MASS MEDIA AND INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGIES IN DEVELOPMENT COMMUNICATION

Annwoy Banerjee

Research Scholar of Journalism & Mass Communication, CMJ University, Jorabat, Meghalaya

Supervisor Name – Dr Richa Bansal (Assistant Professor)

Abstract

The purpose of this study is to demonstrate how media, telecommunications, and computing/information systems, collectively known as information and communication technology (ICT), have long been related with economic progress and social/cultural transformation. Historically, assessments of ICT and social change have relied on metrics of diverse technical systems' ownership, availability, access, and use to determine their significance and social influence. Technology assessment of contemporary new media and information and communication technologies (ICT) demands metrics that more accurately represent its essentially social, interactive, performative, and participatory nature. The scope of an information technology resource is defined by the range of users and sources made possible by the technology. A distinguishing feature of internet-based information resources, particularly in comparison to traditional mass media, is the enormous diversity of documentary and interpersonal resources made available via hyperlink structures that enable users to take any number of possible paths to locate and retrieve information based on their current interests and inclinations.

Keywords: Development Communication, ICT, Digitization, Mass Media.

1. Introduction

1.1. Development Communication: Definition, Scope, Objectives

Sociologists, psychologists, economics, and communication professionals believe that effective communication can accelerate and facilitate growth. Communication, in broad terms, refers to

interaction between two individuals or within a group, a community, or a nation. Communication is founded on four fundamental elements: a source of communication, a message, a channel or medium, and a recipient or audience. However, in development communication, it is defined as the act of altering or influencing the behaviour of individuals or groups in order to achieve specific goals and objectives, which must necessarily benefit the entire society. As a result, the receiver is anticipated to exhibit the behaviour desired by the communication source.

Development communications are concerted efforts to use communication processes and media to advance an individual, society, or nation's social and economic well-being (generally in developing countries). It analyses the ways in which mass media can contribute directly or indirectly to the improvement of the quality of life for urban and rural populations. This is a communication strategy that strives to offer communities with knowledge they can use to improve their lives and to make public programmes and policies more real, relevant, and sustainable. Such data must be used in some way to aid in community development, but they must also satisfy information needs stated by communities themselves. In short, this strategy results in an improvement in communities' quality of life.

Development additionally, communication can be described as the strategic integration of communication into development programmes. Strategic communication is a potent instrument that can significantly increase the likelihood of development projects succeeding. It seeks to alter behaviour, not merely to disseminate information, educate, or raise awareness.

Each stage of development necessitates some degree of behaviour modification on the part of stakeholders. Changes in knowledge and attitudes do not always transfer into changes in behaviour. To change behaviour, it is vital to understand why people behave the way they do and the hurdles to change or adoption of new habits. It is not sufficient to promote knowledge of the "benefits"; it is necessary to comprehend people's barriers and the perceived "costs" of such a transformation.

2. Role of ICT in Development Communication

Global citizens' access to news and feature programming, as well as how we communicate with one another and contribute to the growing decentralised, many-to-many media system, are all set to change dramatically as a result of new media technology. By becoming aware of how mass media is controlled and slanted by a few corporations, choosing alternative media sources, and taking action to publish news and original content via digital production tools, the internet, and independent media vehicles, the public can effect a true revolution in media control and presentation.

Continued rapid advancements in computer memory and processing performance per unit of cost resulted in a constant growth in computer affordability and ubiquity. When combined with advancements in storage technology, this increased the possibility and desire for digitally capturing and storing information, entertainment, and other forms of valuable information and content. This digitization process facilitated the reuse, repurpose, manipulation, and combining of this content, anywhere and at any time, for the user's specified objectives, via a number of technological means, frequently in combination.

Simultaneously, sustained and significant increases in telecommunications capacity, facilitated by extensive deployment of fibre optic cables, satellites, and wireless technologies, made it easier and more affordable to share information globally and converse instantly across large distances. These new technologies, together with the excitement they inspired about their economic and social possibilities, resulted in an unusually dynamic period of invention, investment, and growth in the mid- to late 1990s.

Some people continue to be suspicious of communication technologies, most likely as a result of historical experiences in which media were frequently used to "twist" discussions and impose change on people. The usefulness and utility of ICTs and other emerging communication technologies are contingent upon their selection and implementation. Even if technologies are not a panacea for all communication problems, they are valuable tools for

addressing specific needs, particularly when employed in a manner that is compatible with and relevant to unique local demands.

From a technological standpoint, it is challenging to ensure that such technologies operate properly in areas devoid of phone or electric lines. Even when those services are guaranteed, ongoing maintenance and updates, as well as concerns of standard compatibility, become significant issues. Technical assistance is a requirement for individuals in developed countries and would be even more so in developing countries with lower levels of technology literacy. Users in many nations require basic computer instruction and, prior to that, literacy skills in order to converse effectively on the Internet.

