UNIT – 2 : COMMUNICATION MODELS AND THEORIES

UNIT STRUCTURE

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2.1. LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit you will be able to:

- explain how the communication process takes place
- describe how different communication experts are explaining the system in various styles according to their own understanding of the concept
- offer a comparative analysis of the various models of communication in circulation
- discuss how the media systems and theories affect the society as well as the individuals,
- narrate the significance of these theories and systems,
- discuss how socio-political systems prevalent in different countries determine the characteristics of the mass media system in those societies,

2.2. INTRODUCTION

In the previous unit we have introduced to you the concept of communication in general and mass communication in particular. Now, even though the process of communication seems to be a simple activity yet it may become difficult and complicated at times. Experts of communication have given various models by which we can understand the entire process in a simple manner. A model is an abstracted representation of a reality. A good model comes as close to reality as possible and it discusses and explains the reality as clearly as possible. The models are mainly pictorial depictions of a certain activity or process for rendering it easier to understand. Different models look at the system from different points of view and try to explain things from different perspectives. That is, each model puts its emphasis upon different angles of the communication process.

As we have already said that Communication has assumed the status of almost being the fourth basic human need, next to food, shelter and clothes, it is necessary that we try to understand it with all its relevant aspects so that we can improve our own communication skills. And thereby contribute to the overall study of Communication as a professional discipline.

There are several models of Communication and it is not really possible to discuss all of them in one unit. So, we have introduced only the basic communication models for your understanding. We hope that after completing this unit, you will be better conversant with the process of how communication takes place and how several communication experts have made efforts to describe the system through models. So let us start by trying to understand what a model is and what is its purpose and function.

2.3 CONCEPT AND FUNCTIONS OF MODEL

A model is a graphical presentation of a concept designed to help us in understanding a concept or activity better. We know that such an explanation is always better than a theoretical presentation from the question of understanding it.

It is an important tool for knowing something. Studies and experiments in this direction are highly helpful in pursuing further analysis for discovering a

better communication process in due course of time which would be of immense help to us in future.

In communication parlance it is commonly said that a picture is worth a thousand words. It means that a picture accords an event such a vision that it cuts down the need of words to explain it to us. A model helps us realize something more clearly than a description in written language.

This is a system that allows us to understand how communication works in actual life in this case. It can be compared to the complex or simple drawings of mechanical or electrical circuits and activities. A model shows us how a message moves from one source to another and back through a specific medium that enriches our experiences in due course of time.

It also helps us in visualizing the process of communication under any circumstances. If we know the process of communication in a graphical system, it helps us better in understanding them and then improving our communication efforts. In other words it helps us in improving our communication in the subsequent times as the process moves on further.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS – A

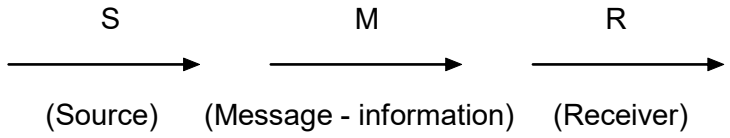
1. What is a model?
2. What is the significance of a model?
3. Say true or false:
   a. Communication is not a basic human need.
   b. A model is an important tool for knowing something.
   c. A good model helps us understand a concept better.

2.4 SOME IMPORTANT MODELS OF COMMUNICATION

Following are some of the important models of communication. Let us discuss them in detail.

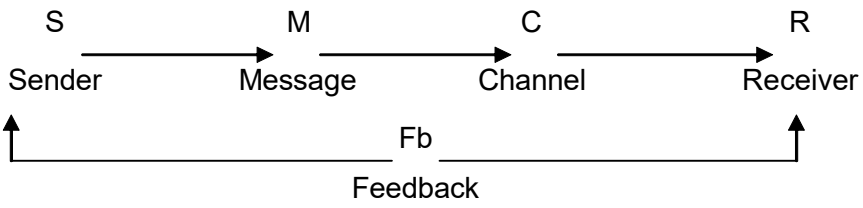
2.4.1 SMR Model

It is one of the earliest and the most basic models of Communication. Two persons are involved in this model - a **Source** (who sends the messages first) from whom the messages originate and a **Receiver** to whom the message is to be sent across. So Source + Message + Receiver or SMR model is a basic model of the communication system.



