Chapter-III

Models and theories of communication.

There are many models and theories of communication which helps in understanding the process of communication.

Models:

- Shannon and Weaver model of communication.
- Wilber Schramm Model of communication
- Lasswell Model of communication
- Newcomb’s Model of communication
- Osgood Model of communication
- David K. Berlo’s Model of communication.
Shannon Weaver Model
Shannon and Weaver proposed a mathematical model of communication. According to the model, there are five most significant elements of communication process.

- **Source**
- **Transmitter**
- **Receiver**
- **Destination**
- **Noise.**

**Source:-**

Source decides the information message which has to be transmitted. The message can be any part, idea, attitude opinion.

**Transmitter:-**

Transmitter is actually which changes the information message into signals which is then transmitted to receiver of message.

**Receiver:-**

In any communication process, there is always a receiver which changes the signal again into the message which can be understandable by the destination.

**Destination:-**

Destination is that for which the message is actually meant for. The transmitted signal is decoded by the receiver and then it is sent to destination.
**Noise:-**

The dictionary meaning of noise is unpleasant sound. Noise actually distorts the source. This makes the communication ineffective. It is basically physical or technical barrier in the communication process. Noise can completely change the actual meaning of the transmitted message. Noise can be anything that can occur when the message is traversing through the communication channel.

Noise can be static, technical or physical Noise may be verbal or non verbal. Anything that distracts the communication process like any physical sound, tone, any buzz etc.
Wilber Schramm Model
According to Wilber Schramm, encoding and decoding are very important in any communication process. Schramm’s definition of communication is “the sharing of information, ideas or attitude is called communication.” In his model of communication there are five elements:

1. Source
2. Encoder
3. Decoder
4. Destination
5. Message.

Source is actually the sender of message. The message is then transmitted into signals so that it can reach the destination. The message is decoded by the decoder and then information message is routed towards the destination.
HAROLD D. LASSWELL MODEL

- WHO Sender
- SAYS WHAT Message
- IN WHICH CHANNEL Medium
- TO WHOM Signal
- WITH WHAT EFFECT effect
HAROLD D. LASSWELL is the American scientist who defined the communication as the answers to the question.

- Who
- Says what
- In which channel
- To whom
- With what effect?

**Who?**

Who here means the communicator.

Who wants to send the message.

**What?**

What here refers to message? The communicator wants to communicate what?

**Which?**

Which refers to the channel which is used for the communication? Which channel is used to transmit the message?

**Whom?**

Whom denotes the receiver or destination of the information message.

**What effect?**

This means what will be its impact. The communicator wants to communication to the receiver and the message sent will leave some impact what will be the effect.
Newcomb Model
The Newcomb’s Model actually defines the relationship in the society. It represents how the relationship between people changes when the environment changes or vice versa. It affects the complete system according to Newcomb.

There exist a system ABX.

Where,

A – can be communicator or receiver

X – is a part of social environment.

In this system, ABX if any of the two i.e. A or B changes then attitude towards X, the whole situation changes. Both A and B have to have same attitude or opinion towards X, Then only the system remains in equilibrium.

It actually, represents the social system in which human relationships on change the complete scenario.
Osgood Model
According to Charles and Osgood’s definition of communication “it is a dynamic process in which there is interactive relationship between source and receiver where a person may be a source one moment a receiver the next, and again a source the following moment.

Osgood tried to give emphasis on encoding and decoding through his communication model. Osgood’s model of communication doesn’t follow the old consumption of communication process.
David Berlo’s model
David Berlo’s model of communication can be said the basis of all other theories of communication. He clearly distinguished all the necessary elements of the communication process.

1. Source
2. Encoder
3. Message
4. Channel
5. Receiver.
6. Decoder
7. Meaning.
8. Feedback
9. Noise
Theories of Communication:

The impact of mass communication on people’s idea, opinion, attitude, knowledge and perception has always been a subject matter of interest to the communication theorists. Mass media has affected a lot the way people behave. There is a very intense relationship between media and society. Both are the part of the system. There are many theories of communication which are given by great social scientist as well as communication theorists. These theories are based on certain assumptions.

