

CIRCULAR AND CONVERGENCE COMMUNICATION MODELS

The major difference between linear and circular models is receiver's feedback to the source. Feedback is the response of the receiver to the message of a source. Feedback can be looked upon in terms of five dimensions: positive – negative, person focused – message focused, immediate – delayed, low monitoring – high monitoring, and critical – supportive (DeVito, 1997). In case of positive feedback, the source will continue to send the same type of message in the same way, whereas in case of negative feedback, the source will try to change the message or the style of presentation. However, in both the cases it will help the source to adjust the message or channel accordingly for making communication effective. It plays a key role by enabling the source to know how effectively his/her message has been received by the receiver. Without feedback, improvement in communication is unlikely. For example, if someone does an outstanding job, feedback will help in reinforcing the individual to do it again. If a person does something wrong, feedback serves as warning not to repeat such behaviour again.

Feedback helps in rewarding people for their good work which ultimately helps them to behave in the same way. Negative feedback also plays very important role. People need to be informed about their wrong doings and the ways how they can improve the situation. Negative feedback is better than no feedback at all. However, negative feedback should be given in a proper manner so that the listener may be receptive, otherwise he/she may be defensive.

5.1 Circular models

Circular models are more dynamic than linear models because of feedback element and thereby two-way flow of information between the interactants. Roll (1984) argued that provision of feedback in communication models has always been stressed.

However, the linear models discussed earlier suggest that it is not so. Some of the circular models are discussed in this chapter.

5.1.1 Riley and Riley's model of communication

Riley and Riley (1959) emphasized the social nature of communication. As a communicator (C) or recipient (R) in the communication process, an individual is influenced by the primary group with which he/she is affiliated. Group influence leads towards better understanding of the perception of message by an individual and his response to it (ibid). The individual may have attachment with more than one group at the same time. These different small groups are related to a large social structure. Thus the individual is not necessarily influenced by a single primary group but by many small groups and the large social structure. This phenomenon is presented in the model shown in Figure 20.

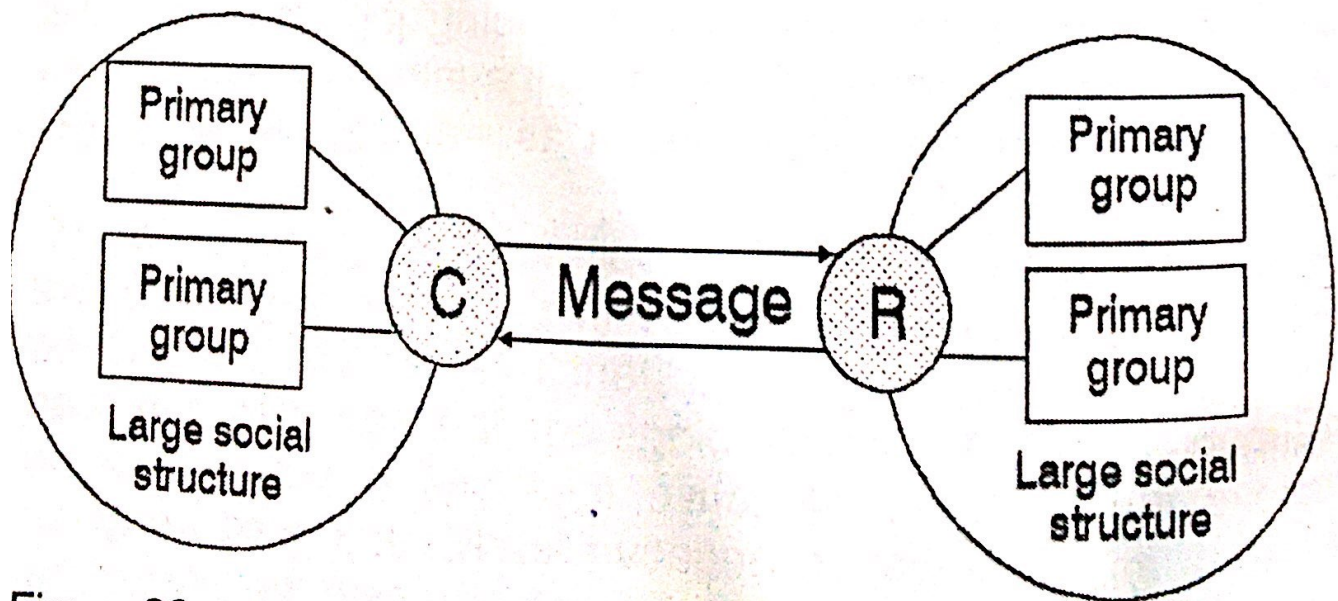


Figure 20

Riley and Riley's model of communication
(Riley & Riley, 1959)