2.4.2 SMCR Model

It is another basic and simple model that tries to examine the communication process in the following manner —



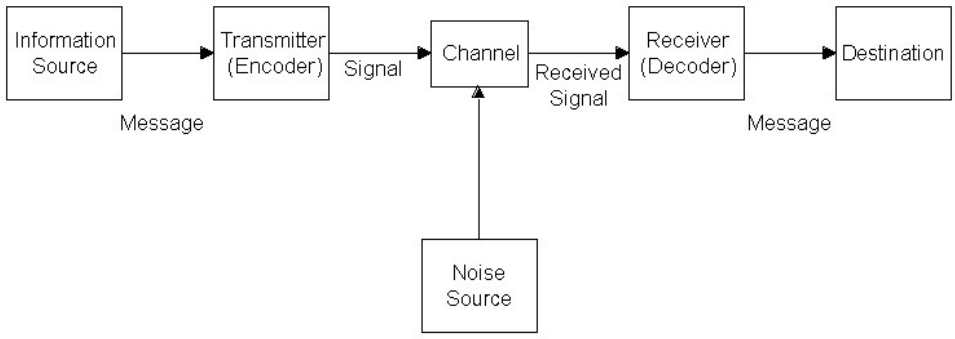
It is a sort of an extension of the SMR model in which the 'sender' of a message who first sends or transmits the messages or information to another person who is the 'receiver' of the same. This model says that the messages are transmitted through a medium – that is a **channel.** So, here four elements are involved in the process – **Sender, Message, Channel** and **Receiver** and thus it is called the SMCR model.

Once the sender sends across the messages to the receiver, he or she in turn prepares a reply or expresses a reaction, depending upon the message, and sends the same back to the sender of the first message. This exchange continues as long as both the parties want or unless one of the parties put a stop to it after sometime.

2.4.3 Shannon and Weaver's Model

Developed by communication experts Claude Shannon and Warren Weaver in 1949, it is a unique model compared to the other models as this is the first engineering model of human communication developed on the telephonic communication system.

The Shannon-Weaver Mathematical Model, 1949



This model says that the process moves from an 'information source' (the first Communicator or Sender) transmitted through a specific mode (normally the voice of the Sender in this case) to a 'destination'. The model also says that these messages are nothing but verbal signals meant for the receiver. The receiver, on the other hand, goes through the same process in order to continue the communication process. And, while the communication is on, noise or disturbances enter into it creating some disturbances in the activity. Here, the term 'destination' means the receiver of the messages or the target audience.

The essential elements of this model are — a transmitter for converting the messages into signals which can be sent to the receiver in the same way as a telephone. This model claims that human communication also takes place in this manner only. The process is repeated from the other participant also in the same manner.

One important characteristic of this model is that for the first time it focused on the aspect of 'noise' in the communication process. Noise – not to be used in the strict literary meaning of the term – means the interferences, barriers and disturbances which cause problems in allowing the participants

in the communication process to continue smoothly, rendering it difficult to understand the messages and information properly.

Noise can be of two types. First – technical or channel noise which implies the disturbances generated due to malfunctioning of mechanical means, winds or aeroplane sounds obstructing the natural and proper flow of information or messages back and forth.

Secondly, there is the human noise which arises due to lack of an equal footing or status of the intellectual level or socio-cultural variations among of those taking part in the communication process. This is one aspect that sets it apart from all other models, specially those developed prior to it.

