Communication and Development

In the mid-1970's, a long-time career officer with the United States Agency for International Development evaluated his experience in a book entitled *We Don't Know How To Do It*. This title summarises well the present-day quandaries in the field of development communication.

The drive for world development began after World War II with great optimism. The United States, flushed with a recent crusading victory, looked back proudly at its own industrial and agricultural development and was convinced that this was just a new challenge for 'American know-how'. Europe, too, though rebuilding from war, was conscious of itself as the apex of Western civilization. Economists now had the tools to eliminate depressions and to ameliorate recessions. Scientists were perfecting miracle wheat and corn. Development would be just a rapid transfer of the technology and modern organization of the North Atlantic nations to the 'backward non-Western world'.

Techniques of communication and good use of mass media were seen to be at the heart of this 'technology transfer'. The relatively new science of how to 'get effects' with mass media seemed to unlock great power for reaching isolated villages and overcoming the resistance of traditionalism. Thus, communication sciences found themselves at the centre of this new crusade.

At the outset, researchers in the industrial nations saw development as largely a matter of economic investment, technology and education. For the new nations emerging in this period, however, the priority was political, economic and cultural independence. It became increasingly clear to many in the developing world that transfer of Western modernity meant a continuation of the same old colonial dependence. For them, development was increasingly defined as self-reliance, non-alignment and the building of a New World Economic and Information Order.

Meanwhile peasants and immigrants to the new cities saw that development was creating a technological elite who were the midwives of the transfer from the industrial nations. The poor, who remained poor, asked what development might mean for them.

This review of the field of development communication is very largely a story of how leaders in developing countries and the poor of those countries have struggled to become the protagonists of development – and to get the communication sciences to recognise this.

REVIEW ARTICLE

I. Different Politics, Different Agendas for Development


One of the key notions guiding the new era of development in the post World War II era was that armed with the power of science, we are now able to intervene to produce the ideal society. Speculative models of the ideal society in the West are as old as Plato's *Republic* and More's *Utopia*; the great civilisations of India and China have also had philosophies of the good society. What was new was the emergence in the early twentieth century of the social and behavioural sciences of economics, sociology and psychology. Drawing on all of these was the science of communication and media studies. Social scientists wanted to apply their knowledge to the problems of development with the same value-free neutrality as the physical sciences; but, in fact, the agendas for research on development were being determined largely by political forces.

A first agenda was being set by the North Atlantic nations and
the old colonial masters. After a great war they were ready for a
period of great political, economic and cultural expansion. The
superpowers, in the atmosphere of the Cold War, were struggling
to consolidate spheres of influence and shape a new world in terms
of their own interests. For them, development communication had
to include control of information networks within those spheres.

A second agenda was being set, however, by the leaders of the
independence movements in Asia, Africa and, in its way, Latin
America. They saw a centralised state with careful economic
planning and centrally directed development bureaucracies for
agriculture, education and health as the most effective strategy for
'catching up' with industrially advanced countries. The new nations
were very much attracted by the promise that technical assistance
would help them to rapidly, almost magically, overcome massive
problems of hunger, illiteracy and bad communications.

Increasingly, however, they saw that aid was introducing a new
world system of economic and cultural domination by superpowers
that could be confronted only if they banded together to form a
unified block of 'non-aligned' nations. Political independence could
be secured only if they achieved cultural and communication
independence.

A third agenda was being set by the rising expectations of the
people in the developing countries, especially the new immigrants
to the cities. This was placing great political demands on still
relatively weak governments. The people sought their own
'people's communication', often through mass movements.

The politicians, planners and popular movements, with their
various agendas, all turned to the communication researchers for
advice or, at least, justification of their decisions. The founders of
the fledgling science of development communication pointed out
that they could offer more hypotheses than firmly established 'laws',
but they also had their own fourth agenda of getting financial
support for scientific research, testing their hypotheses and perhaps
proving that they did have a professional role to play.

**Three Paradigms of Development Communication**

Over the last forty years there have been many comprehensive and
more modest 'middle-range' theories about the role communications
play in development, but the current language of the field has summarised
them in terms of several dominant paradigms. Each paradigm tends to respond to the agenda of a
different set of political actors.

The *modernisation* paradigm, dominant from approximately 1945
to 1966, tended to support the agenda of the North Atlantic nations
and their interest in transferring not only their technology but also
the socio-political culture of modernity to 'traditional' societies.
Development was defined largely in terms of economic growth. The
dependency-dissociation paradigm, which played an important role in
the movement for a New World Information Order from the late
1960s to the early 1980s, represents the goals of the new nations for
political, economic and cultural self-determination within the
international community of nations. Development, in this
paradigm is defined chiefly in terms of political decision. A third
paradigm, still taking shape, has been variously termed the
multiplicity or 'another development' model. Generally it favours
popular grassroots movements for greater democratisation and
structural change within the non-aligned countries. In this
conception of development, issues of cultural identity are taking
primacy.

Each of these paradigms has emerged as a critique of the
inadequacies of earlier dominant paradigms, but both the practical
implementations and the theoretical premises underlying previous
paradigms tend to remain operative in the culture of developing
countries. Thus, in a given country, we would find different
paradigms operating side by side. There might be a structure of
agricultural extension agencies carrying out technology transfer for
commercial farmers, new national and regional news agencies
implementing the dissociation model but often favouring the
interests of new nationalist elites and vigorous people's
communication movements pushing for greater democratisation of
communication. Each new paradigm proposes dimensions that
experience suggests had been lacking. Each paradigm also implies
a kind of kaleidoscopic re-arrangement of cultural and political
priorities, a factor that explains the often bitter debate among
communication researchers. Most specialists in development
communication would recognise some validity in each of the
paradigms - given proper adjustments - but the field is in a
quandary about how to formulate a model that brings together the
best of each paradigm in consistent fashion.

Jacobson, Converse, Samariwa and Hardt represent the current
historical analysis of the ways that particular political agendas and
the limitations of the state of the art of media studies at earlier
historical moments have introduced a bias in one or another
paradigm.

**Modemising the Non-Aligned Nations**

Communication research got an early start in the United States in
part because universities there offered undergraduate and graduate
programmes in journalism, speech, agricultural extension
communication and, later, broadcasting. Journalism and speech
teachers gradually built up a professional research establishment,
and, in the pragmatic American tradition of science were
acquainted to taking research contracts from government and the
media industry. Thus, when Lasswell came from Germany to the
USA in the early 1930s, he quickly found a home in his Office of
Radio Research, later to become the Bureau of Applied Social
Research (BASR), at Columbia University in New York and began
taking research grants from the broadcasting networks, advertising
firms and public opinion polling companies centred in New York.
The location of the BASR in a university meant that he was also in
close contact with a more theoretical tradition and followed the
practise of using research contracts as a means of developing
communication theory. This meant that the environment within
which communication theory developed was very much influenced
by the commercial and political values of the contractors.

American social scientists, including researchers in the field of
media studies worked closely with the American war effort from
1941-1945. They were responding, in particular, to the demand for
more intensive 'social engineering' information to be used in the
massive mobilisation of the American public in the armed forces,
in industry, and for morale-building propaganda. After the war, the
international foreign assistance programmes and the 'Cold War'
provided a new research agenda for centres such as the BASR. As
Converse, Jacobson, and others point out, some of the earliest
research on development communication was carried out in the
United States. This research defined not only the perspective of the
modernisation paradigm but also laid the foundations of the field
of development communication.

**The Influence of Daniel Lerner**

No single book summarises and reflects better the early thinking
of American communication researchers regarding development
than Lerner's *The Passing of Traditional Society: Modernization in the
Middle East*. He expresses the modernisation paradigm with clarity,
consistency, and optimism.

Much of the material for the book came from a study carried out
for the Voice of America by the BASR where Lerner was then a staff
member. The initial data base was a study of public attitudes in the
Middle East. The region was of key political importance in the
Cold-War, and the study included a number of questions about
attitudes toward the Soviet Union. Lerner later used this data to elaborate a theory of the role of the mass media in modernisation.

