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# UNIT 1 CONCEPTS AND THEORIES OF COMMUNICATION

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## 1.0 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

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This unit presents the concepts and theories of communication and is intended to familiarize you with the communication process. It starts with elaboration of the concepts of communication followed by its' theories so that you can grasp every component of communication. We will discuss the basic elements of communication and will elaborately define its' various types and classifications. At the end of this unit, you would be able to –

- understand the concept and meaning of communication;
- explain the communication process;
- analyse the different forms of communication and the basics characteristics of each of them; and
- describe the different communication theories and models.

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## 1.1 INTRODUCTION

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Any field or discipline of study dealing with human behaviour or society at large is essentially concerned with understanding the process of communication. Interestingly, for understanding communication process, the element of social set up or society becomes an integral part this analysis.

Many definitions have been given by scholars for understanding Communication theories. Stephen Turner (1994) compares theories with stories about how and why events occur and that it begins with a hypothesis that the universe reveals several basic and fundamental properties and processes, which explain the flow of events in specific processes. Two other theorists, John Bowers and John Courtright (1984) propose a traditional

scientific definition which states that theories are basically statements asserting relationships among classes of variables.

In simpler words, communication is an essential and indeed the foundational part of the human existence. Without communication, there would be no constructive or purposive meaning of life, and consequently it becomes significant to understand the purposiveness of communication. Having a well-balanced knowledge of communication is considered as the pillar on which rest of the field rests. Theory is a way of looking or perspective towards things. Interestingly, there is much agreement and disagreement about what constitutes a suitable theory of communication, i.e., a theory of how the process of communication works. This module intends to provide an overview of communication theories, that are being studied from different perspectives and facets.

Theories are also described as wider arrays of ways for understanding the social and communicative world. Theories refer to the explanations and forecasts of social phenomena concerning to the subject of interest or the subject under study and also to some other phenomenon. Other scholars define theory as the organized set of concepts, descriptions and principles of certain aspect of human experience. In other words, a theory is described as an idea that elucidates an event or behaviour. It brings precision to an otherwise complex situation by drawing order out of chaos with putting emphasis on fundamental, and helps in ignoring that point which makes little difference otherwise. This module also deals with the historical influences on the theories and models that shaped the entire communication discipline.

Communication theory in everyday view is different from how scholars perceive it. From scholar's perspective, communication is described as a process by which people interact, sustain and manage. In summation, we can say that communication means conveying or sharing of information, knowledge, opinions, ideas, etc. It denotes the transmission of certain message from a source to a receiver. Interestingly, the process of communication also comprises all the actions through which one mind possesses the capacity of affecting another mind or entire human behaviour either orally or via written words.

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## **1.2 ELEMENTS OF COMMUNICATION**

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The basic meaning of communication is clear by now from the above discussions that it is the process of sharing and exchanging of information, opinions, feelings or ideas. However, this earlier basic meaning has undergone many a changeover the years making the meaning more expanded as well as complicated. We will have a look at what the renowned scholars have put forward in terms of the definitions of communication. Wilbur Schramm (1971) stated that “communication is a process of conveying of feelings, ideas, knowledge and motivations from one mind to another, in a

way that the receiver remains as the passive agent in this entire process.” However, this concept of the passive audiences or listeners did not find any base as it was found that at times the audiences tend to refuse some of the messages what is thrown at them. Interestingly, it is the message that gets transmitted to the receiver and specifically not the ideas or the thoughts. The reception or perception part remains at the end of the receiver and many times the message may bring slight alteration in the behaviour of the receiver that might not have been intended on the part of the sender.

Theodorson and Theodorson (1969) conceived communication as a process of transmission of approaches, emotions and outlooks from a person or a group to another person or group mainly with the help of symbols. There are many discussions and deliberations regarding the meaning of communication. However, the meaning that we mainly derive from the above definitions is that ‘communication is a process of imparting and conveying of thoughts and knowledge from one mind to the other(s) through either oral or written form. In this process, the sender and the receiver communicate within some social context. Definitions given by other scholars like Rogers (1973) or Berelson and Steiner (1964) also resonate the same meaning that communication is the planned or unplanned process of transmitting information or ideas through which one person has the capacity or intend to influence the other person.