2.4.4 Westley and Maclean's Model

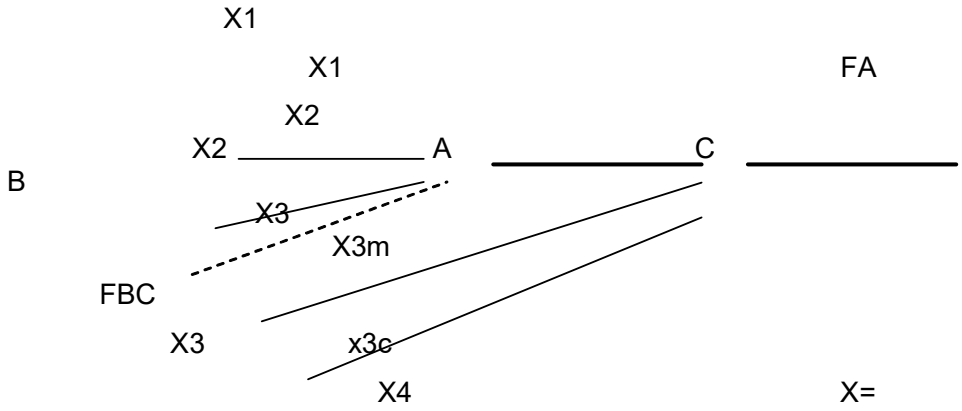
More popularly known as the **'**Gate Keeping model', it was developed in 1957 and is primarily adopted for mass media. The novelty and uniqueness of this model lies in the fact for the first time a communication model has put adequate emphasis upon the aspect of editing and improvising the contents in communication and media. At the ground level, in our day-to-day life don't we go through the process of sorting out various events, issues for discussing them with our communication partners or receivers of our messages? It is based on the assumption that messages in mass communication pass through different selection points called ' gatekeeper' before they are actual received by audience. The model emphasizes the role of gatekeeping operations in media organisations associated with news gathering, editing and the dissemination process. The model captures the process of decision-making through which messages are to be transmitted and how their content is defined.

In the same way, in mass communication also, the process of selecting events, messages, issues, programmes etc. is of utmost importance for making the communication process successful and effective. In the activity we reject many aspects, issues and events as we know from our experiences what sort of aspects would be popular among the masses, target audience etc. This selection and editing of the messages is dependent on a combination of various factors that include our personality, the interests

of the readers or audience, place of publication of the newspaper, broadcasting etc.

In performing the various day-to-day tasks in the different entities of mass media, one has to go through several such steps. At the ground level are the reporters who select certain events as news as the first level gatekeepers. These are selected out of so many events followed by changes that are carried out for discrepancies in language, authenticity, filtering for trimming down the unnecessary information after which only the important ones are retained. Hence, by the time the news item or drama or teleserial or any other programme is actually aired, broadcast or published for the masses it must have gone through several levels of scrutiny.

It is popularly known as the Gate Keeping model as, like the gatekeeprs in a hall or a cinema, here also this model does not allow anything and everything to be published, broadcast or printed without a proper and thorough scrutiny.



All of you must be quite familiar with, and used to reading hundreds of news items everyday in the news media. However, it is difficult to imagine that as against these many news items, there must have been hundred more such events which were not considered newsworthy and were rejected and only a selected events make news and finally find a place in the media.

This also signifies the pressure and tension the mediapersons have to go through while selecting news items as per requirement of their news organisations and placing them in order of importance out of hundreds of news items. So it is said that in mass media the mediapersons fight against time.



Infotainment programmes: Television programmes that present news and serious subjects in an entertaining manner.

It is true not only in case of news items, but also for tele dramas or serials, **infotainment programmes** etc. that, as against those finally telecast or broadcast or printed there would be hundred others which were rejected. This process of selection or rejection is nothing but a 'gatekeeping' exercise.

Hence, you can see that whichever news item or infotainment programme is actually published or broadcast in the mass media, it must have gone through a rigorous and serious scrutiny at several levels in the media houses before they are finally released for the consumption of the audiences.

Right here let us remember one important aspect in this connection. This gatekeeping exercise is continuously carried out at our individual levels also as in the level of the mass media concerned. This means that even while we would like to speak or communicate with someone anytime anywhere – whether he is a close relative or friend or a complete stranger or a senior person, we just don't say whatever we feel like. We go through a process of deciding as to what we would speak, how we would speak, and to a large extent we decide the future course of action based upon an anticipation of what the other person would say to our initial communication. So, it becomes quite clear that even in our personal life, we carry out the gatekeeping exercise constantly while engaging in the process of communicating with others.