The first influential finding of Lerner is that modernisation is essentially a change of attitudes and psychological characteristics. These include: a greater ability to empathise with a wide range of people, greater secularisation, a detachment from traditional indigenous culture and identification with Western culture. Later research would apply this more directly to problems of socio-economic development arguing, for example, that peasant farmers are slow to accept innovative practices because they have fatalistic and traditional attitudes. This threw the blame for underdevelopment on the peasant farmer and directed attention away from other inhibiting conditions such as concentration of land resources in the hands of large owners and the tendency of government services to give more attention to commercial farmers. In situations of powerless dependency and deprivation, a kind of fatalism might be the only way to preserve sanity and dignity.

The focus of early development studies on psychological factors reflected the general preoccupation of American media studies with attitude and opinion surveys. This, in turn, was influenced by the fact that so much of the research was carried out for commercial broadcasters, advertising agencies, and government propaganda efforts. Lazarsfeld’s BASR, for example, did advertising studies for manufacturers of toothpaste, vitamins, whisky and wine, Sloane’s Liniment and greeting cards. Lazarsfeld argued that there was hardly any difference between the academic and commercial study as far as methods and contents go; they differed only with respect to purposes and finances. His justification of such studies was that the methods and theories tested were establishing a new science.

Secondly, Lerner clearly argued that the rejection of a local indigenous culture and adoption of the universal modern culture was a determinate, inevitable process. Modernity, for him, was equivalent to the culture of the West which, because it represented rationality, would certainly diffuse throughout the world. Becoming modern, in Lerner’s view, was simply characteristic of social systems. As Jacobson notes, this thinking reflected the functionalism then dominant in social science circles in the US.

In Jacobson’s analysis, functionalism gained acceptance among social scientists as part of a long struggle to establish the validity of their field as a science in line with the prevailing American philosophy of science which argued that true science must be value-free, objective, positivistic and empirically verifiable. The physical sciences were the model, and, following the German tradition of Max Weber and others, social sciences had to be rid of all the subjective, value-laden opinions. Functionalism attempted to take the value judgements out of research on human behaviour by treating it as the predictable functioning of a self-regulating social, psychological or cultural system. Human decisions might appear to be free, but, in fact, they were determined by the interlocking functions of a behavioural system. Functionalism seemed particularly valuable for cross-cultural, international studies of development because it seemed to avoid political and ethnocentric bias.

Social analysts in the non-aligned world, conscious of the need for profound changes in the structure of social class and caste, criticized functionalism. They pointed out that its preoccupation with the organic integration and equilibrium of a social system tended to legitimate national and international concentrations of social power. Moreover, functionalism, by claiming to be objective, empirical, and above value judgements, prevented social scientists from examining critically how their research might serve an unjust socio-political order. Jacobson argues that the present trend in social science, which is cautious about universalistic models and admits that political factors may enter into theoretical formulations, is particularly important in research on international, cross-cultural, and development communication. This trend would introduce forms of ‘critical theory’ for questioning systematically the epistemological foundations of research.

The Bias of Media-Centred Research

Finally, Lerner reflects the uncritical confidence in the power of the media to modernise and produce development results that were typical of the period. Lerner affirms that ‘Everywhere...increasing media exposure has gone with’ wider economic participation (per capita income) and political participation (voting). The model evolved in the West is an historical fact.......the same basic model reappears in virtually all modernizing societies regardless of race, colour or creed...’ The emphasis on ‘per capita income’ and ‘voting’ as the operational definitions of development came from the need for simple, easy-to-quantify survey questions in polling and audience effects research. In many countries, however, where masses of voters live in situations of powerless dependency on local elites, voting may not be a good indicator of real political participation. A better indicator might be the level of organisation of farmers, labourers and women in popular movements. A better indicator of communication development might be the increased density of horizontal communication and greater access to media that emerges in popular movements. But, for Lerner, competitive individual upward mobility was more important for modernisation and development than social solidarity or affirmation of the cultural identity of lower-status groups.

II. The Practical Implementation of Modernisation Theory


While American researchers such as Lazarsfeld and Lerner in the New York-based BASR were supporting higher levels of US Cold-War policy in Washington, Rogers, Schramm, and others at universities in the agricultural-industrial heartland became involved with the practical problems of development communication in agricultural extension systems, community development and mass education.

In the 1950s, the US looked back with pride on the 150 year
evolution of its own development programme, especially the rural
development that brought high productivity and high standards of
living to its farmers. With its vast expanses of land and with
legislation such as the 1860 Homestead Act, the US had equitably
distributed 160 acre farms to all comers. It had also established
a good farm-to-market transport system, facilitated easy credit with
small, accessible rural banks, ensured good schools from the
beginning of settlement, and opened agricultural-technical univer-
sities with a heavy emphasis on research that soon produced, for
example, better crop varieties. The US was especially proud of the
system for 'extending' information from the research universities
out to rural communities. Information was spread through county
agents, youth clubs, women's home demonstration agents and
county fairs which stimulated productivity and creativity with
competitive prizes. Americans had an almost religious reverence
for the ideal of the 'family farm' and rural community.

When American foreign aid programmes geared up after World
War II, many policy advisors thought that the best American
contribution would be to transfer an almost exact replica of the
American model of extending technical information from research
centres out to the hinterland. American advisors were soon in
dozens of countries helping to organise the hierarchical bureau-
cratic structure not only of agricultural ministries but also health,
education, transport, credit and other structures for providing
inputs for increasing productivity. International agencies such as
the Food and Agricultural Organisation were also heavily staffed
and influenced at this time by Americans. Also involved were
American private institutions such as the Rockefeller Foundation.
It set up nine major agricultural research centres in different parts
of the world and brought the best American agricultural researchers
out to these centres. There they developed the miracle varieties of
rice, corn and wheat that sparked the so-called 'Green Revolution'.
Thousands of young people from developing countries were
trained in the US to staff the new ministries and technical research
centres. Thus the modernisation communication network was set
up to transfer the technology of the West through a newly created
technical elite in the developing countries out to the rural areas.

Development agencies also introduced rationalised planning
systems by bringing in researchers for feasibility studies and
evaluation. American universities which had developed rural
sociology departments for evaluating extension systems and
training researchers found a new role in research on development
communication. Michigan State University was a major source of
this advisory work, and Everett Rogers' position there as a rural
sociologist put him in the mainstream of discussion about the
effectiveness of rural extension and communication systems. His
doctoral thesis on the factors influencing the adoption of fertilizer
and hybrid seed corn among Iowa farmers acquainted him with the
theory of innovation and diffusion then being developed in
institutions such as the BASR. His first major book, *Diffusion of
Innovations*, was a synthesis of current thinking about development
communication and modernisation. Rogers had grown up in an
Iowa farming community and he expressed much of the prevailing
confidence in the American model of rural development.

*Diffusion of Innovations* was particularly influential because it
offered the first comprehensive theoretical framework for
explaining the communication process in rural extension systems
and other processes of development communication. Embedded in
the book was a conception of communication as information
flowing in linear, vertical fashion from an expert source through
local opinion leaders and change agents, who generally were more
powerful local elites, out to receivers. The book was about how to
gain 'effects', not about how to stimulate a process of articulating
ideas and information from the grassroots horizontally or upwards
towards centres of political and cultural decision making.

Eventually, *Diffusion of Innovations* became the standard textbook
for development work and a model for the hundreds of
masters and doctoral diffusion studies carried out around the world.
The concepts fitted well with the career aspirations of young
people going into development bureaucracies. It also fitted well
with the political realities of governments who wanted to keep a
firm central control on the channels of communication and ensure
their direction of national integration.

American technical advisors hoped that the extension systems in
developing societies would channel needed information and other
resources to the grassroots as it apparently had done in the United
States. What was not fully realized by the advisors or taken into
account in *Diffusion of Innovations* was that the social class structure
in Latin America or India is very different from that of the United
States. The hierarchical structure of society was essentially
paternalistic but it was, in reality, a system of extracting surplus
through rents, marketing arrangements and low wages for labour.
The communication system was not one which passed on
information through local elites as Rogers presupposed, but one
which prevented any significant information getting through for
fear of the changes it might bring. In later editions of the book
Rogers recognized that those who have more land, political
contacts, or education tend to get more information and use it more
effectively. Although Rogers introduced concepts such as 'the
knowledge gap', studies such as that of McAnany argue that the
basic linear hierarchical model of communication remains.