So, the above meanings help us in drawing the elements or components of communication. We have seen that we have a sender who produces and sends messages to the receiver in a timely and properly manner with the use of a channel for achieving certain goals. Thus, we can say that the concept of communication solely depends on four basic elements—encoding (sender), medium of transmission, decoding (receiver) and feedback. This process basically starts with a sender and finishes with a receiver. Let us now understand the relationship between the sender and the receiver in a communication process. For instance, if the communication skills of both sender and receiver are extremely good, the message will be encoded and decoded effectively. A given source might be having a higher level of skills that are not shared by the receiver, so we cannot simply foresee the success of the source or sender from its skill level only. It is generally the experiences, skills, attitudes, knowledge of the sender that influences the message and its subsequent impact on the receiver. So, in the encoding process, the sender has to start by deciding what message is to be transmitted. At times, the assumptions and perceived knowledge of the receiver or the targeted audience also plays a great role in framing of the message.

Communication theorist Schramm (1971) noted that “communication is the sharing of an orientation towards a set of informational signs.” Here, information refers not only to facts or news or whatever is taught in any classroom, but it also refers to any content that reduces uncertainty or the number of alternate possibilities in any given situation. It clearly includes opinions, facts, influence, emotions, and guidance communicated

appropriately. Hence we gather that the elements of communication are – sender, encoding, message, channel, decoding, receiver, feedback and noise or barrier.

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### 1.3 CLASSIFICATION/ FORMS OF COMMUNICATION

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There are numerous classifications or forms of communication but majorly it is divided into two major forms – ‘verbal communication’ and ‘non-verbal communication’.

**Verbal communication includes –**

- a) Oral communication – talking or conversing to oneself or others, some form of dialogue or discussion between two or more people, groups, etc.
- b) Visual communication – maps, graphic designs, posters, print advertisements, etc.
- c) Written communication – memorandums, reports, mails, etc.
- d) Communication via electronic or digital mode – communication enabled by digital/computing technologies such as laptops, emails, mobile phones, etc.

#### **Oral Communication**

When the information/idea/thought is transferred, shared or exchanged between sender and receiver by means of verbal and visual aid, it is called oral communication. In oral communication words are spoken for example while making presentations or delivering a speech by a politician or conducting a class by a professor. It is a very common and effective way to communicate. It is generally done face to face however, a telephonic conversation is also considered as oral communication. In oral communication the receiver not only receives spoken words but also non-verbal features like facial expressions, body movements etc.

Oral communication has the following three levels:

- **Person to person:** In such type of communication, the conversation is between two individuals. For example, communication between a shopkeeper and a customer or conversation between two friends is person to person communication.
- **Person to group:** In such type of communication, the communication is from a person to a group. For example, a classroom is a perfect example of person to group communication or the priest giving sermon in the church to a group of people.
- **Group to group:** In such type of communication, the communication is between two groups, for example, a debate between two teams.

## Non Verbal Communication

The process of sending and receiving wordless messages is called non-verbal communication. In such communication, the participants exchange ideas and thoughts through gestures or touch, by exhibiting a particular body language or posture, by facial expressions and by making eye contact. Non-verbal communication is also called ‘communication with implication’. It is necessary to understand that non-verbal communication is different from body language.

Interestingly, whatsoever the type of communication is, its objectives remain the same mostly.

### Check Your Progress 1

**Note:** 1) Use the space below for you answers.

2) Compare your answers with those given at the end of this unit.

1) Explain ‘communication’ and its importance in human lives.

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2) What are the different elements of communication?

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3) Which are the different forms of communication?

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## 1.4 COMMUNICATION THEORIES

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After going through the reading on the meaning, process and the forms of communication, we will now focus on the different theories of communication. As mentioned earlier, theories provide a systematic understanding of the

process of communication and its' relevance in the social structure. We need to have an understanding of the various aspects of the theories to gather relevant viewpoints of the discipline of communication and its relevance.