Filter: Block certain objects or substances or information while letting others through

Besides, we also **filter** out whatever information we do not need from the big amount of information that we receive everyday from various sources. This is also nothing but a gatekeeping exercise.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS – B

1. Briefly describe the SMCR and Westley & McLean's models.
2. How does the communication process take place? Explain.
3. What is the Westley and McLean's model better known as?
4. Which model was based on the concept of telecommunications?
5. Which model is best applicable to Journalism?
6. Which is the most basic and simplest model of communication?
7. What new element did the SMCR model introduce?



ACTIVITY - A

Make a team with two or three of your friends in the classroom or otherwise. Ask each of them a question and analyze how he or she has answered it and how the process of communication carried is out. Repeat the same exercise for yourself asking your friends to observe your communication. At the end of the exercise, note down how much the communication process has gone closer to the manner prescribed by the models. And also, how much of 'gatekeeping' was actually carried out for the exercise.

2.5 NORMATIVE THEORIES

Mass communication has such an overwhelming and all-encompassing influence over the society and the people that it would affect our lives to a big extent. The system of communication prevailing in a certain society or a country, the communication policies of the government, the attitude and personality of that society as a whole etc. determine the effects of mass communication within the society and the relationship between mass communication and society. In a similar way, the overall personality of the nation or its people, level of consciousness, intellectual level, literacy rate etc. also affect the mass media to a large extent.

As we are living in an age in which mass media is exerting a lot of influence on our life, it becomes imperative to develop better understanding of how it affects us and vice versa (how we affect its functioning). Due to this close and meaningful relationship, the interactions between mass media and people have always been a subject of high importance to the communication experts all over the world. And constant researches have been going on to determine and define this relationship as well as trying to explore ways and means of improvising this in future.

Mass media is the 'mirror' of each and every society in which it exists. Hence, it is only natural to expect that it should reflect the true nature of that society. The study of the nature and characteristics of any society necessarily implies a close glance over its mass media system. Again, it should be noted that all the societies of the world have their own and unique socio-cultural and political ethos which also greatly determine the nature of the mass media systems.

The Normative Theories of Mass Media explain how the media should operate under the prevailing political and economic circumstances. Every society controls its mass media in accordance with its existing political system, its policies and norms. According to the normative theories, the political system determines the exact relationship between the media and the government. Initially four normative theories were mentioned by Siebert and his colleagues in 1956. These theories were later found to be outdated and too simplistic to be used in present day media research. Later on Dennis McQuail added two more theories to the original set of four. They have been found to be more useful and they contain principles for current media policy and practices. Let us now study all the six theories.

(a) Authoritarian Theory

Authoritarian theory says that the media is subordinate to the state or the ruling class and thus it is not free to function in an independent and impartial manner. As it is just an extension of the state, mass media in these countries do not have independence at all and have to abide by the directions of their government.

There are various types of censorship provisions for the media in these nations which normally forbid adverse criticism of the authorities and non

compliance of the official codes. Else, such activities are punishable in different forms.

The media system that prevails under autocratic and dictatorial regimes are good examples of this type of media system. However, it must also be noted that even in the democracies, freedom of media may be curtailed or cut down in case of declaration of national emergency which may be only a temporary measure. In Autocratic system, media is permitted only to support the government and criticism is not tolerated.

This theory basically says that —-

- Media is a subordinate entity of the state and therefore must not do anything which may have the potential for undermining the position of the ruling authority,
- Media should avoid such references and news items which may generate dissatisfaction to the dominant political parties, ethnic groups, societies etc.
- Unsolicited offences to majority of the people, or the society as a whole must be avoided and existing moral and social values should be closely adhered to and not to be offended,
- Mass media is not for mass education or instruction. It should always strive for providing only entertainment for the masses. This is to prevent any intellectual development among the people due to the dissemination of information and messages by the media.
- Normally only a few organizations are allowed to set up media establishments so that mass consumption of information could be kept under control of the ruling authorities who would not like to encourage revolt or protests from an informed public against the authorities,
- Judging from these aspects it is quite natural that the media persons and journalists never enjoy any freedom in their expression in the true sense of the term as they can’t write or broadcast whatever they would like to,
- Everything is fine till the ruling authorities are satisfied and they are kept in good humour by the mass media’s functions. But trouble begins once media start behaving in their independent manner that may go against the interests of the ruling class or its allies both inside and outside.

