

A Review of Relevant Literature on Development Communication and its Implications for Kenya

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Abstract

This paper traces the evolution of development communication in terms of theoretical perspectives; approaches to development planning and what these perspectives portend for Kenya. Taking a Kuhnian position, the paper looks at the paradigmatic shifts in the field and explores learning points for a country eager to be industrialized by year 2030. The study takes a historical account of the development of the field and utilizes content analysis from vivid examples drawn from African countries and specifically from Kenya. The paper holds the view that the field has evolved for the better, dropping what has been falsified and adopting new paradigms. The new paradigms explain the failures of the preceding paradigm and explain development concepts in a coherent manner. This is a review of relevant literature on development communication.

Keywords: Development communication, Participation, National planning for development

1. Introduction

In Kuhn's (1994) estimation, the development communication field has witnessed a number of significant paradigmatic shifts. This paper puts these shifts in perspectives and maps out the theoretical growth of development communication. Further, this paper considers the shifts in approaches to development communication and traces the implications of these shifts to development planning in Kenya. The end of the Second World War had a twofold significance for development communication field. First, the establishment of the United Nations in 1945 appealed for peace and the avoidance of war—two factors considered as precursors of the development narrative. The UN came to the scene with the following objectives: ensure international peace and security; promotion of international social and economic cooperation; and respect for human rights.

In pursuit of these objectives, the UN was instrumental in the establishment of the third generation rights which are critical elements for the development of nations. The third generation (or common good) rights advanced the right to peace; right to clean environment; right to development; right to food; right to humanitarian assistance; and right to free flow of information. These rights are squarely what developing countries yearn for. Secondly, the end of the Second World War paved way to a different war, the Cold War (1945-1991). The import of this development was that a bipolar world was established and countries of the world either rallied behind the USA or the USSR. It must be underscored that there existed a Non Aligned Movement (NAM) which ideologically supported neither block. After the two World wars, USA had emerged victorious and therefore stood strategically stronger than its nemesis the USSR as the USA sought to advance its agenda.

With much gusto, the USA took charge of the Cold War and exploited the opportunity to give the quantum of development especially for the developing countries. This does not in any way imply that the USSR did not attempt to influence its pack (Servaes, 1999).

2. Evolution of Development Communication Theories

The birth of modernization theory rests on the developments post Second World War and operates on the parameters of the Cold War. Significantly, the birth of modernization paradigm sets stage for the tripartite account of development theories. The USA, in its agenda to replicate its development in developing countries, therefore contributed to the humble beginnings of the Modernization paradigm. Modernization paradigm was the dominant academic perspective on development from 1945 to 1965 (Servaes, 1999). Among the protagonists of the paradigm included Daniel Lerner and Wilbur Schramm. Other scholars who played a critical role in the propagation of the theory include Harold Lasswell and Everett Rogers (Melkote&Steeves, 2001). Singhal (1987) pays special tribute to Wilbur Schramm —whom he calls the fifth founding father of communication, after Harold Lasswell, Kurt Lewin, Carl Hovland and Paul F. Lazarsfeld.

Development would only flourish in developing countries once such countries rid themselves of the obnoxious traditional model. The traditional model was the greatest obstacles to development and any developing country had to disengage the traditional elements so as to be like the First World countries. Modernization paradigm was also propelled by Walter Rostow's *takeoff* model. The coexistence of the traditional and modern models was only temporary because the urge for equilibrium was expected to favor modernization over the traditional. For Rostow, the stages through which a traditional society ends up to modernization followed a lineal outline from traditional to pre-takeoff stages, takeoff stage, to road to maturity and finally to a mass consumption society (Servaes, 1999). In summing up what entailed the differences between underdevelopment and the modernity of societies, Servaes (1999: 19) writes —

“[U]nderdevelopment in terms of perceptible, quantitative differences between the rich and the poor countries. Development means bridging the gaps by means of imitation processes between traditional and modern, retarded and advanced, or barbarian and civilized sectors and groups to the advantage of the latter.”

Development could be manifested through urbanization, literacy and exposure to mass media (Narula, 2006). The modernization paradigm was not entirely a foolhardy idea. Robert White (cited in Servaes & Malikhao (2008:159) underscore some positives aspects as a result of the theory:

“The most significant communication dimension of the modernization design in the developing world has been the rapid improvement of the transportation, which linked rural communities into market towns and regional cities. With improved transportation and sources of electric power, the opening of commercial consumer supply networks stretched out into towns and villages carrying with it the Western consumer culture and pop culture of films, radio and pop music. Although rural people in Bolivia or Sri Lanka may not have attained the consumption styles of American middle-class populations, their life did change profoundly. This was the real face of modernization.”

