

**THE DUALITY OF DEVELOPMENT: RECASTING
PARTICIPATORY COMMUNICATION FOR DEVELOPMENT
USING STRUCTURATION THEORY**
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RESUMEN

La investigación en comunicación para el desarrollo carece de una adecuada fundamentación teórica que permita investigar e implementar iniciativas de cambio social. Aunque los modelos de comunicación para el desarrollo continúan cambiando debido a políticas de reestructuración, a las limitaciones de los enfoques previos o al avance de nuevos conocimientos, la comunicación participativa en cambio se ha visto fortalecida en las dos últimas décadas. Este artículo plantea que la comunicación participativa para el desarrollo se puede beneficiar de la teoría de la estructuración para así entender cómo las personas pueden negociar el cambio social dentro de las estructuras institucionales existentes en las cuales ellas operan. Se propone que la teoría de estructuración provea el lenguaje para reconsiderar conceptos fundamentales en comunicación participativa, tales como concientización, empoderamiento y poder por constructos como agentes de conocimiento, dialéctica de control y poder y dominación para ayudarnos así a entender el proceso de cambio social.

PALABRAS CLAVE: Comunicación para el desarrollo, comunicación participativa, teoría de la estructuración, Anthony Giddens, Paulo Freire.

ABSTRACT

Development communication scholarship lacks a well grounded theoretical foundation to research and implement social change initiatives. Although, the models of development communication keep changing, due to political restructuring, limitations of the earlier approaches or to account for new knowledge, participatory communication has held forte for over two decades. This paper argues that participatory communication for development can benefit from structuration theory to understand how people can negotiate social change within the existing institutional structure that they operate in. It is proposed that structuration theory provides us the language to recast main concepts in participatory communication such as conscientization, empowerment and power with constructs such as knowledgeable agents, dialectic of control and power and domination to help understand the process of social change.

KEY WORDS: *Structuration theory, Anthony Giddens, Paulo Freire, participatory communication, development communication.*

INTRODUCTION

Participatory communication is about involving individuals and communities through a process of empowerment in development projects aimed for them. This process is usually facilitated by outsiders by engaging a community in a dialogue to identify the community's problems, provide the necessary resources, information or skills to overcome the problem, and in turn allow people to gain control over their lives (Figueroa, Kincaid, Rani & Lewis, 2002). Participatory communication has been a dominant model used by development practitioners since the 1980s, but few studies have explored the theoretical underpinnings of such an approach to development (Jacobson, 1996, 2003; Jacobson & Servaes, 1999). The purpose of this analysis is to recast participatory communication for development using Anthony Giddens' (1984) structuration theory framework. Specifically, this paper draws upon structuration theory constructs that explain how institutional forces can act as both facilitators as well as pose constraints to the process of change. In doing so the paper explains how structuration theory can inform participatory communication for development. The present paper would contribute to the literature on how participatory communication for development can be theorized, and thus provide a framework to better understand social change initiatives.

While this paper briefly reviews the modernity and dependency models of development, the focus of this analysis is on participatory communication for development, an approach that dominates most of the literature on and practice of development communication in the past two decades (Servaes, 1999; Servaes, Jacobson & White, 1996; White, 1999; White, Nair & Ascroft, 1994). Participatory communication for development is based on the premise that development programs would be relevant, effective and sustainable, provided people are actively involved in the programs. Participatory communication underscores the need to empower communities through communicative means to help

gain control over their environment and resources, and importance of involving communities in the planning, implementation and evaluation of the development program (Melkote & Steeves, 2001). Recent efforts to explicate participatory communication have used theory of communicative action, which defines and theoretically treats participatory communication as “action oriented toward understanding” (Jacobson, 2003, p. 107), and communitarian theory, which focuses on “preservation of the community and emancipation from oppressive structures and external dependencies” (Melkote & Steeves, 2001, p. 334). Yet, there is a need to examine how communities can meaningfully participate in development programs, given the existing structural constraints between the various constituents that make up a social system. Given this backdrop, this analysis attempts to explicate participatory communication for development from a theoretical lens that can inform us how societal systems can overcome the tensions caused by the structural problems that impede the process of social change.