(b) Libertarian Theory

This theory, also called Free Press theory, is based on the fundamental right of an individual to the freedom of expression. It prescribes individual and collective right to hold and express opinion freely. This theory advocates that media is absolutely free to perform its duties and responsibilities in any manner deemed suitable and adequate. It is based upon the belief that 'any amount of freedom to an organization or person is also attached with a string of responsibilities in return'. The media exercise freedom within the parameters that it lay down for itself.

This system or the concept had its origin in Europe, especially Great Britain among the pioneers of the advocacy of freedom of expression and personal freedom. It exists mainly in the democratic countries where media is relatively free from any control of the state and can carry out its duties in a responsible way.

For example - the US Constitution very clearly prevents the Congress (the country's Legislature) from making any law which might restrict the freedom of expression of the people.

In case of India, the constitution provides elaborate freedom of expression in the Articles 19 to 24 which allow sufficient amount of freedom to mass media.

At a global level the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) is an ideal example of how mass media can maintain autonomy and exercise its freedom of expression even though it is funded mainly by the British Government.

On many occasions, when the situation demanded, BBC has maintained high standards by not showing a favourable and partial view of the British government's activities in a crisis or issue.

This theory basically says that —-

- The media should be independent of Government control.
- The media should be free to publish anything based on its own judgment.
- Writing against the government or any political party should not only be permitted but also it should not be made punishable.
- The media should not face any compulsion to publish anything.

- There should be no restriction of any kind on the gathering of information for publication/broadcast.

(c) Social Responsibility Theory

According to this theory, as the media is engaged in a highly serious activity of disseminating news and views to the society with far-reaching consequences, it must maintain a high standard of impartiality as well as professionalism in its functioning.

The professional communicators including journalists should never compromise on the question of truth, accuracy, objectivity and balance. In discharging the obligations, the media should be self-regulatory within the framework of law and established institutions. They must also develop a strict sense of self-regulatory system to ward off any bias or vested interests towards any party or individual.

In simple terms, the media community must exercise self-censorship and self-restraint based on personal and social concerns for avoiding news items and programmes which might be harmful for the overall well-being of the society. For example, news items having the potential for causing damage to the society directly or indirectly, if published, should either be avoided or be published in a way that would not cause any such damage.

According to Theodore Peterson, the co-author of the Four Normative Theories of the Press, “freedom carries concomitant obligations, and the press which enjoys a privileged position under our government (the US Government), is obliged to be responsible to the society for carrying out certain essential functions of mass communication in contemporary society.”

On the other hand, critics of the Social Responsibility theory feel that ‘social responsibility’ as a method of self-censorship may deprive the readers or audiences of information which may be potentially beneficial in future.

This theory has its origin in the findings of the Commission on the Freedom of the Press (Hutchins, 1947) of the USA. The Commission found that the media in the free market economy had in reality failed to live up to the expectations of the information and entertainment needs of the society. And so there was a need for looking for an improvement in the situation by the

media itself. Or, the Commission felt that the solution to this problem had to come from the media persons themselves and nothing should be imposed on them from outside bodies.

It has led to the setting up of self-regulatory bodies and mechanisms amongst the media community in various forms, such as - drawing up of statutes for protecting editorial and journalistic practices, preparing a universal code of ethics, ensuring implementation of anti-monopoly legislation, regulation of advertising etc.

For example, if you had the opportunity to notice the coverage of the **New York Twin Tower blasts in 2001**, you would find that there was hardly any photograph of the dead bodies or injured persons in the media. This was a conscious decision of their media not to cause any further panic among the people. This is self-censorship or self-regulation.

