

History of Dev-com

- The 20th century saw massive expansion of media of mass communication.
- Political scientists, sociologists and psychologists were intrigued how technology could effect and influence people at the level of societies as well as individual.
- This led to formation of many communication theories, which essentially looked at communication as a one way process more in line of bullet theory.
- It was increasingly believed that mass media could set an agenda for public discourse, influencing public opinion ; persuading in educating in context of planned campaign (McQuail, 1994)
- Some scholars could see links between cultures and communication and saw communication as shared meaning, versus information transmission as persuasion (Carey, 1989). “ in this sense , the process and institution of communication of culture and of development are all woven together” (Melkote and Steeves, 2011:31)
- The focus on the interwoven nature of culture and communication made some scholars to contend that communication could solidify hegemonic values and priorities in society.
- On the basis of above theoretical framework the scholars of development communication can be widely divided in to two groups in their understanding of the philosophy informing communication.
- One group believes that communication is an organizational delivery system and the other group regards it in a broader perspective as related to culture and society.
- For those who view it as an organizational delivery system it conforms to the idea of development as a process of modernization.
- In such case communication and information is left with the role of a persuasive tool that can assist in the modernization process. In this process technology, which symbolizes modernity helps information to be disseminated. Thus development communication under the modernization framework becomes a persuasive marketing.

- Under the modernization framework while tracing the growth of the discipline of development communication, Roy D. Colle (2008) says that it comprises of seven 'threads and patterns' which ultimately built up the stream.

According to him these are-

- ❖ Contribution of organization like UNDP and individuals like Erskine Childers
- ❖ Extension education
- ❖ Community participation
- ❖ Population health communication
- ❖ Social marketing
- ❖ Institutional –building and the
- ❖ Information communication technology
 - The pioneering initiative in the field of development communication is generally traced to the United Nations unit called the Development Support Communication Services (DSCS) which was operated under the aegis of UNDP and Childers, was the key person in the UNDP operation.
 - Childers was an individual who personally gave DSCS a targeted approach. Childers wrote no books but actively advocated the necessity of regarding communication as an integral component of every development project.
 - The role of all UN organization involved in development communication emanates from this.
 - The second thread as Colle calls is the Extension thread. This has been extensively used in the agriculture sector by the World Bank.
 - It has been estimated that the world Bank has provided more than US \$3 billion indirect support to extension, more than all other international donors combined (Ameur, 1994).
 - The US system was 'exported' to India in the second half of the twentieth century largely through a US agency for international development (USAID) projects that helped establish agricultural universities in most of the Indian states.

- The dominant notion in the extension approach is that individuals will adopt a new practice and technology “ if only they understand what is advocates and know how to carry it out”
- The third thread in this fabric of development communication is the community participation thread.
- It was again Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO) which had “forcefully inserted the idea of community participation in the development communication field.
- However the community participation approach was also practiced by the Puerto Rico’s Division of Community Education, even before it was done by FAO.
- Paulo Freire’s participatory approach gave community participation an academic grounding and since the mid 1990s the World Bank established a policy of participation into programme where it was appropriate.
- The fourth thread is the most widely used approach was IEC i.e. information Education Communication which was meant for programmes designed to influence knowledge, motivation and behavior related to contraception and family planning.
- For a long time IEC was regarded as exclusively a part of population and family planning programme in 1969, UNFPA(United Nation Population Fund) started using the label of IEC for its communication activities.
- IEC however underwent changes due to various issues in the last two decades or so . the main among them were the concern of gender equality, the growing menace of AIDS as well as the increasing importance of social mobilisation , advocacy, social marketing, and interventions emphasizing participation and empowerment.
- The John Hopkins University’s Centre for communication programmes becomes a major player in designing the communication approach for the new IEC.
- The fifth component is social marketing. This is a process through which development is sold to the people the way other consumer items are sold.
- As Colle says “social marketing has greatly influenced the way communication and information are incorporated in development programme”(2008:134)
- Social marketing is however often confused with Advertising and Commercial marketing.

- It was Alan Andreasen who gave social marketing a theoretical dimension when he wrote his book the marketing of social change(1995) explaining the difference of social marketing and commercial marketing.
- The sixth component is : “the institution building that has provided developing nation with organization , skills and facilities to carry out development communication”
- For example in late 1960s, the ford foundation was active in India supporting, training and resource development.
- Another agency which has been quite active in the institution building is UNESCO. The third Medium Term Plan of 1989 of UNESCO put special focus on communication when it states that one of the objectives is to strengthen communication capacities in the developing countries so that they may participate more actively in the communication process.
- In the 1980s, after years of debates and discussion on its mandate, UNESCO came out with the international programme for the development communication (IPCD) as its main operational instrument for upgrading the communication capacity of developing nation. In India , Film And Television Institute of India located at Pune got fund for infrastructure development.
- Colle calls the last thread a parallel or a sub- component of the sixth thread i.e. ICT(information communication technology)
- However ICT has been used in development sector for a long time, rural radio forums of 1950s and SITE.