PGDMC S1 01

Concept of Communication

SEMESTER - I

JOURNALISM AND MASS COMMUNICATION

KRISHNA KANTA HANDIQUI STATE OPEN UNIVERSITY

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COURSE INTRODUCTION

The Master of Mass Communication and PG Diploma in Mass Communication aimed at equipping earners with a good knowledge in various areas of Mass Communication. These programmes will form the basis for any one who wants to make a career in the media industry. MMC and PGDMC will cover every aspect of Mass Communication, which includes print media, electronic media, advertising, public relations etc. This is the first course of the post graduate level programmes in mass communication.

In this course we are going to discuss the concept and related issues on communication. The block is divided into nine units, which are as follows–

Unit 1 : Concept of Communication

This is the first unit of the course on Concept of Communication. In this unit we will introduce you to the basic concept of 'communication'. Here we will discuss how the activity of communication takes place among human beings. We will also discuss the different stages of the communication process with all its characteristics and aspects.

Unit 2 : Brief History and Development of Communication

In this unit we will delve into this very history and discuss the evolution of communication. We will trace the origin and growth of communication through the ages. Then we discuss the growth of communication in India and attempt an analysis of the present status of Mass Communication in India.

Unit 3 : Functions of Communication

In this unit we are going to discuss the basic functions of Communication and how communication actually functions in different contexts. Communication is a very general term for all of us. We all know that it is a process by which messages travel from the sender to the receiver. But how communication actually functions should be understood first to get a more clear picture. There are various functions of communication which we will be discussing in this unit.

Unit 4 : Communication Barriers

This is the fourth unit of the course on Concept of communication. In this unit we will introduce you to the basic concept of Communication Barriers. Here we will discuss how the different barriers of communication take place. We will also discuss the concept and types of Noise.

Unit 5 : Mass Communication

In this unit we are going to discuss one of the most important forms of communication - Mass Communication - that has a very deep influence on the lives of all human beings across the world, an influence which is increasing every passing day. Mass Communication is an activity that has been encompassing each and every sphere of our life. So, a detailed study of this system will help us in communicating better with our surroundings and the society. We will be discussing various aspects of the wider concept of Mass Communication here in this unit.

Unit 6 : Process of Communication

In this unit we are going to discuss the process of communication, what exactly the entire process is and what are the elements involved in the process. What the term 'Communication' actually means and how it is defined is clear to you by now. In the previous units we have discussed the concept, functions, barriers and types of communication. As you read this unit you will learn that the process of communication is very interesting. The entire process of communication takes place with the help of various elements. These elements have a very important role to play. Their role and function will also be discussed in this unit.

Unit 7 : Communication and Society

This unit describes some other important issues connected with society, such as the role of communication in society, why communication is important, impact of society on communication processes, communication and social change, communication and culture, information Society, new information order etc.

Unit 8 : Communication and its Audience

The term audience in communication carries with it a far broader sense of meaning and it is a vast field of study. So, in this unit we will explain to you the types of audience, illiterate audience, mass audience and intellectual audience.

Unit 9 : Communication and the Grassroots Level

In this unit you will be introduced to a few new concepts like communication strategies at micro level both in rural and urban setup, Alternative media as tools of micro level communication etc. it is important to mention here that at the time of Independence our country possessed hardly any advanced stage of mass media except a minuscule service by All India Radio (just six stations in all) and a few hundred newspapers and magazines.

POST GRADUATE DIPLOMA IN MASS COMMUNICATION

COURSE–1

CONCEPT OF COMMUNICATION

DETAILED SYLLABUS

Unit 1 : Concept of Communication

Communication, definition, how communication takes place, types of Communication

Unit 2 : Brief History and Development of Communication

From stone age to digital era, Early communication systems in India, Present status of mass media in India

Unit 3 : Functions of Communication

Functions of Communication, Functions of Communication in Different Contexts, Functions of Communication according to Lasswell, Functions of Communication according to McQuail, other Functions of Communication

Unit 4 : Communication Barriers

Barriers of Communication, types of communication barriers, concept of noise, types of noise

Unit 5 : Mass Communication

Mass Communication, Definition, Characteristics of Mass Communication, Types of Mass Communication, Functions of Mass Communication, Evolution of Mass Communication, Mass Media

Unit 6 : Process of Communication

How Communication takes place, The elements of communication, Sender, receiver, Message, channel, Feedback

Unit 7 : Communication and Society

The role of communication in society, why communication is important, impact of society on communication processes, communication and social change, communication and culture, information Society, new information order.

Unit 8 : Communication and its audience

The types of audience, illiterate audience, mass audience and intellectual audience

Unit 9 : Communication and the grassroots level

Communication strategies at micro level both in rural and urban setup, Alternative media as tools of micro level communication

UNIT-1 : COMMUNICATION

UNIT STRUCTURE

1.1 Learning Objectives
1.2 Introduction
1.3 Communication
    1.3.1 Definition
    1.3.2 How Communication takes place
1.5 Types of Communication
1.6 Let Us Sum Up
1.7 Further Reading
1.8 Answers To Check Your Progress
1.9 Possible Questions

1.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit you will be able to–

- define the term Communication
- outline the process of Communication
- explain the different types of Communication.

1.2 INTRODUCTION

This is the first unit of the course on Concept of Communication. In this unit we will introduce you to the basic concept of 'Communication'.

Here we will discuss how the activity of communication takes place among human beings. We will also discuss the different stages of the communication process with all its characteristics and aspects. After a thorough study of this unit you will develop an adequate understanding of the concept of Communication and this will be your base for understanding the development of Communication which will be studied in the Unit 2 of this course.

We hope that this unit will open up to you the exciting world of Communication in a completely new light. So let us begin our journey into this world by understanding the meaning of the word 'Communication' from the point of view of a professional communicator.

1.3 COMMUNICATION

Communication is quite a simple term that transcends each and every walk of human life which actually makes it so important for us. It influences the way we live and has an impact on our day to day life.

This term is derived from the Latin roots 'communis' and 'communicare' both of which imply sharing and mutual understanding. It is something through which we share knowledge, feelings, ideas, information etc.

In face-to-face communication, it is not merely an exchange of information, but also something more which include passing of gestures, expression, language, tones etc. All these aspects combined together create a sort of impact on both the partners. It goes on to affect some kind of changes in the behaviour or personality of all those persons involved in the communication process.

1.3.1 Definition

Communication is an all-encompassing activity or process that has far-reaching utility and influence over humanity. In one way, it is the driving force of humankind anywhere in the world.

It is the activity of sharing or exchanging information between two or more persons. It is a basic and universal tool for making others know about our views, feelings, interests etc. In other words, it implies notifying others (whoever might be interested) about our attitudes, status of our minds etc.

This happens in two ways. First, we might wish to know the mental status of somebody else and second, we might be interested in getting across our status of mind to someone who might have some interest in it. Sometimes we start the communication process ourselves to which others respond. And at other times we respond to someone else's queries or communication initiative when he or she might have wanted to know something about us – maybe out of personal interest or professional interest.

Here are a few definitions of the term communication which will help you in understanding the subject better:

"Communication is sharing of experiences on the basis of commonness." — Willbur Schram,

"One mind affecting the other." — Claude Shannon,

Communications expert Leagans, way back in 1961, described communication as **"a process by which two or more people exchange ideas, facts, feelings or impression in such ways that each gains a common understanding of meaning, intent and the use of messages."**

In other words, it will not be wrong to say that communication is the 'mother of existence.'

1.3.2 How Communication Takes Place

Though the communication process looks simple enough yet it has to go through several steps before it reaches the person for whom it is aimed. Let us go into this process for your understanding.

For completing the communication process there is a need of at least one (communication can be done within our own self also) or more persons.

Here, the person who would like to start the proceedings is called the **'Sender'** of messages. And the one or ones who receives what is being said or written is termed as the **'Receiver',** because he or she receives the communication message.

The Sender (for example Mr A) wakes up in the morning in his house and wants his mother to give him a glass of water. He would form a suitable sentence in this regard in his mind and speak to his mother or anybody else in the house. This is the **'Message'.**

His mother or anyone who may have heard this sentence will at first listen to what has been said and then try to understand the meaning of the sentence. Following this, the Receiver of the communication message will simply bring a glass of water to Mr A. Or maybe that he or she does not bring the glass of water as the latter may not be free at that time or due to any other factor. Here, in return to Mr A's sentence or message, the Receiver may or may not speak anything but may simply do the job being asked to carry out.

When something is said or communicated to the other person, in reply the Receiver of the messages also goes through the same process. Such as – at first he or she decides what is to be said in reply to the first communication and then formulates a suitable sentence or message to be passed on. This is called **'Feedback'** in communication. It is the response of the receiving parties of a communication process.

Then, we come to the aspect of **'Channel'** which is the carrier of the information or messages which we want the other party to know or receive. There may be many forms of a channel such as language, body language etc.

Here are a few other terms involved with the communication process with which you should also become familiar :

Encoding – It is the process of forming a meaningful sentence or message to inform somebody about something. Say, for example,

the writer of this study material wants to inform you all about Mass Communication. He or she prepares a structure about how to do it, then decides what is to be said, forms the exact sentences etc. This is Encoding.

Decoding – It is the opposite of the process of encoding. It is the process of understanding of the message by the receiver of the message. What you are trying to do right now while reading the study material is decoding.

Significantly enough, the word **'Noise'** is used here with a different meaning. In communication studies, it refers to various types of disturbances that the communication process has to face many a time.

These disturbances may even cause distortions in a smooth flow of the communication process as they may hamper the proper understanding of the messages or information being exchanged between the communicators.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q.1. What is communication?

Q.2. What are the elements of communication?

Q.3. Define the terms :

a. Sender b. Receiver c. Message
d. Channel e. Feedback f. Encoding
g. Decoding

1.4 TYPES OF COMMUNICATION

We can classify the communication system into several types, depending upon various factors like physical and linguistic expressions, number of participants, medium or tool or vehicles of transmission used, objectives to be achieved etc. We will discuss about all of them with examples for your better understanding of the system.

Types of communication based on the number of persons involved:

Intrapersonal Communication: When we communicate within ourselves it is called Intrapersonal Communication. In simple terms, we exchange information or messages within ourselves in our own mind. For example, Intrapersonal Communication takes place when we think of something in our mind, try to remember something etc. It is important that as in this system we communicate with ourselves only, the feedback or responses to the process is instant or the most immediate.

Again, in addition to the moments when we exclusively communicate with ourselves, even each and every instance of communication with others - whether with one person or a few persons – is preceded by at least one small instance of an Intrapersonal Communication.

Interpersonal Communication: This is the term applied to that type of communication when we communicate with one or more persons. Say, when we are talking with a few friends or family members sitting somewhat in a close manner. Here, the response or feedback is slightly delayed compared to the Intrapersonal one. The reason is that when we say something or show a certain gesture to the other person he or she will at first 'decode' what we have said, then 'encode' a specific response and only after that, will send across the response. The entire process takes a few seconds or may be a few minutes depending upon various circumstances.

It is basically a face-to-face communication usually in very close quarters, with almost equal scope for all the parties involved for participating in the communication process.

We normally practise this type of communication for a major portion of our lives.

Group Communication: In this type, the number of participants increases to about five / six to maybe 10 / 12 for which it is called a Group Communication. It is expected that the people communicating amongst themselves in a group may have some common relationship – for example – close friends, classmates, family members, employees in an office etc. It is usually seen that in contrast to Intrapersonal and Interpersonal Communication types, here the scope of equal participation in the communication process by all the members of the group may not be so simple.

Here the responses or feedback may be further delayed and some members of the group may not at all take part in the activity due to various factors.

Large and Small Group Communication: Some of the communication experts have opined that this mode of communication (Group Communication) can be further sub-divided into Large Group and Small Group Communication depending upon the number of participants in the process. However, there is no hard and fast rule regarding the fixed number of participants to identify groups in these categories.

Public Communication: This specific type of communication involves a large number of receivers of messages or audiences, with just one or a few senders of messages, normally at a public place. As the number of receivers is large enough, mechanical devices like microphones, amplifiers, sound systems need to be used for communicating with the audiences. For example - big public meetings, political rallies etc. where several hundreds or thousands of people gather for listening to the speaker or the sender of messages.

An experienced person can understand the physical or non verbal signals or feedback from the receivers here instantly and thereby decide how to conduct further communication.

Then there is the important type of communication called **Mass Communication** which we will discuss in detail in the next Unit.

Types of communication based on physical and linguistic expressions:

Verbal Communication: Verbal communication is one way for people to communicate our feelings, attitudes etc face-to-face by using spoken and written language. The effectiveness of written communication depends on the style of writing, vocabulary used, grammar, clarity and precision of language **In verbal communication the key components are sound, words, speaking, and language.**

Language is a code of symbols which is created after a scientific permutation and combination of alphabets and words for adding a certain meaning to the messages as one desires the receivers to understand. This is called encoding about which we have mentioned earlier. Similarly, the receivers on their part also try to draw out the meaning of the words and messages by decoding the words and sentences of the messages. So we can see that this process follows the same pattern that a normal communication process follows - like encoding – decoding etc.

Non-verbal Communication: In contrast to the above system, Non-verbal Communication means communicating by using various means and signs other than verbal language. Despite the simple enough definitions of both the types of communication, their meanings have far greater impact upon the people than we can actually think of. It is important to point out that Non-verbal Communication is much more expressive and meaningful than verbal language. The different tools or means of communication or expression in Non-verbal Communication include - our facial expressions, body gestures, our overall behaviour, dress code, and way of doing things, our voice modulation while delivering messages etc. everything. Each of these traits actually reflects something or the other about our overall personality which is a communication in itself and that is why its scope is much wider than Verbal Communication.

But we should not see the different types of communication in isolation. It will always be a better idea to understand and think of the communication process as a whole. This is because the communication process will be far more effective and meaningful if both these types can be combined judiciously for making a greater impact upon the receivers of those communication messages.

Yes, it is true that both of them can be completed in themselves in their individual spheres. But the objectives will be much more effective if both of them can be combined to produce a better effect.

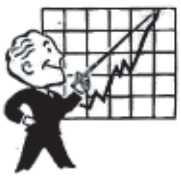
All of you must be familiar with the 'silent movies' of Charlie Chaplin and also a famous feature film 'Pushpak' made in South India in which famous actor Kamal Hassan performed a role that did not have any dialogues. Both the films have been very popular. Have you ever thought how the people could enjoy these films if they did not have any spoken words?

And in many cases, even without saying a single word, a simple gesture of ours can convey the desired meaning to the receivers. When a person close to us is in grief or in a foul mood a simple touch of our hands can work as a soothing balm at that time.

The best way to communicate is to combine both Verbal and Non-verbal Communication to support each other. Our physical expressions contribute a lot to the effort of making the communication process effective and successful. In the face to face interactions, and also even when we are talking with someone without being seen personally, then also non verbal gestures affect our verbal expressions to a large extent.

For example, even when we are talking with someone over the telephone or listening to programmes, the understandability as well as effects of the messages depends a lot on the voice modulation or the style of dialogue delivery. Based upon the speed, accuracy, pitch etc. the seriousness and desired meaning of the messages can be understood and drawn out by the intended receivers.

It is important to note that as body gesture and language play an important role in communication, a person communicates something even if he or she chooses to remain silent. Also, many a time Non-verbal Communication can be completed in itself while the same can't be said of Verbal Communication. Besides, it seems that Non-verbal Communication enjoys more space than Verbal Communication in our life.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q. 4. Discuss the different types of communication.

Q. 5. Compare Verbal and Non-verbal Communication.

1.6 LET US SUM UP

- Communication is the mutually understandable activity of exchanging information with one's own self or with fellow human beings, using different methods.
- A person communicates with his or her own self for a major part of the time. Even when one is communicating with someone, prior to everything being said, he communicates with his own self to decide what to say, how to say, whether to carry on the process or not etc.
- It is an endless process starting with the conceiving of lives in our mothers' wombs and continuing on and on.

- The process essentially involves these elements or components – a sender, a receiver, a channel or vehicle for movement of the messages or information, feedback – the responses to the communication, noise or disturbances which mean interferences from technical or human problems resulting in misunderstanding or inadequate understanding of the meaning of the messages creating a wastage of the communication efforts.
- It is a human phenomenon that under normal circumstances we would like to expose ourselves only to those aspects and things in life with which we are familiar and feel comfortable with,
- Similarly, we would also like to perceive something only with those aspects with which we feel comfortable and are familiar,
- We actually communicate something even by not responding to the senders' messages,
- There are different types of communication depending on the number of participants, the physical and linguistic expressions, medium or tool or vehicles of transmission used, objectives to be achieved etc.



1.7 FURTHER READING

- **Handbook of Journalism and Mass Communication** — *VB Aggarwal & VS Gupta, Concept Publishing Company, New Delhi*
- **Mass Communication in India** — *KJ Kumar, Jaico Books, Mumbai*
- **Understanding Human Communication** — *Ronald B Adler & George Rodman, Harcourt Brace College publishers*
- **Mass Communication in India**, *JV Vilanilam, Sage Publications, New Delhi*
- **Mass Communication, Theory and Practice**, *Uma Narula, Harchand Publication, New Delhi*

1.8 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Ans. to Q. No. 1: Communication is the activity of sharing or exchanging information between two or more persons. It is a basic and universal tool for making others known to our views, feelings, interests etc.

Ans. to Q. No. 2: The different elements of communication are – sender, receiver, channel, message and feedback.

Ans. to Q. No. 3:

a. Sender: Sender is the person who initiates the communication process. He is the one who sends a message to the receiver

b. Receiver: Receiver is the person at whom the sender directs the message and who receives the message sent by the sender.

c. Message: Message is the information that the sender conveys to the receiver. It may be in the verbal or non-verbal form or could be a combination of both.

d. Channel: It is the vehicle that carries the information from the sender to the receiver or vice-versa. In oral communication air is the channel whereas in the written communication paper or other writing materials is the channel.

e. Feedback: It is the response of the receiver to the message sent by the sender.

f. Encoding: It is the process of forming a meaningful sentence or message to inform somebody about something.

g. Decoding: It is the opposite of the process of encoding. It is the process of understanding of the message by the receiver of the message.

Ans. to Q. No. 4: The types of communication depending on the number of participants are – Intrapersonal Communication, Interpersonal Communication, Group Communication, Public Communication, Mass Communication.

Ans. to Q. No. 5: Comparison between Verbal and Non-verbal Communication:

	Verbal Communication	Non-verbal Communication
1.	It is carried out with the help of spoken words	It is carried out without the help of spoken words
2.	Share of this in the total amount of communication in a human being's life is comparatively smaller	Its share is far bigger than the other
3.	Its expression power is somewhat limited	This one is much more expressive than Verbal Communication
4.	Without the support of Non-verbal Communication, Verbal Communication is not very effective	Non-verbal communication can be very expressive even without the support of Verbal Communication or spoken words.



1.9 POSSIBLE QUESTIONS

Q. 1 : Describe the process of communication and explain why it is important in the lives of human beings.

Q. 2 : Make a table showing the different types of communication giving examples of each of them.

Q. 3 : What are the advantages and disadvantages of Verbal and Non-verbal Communication? Give relevant examples.

UNIT-2 : BRIEF HISTORY AND DEVELOPMENT OF COMMUNICATION

UNIT STRUCTURE

2.1 Learning Objectives
2.2 Introduction
2.3 From Stone Age to Digital Era
2.4 Early Communication Systems in India
2.5 Present Status of Mass Media in India
2.6 Let Us Sum Up
2.7 Further Reading
2.8 Answers to Check Your Progress
2.9 Possible Questions

2.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit you will be able to:

- trace the origin and development of communication through the ages
- discuss the early communication systems in India
- describe the present status of Mass Media in India.

2.2 INTRODUCTION

Today we live in the Information age. Communication and Information technologies pervade every aspect of our existence in such a way that these communication technologies no longer surprise us or even give a thought about how they operate or how had they originated. And yet the Information age has a history which is both fascinating and awe-inspiring. Now, in this unit we will delve into this very history and discuss the evolution of communication. We will trace the origin and growth of communication through

the ages. Then we discuss the growth of communication in India and attempt an analysis of the present status of Mass Communication in India.

2.3 FROM STONE AGE TO DIGITAL ERA

The history of communication can be traced back to the very beginning of life itself. Before the development of speech, the prehistoric man used to communicate by using signs and symbols.

The origin of speech about 200,000 years ago completely revolutionized communication marking the beginning of a new age. Gradually speech became more complex and different languages were born. It completely changed life and became the carrier of history. But it was only some 30,000 yrs ago that the imperfections and limitations of speech gave way to a newer form of communication – written symbols. The oldest known instances of the use of symbols are cave paintings. As time passed, the cave paintings gave way to petroglyphs, pictograms and then ideograms before writing could finally take shape about 7,000 years back. The earliest instances of writing could be found on rocks and stone pillars. This made it possible to store information in writing for posterity. It was a very good system that could communicate across time but it proved inefficient for communicating across space as it could not be carried across information to long distances.

Gradually, more portable media like clay and stone tablets developed. Much later, around 170 BC, writing materials like papyrus, parchment etc came into use. This gave permanence to the written language. The development of writing was rather slow. This happened because the clergy, who were at the helm of authority, having understood the significance of this powerful tool, wanted it to remain their exclusive privilege.

However, after the invention of paper in China in the 1st Century AD, things began to change dramatically and once the Arabians began manufacturing paper in the 8th Century, the development of writing could not be confined any more. But, what probably was the most important event in the

history of communication that actually ushered in a new era, was the invention of the printing press by Johann Guttenberg in the 15th Century. He also discovered how to make good ink for this printing. Earlier printing could only be done using wood blocks but now information could be copied much faster with the printing press. This resulted in the rapid spread of information which could not be restricted to the Roman Church any more and information became readily available to a wide section of European audiences.