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**Schramm: The Role of New Communication Technology**

While Rogers focussed on social structure and interpersonal
networks as a channel of modernising information, Schramm
introduced into the discussion a fascination with the power of the
media as a cheap multiplier of information. His work was part of
the effort of the United Nations and UNESCO to develop a
programme of concrete action to build up press, radio broadcasting,
film and television facilities in countries in process of economic and
social development. The survey on which the book was based was
carried out by UNESCO by means of a series of meetings in
Bangkok, Santiago (Chile) and Paris. The participants were mass
media experts, professional organizations and government
representatives. Schramm, the Director of the Institute for Com-
munication Research at Stanford University at the time, and an
adviser to many governments, was invited to participate at this
series of meetings. Later he was asked to 'give practical effect to
the mass media development programme' which this series suggested.

For Schramm, typical of mainstream social researchers of the
time, the mass media were 'agents of social change', 'almost
miraculous' in their efficaciousness. They could be expected,
Schramm argued, to help accomplish the transition to new customs
and practices, and, in some cases, to different social relationships. Behind such changes in behavior must necessarily lie substantial changes in attitudes, beliefs, skills, and social norms. The process, as elaborated, is simple: first, there arises the awareness of a need which is not satisfied by present customs and behavior; second, to satisfy that need it is necessary to borrow technology and new social practices. Hence a nation that wants to accelerate the process of development will try to make its people more widely and quickly aware of needs and of the opportunities for meeting them. The nation will also facilitate the decision-making process and will help the people put the new practices into effect smoothly and swiftly.

Schrann went further than Lerner and Rogers in taking account of cultural linkages, in acknowledging ‘resistance to change’, and in urging an ‘understanding participation’. However, his model of communication was still manipulative of behavior towards the desired end of innovation adoption and it still rested on empirical evidence that seemed to show a strong correlation between high media exposure and development.

Schrann argued forcefully that the mass media had the potential to widen horizons, to focus attention, to raise aspirations and to create a climate for development. He was equally optimistic about the potential of the use of technologies and also the educational media such as programmed instruction, language laboratories, and electronic digital computers in all types of education and training. Unlike Lerner and Rogers, however, he conceded that ‘the mass media can help only indirectly to change strongly held attitudes and valued practices’.

He recommended, therefore, that a developing country should review its restrictions on the importing of informational materials and should not hesitate to make use of new technical developments in communication in cases where these new developments fitted its needs and capabilities. So confident was Schrann in media technology that he observed in a final flourish: ‘it is hardly possible to imagine national economic and social development without some modern information multiplier; and indeed, without mass communication probably the great freedom movements and national stirrings of the last few decades would never have come about at all’. Such was the faith of the purveyors of ‘modernization’ models.

III. Dependency/Structuralist Models: Development for ‘Liberation’


By the mid-seventies, evaluation reports of ‘extension’ programmes in the non-aligned world indicated that the real consequences of ‘modernization’ were very different from expectations. While there had been some successes in agricultural, health, nutrition, and educational extension programmes, the main socio-economic beneficiaries were the better-off classes. There was little evidence of the hoped for ‘trickle down’ effect; the diffusion of innovations that was believed to have brought about the Green Revolution benefited mainly the richer landowners and farmers. And the expansion of the media networks was used for political propaganda or for the entertainment of the urban middle-class rather than for development purposes. Indeed, the knowledge gap between the haves and have nots had widened because access to the mass media was still restricted to the elites. Where serious attempts to use media for development were made, bureaucracies and their collusion with the better-off groups rendered most projects ineffective. Rural social structures were such that most attempts to reach the poorest of the poor were scotched.

At the international level, it was claimed that the main beneficiaries were the big powers and their industries, the multinational companies, and the financing banks and institutions. Even when effective, as in the case of reduced infant mortality due to better health care, development brought other problems, such as population increases which overtaxed food resources. According to Sonaike, ‘by the late seventies most Third World countries had turned from being exporters of agricultural products into importers of food grains on a massive scale. Nigeria, for instance, spent almost a billion dollars on the importation of grains — mostly wheat and rice — between 1979 and 1983. After being a net exporter of food for twenty years Mexico was forced to import food in the eighties ... Large scale industrialization and urbanization, the hallmarks of ‘modernization’, had led to massive migration from rural areas to the cities, and greater technological dependence on the more advanced countries, and especially on multinational corporations’. The expansion of the mass media, too, resulted in greater dependency on hardware and software from media-rich countries. The increased flow of information meant an increased presence of multinational news agencies and advertising agencies in most of the non-aligned countries.

It appeared that with the ‘transfer of technology’ model, the developing world could never ‘catch-up’ with the industrialized capitalist or communist countries. Meanwhile, the non-aligned countries had increased their strength at the United Nations, and intensified their solidarity, politically and economically (in OPEC, for instance). The demand for a new world economic order and for a new world information order came to the top of the UNESCO agenda mainly because of their efforts. It was at that time that ‘dependency’ theories rose to prominence in the debate on development communications.

Dependency perspectives on development communications emerged in the early seventies as a reaction to ‘modernization’ models. The former were the product of the application of Marxist theories of imperialism, though both Marxists and non-Marxists were involved in developing the perspectives. There were other influences at work such as Freirean methods of popular education1, Schumacher’s advocacy of appropriate technologies1, popular grassroots movements, and alternative communication strategies such as participatory people’s radio and theatre.

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Causes of Backwardness

The original version of "dependency and underdevelopment" theory was outlined by Paul Baran and Andre Gunder Frank. Their chief concern was to find the causes of backwardness of non-aligned countries, especially those of Latin America, within the dynamics of the world capitalist system. Hoogvelt notes that underdevelopment was assumed by these theorists to be due to some "original state of affairs" but to the same historical process by which the industrialised countries had achieved their capital accumulation. The dependency approach rejected the concept of the state as an isolated actor and the notion of the global system as a collection of individual nation-states; rather it was a world-system approach.

Baran argued that underdevelopment was the obverse side of development: the advanced capitalist countries had developed by exploiting their colonies. Such economic exploitation had left the colonies with a narrowly specialized, export-oriented, primary production structure managed by an elite which shared the cultural lifestyle and tastes of the dominant classes in capitalist states. This elite perpetuated the rule of the ex-colonial powers.

Andre Gunder Frank elaborated this approach by postulating three "laws" of motion of the process of development and underdevelopment, and coining the twin concept "metropolis/satellite" to characterise the nature of imperialist economic relations. The ties of dominance and dependency, he explained, run in chain-like fashion throughout the global capitalist system, with metropolitan states appropriating the surplus from the satellites, their towns removing the surplus from the hinterland, their landlords from the peasants, their merchants from shopkeepers, and, finally, the shopkeepers from the customers. Hoogvelt observes that this was criticised as being "un-Marxist" because it located exploitation in the sphere of exchange rather than production. Nor did Gunder Frank make quite clear how this exchange led to exploitation.

ECLA's Stand

Raoul Prebisch of the Economic Commission for Latin America (ECLA), a decade earlier, had postulated a structural link between the development and underdevelopment of different regions of the world. The structural model he used was the centre/periphery model according to which the industrialized countries (the centre) were responsible for "underdeveloping" the poor countries (the periphery). However, Baran and Frank interpreted this structural link in politico-economic terms rather than in purely economic terms, going beyond the centre/periphery analysis to the role of local elites in the transfer of economic surplus from subordinate to imperialist countries. ECLA's economists had emphasized self-reliant development through industrialization and import-substitution, though under the aegis of foreign investment. In Latin American countries the result of following this policy was greater, rather than less, dependence since the balance-of-payments position became more acute through greater dependence on the capitalist metropolitan centres for financing, marketing, capital goods, technology design, patents, etc. Indeed, it led to further underdevelopment because foreign firms were now invited to establish production facilities locally. The combination of a limited domestic market and the presence of foreign industrial subsidiaries encouraged a grotesquely inefficient system of production and a net outflow of resources. The Latin American subsidiaries have, as a result, become the dumping ground for either obsolete foreign equipment or foreign plants that have obsolescence built into them. Their capacity is grossly under-utilised, and their labour absorption minimal. Over time, remitted returns on foreign investment have come to exceed by several times the net inflow.