Structuration theory, argues that there is a duality as opposed to a tension or dualism between individuals and the social structure. As a result of the duality, the structural properties in a social system can serve as both enabling and constraining forces (Giddens, 1984). This offers us a theoretical framework against which participatory communication for development can be investigated. If we can understand how participation through communication can be achieved between the outsiders (national as well as international development experts) and the community, despite the larger structural constraints to participation it could have a meaningful impact on future development projects. Structuration theory provides us the language to understand how communities can exercise agency or have some kind of control over their lives as proposed by the participatory communication literature, and thereby informs us how social change can be achieved.

COMMUNICATION FOR DEVELOPMENT PERSPECTIVES

The major paradigms in development are commonly categorized under three eras and used to explain the role of communication for development (Melkote & Steeves, 2001; Rogers, 1976; Servaes, 1999). Modernization theory, which dominated most of the development work in the 1950s and 1960s, stressed that the newly independent developing nations need to adopt Western ideas and innovations, diffused using mass media, in order to “catch up” with the developed nations. The focus was on economic growth alone. Dependency theory gained momentum in the mid-1960s and challenged the modernization approach by blaming Western oriented models of development as imperialistic, and creating an unnecessary reliance of economic and technological innovations among the developing nations on the rich (Western) nations.

Beginning in late 1970s and early 1980s, a critical or alternative approach to development was proposed. This approach stressed the need to listen to and involve those people in development process for whom the project were implemented. Within this context Freire’s (1970/1998, 1973) ideas about participation influenced and led the way to rethink the role of communication as not information dissemination, but as a two-way process. Freire emphasized the importance of a dialogue between the community and the agents of change with active participation by the community in the social change programs.

Till date depending on the development issues all three approaches to development are practiced (Mody, 2002), although modernization theory and the dependency approach are not as favored as the participatory paradigm (White, 2003). Therefore, the contemporary model for development underscores the importance of community participation and relies on communication as a means to empower the community. Participatory communication grew out of the realization that beneficiaries need to be involved in the development programs that are meant for them. This means devolution of power and social change interventions to reflect

people's real needs (Melkote & Steeves, 2001; Servaes, 1999; Servaes, Jacobson & White, 1996; Wilkins, 2000). However, it would be naïve to believe that all directed social change intervention encourage only the participatory communication for development approach (Mody).

Table 1 summarizes the discussion on development eras by comparing the different theoretical, methodological, nature of social change and communicative roles that underlie each perspective.

Table 1
Paradigms in Communication for Development*

| | MODERNIZATION (1950 _s -1960 _s) | DEPENDENCY (MID-1960 _s -1980 _s) | PARTICIPATORY (1980 _s ONWARD) |
|------------------------------|---|--|--|
| EPISTEMOLOGICAL ORIENTATION | • SOCIO-CULTURAL | • SOCIO-CULTURAL | • CRITICAL |
| META-THEORETICAL ORIENTATION | • PRAGMATISM • FUNCTIONALISM • POSITIVISM | • LIBERALISM • NEW SOCIAL MOVEMENTS • NEO-MARXISM • STRUCTURALISM | • POST-MODERNISM • POST-STRUCTURALISM • POST-COLONIAL FEMINISM • LIBERATION THROUGH EDUCATION |
| NATURE OF SOCIAL CHANGE | • ECONOMIC GROWTH WILL FOSTER CHANGE | • SELF-RELIANCE WILL FOSTER CHANGE | • DIALOGIC COMMUNICATION WILL LEAD TO PEOPLE ORGANIZING FOR CHANGE |
| METHODOLOGICAL APPLICATIONS | • QUANTITATIVE AND EMPIRICAL | • QUANTITATIVE AND EMPIRICAL | • QUANTITATIVE, QUALITATIVE, AND INTERPRETIVE |
| | MODERNIZATION' (1950 _s -1960 _s) | DEPENDENCY (MID-1960 _s -1980 _s) | PARTICIPATORY (1980 _s ONWARD) |
| THEORIZING OF COMMUNICATION | • TO INFORM AND PROMOTE DOMINANT IDEOLOGIES AND THEREBY REPRODUCING EXISTING SOCIAL ORDER | • TO PROMOTE EXISTING INEQUALITIES IN INFORMATION FLOW | • TO EMPOWER PEOPLE AND PROMOTE SOCIAL ACTIVISM THROUGH DISCURSIVE PRACTICES |