3. Mass Media on Social Change

Since 1947, India's development process has been marked by considerable social changes and a growing awareness of concerns impacting the poor, women, and children in the country. This period also saw the growth of India's volunteer movement and the establishment of various non-governmental organisations dedicated to the protection and promotion of women and children's welfare.

The Government has made a concerted effort to promote ideals such as democracy, nondiscrimination, self-reliance, and intellectual independence. Additionally, it has sought to better the situation of the impoverished and weaker members of society. Women and children have been prioritised in the government's social policies and efforts. India is currently attempting to create a society in which the poor, marginalised, and disadvantaged enjoy equal chances in all aspects of life. The mass media, together with volunteer agencies, government, and other like-minded institutions and individuals, has played a critical role in this regard by acting as a mediator between the government and the people.

The mass media are the means by which messages are communicated to big audiences.

They are so widespread in contemporary life that many individuals are unaware of their presence. The media's duty in a liberal democracy might be assumed to involve informing, entertaining, and educating the public. It is widely acknowledged in liberal democracy that when the media assist in putting information at the people's disposal, they will be able to influence the state formally or informally.

The mass media are not self-contained. The individuals who decide on media material are products of society, and the requirement of profit mandates that the media be in touch with the values of society or risk losing viewership. In some ways, capitalism's reality works against media outlets that stray too far from conventional values. According to critics, the media caters too much to popular interests and overlooks culturally significant works that have the potential to enhance society. A more sympathetic perspective of the media, on the other hand, is that exceptional works flow down to large audience's via media popularisation.

The media play a role in both social stability and transformation. Numerous pieces of media content reassure people by reaffirming established social standards. Simultaneously, media attention to non-mainstream ideas, whether in news or fiction, compels people to reconsider their values and, over time, leads to social transformation.

Media education contributes to the development of an informed media audience, one that is capable of discerning between good and bad media content. Simultaneously, for a true democracy to exist, we must provide a robust stream of media independent of government control, with free speech and free press.

4. ICTs on Social Change

Any plan for eradicating poverty and promoting sustainable development must begin with the goal of fostering positive change, particularly pro-poor change. Regardless of how straightforward the observation may appear, it serves as a critical point of reference for any ICT-for-development approach. The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) serve as an

excellent instance of this perspective, as they are themselves proxies for more profound changes.

The MDGs specify a set of desirable first-order changes in developing nations' socioeconomic conditions: fewer people living in absolute poverty, fewer women dying in childbirth, more girls enrolled in grade 12 school, and so on. Nonetheless, they presuppose and essentially rely on a more profound set of reforms, including increased and broader economic growth in developing nations, more capable and responsive political structures, more effective policies, and a greater voice for the poor. These more profound changes are contingent on measures that are not directly related to any one MDG but are critical to achieving all of them.

The same can be said of information and communication technologies. It is obvious that ICTs, when correctly adapted to local conditions, may be an extremely effective tool for combating poverty and promoting sustainable development. However, the key to deploying ICTs as a catalyst for positive change in a given country is to begin with a clear picture of that country's key development challenges and a rigorous analysis of where and how ICTs could have a sustainable impact on those challenges, large enough to justify investment in ICT by donors, developing countries, or both.

In other words, one should begin by determining not what ICTs a given country lacks and what can be done about it, but rather what specific forms of transformation are required to make this country more sustainably prosperous, in ways that benefit even the poorest. ICTs are then considered as feasible instruments, alongside other factors, such as resources and legislation, for effecting these desired changes, rather than as an end in themselves. As a result, indicative goals relating to ICT are, at best, deceptive, and, at worst, terrible policy.

The new technologies and the new economic and social activities they enable would fundamentally alter our way of life. The combination of these new technologies and other global trends, such as trade liberalisation and the end of Cold War-era geopolitical tensions, resulted in a broader process of globalisation, marked not only by steady increases in global trade flows of goods and services, but also by dramatic increases in global information flows.

The ability to create, access, and adapt information and knowledge became widely recognized as a critical component of global competitiveness and individual potential. The concept of a global information society grew in favour as new ICTs permitted instantaneous global flows of information that increasingly functioned as the "oxygen" for economic, social, and political life.

5. Mass Media and ICT: Comparison and Convergence

The final decade of the twentieth century saw the initiation of unprecedented information and communication technology interventions for development. This time period has seen massive and unprecedented developments in virtually every aspect of communications technologies, legislation, infrastructure development, and services. India's political leaders have begun to relinquish outdated government control over communication, which has recently shifted to national and international corporate companies. Finally, airwaves and electronic signals have broken free from centuries-old colonial enslavement, allowing them to reach out and link people via a privately owned and run communication network and infrastructure.

International and domestic private sector firms have dominated the process of redefining, reshaping, and supplying telecommunications, broadcasting, and information services for national growth. It has ushered in a new era of collaboration between the public and private sectors, leveraging 14 entrepreneurial skills and abilities to achieve unrestricted connectivity. The transition from industrial to information society has been slow.