Hoogvelt concludes that dependency theory, having arisen as a criticism of bourgeois development theory, has now itself become bourgeois. It is no longer radical because it fails to appeal to the masses of peasants and workers.

The Structuralist Position

McAnany focuses on the external and internal structures in society and communications that inhibit education and development in non-aligned countries. He examines the role of communication and information in development in terms of equity (who benefits from information) and productivity (what impact information has on agricultural productivity, health, and income). On the basis of three case studies, in the Ivory Coast, Guatemala, and Brazil he concludes that the role of information is very limited and that those who benefit most are the ones who are not most in need. The relevance of information for developmental purposes depends largely on a number of internal and external structures. McAnany argues that social, economic and political structures enter into the formation of the problems of the poor, and the problems cannot be solved by ignoring this reality. He believes that there is a solution that communication/information has an important if modest role to play, but the necessary condition of this role will be some change in the social structure rather than simply the addition of information.

In his 1983 paper, however, McAnany is more optimistic about the "real potential for applying communication for poor rural majorities with some reasonable promise of success." The three areas in which this potential can be realized are: mobilization of the poor majority, substantive areas of rural need, and the introduction of a variety of new technologies.

McAnany cites three concrete instances from Latin America which demonstrate the effectiveness of grassroots mobilization of the people for their own development. One of the most successful is the people's radio (radio popular) movement in Latin American countries organized by labour unions or the Catholic Church. People's radio, observes McAnany, is fundamentally an organization of people rather than a social service, and provides an alternative source of information and lower-status identity that the commercial media will not offer.

The second instance relates to the network of Church-related comunidades de base (or "basic Christian communities") which grew out of popular Catholicism and which was eventually supported by the bishops of Latin America who stood for solidarity with the poor. Over 80,000 basic communities have formed in Brazil alone. These communities, according to McAnany, are essentially a functioning network of people who carry out certain communal activities that are religious, social and political. The network is linked together by people's radio stations, small newspapers, and video in their united struggle for basic human and civil rights.

The third instance comes from Mexico. There the government promoted a major effort to increase agricultural productivity by giving small peasant producers significant aid in the system called SAM (Sistema Alimentaria Mejicana). The result was a fifty per cent rise in productivity in the first year. Subsequently bureaucratic and political pressures undermined its success, but the scheme demonstrates that peasants, left to themselves and with enough direct aid, can organize themselves into very productive work units.

Further, communication is effective in rural development where substantive areas of need are identified such as in agricultural productivity for both small and large farmers, rural education, health and nutrition. Two conditions are necessary for this: the support of government, and the mobilization of people themselves and the willingness of government to work through organizations under independent local leadership. This holds for the use of new technologies such as satellites, as well.
IV. Strategies for ‘Another Development’: Culturalist Models


In the 1980s a number of critical scholars are proposing approaches to development communication that are alternatives to both the ‘modernization’ and ‘dependency’ models. These are in the main non-Marxist approaches; they reject the economism and universal relevance of earlier models. The focus of these approaches is on the social and cultural identities of nations as well as on the internal and external factors that inhibit all-round development. Communication scholars associated with the culturalist approaches include Hedebro, Sætra, Tehranian, and Mowlana.

Göran Hedebro and Jan Sætra believe that a new paradigm of development communication has emerged from the critique of the ‘modernization’ and ‘dependency’ paradigms, but particularly of the latter. This new paradigm is known by various terms: ‘another development’, ‘multiplicity in one world’, ‘culturalist’. The concept of ‘another development’ is not really new; it can be traced back to Inayatullah*, and to the 1977 anthology of papers by Latin American and Asian scholars in the Dag Hammerskjold Foundation’s journal, Development Dialogue.

The basic assumption of this approach is that there are no countries that function completely autonomously and that are completely self-sufficient. Nor are there any nations whose development is exclusively determined by external factors. A second assumption is that every society is dependent in one way or another, both in form and degree. The most striking assumption is that there are no universal models of development and that development is an integral, multidimensional, and dialectical process that can differ from society to society. Thus each society must attempt to define its own strategy for development. Development itself is looked at holistically as including social, economic, cultural, and religious elements.

Hedebro and Sætra enumerate six basic principles of the new paradigm. The first criterion of development must be the satisfaction of basic needs of those who constitute the majority of the world’s population. The second is satisfaction of their needs for expression, creativity, and equality. The third principle is endogenous and self-reliant development to preserve the dignity and sovereignty of nations and regions, to enable peoples and communities to define their cultural identities. The fourth relates to equitable access to the world’s natural resources and to the preservation of the global and local ecosystems. Finally, the advocates of the new paradigm stress the need for participatory forms of development and dialogic strategies of communication. The ideal is what they term ‘participatory democracy’. They also believe that structural changes in social relations, in the economy, and in the power and class structures are vital.

Communitarian Approaches

Tehranian and Mowlana are two Iranian scholars with a considerable body of work to their credit. They have been the chief advocates of approaches to development and communications which support participatory community. Tehranian conceives of development as ‘the growing learning and communication capacity of a society to empower its members to define, negotiate and solve their own social problems autonomously’.

Tehranian’s work is, according to Jacobson, an attempt at a broadly conceived synthetic theory. He maintains a critical perspective regarding dependency but also combines value-oriented research with the practical use of empirical techniques. At the same time, his approach takes account of the need for mechanisms of participation. His development of ‘communication indicators’ is illustrative of this approach. In a study of Iran, for instance, he examines indicators, not only of relative material wealth and well-being, but also of social communication. These indicators are placed within a conceptual structure by means of which, he believes, societies’ goals are negotiated and expressed. In this approach, communication indicators become both expressions of social goals and barometers of progress. His theoretical structures of identity, legitimacy and community play a vital role in his conceptual framework.

Mowlana favours what he terms the ‘monistic/participatory’ model of development communications. The emphasis in his approach is on the community rather than the nation state, on monistic universalism rather than nationalism, on spiritualism rather than secular humanism, on dialogue rather than monologue, and on emancipation rather than alienation. Further, development is viewed within the context of particular cultural and spiritual values. Clearly, Tehranian and Mowlana have been markedly influenced by the Islamic world view and the concept of ‘ummah’ (community) so fundamental to West Asian cultures, and they are also aware of this region’s traumatic experiences of modernization under such rulers as the Shah.

V. The Struggle For Self-Reliance: Beyond ‘Another Development’


Hand-in-hand with the demands of the non-aligned nations for a new world information order has been their demand for a new world economic order. Big power domination of the world economy is felt to have resulted only in greater technological and economic dependence on the developed countries and the multinational corporations. This perception was embodied in two
United Nations resolutions, in 1973: the Declaration on the Establishment of a New International Economic Order (NIEO), and a Programme of Action on the Establishment of a New International Economic Order. Under these proposals, 'commodities agreements' would promote an exchange system more favourable to nations whose economies depend mostly on the production of raw materials. They also called for unrestricted access to the markets of developed countries, greater financial flow, better access to credit, special drawing rights, greater participation in the management of monetary funds (including the International Monetary Fund), increased technology transfer, a code of conduct for transnational firms, and measures for the redeployment of industries to Third World countries. Even these proposals have been criticized by some who feel that they would stabilise, rather than restructure, the existing system.

New strategies for an NIEO would centre on the autonomous self-reliance of individual countries, rather than stressing trade and technological transfers from outside. According to this view, development should be a process of mobilising local resources for the satisfaction of local needs.

Mattleart stresses five key aspects of self-reliant models of development. The first is to restate the goals of development as meeting the needs of the entire population through domestic resources and efforts, rather than the current, primary concern with increasing Gross National Product and 'catching up' with the industrialized nations. The second is to recognize the need for solidarity and co-operative effort at all levels, from that of the individual and family to the international level — where relations with other Third World countries should be given preference over those with industrialised countries. The third key aspect is a renewed emphasis on culture, in the recognition that integral development must be founded on the cultures, values and norms of each country, rather than on Euro-American models. Fourthly is the recognition that social development may be better accomplished through low-cost, small-scale, labour-intensive technologies, rather than through high technology. Finally, the developed countries should be drawn into a world-wide growth model which will ensure the best use of the world's limited natural resources for the good of all nations and for future generations.