5.1.4 Harlo and Compton's model of communication

Harlo and Compton (1967) regarded communication as an activity of sharing information and intentions between the communicator and the receiver. In the act of communication, the communicator sends a message to the receiver through certain means. The receiver after receiving the message responds to it which enables the communicator to know how well his/her message has been perceived by the receiver. The real test of effectiveness of the message lies in the receiver's reaction. They further mentioned communication barriers both external and internal which may interrupt communication.

Effectiveness of communication largely depends upon clear thinking of the communicator and his/her ability to express clearly the same, appropriate choice of means of communication, minimum possible interruption and finally accurate perception of the message by the receiver (ibid). They also highlighted that it is not sufficient to make the receiver understand the message, but he/she must react as

desired by the communicator. This model shows a circular nature of communication as depicted in Figure 24.

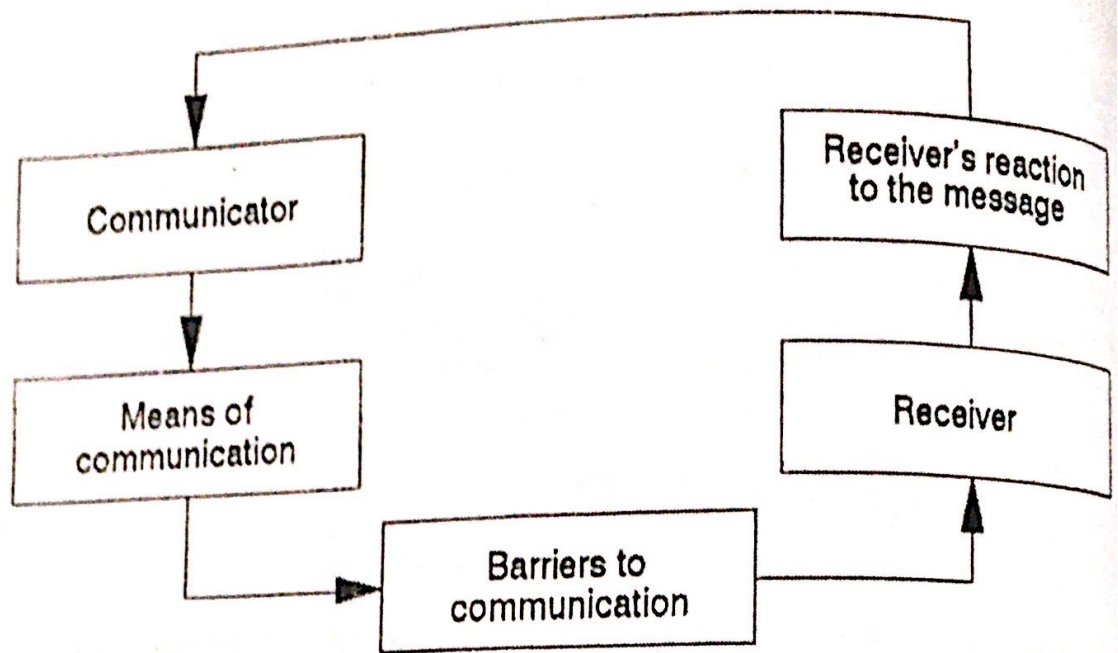


Figure 24

Harlo and Compton's model of communication
(Harlo & Compton, 1967)

5.1.5 Khan's model of communication

Khan (1969) developed his model specifically in an extension education context. The model (Figure 25) depicts that the extension communicator, as the initiator of the communication process, must have sender motivation prior to sending his/her message to the communicatee. He/she may be motivated, for example, by a desire to help other people. This initial motivation triggers the process of generating the extension messages. Likewise the extension communicatee should also have receiver motivation. Motivation or need at the receiver's end can be regarded as a gap between what is and what ought to be. This motivation may increase or decrease the readiness of the extension clientele to respond to a message. The message transmitted by the extension communicator has to be useful enough to motivate the extension communicatee to react in a way desired by the extension communicator (Khan, 1969).