There are some theories like –

1. Bullet theory.
2. Cognitive dissonance theory
3. Agenda Setting theory
4. Uses and gratification theory.

Normative Theories of Mass Media

- Authoritarian Theory
- Libertarian Theory
- Social responsibility Theory
- Soviet Communist Theory
- Development Media Theory
- Democratic Participant Theory.
**Bullet theory:**

This theory clearly indicates that the message has to be indulge into the mind of receiver of message like a bullet. There should not be any intermediate between the source and destination of information message. It can be described as one step flow of information.

**Individual differences Theory:**

This theory portrays that there can be differences in the opinion, attitude or view towards what the media communicates to the people. The factors which causes such differences are –

- Selective Exposure
- Selective Perception
- Selective Retention.

**Selective Exposure:-**

When people living in a society exposes themselves to what media communication but selectively, this is selective expose. This actually means people only use to expose to those messages which are according to their thinking or beliefs.

**Selective Perception:**

According to the concept of selective perception, people only perceive those messages which are in accordance with their attitude or views. They can simply ignore or do not agree with those which are against then beliefs or which are different from their thinking.
Selective Retention:

Selective retention means we only remember those messages which are useful to us. We may forget those things which are not of our interest.

Cognitive Dissonance Theory:

The cognitive dissonance theory states that “any time a person has information or an opinion which considered by itself would lead him not to engage in some action, then this information is dissonant with having engaged in action.” This theory was given by Festinger. He has given sources of dissonance between two beliefs.

- Logical inconsistency.
- Cultural mores
- Past experience
- Behavior can cause pervasion.
Agenda Setting Theory:

An agenda is a list of things to be considered on acted upon. Media can select some news item or some particular subject and then emphasize on them, which then affect the audience. Sometimes people perceived those issues more important on which media has emphasized more. This can be easily understood by taking an example of elections. Media can highlight the work done by currently working govt. and this may increase the no. of people supporting existing govt.

The impact of agenda setting theory is undoubtedly of very high degree.

Uses and Gratification Theory:

There uses and gratification theory explains the use of media and the satisfactions that are derived from them in terms of self perceived needs of audience members. The actual needs of people satisfied by media are known as media gratifications.

The different uses and gratification are classified in the following categories:-

- Cognition
- Diversion
- Social Utility
- Withdrawal.
Cognition:

The individual’s cognitive use of a mass communication medium is directly related to surveillance when a person wants to get some information he/she is using that particular medium in a cognitive way.

Diversion:

Diversion is another basic need of human beings. It can of many forms likes.

- Stimulation
- Relaxation
- Reality Exploration.

Social Utility:

One of our social needs is to be in contact with one family, friends and society. The media function that address this need is known as social ability. When some T.V. Program is used as a communicating tool to interest with our friend, this can be taken as we are using the media as per our need.

Withdrawal:

Today there is a very common thing that approximately every person use to do. That is suppose our favorite T.V. show is gonna to broad-cast, then we use to leave every other work and watch the show. This is what exactly “withdrawal” means. We don’t want to get interrupted by anybody else.
Normative Theories of Mass Media

- Authoritarian Theory
- Libertarian Theory
- Social responsibility Theory
- Soviet Communist Theory
- Development Media Theory
- Democratic Participant Theory.
1. Authoritarian Theory

This theory evolved in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, spreading throughout Europe with the invention of the printing press. The authoritarian theory views humans as subservient to the state. They held the belief that the ruling elite should guide the masses, whose intellectual ability was held in low esteem. Public dissent and criticism were considered harmful to both government and the people and were not tolerated. The press in such a society is viewed as an instrument for disseminating the state’s position to the public, informing (lie public what is right and wrong based on the state’s interpretations of issues, and providing official policy statements of the ruling elite. The state, after determining its objectives, uses the press as a means of obtaining those objectives. The press becomes a means to an end rather than an instrument of criticism of either means or ends.

Authoritarians used various devices to enforce cooperation of the press including licensing censorship of material before publication, the granting of exclusive printing rights to favoured units of the press, and the swift-harsh punishment of government critics. In fact, in certain societies, not only is the press prohibited from criticizing the government, but it is also required to perform functions for the good of the state. These might include omitting certain news reports that would be embarrassing or harmful to the government and explaining other events in a light favourable to the ruling powers. The main principles of the theory can be briefly summarized:
Media should do nothing which could undermine established authority or disturb order.

Media should always be subordinate to established authority.

Censorship can be justified to enforce these principles.

Media should avoid offence to majority, or dominant, moral and political values.

Unacceptable attacks on authority, deviations from official policy or offences against moral codes should be criminal offences.