In contrast, what do we see in our media? Photographs of violent scenes in newspapers or news channels often greet us in the morning. Such visuals affect us not only with their unpleasantness but may also disturb our peace of mind.

When the media publishes or airs the news items, views, photographs, etc. highlighting the sabotage or other activities of the secessionist organizations, terrorists, vandals or anti social elements, it gives a boost to their image and morale. Many people come to know about their objectives and activities and some of them may get influenced. Hence, the media has to strike a judicious balance between what is to be highlighted and what to be kept at low key.

This theory basically says that —-

- The media should assume some social obligations and responsibilities like setting high professional standards.
- Truth, accuracy, objectivity, authenticity, balance and restraint should be the cornerstones of the media profession.
- The media should exercise self regulation in keeping with the country's laws and social norms.
- All media professionals should be accountable to their society and their organization.

(d) Soviet Media Theory

The Soviet Media theory is closely tied to the communist ideology. Siebert

traces the roots of this theory back to the 1917 **Russian Revolution**. The media organizations in this system are under the control of the working class whose interest they are meant to serve. Private ownership of the press or other media is ruled out.

Mass communication, according to the Soviet theory, is an instrument of the state power to propagate the communist ideology. The media do not have an identity of their own. An illustration of the Soviet system would appear to be the same as the authoritarian model, in that both theories acknowledge the government as superior to the media institutions:

However, there is a major difference between the two theories that needs to be clarified: The mass media in the Soviet model are expected to be self-regulatory with regard to the content of their messages. Also, the Soviet theory differs from the authoritarian theory as it bestows certain social responsibilities on the media organizations. The media must serve positive functions in society relating to information, education, motivation, and mobilization. The media must project the society in accordance with the Marxist-Leninist principles. They must support progressive movements in the country and abroad. The underlying standard is to provide a complete and objective view of the world according to the Marxist-Leninist principles.

After the collapse of the Soviet system in early nineties, Russia has performed a mass media model closer to the social responsibility principle. The clearest current example of the Soviet media theory is how the media function in communist countries, such as, China, Vietnam and Cuba, where TV, radio, and newspapers are controlled by the state.

This theory basically says that —-

- Media should not be privately owned and should be owned by the state and be of service to the working classes.
- Media should carry out certain social responsibilities like education, information, motivation and mobilization.
- The media can be punished by the society for anti-societal publications
- Media should be completely dedicated to the society, fulfilling the wishes and needs of the society and providing a complete and objective view of the society.

(e) Development Media Theory

The Development Media theory says that mass media can be utilized for developing the nation or the society to a great extent. This is because the media can help us in extending the information needs of the masses widely to make them wiser in the different activities of life.

In developing nations like ours, one of the most important deficiencies is the lack of 'useful information' for the masses. If a person can gain information, he or she can improve the living standard by applying the information in a wise manner. Now, the media has to play this crucial role of bringing the information to the doorsteps of the people.

In the Third World nations which became free from the colonial powers, a very challenging task immediately after becoming free was to make the masses aware of a modern way of life. This was necessary as the major portion of the population did not enjoy the benefits of a formal educational system and then even today it is still a cause of concern.

Mass media had to take up this responsibility of acting as an 'informal university' for enlightening the masses about all these issues. In other words, mass media is expected to play the role of a disseminator of government's developmental policies to a great extent.

This can be considered as a 'media activism' by which media takes up the good causes on behalf of the Government or society for delivering the benefits to the masses for whom they are actually meant.

This theory basically says that —-

- The media should take up the responsibility of positive development activities in keeping with the established policies.
- The media should uphold national language and culture.
- Media freedom should be restricted to an extent in view of the economic and development priorities of the society and the government can intervene in media operations in the interest of the country's development.
- Media has freedom, but that has to be used with a sense of responsibility.

(f) Democratic Participant Media Theory

This theory advocates that the needs and aspirations of the masses should be the only concern of the media rather than the interests of their owners.

It mainly means that media should do its best for allowing ever more people from its readership to participate in its functioning. This will ensure that the issues and interests of the masses are adequately reflected in media.