Note. For detailed differences between the three paradigms please refer to Singhal, A. & Sthapitanonda, P. (1996). The role of communication in development: Lessons learned from critique of the dominant, dependency, and alternative paradigms. *Journal of Development Communication*, 1 (7), 10-25. Categories in this table have also been adapted from Craig, R. T. (1999). Communication theory as a field. *Communication Theory*, 9(2), 119-161.

* Neither of the dominant paradigms in development communication have been completely replaced by the participatory communication paradigm. Even today, many development projects can be analyzed as using either modernization (e.g. universal access to Internet), dependency (resistance to global capitalism) or a combination of these approaches (involving communities in designing and preparing pro-social messages disseminated using the mass media).

THE CONTEMPORARY PARADIGM – PARTICIPATORY COMMUNICATION FOR DEVELOPMENT

Although the idea of involving actors or the beneficiaries in the development process was identified as early as 1971 and the definition of development reflected the participatory process of social change (Rogers, 1976), it was not until the 1980s that participatory approach in development gained momentum. Participatory communication for development means giving people or the actors a voice and allowing them to meaningfully contribute in the social change process. Giddens (1979, 1984) structuration theory can aid our understanding of participatory communication by realizing the duality between agents and institutions and the role of power in social change.

Participation is based on a level playing ground, where different actors gain from each other, it involves an equitable sharing of political and economic power and structural changes in order to redistribute power (Servaes, 1996). If certain actors such as development agencies, politicians or even certain people in the community exercise agency over others in the societal system because these actors have more allocative (financial) as well as authoritative (hegemonic) resources, then the goal of participatory communication is not realized. This means that the participatory model is based on the assumption that allows actors to gain control over allocative as well as authoritative resources and in turn resist domination by exercising agency over the powerful.

Participatory communication realizes the growing interdependence between nations and communities as well as the need for improved dialogue between communities and local and national political institutions. This paradigm acknowledges that there is no longer a clear demarcation of boundaries between the central and the periphery nations or the developed and the developing countries (Servaes, 1999). This collapsing of geographic and political boundaries are similar to the notion of transformation of time and space due to the globalization of societies and reliance

on mediated experiences due to technological advances as put forth by Giddens (1991). The participatory communication approach to development emphasizes concepts such as cultural identity and the recognition of specific local cultures as opposed to a single Western dominated capitalistic culture promoted in the modernization era, or the emphasis on self-reliance and ethnocentrism that was promoted as part of the dependency theory (Melkote & Steeves, 2001).

Servaes (1983, 1999) was one of the pioneering scholars who emphasized a need for development programs that are culturally sensitive. Servaes contends that both the earlier paradigms in development, modernization and dependency, were based on the assumption that as societies develop they lose their individual identities and gravitate toward a common type of society. But on the contrary, development efforts failed in many instances primarily because countries did not transform their core cultural identities and become new nations. The development agencies had overlooked the cultural nuances and expected that developing countries would adopt new practices in a manner similar to how Western countries had adopted new technology. Thus, participatory communication for development was a shift from the modernization and dependency paradigms with respect to basic assumptions about theory and praxis, as summarized in Table 1.

PARTICIPATORY COMMUNICATION AND STRUCTURATION THEORY

It is important to establish a link between the participatory communication and the variables that constitute structuration theory. This section attempts to establish that connection by drawing on constructs in participatory communication for development such as conscientization, empowerment and power, and recast these with constructs such as knowledgeable agents, dialectic of control and power and domination from structuration theory. The aim is to demonstrate how Giddens' thesis of the duality of structure applies to the participatory communication

paradigm, and how through the structuration theory concepts we can extend our understanding of the process of development as a duality, as opposed to it being an individual or institutional level social change process.