## **I) Classical Theories**

### **a) Authoritarian Theory**

This theory suggests that mass media have to follow the command of the State even though it is not directly under the State's control. Authoritarian theory endorsed enthusiastic obedience to a classified superiority and advocated threat and penalty for those not following the rules set out by the supreme authority. This theory also justified censorship on the grounds that the State stands superior over the right and freedom of expression of an individual. The Authoritarian theory developed after the invention of the printing press by Johannes Gutenberg around 1440 in Strasburg Germany. This theory evolved during the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> century. The Authoritarian theory considers citizens as inferior or subservient to the state. The theory holds a belief that the rich, powerful, elites and the rulers are authorised to lead the masses. Therefore, all information to be disseminated by the mass media must be the interpretation of the powerful, rich and elites of the society. According to this theory, the masses are incapable of making interpretations and therefore they should be led. The press or mass media is considered as the tool or weapon of the powerful and the rich to communicate what they deem as correct. There is no provision of public dissent or the mass is not permitted to reject what is being communicated by the state. This theory basically follows a top – down approach of communication. The social reality is constructed by the mass media according to the notions, ideas and judgements of the elites. The state determines its objectives and then uses the press to achieve them. The mass media is used to make believe that the state is correct. The press is used to create a favourable and desirable image of the state. According to the authoritarian theory, the government exerts pressure on mass media forcing it to publish/broadcast information in favour of the government. Even though mass media is an independent body, it still faces an unseen pressure from the authority. The idea of censorship is announced by the authoritarian theory. Censorship is “the suppression or prohibition of any parts of books, films, news etc. that are considered obscene, politically unacceptable, or a threat to security.” It is observed that media organizations that publish in favour of the government, receives licenses and advertisements and media houses which are critical of the government receive backlash and curtailment of publishing rights.

### **b) Free Press Theory or Libertarian Theory**

This theory is based on the idea of the basic individual right and supports the absence of limitation in the expression of one's thoughts. The foundation of this theory dates back to 17<sup>th</sup> century in England when the

State was considered as a main source of intrusion on the rights and personal properties of an individual. Libertarians debated that the press should be perceived as the *Fourth Estate* with the power for reflecting larger public opinion. Libertarian theory has its roots back in the sixteenth century Europe. This era was characterised by the aristocratic control over the common people. This theory opposed the authoritarian concept and emerged because of social and political movements like the Protestant Reformation. The practitioners of Libertarian theory were against the practice of governing elites controlling the freedom of the press. They did not approve of the authorities justifying their control as a technique to protect the state and maintain social order. There were several instances where the King granted licenses and permissions to media practitioners and if the media practitioners were found to violate the orders of the king, they could be imprisoned or their licenses could be revoked. Early Libertarians argued that “if individuals could be freed from the arbitrary limits on communication imposed by church and state, they would ‘naturally’ follow the dictates of their conscience, seek truth, engage in public debate, and ultimately create a better life for themselves and others (McQuail, 1987; Siebert, Peterson, and Schramm, 1956).”

### c) **Social Responsibility Theory**

The critics of Free Press Theory advocated for the need of its replacement by Social Responsibility theory, which supported responsibility on the part of the mass media towards the larger society. It believed in the idea that the advent of popular mass media like the television, radio or films need to owe some levels of accountability. Thus, this theory became the modern variant promoting the idea that one's morality was the prime basis of the right of free expression and speech. During the World War II, there was a greater need for government regulation of media and the demand continued during the anti-communist agitation that followed.

## II) **Magic Bullet/ Hypodermic Needle Theory**

According to this theory, mass media constructs a message which is targeted to a certain audience. This message is transmitted just like how a gun triggers a bullet and the message is received by the audience who are like sitting ducks and lack the wisdom to interpret or challenge the message. It is by sending the message through mass media to the audience the desired response is achieved. The message transmitted by mass media has direct effect on the minds of the audience and they most certainly believe in the message. This theory advocated the outlook that mass media has a strong influence on the audiences and it can easily alter or mould peoples' behaviour as it considered the audiences to be passive. One of the major factors considered accountable for the strong effects of mass media is selective exposure that talks about the tendency of people of exposing themselves to content that are largely in agreement with their

interests and beliefs. The second factor is selective perception and selective retention, which indicates towards the inclination of people to perceive the meaning of media messages in accordance with their already prevailing thoughts.

