



# The Role of Mass Media in Community Development

**Dr. Vinay M**

Assistant Professor

Department of Journalism and Mass Communication Studies

Davangere University

Davangere

**Abstract:** In recent times, social media has come to emerge as being an important tool of mass media that is used for disseminating vital information about community development work. Using social media, community developers are usually able to gather all the resources and the tools that they need to make their projects a success, while informing plenty of people along the way about the work that is being undertaken. The wide outreach that is connected to the use of social media platforms has made it an important mass media tool that is being used by community development practitioners today, in various parts of the world. This research paper investigates the impact that mass media has on community development work, or rather, the role that is played by mass media, in community development, with the research undertaken being primary as well as qualitative in its nature. The current research topic has made use of the descriptive design in order, to embark upon a rigorous study and analysis of the role of media in community development.

**Keywords:** community development, mass media, social media, impact, descriptive design.

## Introduction

Community development is a term that maybe understood as the strategies and the collective actions that are undertaken in order, to bring about a change or improvement in the affairs of the community. The upliftment of people who are living in a specific community is the main focus of community development and there are many platforms that are usually made use of, by those who are engaged in community development work, in order, to ensure that their activities gain as much outreach as possible and that the maximum number of people in the community are able, to benefit from the development work that is being undertaken on their behalf (Olaniyi, 2020). Mass media maybe understood as the tools of knowledge dissemination that are made use of, to convey information to large numbers of people in, a given, instance. The television as well as the radio are well-known examples of mass media, as used down the ages, while newspapers constitute an important tool of mass media as well. In recent times, social media has come to emerge as being an important

tool of mass media that is used for disseminating vital information about community development work. Using social media, community developers are usually able to gather all the resources and the tools that they need to make their projects a success, while informing plenty of

people along the way about the work that is being undertaken (Olaniyi, 2020). The wide outreach that is connected to the use of social media platforms has made it an important mass media tool that is being used by community development practitioners today, in various parts of the world (Aras, 2018). This research paper investigates the impact that mass media has on community development work, or rather, the role that is played by mass media, in community development, with the research undertaken being primary as well as qualitative in its nature.

## **Literature Review**

### **Understanding the Work that is done by Community Developers**

It is important to note first and foremost, that the work that is undertaken on the part of community developers is something that is aimed at bringing about an improvement in the quality of lives of both individuals as well as whole families. Social workers, teachers and police are examples of community development workers, with their main role being to strengthen or enhance the people who are living in a specific community. Social workers conduct all the agitation that is needed to raise awareness about social ills, and undertake plans and programs in order, to eradicate such ills. Teachers have an important role to play in educating people who are living in the community, teaching them the art of literacy, and making sure that they have all the skills and the tools that are needed to be aware and to earn an income for themselves, while police are concerned with law enforcement and by making sure that the people who are living in the community, are safe, and protected (Asiksoy et al., 2019).

### **Understanding the Role of Mass Media**

Mass media is a term that describes all the communication tools that are deployed to make the people of a country, and of a society, aware of all that is going on in their immediate and extended environments. Knowledge dissemination is the most important purpose that is connected to the use of mass media. As such, those who do engage in the use of such tools do so to educate people and to make them aware of all that is happening around them, both the good and the bad. It is for instance by reading a newspaper or by watching a news channel that an individual will be in a position, to understand not only what is happening in the world around him, and what is taking place in his immediate society as well (Aras, 2018). Like the newspapers, and like television radio and social media are also popular tools of mass media, with people tuning into radio channels and logging onto social media sites and platforms in order, to find out about what it is that is going on in their society and community, what are the ills taking place, how such ills are being addressed and what it is that is being done by the state and by civil society to make sure that the lives of the people of a community are safeguarded and that they are protected from the threat of harm in every possible way (Aras,

2018). Social workers have for instance been using mass media quite extensively in order, to inform people about donation drives and charity events, to raise money for a cause and to use the money that has been raised to address many of the wrongs and the inadequacies that are found to be present in the society.