CONSCIOUS BEINGS AND KNOWLEDGABLE AGENTS

The participatory model in development is based on the assumption about “knowledge” of the beneficiaries. Freire (1970/1998) in his theory of education for liberation was the first scholar who promoted the idea of students as not being mere receptacles who can be “filled” with knowledge they receive from the teachers. This led to Freire employing a new educational technique where he suggested that both the subject (teacher) – object (student) dualism needs to be replaced with a subject-object duality, that is both the teacher and the student can learn from each other through a process of dialogue. This concept, which has its roots in adult educational programs in Latin America, has been adopted by the development practitioners after the social change interventions that used top-down positivistic approach were challenged for their lack of sensitivity to local or rural peoples’ knowledge (Chambers, 1983; Servaes, 1999). Freire also uses a term “conscious beings” (p. 80) to describe humans as aware of themselves and their world and therefore humans exist in a dialectical relationship by negotiating the limits imposed by the world and the knowledge of their freedom.

Freire’s recognition of the importance of locally based or traditional knowledge could be related to Giddens (1984) idea of actors as knowledgeable agents. Knowledgeability according to Giddens refers to knowledge that people possess and apply in the production and reproduction of everyday social encounters. The actors know about their circumstances and act based either on discursive or socially learned knowledge.

Participatory communication recognizes that actors or people possess and they can create knowledge but they fail to do so as they

are not allowed to exercise agency. Participation allows people an opportunity to engage in a dialogue with the change agents and in turn use their knowledge to bring about social change. Therefore, similar to Giddens' idea of social actors possessing knowledgeability, participatory communication for development emphasizes that knowledge is not a property of the experts which needs to be transmitted from the experts to the end beneficiaries. Through active participation and dialogue, communities can help identify their needs and fix them with the available resources and thus use and create their own knowledge (Arnst, 1996). Knowledgeability is tapped by facilitating empowerment of communities, which leads to directed social change (Melkote & Steeves, 2001). Participatory communication is a synergistic approach based on the acknowledgement and respect of local peoples' capacity and allowing them the freedom to exercise agency over the existing structures.

Giddens (1979, 1984) in his synthesis of the structuration theory also explains that recursive social practices are produced and reproduced over time by people by drawing upon the rules and resources that make up the social system and these rules and resources tend to play a dual role of being enabling but also constraining. As explained earlier this is termed the duality of structure. This results in social practices being stretched over time and space and can help us understand how different social systems exist and tradition and culture gets institutionalized. But in order to produce and reproduce social practices, actors need to either discursively or tacitly know the rule and resources that form the social system.

Humans as social actors reflexively monitor their day-to-day functioning as a result of discursive consciousness. Applying the concept to development, unless the communities in the developing nations, reproduce the new social practices that they are exposed to as a result of social change these new practices will not be sustained. An example of this would be resistance to adoption of new farming techniques in the early 1950s and 1960s in Latin America (Diaz-

Bordenave, 1976) or resistance to adopting family planning by couples in South Korea and India in the 1960s (Rogers, 1995). As a result, what was thought as planned social change by development agencies did not sustain. These attempts to bring about social change were not sustainable because it was assumed that people would change once the initial resistance was overcome as a result of persuasive communication efforts. The failure to be sustainable however could be because the proponents of change did not realize that communities are knowledgeable agents, and that people may continue to reproduce their existing social practices as opposed to adopt new practices.

Thus, the principle of actors as knowledgeable agents and understanding the co-existence of agency and structure as a duality, and not as a dualism can explain the centrality of the assumption of knowledge as used in the participatory approach. The structuration perspective helps us explain that social systems will not exist across time and space unless the actors are considered as knowledgeable agents. Therefore, it supports the assumption of dialogue between the expert and the beneficiaries that participatory approach to development recognizes as crucial for people and nations' to progress.

EMPOWERMENT AND DIALECTIC OF CONTROL

Empowerment is another concept that is central to the participatory communication model. Once again we turn to Freire (1970/1998) to understand empowerment in the context of development. For Freire, the basis of development is to free people from oppression. He asserts that problem-posing education as a liberating praxis can help humans free themselves from domination, and fight for their emancipation. Therefore for Freire, empowerment comes in the form of liberation through education, which allows people to overcome the oppression they face from subjects who are more powerful.