In support to White's assessment of the modernization paradigm, it was evident that the dominant paradigm saw loans advanced to Third World countries and to businessmen and farmers. Government revenues in form of taxes collected were used to construct roads and offer public services to the citizenry. The agricultural extension services thrived during the modernization paradigm which saw the rise of agricultural centers of experimentation. In Kenya for example, the establishment of Bukura Agricultural Institute in Kakamega Country still thrive to date.

In line with the desire to improve productivity of labor, the modernization paradigm saw the setting up of instrumental ministries in modern governments such as education, health, agriculture, roads and communication. Production was also increased through import substitution. The import of all these incentives left many Third World countries with colonial effects. Nothing can be further from the truth now that popularization of the modernization paradigm coincided with the colonial era in many Third World countries.

The modernization theory premises have received a sufficient rebuttal, most of the rebuttals contributed to the reconsideration of the development agenda. Melkote&Steeves (2001) in a chapter they have titled 'Critique to the Dominant Paradigm's Communication Approach,' tear into the dominant paradigm refuting the claim that the media was such a powerful instrument in the hands of the powerful means that the audiences are manipulated and that they were victims of propaganda. The authors dwell on the concomitant failures of modernization theory.

While debunking the notion that development was a corollary of dropping backward traditional model of society, Melkote&Steeves interrogate the ethnocentric bias in modernization.

The perspective that the West and specifically America was the citadel of development was naïve and one that thrived on ignorance (or perhaps, arrogance). Secondly, the authors applaud the deep seated tradition in the Third World countries. In their assessment of the modernization paradigm, Servaes &Malikhao (2008:159) write—

“All societies would, passing through similar stages, evolve to a common point: the modern society. In order to be a modern society, the attitudes of ‘backward’ people—their traditionalism, bad taste, superstition, fatalism, etc.—which are obstacles and barriers in the traditional societies have to be removed. The differences among nations are explained in terms of the degree of development rather than the fundamental nature of each. Hence, the central problem of development was thought to revolve around the question of ‘bridging the gap’ and ‘catching up’ by means of imitation processes between traditional and modern sectors, between retarded and advanced or between ‘barbarian’ and civilized sectors and groups to the advantage of the latter.”

In a nutshell, modernization failed because what it never attained what it portended to achieve (Servaes &Malikhao, 2008; Melkote&Steeves, 2001; and Singhal, 1987). Any paradigmatic shift was to involve the concerns of the people who were the direct beneficiaries of development. The citizens of Third World countries can narrate their problems with alacrity and as such they ought to be included in development projects. Such opinion is likely to propel the projects to sustainability. The culture of a people ought, in Marxist tradition, to be the infrastructure of development —one that helps development to respond to their call. The ultimate failure of modernization theory was the fact that monies went to intermediaries and not to the intended people. This failure successively led to dependency model which thrives in the Third World especially where colonialists made every effort to disabuse horizontal communication and enforce policies through fear.

Before exploring the downfalls of modernization theory, it is only fair that we mention its contemporaneous theoretical perspective – the World System Theory (WST). The perspective gained prominence in the late 1950s and thrived on casting aspersions on the propositions advanced by the apologists of modernization theory. Wallerstein (1974) encapsulates the views of WST arguing that modernization theory was ethnocentric, inaccurate and naïve. The World System Theory argues that underdevelopment is not as a result of modernization but as a result of exploitation. Perhaps Gandhi’s development dilemma best explains the world system theoretical perspective. Gandhi had contended: “if it took England the exploitation of half the globe to be what it is today, how many globes will it take India?” Wallerstein thus situated the world capitalist economy as the basis of global inequality. Galtung’s (1971) work was a clear manifestation of WST albeit in the world of media through the core-periphery relations.

WST is exponentially revealed through trade imbalances; cheap labor; politics of foreign aid (Moyo, 2009); and the presence of Multi-National Corporations (MNCs). MNCs are seen as conduits of neocolonialism serving the very ideals of colonialism which sought to exploit the South countries and thereby hindered the development of the South. In many Third World countries, MNCs are notorious for their negative representations that range from jumping to bed with the government to the neglect of the citizenry; tax holidays; repatriation of profits and capital flights; creation of oligopolies; control of most strategic and dynamic economic fields; bedfellows with governments to solicit favorable policies; to the transfer of inappropriate technology.

