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COMMUNICATION AND DEVELOPMENT

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UNIT 1: CONCEPT OF DEVELOPMENT

The Meaning of Development Communication

Development communication is the communication that can be used for Development. Here, in 'development communication', there are two words- 'development' and 'communication'. It is about using communication to change or improve something. We use different types of messages to change the socio-economic condition of people. Those who write or produce programmes on issues related to development are called development communicators. The term "Development Communication" was first coined in 1972, in the Philippines. During the period of World War II these messages are designed to transform the behaviour of people or to improve their quality of life. Those who write or produce programmes on issues related to development are called development communicators. **The term "Development Communication" was first coined in 1972, in the Philippines.**

DEVELOPMENT is a concept which has varied connotations. Development is perhaps one of the most fiercely debated concepts in contemporary social science.

To some extent, it means modernization to others social change, and yet some others would take development as enhancing the quality of life.

However, this concept is often equated with industrialization, progress, and growth, and like these other terms is invariably seen as something desirable and positive for society in general and for the community in particular.

Streeth (1981) defined, Development as an attack on the chief evils of the world today: malnutrition, disease, illiteracy, slums, unemployment, and inequality.

Development is much more than mere economic growth. Development as a socio-economic phenomenon is seen as necessary, even inevitable, as good and salutary. It means the development of society as a whole, and of all its institutions- economic, social, and political. It

calls for the improvement of the lot of the poor through an equitable sharing of the resources- social and economic.

In a nutshell, development is both physical reality and a state of mind in which society has, through some combination of social, economic, and institutional processes, secured the means for obtaining a better life.

Development is in the main seen as absolute, inevitable, and universal. It is promoted as a laudable goal.

COMMUNICATION is the process of sending and receiving information. It is the vehicle through which we develop, maintain, and improve human relationships.

Communication is perhaps one of the most loosely defined terms in contemporary media and cultural studies. Perhaps, it is because, the terms encompasses a variety of experiences, events, and action, as well as a whole variety of happenings and meanings and technologies.

According to **National Communication Systems, UNESCO:**

Communication is part of the very fabric of society. It takes place at all levels between people and between institutions from government to people from people back to government and through many channels both interpersonal and mediated.

Now making **DEVELOPMENT COMMUNICATION** as a whole,

It is defined as the means of communication which are indeed useful for the development and growth of society as a whole.

Since time immemorial, India has had a rich legacy of various modes of communication, oral communication, traditional forms of communication, and mass communication comprising print and electronic media.

Before the advent of printing the Indian ethos, culture and traditions were primarily oral in forms. The ideas and messages contained in folk tales, myths, epic, stories, were disseminated by the wandering monks through oral communication. Similarly, traditional forms of communication primarily- Folk theatre, Folk songs, Puppet Shows, Ballads, Folk Religious

discourses constitute a rich resource which can be usefully harnessed for bringing about desirable societal changes for accelerating the development process.

The print and electronic media are the two modern means of development communication which have expanded rapidly and are imperceptibly, competing with and in some cases, overtaking the oral and traditional media of communication.

‘Development communication’, you see that there are two words- ‘development’ and ‘communication’. When we refer to communication, in the context of development, we refer to various types of communication like interpersonal, group and mass communication. Development is about change. It is about changing for the better. It could be about social or economic change for improvement or progress. When we refer to development communication, it is about such communication that can be used for development. It is about using communication to change or improve something. Here we use different types of messages to change the socio-economic condition of people. These messages are designed to transform the behaviour of people or for improving their quality of life. Therefore, development communication can be defined as the use of communication to promote development. Those who write or produce programmes on issues related to development are called development communicators.

Communication for Development is a broad term used to refer to all the different types of communication that need to take place in societies if sustainable democratic development is to occur.

It encompasses access to and exchange of information, dialogue, creation of knowledge and open access to knowledge, development communication, strategic communication, participatory communication, expressive culture, media, information and communications infrastructure and technologies.

C4D recognizes that communication processes often reflect power relations and aims to address this by enabling people’s capacities to understand, negotiate and take part in decision-making that affects their lives.

The growing interest in this sector leads to the first World Congress on Communication for Development organized by the FAO Communication Development Team, The World Bank and The Communication initiative in Rome, Italy, in October 2006.

ROLE OF A DEVELOPMENT COMMUNICATOR:

The development communicator plays a very significant role in explaining the development process to the common people in such a way that it finds acceptance. In order to achieve this objective a development communicator:

- Has to understand the process of development and communication;
- Should possess knowledge in professional techniques and should know the audience;
- Prepare and distribute development messages to millions of people in such a way that they are received and understood, accepted and applied.