### **III) One Step, Two Step and Multi Step Flow Theory**

One step flow theory suggests that mass media directly communicate with the audiences minus the filtration of message by opinion leaders whereas two step flow theory suggests the reverse. It indicates towards the flow of information from mass media to opinion leaders and from there to the audiences. It talks about the influence that the informal social groups or opinion leaders have on people and how capable they are in moulding the way the audiences select the media content and react to it. Multi step flow theory suggests something similar. It talks about several interferences or relays in the flow of communication from the sender/source to the audiences.

### **IV) Spiral of Silence Theory**

This theory basically explains the process of public opinion formation. According to this theory, spiral of silence is the process experienced by an individual when, “he may find that the views he holds are losing ground; the more this appears to be so, the more uncertain he will become of himself, and the less he will be inclined to express his opinions.” In other words, this particular theory points that mass media advertises views that are main-stream and audiences adjust their views as per to their insights to avoid being secluded. Individuals who foresee their opinion as being acknowledged will openly express it, whereas those who contemplate themselves as being marginal in terms of being accepted will suppress their views and remain side-lined.

### **V) Uses and Gratification Theory**

This particular theory is mainly interested in finding out how people use media for fulfilling their needs. This theory advocates the fact that individuals select their content from the media to satisfy their needs and derive gratification accordingly. It signifies that an individual use media for various purposes and this approach further suggests that audiences acquire different kinds of gratifications. This theory was proposed by Elihu Katz in 1959. This theory is a shift of thought from how media uses people to how people use media. The question which strikes the mind is that what do people do with the media? The answer to this question is that people receive information, knowledge, awareness, education, entertainment from the media. Unlike mass media theories which emphasises on the media influence and impact, the Uses and Gratification theory explores the motives on the basis of which people use media and how gratifications are obtained. Unlike the hypodermic needle theory which considers audience to be incapable of judgment and



passive, uses and gratification theory highlights how positive motivation and active use of media content can gratify the needs of the receiver.

## **VI) Cultivation Theory**

Cultivation theory of Mass Media was conceptualised by George Gerbner in the 1960s and 1970s. The theory is also referred to as the 'cultivation hypothesis' or 'cultivation analysis'. Cultivation theory attempts to study the long-term effects of Television (TV) on viewers. The theory asserts that "the danger of television lies in its ability to shape not a particular view point about on specific issue but in its ability to shape people's moral values and general beliefs about the world." Cultivation theory lies in the "effects tradition" and the cultivations theorists argue that "television has long-term effects which are small, gradual, indirect but cumulative and significant." Cultivation theory in its basic form, suggests that television is responsible for shaping or cultivating viewers conceptions of social reality. The combined effect of massive television exposure by viewers over time subtly shapes the perception of social reality for individuals and ultimately for our culture as a whole. Gerbner argues that the mass media cultivate attitudes and values which are already present in a culture: the media maintain and propagate these values amongst members of a culture, thus binding it together. He has argued that television tends to cultivate middle-of-the-road political perspectives. Gerbner called this effect "mainstreaming."

## **VII) Media Dependency Theory**

This theory propagated the idea that people mostly depend on information provided by the media for meeting their needs and certain goals. Further, this theory suggests that social institutions along with media interact with the audiences and create interests and needs of certain level. The theory studies the interrelations of larger social systems, mass media and the individual as a result of effect of mass media. The concept is based on the simple assumption that the more an individual depends upon mass media to fulfil her/his needs; the dependency on media will grow making it more important in the person's life. The theory suggests that in a modern society, media is considered as an essential 'information system' required for the maintenance, change and conflict processes at the societal, group or individual levels of social action. The theory emphasizes that in such a society, individuals heavily depend on mass media information for knowing what is happening in their own society.

## **VIII) Agenda Setting Theory**

Agenda setting theory explains how mass media has the potential to set agenda for the people. The theory explains that mass media is an influential tool which has the ability to tell the people what issues are significant and requires attention of the public and the policy makers.

According to the theory, mass media tries to influence the people and list news items on the basis of preference received by them. Agenda setting helps in creating public awareness about important issues as perceived by people.