A critical reflection on the World System perspectives had a number of failures. For starters, the overemphasis on MNCs meant that the proponents of the perspective were not cognizant of the internal factors that were at play on underdevelopment in many other countries. Similarly, the failures of modernization theory were antecedents of the dependency theory. Historically, the dependency theory thrived from 1960s to 1980s and was founded in the thoughts of Paul Baran, a Latin American, in 1957. The dependency paradigm was a mix of neo-Marxist thoughts within the context of debates in Latin America on development (Servaes &Malikhao, 2008). Dependency theory conceptualizes development and underdevelopment as two sides of the same coin. The core-peripheral relations create avenues of dependency in the Third World countries. The dynamics of dependency shows a dominance of the core countries over the periphery countries through global exploitation, media and cultural imperialism.

The Dependency paradigm operated in a time when most countries in the Third World were gaining independence. It is therefore appropriate to triangulate the happenings in the dependency paradigm with the iron fisted governments during that period. The belief in the Strong State characterized many independent African States. The leaders of most of these countries had one source to learn about leadership —their colonial predecessors.

The colonial predecessors were at best exploitative and this lesson was heightened in the special ties exhibited between some of the leaders in the Third World utilized and the former colonial masters. The ties served the gratification of former colonial masters and their protégées. This was neocolonialism at its perfect illumination. The African continent was not short of examples of how newly independent States had leaders take charge of the society. Hastings Kamuzu Banda was declared ‘president for life’ by members of his party. The strong State model also made use of national philosophies (or myths) to advance the agenda of the rulers. Such philosophies said little in comparison to the oomph they exuded. Kenya and in United Republic of Tanzania (URT) had their foundation fathers craft *Harambeeism* and *Ujamaa* philosophies respectively. Zambia had Kenneth Kaunda’s leadership model their philosophy on the shoulders of humanist philosophy.

Another determinant of the strong State model was present in the pre-independence parties which blurred the line between party issues and government policies once the party leaders took charge. Kenya’s KANU and United Republic of Tanzania’s CCM are cases in point. The era of single party was to thrive until the collapse of the Cold War. Indeed the 1960s to 1990s are remembered as the dark years of Africa and many other Third World countries. During this period, the Third World countries experienced what has been termed a ‘theatre of coups,’ in the words of Offor (2007:140) —

“A few months after the independence of most African countries, the continent became a theatre of coups. The military stuck in Zaire [now DRC] in January 1961, precisely six months after independence. Togo and Benin Republic had theirs in 1963, Central African Republic in 1965, Burkina Faso and Nigeria in 1966, Mali in 1968, Niger Republic in 1974, Mauritania in 1978, Equatorial Guinea in 1979, Liberia and Guinea Bissau in 1980.”

The trouble ridden Africa for instance, suffered an identity crisis even as efforts were made to Pan Africanize the continent. The failure of the strong State model is attributable to a legion of reasons. Prime among these reasons was the continued growth of the middle class and the rise of the intellectuals, a vibrant group of individuals who gave the leaders a run for their money. In Kenya, the activities of intellectuals led the government to do what may be considered as criminalization of intellectualism. As a result many of these intellectuals had to flee for their dear lives and this distorted the level of intellectualism in Kenya.

The secondly and related to the first reason, was the need to conceptualize success in light of the European concept of success. Education was overemphasized in the format of the former colonial masters. Few leaders interrogated this ‘wisdom’. Nyerere (1968), for example, disabused colonial notion that success can only be measured in terms of education. He saw the needs in society as the basis of education. This he ably argued in his speech titled *Education for self-reliance*. Even with such dissenting voices, the society in the Third World countries still define success in the terms of education. Education in and of itself is not bad. Intrinsically, education ought to empower the learner but the second component is creativity —the very thing that was conspicuously absent in the colonial-post-colonial model. Education in most colonial systems encouraged the banking model where the trainer/teacher pumps in information in the student/participant’s mind and during assessment, the participant is expected to memorize and imitate (withdraw what was banked). The Paolo Frere’s philosophy of participation should be incorporated in education methodology.

Without the participatory approach, the participant suffers the lack of creative but the trainer also suffers because they do not learn from the experiences of the learner. In the final analysis, the learner can never be empowered and always lives a life of dependence. Attempts to empower people have been successful and the narrative by Rodriguez (2001) where identities were deconstructed to tap into the creativity of women groups is a story worth retelling to the generations. Her work is simply a moment of brilliance! Education in the dependence paradigm smells of the yearnings of modernization paradigm where third World countries were to listen carefully to what was being spoken and alas there would be development!