If they accept this challenge they will be able to get the people to identify themselves as part of a society and a nation. This identity will help in bringing human resources together for the total welfare of the individual and the community at large.

DEVELOPMENT COMMUNICATION USING VARIOUS MEDIA:

The history of development communication in India can be traced to rural radio broadcasts in the 1940s in different language. People who present these programmes speak in a language or dialect that the people in your area speak. The programmes may be about farming and related subjects. The programme may comprise of interviews with experts, officials and farmers, folk songs and information about weather, market rates, availability of improved seeds and implements. There would also be programmes on related fields.

During the 1950s, the government started huge developmental programmes throughout the country. In fact, when Doordarshan started on 15th September 1959, it was concentrating only on programmes on agriculture. Many of you might have seen the 'Krishi Darshan' programme on Doordarshan.

Later in 1975, when India used satellites for telecasting television programmes in what is known as SITE (Satellite Instructional Television Experiment), the programmes on education and development were made available to 2400 villages in the states of Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Orissa and Rajasthan.

As far as the print media is concerned, after Independence when the Five Year Plans were initiated by the government for planned development, it was the newspapers which gave great importance to development themes. If the print media have contributed to development communication, the electronic media – radio and television especially All India Radio and Doordarshan have spread messages on development as the main part of their broadcasts. However, amongst all the media that are used for development communication, traditional media are the closest to people who need messages of development like the farmers and workers. Such forms of media are participatory and effective. You may have seen construction workers cooking their meal of dal and rice over open fires in front of their tents set up temporarily on the roadside. They need to be educated about the values of balanced nutrition, cleanliness, hygiene and water and sanitation.

Development Communication in various parts of India, groups of volunteers use street theatre as a medium for development communication. This is done through humorous skits and plays through which the importance of literacy, hygiene etc. are enacted. The content for the skits is drawn from the audience's life. For example, they are told about "balanced nutrition". This means supplementing their staple diet of dal and rice with green leafy vegetables known to cure night blindness, an ailment common among construction workers. Similarly, female construction workers and their children are taught how to read and write. However, problems in communicating a message in an effective way have been a matter of concern to development workers. How can people be taught new skills at a low cost? What would be a good way to deal with sensitive topics such as health issues? How can complicated new research, like that in agriculture for example, be simplified so that ordinary people can benefit? Comics involve story telling using visuals which must follow local ideas and culture in order to be understood correctly by people. The important thing about comics is that they are made by people on their

own issues in their own language. So, readers find them closer to their day-to-day lives. Programmes are organized in the remote areas of Jharkhand, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu, and the North East to provide training to rural communicators to enable them to use comics in development communication.

Information on sensitive health issues such as HIV/AIDS has been communicated through the medium of comics in several states. However, you must understand that development communication using various media is possible only with the active involvement of the following:

- (i) Development agencies like departments of agriculture.
- (ii) Voluntary organizations
- (iii) Concerned citizens
- (iv) Nongovernmental organizations (NGOs)

Whenever we speak about development, the contribution of voluntary groups, concerned citizens and nongovernmental organizations cannot be ignored. Actually these groups help the government in implementing development programmes. The NGOs undertake studies, conduct research and develop appropriate messages for spreading awareness on various issues pertaining to development.

CONCEPTS OF DEVELOPMENT

The development signifies a broad-based, progressive movement synonymous with growth, modernization, industrialization, self-reliance, and social change, culminating in national development. Development has been conceptualized variously by eminent social scientists. **According to Prof. Cairncross, "Development is not just a matter of having plenty of money, nor is it a purely economic phenomenon. It embraces all aspects of social behaviour-the establishment of law and order, the relationships between family, literacy and scrupulousness in business dealings, familiarity with mechanical gadgets, and so on"**

(Cairncross quoted in Jhingan, 1975: 4). Linden (1989) defined development as a process which aims at achieving self-reliance and improved living conditions for the underprivileged majority of the population.

According to the Everett M. Rogers, the eminent communication scientist, **"Development is a widely participatory process of social change in a society, intended to bring advancement (including greater quality, freedom and other valued qualities) for the majority of the people through gaining greater control over their environment"** (Rogers, 1976: 33).

Gunnar Myrdal, the reputed economist defined development as the upward movement of the entire social system. Perspectives are many and views are divergent on development, calling for an in-depth study. The goal of development lies in going beyond material advancement to constructively channel the vast free-flowing human energy towards peace, love and harmony. Development is thus a multi-dimensional evolution on the social, economic, political, cultural and human planes.

