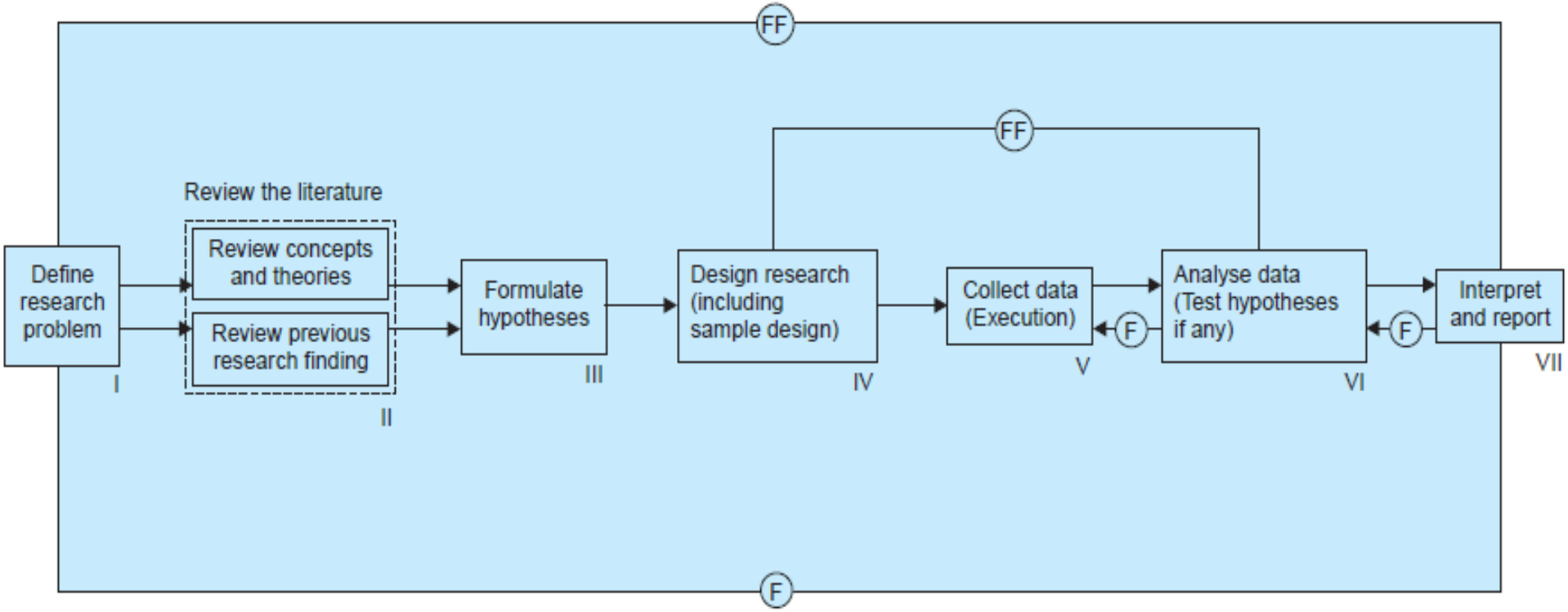
Characteristics of Scientific Method

1. **Scientific Research is Public** – Advances in science require freely available information.
2. **Science is objective** - When a study is conducted, explicit rules and procedures are developed and the researcher is bound to follow them
3. **Science is empirical –** experiences that can be perceived, classified, or measured
4. **Science is systematic and cumulative -** No single research study stands alone, nor does it rise or fall by itself
5. **Science is predictive -** scientists strive to develop theories because, among other reasons, they are useful in predicting behavior

Recollect: Research Procedures

1. Select a problem
2. Review existing research and theory (when relevant)
3. Develop hypothesis or research questions
4. Determine an appropriate methodology/ research design
5. Collect relevant data /Data collection
6. Analyse and interpret the results / data analysis
7. Present the results in an appropriate form /Research Report
8. Replicate the study when necessary

Research Process in Flow Chart



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