Fighting Mechanisms of Exploitation
Galtung also supports self-reliance, which will break the 'centre/ periphery' relationship and will make each part of the world a 'centre'. National dignity, with a faith in one's own values and cultures, is a necessary foundation for integral development and will give people the normative/ideological power to avoid dependency. Similarly, each society should have the ability to meet at least its basic food needs, in order to resist the 'remunerative' power of external forces which would use food supplies as a weapon.

New patterns of co-operation have to be developed, according to Galtung, to counteract fragmentation and marginalization by breaking up the centre's monopoly on interaction. Solidarity and control of economic machinery at the local and regional level is seen as a necessary means for breaking the dependence of local societies on the developed 'centre'. This would require intensive popular participation, developed through dialogue and conscientization. Regional, 'South-South' co-operation between the less developed countries is essential to overcome inequalities in resources.

'Global Problems, Local Solutions'
Kothari, the Director of the Centre for the Study of Developing Societies in New Delhi, emphasizes the need to 'recapture the real basis of self-reliance and the basic needs perspective of the rise of new movements and new political actors on the scene', such as the human rights movements which are gathering strength among bonded labourers, the landless, miners, ethnic minorities, women and other disadvantaged groups. Many of these movements run directly counter to other tendencies — frequently supported by governments — which promote militarism or rampant consumerism. At the same time, the old paradigm of development seems to be reviving, in terms of renewed stress on 'transnationalization' of the world economy, on free markets, monetarism, export-oriented growth, free trade zones, adoption of new technologies and the depoliticization of development.

The role of communication in such a situation is to be part and parcel of the struggle for human liberation, freedom and justice, strengthening the struggles of communities, cultures and of the marginalized, and to make their voices heard. Communication should be a process that contains the forces of backlash and the forces of transformation and survival. The human rights dimension needs to be built into the new development paradigm. Human survival, and a just, demilitarized and humane society should be the main aims of this development paradigm. Kothari sees human survival as 'a dynamic force projecting a positive alternative to the theory of progress and the goal of affluence'. Dignity will be found in genuine equity and in diverse cultures working out their own strategies in local movements for democracy and autonomy. To speak of 'Global problems, local solutions', he concludes, is no mere slogan. It is the very condition of human survival.

VI. Telecommunications For Development: Revival of 'Modernisation' Models


The 'dominant' paradigm of modernization, diffusion and growth never really 'passed from the scene'. Though 'dependency' and 'alternative' paradigms did gain in influence among scholars and researchers in development communication, the views of Lerner, Rogers and Schramm continued to prevail in national government policies and extension strategies. After all, national governments are not going to turn their backs on industrialization and the newly developing technologies which offer the only hope of their 'catching up' with the West. Moreover, the new technologies offer governments greater means of control and surveillance over their large populations; 'appropriate technologies', 'grassroots participation' and 'dialogue' which the 'alternative' paradigms emphasise do not fit their needs. Only in grassroots or popular movements such as those in Latin American and Asian countries were modest attempts made to put the new theories into actual practice. Social action groups (SAGs), voluntary agencies, and non-government organizations (NGOs), frequently funded by church foundations and other aid agencies abroad, have spearheaded these movements.
This failure to discern the yawning gap between development communication theory and practice has resulted in much confusion; one is often equated with the other. McNally believes that this gap may be attacked as a failure of theory to account for reality or, the irrelevance of theory to practice. On the other hand, it may also be argued for the failure of practice to heed theory. The modernization paradigm had its basis in Western history, in a need for economic expansion and in ‘Cold-War’ politics. The ‘dependency’ and ‘alternative’ paradigms have offered explanations of underdevelopment but the prescriptions they offer are, for many, unattractive, time-consuming and idealistic. Moreover, they are not in step with the interests of national governments.

The last few years have witnessed a vigorous revival of the ‘modernization’ paradigm in both theory and practice, particularly in the aftermath of recent developments in telecommunications and the new technologies. Rural development is once again the focus of attention, though not so much through the mass media as through ‘telecommunications’. The term ‘telecommunications’ entered the field of development communication in the early eighties and came to include not only the broadcast media but also the telephone and related technologies such as teleconferencing, audioconferencing, and satellite communications. These advances hold the promise of introducing two-way communication links among isolated rural communities and between such communities and larger regional centres. As a result, several experimental rural telecommunications projects were launched in Alaska, India, Indonesia and the South Pacific, mainly with the assistance of international donor agencies. Evaluations of these projects seem to indicate that there are linkages between the provision of a telephone system and rural development, and that the availability of telephones is a cause rather than a consequence of development. More than twenty developing countries are now working with INTELSAT to provide some percentage of their domestic telephone communication service via satellite. This demand for telecommunications development in the non-aligned countries has been steadily growing as studies commissioned by the United States Telecommunications Suppliers Association and the United States Department of State demonstrate.

The Maitland Recommendations

The new-found optimism about the developmental potential of telephony is most eloquently expressed in the Maitland Commission Report.

The Maitland Commission was set up by the International Telecommunications Union (ITU) to investigate ways in which telecommunications might be better promoted in the Third World. Four recommendations sum up its approach to telecommunications for development:

1. Telecommunications have often been neglected in favour of other sectors such as agriculture, water, and roads. Telecommunications should be regarded as a complement to other investments and as an essential component in the development process for raising productivity and efficiency in other sectors and for enhancing the quality of life in the developing world.

2. Telecommunications play an essential role in emergency and health services, commerce, and other economic activities, in public administration, and in reducing the need to travel. There is moreover a clear link between investment in telecommunications and economic growth.

3. The economic and social benefits an efficient telecommunication system confers on a community or a nation can be clearly perceived. The system can also be used as a channel for education, for disseminating information, encouraging self-reliance, strengthening the social fabric and sense of national identity, and contributing to political stability.

4. Dramatic technological advances are taking place at a time when the role of telecommunications in the process of development is more important than ever. In the view of the Maitland Report, no development programme of any country will be balanced, properly integrated, or effective unless it accords telecommunications an appropriate role.

Other attempts to stimulate expansion of rural telecommunications in nonaligned countries include the ITU and OECD study ‘Telecommunications for Development’, and the World Bank study ‘Telecommunications and Economic Development’.

As a result of the Maitland Report the ITU set up its Centre for Telecommunications Development (CTD) in 1985. However, because it has to rely on voluntary contributions from governments and industry it has been constantly beset with financial problems.

Apart from the ITU, OECD and the World Bank other organizations involved in providing development aid include the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), and UNESCO’s International Programme for Communications Development (IPCD). Both Hudson’s and Mayo’s studies were supported by these organizations, and they are a qualified endorsement of the faith in the crucial role of telecommunications in rural development.

Hudson’s pioneering work attempts to sketch a theoretical framework, but rather like Rogers, reviews several projects and research studies in the area and then hypothesizes about the possible role of telecommunications in rural development. She notes that there have been, since the 1960s, three types of studies in this area: statistical studies which relate some measure of telecommunications development with national economic development; studies of a generally non-empirical nature which attempt to delineate the broad influences of telecommunications on development, and case studies of particular telecommunications projects. The studies show some relationships between telecommunications and development indicators but do not clarify the question of the fundamental goals of development. Hudson also notes that while telecommunications investment and economic development are interdependent, it is not possible to infer from these studies the degree to which telecommunications contributed to economic development or how telecommunications investment has contributed to economic growth.

In place of proposing modernization as the objective of development communication, Hudson proposes a ‘public good’ theory of development communication. In this view the goals of development communication are a system of telecommunication which: 1) benefits the whole society and the economy; 2) reduces the cost of rural social service delivery; 3) reduces the costs and improves the incomes for agriculture and other rural economic activities; 4) permits more equitable distribution of economic benefits; and 5) facilitates a process of social change, improvement of quality of life and greater social participation. This ‘public’ or ‘common good’ perspective comes closer to providing a comprehensive theory of development embodying the best aspects of all the three major paradigms.