In order to have purposeful communication, the extension communicator passes through thinking, imagination and analyzing processes. He/she encodes his/her message and treats it to make it more understandable and realistic to the communicatees. Then the communicator gives initial exposure to the message through certain channel(s) with the intention of arousing and stimulating a desire among the audience. Receiver, after receiving the message, shows immediate reaction. In the light of the reaction of the receiver, the extension communicator sends the entire message through subsequent message exposures to stimulate the desired response. He/she finally evaluates the consequences of his/her message on the audience.

5.1.7 Oakley and Garforth's model of communication

Oakley and Garforth (1985) discussed their model of communication with four basic elements as indicated by Berlo (1960): (1) source, (2) message, (3) channel, and (4) receiver. These elements are depicted in Figure 28. While discussing the effective communication act, they pointed out that the source must be reliable and credible in the eyes of the

receivers. They further stressed that the source must take into account the existing knowledge, attitude, and needs of the audience. Oakley and Garforth (1985) highlight that a balance must be achieved between what the receiver wants to know and what the source feels the receiver ought to know. They have also given a good account of feedback in their model.

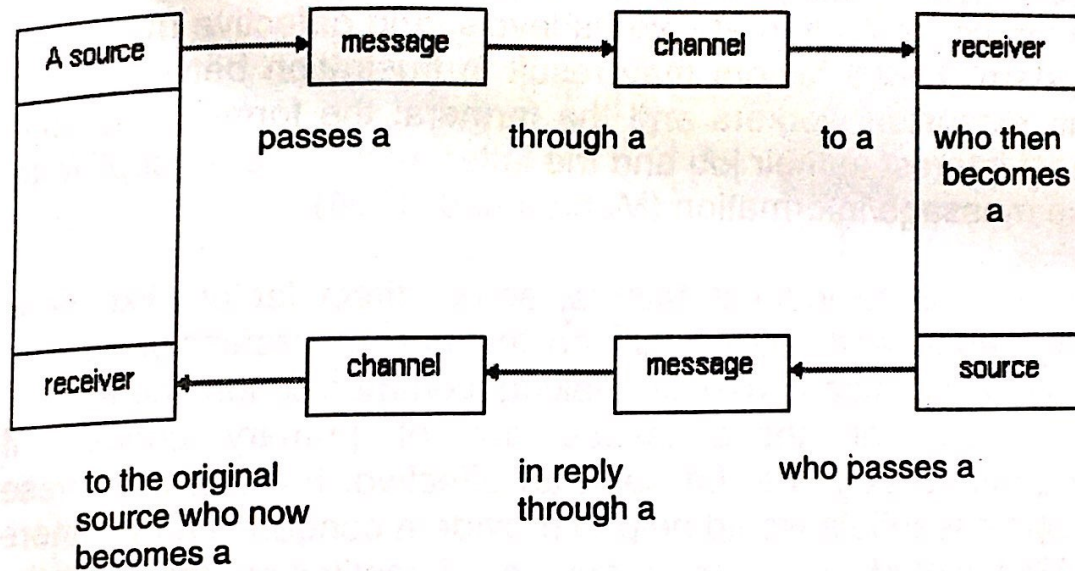


Figure 28 Oakley and Garforth's model of communication (Oakley, & Garforth, 1985)

5.1.8 Muhammad's model of communication

Muhammad (1994) developed his model for effective communication. Effectiveness of communication depends on many interrelated and interdependent factors. These factors may result in low motivation on the part of the source and non-receptive behaviour on the part of the receiver. In fact, both source and receiver need a high level of motivation if the communication act is to be effective. He regarded it as "congenial atmosphere" which seems to be one of the major elements of communication process. This could exert adequate motivational force on both the source and the receiver. Therefore, an effective communication calls for a strategy which takes into account all such factors.

The model (Figure 29) was developed in agricultural context; however it can also be applied to other situations. The factors relating to the source (extension worker) may include lack of adequate facilities, incentives, promotions, and undue political interference in official matters. On the other hand, the factors relating to the receiver (farmer) may include poor access to resources, unreliable/adulterated supply of inputs, high prices of inputs, corruption at various levels, and defective marketing system. These factors may result in frustration between both the extension workers and the farmers: the former may take least interest in their job and the latter may be non-receptive to the message/information (Muhammad, 1994).