Journalists or other media professionals have no independence within their media organizations.

Today the authoritarian system of the press is still in operation in many parts of the world. In communist countries, in nations under dictatorial control, and in some third world countries, a free press is little more than a theory without practice.
2. Libertarian Theory

The libertarian theory developed slowly in the sixteenth century being refined in the eighteenth century as libertarian principles found their way into nation’s constitutional framework. In theory, a libertarian press is the exact opposite of an authoritarian press. Libertarians assume that human beings are rational and are capable of making their own decisions and that governments exist to serve the individual. Unlike the authoritarians, libertarians hold that the common citizen has a right to hear all sides of an issue in order to distinguish truth from falsehood. Since any government restriction on the expression of ideas infringes on the rights of the citizen, the government can best serve the people by not interfering with the media. In short, the press must be free of control, Fred Siebert in discussing the development of libertarianism, credits its transition from authoritarianism to the efforts of four men: John Milton in the seventeenth century, John Erskine and Thomas Jefferson in the eighteenth century and John Stuart Mill in the nineteenth century. Milton argued that people had the capacity to distinguish between right and wrong and good and bad. As a result, to make decisions, people should have “unlimited access to the ideas and thoughts of other men”. Erskine argued that people seeking to enlighten others, and not intending to mislead, should be able to address the universal reason of a whole nation on what is believed to be true. John Stuart Mill believed that people had the right to think and act as they pleased if they did not infringe on the rights of others. Jefferson, borrowing from Milton’s ideas, believed that the collective aggregate of a people, if intelligent and informed, could
arrive at sound decisions. The press was the instrument to inform the people and, therefore, had to be free of control. Gradually, the rights of the press and libertarianism began to gain ground and became part of the constitutional doctrine both in the United States and later in England.

This theory is criticized on the following grounds. First, it is very unclear to what extent the theory can be held to apply to public broadcasting, which now accounts for a large part of media activity in many societies. Secondly, the theory has been most frequently formulated to protect the owners of media and cannot give equal expression to the arguable rights of editors and journalists within the press. Thirdly, the theory seems designed to protect opinion and belief and has much less to say on ‘information’. Fourthly, the theory prescribes compulsory control but provides no obvious way of handling the many pressures to which are subject. In nutshell, the theory can be expressed in the following principles:

➢ Publication should be free from any prior censorship.
➢ Attacks on any government, official or political party, should not be punishable, even after the event.
➢ There should be no compulsion to publish anything.
➢ No restriction should be placed for gathering the information for publication.
➢ The act of publication and distribution should be open to a person, a group without licence or permit.
➢ There should be no restriction on getting or sending information overseas.
➢ Journalists should have professional autonomy within their organization.
3. Social Responsibility Theory

The theory was constructed in 1947 by the Commission on Freedom of the Press, a private organization financed by magazine publisher Henry Luce. According to this theory, although the press had a right to criticize government and other institutions, it also had a responsibility to preserve democracy by properly informing the public and by responding to society’s interests and needs. Probably the most significant contribution of the social responsibility theorists is their view that it is more important for citizens to have the right of access to information than it is for the press to achieve complete freedom of speech. It is not enough that increasing by large media and economic structures have the freedom to do as they please. They are also obliged to respond to society’s needs.

Social responsibility theory has a wide range of application since it covers several kinds of private print media and public institutions of broadcasting, which are answerable through various kinds of democratic procedure to the society. The theory has thus to reconcile independence with obligation to society. It is assumed that the media do serve essential functions in society, especially in relation to democratic politics. Media should accept an obligation to fulfil those functions—not only in the sphere of information and the provision of a platform for diverse views, but also in matters of culture. It should give maximum emphasis on media independency, consistent with their
obligations to society. The theory states that media should also follow certain standards in work.

It can be seen that social responsibility theory has to try to reconcile three somewhat divergent principles: of individual freedom, of media freedom and of media obligation to society. There can be no single way of resolving the potential inconsistencies but the theory has favoured two main kinds of solution. One is the development of public and the other is the development of professionalism as a means of achieving higher standards of performance, while maintaining self-regulation by the media themselves.