However, most of the case studies she refers to in India, Egypt, and Alaska clearly demonstrate that the greatest beneficiaries of a subscriber or public telephone system are the business and agricultural classes and that access is restricted. Most calls are long distance and hence the cost to the poorer communities exorbitant.

Need for International Regulations

Telecommunications, computing, interactive video, and other new technologies are not necessarily ‘appropriate’ to all non-aligned countries. In fact, the use of these capital-intensive technologies could lead to further dependence on transnational corporations and the power-blocs that support them. Freer enterprise and export-oriented economies in south-east Asia have succeeded in 'catching
up' with the industrialized powers. Development economists hold them up as 'models' to other non-aligned countries, but socio-economic and geopolitical conditions vary so much from country to country that all talk of 'models' of development communication or development support communication seems irrelevant.

In the ultimate analysis, the search for grand universal paradigms of development communication has only an heuristic value. Each country or community must find its own path in terms of its values and culture, its resources and ideas, and in a way that respects human rights, basic needs, social justice, the world's fragile ecology and our ever-depleting energy and other resources. International regulations on arms trade, the dumping of poisonous wastes, the activities of transnationals, the use of space for surveillance and military purposes, the trade imbalances between and among nations, and on other matters, are imperative for the very survival of nations and of humanity itself.

PERSPECTIVE

The 'Passing' Of Development Communication?

Development communication appears to have reached a stalemate. As a field it is divided where theory or model/paradigm-building is concerned, and has little new to offer in the matter of practical strategies. The Nigerian, Charles Okigbo, observes that scholars have found themselves in a vicious cycle of self-defeating prophecy. The poor results derived from applying the theory of development based on the models of agricultural extension and knowledge gap have led to the abandonment of further efforts to research communication and development. Such an abandonment leads to even poorer concepts and much poorer research efforts, and consequently places scholars even farther from formulating a grand theory of development communication. 15 Nora Quebral (of the Philippines) complains that development communicators 'merely attach new labels to the old formulae,' 'coast on old knowledge, most of it researched elsewhere,' and 'lack the boldness and the prescience to break out of foreign moulds and recreate others more fitting.' 14

Pluralism in Theory and Practice

'A major reason for the apparent 'passing' of development communication was its ethnocentric bias. Euro-American communication researchers with limited understanding of what they called 'underdeveloped' societies drew up models for uplifting non-aligned nations. It is apparent that what is needed is a theoretical pluralism where each culture and tradition develops its own theory or theories and practices or strategies in terms of its own philosophy, its resources, its history and experience. The contemporary crisis in the social sciences, and in mass communications, which takes its sustenance from them, has its source in the lack of autonomous theory development and research adapted to each country and region. This has resulted in the misuse of Western social theories in situations where they are not applicable. The Colombian, Martin Barbero goes so far as to say that the real crux of 'dependency' is not using theories imposed by foreign scholars but accepting external conceptions of science, scientific work, and the role of science in society.' 15

Self-Reliance as a Strategy for Development

Since the international economic and information order continues to be dominated and shaped by the power-blocs (despite the many attempts by the non-aligned nations to significantly transform it), one of the alternative strategies for development would appear to be 'self-reliance'. Self-reliance is not to be equated with self-sufficiency since few non-aligned countries, especially the smaller countries, have all the necessary resources to develop according to their own needs. But the dependence on transnational corporations, which are a law unto themselves, and the big powers who often do not deal fairly with the non-aligned nations, needs to be reduced.

On the other hand, interdependence among the non-aligned nations themselves needs to be strengthened. The 'divide-and-rule' strategy of former colonial powers and the Soviet and Western power-blocs has often grouped weaker nations into hostile camps.

Non-aligned nations need, of course, to put their own houses in order, too. At the national level, regard for regional and local needs and cultures are often overlooked. Decentralization is not a feature of most non-aligned nations because of the fear of national disintegration. As a result, national governments attempt to promote national cultures at the expense of local languages and cultures. This alienates communities with strong local traditions, hence the demands for separatism and autonomy. The suppression of human rights and the victimisation of dissenting voices are other features that weaken the worldwide movement to non-alignment and self-reliance. National and regional governments will need to join hands with voluntary action groups who employ alternative participatory strategies in the mobilization of the poor and the oppressed. The success of the Sarvodaya movement in Sri Lanka demonstrates that such cooperation is possible. 14

Research in Development Communication

Some clear shifts in research perspectives in development communications are required. 14 The first is a shift from research with an exclusive focus on rural development to a focus on urban development as well. The large-scale migration from rural to urban locations has resulted in the growth of massive peripheries of poverty in the cities of most of the non-aligned countries. The conditions of life in them are less than human. The role of the media in the lives of the urban poor has not been a subject widely researched. An appropriate research methodology would be a blend of the quantitative, the qualitative, and the ethnographic, in order to look at both folk and modern media use by whole urban communities rather than merely by individuals. Unlike earlier development communication research, the starting point should be not just national goals, but the development needs of the community. What are the information needs of the urban poor as they struggle to build new communities?

Closely related to this is the importance of shifting research attention from individual effects to institutional effects. What national and regional policies and institutions, for instance, led whole populations to migrate to the cities? What is the role of the public and the private media in this migration?

Thirdly, we need to give greater attention to public participation in the political decision making process regarding communication policy. What, for instance, is the power-structure and the political process by which national leaders decide to go in for sophisticated information technologies such as satellite communications, or telematics, when these entail massive foreign exchange investments in hardware, and greater dependence on transnationals and the power-blocs? Several non-aligned countries have already opted to go in for higher technologies, as they did over a generation ago for the mass media.

With the re-emergence of an awareness of the 'active' receiver in
current mass communication research, the effects or even the
effectiveness of communication in development is being
challenged. How do communities receive and interpret the
messages of advertisements, documentaries and soap operas with
regard to family planning, nutrition, health and hygiene? How
relevant are advertising and marketing strategies in the
dissemination of development information? Would participation
by the local people themselves make the messages more credible?

The Researcher as Activist
Finally, we need to look at forms of popular (or people’s)
communication in development. Would participatory communication media
such as ‘group media,’ folk songs and dance, and ‘people’s theatre’
be more effective? Social action groups, in India, and people’s radio
and newspapers in Latin American countries employ such media
in development/liberation efforts. Participatory research is essential
here. It derives its principles and methodology from within the
social context of a community or movement and believes that people,
not media, ‘communicate’. The preoccupation is not so
much with theory in the abstract but rather with action research.
Indeed, in the future the ‘researcher as activist’ may well play a more
central role, working with popular movements in the study of
development communication and the formulation of
communication policies.

Kevan J. Kumar
Bombay, India
Issue Editor

FOOTNOTES

Current Research on Communications for Development

ARGENTINA
Daniel Pietro, Casilla de Correos 699, Mendoza 5500, Argentina, collaborates with researchers at CIESPAL in the study of communication planning, message analysis and curriculum planning.

CANADA
Marlene Cuthbert, Univ of Windsor, 401 Sunset Ave, Windsor, Ontario, is studying the possible internationalization of youth and the potential for the retention of cultural diversity (part of the ICYC project), and, with Stewart Hooper, is examining new technology and cultural dependency in the eastern Caribbean.

CHINA
Ming An-Xiang, Inst of Journalism, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, Beijing, PO Box No 8811, is assessing the applicability of Western communication theories and research methodologies to the political, economic and cultural situation of China. He is also looking at the transformation of the mass communication system in China with a view to developing a model which will enhance democracy and productivity in China.

ECUADOR
Peter Schenkel and Gloria Davida de Vela, CIESPAL, Av Almagro and Andrade Marin, Casilla 5064, Quito, are doing research in the area of grassroots communication.

FRANCE
Armand and Michele Mattleat, Univ Rennes, 2 Haute Bretagne, 6 Ave Gaston Breyer, 35043 Rennes Cedex, are currently working on two new books, Le Carnval des Images and Penser les Medias: the first will provide a theoretical framework and an empirical base for understanding the phenomenon of the Brazilian 'novelas'; the second is a critique of the communication 'paradigms' related to development.