Historically viewing from the mid-18th century onwards, trends such as industrialization, urbanization and modernization transformed western societies into economically and socially developed nations. The concept of development has undergone a sea change since the time of classical economist Adam Smith. Development according to the new perception is not mere satisfaction of food, shelter and clothing needs but also includes education, knowledge and spiritual fulfilment which are value-oriented. The newly independent nations in the later half of the twentieth century charted out new directions in development. These nations were called Third World by the developed countries of the West (First World). After planned development programmes in many of the third-world countries, they are moving from underdevelopment to development and are now called developing countries.

Despite the diversity that exists among the developing countries, they share a set of common and well-defined goals which include the reduction of poverty; inequality and unemployment; the provision of minimum levels of education, health, housing and food to every citizen; the broadening of economic and social opportunities; and the forging of a cohesive nation-state. In

the late 1950s early communication theorists such as **Wilbur Schramm (1964)** and **Daniel Lerner (1958)** were convinced that the mass media could move the developing countries beset by poverty, illiteracy and poor infrastructure from traditional to modern ways of life. By the 1960s, UNESCO, the World Bank and the IMF began to focus on communication to promote modernization in the Third World based on the experiences of the developed countries in Western Europe and the US. These early approaches failed in the modernization of the people as it was equated with Westernization, which was seen as a prerequisite to development. Development was seen as a top-down process where the mass media viewed as catalysts of change had limited reach among the vast populations and did not take into the complexities of culture and structures that could support change.

Though it is accepted that the mass media have the potential to direct social change and development, most developing countries do not have a formal communication policy to support sustainable development and motivate people to purposeful action. They must depend in such circumstances on the degree of mass communication support to development. In the 1970s and 1980s, many countries like China, India and Tanzania developed alternative development paradigms which recognized the use of cultural media to effectively meet communications efforts for development, particularly in rural areas. Alternative development communication widely used folk media that were seen as familiar, culturally sensitive, participatory and cost-effective media to promote social change, adult literacy, population and health, women's issues and rural development. Alternative development communications also included a gendered analysis of development programmes to enable women's participation in health, environment and rural development.

The Meaning of Development Communication In India

India has a unique place in the history of civilization and is credited with influencing the culture of the whole of South Asia as well as other parts of the world, directly and indirectly. Ancient India was immensely wealthy, probably more than any other nation. India has produced an

impressive procession of world-renowned saints, philosophers, mathematicians, scientists, poets and statesmen. The continuous and remarkable interaction with the world rendered India into an intellectual subcontinent, a universe in miniature. This is no mean achievement at a time when speedy communication technology and transport were almost non-existent. The concept of lokamsamgraha (world solidarity) in Gita, one of India's greatest philosophical texts and the lofty Indian ideal of Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam (all humankind as one family), outshine the global village concept of the West. Ancient India was indeed an advanced and majestic knowledge society whereas present India is only a glimmer of the glorious past though it continues to attract global attention as the fountainhead of culture.

Contemporary India is bombarded by a host of crises:

1. The failure to improve the productivity of agriculture can spell doom as every fourth farmer in the world is an Indian farmer.
2. High maternal and infant mortality rates reflect the poor quality of future human resources.
3. Dismal status of women who continue to be auctioned in several parts of India, a country acclaimed as a 'nuclear', 'space' and 'IT' power.
4. Gross violation of the rights of children with the largest number of child labourers (100 million) in the world.
5. Spiralling corruption and scams of every hue and kind including the Rs. 4 crores spurious medicine market which translates into 20% of fake medicines in the domestic market.
6. An era of jobless economic growth.
7. The shadow of hunger that increasingly stalks people across India resulting in substantial poverty and starvation deaths.
8. The gross neglect of the disadvantaged and marginalized masses. India gives no hint of emerging as a knowledge society despite it earning acclaim as one of the fastest-growing economies of the world and a potential technological czar.

The above dual contrasting arguments call for a revision of the development of communication strategies in India. **Communication** is a dynamic process of continual interactions and influences among various groups with diverse cultural experiences. **Charles Cooley**, a famous sociologist, defines communication as the mechanism through which human relationships exist and develop. Edward Sapir, an anthropologist, goes further when he states that society in the more intimate sense is the highly intricate network of understanding between the members of organizational units. Society is thus the sum of information-sharing relationships linked by a communication network.