The Bible is the first book which was printed using Guttenberg's press. Very soon lots of other books were published, then news pamphlets and then came the newspapers. The coming of newspapers in the 17th Century marked the beginning of a new age. Infact, the concept of newspaper had its origin in Renaissance Europe where handwritten newsletters were privately circulated among merchants. These newsletters carried all kinds of information including news of wars, economic conditions, social issues and even 'human interest' features.

But it was only in the 17th Century that it took a concrete form. The predecessor of the printed newspaper was the news pamphlet or the 'corantos' which were published only when some newsworthy event occurred. The first news pamphlet to start regular publication was *The Weekly News* of 1622. Within two decades many other titles followed, and gained momentum in the 1640's and 1650's. The first - ever 'real' newspaper in English was the *London Gazette* which was published in the year 1666. For a long time it remained the only officially sanctioned newspaper, in spite of the fact that many other periodicals also came into being by the end of the 17th Century. The first newspaper to come up in America was the ***Publick Occurrences*** which appeared in 1690, but, it could not survive for long. The first successful newspaper was the *Boston News-Letter* which began in 1704.

By the beginning of the 19th Century, print media had two more allies – the telegraph and the telephone, which helped the newspapers grow and thrive. And in the 20th century, two more very important media emerged – radio and television - which in the true sense ushered in the era of Mass Communication.

The era that we are living in today is the era of Information Technology. New technologies are emerging everyday. The World Wide Web has made the world a very small place and digital technology is the new mantra which is changing the very nature of communication.



LET US KNOW

Petroglyphs, pictograms and ideograms

Petroglyphs are images created by incising, pecking or carving on a rock surface. It is the next step in the history of communication after cave paintings. The term derives from the Greek words *petros* meaning "stone" and *glyphein* meaning "to carve" .

After Petroglyphs, **Pictographs** were the next step in the evolution of communication A pictogram or a pictograph is a symbol representing a concept, an object, an activity, a place or an event by way of illustration. Here ideas are transmitted through drawing. While petroglyphs simply show an event, pictograms tell a story about the event.

Pictograms evolved into **Ideograms**. They are graphical symbols that represent an idea. While Pictograms could represent only something resembling their form but not concepts, ideograms could convey abstract concepts as well. For instance, a pictogram of a circle could only represent a sun, but not concepts like 'heat', 'light', 'day' etc. But the ideogram of two sticks could mean not only 'legs' but also 'walking'.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q. 1. Fill in the blanks :-

(a) The origin of speech can be traced back to _____ years ago.

(b) The oldest known instances of the use of symbols are _____.

(c) Why was the development of writing rather slow?

_____

_____

_____

(d) Paper was invented in _____ in the 1st Century AD.

(e) The printing press was invented by _____ in the 15th Century.

(f) _____ is the first book which was printed using Guttenberg's press.

(g) The first news pamphlet to start regular publication was _____ of 1622.

(h) _____ was the first newspaper to come up in America.

2.4 EARLY COMMUNICATION SYSTEMS IN INDIA

The communication systems found in ancient India are replete with romanticism. During the era when images and symbolic representations were the foremost means of communication, messages were written on leaves and stones. Music was a most remarkable and emotive way to communicate. The rendering of the flute or the melody and pitch of a song carried deep meaning and could very effectively transmit news instantly across the village. When information had to be transmitted across rivers and valleys, drum beatings and bushfires were used.

Later on when oral communication developed, oral narratives which were passed down from one generation to the other became a most important means of communication. These narratives are imbued with regional flavor and musical overtones and form an integral part of the cultural and social fabric of the country till date. It is through these narratives that we can trace the history of the country to a large extent.

Necessity is the mother of invention. As the ancient Indian's necessities increased, so did a new method of communication emerged. References to 'carriers of message' can be found in the Hindu scriptures like Vedas. The 'Rig-Veda' mentions a dog called 'Sarama' which was used to carry message. Again, in the 'Atharvaveda' we find reference to couriers called 'Palagala'. Devarishi Narada was perhaps a yellow journalist in his own right by dint of his ability to deliver every news in a sensational manner.

In Indian mythology and ancient history too, we find mention of traditional emissaries conveying messages in an unconventional manner. In the 'Ramayan', Hanuman carried messages for Ram. In 'Mahabharata' there is a romantic legend in which a swan is used to convey the message of love from prince Nal to princess Damayanti. Chanakya's 'Arthashaastra' on the other hand, talks of the effective manner of collecting information and revenue data using *doots*, who also spied for the king.

Homing pigeons were used as message carriers from the earliest times in India. Interestingly, these 'pigeon carriers' are still officially in use by government departments in remote areas, like in the State of Orissa. Camels were used in areas like Rajasthan, Orissa, like etc., particularly by Emperor Ashoka in the 4th century B.C. For military purposes, mostly horses were used for carrying mail. There was also the legendary mail runner, or Harkara or Dak runner who ran through rain and storm, to deliver his messages packed together on a bundle hanging from his stick. Initially, the Dak runner was used only for military purposes. Then its use was extended beyond the military to the governance and administrative purpose. Eventually, they came to be used by merchants for business and trading. During his reign, Emperor Ashoka devised a very efficient means of communication combining the use of mail runners, horse couriers, pigeon carriers and camels for official communication.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q. 2 : In ancient India during the era when images and symbolic representations were the foremost means of communication, what materials were used for writing messages?

_____

_____

_____

Q. 3 : For what purpose was drum beatings and bushfires used?

_____

_____

_____

Q. 4 : Which ancient Indian scripture mentions a dog called 'Sarama' which was used to carry message?

_____

_____

_____

Q. 5 : How does Devarshi Narada qualify as a yellow journalist?

_____

_____

_____

Q. 6 : 'Pigeon carriers' are still officially in use by government departments in remote areas in the State of _____.

Q. 7 : What consisted of the communication system developed by Emperor Ashoka?

_____

_____

_____

2.5 PRESENT STATUS OF MASS MEDIA IN INDIA

The birth of Mass Media in India took place at the hands of the British when Augustus Hickey started the Bengal Gazette or the Calcutta General Advertiser in Bengal in the year 1780. It was a two-sheet newspaper which carried gossip about the private lives of the East India Company officials. Since then, Mass Communication in India has come a long way. Not only has print media spread its wing immensely, electronic media too, which has a relatively recent history, has a huge presence today.

The latest statistics available in the records of the Registrar of Newspapers in India shows that as on 31st march, 2008, there are as many as 69, 323 newspapers in circulation in the country with a total circulation of 20, 71,08,115. In the year 2007-2008 itself, some 4332 new newspapers were registered which amounts to a growth of about 6.7%. This speaks volumes about the growth of newspapers in the country.

Of the total number of newspapers, Hindi language newspapers have the highest number, an amazing 27,527. The language to bag second position is the English language which has about 10,000 newspapers. 10, 779 newspapers are published from Uttar Pradesh alone which has the highest number of newspapers to be published from a single state. Delhi produces the second highest number of newspapers numbering 9483.

The English daily Hindu published from Chennai is the largest circulated daily in the country with a circulation of 12, 75, 553. It followed close behind by the Bengali daily Ananda Bazar Patrika published from Kolkata. The multi-edition daily which has the highest circulation is The Times of India, published in 5 editions and having a circulation of 23, 35, 991.

The combined reach of the print media including newspaper and magazine according to the Indian Readership Survey 2006, is 222 million. The reach of the press in urban India is 45%, while in rural India it is 19%.

Taking its lead over the readers are the Satellite TV viewers. TV now reaches 112 million Indian homes of which 64 million are colour TVs. About 68 mil-

lion homes have access to Cable and Satellite Television. The penetration of TV is particularly high in Southern states. Tamil Nadu, Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh have a TV reach of 76.2%, 76.2% and 78% respectively. These States also have high penetration of Cable & Satellite i.e. 60%, 53% and 59% respectively. There are presently over 400 Satellite TV channels which are broadcast in India.

Over the past few years radio has grown considerably as a medium. All India Radio has over 97% penetration into the country's population while listenership of radio in general covering all other stations is about 119 million. This amounts to about 27% of the population listening to any station in the average week. This growth can be mainly attributed to the growth of FM radio in the country.

Cinema on the other hand has somehow declined if we consider theatre-goers from both urban as well as rural areas. From 51 million individuals going to the movies at least once a month, the figure has come down to 39 million. However, if we consider the urban population alone, we find that there has been an increase and around 25 million individuals go to the theatre at least once a month.

With the coming of the internet to India, the country is now thronged with cyber users. Internet reach now exceeds 12 million and about 9.4 million users log on to the internet at least once a week. While around 10 million users are from urban areas, the remaining are from rural India.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q. 8 : Fill in the blanks :-

(a) _____ started the Bengal Gazette or the Calcutta General Advertiser in Bengal in the year 1780.

(b) Write a short note on the status of the print media in the country.

_____

_____

_____

(c) TV reaches _____ million Indian homes.

(d) There are presently over _____ Satellite TV channels which are broadcast in India.

(e) Internet reach now exceeds _____ million Indians.

2.6 LET US SUM UP

- The history of communication can be traced back to the very beginning of life itself. Before the development of speech, the prehistoric man used to communicate by using signs and symbols.
- The origin of speech about 200,000 years ago completely revolutionized communication, marking the beginning of a new age.
- The oldest known instances of the use of symbols are cave paintings. Actual writing could finally take shape only about 7,000 years back.
- The earliest instances of writing could be found on rocks and stone pillars. Around 170 BC, writing materials like papyrus, parchment etc come into use.
- Paper was invented in China in the 1st Century AD,
- The printing press was invented by Johann Guttenberg in the 15th Century. The Bible is the first book to be printed using Guttenberg's press.
- The coming of newspapers in the 17th Century marked the beginning of a new age. The concept of newspaper had its origin in Renaissance Europe.
- The predecessor of the printed newspaper was the news pamphlet or the 'corantos'.
- The first news pamphlet to start regular publication was *The Weekly News* of 1622.
- The first ever real newspaper in English was the *London Gazette* which was published in the year 1666. The first newspaper to come up in America was the *Publick Occurrences* which appeared in 1690.

- In the 20th century two more very important media emerged – radio and television which in the true sense ushered in the era of Mass Communication.
- In ancient India during the era when images and symbolic representations were the foremost means of communication, messages were written on leaves and stones.
- Music was a most remarkable and emotive way to communicate. When information had to be transmitted across rivers and valleys, drum beatings and bushfires were used.
- Oral narratives which were passed down from one generation to the other became a most important means of communication.
- References to 'carriers of message' can be found in the Hindu scriptures like Vedas.
- Homing pigeons were used as message carriers from the earliest times in India.
- Camels were used in areas like Rajasthan, Orissa, etc. For military purposes, mostly horses were used for carrying mail.
- There was also the legendary mail runner, or Harkara or Dak runner who ran through rain and storm, to deliver his messages.
- Emperor Ashoka devised a very efficient means of communication combining the use of mail runners, horse couriers, pigeon carriers and camels for official communication.
- The birth of Mass Media in India took place at the hands of the British when Augustus Hickey started the Bengal Gazette or the Calcutta General Advertiser in Bengal in the year 1780.
- Presently there are as many as 69, 323 newspapers in circulation in the country with a total circulation of 20, 71,08,115.
- The combined reach of the print media including newspaper and magazine according to the Indian Readership Survey 2006 is 222 million.
- TV now reaches 112 million Indian homes. About 68 million homes have access to Cable and Satellite Television.
- There are presently over 400 Satellite TV channels which are broadcast in India.

- 27% of the Indian population listens to any radio station in an average week.
- 39 million individuals go to the movies at least once a month.
- Internet reach now exceeds 12 million and about 9.4 million users log on to the internet at least once a week.



2.7 FURTHER READING

- ***India's Communication Revolution*** by Arvind Singhal
- ***Handbook of Journalism & Mass Communication*** by V B Aggarwal & VS Gupta.



2.8 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Ans to Q. No 1 :

(a) 200,000

(b) cave paintings

(c) The development of writing was rather slow because the clergy, who were at the helm of authority, having understood the significance of this powerful tool, wanted it to remain their exclusive privilege.

(d) China

(e) Johann Guttenberg

(f) The Bible

(g) The Weekly News

(h) Publick Occurrences

Ans to Q. No 2 :

Leaves and stones.

Ans to Q. No 3 :

When information had to be transmitted across rivers and valleys, drum beatings and bushfires were used.

Ans to Q. No. 4 : The RigVeda

Ans to Q. No. 5 : Devarishi Narada qualifies as a yellow journalist by dint of his ability to deliver every news in a sensational manner.

Ans to Q. No. 6 : Orisa (now known as Odisha)

Ans to Q. No. 7 : The communication system developed by Emperor Ashoka combined the use of mail runners, horse couriers, pigeon carriers and camels for official communication.

Ans to Q. No. 8 :

(a) James Augustus Hickey

(b) The latest statistics available in the records of the Registrar of Newspapers in India shows that, as on 31st march, 2008, there are as many as 69, 323 newspapers in circulation in the country with a total circulation of 20, 71;08,115. Of the total number of newspapers, Hindi language newspapers have the highest number, an amazing 27,527. The language to bag second position is the English language which has about 10,000 newspapers

The combined reach of the print media including newspaper and magazine according to the Indian Readership Survey 2006 is 222 million. The reach of the press in urban India is 45%, while in rural India it is 19%.

(c) 112

(d) 400

(e) 12

2.9 POSSIBLE QUESTIONS

Q. 1. Trace the history of communication from the stone age to the present times.

Q. 2. What were the communication systems used in ancient India?

Q. 3. Write a note on the present status of Mass media in India.

UNIT-3 : FUNCTIONS OF COMMUNICATION

UNIT STRUCTURE

3.1 Learning Objectives
3.2 Introduction
3.3 Functions of Communication
    3.3.1. Functions of Communication in Different Contexts
3.4 Functions of Communication according to Lasswell
3.5 Functions of Communication according to McQuail
3.6 Other Functions of Communication
3.7 Let Us Sum Up
3.8 Further Reading
3.9 Answers to Check Your Progress
3.10 Possible Questions

3.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit you will be able to:

- express the meaning of Communication
- name the functions of Communication and how communication functions in different contexts
- explain the functions of Communication according to Lasswell
- explain the functions of Communication according to McQuail.

3.2 INTRODUCTION

In the previous unit (unit 2), we have learnt about the history of Communication, how the entire Communication process has developed and the role of media as a communicative process in reaching out to the masses. In this unit we are going to discuss the basic functions of Communication and how communication actually functions in different contexts.

Communication is a very general term for all of us. We all know that it is a process by which messages travel from the sender to the receiver. But how communication actually functions should be understood first to get a more clear picture. There are various functions of communication which we will be discussing in this unit.

Communication entails the process of social interaction where two or more individuals interact for various purposes. There are four basic functions of communication. They are related to information, command or instruction, being persuasive and integrative. Further, these functions can be called informing functions, directing function, influencing function, etc. This unit proposes to discuss all the important functions of communication.

3.3 FUNCTIONS OF COMMUNICATION

Communication is a very familiar term in our day to day life. In simple terms it signifies the process of exchanging information between two or more people. Social interactions through messages that are statements on events, ideas, issues, personalities and groups relevant to the dominant groups in the society is communication. These statements are exchanged between and among the persons, groups and institutions through the different mass media channels.

Now the entire communication system seems to be very simple. But the entire system will turn into success also if it functions in the right manner. There are some specific functions of communication and it should work accordingly. For a society's existence certain norms and needs should be met. This phenomenon is nothing new in the social system. As we now know that the process of communication existed since the primitive time. In the earlier times the mode and nature of communication were different from today's hi-tech methods of communication.

In ancient times the society was much less complex. The chiefs of the primitive tribes had sentinels who scanned the environment and reported the happenings to them. But today the society is much larger and more

complex in nature as well as in structure. The Communication system has also undergone great changes. With the advent of technology the development of communication has become more and more sophisticated. Consequently, it has brought a sea change in the entire scenario of the media world. But the basic functions of communication have remained unchanged since communication deals with people living in society and their constant interaction as social beings.

3.3.1 Functions of Communication in different context

The range of the functions of Communication is very wide, depending on the context in which it is applied. The functions of Communication as applied in different contexts are as follows;

1. **Individual Context :** At the individual level Communication's role is to;
   - To give knowledge
   - Help one in achieving commercial success
   - Help an individual in adjusting to changing behavioural patterns
   - Help one in socializing
2. **Social Context :** At the social context Communication;
   - Helps in educating people
   - Persuades the targeted subjects to buy products
   - Provides information
   - Helps people to get as well as modify their views regarding certain issues
   - Builds social revolution
   - Helps in bringing transformation of the society in different directions.
3. **Organisational Context :** In this context Communication has the following functions;
   - It is an essential tool for direction
   - It helps in decision making

- It is used to inform the employees
- It helps in building good employer – employee relation
- It helps in the interaction with the members of external circle
- It helps in getting the right feedback.

At different times different scholars have forwarded different opinions regarding the functions of communication. Among them Harold Lasswell's and Dennis McQuail's views on the functions of communication are most widely accepted.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q. 1. What are the functions of communication?

Q. 2. What are the different contexts of communication?

3.4 FUNCTIONS OF COMMUNICATION BY LASSWELL

In the year 1948, Harold Lasswell, an American political scientist, named three basic functions of communication. These are;

1. Surveillance of the Environment.
2. Correlation of the parts of the society in response to its environment.
3. Transmission of cultural heritage.

Along with these functions, Wright in the year 1960 added a fourth function to this that is **entertainment.**

For the existence of a society, communication process plays a very significant role. The above mentioned functions refer to the availability of information, giving comments and interpreting it accordingly. This helps in forming opinions regarding the various happenings in our day to day life.

Lasswell has given *three* functions of communication. Each of these functions has its own importance and uniqueness.

(a) The first function he has mentioned is the ***Surveillance of the environment***. Among all the functions surveillance is considered the most vital. But now the question arises as to what surveillance actually means. Surveillance is nothing but giving news and information by the media to the audience. The spread of the media today is really vast. It comprises both the advanced electronic media and the growing print media. Earlier, the responsibility of catering information to the general people used to lie with the local village heads and sentinels. But today they are replaced by a vastly sophisticated process of media that has a far deeper impact on the public mind.

(b) The second function of communication, according to Lasswell, is that of effecting a ***correlation*** among the parts of the society in relation to its environment. For imparting any kind of information it is very important on the part of the media to keep in mind the environment in which they are working. While imparting any kind of information the surroundings as well the target audiences should be taken into account.

(c) Thirdly, Lasswell has mentioned ***transmission of cultural heritage*** as one of the functions of communication. Mass media has always played its role in focusing on the society and people. Each social stratum has its own culture and values. Transmission of values is a vital function of communication, through which people learn about the different positive values prevailing in the society and being carried on generations after generations.

(d) Besides these functions of communication mentioned by Lasswell, there is another important function as forwarded by **Wright**, which is ***entertainment***. Entertainment is undoubtedly a vital part of the communication process. All kinds of media use entertainment in various

forms. Television and radio, the most important electronic media, consider entertainment as one of their prime objectives. Even in the print media like the newspaper, entertainment is stressed. For mass media, therefore, providing entertainment and information is the most important function. Entertainment has assumed considerable importance in view of the increasing leisure for people as a result of technological development. Today communication has become synonymous with the mass media which can reach every section of the society. Along with this the scenario of entertainment has changed with every passing day. Initially entertainment was confined to the traditional forms of story telling, folk songs, folk dances, theatres etc. Today entertainment has reached an altogether new perspective and dimension. It is no longer confined to the traditional forms only and even the traditional forms of entertainment have got a new sheen as it works together with the new technologies. Another feature of entertainment is that it makes the message easily understandable to the masses. Everyone needs recreation in one form or the other. Hence, Wright has included entertainment as one of the functions of communication.

To some critics, by including entertainment media has lowered the standard of the values and culture of the society. India is a culturally rich country. The media in India has the responsibility of both entertainment and enlightening the masses.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q. 3. Fill in the blanks :-

(a) In the year _____ an American political scientist named three basic functions of communication.

(b) The name of the Political scientist was _____.

Q. 4. Name the functions of communication named by Lasswell?

_____

_____

_____

Q. 5. Who introduced the 'entertainment' function of communication?

_____

_____

_____

3.5 FUNCTIONS OF COMMUNICATION BY McQUAIL

In the year 1987, Denis McQuail added another function to communication. The function included by McQuail in addition to all the functions mentioned above is the **mobilization function** of the media. Later in his book 'Mass Communication Theory' he summarized the functions of communication which are the most widely used and accepted functions of communication today.

So, the functions of communication, according to Mcquail, are as follows:–

(a) Information

- Providing information about events and conditions in the society and the world.
- Indicating relations of power.
- Facilitating innovation, adaptation, and progress.

(b) Correlation

- Explaining, interpreting and commenting on the meaning of events and information.
- Providing support for established authority and norms.
- Socializing.
- Co-ordinating separate activities.
- Consensus building.
- Setting orders of priority and signaling relative status.

(c) Continuity

- Expressing the dominant culture and recognizing sub-cultures and new cultural developments.
- Forging and maintaining commonality of values.

(d) Entertainment

- Providing amusement, diversion, and the means of relaxation.

(e) Mobilization

- Campaigning for social objectives in the sphere of politics, war, economic development, work and sometimes religion.

McQuail has mentioned several different functions of communication as given below:

(a) Information: The basic function of communication is to provide information to the masses. The term 'Communication' itself means to provide information. If giving information is a primary task of communication the question arises as to information about what. The answer to this question is that communication can provide information for anything, be it an event or a happening, or anything else.

Many events can happen in any corner of the world, but it is through communication that people will get to know about those events taking place in any nook and corner of the world. It is not necessary that the people have to be physically present to know about such happenings McQuail has mentioned another aspect of communication. It helps in bringing innovation, which will ultimately result in development and progress. With the changing time the society is also progressing and it is the responsibility of communication to make the people aware of the changes and help in adapting themselves to these changes. Thus, one of the important functions of communication is giving information.