In the overall the dependency paradigm came to its knees when it was apparent that nothing much could be sustained in the model since the students were outsmarting their colonial masters. Exploitation, ineptitude and the corruption malady — were the last straw that broke the camel’s back.

Mid 1980s were critical for the development in the developing (South) nations. This period was one of uncertainty, of crises and of lots of adjustments. At the onset of the uncertainty era saw the ever flowing foreign aid come with conditions (Moyo, 2009). The Bretton woods institutions came up with the Structural Adjustment Programs (SAPs) which aimed at controlling patronage that had so ravaged many government systems and officials. In most cases job opportunities were based not so much what one knew but more whom they knew.

The years 1985-2000 were a time for many Third World countries to engage in introspective reflection. There was an urgent need to improve the lives of the people in these countries. The characteristics of the Third World countries were disturbing. They ranged from: high poverty levels; poor physical and social infrastructure (roads, rails, schools, housing, hospitals); high illiteracy levels; political instability; high mortality rates; high debt servicing ratios; lack of industrialization; dependency on primary products; poor governance (such as nepotism, tribalism and corruption); high population growth rates; prevalence of crime and other forms of insecurity; low life expectancy levels; low initiative and innovativeness; lack of capital; poor trends of policy implementation; the big man syndrome; low GDP per Capita; to high inflation rates. Whereas the SAPs and other foreign aid conditions worked for given reasons, they also had their own misgivings. A classic example was the conditions imposed on Kenya's second president, Daniel T. A. Moi's government to reduce the wastage in his government by slashing the number of ministries. Moi did exactly that; reducing the ministries but allocating two ministers for each ministry. In other words, nothing changed. The conditions in other States were regrettably worrying. Some countries were reported to have had presidents who were richer than the countries they led.

The dependency paradigm had a moment of overlap when the NGOs sought a response model. By around 1995, many developing countries had increased democratic space albeit the Strong State model was at its peak. Kenya had just held its multiparty elections in 1992 and the incumbent, Daniel Moi had won. Zambia had held its elections and the incumbent; Kenneth Kaunda had lost to Fredrick Chiluba. Development partners were willing to finance development projects through Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), Community Based Organizations (CBOs), and church organizations. Activists in the NGO world joined intellectuals to become the alternative voice. People got together and started providing themselves with some of the services that the government had neglected. NGOs were considered transparent, accountable and alive to the problems that faced the community. We can therefore credit NGOs for the consideration of the grassroots perception to development issues. The flip side is that when it was realized that monies were being channeled through NGOs, many people preferred that route and the result has been termed *NGOnization* of the countries (Mamdani, 2011). *NGOnization* meant that NGOs had become cash cows for activists at the expense of the plight of the people (Shivji, 2006).

The reality of NGOs requires a further probe over and above the works that immediately come to mind (Shivji, 2006; Mamdani, 2010) so that their role in defeating development is exposed. We need to note the study by Ndati (2012) highlights the possibility of increased prevalence rates given that students in high schools prefer to have unprotected sex. The general consensus among authors is that whereas the modernization theory and its immediate successor had a lot of negative effects, the immediate solution under the response model of NGOs has not helped a lot. In Kenya, for instance, there is no consensus on development communication especially in how NGOs operate. Like the NGOs serving different interests on the HIV/AIDS scourge, Children homes seem to be the other cash cow for activists. Activists use NGOs to seek rent at the expense of the very reason they were established. In conclusion, the dependency paradigm— whether in the name of Strong State model or response or *NGOnization* model — had its shortcomings exceed its virtues leading to the collapse of the paradigm. Since then, the world has taken a rather multidisciplinary — even multimedia approach.

The multiplicity paradigm seeks to pick the positives in the preceding models and remain cognizant of the negative impeding ideas. It is therefore the 'best of the two possible worlds' (Servaes, 1999). Servaes (2008) underscores the fact that no one approach can suffice development ideals. There exists a legion of ways to expound that development is not unidirectional as had earlier been conceptualized. A lot of premium is placed on the peaceful co-existence with the environment and White (2008) does a splendid job in exposing such harmony when he addresses ten major lines of research on participatory communication in Africa. The efforts by UNESCO under the influence of the Non-Aligned Movement to democratize communication can find its reference in the McBride Committee Report of 1980. Multiplicity paradigm therefore incorporates dialogic communication, interpersonal communication, mass media, films, drama, meetings and discussion groups among many other reasons. The health sector for instance has adopted different models such as public relations and advocacy; constituency relations; and community mobilization among other models (Schiaivo, 2007). Recent focus on media and development (Wekesa & Tsuma, 2014) needs to be encouraged.