Empowerment is usually understood within the context of power. It refers to the ability to have control over making decisions about issues and situations that affects ones lives. In the field of social change, the concept of empowerment of people has largely been the goal of professionals in the field of community organizing, education and community psychology, which the development agencies have borrowed and applied to larger national development objectives (Melkote & Steeves, 2001). Empowerment in participatory communication has been operationalized as the process of sensitizing people, especially the marginalized and the oppressed, of their circumstances. Freire termed this the method of conscientization, where men and women are urged to think critically of their surroundings and through this process exercise agency over the oppressors.

Participatory communication facilitates the conscientization process. Reviewing Freire's work, Melkote & Steeves (2001) conclude that communication channels bring about dialogue and serve as a vehicle for liberation by overcoming the psychological and physical barriers that exist between people and the larger social structure. Empowerment can be linked to two concepts in structuration theory, the dialectic of control (Giddens, 1984) and the emancipatory politics of life (Giddens, 1991).

As stated above, empowerment is situated within the context of power. According to Giddens, power within social systems that exist over time and space presumes relations of autonomy and dependence between actors or collectives that engage in social interaction. However, even those actors that are dependent can draw upon some resources and exert power over those groups that wield more resources. This social phenomenon he terms as the dialectic of control.

Empowerment, as means of overcoming oppression, can be understood if we look at how actors exercise agency through the dialectic of control over powerful agents that dominate social systems. Within the context of development this has been explained by scholars who have studied the process of empowerment of

women in the developing countries through income generating social interventions aimed at providing the women means to overcome the oppressive forces of men in a patriarchal social system (Papa, Auwal & Singhal, 1995; Shefer-Rogers, Rao, Rogers & Wayangankar, 1998). Therefore, structuration theory holds the view that people are empowered as they have the agency to draw upon existing rules and resources in the social system to counteract or resist the dominant actors. This could be similar to Freire's (1970/1998) hypothesis on liberation, humans are not born as oppressed but instead humans adapt to the structure of domination. According to Freire, when oppressed people become conscious beings, they make oppression and its causes the object of reflection; this process in turn will help liberate the people through the struggle for freedom. For Freire the oppressor and the oppressed acts as a duality, that is one feeds into the other, and only through the process of liberation can the oppressed people resist their oppressor and find freedom. Applying the concept of the dialectic of control, all humans essentially have the agency to fight the oppressed because even the weak can draw on the rules and resources in the social system against the superior.

POWER AND DOMINATION

The concept of power in development is seen to be in binary opposition with the concept of empowerment. Power is the transformative capacity held by collectives or elites to bring about some change which is in the interest of the collectives (Giddens, 1984). Empowerment is the process of distributing power equitably among people and groups within the community. Power in the participatory approach to development is built on insights of scholars with a critical epistemological orientation such as Foucault, Bordieu and Habermas (Servaes, 1996). These scholars understand power within the context of interest of the few (elites), and power as a form of domination over marginalized communities or nation states and not merely the capacity to control. Due to the

complex nature of power, the need to control and the structures of dependency true participation or equal sharing of resources has not been seen even in most participatory social change interventions (Melkote, 2000).

Waters (2000) succinctly clarifies the two dimensions of power that intervene with the praxis of development. First, participatory communication for development is based on the assumption that there is a dialogue and mutual engagement of social actors as equal subjects; therefore power can impede the operationalization of dialogue. Second, power intervenes in the larger development context due to the discursive practices that the development agencies and other institutions engage in, and when this discourse gets translated into praxis, it tends to maintain the existing power structure. Development scholars do not hold Waters' view of power universally. Storey (2000) reviewing the role of discourse in development contends that just because some actors have more resources does not mean that discursive practices only represent the consensus of the collectives in power. Based on two empirical examples of development praxis, Storey argues that discourse allows for multiple meaning to emerge and by engaging in discourse we can come up with a middle ground rather than focus on the bi-polar opposites such as the oppressed and the elites.