Satellites, cable television, wireless telephone, the Internet, and computers are all causing noticeable changes in society. The term "communication technology" refers to the hardware, organisational structures, and societal ideals that enable individuals to acquire, process, and share data. The new media have some traits with interpersonal and mass media communication, but they also differ in a number of ways. Interpersonal communication is any exchange between two or more individuals that takes place face to face. The message flow occurs between one and a few individuals, feedback is quick and typically abundant, and the messages frequently have a high level of socio-emotional content. In comparison, mass media communication encompasses all modes of message transmission, such as radio, television,

newspapers, and film that enable a source of information to reach a large audience. In mass communication, some form of hardware equipment is always involved, feedback is limited and delayed, and communications are frequently devoid of socio-emotional substance.

In the early 1990s, browsers and the World Wide Web made the Internet widely accessible outside of the workplace and academia, and two distinct visions, the pipeline and frontier (or commons) perspectives, came to dominate public debate over how new media and information technologies should be understood and regulated. The pipeline perspective of ICTs is based on the traditional concept of mass media as highly centralised, powerful, culturally uniform factories for the production and delivery of mass-consumed cultural products. In keeping with its industrial age beginnings, the pipeline vision's economic logic is predicated on mass manufacturing and economies of scale. Revenue is created through the mass distribution of media items and advertising, the value of which is likewise heavily dependent on the size of the possible audience. Profitability is contingent upon capturing the greatest market share in specific product categories, maximising revenue, and reducing production and personnel costs; market dominance is frequently attained through so-called synergies associated with mergers, increased ownership concentration, and decreased competition. This upward trend in industry consolidation has dominated the entertainment and media industries for decades, and some believe it is a significant cause in the continuous demise of mainstream corporate news organisations (print & broadcast).

In response to upstart online services' challenges in the 1990s, traditional media industries rebranded as "content industries" and pushed for a vastly expanded, rigid new policy regime for protecting their intellectual property rights, including the United States' Digital Millennium Copyright Act (1998) and efforts to have other countries' intellectual property laws conform to the DMCA's provisions. Even today, the archetype of the old media and entertainment industries is the mass production and consumption of carefully controlled, proprietary products. They have attempted to replicate the mass media paradigm in their online businesses, perceiving the Internet primarily as a global delivery system for industrial items. Any characteristics or applications of new ICTs that threaten this model (e.g., low marginal costs

and ease of copying; users' ability to anonymize their communications, circumvent copy protection schemes, block advertising, or prevent the collection of personal data) have been lobbied against, co-opted, and even criminalized by industries intent on retaining their market power and profitability.

6. Conclusion

The ICT revolution has created new economic and social transformation opportunities for both developed and developing countries. Unlike in the past, developing countries now have near-instant access to new technology and the benefits they can bring. This presents the enticing possibility that ICTs may soon usher in a new period of economic prosperity for the global economy, far surpassing anything ever accomplished through technological progress. ICTs, in particular, have the potential to facilitate a more seamless integration of global labor markets than was previously thought conceivable. This integration is projected to be helped by a number of causes, including declining trade barriers as a result of multilateral trade agreements, rapid transmission of market information, and efficient service delivery enabled by the 25 new ICTs. All of this should contribute to a more efficient allocation of labor across the global economy —- even unskilled people.

ICTs can be used strategically and innovatively to directly benefit the underprivileged. However, in order to fully profit from the ICT revolution and alleviate poverty, countries must overcome the major economic growth barriers. Improving infrastructure, liberalizing markets, dismantling telecommunications monopolies, and universalizing education are all critical components of economic development and success in capitalizing on the economic potential offered by ICTs. Indeed, without solving these concerns, efforts to secure Internet access would not yield the same economic benefits —- and in certain cases, they could result in financial calamity. While IT investment appears to increase growth in rich economies, this is not always the case in developing economies, which must implement additional policies to gain the economic benefits of such investments.

The internet can aid development in the presence of favorable policies and institutions, and the process can be aided further by globalization, which tends to magnify the benefits of ICTs. However, ICTs are far from a cure for stagnant growth or widespread poverty. These new technologies may have opened up an economic window for the developing world, allowing it to nurture growth and escape the scourge of poverty. Nonetheless, they would require a suitably established social and physical infrastructure, as well as receptive policy and institutional frameworks, in order to embrace this opportunity. While ICTs have sparked a fresh surge of enthusiasm among developing countries to embrace and benefit from new technology, many do not appear to have the requirements to fully exploit this window of opportunity.

Developing countries that have previously achieved universal primary education should place a greater focus on secondary and university education if they are to capitalize on ICT potential. Nonetheless, secondary and tertiary education do not have to be solely promoted by the government. Many persons interested in pursuing IT prospects are monetarily secure and may not require government aid. For others, increased financial market functioning and the availability of student loans can significantly assist in funding school expenses.

7. References

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