The researchers have two basic assumptions which lay the foundation of agenda setting – *firstly*, the press and the media does not reflect reality, they only filter and shape it and *secondly*, the media concentrates on certain issues which are perceived by the people as most important. A significant aspect of this theory is the “time frame” required for this phenomenon which is why different media have different agenda-setting.

The theories mentioned above suggest that the primary purpose of the role of communication in any form is to maintain balance within the social system. The bottom line derived out of these theories is that communication definitely serves diverse purposes and it is also the means of maintaining relationship between people within the society.

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## 1.6 MODELS OF COMMUNICATION

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We have elaborately discussed the major theories of communication. We have developed an understanding that the study of communication is essentially multi-disciplinary that draws concepts from different disciplines like that of sociology, psychology, political science, etc. Now, we need to understand what is meant by a communication model. A model is defined as a methodical representation of an object or occurrence in perfect as well as abstract form. Further, the act of conceptualizing rejects certain details in order to focus on critical factors. In the communication process, a model proposes framework on the basis of which it becomes easier and convenient to identify and address the problems encountered during the process of communication. A model must clarify and simplify the structure of communication and must offer new dimensions to it in a graphic form. There are several advantages of communication models — models perform an organising function by placing the elements of communication process in a specific order and also recommend the association between them. Moreover, communication models offer explanations to complex or vague concepts and they also help in listing possible outcomes or suggest sequence of an event.

### **Types of Models: Linear, Transactional and Interactional.**

#### **I) The Key Features of Linear Models are –**

- One way communication
- Used in mass communication
- Sender sends the information and receiver only receive
- No feedback
- No mention of possibility of noise or barrier

- Effective persuasive tool
- Desired results are obtained
- No proper way to determine the effectiveness of communication as no feedback is recorded
- Not a continuous process.

Some examples of linear models of communication are Aristotle's model of communication, Shannon and Weaver, Harold D. Laswell's model of communication. We will elaborately discuss few models here.

**Aristotle's model:** This model was based in oral communication and is known as Aristotelian model of communication. The model is considered the oldest model of communication and dates back to 300 BC. According to the model, the speaker is most central to communication process and is the most important element. Speaker is the only active element who delivers the message as a speech to an audience at a particular occasion and generates an effect, mostly a positive one. The audience is the passive target audience who is expected to get influenced by the speech. It is therefore, a one way flow of communication from the sender to the receiver.

The speaker prepares the speech according to the occasion and the target audience. The speaker pre-determines the desired effect and accordingly the speech is carefully drafted to meet the objectives of the speaker. It is necessary to prepare the speech in a way that it is best understood and accepted by the target audience. The speaker must keep in mind the selection of language, cultural beliefs, needs and attitudes of the audience. The speech must be persuasive and influential. It is interesting to note that as per this model communication does generate an effect but does not facilitate feedback and leaves the audience influenced without participating in the process. The model is primarily used in public speaking and to create propaganda. It is also noteworthy that even if audience does not provide feedback, the communication process focuses on the receivers. The most basic example of this model is an election campaign, during which the politician (speaker) addresses (speech) the people of his/her constituency (target audience) during the elections (occasion) and wins support (effect). If the candidate wins the election, it is a result of the influence and propaganda spread by delivering the speech.

**Shannon and Weaver Model:** This model aims at facilitating communication between the sender and the receiver by identifying factors that can hinder the process, such an obstacle is called "noise". The model was primarily developed to improve telephonic communication and was later applied to communication discipline. The model proposed six elements of a communication process — source, encoder, message, medium/ channel, decoder, and receiver. The model was produced in 1949. The model gave importance to the transmission and reception of information. The model was a linear model and ignored feedback in the communication process.

According to this model, the sender is the source of information or information source who selects the channel and transfers the message. Encoder is the transmitter or a machine which converts the messages into signal in the form of binary data. Channel is the medium used to transmit the information. Decoder is the machine used to decode the information received and the signal in the form of binary data is decoded. Receiver is the person who finally gets the message. Noise is the disturbance that does not permit smooth communication between the sender and the receiver. Shannon and Weaver were the first ones to point out 'Noise' in the communication process. It is extremely important to identify noise or disturbance for carrying out smooth communication. This model is a two way flow of communication. It can be applied to interpersonal communication primarily however, in the new media age, it is applicable to group communication as well for example, a conference call, group chats on social media platforms like Facebook, Twitter and WhatsApp involves more than two participants.

