**E-CONTENT

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**Topic : Development and communication**

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**Development and communication**

Development‖ and communication‖ are two terms heavily loaded with different conceptions and a richness of uses and functions shaped by their various theoretical underpinnings. Such richness often leads to ambiguities and a lack of clarity that affects the field of development communication. The wide range of interpretations of key terminology and the rapid evolution of some concepts have led to inconsistencies in the way basic terms are understood and used. What we have here, in fact, is more of an approach than a discipline. As far as its definitions are concerned, they usually consist of general statements. Thus, the communication media, in the context of development, are generally used to support development initiatives by the dissemination of messages that encourage the public to support development-oriented projects. Although development strategies in developing countries diverge widely, the usual pattern for broadcasting and the press has been predominantly the same: informing the population about projects, illustrating the advantages of these projects, and recommending that they be supported. A typical example of such a strategy is situated in the area of family planning, where communication means such as posters, pamphlets, radio, and television attempt to persuade the public to accept birth control methods. Similar strategies are used in campaigns regarding health and nutrition, agricultural projects, education, and so on.

The concept of development communication arose within the framework of the contribution that communication and the media made to development in the countries of the Third World. Development communications are organized efforts to use communications processes and media to bring social and economic improvements, generally in developing countries. The field emerged in the late 1950's amid high hopes that radio and television could be put to use in the world's most disadvantaged countries to bring about dramatic progress. Early communications theorists like Wilbur Schramm and Daniel Lerner based their high expectations upon the apparent success of World War II propaganda, to which academia and Hollywood had contributed.

Also with World War II came dozens of new, very poor, countries, left by their former colonial overseers with little infrastructure, education, or political stability. It was widely accepted that mass media could bring education, essential skills, social unity, and a desire to "modernize." Walt Rostow theorized that societies progress through specific stages of development on their way to modernity, what he termed "the age of high mass consumption." Lerner suggested that exposure to Western media would create "empathy" for modern culture, and a desire to move from traditional to modern ways. Early development communications, especially that sponsored by the U.S. government, was also seen as a means of "winning hearts and minds" over to a capitalist way of life.