(b) Correlation: Correlation is another function of communication. Explaining, interpreting and commenting on the meaning of events and information through correlation is what communication does for its masses. Communication also provides support for the established authority and norms. It helps in socializing as well as coordinating separate activities, consensus building, and setting up orders of priorities.

(c) Continuity: Another function of communication is Continuity. It helps in expressing the dominant culture and recognizing sub- cultures

and new cultural developments of the society and helps in forging and maintaining commonality of values. Thus, adapting to a new cultural development by the people becomes easier with the help of communication.

(d) **Entertainment:** Entertainment is another important function of communication as it provides amusement, and diversion. It is a means of relaxation. In this busy world people strive to get a moment of relaxation and this is possible only with the help of communication.

(e) **Mobilization:** The last function of communication as given by McQuail is Mobilization. Communication can also help in creating awareness by campaigning for social objectives in the sphere of politics, war, economic development, work, health and even religion.

There is no general ranking or order among these above functions. All the functions aim to make the communication process an effective means of transmission from the sender to receiver. Besides, in the world of media one function can overlap the other and hence the same content can serve different purposes. So, the functions mentioned in the order by Mcquail do not mean that they are to be followed in the same sequence. The main communicative aim should be to serve the society and help towards its well being.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q. 6. Fill in the blanks :-

(a) _____ functions of communication is widely used and accepted.

(b) The function added by McQuail is _____.

(c) The new function of communication was mentioned in the book _____

Q. 7. Name the functions of communication forwarded by McQuail.

_____

_____

_____

3.6 OTHER FUNCTIONS OF COMMUNICATION

Both Lasswell and McQuail have dealt with the basic functions of communication and these functions are accepted as such.

But different scholars have also dealt with the issue and have mentioned different functions of communications. Some of them are mentioned below:

In the year 1990, Dominick mentioned in his book 'The Dynamics of Mass Communication' several functions of communication in connection with media. He mentioned five functions:

(a) Surveillance,

(b) Interpretation,

(c) Linkage,

(d) Transmission of values and

(e) Entertainment

These functions are not exclusive and will vary according to whose purpose is served by them. Let us discuss them in greater detail.

(a) Surveillance: Dominick has mentioned the surveillance as a function of communication. We have seen that this function is also given by Lasswell which has been discussed in the section 3.4. But Dominick has divided the function of surveillance into two parts: (i) warning surveillance and (ii) instrumental surveillance. Let us now know about these two types of surveillance.

(i) Warning or beware surveillance: This type of surveillance occurs when the media has to inform the general masses about any kind of threats. These treats can be both natural as well as man made ones, like, flood, earthquake, drought, terrorist attacks, inflation, etc. These kinds of information will be more of warnings and can be about some immediate threats or long term threats. For example, in case of flash floods or earthquake warning any television can interrupt any ongoing programme to inform the

people about their likely occurrence. Again, long term threats can be anything existing for a long period of time, for example pollution, unemployment, etc.

(ii) ***Instrumental Surveillance:*** This is a kind of information which is for the day to day life and requirement such as the news about new products, new films, actors, share prices, etc. Both the traditional media like newspapers and magazines and the new electronic media give information on such items as we require in our day to day life.

(b) Interpretation: It is through communication that interpretation is possible. When a news story is done and it reaches the masses the target consumers can very well interpret it. For example, when there is inflation and the prices of the commodities are rising by leaps and bounds, a layman can easily form his own interpretation as to why the prices are rising. Again, interpretation can be made for the people as well. How is it done? It is done by the people who are specifically employed by the media organization. Hence, this is another function of communication and an important one.

(c) Linkage: Linkage very closely follows surveillance. For instance, when an advertisement is made it is done keeping the buyers in mind. The product is highlighted in such a manner that the buyers can easily relate to it.

(d) Transmission of values: Communication has an important role to play in the transmission of values in society. In a country like India there is a huge diversity of cultures and values. It is through media that people of one group can know the culture and values of the other groups. When the people expose themselves to media they are also exposing themselves to various social norms and values. They can very well accept these values and, thus, a social value is transmitted from one group/generation to another.

(e) Entertainment: Entertainment is another most obvious function of communication. This function is discussed above as well. By and large, all the scholars have agreed that providing entertainment is one of the important functions of communication. Media can be used

to provide entertainment as a means for relaxation to the masses. Though the forms of entertainment have changed a lot with the change of time, entertaining the masses remains a basic function of communication at all times.

From the above discussion we have come to know about the different functions of communication. Let us now discuss how these functions of communication can vary according to the situation and changing circumstances. Accordingly we can divide them into the following categories:

- **Informing functions:** This function is very important for communication and it is required for any kind of society, organization, management, etc.
- **Controlling Functions:** For the smooth running of any organization or management house a planned organizational order is to be followed. For this communication is necessary between the top management and managers to the lowest level. The communication process involves both giving and receiving orders.
- **Persuading Function:** Communication has a persuading function in the sense that in case of the launching of a new product in the market the target groups need to be convinced about it through persuasive words.
- **Co-ordination Function:** Lack of co-ordination in any work will only lead to a messy work. So, a good co-ordination between the employer, employee and the outside environment is very important. Communication is used as a means to achieve this coordination. So this is also considered an important function of communication.

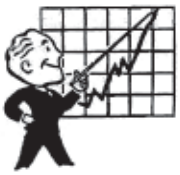
Some other functions of communication :

Some of the other functions of communication are;

- Data transmission, that is, transmission through media like television, radio,etc.
- For management purpose: personal as well as professional communication, can help us in getting rid of confusion so that we can receive clear meassages.

- For displaying information: Communication is used for displaying information in screens, boards, etc. This function has assumed increasing importance in today's consumer society dominated by advertisement.
- Brain storming sessions are held for communicating various ideas among group of people who can share their ideas and thoughts on a common topic.
- For monitoring temperature, floods, winds, natural disasters, etc.

In these days of globalization communication has come a long way to become an inseparable part of our daily life and it is still moving forward. From entertainment to space exploration there is a continuous march towards progress and developments are taking place so speedily that there will be many more new and upcoming functions of communication.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q. 8. Name the functions of Communication mentioned by Dominick.

_____

_____

_____

Q. 9. How many types of surveillance functions are there? Name them.

_____

_____

_____

Q. 10. Fill in the blank with appropriate word/words:

(a) Social value is transmitted from _____.

(b) Linkage is one of the functions of Communication as mentioned by _____.

3.7 LET US SUM UP

In this unit you have been introduced to the various functions of communication. Let us go over to what we have learnt.

- The process of Communication takes place through various functions. Several scholars have mentioned different functions of communication.
- In different contexts the functions of communication are different. The three different contexts are; Individual, Social and Organizational Context.
- Lasswell named some functions of Communication, which are Surveillance of the Environment, Correlation of the parts of the society in response to its environment, and Transmission of cultural heritage.
- Wright has introduced 'entertainment' as a new function of communication to the functions given by Lasswell.
- McQuail added 'mobilization function of the media' as another function to the other functions of communication.
- Communication is such a wide phenomenon that there are various other functions of it as well.



3.8 FURTHER READING

- **Handbook of Journalism and Mass Communication** –*VB Aggarwal & VS Gupta, Concept Publishing Company, New Delhi*
- **Mass Communication in India** –*KJ Kumar, Jaico Books, Mumbai*
- **Mass Communication in India** –*JV Vilanilam, Sage Publications, New Delhi.*

3.9 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Ans to Q. No. 1 :

The function of communication is the various ways by which communication takes place. Several scholars have put forward different functions of communication.

Ans to Q. No. 2 :

Individual, social, and organizational contexts.

Ans to Q. No. 3 :

(a) 1948

(b) Harold Lasswell

Ans to Q. No. 4 :

(a) Surveillance of Environment

(b) Correlation of the parts of the society in response to the environment.

(c) Transmission of cultural heritage.

Ans to Q. No. 5 :

Wright

Ans to Q. No. 6 :

(a) McQuail

(b) Mobilization function of the media

(c) Mass Communication Theory

Ans to Q. No. 7 :

(a) Information (b) Correlation

(c) Continuity (d) Entertainment

(e) Mobilization

Ans to Q. No. 8 :

(a) Surveillance (b) Interpretation

(c) Linkage (d) Transmission of values

(e) Entertainment

Ans to Q. No. 9 :

There are two types of, Surveillance functions: (a) Warning or beware surveillance and (b) Instrumental Surveillance.

Ans to Q. No. 10 :

(a) Communication (b) Dominick



3.10 POSSIBLE QUESTIONS

Q. 1 : What is the basic function of communication? Mention the context on which the functions of communication might vary.

Q. 2 : Who is Harold Lasswell? What are the functions of communication mentioned by him?

Q. 3 : Who is McQuail? Name the functions of communication as mentioned by him.

Q. 4 : Apart from McQuail's and Lasswell's functions of communication what are the other communication functions?

UNIT-4 : COMMUNICATION BARRIERS

UNIT STRUCTURE

4.1 Learning Objectives
4.2 Introduction
4.3 Barriers of Communication
4.4 Types of Communication Barriers
4.5 Concept of Noise
4.6 Types of Noise
4.7 Let Us Sum Up
4.8 Further Reading
4.9 Answers to Check Your Progress
4.10 Possible Questions

4.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit you will be able to–

- define Communication Barriers
- name the barriers to communication
- describe the different types of Communication Barriers
- define noise
- describe the different types of noise.

4.2 INTRODUCTION

This is the fourth unit of the course on Concept of communication. In the previous units we have introduced you to the concept, history, development, functions and types of Communication. In this unit we will introduce you to the basic concept of Communication Barriers.

Here we will discuss how the different barriers of communication take place. We will also discuss the concept and types of Noise. After a thorough study of this unit you will develop an adequate understanding of the concept of communication barriers and this will be your base for understanding the concept of Mass Communication which will be studied in Unit-5 of this course.

We hope that this unit will help you to understand the different barriers to communication and subsequently ways to avoid them. So let us first understand the meaning of communication barriers.

4.3 BARRIERS OF COMUNICATION

In common parlance, "Barriers" are any obstacles or difficulties that come in the way of communication. Barriers may be physical, mechanical, psychological, semantic, cultural or linguistic in nature. Communication barrier is faced by many people while communicating. Many a times meaning is lost while conveying the messages from a sender to a receiver

In communication process, sender encodes the message and passes it through some channel to the receiver who then decodes it. Communication is said to be complete if the messages sent by the sender are interpreted correctly by the receiver. However sometimes certain 'factors does' not allow the messages to be interpreted properly. Such kind of disturbance which impedes the proper transmission and interpretation of messages are known as Communication Barriers. Howsoever effective a communicator might be, he or she does face certain barriers from time to time.

In business communication the major obstacles arise because of the set –up of organization- organizational barriers. The size of an organization, the physical distance between employees of an organization, the specialization of jobs and activities, and the power and status relationships, are the main organizational barriers. Besides, there are the barriers, raised by interpersonal relationships between individual and group, the prejudices of both individuals and groups, and the channels they use to communicate.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q.1. What do you mean by barriers of communication?

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4.4 TYPES OF COMMUNICATION BARRIERS

In the last section you have understood the meaning of communication barriers. Here you will learn about the different barriers of communication process.

The important communication barriers are summarized below:

(i) Physical barriers

Four main kinds of distractions act as 'physical barriers' to the communication process. They are–

- **The Completing Stimulus** in the form of another conversation going on within hearing distance, or loud music or traffic noise in the background. The cawing of crows or a plane passing overhead can for example, drown out messages altogether.
- **Environmental Stress:** A high temperature and humidity, poor ventilation, vibrations felt, a strong glare – all can contribute to distortions in the sending and receiving of messages.
- **Subjective Stress :** Sleeplessness, ill health, the effects of drugs and mood variations give rise to forms of subjective stress that often lead to great difficulties in listening and interpretation.
- **Ignorance of the Medium:** The various media for communication are: oral, written, audio, visual and audiovisual. The use of a medium with which the communicators are not familiar would

turn the medium itself into a barrier. For instance the use of visual media like maps and charts to instruct workers who have not been taught to read maps and charts would alienate the workers immediately; they would "switch off" for lack of knowledge of the medium.

(ii) Psychological barriers

Each of us has a certain 'frame of reference', a kind of window through which we look out at the world, at people, and events and situations. A frame of reference is a system of standards and values, usually implicit, underlying and to some extent controlling an action, or the expression of any belief, attitude or idea. Even if two individuals are identical to each other, they do not possess exactly similar frames of reference. To a large extent our frames of reference are influenced by our experiences, particularly our childhood experiences, and the cultural environment in which we have grown up. Heredity too has a great influence.

These 'mental sets' are modified by learning and deeper experiences as we grow and mature, and develop diverse frames of reference to meet different needs – our own and that of the group we identify ourselves with. This is the 'Reference group' whose attitudes towards religion, politics, and education and so on we adopt as our own – without being fully aware that we are doing so.

(iii) Semantic Barriers :

Semantics is the science of meanings. A word can carry as many as five hundred meanings. Such barriers arise due to differences in meanings, which people attach to the different words. The meanings of the words are not in the words: they are with us. A poor choice of symbols or their confused meanings could distort communication. **Semantic barriers can be subdivided into** :

1. Word interpretations
2. Gestures (handshakes and frowns)
3. Language translations
4. Signs and symbols
5. Cue meaning

Language facilitates understanding, but there are times when it can be a barrier to communication. In the first place, a language (whether verbal or non-verbal) is ambiguous by nature. The words of language, for instance, are mere symbols, and by themselves rarely represent only one meaning. Further, these symbols are understood differently by participants in communication. And words (or symbols) process objective and subjective meanings. While objective (or denotative or dictionary) meanings point to objects, people and events, subjective (or connotative) meanings point to emotional and evaluational responses. The favourable and unfavourable associations of a word depend upon the cultural context in which it is used.

If everyone used symbols the same way, language would be much easier to manage and understand. However, your own experience shows that this isn't always the case. Messages that seem perfectly clear to you prove confusing or misleading to others. You tell the hair stylist to "take a little off the top" and then are stunned to discover that her definition of "a little" was equivalent to your definition of "a lot". You have a heated argument about the merits of feminism without realizing that you and the other person have been using the word to represent entirely different ideas. Misunderstandings like these serve to remind us that meanings are in people, not in words.

In Washington, D.C, an uproar developed when the city's ombudsman, David Howard, used the word ***niggardly*** to describe an approach to budgeting. Howard, who is white, was accused by some African American critics of uttering an unforgivable racial slur. His defenders pointed out that the word, which means 'miserly' is derived from Scandinavian languages, and has no link to the racial slur it resembles. Even though the criticisms eventually died away, they illustrate that, correct or not the meanings that people associate with words have far more significance than do their dictionary definitions.

Apart from the above mentioned barriers, there are also other barriers. These are given below;

Personal Barriers : No two people are alike. People differ from one another because of different geographical, economic, social, educational or

occupational backgrounds. Some characteristics are inherited by them due to their birth, family backgrounds, upbringing or social events that are unique to them. These include –

1. Personal Emotions
2. Biases
3. Perceptual Variations
4. Competencies
5. Mental Faculties
6. Five Senses
7. Psychological Problems

Technical Barriers: Technical barriers arise due to:

1. Space or geographical distance
2. Mechanical failures
3. Physical obstructions (too much emphasis on the organization structure
4. Technological malfunctions (like bad telephone lines, poor printouts from the printer etc)
5. Improper timing of communication
6. Wrong timing of communication

Linguistic and cultural barriers: A language is the expression of the thoughts and experiences of a people in terms of their cultural environment. When the same language is made use of in a different culture, it takes on another colour, another meaning. When for instance, English is employed in India, it comes under the influence not only of the accent of the local language, but also of the meanings and connotations of words, phrases and idioms of that language, and of the culture that has given rise to it.

Each language shapes the reasoning of its speakers. Thus English enforces 'either/or' thinking and reasoning, which Chinese does not. Indeed no human is free to describe nature with strict objectivity; he is a prisoner of his language and even the same language has to cross not only cultural and generation gaps, but political and social gaps.

What is more, in our own familiar environment we switch our type of language fairly frequently, probably quite unconsciously ; we modify it according to whom we are talking to, where we are, and according to what we talk about; there is a different language for discussing profits margins and for talking about the merits of the domestic help..... we are aware of the situational differences. This is equally true of on-verbal language: a nod of the head does not mean assent in all cultures; the 'thumbs up' gesture has different associations for urban and rural groups in India; the touching of an elder's feet is a mark of respect in North India, but a mark of humiliation in other cultures.

Barriers arising from the organization climate: These are the barriers that are created due to problems in the culture of the organization and also, due to lack of proper directions of the managers or top brass. These are as follows –

(i) Fears

Fear includes:

- Fear of being misinterpreted
- Fear of distortion by grapevine
- Fear of exposing oneself to criticism
- Fear of getting fired

In the words of Izard and Tomkins, 'Fear is an affect of great potency in determining what the individual will perceive, think and do'. Indeed together with the allied emotions of nervousness, anxiety and tension, fear is the most constricting of all the effects, resulting often in 'tunnel vision' (near-blindness to a great part of the communication). It also gives rise to slow and narrow thinking which selects and distorts communication.

During an interview, a candidate's fear, tension and anxiety tells on his performance: he fumbles for words, misinterprets questions and in general gives a poor show of himself. During a written examination, nervous candidates misread the instructions, misunderstand

the questions asked. Some psychologists, however, are of the view that a little anxiety is good, for it brings into use brain-cells otherwise inactive, and heightens attention, improves performance, releases certain hormones, and facilitates learning by a greater spread of nerve messages in the brain. In other words, fear and anxiety can be turned into a source of energy and confidence.

(ii) **Poor or Ego-centred Supervision:** Poor supervision may create obstacles in the communication process. Typically, the person may think that he is being ignored or dominated.

(iii) **Insincerity and lack of confidence:** Insincerity means that communication is superficial. Lack of confidence means that the message or the communicator of the message is not trustworthy.

Organization structure barriers:

When the organization structure is not properly defined, the responsibility and authority are not assigned and channels are not clear. Thus, communication is likely to be ineffective and even harmful. These barriers are as follows:

1. Lack of chain of command
2. Bureaucratic delay
3. Political manipulations
4. Class conflicts



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q. 2 : What are the different types of barriers to communication?

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4.5 CONCEPT OF NOISE

In common parlance, the word noise means unwanted sound or noise pollution in both analog and digital eléctronics, noise or signal noise is an unwanted random addition to a wanted signal; it is called noise as a generalization of the audible noise heard when listening to a weak radio transmission. As far as communication is concerned, noise refers to influences on effective communication that influence the interpretation of conversations. Communication noise can have a deep impact on our perception of interaction with others and our analysis of our own communication proficiency.

Main forms of communication noise are **psychological noise, physical noise, physiological noise and semantic noise.** All these forms of noise greatly influence our communication with others.

4.6 TYPES OF NOISE

In the last section, you have understood the meaning of noise. Here you will learn about the different types of noise. These have been summarized below–

(i) Physical Noise

This kind of noise is produced by any external element that hinders the process of communication. Communication is affected by physical noise, which is any external element that hinders the process of communication. A noisy or confined environment may hinder the development of clear thoughts. Encoding could be faulty. Transmission could be interrupted by disturbances of the telephone line. Inaccurate reception of the message could be caused by lack of attention. Decoding could also be faulty, or the receiver could be interrupted by disturbances of the telephone line. Inaccurate reception of the message could be caused by lack of attention. Decoding could also be faulty, or the receiver could be prejudiced against the sender.

Examples of physical noise include: people talking in the background, background noise, a startling noise and acknowledging someone outside of the conversation.

(ii) Mental Noise

Mental noise could be present due to a state of mental instability of the receiver. This could happen due to social, economic, personal or psychological problems being faced by the receiver.

(iii) Psychological noise

Such noise results from preconceived notions we bring to conversations, such as racial stereotypes, reputations, biases and assumptions. When we think about what the other person is going to say and why during any conversation, we can get carried away by their original message. It is quite difficult to free ourselves from psychological noise. So, we must take it into our stride that it exists and to take into account those distractions during our conversation.

(iv) Semantic noise

This noise is generally caused by the sender, i.e., the encoder. It takes place when the grammar as spoken by the sender cannot be decoded. Such type of noise also occurs when we keep technical language



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q. 3 : What do you mean by noise? What are the different types of noise? Name them.

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4.7 LET US SUM UP

In this unit you have been introduced to the concept of barriers to communication and noise. Let us go over what we have learnt

- Communication barriers are any obstacles or difficulties that come in the way of communication.
- There are mainly three types of barriers- physical barriers, psychological barriers and semantic barriers.
- Noise means unwanted sound or noise pollution.
- There are mainly four kinds of noise-physical, mental, psychological and semantic noise.



4.8 FURTHER READINGS

- **Handbook of Journalism and Mass Communication** –*VB Aggarwal & VS Gupta, Concept Publishing Company, New Delhi*
- **Mass Communication in India** –*KJ Kumar, Jaico Books, Mumbai.*



4.9 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Ans. to Q. No. 1 :

Barriers to communications are certain disturbances that occur during a communication process. Communication barriers may be due to lack of communication environment or a common frame of reference, noise, badly coded messages, disturbance in the transmission channels, mistrust between the sender and the receiver, different perception of reality and vagueness about the objectives achieved.

Ans. to Q. No. 2 :

The different types of barriers to communication are physical barriers, psychological barriers, and semantic barriers. Apart from these three types of barriers there are also organization structure barriers,

linguistic and cultural barriers, technical barriers and personal barriers.

Ans. to Q. No. 3 :

Noise means unwanted sound which tends to break down communication process or causes disturbances in the environment leading to noise pollution.