You may be familiar with a term called 'democratic decentralization' which means more representation of the people or the masses in a specific work, rather than allowing only a few persons to take a decision. This theory is also based on such a consideration – to allow more and more people to have a say in the decisions made by the authorities.

The concept of Participatory Mass Communication has become important over the years. For example, our country has a population of about 105 crore today and about 200 million copies of 62,000 newspapers and journals are published in a year. Now, if a newspaper, a TV or a radio channel has to cater to the requirements of several lakhs of people or target audience we can expect even a quarter of this population to be cared for properly by those channels and newspapers.

In India there are about 1,700 languages and dialects spread across the nation, each possessing a distinct identity of its own. That is why the Union Government has taken up the policy of promoting and encouraging small-scale mass media like TV or radio centres with a smaller area and target audience. By this, it is expected that more people out of the whole target audience can be catered to properly rather than just a handful of people in a very huge target audience.

The Community Radio (CR) that the Ministry of Information & Broadcasting (MIB) has been encouraging in the recent years is an ideal example of a device for involving more people in the media.

This theory basically says that —-

- Media should be controlled by the audience and individual citizens and minority groups should have the right to communicate.
- Organisations and local communities should have their own media.
- Media should be small scale and participative and should cater to the individual needs of the communities.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS – C

1. How many normative theories are there? Name them.
2. Who propounded the normative theories?
3. Summarise in about 50 words each, what is advocated by the different normative theories.
4. Which media theory applies best to India?
5. Say true or false:
   a. Mass Media, according to the Soviet Media theory, is an area of the state power.
   b. According to Development Media Theory, the media should uphold national language and culture.



LET US KNOW

Frederick D. Siebert is a well known media theorist. He was Dean of the College of Communication Arts, Michigan State University and the author of Freedom of the Press in England, 1476-1776. He, along with Theodore Peterson and the late Wilbur Schramm, authored the 'Four Theories of the Press" which has been one of the essential works for scholars and students in both journalism and political science. The purpose of the work was to establish and explain four Normative theories that ought to illustrate the press' position in relation to its political environment. By press, Siebert meant the media of Mass Communication including radio, TV and newspapers.



ACTIVITY – B

1. Find out at least two countries corresponding to each of the normative media theories.
2. Try to find out what type of media system is prevailing in these nations – Nepal, Bhutan, Bangladesh, Pakistan and china.

2.6 LET US SUM UP

1. A model of communication facilitates a graphic presentation of the entire communication process which makes it convenient for understanding,
2. There are several models from simple to complex ones which focus on different interesting aspects of communication and mass communication,
3. These models were evolved following extensive scientific observations of human behaviour and activity under various circumstances,
4. The models of Shannon and Weaver and Gerbner are considered to be universally applicable as they can explain any form of communication,
5. Westley and McLean's model is very much suitable to journalism media,
6. Authoritarian theory advocates that mass media is subordinate to the state with no independent identity of its own,
7. The Libertarian theory says that mass media should be absolutely free in its functioning so as to allow a healthy atmosphere of debates and discussions among the people for evolving better things for the society,
8. Social Responsibility theory believes that mass media, especially in a developing nation like ours should exercise a sufficient amount of duties for executing the social responsibilities in different ways rather than leaving it to others for implementation,
9. Soviet media theory believes that the media should serve the working class,
10. Development Media theory says that media must inform the masses who are normally idle about the various developmental activities so that their life can be enriched and propelled towards a meaningful existence,
11. Democratic Participant theory on the other hand advocates facilitating optimum possible participation of the masses in the whole activity of production, broadcasting and publication of mass media contents or programme software. This is expected to facilitate the reflection of local-specific problems of various areas and the people of the country,