The main principles of this theory can be stated as follows:

- Media should accept and fulfill certain obligations to society by setting high or professional standards of truth, accuracy, objectivity and balance, etc.
- In accepting and applying these obligations, media should be self-regulating within the framework of law and established institutions.
- Journalists and media professionals should be accountable to society as well as to employers.
4. Soviet Communist Theory

Wilbur Schramm while writing this theory begins his discussion by noting that when a reporter from the United States and one from the Soviet Union get together, “The talk is apt to be both amusing and frustrating”. Their different frames of reference are simply incompatible. The American loathes the Soviet reporter’s life with a government controlled press. The Soviet reporter loathes the American’s association with a “corrupt”, “venal”, “irresponsible press” controlled by special interests.

The Russian press and other media were completely reorganized after the Revolution of 1917. This theory is derived from the basic postulates of Marx and Engels. It envisages media to be under the control of the working class. The working class by definition holds power in a socialist society.

To understand the Soviet media theory of the press, one must examine the Soviet interpretation of the word “freedom”. The Soviet constitution guarantees both free speech and a free press. In addition, the principle tenet of Soviet political life is one of unity. The rise of the working class, the revolution, was a movement of unity within Soviet Society. This joining together of the people into a classless society has become the philosophy of the Soviet state. Thus, freedom from the Soviet point of view is freedom from the oppression of a upper, middle and lower class.

Schramm explains that mass communication in the Soviet media theory is an instrument of the state. It (media) do not have integrity of their own. Their
integrity such as it is, that of the state. They are “kept” instruments, and they follow humbly and nimbly the gyrations of the party line and the state directives. Mass communication is integrated with other instruments of the state, such as schools, the police, and even assemblies as instruments protecting the communist philosophy Yet while the press is considered an instrument of unity, it is also considered an instrument of revelation to provide enlightenment and to prepare the masses for unity and eventually revolution. The press is an “agitator, propagandist, and organizer”.

Broadcasting under the Soviet-Communist theory likewise is designed not so much to serve the public but to inform it. Programming is again the instrument of the state, and the medium is important to it because of the large number of people that broadcasting can reach.

The theory can be summed as follows

- Media should not be privately owner.
- It should serve the interests of, and be in control of the working class.
- Media should respond to wishes and needs of their audience,
- Media should serve positive functions for society by education, information, motivation and mobilization.
- Society has a right to punish for the anti-societal publication.
- Media should provide a complete and objective view of society.
- Journalists’ aims and ideals should coincide with the best interests of the society.
5. Development Media Theory

The limited application of the four established theories of the press to Third World countries has led to the birth of a new media theory whose main task is that communication be used to carry out the development functions in a society. The absence of some of the conditions in these countries which are necessary for a developed mass communication system are as follows:

- Communication infrastructure; the professional skills; the production and cultural resources and the available audience, etc.
- Technology; skills and cultural products.
- Devotion of these societies to economic, political and social development as a primary national task.
- Developing countries’ awareness of their similar identity and interest in international politics.

The normative elements of emerging development theory are shaped by the conditions described above and have both negative and positive aspects. They are as below:

- Opposed to dependency and foreign domination and to arbitrary authoritarianism.
- For positive uses of the media in national development.
- For tile autonomy and cultural identity of the particular national society.
Development media theory favours democratic grass-roots involvement to a certain extent. It emphasized on a ‘right to communicate based on Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes of freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media regardless of frontiers’. The main principles of this theory can be summed as follows:

- Media should accept and carry out positive development tasks in line with nationally established policy.
- Media should give priority to the national culture and language. Freedom of media should be restricted to an extent keeping in view the economic priorities and development needs of the society.
- Journalists and other media workers have responsibilities as well as freedom in their information gathering and dissemination tasks. The state has a right to intervene in or restrict, media operations and devices of censorship and direct control in the interest of the development of a country.
6. Democratic-Participant Media Theory

Denis McQuail states that it is most difficult to formulate this theory, partly because it lacks full legitimisation and incorporation into media institutions and partly because some of its tenets are already to be found in some of the other theories. The main feature of the democratic-participant theory relates to the needs, interests and aspirations of the active “receive?” in a political society. It is concerned with the right to relevant information, the right to answer back, the right to use the means of communication for interaction in small-scale settings of community, interest group and sub-culture.

The main principles of this theory can be slated as below:

- Individual citizens and minority groups have rights to communicate.
- Groups, organizations and local communities should have their own media.
- The organization and content of media should not be subject to centralized political or state bureaucratic control. Small scale, interactive and participative media focus are better than large-scale, one-way and professionalized media.