This model was criticised for emphasising on a passive receiver as the sender plays a dominant role in the process. Feedback is considered less important than the message sent by the sender. As per this model, communication within a medium is often unidirectional and direct; however in the real media world communication is rarely unidirectional and is mostly indirect.

**Harold D. Lasswell's model:** Harold D. Lasswell was a political scientist who studied the American presidential elections of 1948. He studied propaganda and analysed political campaigning and introduced a linear model. The model is also known as the Action model. The model was published in an article titled, "The Structure and Function of Communication in Society" in 1948 and according to this model there are five components of a communication process. The process begins with identifying who (the sender) is sending what (message) through what channel (medium) to whom (receiver) with what effect (feedback). Lasswell's model is the traditional way of doing propaganda. It is a way to study media effects. The model does not mention noise or barriers of communication; it also ignores honest feedback as the effect is pre-determined.

## II) Key Features of Transactional Models are –

- Used for interpersonal communication
- Sender and receiver are participants with interchangeable roles
- Provision for simultaneous feedback
- Includes the content of environment and noise
- Feedback is considered as a fresh message.

Example of transactional models — Helical Model, Gate Keeping Model

**Helical Model of Communication or Dance Model:** This model was introduced in 1967 by an American Communication Professor, Frank E.X. Dance. It is popularly known as Dance's model of communication. This

model is inspired by a spiral or helix which is a three dimensional spring like curve in the shape of a cylinder or a cone. Dance compared the helix with human communication. The process of communication is non-linear and evolutionary as the helix grows bigger, so does human communication. In the beginning of communication between two people, the participants in the beginning share less information about themselves. It is only gradually after spending time with each other and based on the experience they have had, communication increases and evolves. Therefore, according to Dance, communication is a dynamic process, which is ever-changing, never-ending and ever-growing with time and past experiences. It is slow and less at the beginning and grows upward with time. The model suggests that the sender and receiver have interchangeable roles which make it a dyadic process. This model considers intellect and speculation as important factors which affect communication.

**Gate Keeping Model:** Kurt Lewin, a German social psychologist, conceptualised the term Gate Keeping in 1943. The concept was developed for mass communication and transmission of news by David Manning White. Gate keeping is the process of selection of information according to importance and relevance. The information is also published according to the amount of importance the media wants the information to have. It is the gatekeeper who decides to filter information and selects what needs to be transferred to the audience. Through this process, the unwanted, irrelevant and prejudiced items are weeded out by the gatekeeper. For example, in a family set up, a mother decides what is important for the children and what is not. Similarly, in the news business, the editor plays the role of a gatekeeper who decides what news items to publish and which ones to reject or discard.

Limited space or time can affect the number of items selected for a specific news bulletin or a newspaper edition. The fundamental function of a gatekeeper is surveillance; the editor keeps a check on the information flow and determines what is most important for the organization as well as the audience. Gate keeping also maintains the standard of news by selecting newsworthy items. It is possible that the editor or the gatekeeper will bring changes to the news item received by the reporter because of subjective perceptions. Media plays the role of a watchdog of the society and must be responsible while deciding the news content. The concept is used as a social controller for media influence.

### III) Key Features of Intersectional Models are –

- Used for new communications like internet
- Slower feedback
- Facilitates convergence
- Includes field of experience
- Communication can turn linear if feedback is not received

Wilbur Schramm’s interactive model is one good example of intersectional model.

**Wilbur Schramm’s Model of Communication:** Wilbur Lang Schramm, a communication scholar, expanded the Shannon and Weaver’s communication model in 1954. He emphasised on the process of encoding and decoding of the message. Schramm suggested that communication is a two-circular process between the sender and the receiver. To the six elements of communication introduced by Shannon and Weaver, Schramm included two other elements, namely – Feedback and Field of Experience.