2.7 FURTHER READINGS

- **Handbook of mass communication** — *VB Agarwal & VS Gupta, (Concept Publishers)*
- **Mass communication in India** — *KJ Kumar (Jaico Books)*
- **Understanding Human Communication** — *Ronald B Adler + George Rodman (Harcourt Brace College publishers)*
- **Mass Communication in India**, *JV Vilanilam, (Sage)*
- **Mass communication, theory and practice**, *Uma Narula, (Harchand Publication)*
- **Theories of communication —** Defleur, ML & Ball-Rokeach S, *(Longman),*
- **Communication media, yesterday, today and tomorrow** — PN Malhan, (*Publications Divisions, GOI),*
- **Mass communication theory, an introduction** — Dennis McQuaily, (Sage),
- **Communication models for the study of mass communication** — Dennis Mcquail, (*Longman),*
- **Understanding media** — Marshall McLuhan, (*Routledge and Paul Kegan, London)*,
- **Understanding the media** — Eoin Devereux (Sage)
- **Mass communication, an introduction** — John Bitter, (*Prentice Hall),*



2.8 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

A)

1) A model is a graphical presentation of a concept designed to help us in understanding the concept or activity better.

2) Communication is an extremely complex process that becomes more complex with the ever-changing communication phenomenon. Complexity and constant change in communication makes it necessary that it is presented in simple and generalized way to understand the structure and functions of communication. Now, it is commonly said that a picture is worth a thousand words. It means that a picture

accords an event such a vision that it cuts down the need of words to explain it to us. As such a model helps us realize something more clearly than a description in written language.

3) (a) False

(b) True

(c) True

B)

1. The SMCR model says that it is a form of communication in which an exchange of Information (Message) takes place between the Sender (S) and the Receiver ® through a certain Channel ©.

   The Westley and McLean's model says that contents in mass media have to necessarily pass through a series of checks before they are actually published or broadcast by the media. That is why this theory is also known as the Gatekeeping model as the checks at various stages of the media are termed as Gatekeepers not allowing anything and everything submitted to the media organization to be published or broadcast.

2. Communication is a process which takes place with an exchange of messages or information between the senders and the receivers via a channel (a platform in which the exchange is carried out). This exchange is repeated on and on till one or both the parties involved decide to put a stop to the process.

3. Gatekeeping model.

4. Shannon and Weaver's Model

5. Gatekeeping Model

6. SMR Model

7. Channel

C)

1) There are six normative theories. They are :

a. Authoritarian theory

b. Libertarian theory

c. Social responsibility theory
d. Soviet Communist media theory
e. Development Media theory
f. Democratic participant media theory

2) The original set of four normative media theories was propounded by Siebert and his colleagues. Later on, Dennis McQuail added two more normative theories to make it six.

3)

Authoritarian theory: This normative theory advocates that mass media is subordinate to the state with no independent identity of its own. According to this, media is a machinery of the state and should be used for state propaganda.

Libertarian theory: According to this theory, mass media should be absolutely free in its functioning so as to allow a healthy atmosphere of debates and discussions among the people for evolving better things for the society

Social Responsibility theory: This is a theory which believes that mass media, especially in developing nations like ours, should exercise a sufficient amount of duties for executing the social responsibilities in different ways rather than leaving it to others for implementation.

Soviet Communist media theory: This theory believes that the media should not be privately owned and should serve the working class. Mass communication, according to the Soviet Communist theory, is an instrument of the state. The media do not have integrity of their own.

Development Media theory: This theory says that media must inform the masses who are normally idle about the various developmental activities so that their life can be enriched and propelled towards a meaningful existence.

Democratic Participant Media theory: This theory advocates facilitating the optimum possible participation of the masses in the whole activity of production, broadcasting and publication of the mass media contents or programme software. This is expected to facilitate reflection of local-specific problems of various areas and the people of the country.

4) Development media theory

5) a. True b. False



2.9 POSSIBLE QUESTIONS

1) What is the significance of a model of communication?
2) How does a model of communication help us in furthering our knowledge of mass communication and media?
3) What is the need for studying theories of mass communication?
4) How can the mass media affect the masses and vice versa?
5) Describe the Authoritarian theory of mass communication.
6) What do you understand by the term Libertarian theory of mass communication?
7) Compare the Authoritarian and Libertarian theories of mass communication.