The main forms of noise are psychological noise, physical noise, physiological noise and semantic noise.



4.10 POSSIBLE QUESTIONS

Q. 1. What is the difference between mental noise and psychological noise?

Q. 2. What communication barriers are generally encountered in an organization?

UNIT-5 : MASS COMMUNICATION

UNIT STRUCTURE

5.1 Learning Objectives
5.2 Introduction
5.3 Mass Communication,
  5.3.1 Definition
  5.3.2 Characteristics of Mass Communication
  5.3.2 Types of Mass Communication
5.4 Functions of Mass Communication
5.5 Evolution of Mass Communication
5.6 Mass Media
5.7 Let Us Sum Up
5.8 Further Reading
5.9 Answers To Check Your Progress
5.10 Possible Questions

5.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit you will be able to–

- define Mass Communication and Mass Media
- explain the characteristics of Mass Communication
- name and explain the types of Mass Communication
- enumerate the functions of Mass Communication
- delineate the evolution of Mass Communication.

5.2 INTRODUCTION

In the previous units, we have learnt about the basic concepts of communication, its process, functions, barriers etc. In this unit we are going to discuss one of the most important forms of communication - Mass Commu-

nication - that has a very deep influence on the lives of all human beings across the world, an influence which is increasing every passing day.

Mass Communication is an activity that has been encompassing each and every sphere of our life. So, a detailed study of this system will help us in communicating better with our surroundings and the society. We will be discussing various aspects of the wider concept of Mass Communication here in this unit.

After you go through this unit, you will know what Mass Communication means, how it works, its characteristics, growth and development. So, let us first understand what Mass Communication means.

5.3 MASS COMMUNICATION

Mass Communication is the activity or process of communicating with an innumerable number of receivers or audiences who might be scattered all over the world.

Over the decades a rapid advancement in science and technology has facilitated the system of communicating with people anywhere in the world and it has become a simple enough function today.

Sending across our messages to the audiences or receivers has been rendered quite simple nowadays and everyday it is improving at a faster pace.

Because of this, the world today has become a smaller place as any person can communicate with anyone across the globe in a few seconds any moment of the day or night. Geographical or physical barriers are coming down very fast.

Mass Communication helps us in socialization among the people irrespective of any border – whether geographical, political, economical or otherwise. Nowadays, like human beings, the nations of the world have also

become dependent upon each other for so many things including their growth and development. So, an acute need to address the people world-wide has arisen over the decades reaching the peak today. Thus, Mass Communication has assumed an ever more significant role today and an almost inseparable part of our life.

To communicate with an audience spread all over the world is definitely a tough task as all of them differ in culture, civilization etc. Being a system of communicating with such a large number of people with hardly any similarity among them, it is definitely a difficult task, totally different from personal level communication.

Mass communication is a 'mediated' communication because, to communicate with such a huge number of people all over the world, we must take the help of a mechanical medium without which it will be impossible to carry out the task.

This is also a highly impersonal form of communication. There is no direct personal touch between the communicators and audiences or readership at all.

It has to be simultaneous which means that the messages must be available to the interested people at the same instant, except in case of newspapers. Even for newspapers and magazines, though the time of delivery may not be exactly the same, yet a fair amount of simultaneousness is maintained.

It is a 'magic multiplier' or 'force multiplier' which means that a single message broadcast by the media or printed in a newspaper or magazine is available in the air which can be downloaded virtually any number of times any moment with the help of receiver sets.

Mass Communication is an important discipline for every section of our lives – science & technology, environment, political system etc.

A profession in the media is a high pressure job because 'the switch is in our hands'. That is – if we don't like a certain programme we simply switch

it off rather than watching bad programmes. So, the media persons must be good enough to keep the audiences glued to the media any time of the day or night.

5.3.1 Definition

Different communication experts have defined Mass Communication in different ways. However, if we want to quote a generalized definition of Mass Communication which reflects all the characteristics of Mass Communication, we can put it this way :

'Mass Communication occurs when a small number of people send messages to a large, anonymous and usually heterogeneous audience through the use of a specialized mechanical communication device.'

So, Mass Communication represents the creation and sending of a homogenous message to a large heterogeneous audience through the media.

Communication expert Mr JV Vilanilam defines Mass Communication as "a communication of mass-produced messages to mass audiences consisting of millions of people who do not gather at any particular place but individually receive the messages sitting in their homes or their offices. The messages are produced by trained professionals in organizations specially formed by private entrepreneurs or public / government / autonomous bodies which invest millions of dollars for the production and dissemination of those messages."

Here, we come across the concept of 'professional communicators' who are nothing but trained personnel engaged in broadcasting or publishing messages from the original sources. For example – if the Prime Minister of the country would like to send across a message to the people, the people employed by the media organizations like newspapers / TV / Radio, edit the messages and broadcast / pub-

lish it in a suitable manner for the benefit of the public. So this breed of personnel is called the professional communicators.

5.3.2 Characteristics of Mass Communication

Here, we will discuss a few of the important characteristics of Mass Communication that will make it convenient for you to understand the concept better.

- The number of receivers or audiences is innumerable. It includes anyone living anywhere in the world without any consideration for gender, religion, country, state etc.
- The messages must be available to anyone who might like to enjoy it. There must not be absolutely any deprivation or discrimination based on any criteria in this regard.
- The feedback is the most delayed in this type of communication. This is so because even if a receiver would like to express as well as register his or her reaction about anything broadcast or published in the media it would still take some time before it can be properly acknowledged in the media.
- The message delivery has to be synchronous or in other words happening at the same moment everywhere, wherever it is available. For example - whenever we listen to radio or watch TV programmes it is available at the same time for all the receiver sets across the globe without any exception.
- The process of Mass Communication is rather a complex one with several steps, from encoding to finally delivering it to the receivers. This is very much comparable to the process of communication in the basic sense.
- Here, you will be introduced to an important concept called the 'gatekeeping' process. This concept means that out of so many things happening all around us and so many messages coming to us from all sides, we do not pay attention to all of them. We are attracted by only a few of these events and activities on which we

do concentrate our attention. Gatekeeping is also done on macro as well as on micro level by the organisation depending upon the importance of the message.

- The audience of Mass Communication is spread anywhere in the world with no homogeneity at all. They are highly scattered, disorganized and shapeless as a whole and are anonymous to the source.

5.3.3 Types of Mass Communication

Mass Communication is a vast field and has several types classified upon different parameters. There are basically three types of Mass Communication. Here we will give you just a very short introduction to the different types as each of these types will be discussed in detail in subsequent study materials. These are -

Journalism: It is the business of presenting news to the masses. It brings the whole world into our drawing rooms in the form of news items from across the globe from thousands of miles away. Even though the news items served in the newspaper or news channels seem to be simple enough, yet, one can hardly imagine the efforts, time, resources (financial and otherwise) needed to carry out the whole task.

Public Relations: It is that type of Mass Communication which tries to create as well as boost the pubic image of an organization among the masses. As the present age is an age of tremendous competition among the business corporations, the ones which will enjoy the maximum support of the audiences or publics will be the most successful ones in the long run. So PR is important for industry today.

Advertising: It is the paid form of publicity used for creating awareness about a product or service among the masses. For publication of an advertisement the manufacturers or service providers of the products or services have to pay a certain amount of money to the

media house. It is interesting to note that most of the mass media organizations actually survive and thrive on the collection of advertising revenues which is generated by selling its space for publishing or broadcasting messages in return for a fee so that people can come to know about that product.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q. 1. Define Mass Communication.

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Q. 2. What are the different types of Mass Communication?

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5.4 FUNCTIONS OF MASS COMMUNICATION

Communication and Mass Communication are integral aspects of our life and thereby the society at large. That is why they have to perform certain functions which are expected of them by the society. This is obvious because only through communication we can transform the world, by allowing people to know about our revolutionary ideas, feelings, cooperation etc.

A few of the functions of Mass Communication are–

Information : We are essentially social beings and so we have to live in the company of other people in close proximity. Thus, to keep in touch with other fellow human beings we have to exchange our feelings, attitudes etc. From a technical point of view these are simply bits of information in themselves which carry and connote certain meanings to the receivers.

The initiator or sender of the messages encodes those messages and the receiver decodes or accords certain meanings to them.

Instruction : Mass Communication has developed into a broad platform with lot of opportunities for presenting diverse views, solutions, models for various problems, issues and developmental initiatives from which the masses can pick up the one most suitable for them. Besides, being serious analyzers of such issues and problems, day in and day out the mass media agencies develop certain expertise in such matters. And thereby instruct people about what course of action is to be taken at times of crisis.

Entertainment : Entertainment is a major function of Mass Communication along with others. Actually, for most of the audiences and readership of mass media, the term generally conjures up an image of entertainment programmes and messages at the first instance, while other facets come only later on.

Even when someone reads a news item in a newspaper it also brings to him or her a sense of entertainment besides fulfilling other necessities.

Persuasion : Mass Communication persuades the masses into believing in a certain issue or ideology by plainly offering all the sides of the issue or the problem in front of the people so that they can make a conscious and wise decision. We have already mentioned that it is a very effective platform for discussion of such issues.

Debates and discussions / agenda setting : It is a normal feature that every society has a number of problems and issues confronting it at any given time. For example, in Assam we had the immigrants' issue resulting in the Assam Accord of 1985, besides the problems of unemployment, secessionist violence and floods etc.

Similarly, at the national level the issue was whether India should produce nuclear weapons or not etc. Now, it is the media which keeps a hawk's eye on these issues and puts them in front of the public in order of a certain priority.

Cultural promotion : Mass media promotes cultural aspects of a society / community, a nation or a country by focusing it amongst a global audience. Otherwise, how could we, the people of India, more so Assam in general come to know about the socio-cultural ethos of, say, the Red Indians in the USA, or nearer home, about the culture of the South Indian people. Similarly, the culture of Assam and the communities of the North-East region have been introduced to the world audience by mass media. This activity very effectively works as a convenient cultural exchange programme in today's age of increasing dependence upon one another amongst the nations and societies of the world.

Integration : Mass media creates a strong unifying sense amongst the masses. It can be mentioned here that English was introduced as a common medium of instruction in the schools and higher institutions across the country in the early quarter of the 19th century by the British government. This has contributed immensely towards the integration of the country during those days.

This was so because India is a country of continental proportions with hundreds of ethnic communities and tribes and other racial groups co-existing with distinct cultural identities. But English language has solved this problem to a great extent and the success of the freedom movement had a lot to do with this phenomenon

Socialization : Mass media is a wonderful instrument for introducing ourselves to the outside world, right from our childhood. For a child, the first ever introduction to the world is facilitated by his or her parents or the immediate family followed by friends, society, school etc. However, the influence of mass media in making the children aware of the world and its treasure of knowledge is quite overwhelming and more than anything else.

Further, it also has to perform the function of improving the taste and of enlarging the sense of life's worthwhileness among the masses.

The modern communication media allow individuals to be linked, for the first time, directly to a national community without any mediating influence of regional and local affiliations.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q. 3 : What are the functions of Mass Communication?

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5.5 EVOLUTION OF MASS COMMUNICATION

We all know that in the earlier days, circulation of knowledge or information among the people or the masses was a very tedious process as each and every book; every pamphlet had to be copied by hand to make them ready for reading by the public. But the invention of the printing press by Johan Gutenberg of Germany in the 16th century was a revolutionary turning point in the history of mankind. This revolutionary event can be termed as the starting point of the development of the concept of Mass Communication as production of books in large numbers became possible and knowledge or information could be made public at a minimum cost and hard labour of the people.

From the basic idea of the printing press of Gutenberg several hundred years ago, state-of-the-art printing machinery has been developed today. Yet Gutenberg was the pioneer of the era of Mass Communication.

After this, there was a long gap of activity in the history of mass communication. But in 1873, Count Guglielmo Marconi invented the telegraph system which was improvised further leading to the development of Radio transmission that is considered another important milestone in the journey of the civilization of humankind.

In the post World War I scenario, TV was invented by a person called John Loggy Bayerd. By the mid-1920s Radio managed to garner a big growth

by ensuring that most of the households in the USA had at least one radio set. They were supported by more than 700 small and big Radio stations in that country even by 1927.

Mass Communication is growing by leaps and bounds over the years because of its advantageous position. This growth has received a tremendous boost when the satellite communication technology has been invented for sending across the messages of the original communicators to virtually any spot around the world using electronic signals from the earth to sky and back. This is what we now know as Direct to Home or DTH. By this, we do not need terrestrial transmission towers or stations and the signals can be received directly into the drawing rooms in our homes through the satellite with a dish antenna.

So, the entire business of Mass Communication is throwing open numerous scope for professional engagement or jobs in the industry which is growing every passing year and will keep growing at a steady speed. More so, in countries like ours where even though the industry is opening up, yet there is a lot to be done for covering the entire country as a whole.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q. 4 : Who invented the printing press?

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Q. 5 : Why is Gutenberg's printing press considered to be a turning point in the history of mankind?

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Q. 6 : Who invented the telegráph and when?

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5.6 MASS MEDIA

As we have already discussed, media are the tools and instruments for carrying a message of information to the audiences As such, mass media means the tools for facilitating Mass Communication. In simple terms, it is the carriers of messages of Mass Communication to an innumerable audience which may be scattered anywhere around the world in an uneven way.

As a communicator has to address so many people at the same instant all over the world, it is virtually impossible to do so without the help of a powerful instrument. Hence we have to use the services of mass media – Radio, TV, Films, Newspapers, Magazines, and Books etc. They act as the bridge between the communicator and the people for whom the communicator is saying something.

In the entire process, two types of mediators are involved – first the human mediator or professional communicator who is responsible for collecting, editing or brushing up the messages for making them suitable for broadcasting or printing. Reproducing the messages of the main source communicator without any distortion is a challenging job. At the same time, while editing or brushing up the messages for human consumption, professional communicators also have to keep in their minds that the messages must be prepared in a manner easily understandable to the masses. Otherwise, it will lose its appeal and attraction.

Secondly, side by side with the professional or human mediators or communicators, the mechanical devices or mass media instruments must also be in a good state so that presentation to the masses is smooth and free of any technical difficulty. Else, even a very nicely-produced and attractive programme may become worthless if the TV or Radio broadcasting becomes problematic with disturbances from sound or other sources.

We can say that if a person is interested in making a career in this field – Mass Communication – it would be a good idea to have at least a fair knowledge of the general way of functioning of mass media instruments.

The growth and development of mass media has actually revolutionized the world by helping in carrying information to the peoples' doorsteps, round-the-clock, 365 days a year.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q. 7 : What do you mean by mass media?

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Q. 8 : Name five important mass media.

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5.7 LET US SUM UP

In this unit you have been introduced to the concept of Mass Communication. Let us go over what we have learnt.

- Mass Communication is the process of communicating with innumerable audiences at the same time with the help of mechanical devices.
- The audiences are mostly unknown to each other, separated by geographical and political barriers and do not enjoy any closeness amongst themselves. The feedback or the reaction or response to a message from the communicators is delayed due to several factors.
- There are different types of Mass Communication – Journalism, Advertising and Public Relations.
- On the other hand, mass media means the devices through which communication with the masses takes place, for example – Radio, TV, Films.



5.7 FURTHER READING

- **Handbook of Journalism and Mass Communication** — *V. B. Aggarwal & VS Gupta, Concept Publishing Company, New Delhi*
- **Mass Communication in India** —*K. J. Kumar, Jaico Books, Mumbai*
- **Understanding Human Communication** —*Ronald B Adler & George Rodman, Harcourt Brace College publishers*
- **Mass Communication in India** –*J. V. Vilanilam, Sage Publications, New Delhi.*



5.9 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Ans to Q. No. 1 :

Mass Communication is the process of communicating with an immeasurable audience or readership who may be spread across the world. Mass Communication occurs when a small number of people send messages to a large, anonymous and usually heterogeneous audience through the use of a specialized mechanical communication device.

Ans to Q. No. 2 :

Journalism, Advertising, Public Relations.

Ans to Q. No. 3 :

a) Information
b) Instruction
c) Entertainment
d) Persuasion
e) Cultural promotion
f) Integration
g) Socialization

Ans to Q. No. 4 :

Gutenberg

Ans to Q. No. 5 :

Gutenberg's invention of the printing press in the 16th century was a revolutionary turning point in the history of mankind as it became the starting point of the development of the concept of Mass

Communication as production of books in large numbers became possible and knowledge or information could be made public at a minimum cost and labour.

Ans to Q. No. 6 :

Guglielmo Marconi, 1873.

Ans to Q. No. 7 :

Mass media are the tools for facilitating Mass Communication. They are the carriers of messages of Mass Communication to an innumerable audience which may be scattered anywhere around the world in an uneven way.

Ans to Q. No. 8 :

Newspaper, radio, television, internet, magazines.

5.10 POSSIBLE QUESTIONS

Q.1. What is Mass Communication? What are its different types? Write with suitable examples.

Q.2. What are the characteristics of Mass Communication?

Q.3. Write on the growth of Mass Communication.

Q.4. What is mass media? What are its types? Write with examples.

Q. 5. How does Mass Communication differ from mass media?

UNIT-6 : PROCESS OF COMMUNICATION

UNIT STRUCTURE

6.1 Learning Objectives
6.2 Introduction
6.3 How Communication Takes Place
6.4 The Elements of Communication
6.5 Let Us Sum Up
6.6 Further Reading
6.7 Answers to Check Your Progress
6.8 Possible Questions

6.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit you will be able to–

- outline the process of Communication
- explain how the Communication process actually takes place
- name the different elements of communication
- explain the functions of these elements.

6.2 INTRODUCTION

By now, after going through the previous units, you have already got the idea about what communication actually is. You have come across various segments of communication. In this unit we are going to discuss the process of communication, what exactly the entire process is and what are the elements involved in the process.

What the term 'Communication' actually means and how it is defined is clear to you by now. In the previous units we have discussed the concept, functions, barriers and types of communication. As you read this unit you

will learn that the process of communication is very interesting. The entire process of communication takes place with the help of various elements. These elements have a very important role to play. Their role and function will also be discussed in this unit.

Communication is a very common term and it also seems to be very simple. It is a term which is directly or indirectly used in our day to day life. Now, the communication process has got many elements which help in making the entire process successful. So let us understand the process of communication.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q.1. What is Communication?

_____

_____

_____

Q.2. Fill up the gap :

Communication process has many _____.

(i) elements (ii) aspects (iii) functions.

6.3 HOW COMMUNICATION TAKES PLACE



Communication is the process when any kind of information is passed by an individual (the sender) to another individual or individuals (the receiver) with the help of any kind of medium. Communication can be spoken in words or in can be non – spoken also. It is a continuous process which is going on all the time. The necessity of communication can be regarded as one of the basic needs of any living being. If the communication process

stops then the life processes will wither away. The need of communication is same for both at the individual as well as in the social level.

For successfully completing the communication process there is a need of at least one (communication can be done within our own self also) or more persons.

Here, the person who would like to start the proceedings is called is called the 'Sender' of messages. The person who receives what the sender has said is termed as the 'Receiver'. He is called the receiver because he receives the communicated message.

Now, to give a more clear picture we are citing an example. For instance, Mr. X wants a pen from his friend Mr. Y. He would therefore form a suitable sentence in this regard in his mind and speak to his friend or somebody else present there. The suitable sentence which he will form is the 'Message'.

Now, if Mr.Y or anyone who has heard the sentence will first listen to what has been said. Then he will try to understand the meaning of the sentence. Following this, the Receiver of the communication message will simply give Mr. X a pen. Or it might also happen that the receiver does not give him a pen as the latter may not be free at that time or due to any other factor. Here, in return to Mr. X's sentence or message, the Receiver may or may not speak anything but may simply do the job that is asked to carry out.

When something is said or communicated to the other person (the sender) or while replying, the Receiver of the messages also goes through the same process. At first he or she decides what is to be said in the reply to the first communication and then formulates a suitable sentence or message, which is later on passed on. This is called 'Feedback' in communication. It is nothing but the response of the Receiver.

Now, the next aspect that comes to this process is the 'Channel' which is the carrier of the information or messages which an individual wants the

other person to know or receive. Channel can be of many forms. It can be language, gestures, etc.

Ten Commandmants of Good Communication

Some essential points of good communication have been given by the American Management Association, which are popularly known as the ***Ten commandments of good communication.*** These commandments are mentioned below :

1. Clarification of ideas before communicating.
2. To examine the actual purpose of communication.
3. Taking the entire environment, i.e., both human and physical, into consideration.
4. While planning the communication valuable advice should be taken and implemented as and when required.
5. The basic content of the message should be clear and suitable for the listeners.
6. Useful information should be conveyed whenever possible.
7. Feedbacks of the subordinates should be ascertained for communicating successfully.
8. Communication should be designed keeping in mind the present as well as future prospects.
9. Support words with deeds.
10. Be a good listener.

The above mentioned essential points of communication are specially mentioned keeping in mind any management organization. But every communication process needs to follow these essential points in order to make any kind of communication process a success. The ten commandments are discussed below :

- Before preparing a message the sender has to clarify the message considering the receiver of the message. If the message is analyzed in a systematic manner it will be communicated in a more clear way.
- The objective of the message has to be determined beforehand so that the actual message can be designed in a proper way.

- The entire physical surrounding, the social atmosphere as well as the past communication practices should be taken into account so that it becomes easier for the receiver to accept the designed message.
- For any kind of communication there should be proper planning. Valuable advice from experts should be welcomed whenever necessary and applicable.
- In order to disseminate the message many factors should be kept in mind such as, Language, voice and facial expressions which should be considered.
- Important and valuable information should be given whenever necessary.
- In any kind of communication feedback is very necessary. Through the feedback it is possible to know what the effect of the message is, whether the main aim of the message has been fulfilled or not.
- The process of communication should be designed keeping in mind the future as well as the present.
- It is very important to support the words with action. All communication messages are prepared with some aim. It is very important to support one's words with action.
- For understanding the actual meaning of the message in any kind of communication, the role of the listener is very important. With the help of a good listener the understanding of any message becomes easy and simple.