Based on the above view of power, we realize that though participatory communication seeks to empower people, in doing so it has to work within the existing power structures, which are controlled by the elites. Thus, a village leader may not want the community members to become empowered even when the development program seeks to empower people to take control over their environment. Field studies on empowering women in the developing countries have shown that though women, the traditionally oppressed groups, can exercise agency and bring about social change, they still remain disempowered in certain social interactions such as with their husband or with male political leaders (Papa, Auwal and Singhal, 1995; Shefer-Rogers, Rao, Rogers and Wayangankar, 1998). Mindry (2000) studied

transnational NGOs in South Africa and analyzed how there are various power agents; the White experts, the Black elites and the grassroots people themselves that tend to exercise agency over one another, which results implementing development programs that are not based not on peoples' needs, but based on existing dominant structures in the social system.

Domination according to structuration theory depends on mobilization of two kinds of resources, allocative and authoritative resources. Allocative resources refer to the transformative capacity of generating command over material phenomenon such as the economic institutions, and authoritative resources refer to transformative capacity of generating command over people such as political institutions or collectives of powerful elites in a social system (Giddens, 1984). Since these modes of domination exist in all social systems, it is not sufficient to simply empower people by recognizing their knowledgeable ability and capacity to bring about change. There needs to be a dialogue between the people in power and the community members for social change to occur. It is within this context that we need to examine how power is accounted for in participatory development.

Also, power is understood as a form of legitimation, as elites hold power not because they control the means of production, but because of their ability to legitimize certain practices over other. The participatory approach to development challenges this ability of the elites to exercise power by empowering the locals or by giving a voice to the voiceless in the society. This inadvertently creates tension between the already existing elites who are powerful and the end beneficiaries who gain power as part of the development program. Although attempts are being made to include the elites in the development program the present literature falls short of explaining the complications involved in overcoming this power conflict.

Within the development context, power also can be useful to explain the subject-object dialectic. Traditionally beneficiaries of development projects were treated as objects that can be acted

upon and not as subjects who can meaningfully participate in the development programs aimed to benefit them. The participatory model emphasizes that beneficiaries of development programs need to be treated as subjects who have a voice, a right to be heard and their knowledge respected as that of the experts. Methodologically this has been operationalized in action research.

Greenwood (1999) defines action research, as a methodology that uses participatory research, as a process of dialogue between the epistemic subject (the researcher or the expert) and the empirical object (the researched or the end beneficiaries) and the relationship between the subject and the objects is seen as inter-subjective and interactive. Therefore, participatory approach to development challenges the epistemological assumption of knowledge as being privileged and belonging only to the powerful; instead it acknowledges that people create their own knowledge based on their lived experience.

Thus, power in the development context though it is seen as discursive at the same time it is also constraining due to the organizational relationship between change agents and the beneficiaries. As a result power can be seen as impeding the development process. According to Giddens, “power is generated in and through the reproduction of structures of dominations” (1984, p. 258). The structures of domination as discussed above are of two kinds – allocative (economic) and authoritative (political). Further Giddens argues that as social systems exist across time and space there involves a combination of allocative and authoritative resources, which in turn characterizes power. Therefore, power can be understood to have two axes and it manifests due to a combination of the increase in material forms of production and transformation of authoritative resources (Giddens, 1984). Applied to participatory development, if people exercise agency to determine their social goals it would destabilize the existing structures of domination. These structures could be internal to the social system such as class-societies within a nation state, or external such as the system level interaction between nation-states.

SYNTHESIS

This paper argues that development communication in general and participatory communication in particular, is not theoretically grounded but is a result of multiple theories and models. This lack of a theoretical framework limits the functionality and use of communication strategies to support social change initiatives. Recasting participatory communication literature using Giddens (1979, 1984) structuration theory has provided us a framework to understand the role of communication for development within the complexities and inextricable relationship between people and the larger social structure within which societies operate.

Although, most of the literature on participatory communication for development reviewed in this paper has borrowed ideas from Freirean thinking and critical and interpretive epistemologies, few studies have attempted to explicate the central concepts underpinning participation using an all encompassing social theory.

Based on Giddens' concepts of duality of structure, dialectic of control and structures of domination, we realize that development as a social change process is possible only when understood as a totality and not an individual level phenomenon. The proposition that oppressed and marginalized individuals can free themselves if they are given a voice, and ability to take control over their surroundings (agency) seems to exclude the role of structure as played out by social institutions. Giddens reminds us that social change is dependent on the relationship between people and the institutions that govern the community. Thus, it is not individual change alone, but a collective movement that strives to change the structures of oppression which would in turn make sustainable social change possible.