The Western conviction that mass media are indisputable aids to development has time and again been proved otherwise in culturally rich parts of the world with time-tested and trusted oral and folk traditions. This revision calls for a realization that technology alone is not of prime importance from the development perspective; rather there should be a shift in emphasis from the techno-economic to human development. Communication for development also encompasses dialogue on nuclear disarmament, terrorism, the use of safe technology for sustainable development, an equitable and just human order, and the pursuit of global peace. The challenge to development communication is great, given the mounting problems including social development issues in our country.

"It is man-making religion that we want. It is man-making theories that we want. It is man-making education all round that we want" (Swami Vivekananda cited in Swami Jyotirmayananda, 1988: 29). These prophetic words of Swami Vivekananda, though uttered more than a century ago, still voice the needs of our country. Mass media were envisioned as instruments of healthy education, social change and modernization. The dissemination of developmental news, promotion of social harmony, national integration, environmental protection and sustainable development were the goals set before the national mass media. But these goals are increasingly being replaced by entertainment which often diverts people's attention from grave matters and lures them further and further away from reality and serious problems into a world of make-believe and fantasy. There is a need for introspection by our

media on how far priority is being accorded to the original aim of development in the mass media.

A serious crisis arising out of personality problems and an almost total erosion of values due to a marked shift from God-centered to man-centered ideas has seen a tremendous decrease in the communication of religious and humanistic ideas and thoughts. This crisis, characteristic of Western societies, has now spread its tentacles in the East. With mass communication in India becoming increasingly westernized in thought, content and conduct religious and peace communication which should bring adjustment on the material and spiritual planes, has not been accorded due priority. Despite all the scientific advancements and technical power, we do not see a corresponding decrease in mental and emotional distress. This is witnessed by us with ever-growing despair in the widespread violence, crime, bribery, corruption, indiscipline and social atrocities. It is of paramount importance that our education brings out the spiritual importance that our education brings out the spiritual possibilities in every one of us. Only such an education can affect human development. Development communication in India is faced with the challenges of promoting scientific temper, filling the spiritual vacuum and bridging the moral gap.

Defining Development as a Process

- Development is simply defined as “good change”.
- As change is a process, this definition of development tends to denote a process towards a desirable state in society.
- Whether this state is achieved in the short or long term, change has several implications for society.
- Disruption may occur in the established patterns of living within the society as it moves towards good change, and thus reflect a contradiction to its intended meaning, and generate a discourse on what constitutes this „good change“.

- As a result, the term development in both academic and non-academic fields has enjoyed an ambiguous position of being alluded to a diversity of meanings defining or evaluating what “good change” is, and who this good change belongs to.

Alternate Paradigms of Development and Development Communication

- Envisaged reducing inequality and improving conditions of the poorest of poor;
- Active participation of people at the grassroots
- Encouraged self-reliance of local communities
- Gave importance to indigenous technology;
- Stressed the importance of meeting the basic needs of people
- Gave thrust to integrated rural development
- Defined new roles for communication media in development
- Highlighted the role of folk media in development and
- The use of development support communication.

Use of technology in Development Communication

Mass media and technology should be extensively and tactfully used for development purpose. It should be kept in mind that it is a weapon in the hands of the government for positive developmental purpose. When the media is used for developmental purpose, development communicator has to keep in mind that the usage should be extensive. And for this purpose the mass media structure should be planned and efforts should be made to reach out to maximum number of people every time. Daniel Lerner in 1958, while discussing the relation of development with that of any mass media said that: —the greater the communication facilities, the greater or even faster is modernization.

According to Wilbur Schramm, the role of media in development can be divided into three parts i.e. (i) to inform (ii) to instruct and (iii) to participate.

To inform: for the development of the society, correct social, political and economic influence is the main criteria. This information should be both national and international. People should be aware of the areas or facts which hamper the development process.

To instruct: Mass literacy is an essential criteria to development. This is possible by imbibing basic skills among the people. Mass media plays an important role in this. Mass media can instruct people and educate them. Projects like Educational Television and Gyan Darshan are few such examples where media is used to instruct people, educate them and teach them basic skills. These basic skills help people to develop their standard of living.

To Participate: People shall participate in government projects to lay the foundation of an understanding and developed society. Participation will surely lead to awareness.