3. Debates on Approaches to Development Communication

As the theoretical underpinnings of development developed, approaches to communication to development also evolved. The modernization paradigm had focused on communication effects; Diffusion of Innovations; and the place of mass media in development.

Communication approaches to development perhaps begins with Harold Lasswell who in the 1948 made public his findings of the American presidential elections campaigns and established the power of opinion leaders contrary to popular view that media influenced opinion. The two step flow entailed a process from the sender to the receiver in what Lasswell termed: “Who says what through which channel to whom with what effect?” The Lasswell model was unidirectional and laid emphasis on effects, a kind of hypodermic expectations was the target of any communication model. In this view one would trace the debates on the role of media in development.

As an antithesis to the growing debate on media influence, Servaes (1999:23) recaps this contention thus: “mass communication is less likely than personal influence to have a direct effect on social behavior.” Building on the findings of Lasswell, Rogers (1962) developed the Diffusions of innovation approach. Underlying this approach was the fact that personal communication was important in decisions that required the adoption of innovations. Diffusion of Innovations (DOI) advanced the view that every technology had to be diffused to the masses within a graded appropriation that starts with innovators, to early adopters, early majority, late majority and laggards.

To properly wrap up the diffusion, Rogers saw a source disseminating messages or innovations (ideas, services or products) through the mass media over a long period of time to a given audience. Innovations require a level of awareness and creation of interest such as through persuasion.

The underlying principles for DOI were that the idea is good and it is likely to lead to development (Narula, 2006). The failures of the DOI like the paradigm the model operated in were the self-righteous nature as well as the utter disregard of the traditional *weltanschauung* within which the people in the South countries lived in.

We need to note that the diffusion of innovation was a critical component of the modernization paradigm. Indeed the manifestation of the approach was seen in the extension services and transfer of technology. Like the mother approach, DOI failed because the approach was rather centrifugal- the bearers of the innovations thought themselves experts who had come to salvage the savage and bring them to development level. In many parts of the Third World countries, it was evident that the seed variety that was rejected, in favor of an agriculturally modified one, performed extremely well in comparison. One can therefore extrapolate the argument against modernization paradigm to its daughter approach.

The belief that technology from the West was the best crumbled as time lapsed. Servaes (1999) presents an interesting addition to the debate on communication approaches for development. He adds psychological, institutional and technological explanations to the quest for development to which we would ascribe to modes applicable to the different approaches to communication. The Lerner’s concept of empathy helps implementers as they seek to change predispositions that individuals have over someone or something. Psychological foundations of humanity are critical when they have to be convinced of new perspectives. Technological determinism – thinking in the McLuhan fashion – orders our perspectives as to whether technology is good, bad or a necessary evil.

Hot in pursuit of the debate on the place of media, led Wilbur Schramm to engage in a search for greater understanding of the place of mass communication. Schramm (1964) resolved that personal communication should be complementary to the function of the media. Schramm’s furthered Lasswell’s communication model. Like Lasswell, Schramm conceptualized media as a tool in the hands of modernization apologists. Distinctively, Singhal (1987:19) points at Schramm as pertinent in the humble beginnings of development communication when he argues that “under Schramm the field of communication inquiry went international to the Third World countries in Asia, Africa, Middle East, and Latin America” (Singhal, 1987:19). We can see the link of media with development efforts of a country. The question to ponder about is whether media necessarily mean the mass communication media.

This internationalization of Schramm led to the recognition that mass media had a role to play in national development. Schramm’s observation came at the time, in 1950s, when most Third World countries were struggling with the problems of national development and thus the belief that mass media could speed up the process. The acceptance of the modernization imperative meant razing down the traditional structure (call it cultural elements) residues in the citizenry of the Third World. Metaphysically, the modernization model sprouts from the belief that America was culturally superior. Further, the modernization rhetoric was hinged in the belief that nothing good can come from outside America. The failure of overemphasis of mass media has been replicated in many studies. In a rather sarcastic even cynical portrayal of the myopic view of mass media, sociologist Stanislav Andreski uses the expansion of media technology as a case in point when he writes:

“In a number of African cities we can see television masts towering above expanses of insalubrious shacks where there may be no running water (or at best one tap for hundreds of inhabitants), where people defecate and dump refuse into open ditches which may not drain at all and which permanently exude all-pervading nauseating smells. The decision to spend money on television rather than sanitation well illustrates the scale of priorities adopted by the rulers of Africa.” (Andreski, 1968:85)