FINLAND
Helena Mäkinen, Univ of Helsinki, Dept of Communication, Aleksanterinkatu 7 A 70, 00100 Helsinki 10, is doing research on the growth of information industries in the economy of 'post-industrial' societies.

GERMANY (EAST)
Werner Ulrich, Berggartenstrasse 13, 7022 Leopzig, read a paper 'The Contribution made by the press in stimulating economic development - an analysis of two African daily in the field of development journalism at IAMCR, New Delhi.

GERMANY (WEST)
Doris Laepel-Pagenhals, Silberhorst 18, 69155 Dossenheim, is working on a doctoral thesis on 'Communication Policy in Cuba and Nicaragua: A Comparison'.

GHANA
Isaac Obeng-Quaidoo, School of Communication Studies, Univ of Ghana, PO Box 53, Legon.

INDIA
M M Chaudhuri, Central Institute of Educational Technology, Sri Aurobindo Marg, New Delhi. 110016, is working on the application of educational media and technology to the Indian situation, with special emphasis on satellite use.

Uma Narula, Indian Inst of Mass Communication, Shastriji Singh Marg, JNU New Campus, New Delhi, is examining the philosophy of social development in the context of adoption of new forms of media technologies in developing countries. She is also evaluating the diffusion of telecartic media in India.
Additional Bibliography on Development and Communication

1. ‘Dominant’ Perspective: Modernization through Diffusion


The ninth monograph in the Unesco series on ‘Population Communication: Technical Documentation; this work describes the government’s national policy on using its eight radio broadcasting services and two national TV channels for population, education and family planning messages, the communication training provided to personnel, and the implementation of integrated mass media and community level communication programmes.


Dr. Bates makes a plea for innovative approaches in educational radio to reach the disadvantaged. The Dutch ‘Open School’ and the British ‘Open University’ experiments are discussed.


A study of the theoretical implications of media in the development process, of the reasons for VCR popularity in the developing world, its impact on local television and film industries, and the potential effect of viewer-chosen programming on development.


An analysis of how the four interest groups define the success or failure of their projects largely funded with grants or loans from institutions with headquarters in the North. Targeted at planners and international developmentists.


A comprehensive worldwide collection of papers on agricultural change and rural development and developing countries. Volume I discusses communications, diffusion of ideas, education methods, and social and cultural problems faced by agents and communities involved in extension activities. Readings on the process of development and the diffusion of innovations, with reports of experiences of rural change and innovation in 19 countries.


One of the few books on Eastern European mass media and social change, and on the reinforcement of existing social values.


An influential early work on modernization theory and development.


A good introduction to the subject by an Indian sociologist. It also provides an overview of development efforts in India in the 1960s and early 1970s.


An introduction to quantitative tools for investigating the temporal diffusion processes of an innovation. ‘Fundamental’ deterministic diffusion models and ‘flexible’ diffusion models are outlined.


Quantitative analysis of development patterns and communication indicators.


An early work that influenced development theory to a considerable extent.


A source book for Asian communication planners and entrepreneurs in government and non-government agencies engaged in industry and rural development. The thrust of the book is to show that communication ought to be considered as itself constituting one of the important resources to be developed. Examples are drawn from the Philippines, Sri Lanka and Japan.


A case study of a typical Tamil Nadu village, the pattern of leadership-emergent on account of the community development programmes, role performance, development and change.


A good example of how Britain is promoting computers in developing countries in the name of ‘development’.

II. Critiques of the ‘Dominant’ Perspectives – and Alternatives


Perhaps the first study of Third World publishing on an international scale, with chapters on countries in Asia, Africa, Latin America and the Middle East. The role of multinationals, distribution, and the prices and availability of paper continue to plague publishing efforts in the Third World.


A useful manual for the teacher of development communication, with sections on ‘The Nature of Development’, ‘Development Communication’ and ‘Development Communication Planning’. Annotated bibliographies on each of the sections.


Examines the two assumptions that (1) reduction of dependence on foreign communications software technology will result in appropriate media systems in developing countries, and (2) the transfer of control of mass media enterprises from elite to lower socioeconomic groups will ensure greater citizen participation. The context of the discussion is Peruvian attempts to restructure the country’s mass communication system.


The relatively rapid economic growth in some parts of Latin America has not improved the lot of the marginalised. Western models of development are irrelevant and the need is for models that provide greater participation. The State has to adopt redistributive policies, and financial institutions must adapt to the needs of both the poor, making technical assistance and inputs available to small farmers and the other early work on ‘modernization’ theory and development.


Benitez, Conrado O (Ed.): Communication and Development. Communication Foundation of Asia, Manila, 1981.

Several articles on development in the Philippines, and alternative perspectives. A few interesting articles on Christian communication.


Communication technology systems have hardly touched the bulk of the population most afflicted by poverty. But the challenge is not ‘to catch up’ with the developed world but to chart its own path of ‘autonomous’ development.


Brown defines development as an ideological issue through a case study of Jamaica. Distinguishes between a non-Marxist socialist approach and a neo-conservative approach to development communication.


An influential early work on ‘dependency’ theories as they developed from the Latin American experience.

This is a multidisciplinary analysis of communication as a social process, and its role in the Chinese communist revolution in bringing about social structural change and development. Chu’s starting point is that communication is a basic social process, the patterns of which change dynamically and concomitantly with changes in the social structure.


Pleeds for a 'global view' through an examination of the relationships between science, technology and society in both developed and developing countries.


16 papers on the Indian experience of development communications.


Pleeds for a 'gap between theory and practice in rural development efforts involving communication media'. Diaz attempts to answer this basic question in the context of ten case studies of rural development in Colombia, Brazil, India, Senegal, Peru, Iran, Canada, Tobago and the Philippines. He urges that media practitioners make sufficient use of theoretical bases for the use of communication in rural development.


Dr Dinh offers a new definition of the first, second and third worlds. A challenging critique of the Eurocentric view of the liberation struggles in the developing world from a Vietnamese scholar. Dallas Smythe contributes 'an unsurprising' foreword.


Communication results from, rather than leads to, development according to this thesis. A non-linear interaction component representing a 'joint' effort may be required, and the approach to development must be inter-disciplinary, multivariate and interactive. Communication is both a dependent and independent variable in relationship with development.


A landmark critique of the 'dominant paradigm' of the part played by mass media in modernizing developing societies.


Proceedings of the CISTOD World Congress on 'Interdependence and Self-Reliance: The Promises and Limitations of Science and Technology and the Roles of the Non-Governmental Organizations Acting in Concert'. Contributions from the developed and developing countries.


A high priority for research is the development of participatory alternatives to avoid communication structures marked by monopoly control, verticalism and authoritarianism. The major conclusion of the workshop: the researcher cannot simply be an outside observer, he has to be an involved and committed actor.


A grassroots-level anthropological study of five villages in India, and of the place of communication in the lives of the village folk. Hartmann's introductory chapters offer a critique of the 'economic' Western models of development. The attempt is to look at modern and traditional media in a larger socio-economic, religious and political context. The Ketal village study illustrates the role of media in a local political election. Hartmann has made a similar study of the Philippines.


An anthology of the seminar papers of development thinkers who met in Hawaii in 1977 to explore new strategy for development.

Horink, R: 'Communication as Complement in Development' in Journal of Communication, 30.2.


A collection of papers by Indian development scholars presented at an IIMC Seminar. It offers a critical evaluation of official government policy on the use of mass media for development purposes.


The seminar papers put together here address two questions: Do the media lead or follow, mirror or mould? Should they be conceptualised as agents of social change or agents for reinforcement of the status quo?


How has the Sandinista regime's approach to development affected Nicaragua's communication system? This study by a German scholar examines the structure of the communication system and its development, as well as its inter-relation with other sub-systems of society. The scope for the democratization of communication is narrower than long: large financial and human resources are concentrated on the defence of the country, concludes the author.


A collection of papers from scholars of the developing and the developed world on the New World Information Order, media imperialism and development.


Africa has become a test site for a medley of development theories following invasions by western academic researchers. This paper addresses three issues: perceptions and definitions of development; the factors leading to 'alternative' models; and the current search for new formulations of communication theory.


