

Singhal Arvind and James W. Dearing (ed.). *Communication of Innovations: A Journey with Everett Rogers*. New Delhi: Sage Publications. 2006. 259 pages. Paperback. Indian Rs 360.00.

The book “Communication of Innovations” comprises of ten essays that focus and highlight the ideas and works of a highly renowned student and proponent of diffusion of innovations, communication networks, and social change—Everett Rogers. Each chapter of the book discusses different aspects of Rogers’s dynamic personality, his individual and remarkable ways of working and advancing in his field.

This book presents introductory remarks to Everett Rogers’ personality. His beginnings in the field of communication of innovation, his focus on diffusion of innovation, his optimism, his main intellectual contribution, the combination of the diffusion of innovation models and the main purpose of writing this book to ‘honour the memory and contributions’ of Rogers is also elaborated.

Diffusion, innovation, process of spreading the innovations, the factors involved in diffusion, the importance of adopters’ activity and effective strategies for target-oriented diffusion are thoroughly explained. “Revisiting Diffusion Theory” is interesting for it contains the basic features of Rogers’ diffusion theory and therefore can be very helpful in clarifying the fundamental concepts about the communication of innovations.

Rogers’ role in the early studies of the diffusion network is fully explored in another section of the book. This portion also presents five types of communication network models developed to understand how innovations diffuse through communication and social networks. Rogers provided a considerable contribution to these models and advocated the use of science to improve the human condition.

Rogers’ habit of collecting knowledge from everywhere is highly appreciated. A whole section of this book emphasises innovations—both its generation and its diffusion—as a process of knowledge generation and transfer. Innovations are regarded to be ‘bundles of knowledge’. Types of knowledge, sources of innovative ideas e.g. marketplace, users’ tacit knowledge and intellectual diversity, learning process, the empty vessel hazard, knowledge transfer method and role of knowledge coaches as change agents and Rogers’ role as a greatly successful motivating coach is focused on heavily. However, this section concludes that the distinction between generation and diffusion is cursory and insignificant. Also one branch of the book concentrates on the main features of the social cognitive theory and the four essential components of productive partnership in theoretical integration in global application.

In regard to social marketing and the broadening of marketing movement Rogers’ “Diffusion of Innovation” published in 1962 is an established classic. Social marketing’s aim is to benefit the general society rather than the marketer.

Organised development assistance and the dominant paradigm of development, deconstruction of the dominant models of development, ‘new’ development objectives and roles for communication and empowerment as an alternative paradigm for social change have been analysed here.

Rogers was one of the founders of development communication. His diffusion concepts influenced many development communication practices including the design and implementation of strategic extension campaigns (SEC). The implementation of

strategic extension campaigns, useful features of SEC, lessons learned from up scaling and franchising SEC are also discussed in this book.

Rogers was a perfect story-teller believing in Entertainment-Education (E-E). Entertainment-Education and Health Promotion” consists of a number of stories to discuss the entertainment-education strategy in health promotion. We come to know about the four story-tellers, their connection with Rogers and with each other, the increasing usage of the E-E strategy in health promotion.

The final part of this book glorifies the personal aspects of Rogers’ life. His life’s beginnings on an Iowa farm as a simple farm boy, his academic achievements and contributions, his belief in sharing knowledge and experiences, his being a role model for perseverance, his keen interest in gardening, his cancer diagnosis as a transformative experience and his return to his forefathers’ land to strengthen his bonds with his family in Iowa where he refreshed his childhood memories along with his life-long lessons and experiences are all elucidated. He died in October 2004, according to Rogers’ will, the Pinehurst soil became his final resting place thus becoming a true “son of the soil”.

This book highlights the life and works of Everett Rogers ‘the ultimate net worker’, polite, considerate, loving, friendly and supportive advisor. This book contains the essence of Rogers’ diffusion theory, so it is worth reading for social researchers interested in communication of innovation and social change as well as for the students of sociology.

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