Feedback is the information which is sent back to the sender by the receiver. It signals the effectiveness of the message and suggests whether the message was properly interpreted by the receiver or not. Feedback plays a crucial role in determining the success of the communication. On the other hand, Schramm introduced an imaginary area which is a part of the communicator’s mental and social construct. It contains the individual’s values, beliefs, experiences and meanings. If the sender and the receiver do not share the common field of experience, communication will not be successful. According to Schramm, messages can be interpreted differently by different people thereby, making the communication process difficult. The interpretation of the message plays key role in determining how well it has been communication. The interpretation can be denotative or connotative. Denotative meanings are literal meanings of the words being spoken and connotative meanings are emotional or experiential attributions attached to the words. To have a successful communication, it is important for the sender and receiver to share common field of experience. Schramm believed that people make decisions based on the information they receive about their society and environment.

Communication models lead us to a common understanding of the phenomena of communication and each model is contributing to the learning process evolving from that understanding. There ought to be arguments about which of these concepts is absolutely appropriate, but eventually we find cohesion by appreciating the multiplicity of diverse methods and the scholarship, which they have produced.

**Check Your Progress 2**

**Note:** 1) Use the space below for you answers.

2) Compare your answers with those given at the end of this unit.

1) Name the major theories of communication.

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2) What do you understand by a communication model?

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## 1.6 LET US SUM UP

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In this unit, we have discussed and understood the meaning and concepts of communication. We have familiarized with the process of communication and how it starts with a sender giving a message through a medium to the receiver. We have also gathered that communication takes place at different phases. The basic objective of communication is to cater a message with a meaning; however the perception of the message depends entirely on the part of the receiver. We need to have this clarification that meaning is not the same as that of the content or the message, because as stated earlier a single message can be decoded in multiple ways as perceived by the audiences. Communication helps in developing connections between people through different forms or media. The theories of communication give us an idea that communication has always been a social activity and it is a subject of constant research by scholars, theorists or educationists. Thus, this unit has explained the key concepts, meaning and different theories associated with communication that help us in formulating a strong base of our understanding about the subject. So, we can sum up with the statement that communication forms relationships and makes organizing groups possible. Every message in the communication process has a resolution or objective. The sender definitely intends either intentionally or unintentionally to wards accomplishing something by communicating. Communication does not begin when an individual starts to speak. It begins with the individual responding selectively to his physical surroundings. It can be said that the process of communication begins when message is received from the surroundings and the individual reacts on the basis of his/ her object of orientation.

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## 1.7 KEYWORDS

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**Communication:** Communication is a process that establishes relationships and makes organizing and coordination possible. The term has been derived from the Latin word ‘communis’, which means having something in common.

**Sender:** The person who wants to transfer, exchange or share the information is called sender.

**Message:** The encoded content/idea/information which is transferred or shared by the sender is called Message.

**Channel:** The medium through which the message is transmitted to the receiver is known as Channel.

**Receiver:** Receiver is the person to whom the message is directed.

**Feedback:** The response of the receiver sent back to the sender after decoding the message is called feedback.

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## 1.8 SUGGESTED READINGS

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## 1.9 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

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### Check Your Progress 1

- 1) Communication is a process that establishes relationships and makes organizing and coordination possible. In communication process, every message has a purpose and objective. Communication is a process that establishes relationships and makes organizing and coordination possible. The need for communication for a human being is as strong and as basic as the need to eat, sleep and live. It is both an individual and a social need. Communication can raise aspirations and raise awareness, meet information needs, and reinforce existing beliefs. We all communicate in some form or the other. We communicate to express our happiness, sadness, opinions, etc.
- 2) Communication is made possible through different components and these are sender, encoding, message, channel, decoding, receiver, feedback and noise or barrier.
- 3) The major forms of communication are non-verbal communication and verbal communication. Non-verbal communication including facial



expression, body language or silence. Verbal communication includes oral and written communication.

### Check Your Progress 2

- 1) The major theories of communication are Authoritarian Theory, Free Press Theory or Libertarian Theory, Social Responsibility Theory, Magic Bullet or Hypodermic Needle Theory, One Step, Two Step and Multi Step Flow Theory, Spiral of Silence Theory, Uses and Gratification Theory, Cultivation Theory, Media Dependency Theory and Agenda Setting Theory.
- 2) In the communication process, a model suggests framework on the basis of which problems encountered during the process of communication can be identified and addressed. A model must clarify and simplify the structure of communication and must offer new dimensions to it in a graphic form.

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