A critique of the concept of 'development' whose definition over the last four decades has been motivated by political and ideological considerations.


A significant evaluative study of official developmental efforts in rural India from a communication perspective. The focus is on the actual sequence of acts in the interaction among planners, change agents and the masses: the 'social realities' which guided their interpretations of and responses to those acts; and the reflexive effects that the pattern of interaction had on the agents. Offers specific recommendations and a Dialogue Action Strategy.


Noelle-Neumann uses cross-national, longitudinal survey and media content data to address the role of mass media in modern Europe. She presents data supporting both agenda-setting and opinion-molding functions of the mass media.


A collection of articles that first appeared in Communication Research, 3(2), 1976. Includes Rogers' landmark article 'Communication and Development: The Passing of the Dominant Paradigm' which describes the old concept of development and contrasts it with some emerging alternatives; sets forth earlier conceptions of communication in development and contrasts it with some of the roles of communication in the emerging models of development. The thesis is that by the mid-seventies the dominant paradigm had passed. at least as the main model for development in Latin America, Africa and Asia.


A review of significant studies in the sociology of knowledge and mass communication. Rosenberg suggests how time series data from the Swedish Cultural Indicators Project will be used to remedy weaknesses he identifies in much contemporary research.


A re-think on the 'dominant' paradigm and an attempt to formulate a 'new' paradigm. Includes accounts of devcom experiences in Bangladesh, India, China and Korea.


An analysis of the role of communication within the structure of world society. Serres looks at the functioning of communication in the nation state and expands the classical concepts of development and communication in order to design a communication model with active social participation, formulates some general strategies about communication and structural change, and their implications for policy design.


The two perspectives on development - 'modernization' and 'dependency' - are interpreted primarily with reference to economics, politics, culture and mass media of communication.
III. Development Communication: The International Dimension


One of the foremost journals focusing on the international dimension of development.


A doctoral thesis on devcom, media imperialism and Taiwan media.


A critical look at the role of the media in periods of revolutionary struggle and in transition to socialism. The focus is on Chile, and media roles under capitalism.


The much-discussed and controversial report on the New World International Communication Order, with several sections devoted to the international implications of development and communications.


An interesting debate on news flows and cultural imperialism.


The adoption of new technology by poor countries is argued, Schiller, leading to the adoption of Western development models. Electronic information systems will only enhance the knowledge gap between the information-rich and the information-poor.


Includes chapters on the 'old' information order, cultural dependence, news imperialism, new international electronic order and double standards of freedom.


A scholarly analysis of the controversy over the 'politicalization' of the two international bodies. Valuable background documentation for UNESCO resolutions on communication and education.

IV. Communication Planning and Policy for Development


Reviews the variety of decentralization policies and programs that have recently been introduced in developing countries, examines the experience in implementing them, and identifies the social, economic, political and administrative factors that seem to influence the success or failure of decentralization policies. Alternative approaches are also explored.


Taking as its basic premise that national development is a process, and that each country needs a communication system uniquely attuned to its own culture and circumstance: this account traces the influence of communications on development over the past 35 years. It sees communications as continuing to be a critical element in development.


Provides a framework for the planning of communication systems, especially at the national level. The focus is on the needs and problems of the developing world, and its underlying assumption is that communication planning should be in the interests of social and economic development.


An overview of Singapore society and its communication systems, with particular reference to family planning.


Perhaps the first comprehensive bibliography on the subject. 395 annotated entries on communication policy, and planning in 53 countries.


Serves offers a valuable critique of the 'modernization' and 'dependency' paradigms, and suggests a new paradigm which he terms 'multiplicity in one world'. This new paradigm stresses multidimensional development.

V. Telecommunications and Satellites for Development


An assessment of the 18-month SITE programme in around 4,000 villages in India, of the role of television as a new medium of communication in the process of change in a rural structure.


An Arab view of 'Arabsat', the satellite communication system of the Islamic crescent.


Demonstrates how political, religious, socio-cultural, economic and organisational factors have affected the use of the national satellite television system.


This is a special issue of CTR on 'Satellites for Development, Broadcasting and Information'. Features recent published and unpublished literature such as Chris Duke's 'Impact of Modern Communications Technology', and Heather Hudson's 'Satellite Communication and Development', and offers a perspective on research in the area.


Criticizes various SITE research reports and the methodologies employed.


Eight articles on financing and satellite technologies, three on INTEL SAT policies.


An up-to-date compilation of over a thousand entries on the subject.


Mowlana argues that the world society in general and international relations in particular can only be understood through a study of the messages and communication facilities that are part of it. Includes a bibliography.


A comprehensive update on the field. Provides a framework of analysis of the role of communication in development, evaluates the various theories and approaches, and discusses the developmental uses of modern space technologies.

VI. Alternative Media for Education and Development


Explores the use of the audiosound in rural development programmes in developing countries.


An overview of rural development communication in Colombia, with a critical analysis of ACPO (Popular Cultural Action).


An extensive bibliography on various aspects of participation and development.


A report of the three working groups established during the seminar on conceptual questions and the politics of participatory communication; on implementation, planning and methodology for participatory communications.


A report of an international workshop on 'theatre for development' in August 1979. Taking off from that workshop Dall demonstrates that theatre is a most appropriate means for extension communication and non-formal education.


Calls for the dominance of interpersonal communication over the mass media as
VII. Periodicals and Serials

ASTHA/CONCERN. An Occasional publication of the Xavier Institute of Communications, Bombay. Recent numbers have dealt with the use of group media such as slide-sound presentation in conscientizing urban women and youth.

Development Communication, a newsletter of Chitrabani, Calcutta. Nos. 43, 44, 47 and 53 discuss the principles and methods of dialogic communication.

Development Communication Report (Clearinghouse on Development Communication, 1815 No. Fort Myer Drive, Suite 600, Arlington, VA 22209 USA). A quarterly dedicated to the application of communication technology to development problems, published with the support of the U.S. Agency for International Development.


Media Development, London. 26 (3), 1980; 32 (4), 1985; 1988 (2). The first number is devoted to 'communication popular'; the second to 'Communications for Development', the third to 'popular theatre for development'. All numbers include extensive bibliographies.

SPECIAL BOOK REVIEW


In their formative periods fields of academic interest tend to go through an initial stage of vigorous, but necessarily chaotic growth. One symbol to indicate that a field of knowledge has finally matured and coalesced into a single, academically recognized entity, is the publication of the first multi-volume encyclopedia attempting to draw together the best thought relating to all its sub-areas. The French Encyclopédie of Diderot and d'Alembert in the mid-eighteenth century, was such a symbol for the whole range of thought of the Enlightenment. Modern science and the tradition of empirical thought had started much earlier. But the Encyclopédie marked the 'coming of age' of the new era and defined clearly the new direction intellectual endeavour had taken.

An equivalent rite of passage into adulthood for the social sciences occurred in the early 1930s, with the publication of the Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences. Their maturity was reconfirmed amid doubt, in some quarters - by the appearance of the International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences, in the 1960s.

The publication of The International Encyclopedia of Communications suggests that a similar coalescence finally has taken place in the singularly heterogeneous and exuberant area of communication studies.

The encyclopedia's two-thousand pages contain 550 entries by 450 scholars and professionals from twenty-nine countries. The contents are broadly conceived, including numerous entries in each of such categories as animal communication; journalism and mass media; language, linguistics and speech; nonverbal communication; the performing arts; and social issues. More than twenty-five articles deal with various aspects of government regulation of communication, more than fifty are devoted to the arts, over thirty-five to education, and twenty to communication in the ancient world, as well as many related to computers and other recent technological aspects of communication.

The writing is condensed, as that in all such works must be, but it is tailored to the general reader. Visual appeal is supplied by 650 photographs and 400 line drawings. While most of these are relevant to the presentation, the academic user might have preferred that some of the space they occupy had been used for adding more detail to the text.

The IEC represents a milestone in the development of communication science and will go a long way to define the content and boundaries of a field which hitherto has been difficult to deal with as a whole. For this reason, we have felt a need to call it to the attention of Trends' readers, as a ready and reliable source of information.

W. E. Biernat

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