The seven C's of Communication

1. **Credibility:** Communication always starts with trust. The receiver should have confidence in the sender. This will only lead to a successful communication.
2. **Context:** A communication must be designed according to the environment. The context should always confirm and not contradict the message.
3. **Content:** The message should have meaning for the receiver. It should be understandable to him. The content of the message always determines the audience.

4. **Clarity:** The message should be very simple and easily understandable. The meaning should remain same to the receiver as it is to the sender. Words used in the message should be very simple while any kind of complicated terms, phrases, themes, etc should be avoided.
5. **Continuity and Consistency:** Repetition is a very essential in the process of communication as it is a continuous process. Uniformity should be maintained in the entire process.
6. **Channels:** The channels that the receiver is comfortable with should be used and it should also be an established one.
7. **Capability:** The capability of the audience should be considered so that the message can act effectively. It should be such that less effort is required on the part of the recipient.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q. 3 : What are the main ingredients in the process of communication?

_____

_____

_____

Q. 4 : What are the ten Commandments of Good communication?

_____

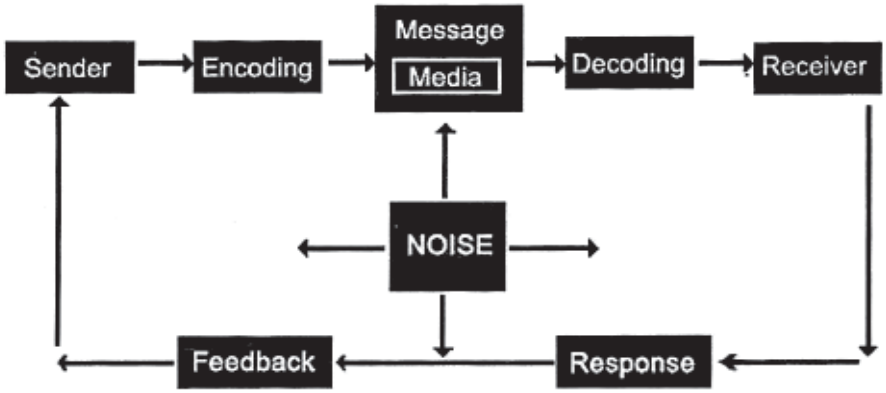
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6.4 ELEMENTS OF COMMUNICATION

The process of communication is a continuous process. It has several aims. The main aims of communication are **human relations, dialogue, empathy, persuasion, influencing, information, and understanding.**

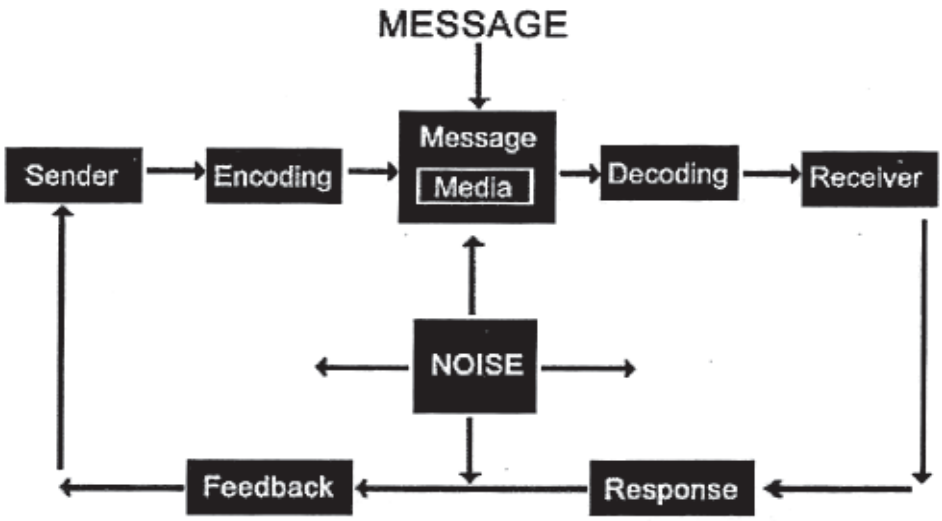
The process of communication involves many elements as shown below



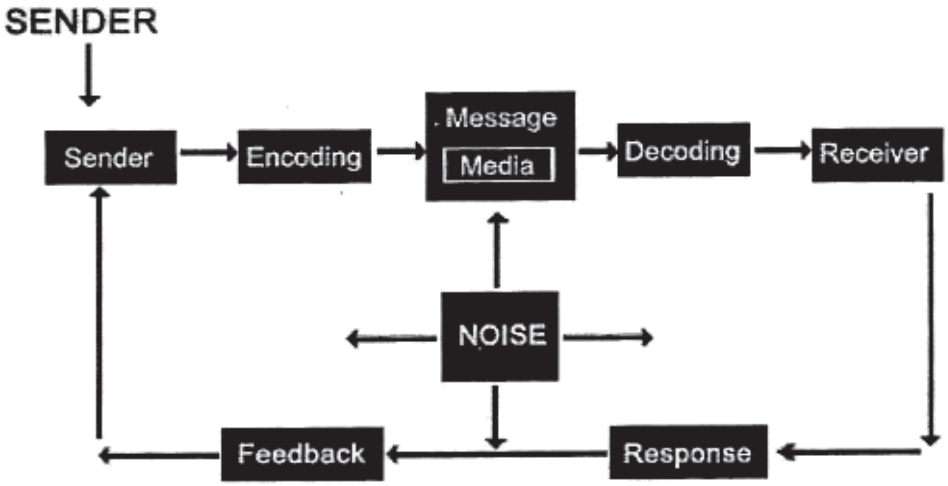
Source: www.learnmanagement2.com

A brief description of the various elements of communication is given below :–

1. **Message:** A message is any information which may be either spoken or written, that may be passed from one person to another. It is the fact which would be communicated to another person or party. It can be related to any fact, opinion, attitude, etc. The actual content of the message exists in the minds of the communicator.

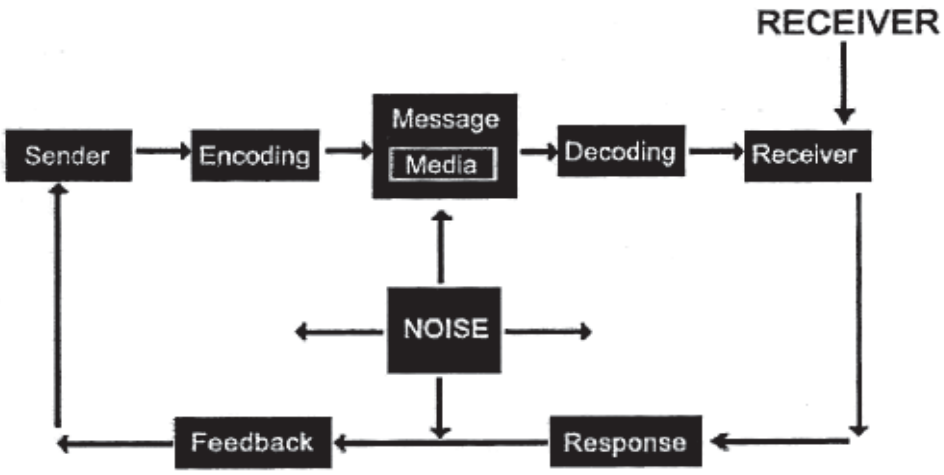


2. **Sender :** The sender of a message is the person who transmits the message. He is the one who communicates the message. Now the sender is not only required in a human conversation but it is also required in any kind of communication process.



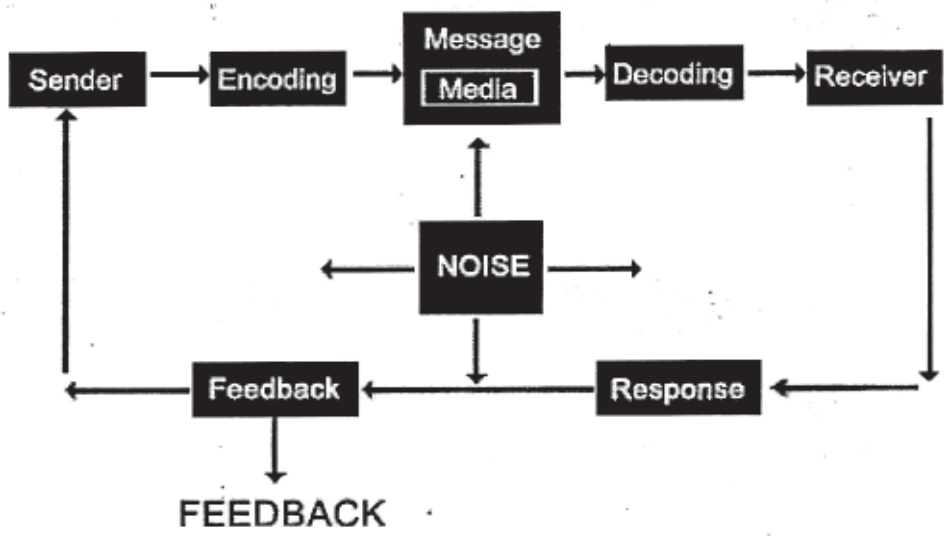
3. **Channel:** Channel is the means or the medium through which message has to be passed. The Channel acts as the carrier of the messages. The information that the sender wants his receiver to know is sent through the channel. Channel may include *language, written mediums, telephone, radio,* etc.

4. **Receiver:** The receiver of a message is the person who receives the message. The message of the sender is especially meant for the receiver. It is he who receives, interprets, perceives and understands the message.



5. **Feedback:** The most important principle of effective communication is to get back the feedback regarding the communicated message. The feedback is obtained from the receiver. Feedback is the process to know whether the receiver has understood the message

or not. With the help of the feedback it becomes easier to know the reaction of the receiver and in the process it helps to answer and interpret the message as required.



6.5 LET US SUM UP

In this unit you have learnt about the process of communication and how it takes place. Let us go over to what we have already learnt.

1. Communication is the activity of exchange of information with one-self or with any other individual with the use of different methods.
2. The essential elements of the process of communication include components such as a sender, a receiver, a channel or a vehicle for the movement of the messages or the information, feedback or the responses to the communication, noise or any kind of disturbances that might interfere during the process of communication resulting in partial understanding or misunderstanding of the meaning of the messages creating in the wastage of all the efforts made for the whole process of communication.
3. The process of communication to be successful must consist of the 7 C's of communication, which are- credibility, context, content, continuity, consistency, channel and clarity.

6.6 FURTHER READING

- **Handbook of Journalism and Mass Communication** –*V. B. Aggarwal & V. S. Gupta, Concept Publishing Company, New Delhi.*
- **Mass Communication in India** –*K. J. Kumar, Jaico Books, Mumbai.*
- **Mass Communication, Theory and Practice** –*Uma Narula, Harchand Publication, New Delhi.*
- **Mass Communication, Theory and Practice** –*K. B. Datta (Edited by), Akansha Publishing House, New Delhi.*

6.7 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Ans to Q. No. 1 :

1. Communication is the activity of sharing or exchanging information between two or more persons. It is a basic and universal tool for making others known to our views, feelings, interests, etc.

Ans to Q. No. 2 :

Elements.

Ans to Q. No. 3 :

Sender, receiver, message, channel, noise and feedback.

Ans to Q. No. 4 :

a. Before preparing a message the sender has to **clarify the message** considering the receiver of the message.

b. The objective of the message has to be **determined** beforehand.

c. The entire **physical surrounding**, the **social atmosphere** as well as the **past communication practices** should be taken into account.

d. **Planning** should be there for any kind of communication.

e. In order to disseminate the message **language, voice and facial expressions** should be considered.

f. **Information** should be given whenever necessary.

g. In any kind of communication **feedback** is very important.

h. The process of communication should be designed keeping in mind of the **future as well as the present.**

i. The words should be supported with action in communication.

j. The role of the listener is very important in any kind of communication.

6.8 POSSIBLE QUESTIONS

Q.1. Describe the process of communication and explain why it is important in the lives of human beings.

Q.2. What are the elements in the process of communication? Explain with suitable examples.

Q.3. What do you understand by seven Cs of Communication?

Q.4. Discuss the 'ten commandments' of good communication.

Q.5. Write short notes on

(a) The Sender (b) Feedbacks (c) Channel.

UNIT-7 : COMMUNICATION & SOCIETY

UNIT STRUCTURE

7.1 Learning Objectives
7.2 Introduction
7.3 Role of Communication in Society
7.4 Why Communication is Important
7.5 Impact of Society on Communication Processes
7.6 Communication and Social Change
7.7 Communication and Culture
7.8 Information Society
7.9 New Information Order
7.10 Let Us Sum Up
7.11 Further Reading
7.12 Answers to Check Your Progress
7.13 Possible Questions

7.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

The study of this unit will enable you to be familiar with–

- the importance of communication in society and the role played by it
- how communication influences the society
- how communication affects social change and cultural aspects of the masses or the society
- the concept of Information Society and how it functions
- what is new Information Order

7.2 INTRODUCTION

You are already familiar with the broad concept of the communication process and also its various aspects in today's context. Communication has

managed to establish itself as the 'fourth basic human need' after food, shelter and clothes for human beings.

As communication is integrally connected to our life we can't imagine a life without it. You may have heard about punishments given to criminals by putting them in 'solitary confinement' in prisons. This is nothing but putting the person in a small single cell where he or she can't see or meet any other human being. This becomes very depressing. The severest punishment if someone wants to give a person—STOP TALKING. This situation is not less than a death.

Now, as communication is so closely related to our day-to-day life having bearing on the evolution of our future life, it is only necessary and natural that an adequate amount of study must be carried out to examine its different related aspects from all angles.

In other words, we can say that the entire world runs on 'communication' or it is the 'fuel' of the world community. Is there 'any' aspect or walk of life of the humankind where there is no need of communication?

Here, if we study it in detail it will help us in understanding it better and also at the same time allow us to find out more and more ways of improving it in the future – both for mass communication and individual interaction through person-to-person communication. This is why it is necessary that we become familiar with communication as a discipline to the maximum extent possible.

7.3 ROLE OF COMMUNICATION IN SOCIETY

It almost goes without saying that communication has a huge role to play in society and it is an integral part of it. It is the cement of society. It is impossible to confine it to the limits of written words. Therefore, it is important to understand the extent of this role played by communication in the society. We shall try to explain this in simple language by elucidating the following concepts.

(a) SOCIALIZATION :

The term socialization is used by Sociologists, Social Psychologists, Anthropologists and others to refer to the process of inheriting norms, customs and ideologies. Socialization provides the individual with habits and skills necessary for participation in social activities within their own society. Thus, sociology describes the process by which an individual is integrated into the society. People are shaped by both social influences and their biological makeup. A person's socialization is vital for his behavioural activities. When we use the phrase 'to socialize' we mean simply to associate or mingle with people socially.

There are different types of socialization. Such as, (a) Primary socialization, (b) Secondary socialization, (c) Developmental socialization, (d) Anticipatory socialization, (e) Resocialization.

Primary socialization occurs when a child learns the attitude, values and actions appropriate to individuals as members of a particular culture, for example, if a child finds his parents making a derogatory comments about some neighbours then a child may think this behaviour as acceptable and say the same comments about the neighbour but **secondary socialization** refers to the process of leaving what is an appropriate behaviour as a member of smaller group within a larger society. This socialization is usually associated with teenagers and adults. Other types of socialization denote the processes of different kinds.

There are the agents of socialization which are the people and groups that influence our behaviour, emotions, attitudes, etc, basically the agents of socialization are, the Family, Education, Religion, Peer groups, the Mass Media and other agents such as, work place, public institution, etc.

Socialization has a great role to play in society and in this regard the mass media has assumed great significance. Mass media has emerged as an important social force in its primary function of communicating with the masses. We may take the example of the link existing between television as a mass media and education and

socialization of children. Many theorists like Pearsons recognize that socialization continued from the childhood to adulthood. By the middle of the 20th century mass media were becoming an important social force. For children the television could be a medium for education but for the adult it could be regarded as a source of information and entertainment. Communication is integrally connected to our life and we cannot imagine our life without it. At each and every stage of our life one or the other form of communication is constantly at work to inform us about something or the other. Socialization initiates a person into the big broad world by making him or her familiar with the outside world. Communication thus has a great influence in our interaction with the society. So, there is an intimate link between communication and socialization.

(b) SOCIAL & NATIONAL INTEGRITY :

Communication works as a major cementing factor in enhancing the unity and integrity amongst masses and the nation as a whole. The word 'communication' derives its origin from the meaning of 'making something common' or in other words, when we live in a community, whether large or small, we need a common system for making our thoughts, feelings known to each other by various modes. This is in a broad meaning of what we understand as 'communication'.

The word 'community' is also derived in a similar way. Community means a group of people living together in one place where quite a few things including language, culture are common. Of course, nowadays the characteristics of the term community have undergone some change to include people coming together without any similarity of lifestyle or culture but having a common religion, race or profession on pursuing a specific goal or intention or holding certain attitudes and interests.

Same is the case in common about the term 'nation' on a broader sense. Nation may be defined as a large group of people sharing the same culture, language and history and inhabiting a particular territory.

Let us explain this with an example. Before the British rule in the Indian sub continent stretching from the present day Afghanistan to Myanmar and Sri Lanka, the entire area was divided into a few major kingdoms, many hundreds of princely states, Zamindari estates etc. There was no existence of formal integration among them worth the name during those years because of the vast differences in language, culture, lifestyle prevailing the constituents among and one part of the country hardly knowing anything about the other places at all.

However, this had all changed when the British government introduced a formal system of education across the country from primary to higher level in English and also in local languages. Within a short span of time this introduction of English-based educational system has immensely helped in making communication among people from different regions of this vast country a distinct convenience. So it gradually paved the way for a 'feeling of unity' among the people cutting across regions. Exchange of views and in other words communication, became much more convenient which ultimately led to the emergence of the freedom struggle in due course of time. Thus communication plays a pivotal role in securing social and national integration among the people.

It is a country in which independent media also plays a crucial role in facilitating the participation of citizens in the democratic process. It does so by providing information and analysis on many issues concerning the masses at the grassroots level.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q. 1 : Discuss the role played by communication in the society.

2. Say whether the following expressions are true or false.
   (a) Communication is helpful in securing social and national integration
   (b) A nation consists of people inhabiting different territory.

7.4 WHY COMMUNICATION IS IMPORTANT

Communication is important on the following grounds :

(i) Communication facilitates a smoother flow of information to the masses. We know that our educational as well as other research institutions are constantly engaged in various path-breaking research works in addition to the normal teaching duties. For example – prevention of different deadly diseases, leading a healthy lifestyle, finding a good variety of seeds for agricultural purposes, developing an improvised breed of livestock and poultry, policy researches etc. are being carried out in many of these institutions.

Now, will these findings be of any benefit for the society if just a few people (only those involved in the process) know about them and no one else is allowed access to them? The society will derive benefits out of it if only all these findings are made known to the masses so that they can use it in their day-to-day life and thereby enhance the quality of their life.

But the question arises how to do this. This is a much more serious challenge for the people involved in the business of communication as we all know that in our country even today about 70% of the people live in rural areas for whom agriculture is the mainstay of life.

At this point communication comes to the rescue of research institutions and the people involved in the process to facilitate the flow of information to the masses – who are the actual target beneficiaries of all those efforts in the end. How this is going to be done is a matter of concern for the communication strategists.

(ii) Communication can be of immense help in the field of education. The official literacy rate of our country is 65%, which means that out of the 116 crore of population about 70 crore of the people are supposed to be literate. But the official definition of a literate person is 'someone who can just sign his or her name'.

So you can imagine the actual number of people who are literate or educated in the true sense of the term which would roughly comes around half of the official percentage – about 40 crore of people in reality.

The number of illiterate people is a substantial one and we as a nation can't expect to develop properly if such a big number of people remain literate. And a majority of these people are in such an age group and such financial condition that they can't afford to be admitted to a formal school of education. This is why communication can be of great help in delivering the benefits of modern day education and knowledge to these people at their doorsteps so that even without going to school or college they can become literate.

(iii) Communication disseminates information and knowledge about the progress and development taking place in one country. Whenever any new development-oriented scheme is announced by the government often there is a problem in making the people aware of the schemes in a convenient and cheaper method. At such times communication is the only alternative that facilitates such dissemination of information and knowledge.

(iv) Another effect of Communication is felt in the promotion of harmony and fellow feeling among the masses. It does so not only among the people of a country but also among even groups at war or fighting with each other. Many of you may well remember the 'pressure valve' theory behind the British government's initiative to establish the original Congress party in Mumbai. We all know that around the 1880s widespread resentment was growing in the minds of the educated people who were getting restless that the British government was not paying adequate attention to the country's issues. The Congress party was formed as a means for easing the pressure from those people and made them feel that the government was actually doing

something in this regard. To make this information known to the people this was an initiative which we can term as communication deemed necessary for informing the people.

Further, you must all be familiar with the term and demand that 'dialogues' be initiated with secessionist and dissenting groups making their presence felt in the society from time to time. This term 'dialogues' is nothing but a way of communication for bringing the dissenting parties into the negotiation table and thereby find a peaceful solution to complex issues.

7.5 IMPACT OF SOCIETY ON COMMUNICATION PROCESS

Society and communication are integrally connected with each other and they are bound to influence each other because it is not one-sided activity.

It is normally said that communication or mass communication is a near perfect mirror of the society of any nation across the globe. If a person would like to study the nature of a society or a nation one just needs to carry out a thorough study of the mass media system of that nation and a good idea about the nation's characteristics would be revealed. In the unit on Theories of Mass Communication you must have seen how mass media functions in different nations. That is, depending upon the prevailing socio-political system of that society the mass media is also shaped in a similar way. This implies that the society impacts the communication in the same way as the latter does the former.

