

## **DEVELOPMENT COMMUNICATION: FOOD TO ABSOLUTE MODERNIZATION**

By

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***Communication for Development in the Third World Theory and Practice for Empowerment: composed by Srinivas R. Melkote and H. Leslie Steeves; Sage Publications India Pvt Ltd, B 1/I-1 Mohan Cooperative Industrial Area, Mathura Road, New Delhi 110 044, India, pp 422, price Rs.550 ISBN 978-0-7619-9476-3***

Development communication has been practiced as a part of mass communication studies since very beginning. Without development communication, the studies on mass communication are just like a boat without a sailor. That is the reason of choosing the review of a book related to the development communication. Segmented in five parts, the book namely Communication for Development in the Third World has nine chapters. A chapter wise review has therefore been made here.

The chapter 1 of this book depicts the very basic terms of development communication like communication, development, third world, and empowerment of different sects in the third world countries. The chapter provides a clear insight into the proper identification of the third world nations in this world. Why these countries are known as third world or why they have been given such names are explicit here. Whether we should refer the less developed nations as under developed or developing or third world nations – these have been clarified by the authors in this chapter in a proper way. How the communication has been taken place between these backward countries and the progressive nations are properly discussed in this chapter. The reference to information age and the subsequent growth of the gap between the developed and underdeveloped and developing nations are also given proper light here. Finally the authors discussed about the development communication, a term which has been in practice since decades. Here they speak a lot about the different sectors of the society in terms of their needs and reasons for growth. Right from the grass root level to the global level, the chapter tries to underline the necessity of the development communication as a whole.

Chapter 2 of this book discusses about the evolution of the theory and practice of development communication. The centuries right from 16<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup> witnessed a vast experience of ‘exploitation’ and ‘expansionism’ in terms of development throughout the world. Though the western nations leaped forward a lot during this period, the third world nations remained and still remain completely or partially

dependent on the modernized western society. The set up of the United Nations and its subsequent branches as the organs of development communication and their contribution to the third world nations for getting developed as per the parameters defined by the modernized nations have been discussed with proper perspectives. The references to FAO, UNDP, ILO, UNESCO, UNFPA, UNICEF, WHO, GATT have been made with proper examples. A good discussion has been made on the pro-persuasion and top-down communication bias here. Development undoubtedly comes through the expansion of literacy and mass media. This ideology has been exemplified here with proper reasons. Before any kind of positive work to be done, always the psychological set up of a person has to be modified as per that pro-positive standard. The same has been exemplified here with special reference to the peasantry culture. References to Hagen, Hoselitz, Inkeles, Lerner and McClelland have been made too. Before discussing about the challenges to be faced in the twenty-first century, the authors have also discussed about the external reasons of under-development in these countries.

Chapter 3 discusses about the enterprise of the modernization and the dominant discourse of development. Here the authors focused on Everett M Rogers' concept of development i.e. the economic boom through 'Industrial Revolution' in the western nations after the Second World War and the choosing of scientific technology besides proper planning at the national as well as grass root level. The famous idea of Dominant paradigm of Development Communication has been discussed here with proper examples. The positivistic, empirical and objective role of science has been properly discussed here. If we look after modernization as a tool, then the components of modernization are capital, labour, land, technology and entrepreneurship. The authors have illustrated proper examples in this regard in this chapter. The idea of laissez-faire and the light on the importance as well as effectiveness of the financial institutes like the Bretton Woods, the IMF, the government financial institutions, the private banks have been provided here. A proper discussion has been done here between traditional values and modernity too. The unilinear model of development with special reference to Rostow and Lerner has been truly made here. Rostow's five stage model of transition like traditional society and beliefs, preconditions for take-off, take off, drive to maturity and the age of high mass consumption has been discussed here with proper examples. Rostow basically propounded his theory on non-communist model and the same has been discussed here in order to get a proper modernization structure which has been rightly followed by the non communist western states as a whole.

Chapter 4 of this book provides enough light on the mass society and the mass media and their approaches towards modernizing the entire nation. Daniel Lerner's 'Passing of the Traditional Society' with special reference to the western nations have been rightly discussed here. Next comes the diffusion of innovation. While discussing about the models of diffusion, the authors have put enough light on the terms like innovators, early adopters, early majority, late majority and laggards with curve drawings. Development of a nation rightly depends on the proper family planning and disease control. This chapter also focuses on these topics as well. A considerable volume of the population in the underdeveloped nations has been infected with contagious and deadly diseases like AIDS. Proper communication needs to be made in the third world nations in order to eradicate these deadly diseases. The chapter concludes with special light on the role of entertainment - education like SITE programme through the Government of India in the days of eighties.

The chapter 5 discusses about the deconstruction of the dominant paradigm of development. While discussing the dominant paradigm biases, the authors have discussed about the role of science and development machine i.e. various social hierarchal bodies. While discussing about the consequences of the dominant paradigm of development, the authors have criticized the role of the government as well as the development agencies in a negative way towards certain section of the society. In the name of development, one cannot claim to usurp the extreme backward class as well as their tradition. Those incidents with special reference to Indian cases have been discussed here. At the same time, why and how the so-called industrial models practiced in the developed nations in terms of bringing economic development in the third world nations have faced a big failure has been discussed here. The pros and cons of all failures have been provided enough light in this chapter. The role of unemployment, inequality and poverty as the main constraints of economic development in the third world nations has earned space in this chapter. While discussing about the subsistence ethics, the authors have also put down the emphasis on safety first principles in this chapter. Then comes the discussion on dependency theory. In the name of development, a group of nations have been completely dependent on the developed nations. The birth of core nations and periphery nations has been taken place in this way. How much and why these under developed nations and for how long they would remain depended on these developed nations have been discussed as well as criticized here. In the race of development, the world is gradually losing its ecological balance. Referring to this global threat of reducing greeneries, the chapter also speaks on sustainable development, i.e. ecological development. At the same time, development in absolute term can only be achieved with the proper and equal participation of both genders in the society and in every sphere as well – this ideology has been provided enough light in this chapter. Without the development of women, a society can never make progress. The alternative perspective of development therefore appears to be fruitful in the underdeveloped nations.

The chapter 6 of this book completely criticizes the communication approaches in the third world countries. Proper criticism on the diffusion of innovation, the role of the mass media, the digital divide, the effects of pro-persuasion bias, pro-literacy bias, pro-source bias and the in-the –head variable bias have been discussed here. Whether the ICT has arrived as a boon or as a curse, has also been discussed here.

Chapter 7 discusses about the liberation theology and development communication perspectives under the canopy of liberation i.e. emancipation. Here the authors have rightly focused on the Christian liberation theology, the Buddhist philosophy, the Islam and Mahatma Gandhi's teachings on the ground of Hindu philosophies. The role of religion is considered here as an effective tool of bringing development in the society irrespective of class and creed or status. The authors have placed an equal view of the main philosophies of all religions. Ignoring the religious beliefs, the society cannot develop a lot - that has been exemplified here.

The chapter 8 discusses about the role of communication and spirituality in development communication discourse. Here we come to know about Paolo Freire's liberation theology, the Sarvodaya Shramadan movement in Sri Lanka, life-sketch of Ariyaratne, Base Ecclesial Community Movement in Brazil, etc. All of them direct the ways of participatory and alternative ways of development.

In the concluding chapter, the communication strategies for empowerment have been discussed. This entire book depicts in detail about various perspectives of development communication, while discussing about the positive and negative sides of the ongoing development planning policies in the third world nations including India. Therefore, we can recommend this book a must for the students of mass communication and development communication.