### **Mass Media and Community Development**

It is clear, that mass media is one of the most powerful tools that can be made use of by community development practitioners, to further the work that they undertake on a daily, basis, because of the outreach that is associated with mass media use (Mukhtar, 2020). Social workers, law enforcement authorities and teachers, among others, can make use of social media platforms and television, the radio etc. in order, to let members of the community know about the work that they are undertaking, the goals associated with the work that they are involved in, and what it is that they have managed to achieve so far, insofar as community development is concerned (Mukhtar, 2020). Social media platforms such as Facebook and Instagram for instance, are being heavily utilized by community development practitioners, not only to raise awareness about the work that they are taking up, but also to solicit support and even funding for that matter, for the various projects that they are engaged in (Hoffman et al., 2018). With the outreach that is connected to mass media use and the level of support and awareness that community development practitioners are able, to generate through the use of mass media, it can be stated with considerable clarity, and firmness that mass media has an important role to play in enhancing community development work.

### **Research Methodology**

#### **Research Design**

The specific tools and the specific strategies that are made use of for data collection and analysis are referred to by the term research design (Allen, 2018). The exploratory research design, the explanatory research design as well as the analytical or descriptive design are the types, of research designs that, investigators, and scholars tend to make the most use of (Allen, 2018). The current research topic has made use of the descriptive design in order, to embark upon a rigorous study and analysis of the role of mass media in community development.

#### **Data Collection**

The collection of data for this study has taken place using primary methods. Qualitative methods such as interviews have been conducted with a respondent population in order, to attain a clear and concise understanding of the research topic. The information that has been collected using primary research has been supported with data that has been obtained through secondary research. Books, and articles that have been published in peer reviewed journals on the subject, of community development and mass media, were studied for this assessment, and such books and articles, as studied, were extracted from renowned online databases such as Pro-Quest and Google Scholar.

## Sample Size and Sampling Technique

Since this is a very brief study that was conducted, the sample size chosen was just three people. One person was a police officer, one person was a social worker, and one person was a teacher (Aspers & Corte, 2019). The technique that the researcher made use of, to conceive such a sample, is known as the non-probabilistic technique of sampling or convenient sampling. As such, the different people that the researcher was able to reach out to for participation in this project, are people who he found easy to connect with, and who agreed readily to take part in the study (Aspers & Corte, 2019).

## Limitations of the Study

There are certain important limitations that this study is characterized by, and which have, to be made a note of, before discussing the research results. To begin with, the study had to be done in a very limited time, period and which has kept it therefore from being as detailed as research projects ought to be. The fact that the researcher could not exploit the use of much funding with which to undertake the study has also greatly limited the scope of this study. If there were resources in the form of money and time available more greatly at the disposal of the researcher, then the study undertaken would have turned out to be of a superior quality than what it is at, the moment, though, every attempt has been made to ensure that the research goals of this study are met.

## Research Findings

### Interview with Respondent 1

The first respondent was a police officer. When he was asked how it is that mass media plays a role in boosting the community development work that he undertakes, he stated that by using social media like Facebook and Instagram, he is able, to inform his network and the network at large, about the crimes taking place in his society, the social ills that are prevalent here and the specific actions that he has taken both in the recent and the distant past, in order, to counter the same. It was made known by the police officer that using social media has made it possible for him to not only make the extent of his own community development work known, but he has also received feedback, such as praise for the work he is doing, and suggestions on how he can further improve the work that he is engaged in. He states that more and more people have come to know of ills and problems present in the community through his social media engagement and he therefore, believes, that mass media like social media for instance ought to be heavily deployed when undertaking community development work.

