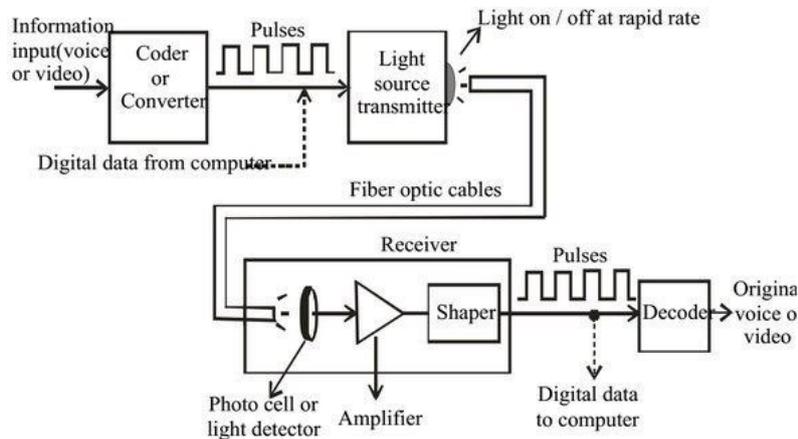


FIBRE OPTICAL COMMUNICATION SYSTEM



The information in the form of voice or video to be transmitted will be in an analog electrical signal format. This analog signal at first converted into digital electric (binary) signals in the form of electrical pulses using a Coder or converter and fed into the optical transmitter which converts digital electric signals into optical signals. An optical fibre can receive and transmit signals only in the form of optical pulses. The function of the light source is to work as an efficient transducer to convert the input electrical signals into suitable light pulses. An LED or laser is used as the light source for this purpose. Laser is more efficient because of its monochromatic and coherent nature. Hence semiconductor lasers are used for their compact size and higher efficiency.

The electrical signal is fed to the semiconductor laser system, and gets modulated to generate an equivalent digital sequence of pulses, which turn the laser on and off. This forms a series of optical pulses representing the input information, which is coupled in to the optical fibre cable at an incidence angle less than that of acceptance cone half angle of the fibre.

Next the light pulses inside the fibre undergo total internal reflection and reach the other end of the cable. Good quality optical fibres with less attenuation to be chosen to receive good signals at the receiver end.

The final step in the communication system is to receive the optical signals at the end of the optical fibre and convert them into equivalent electrical signals. Semiconductor photodiodes are used as optical receivers. A typical optical receiver is made of a reverse biased junction, in which the received light pulses create electron-hole charge carriers. These carriers, in turn, create an electric field and induce a photocurrent in the external circuit in the form of electrical digital pulses. These digital pulses are amplified and re-gain their original form using suitable amplifier and shaper. The electrical digital pulses are further decoded into an analogues electrical signal and converted into the usable form like audio or video etc.,

As the signal propagates through the fibre it is subjected to two types of degradation. Namely attenuation and delay distortion. Attenuation is the reduction in the strength of the signal because of power loss due to absorption and scattering of photons. Delay distortion is the reduction in the quality of the signal because of the spreading of pulses with time. These effects cause continuous degradation of the signal as the light propagates and may reach a limiting stage beyond

which it may not be possible to retrieve information from the light signal. At this stage a repeater is needed in the transmission path.



An optical repeater consists of a receiver and a transmitter arranged adjacently. The receiver section converts the optical signal into a corresponding electrical signal. Further, the electrical signal is amplified and recast in the original form and is sent into an optical transmitter section where the electrical signal is again converted back to an optical signal and then fed into an optical fibre.

Finally, at the receiving end, the optical signal from the fibre is fed into a photo detector where the signal is converted to pulses of electric current which are then fed to a decoder which converts the sequence of binary data stream into an analog signal which will be the same information which was there at the transmitting end.

Advantages over conventional communication:

- 1) **Large Bandwidth:** Optical fibres have a wider bandwidth (when compared to conventional copper cables). This helps in transmitting voice, video and data on a single line and at very fast rates (10^{14} bps as compared to about 10^4 bps in ordinary communication line)
- 2) **Electromagnetic Interference (EMI):** EMI and disturbance in the transmission is a very common phenomenon in ordinary copper cables. However, optical fibre cables are free from EMI, since electromagnetic radiation has no effect on the optical wave. Hence, there is no need to provide specially shielded conditions for the optical fibre.
- 3) **Low attenuation:** Compared to metallic cables, optical fibres have a low attenuation level (as they are relatively independent of frequency). The loss in optical fibres is very low, of the order of 0.1 to 0.5 dB/km of transmission.

- 4) **Electrical Hazards:** Since, optical fibres carry only the light signals, there are no problems of short-circuiting and shock hazards.
- 5) **Security:** Unlike electrical transmission lines, there is no signal radiation around the optical fibre, hence the transmission is secure. The tapping of the light waves, if done, leads to a loss of signal and can be easily detected.
- 6) Optical fibre cables are small in size, light weight and have a long life.

Disadvantages:

- Fibre loss is more at the joints if the joints do not match (the joining of the two ends of the separate fibres are called splicing)

Attenuation loss is large as the length of the fibre increases

- Repeaters are required at regular intervals of length to amplify the weak signal in long distance communication.
- Severe bends will increase the loss of the fibre. Hence, the fibre should be laid straight as far as possible and avoid severe bends.

Note:

- Point to Point haul communication system is employed in telephone trunk lines. This system of communication covers the distances 10 km and more. Long-haul communication has been employed in telephone connection in the large cities of New York and Los Angeles. The use of single mode optical fibres has reduced the cost of installation of telephone lines and maintenance, and increased the data rate.
- Local Area Network (LAN) Communication system uses optical fibres to link the computer-oriented communication within a range of 1 or 2 km.
- Community Antenna Television (CATV) makes use of optical fibres for distribution of signal to the local users by receiving a multichannel signal from a common antenna.