We can take the example of a democratic nation. Here with a high value on freedom of expression we will find that the mass media is considerably free from any coercion or pressure from any party – whether political or commercial. On the other hand, in case of autocratic or totalitarian regimes the communication system and policy would be guided fully by the ruler's (single the party or the individual) discretions.

The journalists or media persons managing the mass media in country are also the products of that same society and therefore they become fully oriented to the prevailing culture or system and the same culture is automatically reflected in their functioning also.

Communication is also very much a part of an individual's and a society's or a nation's overall culture. And that culture is shaped by many factors including heritage, history, present day requirements, circumstances, and relationship with neighbouring societies, nations, exposure to other culture etc. So it is quite natural that a major influence will be exerted by the society on the communication process.

What is, however, important is a balanced influence between both the entities society and communication because that is a healthy way to promote our society. Society should influence the communication system in a way that is deemed the best for that particular mass of people. On the other hand, the communication process must also be able to make its influence felt on the masses by developing and promoting good habits and practices among them so that both of them can play a meaningful role in the overall development of the society.

However, of late it can be seen that rather than a balanced influence by each side on the other side, there has been a major mismatch, resulting in a highly imbalanced and titled influence from mass media on the masses.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q. 3 : How does the society influence the communication process?

_____

_____

_____

7.6 COMMUNICATION AND SOCIAL CHANGE

In the unit 'Introduction to Communication' you have gone through the chapter on functions of communication and mass communication. Communication performs the important functions of – informing, educating, and persuading the masses. These functions are so closely connected with each other that we can't exactly differentiate between them and find out a point where one of them finishes and the other begins its journey.

As communication brings in newer aspects of development to the masses every passing day and at the same time informing, educating and persuading the people to adopt these new things, it is contributing a lot to social change among the people.

Let us cite a few small examples. Nowadays, a big portion of our population, mainly those living in cities and towns are much more prone to celebrating and observing those festivals, occasions which were not exactly part of our traditional culture at all. Such as – celebrating the Christian new year's day, Valentine's Day, friendship day, mother's day, parents' day etc. In contrast, how much do we actually celebrate and observe of our local cultural festivities and occasions like Bihu puja etc.?

Many of you would definitely recall the contributions of great statesmen and social workers led by Gandhiji, Raja Ram Mohan Roy, Swami Vivekananda, American missionaries in Assam who launched the publication of **Arunodoy** – the first Assamese newspaper in 1846 among others.

All these noble persons have published and edited newspapers and journals, magazines with a specific goal – making the masses aware of modern concepts of lifestyle and other things. We all know that most of the newspapers and journals published in the pre-Independence days were brought out with the main aim of mobilizing mass support for the freedom struggle across the nation. And we can confidently say that the media of the period can claim a major credit for spreading awareness among the masses about the freedom struggle and thereby making it successful in the long run. This is a fine example of how communication can contribute towards affecting social change in any society.

Communication is a very convenient and effective window to the big broad world outside. It exposes us to different cultures around the globe and helps us in choosing which of them to be adopted or not to be adopted. Immediately after our independence in 1947, the All India Radio (AIR) was officially mandated to cater to the needs of information of the masses as there was no other media except newspapers which could not be read by illiterate persons.

The goal of AIR was to disseminate all development-oriented information for the people in the absence of a proper network of schools and colleges etc. throughout the country. The goal behind these efforts was to bring in an overall improvement in the living standards of the masses in every nook and corner of the country. So you can understand how communication can affect social change in a big way in any society of the world.

Prof. Ashok Tandon, Director of Makhanlal Chaturvedi National University of Journalism & Communication, NOIDA in his article 'The changing face of Indian media' in the Press Council of India's souvenir published on the occasion of the 2009 National Press Freedom Day has highlighted a few important developments in this regard.

Prof. Tandon describes how the Father of Nationalist Press in the country Raja Rammohan Roy learnt the English language to launch nationalist newspapers for countering British propaganda against Indian ethos and cultural heritage. Roy used his newspapers for educating the Indian people on subjects like Sati and exploitation of peasantry by zamindars in Bengal. This can be described as educative journalism which is a fine example of how communication can contribute effectively towards social change in any society.

7.7 COMMUNICATION AND CULTURE

We already know that the term communication is a very broad one in its scope and it encompasses almost each and every aspect of our life – both as an individual person and also of the society as a whole. In simple words

communication is anything that reflects or sends some idea about anything. Now we are going to discuss the relation between communication and culture. But before discussing it let us deliberate on culture. In the common paralance culture is the overall lifestyle of the people in a society or in a family. It comprises our mindset, literacy level, intellectual capacity, way of living, level of empowerment of the mind etc. So, in a way, our culture also communicates something very strongly to the other persons or societies or nations in the world.

Everything from such small things as our physical gestures or non verbal communication, preferences for something special, to our ethos, our cultural forms like songs, dances, art, theatre and literature which are part of our lifestyle also denotes something about our society or the individual personality.

This is one type of communication in its own rights and after coming into contact with people from other cultures we communicate within us and accept or reject others' systems.

Here, communication influences our culture to a very high extent. For example, by exposing ourselves to different cultural practices all over the world communication facilitates an assimilation of cultures from various nations or societies and thereby helps in creating a newer form of culture amongst us. A kind of synthesis is formed in the process. This is an ongoing and never-ending process like communication and we cannot say when this is going to end and when precisely it was started.

In the older days this was not very convenient because of lack of proper communication facilities. But nowadays no society or nation or an individual person can ever remain isolated refusing to imbibe other cultures all around him or the world.

Further, there is another factor behind this phenomenon. With globalization, liberalization and many other related factors the nations of the world have been made to become extremely inter-dependent and that is why

this cultural exchange is inevitable , irrespective of whether one likes it or not. This is because to enjoy the benefits of inter-dependence we must also come closer to each other and thereby get influenced by the other party in some way or the other.

There is another important phenomenon experienced here.

It is a normal human instinct that every person – whether a man or a woman - likes to spread around his or her area of influence. The same is the case with societies and nations of the world.

Here, a significant majority of the world nations try to influence the cultures of other nations and countries so that the clout of that country increases in other regions of the world. For example, the USA has American Centres, the United Kingdom has its British Council offices, Russia has the Russian Cultural Centres all over the world (at least in their friendly nations) through which they have been trying their best to enhance the level of their cultural influence over other nations all over the world. And the influence is very much there to be seen.

Whenever we mention the possibility of visiting a foreign nation for most of us the name of the USA followed by Europe and Britain come up immediately. The two major US cold drink brands have almost become household names for us. Such a major success has been achieved with nothing but a sheer dedicated and constantly-engaging communication by these nations in other countries.

Not only the advanced foreign nations, our country also has the Nehru Centre in London and the India Centre in Indonesia set up with the sole aim of spreading our culture in those nations.

In this way, communication also brings to us many things which are otherwise foreign to us and communication and culture have a very close relationship in which one affects the other.

7.8 INFORMATION AND SOCIETY

An information society is one where the members or people of that society lead a life which is largely facilitated by an efficient management of various kinds of information. For example – a person wakes up in the morning to the tune of an alarm in his computer or mobile phone. He or she then checks out the weather report for the day in the internet connected computer set at home, orders food for breakfast in internet after looking at various items on display browsing in the net before going to office in personal vehicle or any public transport. While going to office or anywhere the person gets the laptop or palmtop computer connected to internet through a mobile service system and gets hooked to his or her personal or commercial world.

Once settled in office, the same person checks his e-mail messages and replies to those which require it before getting involved in a video conference with a client's office or branches of his or her office.

This is just one example of an information society out of so many. At a larger stage, an information society is characterized by an immensely-large flow of information or data of different types amongst various kinds of users. For example, numerous amounts of information are generated or prepared every passing day by research laboratories, educational and academic institutions, other organizations for various purposes including weather reports, agricultural output information, industrial or economic statistics etc. which may be needed to be accessed by a cross section of users for many purposes. All these are basically exchanged through the internet.

Another major characteristic of an information society is that internet connectivity is very high in them. For example – countries like the USA, Canada, England, and Europe are pioneers in this direction. In these countries and continents because of a highly advanced stage of economic, industrial and educational development majority of the population are connected with the internet and thus the flow of information is very much facilitated amongst them.

From the above description it is clear that today's society is largely dominated by the new information technology and even a less advanced country like India feels its impact in no small measure. But the penetration of internet connection is still low in India comparatively. Govt. of India in collaboration with United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) has an ambitious plan for setting up an expansive network of internet computer connected centres for delivery of various services. On the whole, information technology is being increasingly used in India making it possible for the country to step into the new informative society in near future.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q. 4 : What is an Information Society?

7.9 NEW INFORMATION ORDER

Having discussed the various nuances of the information society we now move on to discuss how a new information order is developing in the society.

Since the last decade there has been a sea-change in the field of information flow or dissemination in our society. Earlier, it was mostly one-way top-down dissemination. That is, information, messages of news, or entertainment programmes etc. were broadcast / telecast or published from a few sources and the masses were using them as they were served with hardly an option of having a say in the process.

But nowadays with the advent of state-of-the-art technological developments all over the world there has been an increasing emphasis on a two-

way flow or exchange of information amongst the mass media and the audience.

Besides, technologically also there has been a major change in the situation resulting in the convergence of media and communication. If we have a computer set connected with internet we can easily access newspapers, TV or Radio programmes also. Interactivity and playing something 'on demand' have become the mainstay of this new information order. Further, there is the concept of blogs and podcasting which have revolutionized the field of mass media. Blogs have become extremely popular and important information providers for millions of people all over the world. In fact, many a time they also act as the source of pointing out discrepancies in news services or other programmes. For example – a photograph of a bombing of a place in Palestine by Israeli air forces which was supplied by the reputed news agency Reuters was published in many newspapers across the world several years ago. But it was none other than a blog which actually pointed out to some flaws in the photograph that proved that it was tampered with or doctored before publication. Later, when Reuters verified it from their 'freelancer' photojournalist posted in Jerusalem he admitted that the photograph was doctored almost to the tune of 30 – 40 % of the content. This is just one example of how the new information order can prove to be a boon for the society in the near future.

As our country is poised to become an information society in the near future let us consider the following table which will give you an idea about the enormity of the situation.

India is going to have the following number of items which will facilitate a much better flow of information in the next couple of years

- 700 million telephones
- 150 millions TV sets
- 10 million internet users
- 50 million personal computer users
- 1,00,000 community information centres

(Source : ARTICLE - The changing face of Indian media – shifts in the paradigm the best is yet to unfold by Dr N Bhaskara Rao, Chairman, CMS Academy of Communication & Convergence Studies, published in the 2009 National Press Day souvenir of the Press Council of India, New Delhi, page 38)

We hope that this is going to have a far better positive impact upon our society in becoming an information society in the true sense of the term.

7.10 LET US SUM UP

In our discussion we have given a brief idea about the overall concept of importance of communication for the society and also what is an information society. Communication is a basic human need of the masses and both of them influence each other in a far-reaching manner. Communication has an overwhelming presence in our personal as well as social life and thereby we can't imagine a life without it. It is so integral to our life that it even influences our socio-political and economic aspects in addition to our culture. It also goes on to effect changes in the social system amongst us. Communication is such an aspect which is supposed to reflect about our society like a true mirror. A good communication system also leads to the evolution of an information society where majority of the population are connected through the internet and their life is very much influenced or governed by different aspects of the internet connected systematic network. This is a phenomenon that we can see more commonly in the developed western societies of the world. To compete with these nations, many of the developing countries are also trying to initiate information networks for letting their population to enjoy the benefits of a wired world – information society. It is basically a question of saving a lot of time and money along with efficiency and accuracy among all things.



7.11 FURTHER READING

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7.12 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Ans to Q. No. 1 :

Communication plays a vitally important role in the society by facilitating exchange of information amongst the masses, the government and all other sources in an effective manner. Man is a social animal and we need the help of one another in the society for maintaining our life. So we need to communicate with each other extensively on a day-to-day basis. Similarly at a bigger level, there is a tremendous need for establishing and maintaining communication among various societies, nations, institutions, organizations and what

not. Thus communication is so important in our life – both at an individual or personal level and also at societies or national level in the broader level. Without this, life in the world would cease to keep going at all.

Ans to Q. No. 2 :

(a) True (b) False

Ans to Q. No. 3 :

1. We should always remember that communication exists only because of the existence of human beings or the masses. And society is nothing but a big congregation of people or masses. Thus, it is obvious that society would have a great influence on the process and system of communication in a nation. The overall culture and characteristics of the people of any society anywhere in the globe would shape the system of communication. A true communication process or system should be able to reflect the proper status of the society under any circumstances. If a person studies the mass media or the communication system of a society he or she should be able to understand the true nature of the society's culture.

Ans to Q. No. 4 :

An information society is one where internet connectivity is greatly facilitating the flow and exchange of information amongst the various partners of the society or the nation – the people or the masses, the government, institutions, organizations. If a majority of the masses in any society are connected with an internet-enabled computer system, exchange of any kind of information becomes highly convenient which saves a lot of time, money and physical effort as a person does not need to approach the source of the information personally to acquire it. Ideal information societies are usually seen in the developed western nation, where such connectivity is very high. Though our country is also trying to enact such a system it will be quite sometime before this becomes possible. This is because of the lack of literacy and a general lower economic status which prevent them from having computers, electricity connection and connectivity also.

7.12 POSSIBLE QUESTIONS

Q.1. Describe the role and importance of communication in society.

Q.2. How does a society influence the communication system?

Q.3. What is the role of communication in bringing about social change?

Q.4. What is the relationship between communication and culture?

Q.5. Describe the concept of Information Society in all its aspects with relevant examples.

Q.6. Fill in the blanks by choosing the correct alternative;

(a) In an information society people depend largely on the various kinds of _____ (information/scientific theories).

(b) Culture is shaped by various factors such as _____ (heritage/scientific theories).

Q.7. Write briefly about–

(a) Communication and social change

(b) Socialization.

UNIT-8 : COMMUNICATION AND ITS AUDIENCE

UNIT STRUCTURE

8.1 Learning Objectives
8.2 Introduction
8.3 Types of Audience
    8.3.1 Target Audience
8.4 Illiterate Audience
8.5 Mass Audience
8.6 Intellectual Audience
8.7 Relationship Between Mass Media and Audience
8.8 Let Us Sum Up
8.9 Further Reading
8.10 Answers to Check Your Progress
8.11 Possible Questions

8.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

A study of this unit will make you familiar with–

- the concept of audience in detail
- different types of audiences
- characteristics of various categories of audiences
- how communication caters to these diverse groups of audiences
- role of audiences in mass communication.

8.2 INTRODUCTION

The term audience in communication carries with it a far broader sense of meaning and it is a vast field of study. All of you are familiar with the saying that in mass communication or mass media "the switch is in our hands". It means that the popularity of any programme including the news depends on the interest of the audience– the listeners or the viewers of those

programmes and so media have to depend upon the audience for their survival. This is particularly so because the entire mass media business is based upon advertising revenues garnered through audience support. Audience support means the popularity of a programme among the audience. Advertising agencies and companies interested in broadcasting or publishing an advertisement would definitely prefer only those channels or media which have the highest number of viewers at any given moment of time. Hence, the role of audience is immensely important in mass communication. We are going to discuss all the significant aspects of the concept for your benefit in this unit.

The term 'audience' comes from the word 'audio' or sound because we usually associate the function of mass media with listening to something. However, with the advent of mass media when the printing press was invented and many hundreds and thousands books could be copied within a short time in Europe and later on in other continents, the concept of 'mass readership' started growing to have arrived at the present day status.

Today, the general term 'audience' embraces within its fold all the varieties of the system – viewers, readers and listeners.

There are two aspects in this regard which play a highly significant role in determining the extent of the audiences. They are–

MEDIA REACH : It means whether a specific mass media is available at a certain place or not. That is, for example – if the news and entertainment channels of cable TV and radio or newspapers and magazines are available at a place where any member of the audience can access it if he or she possesses the means to do so is what is called 'media reach'. In simple words, it means that specific media reaches those people in those places and provides their services to the masses there.

If for any reason like technical or financial problems the signals of the media or newspapers are not available in those places then we have to say that those mass media do not have the media reach there.

MEDIA ACCESS : Enjoying media reach or the availability of media reach in a certain place does not mean that all the members of the audiences will have access to it. That is, even if the TV / Radio channels, newspapers are available the masses may not posses the means of accessing it – one may not have a TV or Radio set to watch those programmes or it may be that a person can't afford to pay the money for subscribing to a newspaper.

So, even though there might be the reach for mass media in a place it is not necessary that all the members of the audiences would have access to them.

After discussing these two aspects– media reach and media access– let us discuss the following related concepts. These are:

(a) MEDIA EXPOSURE :

Further, even if there is reach and access to a certain mass media, it is not necessary that people are going to use it in general, that is, watching or reading or listening to them. There may be several factors for such a development such as inability to afford money to use those services, lack of time or lack of interests etc. Besides, even in the cable TV services, there are some channels for which a person needs to pay extra money to access it. Now, media exposure means whether the masses or the audiences at a specific place are actually listening to, watching or reading those mass media instruments. If the mass audiences do not expose themselves to those media then the media would lose revenues in terms of subscription and less number of advertisements in the future.

However, when a mass media launches its services newly in a place to make its presence felt in the coming days then it is a different aspect.

(b) THEORIES OF MASS MEDIA :

As mass audience is so important and integrally connected to the entire mass media business since the time of the latter's develop-

ment researchers and scholars in this field have been engaging themselves in research into the various aspects of the concept or entity. Quite a few theories of mass communication have been formulated and established because of these research activities.

For example – *the Bullet theory, Hypodermic Needle theory, Need gratification theory etc.*

The Bullet theory says that mass media shoots the messages into the human beings like shooting of a bullet and thereby the messages affect the masses in the way as desired by the mass media owners or the management authorities.

The Hypodermic Needle theory believes that messages can be pushed into the minds of human beings by pushing it through injection needles.

The Need Gratification theory says that the masses utilize a kind of a filtering exercise in their minds while utilizing the mass media messages. That is – the masses do not allow their minds to be swayed by any and every message received from the mass media but they do so only selectively. Here the masses allow only those messages to influence or affect them which they believe are worth doing so or would prove to be useful for them in their personal life.

(c) MEDIA EFFECT / INFLUENCE ON AUDIENCES :

This has been a highly-debated and discussed matter for many long years all over the world. Though we can't exactly measure the influence or effect of mass media on the audiences yet it must be admitted that it is anything between substantial to immense in scales anywhere across the world.

In the earlier days when there was hardly any major expansion of mass media and there were only newspapers and radio – especially in developing nations – mass media were considered as highly cred-

ible sources of information, being the leader and pathfinders of the society. During those days the influence of mass media was quite on the higher side of the scale.

Of course, because of illiteracy and other socio-economic factors, the mass audiences had to depend much upon the 'opinion leaders' who would enlighten the people about the various socio-economic-political events happening in the country with the advantage of their own comments.

Media definitely influences the audiences to a very high degree because of the convenience of disseminating news and views about anything on the earth happening anywhere in a few minutes or hours at the most.

We can look at it from two different angles. First of all – mass media with its information dissemination system may actually contribute towards adopting newer things and aspects into our lifestyle by exposing us to many interesting things of the world.

On the other hand it can influence us on a different note. For example, the general elections for the country are being held in two or three phases across the nation. If the results of one or a few regions or states of the country are announced prior to the holding of polls in the other regions there is every possibility that the voters in the other areas would be influenced to change their voting preference based on these results.

Suppose, if Congress party wins a majority of the seats in the areas where poll results were declared earlier, voters in other regions or states would feel that they should also prefer Congress rather than BJP or any other party as Congress was going to win the polls anyway. This is why the Central Election Commission of India does not allow counting of election results before the polls are held in all the constituencies in the same election.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q. 1 : What is audience?

_____

_____

_____

8.3 TYPES OF AUDIENCE

Depending upon the mass media and a specific product, audience can be of several types. Such as –

(a) General audience : This group of audience usually includes the masses or people who subscribe to a specific mass media for any purposes – may be to know the news items of the day or to receive plain entertainment after a day's hard struggle at workplace. Here, there may be an overlapping of choices of the mass media. Because the same person may subscribe to a newspaper or a magazine, watch a TV channel for news and entertainment and at the same time may also listen to radio programme for the same purposes.

(b) Specialized audience: We all know that nowadays this is the age of specialization in every field of this world as a whole. Here, the audience usually subscribe to a specific mass media for the purpose of receiving news items or plain entertainment etc. Even when a member of the audience subscribes to a particular TV or Radio channel or a newspaper they may be doing so only to look or watch a specific programme out of so many options presented by them.

For example, though I may have cable TV connection at my house or office it is not necessary that I will be watching all the programmes or chan-

nels delivered by it. I will naturally have a limited choice and therefore I will zero down on a few of those programmes or channels.

And even within a single channel it is a normal practice that a person watches just a few programmes – irrespective of its being news or entertainment.

These are the reasons for which we do have various channels focusing on different aspects of mass media business like entertainment, news, business, sports, edutainment etc. for catering to different segments of the society or the mass audience and thereby enlarge the popularity base of the channel or the media in general.

Further, it is a normal human characteristic that every person's personality is different and thus his or her choice also differs from that of others. So it is the endeavour of the mass media in general to serve these varying needs of the masses to the maximum possible extent.

8.3.1 Target Audience

This is an interesting aspect of the overall concept of audience. This term includes those people or masses that are specifically targeted by a company or media organization within a bigger group of masses. It can be mainly of two types: Target audience for mass media and target audience for a company or commercial organization trying to market a specific product.