Merely by making available allocative resources and by providing diagnostic advice, people will not be able to liberate themselves. The participatory communication model puts forth the idea that there is a growing interdependence between

communities, classes, nations and nation states, therefore changes needs to happen at all levels if people are to be truly liberated from their oppressive situations. Giddens (1991) calls this phenomenon the dialectic between emancipatory politics and life politics. He contends that life politics, which focuses on self-identity and choice to make life decisions, “exists in the modern nation states which have already achieved emancipation from fixities of tradition and from conditions of hierarchical domination” (Giddens, 1991, p. 214). And developing nations embrace emancipatory politics “to reduce exploitation, inequality, and oppression” (Giddens, 1991, p. 211) by fighting domination and overcoming the hurdles from the past. This can be achieved through “justice, equality and participation” (Giddens, 1991, p. 212). Further, according to Giddens, unless modern nation states exercise in emancipatory politics it would not be possible for the developing nation states to break out of their existing oppressive cycle.

Participatory communication for development, which emphasizes empowerment of people through dialogic communication, would be more effective if the change agents and community members are able to bring about changes in the structures of domination. These structures result in the widening gap between the rich and the poor nations. Structuration theory informed participatory communication for development based on concepts of emancipatory politics holds this promise. Through communication, peoples’ embedded knowledgeability is unleashed and people would be in a position to overcome the dominant forces that impede social change. Structuration theory informs us that for the most part people are not able to articulate the knowledge they possess because the knowledge is gained through practical experience such as socialization, which reinforces the existing power relationships in a society (Giddens, 1984). Also, the discursively learned knowledge gets shadowed by the daily routine practices that reproduce the existing social practices (Giddens). This results in unintended consequences of our actions, which in the discourse of development could be understood as reinforcing the already

present structures of domination. Participatory communication can bring about social change only if communication is used to challenge the reproduction of power and by allowing the dialectic of control to operate.

AGENDA FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

The Duality of Development

In participatory communication, communication is not a linear process of information being sent from sender to receiver, but an act of meaning making which is possible by co-presence and inter-subjectivity between the sender and the receiver. Communication is understood to have a phenomenological orientation (Huesca, 2001). This inter-subjectivity is at two levels, between the subject and an object, and the relationship between structures in a social system and its interaction with people. These two levels could be compared to the structural constraints in a social phenomenon that are both enabling and constraining.

The duality of structure helps explain that participation aimed solely at an individual, as operationalized in many participatory development interventions, cannot result in sustainable social change due to the larger structural forces. The duality in development is recognition of the interdependence between the people that are oppressed and the people in power. Freire (1970/1998) argues that the oppressed do not exercise agency over the oppressors because the former have not been liberated through education. However, the dialectic of control explains that those who are dependent or oppressed in the case of development can use resources and influence the activities of powerful. Applying this concept to participatory communication, it means empowering people by allowing them access to the resources in order to overcome the existing oppressive forces. In this sense, participatory communication makes development into a duality providing possibilities to create social reality through

exchange of material and communicative resources.

As reviewed earlier, the field of communication for development has undergone changes in the assumptions of the role of communication in social change. Participatory communication perspective has sustained for over two decades, but there is a fear of it being replaced as well (Huesca, 2001). By understanding the limitations and the strengths of participatory communication using concepts from structuration theory as discussed in this paper, it gives us hope that participatory communication for development can achieve meaningful social change by addressing institutional barriers in addition to empowering communities.

At an applied level, the duality in development hypothesis could be tested by analyzing data from communities practicing participatory communication. Using the above constructs, one can assess the interdependence between the actors' sense of agency and the enablers of change as enacted at various levels of interaction. Structuration theory informs us that actors and institutions interact at three different levels: discourse, domination and legitimation. These levels of interaction could be analyzed to understand how participatory communication can contribute to individual level liberation (Freirean principles) within the context of institutional change (Giddens' principles), which together results in sustainable development of people and societies.

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