### Interview with Respondent 2

The second respondent for this study was a social worker. In her review, she states that since fund raising is an activity that she has been given responsibility for, by the NGO that she is working for, she has been able to make use of social media platforms like Instagram and Facebook, to raise awareness and to gather as many donations, or, funds, to contribute to the work that is being undertaken by her NGO. The NGO that she is

associated with is working on child rights, and she says that by posting regular feelers and notifications on Facebook as well as on Instagram, she has been able, to raise a lot of money for the causes that her NGO is committed to, such as fighting child abuse and child exploitation, and she therefore feels that mass media like the social media platforms are very useful when it comes to aiding and assisting the work that is being done by community development practitioners. She says that using social media helps her to connect with a lot of people in, a given instance, and which makes it useful for raising awareness, for raising money or donations etc.

### **Interview with Respondent 3**

The third respondent is a teacher. She is involved in teaching disabled or handicapped children, and she says in her interview that the use of social media has made it possible for her to inform lots of people about the work that she is engaged in. She has received a lot of advice on how she can do her job better, while using social media has also directed her to the type of funding sources that she can exploit, to get better paid for her work and to ensure that the outreach for the teaching work that she is involved in, so more extensive.

### **Thematic Analysis – Role of Mass Media in Community Development**

#### **Helps with Fund Raising**

As stated by the research respondents in the interviews, the use of social media, an important tool of mass media, is something that is seen to enhance community development work as it assists with the fund-raising process. It is a fact well known that it is not possible to undertake development work on a large scale without the use of funds (Mozzaffari, 2017). The respondents have revealed that social media has helped greatly in raising funds or donations for charitable causes and social issues that are being worked on by the respondents, and this in turn has contributed to furthering the development work as a whole. Thus, mass media like social media has seen to boost community development by helping with the raising of funds.

#### **Ensures extensive Outreach**

Community development work is something that is known to get a great boost only if more and more people come to know about the type of development work that is being undertaken within their community (Hoffman et al., 2018). Social media is a form of mass media where knowledge dissemination takes place quite easily and quickly, and it is possible to reach large sections of people quickly and easily through social media use (Hoffman et al., 2018). It has been revealed by the interview respondents that using social media has made it possible for them to let a lot of people know about the type of community development work that they are engaged in, be it teaching, fund raising or law enforcement and the fighting of social ills. This outreach has given their work a boost with lots of people now knowing about their work and providing them with feedback, aid and assistance with regard to the same.

## Conclusion

In conclusion, it can be affirmed that, role of mass media in community development is something that is quite positive. The results of this study have revealed that, community development work is something that is greatly furthered by the use, of mass media tools like social media. Platforms like Facebook and Instagram are being heavily utilized by community development workers, to spread knowledge and awareness of about ills that are taking place in society and to raise funds in order, to be able to take on the work or the actions that are needed in order, to combat such ills. The role that is played by mass media in positive community development is something that therefore cannot be denied, and it has been made more than evident in the findings of this study.

## References

1. Deloitte. (2011). *Media & Entertainment in India Digital Road Ahead* (pp. 1–48). New Delhi. Retrieved from [http://www.deloitte.com/assets/dcom-india/local\\_assets/documents/me - whitepaper for assocham.pdf](http://www.deloitte.com/assets/dcom-india/local_assets/documents/me - whitepaper for assocham.pdf)
2. Ernst & Young. (2012). *Spotlight on India's Entertainment economy* (p. 40). New Delhi, India: Ernst & Young. Retrieved from [http://www.ey.com/Publication/vwLUAssets/Spotlight on Indias entertainment economy/\\$FILE/Spotlight on Indias entertainment economy.pdf](http://www.ey.com/Publication/vwLUAssets/Spotlight on Indias entertainment economy/$FILE/Spotlight on Indias entertainment economy.pdf)
3. Bonn S. 2008. Transitioning from Traditional to Hybrid and Online Teaching, Anil Varma (Ed), “Information and Communication Technology in Education”, First edition,
4. Icfai University Press, Hyderabad, p.34-35. Core ICT indicators: Partnership on measuring ICT for development, retrieved from <http://www.itu.int/ITU-D/ict/partnership/>
5. Farahani A. J. 2008. E-learning: A New Paradigm in Education, Anil Varma (Ed), “Information and Communication Technology in Education”, First edition, Icfai University Press, Hyderabad, pp.25-26.