In addition to indirect factors, some direct factors like poor knowledge and low morale on the part of professionals can play a significant role in making communication ineffective. Therefore, all these issues are of primary concern if communication is to be seen as effective. Fulfilment of these basic essentials would help to provide a congenial atmosphere which would serve as a source of motivation for both the professionals and the people.

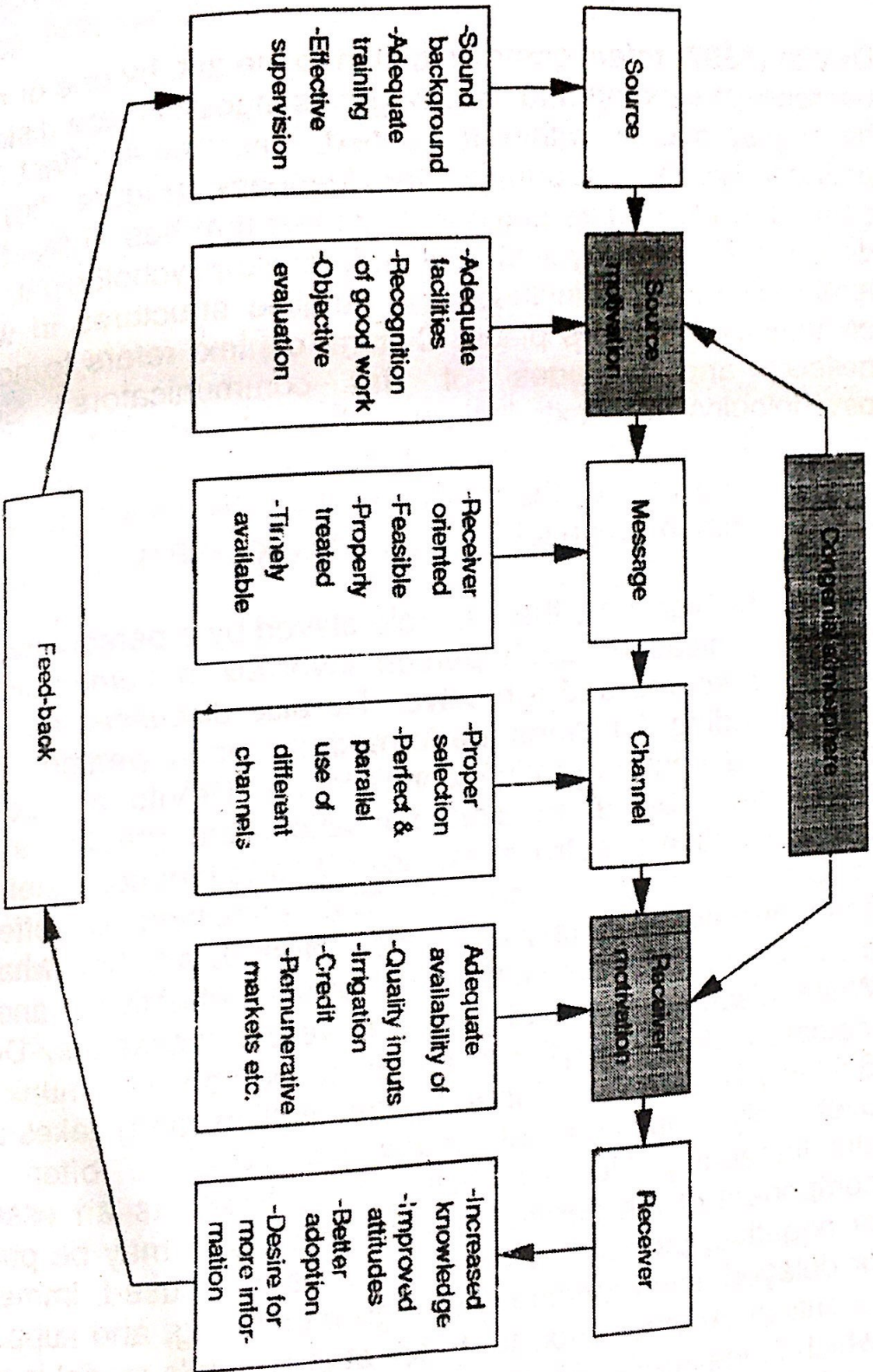


Figure 29 Muhammad's model of communication (Muhammad, 1994)