For example – TV channel A is basically a news channel which aims at providing its services to the masses of India in general. The same channel may have subsidiary channels or specific programmes based on news or non-news themes in its channels which may be aimed at smaller specific targets. Because, within the bigger field of news services we can have different segments like business news, sports news, political commentaries, discussions, adventure sports, international news and what not. Though all the people of the country

and even abroad are generally members of the mass audience of A within this mass audience base, a certain segment may be targeted by the media for special purposes. Such as news on stocks and mutual funds may be targeted at the junior and mid-level professionals engaged in various meaningful jobs earning a respectable amount of money that can save a good portion of their income.

Similarly, a newspaper while catering to a larger base of mass audience may have specific sections for specific audiences in mind.

Again, for example, the media houses like *Times of India*, *The Hindu* or *Hindustan Times* and many others also publish quite a few newspapers, magazines for catering to a cross section of the mass audience base to which it targets its messages.

In the same way, while the entire population of the world is the mass audience base for any company, within this base, segmentation is done to make advertisements for diverse products like toothpaste, chocolates, and beauty products and from cars to heavy motor vehicles and industrial machinery etc.

Now, the segment of the mass audience which is targeted to be catered to by a specific message (whether it is an advertising message or a news item, a book, a film etc.) is called the 'Target Audience'.

Each and every product must have a clear target audience before it is launched so that the right kind of masses can be actually addresses to.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q. 2 : Why do we need to classify audience into different categories?

_____

_____

_____

8.4 ILLITERATE AUDIENCE

When we take up the topic of Illiterate Audience for discussion it poses two sides of the coin.

First of all, an illiterate audience means the members of the mass audience who are not literate in the formal sense of the term. This is especially true of the developing nations and societies like India. Where 65 % of the population out of an estimated total of 110 crore people is officially declared as literates. But according to the government's definition of a literate person he or she is – someone who can just sign his or her name and nothing else. So in the real sense of the term we can say that just about half of this percentage is such persons whom we can call as actual literates.

This opens up several aspects to be taken into consideration. One is, under such circumstances, the print media has a very limited role to play in informing the masses. Besides, the print media in the developing nations are mainly urban and semi urban media with a very low penetration or circulation in the proper rural areas.

Again, Cable or Dish TV is an expensive proposition here as a person has to pay a monthly subscription which usually comes to more than Rs 200/-. Again, power connection is a problem in most of the villages in the country and TV sets themselves are costly enough.

So, the Radio proves to be the most convenient and facilitating mass media in such a situation which can be relied upon effectively for making the messages reach the masses at the grassroots level.

Another major negative aspect in this regard is that the masses being illiterates it is a highly difficult proposition to make them empowered through the development-oriented messages. This is because of the lack of basic literacy they would not be able to differentiate between the information that is to be digested properly and the one to be abandoned.

The idea propounded by the Need Gratification theory is difficult to be pursued here.

One more negative aspect is that the targeted mass audience in the illiterate class can be easily influenced by the propagandist broadcasting messages and they may resort to mob violence at the slightest of provocation.

Let me cite two examples from real life situations. During the 2002 Godhra riots in Gujarat the visuals of many gory scenes were broadcast and printed in TV and Newspapers again and again with the potential of flaring up further riots. Again, when the Mumbai terrorist incident was going on in the last days of 2008, one popular TV channel's anchor was broadcasting a few provocative statements in TV which carried the potential of flaring up riots in the city.

It may be argued here that a person need not be a literate to understand what is being broadcast in TV or Radio. However, because of a lack of basic literacy he or she may have to depend upon the opinion leaders or others who may take advantage of the situation and provoke them to think in a negative manner. In this connection, the role of the opinion leader is not very significant.

Media Literacy of the audiences is another important aspect that whenever we initiate a broad discussion on the concept of mass audiences, this aspect is bound to come up. This term means whether the entire or a section of the mass audience is literate in the sense that they can understand how to utilize the mass media and its messages.

For example, everyday mass media instruments in every issue of it – whether it is a TV / Radio channel or a newspaper / magazine / a book / a film – are disseminating thousands of different messages in the form of news items, articles, features, news analysis etc. to the masses. Now, the question arises whether the masses are actually wise or literate enough to understand the implications and hidden meanings of those messages (if any) and thereby act on their own by accepting or rejecting the necessary section of information.

Media Literacy is gradually gaining popularity in the society because of its value in converting a general audience into a thinking and intelligent audience.

In our country an attempt to make the masses media literate is yet to be seen. But among the developed nations of the West a movement has already taken place to make the people so many medium literate that they can make intelligent choice between accepting and rejecting the media messages.

8.5 MASS AUDIENCE

Before the printing was invented every book or document had to be copied by hand using different types of calligraphic skills in the advanced civilizations. This system allowed only a handful of people to enjoy the advantage of reading a book if they were allowed the privilege at all.

However, the invention of the printing press in Germany by Johann Gutenberg ushered in a revolution to the world, that is – one kind of 'information revolution'.

This is because the original printing press system and its successive improvised versions later on have made it possible and convenient to produce hundreds and thousands of books wherever the facilities were available. This has facilitated far more convenient access to the primary sources of knowledge during those days – books, whether religious or others, containing intellectual knowledge or plain literature etc.

There upon the concept of 'mass audience' started gaining ground firmly in the world and today it is an established and important decision-making factor in the world of mass media.

In other words, the audience in mass media comprises the total number of persons who listen to or watch a certain programme of film (may be news or non news or entertainment programme), read a newspaper, magazine etc.

CHARACTERISTICS OF MASS AUDIENCE :

The following characteristics of mass audience will enable you to understand the concept of mass audience in the context of mass communication–

- It may be spread anywhere across the world, the country or the state. In other words it is never confined to a specific space unless a very special programme is broadcast or an item published with a special audience in mind.
- It must be heterogeneous. The members of the audience are a heterogeneous group scattered over a long distance.
- There can be no discrimination on the basis of caste, creed, educational qualification, age etc. Anybody who possesses the means of accessing any mass media anywhere in the world is a member of the mass audience.

It is easy to explain these characteristics of mass audience. As they are spread over the vast space across the world there is hardly any possibility of contact among them at all. Besides, anybody may have access to any mass media instrument and therefore there can be hardly any homogeneity among the mass audience.

There is also going to be some kind of overlapping of mass media exposure and access among the audience. This means that the same person watching TV may also listen to a radio programme or read a newspaper or magazine or a book and yet watch a film. Again, someone may not at all prefer a specific media –for example a member of the audience may not like to use Radio or TV at all and enjoys reading the print media and vice versa. However, in a majority of the cases we find that usually most of the audience members do have a varied mass media choice rather than concentrating on any specific one.

The entire business of mass media is fully dependent upon the whims and choices of the mass audience base. So there is every effort on the part of the media to popularize its products and attract the maximum number of

people to their channel or programme at all costs. This endeavour many a time leads to an unhealthy practice of 'doing anything' to attract more audience and influence the numbers at the rating system of the channels and programmes.

8.6 INTELLECTUAL AUDIENCE

As the name suggests this is that type of audience which is literate and intellectually at a higher position than an average audience and thereby it needs something more than normal day-to-day messages of mass media to satisfy their intellectual quest. Of course, for the regular daily news requirements they also depend upon the usual mass media channels including newspapers and books etc.

However, for satisfying their intellectual requirements they also do subscribe to specialized newspapers / TV / Radio programmes which are on offer from the mass media organizations across the country or the world.

For example, a teacher of mass communication at postgraduate level needs to constantly update his or her knowledge of the various related aspects of the profession. In addition to reading the daily newspapers, listening to radio bulletins or watching TV / he has to study various journals related to his subject. He belongs to an intellectual audience who must be ahead of his students in acquiring knowledge.

The 'intellectual audience' is one whose requirements are much above the average need of the masses. This is why we can see a whole lot of specialized journals, channels etc. catering to the intellectual audience in all the fields.

For example, at a closer level, the Assamese monthly *Gariyoshi* is a specialized scholarly magazine dedicated to the various aspects of the Assamese language and culture and serves a section of the intellectual audience whose which is a minuscule one compared to the mass audience base.

Similarly, at a far broader level, *Lancet* and *Nature* are two highly specialized scholarly journals published from England which are dedicated to recent advances and developments in the fields of medical sciences and nature respectively.

8.7 REALATIONSHIP BETWEEN MASS MEDIA AND AUDIENCE

After going through the above discussions, you must have developed a definite and comprehensive idea about the whole concept of audience. As both audience and mass media share such a close relationship it is necessary also to look into the relationship between these two.

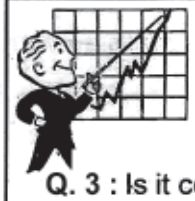
In an ideal situation the relationship between the masses or the audience and the mass media should be a complementary one, each side contributing to the other's healthy growth.

In this connection we can say that mass media should play a decisive role in transforming the audience into a learned, intellectual category by educating them through various means. In other words, media should try its best to create a good taste in the minds of the masses or the audience.

On the other hand, the audience also bears a good amount of responsibility in this regard. The audience as a whole should keep a close watch on the functioning of the media constantly to ensure that the latter does not play truant with its responsibilities. Whenever things may show a tendency to go astray, it is the major responsibility of the media to take unified action to make its demands known to the media authorities and force it to correct the situation.

Both sides should take each other into proper confidence so that a healthy situation may grow in due course of time. Unfortunately such an initiative is usually not experienced in our society. That is why even though we often keep hearing that mass media are performing in an irresponsible manner we hardly organize ourselves to take any affirmative action. The fact is that

the audience is like an elephant which does not realize the extent of its immense powers it possesses at any given moment of time. As the switch is in our hands we the audience can force the mass media to change its ways by presenting us with responsible messages – whether it is news or entertainment or a mixture of both.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q. 3 : Is it correct to say that an audience for a particular mass media does not enjoy any other media at all?

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8.8 LET US SUM UP

In our discussions here we have come to understand the meaning and concept of the term audience and its various types with examples. An audience in mass media parlance means any person or human being irrespective of caste, creed, age, educational qualification etc. who possesses the means to access and get an exposure to the mass media and thereby be able to enjoy the same. The invention of the printing press led to the development of the concept of 'mass audience' as the messages in the books and later on newspapers, magazines, TV / Radio etc. found their way to crores of people across the globe ushering in an information revolution of a different kind.

While the entire population of a country or may be the world is in general the audience for any branch of mass media yet for the benefit of the advertising companies media audience is segmented into different sections so that they could be targeted properly by the messages aimed for them. In advertising it is said that about half of the effort is wasted as we can't be very sure whether each and every targeted person of our audience has actually received the messages or not. However, we also can't determine

for sure which of this half segment has been left out and thereby it is necessary that an exhaustive advertising campaign be carried out always for driving through the messages to the audience in our target.

Mass audience has been categorized into several types such as – general audience which includes the common people who are exposed to one form of mass media or the other. This general category of mass audience can also be termed as 'illiterate audience' in many cases as normally in the developing nations majority of the

population is illiterate in the literal sense of the term. However, the term 'illiterate audience' has another dimension to it. That is, it also means an audience which is not literate about how to utilize the mass media messages. It is the responsibility of the mass media on the other hand to educate and train the audience about the ways to understand media – basically how to digest the messages and then accept or reject whichever way one feels like. In short, such an audience is lacking in a critical appreciation of the mass media contents.

'Specialized audience' is the segment which has special requirements rather than the daily doses of news and articles or features from the mass media. They may not want to enjoy the mass media contents in general but want only the specialized services like sports news, science news, pure entertainment, news about the world of films, political news items and analysis etc.

The segment of 'intellectual audience' means those members of the audience whose intellectual capacities are much above average. Thus, they require a higher degree of contents from mass media and the average fare provided in the usual mass media instruments like newspapers, books, magazines, TV / Radio channels, films etc cannot meet their requirement.

Significantly enough, in all these types of audience there is certainly some amount of overlapping of the different segments. For example – some members of the general mass audience segment may also be subscribing to other mass media in addition to the one they are mainly dedicated to.

8.9 FURTHER READING

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8.10 ANSWES TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Ans to Q. No. 1 :

1. Audience means the total number of people or members of the masses who are listeners, observers, watchers or readers of a particular one or more TV channel, newspaper, magazine, book, films etc. The concept has evolved over many decades and developed with the growth of the various mass media instruments including TV and Radio and today it is an established entity. Audience is immensely important for mass media from the point of view of advertising revenues as the masses or audience indirectly translates into more advertising revenues. That is why mass media organizations try their best to enhance popularity of their contents or the channels, news-

papers or magazines, books or films to the maximum possible scale so that it can claim a huge popularity which in turn means more and more people are looking at its programmes and thereby at all the advertising messages also.

Ans to Q. No. 2 :

1. We need to classify audience for both convenience and commercial point of view. Every product which is advertised and every programme of mass media is launched in the market or the society with a specific target audience in mind. For example – a specific automobile is marketed with an aim to make it appeal to a certain category of people. A news or non news entertainment TV or Radio channel and also a newspaper, a magazine, a film all are actually launched with a certain kind of audience in mind. Thus it will be far more convenient and easier to classify them and thereby aim the messages to those specific people who are members of the audience. So, depending upon the requirements of the specific product and the audience a certain mass media organization caters to, the advertising or other messages are targeted to that segment of the audience which saves a lot of money and time for the parties concerned. This was the audience also gets to be served effectively because the messages are specially aimed at them through the media they do use. This is why a detailed and comprehensive market survey is carried out prior to launching any product in the market so that the media habits of the target audience can be gauged to avoid delays and wastage of efforts.

Ans to Q. No. 2 :

1. An audience or any member of this group may use more than one mass media instrument in their day-to-day life. This is because it is almost impossible to confine ourselves only to one single specific media instrument such as film, or TV or Radio or the print media etc. In most of the cases a person who may be dedicated mainly to the TV needs to use other mass media also like Radio, newspapers as the case may be. This happens because one single media is not at all sufficient to satisfy the requirements of a person at any given

moment of time. Hence, even when a person possesses a TV set at his or her home and watches it yet he or she also subscribes to newspapers, magazines or listens to Radio programmes. It is a normal human nature that our interests are always varied and require gratification from a variety of sources. This necessitates the use of several or at least more than one mass media instrument.

8.11 POSSIBLE QUESTIONS

Q.1. Describe the evolution of the concept of audience in the context of mass communication and media.

Q.2. Can we say that the audience of all the different types of mass media does not have any overlapping preferences for any particular media or programme? How?

Q.3. What is the importance of audience in mass media?

Q.4. How can we define the relationship between audience and mass media in an ideal situation?

Q.5. What do you understand by the terms 'media reach 'and'media accesses?

Q.6. Discuss the relationship between mass media and audience.

Q.7. What are the different types of audience? Write about their differences.

UNIT-9 : COMMUNICATION AND THE GRASSROOT LEVEL

UNIT STRUCTURE

9.1 Learning Objectives
9.2 Introduction
9.3 Communication Strategies at Micro Level both in Rural and Urban Setup
  9.3.1 Panchayati Raj Institutions
  9.3.2 Rural Development
9.4 Alternative Media as Tools of Micro Level Communication.
  9.4.1 Importance of Alternative Media
9.5 Let Us Sum Up
9.6 Further Reading
9.7 Answers to Check Your Progress
9.8 Possible Questions

9.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit you will be able to discuss–

- **the reason behind utilising a specific communication strategy for dissemination of information**
- the type of strategy that is being adopted by the government or society
- a critical appraisal of this strategy
- the concept of Alternative Media
- how Alternative Media can achieve what other media can't

9.2 INTRODUCTION

According to the data prepared by UNESCO, India is one country along with the Arab states and sub-Saharan Africa where the literacy levels are

still well below the threshold level of 75%. We all know that our literacy level is just 65%. Even among them the majority can just write his or her name. Around eight million (80 lakh) children are still out of school in India as reflected in the 2001 census. But, how can we make each and every citizen of the country an able partner in the process of development if such a huge illiterate population can't participate in the democratic process in the true sense of the term.

At the time of Independence our country possessed hardly any advanced stage of mass media except a minuscule service by All India Radio (just six stations in all) and a few hundred newspapers and magazines.

The first national government of independent India had to face the Herculean task of making adequate provisions on many sectors primarily led by education as it was a foremost requirement for the development of any society in the world.

However, also faced with the hard fact of a very meagre amount of resources of all kinds at its hand the government could not provide all the facilities like schools, colleges, universities matching the demands and aspirations of the masses across a country with a continental geographical stature.

During that period the literacy level was obviously much less compared to today's level. As a result, a major percentage of the population were in such an age or financial situation where they could not afford to enroll in formal educational institutions for acquiring knowledge. This has rendered them handicapped for pursuing a professional career.

The government decided that it had to make the people who could not enjoy the benefits of formal educational institutions 'literate' and 'educated' so that they could also be made partners in the process of nation-building. But the question was how to do so ?

Besides, there was another important necessity. We all know that in every field of our professional life every passing day some new knowledge and

information are being generated in the research laboratories which can facilitate our further development. How to disseminate these information to the masses?

Further, when the government adopted the Five-Year Plan model of development and set priorities in the different fields including agriculture, industry etc. it was realized that unless the masses for whom these were aimed at could not understand about them success would be elusive not concrete.

Thus all these factors have contributed towards the urgent need for having a communication strategy for disseminating development-oriented information to the masses at grassroots level both in the urban and rural areas.

9.3 COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES AT MICRO LEVEL BOTH IN RURAL AND URBAN SETUP

With these goals in mind the government had mandated the Ministry of Information & Broadcasting (MIB) to prepare strategies for dissemination of information on all these matters. The MIB accordingly made arrangements by setting up several organizations under its command for the purpose. These organizations are discussed below:

(a) EXPANSION OF A.I.R.

Radio in India has a rich history to fall back upon for continuing its stride towards the future. It can boast of the highest audience bypassing every single mass media in India.

Efforts were on for expanding the AIR network for an inclusive coverage of the entire country as far as possible on a gradual basis. Nowadays, it is one of the two comprising units of Prasar Bharati dedicated to programmes for public good.

By 1950, AIR boasted of a network of 25 stations with an output of about 60,000 hours per annum in all the regional languages which

could be received by 21% of the population covering about 12 % area of the country. The regional language service was one important part of the grassroots level communication so that people could reap the benefits of information and messages broadcast for their usage. Today, it provides messages in 21 languages and 146 dialects covering virtually every nook and corner of the country.

Broadcasting expansion was brought into the ambit of planned development by 1951 with an allocation of Rs four crore for the first Five Year Plan from 1951 – 56.

And over the years it has penetrated into every nook and corner of this country.

AIR has also adopted the Local Radio Station (LRS) system comprising the third tier of broadcasting of the system and they are set up mostly at district headquarter towns. And India has more than 600 districts in all.

In an effort to make Radio more personalized and responsive, LRSs have been serving limited areas and are providing utility services to the people in terms of information and entertainment. It aims at promoting the sense of belongingness and reaches right into the hearts of the people. In a sense, LRS speaks in the dialect of the people and fulfils their needs.

AIR with its exhaustive network of all categories of stations spanning the country enjoys an enviable distinction of being able to utilize this network for broadcasting programmes in local languages and dialects. Programmes for local audiences or those in vernacular languages become meaningful only if they are produced in the languages the target audiences understand. So a decentralized programme production structure is highly essential.

Over the years AIR's relevance as a Public Service Broadcaster (PSB) has actually increased manifold with multifaceted social obligations.

These include universal access to information, education and entertainment and for creating a balanced public opinion through dissemination of information on a non-discriminatory basis etc. This is one reason for which most of the nations in the world are having vibrant PSBs for public welfare.

AIR has been providing special programmes in agriculture, other developmental schemes, woman, children youths since several decades ago by which the people are getting benefited properly in receiving latest information about various schemes concerning their livelihood.

(b) DOORDARSHAN (DD) :

The other component of Prasar Bharati (PB) next to AIR, Doordarshan popularly known as DD among the masses, is the television wing of PB. It is also a public service broadcaster required to disseminate a mixed presentation of services combining entertainment, news and news-based services to the masses.

It is interesting to note that television in India began as an educational and welfare-oriented service provider in the later half of 1950s. For more than two decades after this, it was administered as a part of AIR.

It was curved out of AIR and made a separate full-fledged mass media organization in 1978. DD also pays a lot of emphasis upon the broadcasting of public welfare spirited developmental programmes like Krishi Darshan, Kalyani etc.

While Krishi Darshan is a highly popular programme since its inception, Kalyani which is a health-related interactive programme with doctors and experts sitting at the studio has also been proving equally popular. These programmes are aired in regional languages too, an aspect which is also adding a lot of value to them.

(c) S.I.T.E. EXPERIMENT :

Right here, let us have a glance at the two significant experiments undertaken about three decades back to ascertain the effectiveness of the electronic media for spreading education in an informal manner.

It was in 1975 that All India Radio (AIR) conducted a highly-ambitious experiment in serving the rural folk of the country. Termed as 'Satellite Instructional Television Experiment (SITE), it was carried out for transmission of programmes to 2,400 villages in six states – Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Orissa and Rajasthan.

Under this scheme villages were provided with TV sets at community places. Specially-designed informal educational programmes on diverse topics like ill effects of dowry, child marriage, tobacco eating etc. were broadcast for a few hours everyday. Care was also taken for timing the programmes in such a manner as to facilitate the womenfolk of these areas to be able to watch those programmes.

This educational broadcast experiment evoked considerably-high positive response.

The point is that this experiment has proved more than three decades back that TV and Radio can be very conveniently utilized as effective vehicles for building bridges with the rural communities. Let us make a point clear here.

Today, India has one of the largest Radio, TV and satellite or cable system networks in the world. For instance – compared to just about 260 million TV viewers earlier today we have more than 500 million viewers. The scorecard of PSB in the country fares well with respect to the expansion of hardware but is very uneven in terms of establishing a public policy. Vast changes have occurred in public broadcasting in India in recent decades, including increased competition from private cable and satellite TV channels, rise of media entrepreneurship, and growth of regional broadcasting.