SADHARANIKARAN: BASIS OF COMMUNICATION

Indian communication centres on the word Sadharanikaran. It is derived from the Sanskrit word Sadharan meaning simple, common or ordinary. Sadharanikaran would thus imply simplification. The word has a familiar ring and is equivalent to the Latin word "communis" that is communication, meaning commonness of experience. Sadharanikaran has been vividly described in Bharata's Natya Shastra, which though discovered in the 10th century A.D. by Bhattanayak, has now been established to have its authorship in a period as early as 500 BC. It is also known as the fifth Veda, as in it Bharata Muni had condensed the essence of the four Vedas for the benefit of the common man.

Bharata describes Sadharanikaran as that point in the climax of a drama when the audience becomes one with the actor who lives an experience through his acting on stage and starts simultaneously reliving the same experience. The process has been described as rasa swadan i.e. tasting the same flavour or relish. When Sadharanikaran happens, universalisation or commonness of experience takes place in full form. According to Bhattanayak, the essence of

communication is to achieve commonness or oneness among the people. Later, this word was extensively used in literacy circles for explaining poetics, aesthetics and drama.

But today, Sadharanikaran is often employed to convey the idea of commonness and simplification. The entire superstructure of Indian aesthetics centres on the act of sadharanikaran through rasa swadan.

Indian society is often characterized as one of "unity in diversity" and its villages as "independent republics". These characterizations have important implications for the patterns of human communication in India.

In ancient India, cultures blossomed in different parts of the subcontinent. These were unique and independent of each other. These cultures derived strength and inspirations from each other. The merits of cultures were communicated through the long established oral tradition.

The roving saints and sufies performed the task of communicating messages. They propagated the gospels of truth enshrined in the Vedas, Puranas, epic stories like Ramayana and Mahabharata, and other scriptures. They reinterpreted these messages as per the realities prevailing in the society. In the process, they succeeded in communicating the norms and values proper for decent social living.

At the community level, known as a class of knowledgeable people, Brahmins enjoyed the highest social status. They played an effective role as "link persons" between the common man of their own community and persons from outside the community.

Village communities were mostly self-sufficient. Each community had strong and extensive cultural links with other communities beyond the neighbouring villages and towns. Administrative contacts were minimal, largely confined to revenue collections. Even this task was performed through intermediaries such as the Nawabs, Zamindars, and Lambardars. Thus, in ancient or traditional India, there existed effective systems of communication which were

both local and pan-Indian in character. Such communication provided meaning and justification for the social order. It inculcated the spirit of devotion, love, and faith.

Indian society was highly stratified and hierarchical. Communication tended to flow from persons of higher status to persons of lower status. In any communication situation, the relationship between the source and the receiver was that of dominance and subordination. In spite of this there was some dialogue between the two. Both shared a common frame of reference which made communication smooth and effective.

To participate: Voluntary and steady participation of the citizen of the country is necessary for its overall development. Such participation is possible in a liberal society. Such awareness is possible through debate, conflict and discussion. Discussions and debate helps people to know current issues, participate in developmental programme and bring a change in the standard of living of the society.

Media in developing and under developed countries strive to bring in developmental change, through its message to the mass. Mass media through interpretation, analysis and discussion point out the drawbacks of the society and core areas of development. The message should be such that it should create an urge for change and development among the common men. The media in its aim to developmental changes shall function as a decision maker and teacher.

D. Lerner, while discussing the role of radio (as a medium of mass communication) said that the emergence of radio in different villages and town not only help to educate people, but at the same time bring in consumerism in that place. Consumer arouse wish to own a radio, due to which the people work harder and usher in better standard of living (a form of development). Radio programmes help to educate people about different social issues like farming, agriculture, health, small scale industry etc. Radio forums are a weapon for radio programme producers to involve people in developmental projects. Here use is made of Telecentre where

communities gather to phone in. Discussions on difference topics are done as well as queries by expert are answered.

Television as a mass medium has a huge appeal to common person. For such reason, television is used in a planned manner to motivate people to participate in developmental programs. Feature, documentaries or development campaigns should be such that it creates interest in the mind of viewers, contents should be contemporary to attract people of all ages and should be capable of influencing viewers to take part in the developmental programs.

Wilbur Schramm in his book Mass Media and National Development discussed the role mass media play in development communication while Lerner and others saw all of the media outputs as having modernising effect. For Schramm it was their content that was the key to their use in development. Schramm has put a lot of importance on feed back for successful communication for development. Because a proper feed back helps implementation to findings whether or not the community is meeting their purpose or aim. According to him, it should never be a one way traffic. Modern communication technologies, according to him, would be of great use to meet the demand by multiplying the messages and reaching each and every worker associated with developmental work.