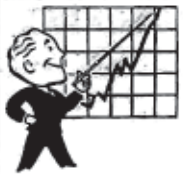
In yet another important project, the Indian Space Research Organi zation (ISRO) in collaboration with another Government agency set up a small caliber TV station in a remote district named Kheda in Gujarat in the same year. It aired programmes which were predominantly based on the local problems, issues, ethos etc.

This 'local' cause was a major factor for its success supported by the step that prior to airing anything a thorough preview of every programme was done with a panel comprising local learned and senior citizens. This was practiced to make sure that nothing derogatory (even unknowingly) or offensive and dissatisfactory was broadcast about the community's lifestyle in general. If something in this manner was pointed out either the programme was dropped or improvised immediately before airing. It proved to be a highly successful project at the end.

These organizations have already managed to achieve a sufficient amount of popularity for being able to take up the cause of development of the local communities in the places where they have set up their stations.

Now, even though these two experiments were not for Radio yet there is a lot of scope for replicating the same for Radio also in the days to come. That too with the added advantages of learning from these two experiments and having much more sophisticated equipment and newer programme formats today. Especially for a country like India with continental proportions and a population of 116 crore, more than 70 per cent of them living in far-off rural corners and pockets of the country. Besides, almost one third of the population is illiterate even today.

Further, India is one of the few countries to have a satellite 'Edusat' launched primarily for educational broadcasting that would go a long way in revolutionizing our interactive 'e-learning' system in the years ahead.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q.1. Why do we need mass media at the grassroots level?

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(d) DIRECTORATE OF FIELD PUBLICITY (D.F.P.) :

This is a system of disseminating information through the use of films and documentaries by showing them to the masses in the remote areas of the country. This has yielded positive results for many years. Several offices were set up under the D.F.P. in every state and each of them was mandated to carry out the function of informing people of the latest developments in the respective fields with the help of the electronic medium.

(e) DIRECTORATE OF ADVERTISING & VISUAL PUBLICITY (D.A.V.P.) :

This is one organization which has been mandated with the task of arranging release of advertisements for all the ministries of the Government of India along with special programmes from time to time for showcasing the country's developments through photographic exhibitions.

A few years back, the Ministry had also undertaken a specific comprehensive plan called Bharat Nirman scheme aimed at making the people aware of the various developmental schemes adopted and implemented by the government for the masses.

Under this scheme, officials from the Ministry's publicity units move to rural and semi-rural areas in every nook and corner of the country

where the masses are informed about the plans and policies through various media.

(f) SONG AND DRAMA DIVSION:

This organization has been assigned the responsibility of spreading various developmental information amongst the masses through the use of songs and dramas whenever necessary. Normally, every state of the country has at least one and at times more than one such units for carrying out the job in an effective manner. The idea behind it is that people always understand better something spoken through the use of an entertainment mode. The songs and dramas are further adopted to the local dialects and ethos incorporating the specific messages to be disseminated to the masses so that the peopl of that place can feel at home with them and also feel themselves being a part of it.

(g) PHOTO DIVISION :

This unit is responsible for capturing the memorable moments of various developmental schemes and activities and for organizing photo exhibitions and shows whenever required or as the need is felt. This allows the masses to get a glimpse of the country's progress in different sectors of the economy and life.

(h) FILMS DIVISION :

This unit of MIB prepares short films on various issues of the country's development and releases the same for public viewing along with commercial films in the cinema halls. They have covered quite important events relating to various issues of the country including the visit of foreign dignitaries, important achievements in the fields of science and technology, sports, agriculture etc.

(i) PRESS INFORMATION BUREAU :

This unit of MIB is concerned with publishing all the important development-oriented news items and information as well as to facilitate

their publication in the mass media at the same time so that they can be disseminated to the masses across the nation.

It also publishes a monthly journal called *Yojana* which deals with the various aspects of the development of the country's industry, economy etc. A sister publication of the same is also published in the languages of the different states under a local name. In Assamese it is called *Payobhara.*

(j) Role of Institutes of Rural Development

We must also discuss the role being played by the Hyderabad—based National Institute of Rural Development (NIRD) which has also been trying to prepare as well as implement different strategies and schemes for information dissemination at micro level to the rural population across the country. Its Department for Rural Communication is mandated with focusing on such issues.

Based on this model, majority of the states do have their own institutes of rural development for devising as well as implementing such programmes.

9.3.1 Panchayati Raj (PR) Institutions

This is one important administrative system which we can also term as a communication system aimed particularly at the development of the masses at the grassroots level — in villages and rural areas of the country.

- **A Brief background of the PR system**

  Article 40 of our Constitution says, "The state shall take steps to organize village Panchayats and endow them with such power and authority as may be necessary to enable them to function as units of self-government".

In 1957, a historic breakthrough in establishing Panchayati Raj (PR) came about through the report of the Team for the Study of Community Development Projects and National Extension Service headed by Balwantrai Mehta. It recommended that "public participation in community works should be organized through statutory representative bodies". Former Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru inaugurated Panchayati Raj in Rajasthan on 2nd October, 1959 at Nagaur.

One of the key objectives of PR is to ensure that the process of planning for development in the country follows a bottom-up approach and commences at the grassroots level. The core approach is that the village panchayat plans prepared with people's participation are joined by plans prepared by the Intermediate and District Panchayats. And these are then consolidated by the District Planning Committees with the Municipal plans into the draft district development plan. Till now 18 states in the country have constituted District Planning Committees while the process is underway in the remaining ones where Part IX of the Constitution is applicable.

9.3.2 Rural Development

In our country more than 70% of the people live in rural areas or villages whose main profession is agriculture and related trades. In a similar situation like agriculture the villages or rural communities are also characterized by a low or almost absent literacy rate, lack of modern means of transport and communication, lack of innovativeness etc. These factors have rendered our rural areas and communities into islands of underdevelopment.

Now, to carry messages of development and enlightenment to such a vast majority of the country's population from the government level we seriously need proper systems of communication for reaching out to the rural population.

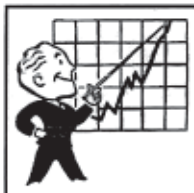
MASS MEDIA FOR THIS MISSION :

- **PRINT MEDIA :** This medium enjoys the distinction of being the oldest one in all mass media and has a special attachment with the masses despite the advent of TV and Radio. Even in today's condition when TV and Radio are becoming highly popular among the masses more and more, print medium has been keeping up its presence felt in major way.

  However, despite all the advantages of this medium it has still remained mostly an urban medium and it can't be exactly termed as an ideal medium for rural and agricultural development.

- **ELECTRONIC MEDIA** : Among the components of this media which includes Radio, TV, cinema, Cable TV etc., Radio is found to be the most suitable one for rural as well as agricultural target audiences. The major advantage or scoring point of this media above the print media is that its messages need not be carried physically to the masses and can be sent through the air. Only the masses need to possess a radio set for the purpose. This is why it is suitable for serving the people almost 24 hours of the day. This is not possible in case of print media as it has to be physically delivered at the doorstep of the masses targeted by it.

  That radio is becoming ever more popular among the masses at the rural areas and also in the towns and cities of the country is reflected in the detailed findings of the India Census 2001. This Census informs us that in the state of Assam out of the total number of more than 49 lakh households, at least 30% possess a radio set whereas the same for TV stands quite low at a little over 18%. Of course, there are some variations in the number of radio and TV sets in the rural and urban categories of the population. In the urban category TV is owned by more than 55 % of the population with about 40% having radio sets. On the other hand, in the rural areas of the state. just about 12% of the total households own TV sets with more than 28% for radio sets.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q. 2 : What are the possible tools for communication at the grassroots level?

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The same set of statistical data also informs that the population of Assam between the age groups of 15 to 49 (divided into six categories of five years each) tunes into 'radio' mostly, compared to any other mass media. For both these data please refer to the charts I and II given as ANNEXURES at the end of this Unit.

9.4 ALTERNATIVE MEDIA AS TOOLS OF MICRO LEVEL COMMUNICATION

At the very outset of this section it is important to explain what is meant by Alternative Media and what are its characteristics in order to make it convenient for you to understand the related discussions.

To speak in a simple language, alternative media, which is a communication system and a tradition that can supplement the mainstream media, owes its existence to the fact that the latter has failed to meet the communication needs and aspirations of a certain group of people within that mass audience.

An alternative media institution (to the possible extent given the circumstances) doesn't try to maximize profits and, primarily, sells audience to advertisers for revenue for this it seeks broad and non-elite audiences. Structurally it is profoundly different from the mainstream media and is in-

dependent of other institutions – mainly the large mass media corporations.

Though there is no hard and fast definition of an alternative media yet it can be said that it gives the audience a choice that is free from corporate and government control.

One very important aspect of this media is the idea of participation which actively encourages the participation of its audience.

9.4.1 Importance of Alternative Media

In the field of mass communication and media earlier the mandate was to disseminate information in the form of electronic waves to the maximum possible number of people. In other words, it means trying to spread the net of the electronic media to the broadest possible extent for covering as many people as possible.

But even while trying to achieve the goal of delivering entertainment or news to as many of people as possible some sections of the mass audience are left out of its purview and are thus deprived of the services. For example, in Doordarshan whenever there is a first class cricket match being played anywhere in the country, the national channel of the media is blocked entirely for broadcasting the match cutting out all other entertainment or news programmes.

But we cannot confidently say that the entire mass audience of Doordarshan are fond of watching the cricket game for the whole day to the point of rejecting the other programmes that are usually broadcast in that channel.

Again, newspapers or magazines also, are the carriers of general news items and articles, features, photographs etc. but all of them may not be liked equally by all the readers of that newspaper/magazines.

Besides, many people are fed up with too much of advertisements from the corporate organizations, government restrictions and almost a zero coverage of meaningful development-oriented positive news items in the mass media.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q. 3 : What is Alternative Media?

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- **MASS MEDIA IS NOT EFFECTIVE BEYOND A CERTAIN POINT :**

For many years and a few decades till about the 1980s, the dominating feeling was that mass media was the most effective and convenient media for disseminating any kind of information to the masses at all levels – whether rural or urban and grassroots level or at a higher level.

A prominent global leader in the field of Advertising once said that this particular type of mass communication had the disadvantage of having about 50 % of its messages going waste. But, at the same time as one can't be sure about which half is actually going waste advertising campaigns must go on. In the same way even though we aim our contents or messages to the mass audience that we target everyday, yet we cannot say that the entire mass audience has received it.

Again, mass media is too impersonal and thereby lacks the personal touch which is an ideal aspect of making our communication efforts effective in practice.

Thus, at a certain level at the point of delivery of the messages mass media do not prove to be very successful in achieving the desired result at all.

So, at this point we require the alternative media for further carrying the messages to the masses for the final delivery. That is why one important characteristic of the alternative media is its participatory nature.

So what is the Alternative?

This is where Alternative Media comes up to fill in this vacant space and provide us with an additional choice or option which can satisfy our requirements and interests as opposed to mass communication.

A famous philosopher in the discipline of Political Science made a statement that democracy is all about maximum welfare for the maximum number of people. Same is the case in mass communication.

That is why an acute and urgent need was felt for such a media which would not have the disadvantages of mass media but would, offer the audience quality contents rather than the basically entertainment-oriented mass communication contents.

In this regard it must be noted that a 'human or personal' touch to the delivery of media messages is very important because mass media is impersonal. That is why even when mass media are constantly broadcasting information or messages aimed at the masses , yet, beyond the point of mass media or mass communication, it is the human or personal communicators who would take it along to the masses.

Now, what are the media which we can term as alternative media. In this connection we can say that Community Radio is a prime example of this media followed by community newspapers.

We can also term alternative media as a form of community media because of its participatory nature as mentioned above.

- **BROADCASTING VERSUS NARROWCASTING :**

Looking at it from a different angle we can say that of late the trend is to move from the broader concept of encompassing everyone possible to the narrower and compact concept of targeting as well as encompassing a smaller percentage of the masses so that the same can be served in a much better way.

Let me properly illustrate it to make it convenient for you to understand.

Till 1990s, Assam had only two major AIR stations – Guwahati and Dibrugarh and between them they had to cover almost more than a crore of the state's population. As against this, it is also important to know that our state enjoys the presence of quite a few different ethnic groups with unique cultural ethos. Now, under such circumstances when we had only two radio stations, it would not be possible to allow the cultural aspects of all these ethnic communities and groups to be broadcast in the electronic medium.

However, if we had broken up such a giant system and set up small-calibre radio or TV stations at different regions of the state we could have done justice to all these ethnic groups and communities by being able to properly broadcast their culture. This is called **Narrowcasting** which is opposed to **Broadcasting** in the society.

Targeting such a goal, the Ministry of Information & Broadcasting of the Union Government has taken up an ambitious plan for setting up a much more exhaustive network of 337 radio stations in the country in the next few years. The ownership and functioning of these stations will be a mixed fare with AIR, the private sector, and the institutions of higher education.

Closer home, take the case of Assam. From the situation of having just two major radio stations in the state till 1990s, today we have several radio stations under AIR such as – Guwahati, Dibrugarh, Kokrajhar, Tezpur, Silchar (all AM) and Diphu, Nagaon, Jorhat, Haflong, Karimganj (all FM under AIR) in addition to several private commercial FM stations based at Guwahati.

With the setting up these smaller FM stations this has become highly convenient to focus primarily on the broadcasting of programmes, news, cultural themes from those smaller places rather than competing for space with bigger contenders in the business in the major AIR stations.

Same is the case with other mass media like newspapers, magazines, films etc.

For example – for a newspaper with a circulation of one lakh copies, can we say that all the contents in it are liked by all the readers or audience who subscribe to that newspaper. Similarly, in case of films many people may not like a normal feature film with the usual love and tragedy or conflict fare and may like to watch something different or better. This is why we need an alternative media for catering to those people who may be left out of this purview of the bigger mass media.

Let us examine a few of such media for your convenience here.

- **COMMUNITY RADIO :**

This is a new concept becoming popular in our country which has a high potential for being used for furthering the cause of development communication. It is nothing but a small-calibre FM radio station with a limited range used for local purposes for disseminating information.

Its major advantages are that being a localized radio centre all issues of local importance get priority over anything else. Further,

these stations are maintained by volunteers and other workers elected or chosen by the local community itself. So, there is hardly any scope for outside interference and undue pressure for broadcasting something which may not be conducive for the immediate local community. In simple terms this is a system of radio broadcasting which is for the people, by the people and of the people.

This is a very ideal tool for development communication Community Radio enjoy the broadcasts programmes in the local languages of an area and these have comprehensive and easily-understandable programme contents for the local masses. Besides it concerns itself with only those aspects which have a direct and indirect relevance for the community etc.

So far, the concept has already gained enough grounds in several developing nations of the world including Brazil and Nepal. But it is somewhat of a new concept for the Indian masses. However, it is gaining popularity rapidly due to its advantages and positive aspects.

Impressed by these features, the MIB in 2006 December has allowed even NGOs and voluntary organizations with a good track record of service, to apply for and operate community radio stations. Further, the government is also encouraging established and reputed educational institutions for setting up such stations and transfer the benefits to the local community.

In a few words, we can say that this medium has proved to be the most potential and emerging tool for furthering the cause of development communication in the country.

One of our neighbours and the Himalayan Kingdom of Nepal has a very ideal establishment of community radios all over the country with about 50 of them currently providing service to their target audience. It needs to be mentioned that when several years ago the present-day king of the country was accused of killing the royal

family members a large-scale chaotic situation arose in the country. This forced the king to resort to an acute emergency declaration and to take an all out effort for stopping the passing of any news from the country to the outside world, and he tried his best to block all the internet connections. The king however could not become successful only because of the presence of Alternative Media in the form of Community Radios.

- **COMMUNITY NEWSPAPERS :**

This media is also similar to the Community Radio, only that it is a print media. Here also the members of the audience themselves contribute news and other contents, help in selling, printing and distributing them in the local area whenever required.

In the same way street theatre, puppetry, folk / traditional medium, community TV etc. are also important from the point of view that they all encourage maximum participation of the target audience whom they serve. The audience itself is their content providers, editors, managers, financers etc. all rolled into one.

In other words we can say that when segments of the masses get disillusioned with the mass media they take the initiative for arranging for their own media and serve themselves in return with programmes and contents which they would want to enjoy from mass media also in the first place.

We have already discussed the necessity of personal or human touch to the message delivery effort of communication. In alternative media and community media this factor plays a crucial role in the successful delivery of the messages taking over from mass media.

This is because the masses feel themselves a part of the media and thereby feel like participating in them. And when we can participate in a specific programme we become more empowered

and enabled in that field and this is the significance of the alternative media in the society.

Same is the case with our traditional folk media which can be utilized for making successful delivery of messages because of its main feature of involving the participation of the masses who get enabled in the process.

Experts in the field of communication and other areas also are nowadays thinking more in terms of applying and utilizing the enormous potential of mass communication and media for delivering adequate amount of meaningful information to the masses at the grassroots level.

Thus, mass media can be called an open informal university which is there for everyone with or without formal education. It is an open forum for discussing any and every issue of the world.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q. 4 : What is the significance of Alternative media in our society?

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BLOGS :

This new phenomenon has also been proving to be a highly popular

- **Agricultural Communication**

  This is one area that requires a heavy amount of alternative media's support for making the people concerned aware of the latest developments in agriculture and the related activities. It is necessary to mention here that in our country even today a majority of the

masses are dependent on this profession because of various factors.

On the other hand our agriculture universities, veterinary colleges, Indian Agricultural Research Institute (IARI) – a national-level organization under the Union Government – have been constantly engaged in research into different aspects including high yielding variety of seeds, improved livestock etc. Now the question is how to make the cultivators in the remote areas of the country know about these developments so that they can benefit from it in their life.

Thus, a unique concept of communication called Agriculture Extension Communication was devised in which the goal has to practically inform as well as demonstrate to the farmers of the country how to use a certain variety of high-yielding seeds, how to grow an improvised breed of livestock etc.

9.5 LET US SUM UP

From our discussions above it has become quite clear that a comprehensive and inclusive communication strategy is the need of the hour for a country like India with such a huge population – a country which is rural-based with more than 70 % of its population being dependent upon agriculture for their livelihood. This has become highly necessary because in the absence of such a policy this segment of the population will not be able to enjoy the benefits of the advanced knowledge that comes out of the universities, scientific laboratories, research institutions in social sciences, humanities, medicine, pure sciences and agriculture and veterinary sciences etc. It is not enough to have invented or discovered new knowledge. It is equally important to make the people aware of these findings. In India the Ministry of Information & Broadcasting of the Union Government has set up several organizations for facilitating this aspect amongst the masses such as Directorate of Field Publicity, Films Division, Photo Division, Directorate of Advertising & Visual Publicity etc. for showcasing such information and

messages to the masses from time o time. The state governments also do have similar organizational establishments which carry out such activities.



9.6 FURTHER READING

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9.7 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Ans to Q. No. 1 :

The socio-political and economic condition of our country is far different from that of the developed nations of the world where there can be 100 per cent literacy and the masses do not need to be dependent upon the government. Contrary to this, India's literacy per-

centage is just about 65 % out of a population of 116 crore today. Under these circumstances, the mass media has a special responsibility to shoulder upon – that is, to make available the useful and meaningful information to the masses at the grassroots level so that they can be benefited from all the developmental research works going on in the country. The mass media in its usual functioning cater mainly to the target audience in urban areas largely ignoring the actual requirements of the people in the rural areas and those at the lower strata of the society as a whole. So, communicating effectively with these people is highly important because this way we can make them educated by informing and persuading them for adopting a better lifestyle and by providing them with necessary information whenever necessary.

Ans to Q. No. 2 :

For this purpose we have to adopt a strategy of using different media in a judicious way as any single media maynot be enough to achieve this goal. So, in this context we have to utilize the positive aspects of mass media and smaller or alternative media the utility of which is immense. Mass media is too impersonal and beyond a certain point its effect on the masses or the target audience seems to fade away. However, at this point alternative media comes in quite handy for further extending the messages of mass media to the masses with a much better effect because the alternative media in different forms are much more personal in nature compared to mass media. Hence, along with conventional mass media such as newspapers, TV / Radio we need to associate alternative media like community radio, community newspapers, traditional / folk media etc. Community radio is one of the most effective tools in this regard. In short, a media, to be effective for grassroots communication, must be people-friendly so that the masses do identify themselves with these media.

Ans to Q. No. 3 :

Alternative Media is an alternative system of communication with the masses where different mass media fail to deliver the desired results among the masses. The major characteristics of the alterna-

tive media include their close proximity to the masses,. They are convenient and people-friendly all for which they are quite popular among the masses. They function with the big advantage of involving the target audience with content preparation, editing, collecting, criticizing, offering suggestions whenever necessary and above all listening to or reading the contents. As they present before us a new and alternate system of communication we term them as Alternative Media.

Ans to Q. No. 4 :

1. In a society like that of our country, Alternative Media has a lot of significance as it can deliver the goods to the masses in a more convenient manner than any usual conventional mass media. As the considerable portion of our population is illiterate and live in such places where reach and access to mass media is not very effective and ideal, alternative media provides us with an opportunity with a huge potential for reaching out to those people in a much more convenient way than it would have been the case with mass media. This is true for even many developed nations which are also actively pursuing this media for delivering the right kind of messages to their masses in any walk of life.



9.8 POSSIBLE QUESTIONS

Q.1. Describe Alternative Media in brief with examples.

Q.2. Compare the different aspects of Alternative Media with those of the Mass Media?

Q.3. Discuss the problems and prospects of using both mass and alternative media in a country like India.

Q.4. Why do we need to make information available to the people at the grassroots level and how can it be achieved smoothly?

Q.5. What is the role of the Panchayati Raj institutions in extending communication to the masses at the grassroots level?