The failure to resonate with the traditional basis of society in the Third World countries perhaps contributed to the many false starts in the area of development. The disregard to the *oramedia* (Oguboaja, 1986) as communication models in Africa for instance may have meant that the process of communication was on developmental issues was in itself a barrier. The exposé undertaken by White (2008) helps express the failures of the modernization-dependency paradigms. Prof. White, for instance, unearths among other essentials the notion of *Sankofa* which underscore the fact that there are African solutions to African problems. In the same manner the African he encouraged to uphold indigenous communication which should be the springboard for passing the message of development to the African people. White’s findings were critical in that he underlines the dearth of extension model of development communication in Africa. In this study therefore, the top–bottom dialogue (centrifugal) was rebuffed while the centripetal model (bottom up) was given an endorsement.

Modernization was a centrifugal model. Centripetal model encourages communalization where the facilitator is also a student and the participants leave the training session having been enriched but also having enriched the facilitator. The need for the participatory model was the logical replacement of the centrifugal approach. In many Third World countries there was need to take a centripetal approach to development issues. In the debate on participatory approach was a win-win situation such that the technical aspects of development merge with the *Sankofa* (local communication tools) and culture. Secondly, the role of the media was put to question especially as regards the role of media in organizing the people for development as was the case of Radio Santa Maria or the local television in Catalonia (Rodriguez, 2011).

The critical question during the participatory model era was how people organize themselves. In many cases, some of which are highlighted by Rodriguez (2001) show a level of participation that carry little rebellions among grassroots people who sought to shift focus from mere development to the vigor of participatory communication in a postmodernist world. Rodriguez also shows through the lives of many that media should choose participants and guide participation of the public. The running of Community Radio Stations demands that they roll out with those with background in Community Development; Discussion forum; Local music; and News are customized for the people. Genuine participation and initiative of the people are hallmarks of the community and should not be ignored at any developmental stage. These initiatives of the people have to be responded to otherwise the people will organize themselves. Any development agenda has to protect at all cost the soul of the people which is community (the unity of people). The path charted above affected development as well as health communication programs.

4. Perspectives for Development and Communication in Kenya

Development communication provides many pointers for Kenya as the country strives to be a newly industrialized middle–income country in a globally competitive world by 2030. Several attempts have been made to put Kenya on the path of recovery. National planning for development in Kenya has taken many routes and attempts. This paper focuses on the development plans that had for a long time been characteristic of government. In spite of the hope placed on technocrats (Owakah & Aswani, 2009), their practice in democratic formation has been wanting. Kenya past experience serves to explicate this point. At independence, Kenya had rightly so conceived of the problems in the republic as ignorance, diseases and poverty. The first development plan (GOK, 1964) focused on rapid growth to reduce poverty and unemployment. The economic growth was 6.6%. The period saw tremendous increase in enrolment in the education sector (Rono, 2002).

The second development plan 1970-1974 (GOK 1970) focused on labor intensive production technology and promotion of small scale rural industries and craft. The much hyped *rudimashambanitu jenge Kenya* (loosely translated ‘go back to the land policy to develop the rural areas’) served as the basis of the second development plan.

The period 1974-1978 marked the third phase of national planning in Kenya (GOK 1974). In taking stock of what was transpiring, the government recognized that there was a significant population growth, unemployment and income disparities.

Whereas the plan prepared the country to handle issues of the equity, the oil crisis thwarted the country's plans. As a safe gap measure, the government, in 1975, came up with a Sessional Paper number 4 on Economic Prospects and Policies which emphasized labor intensive agricultural production and basic rural infrastructure. The fourth development plan 1979-1983 (GOK, 1979) sought to ensure that the basic needs such as food, education, healthcare and housing. This plan was in response to the World Empowerment Conference in June 1976 — a conference that paid emphasis to the provision of basic needs in Third World Countries.

The decade 1984-1993 saw two development plans crafted; one for 1984-1988 and another for the period 1989-1993. 1979-1993 was an era of liberalization in the economic sector and it was marked by the Bretton Woods led Structural Adjustment Programs (SAPs). A number of scholars have written on the effects of SAPs, we find the exposé by Rono (2002) academically gratifying. With the effects of SAPs becoming manifest, Kenya's 1997-2001 development plan was cognizant of the collapse of the Cold War and resultant political tide of multiparty politics. The plan focused on private sector investment particularly in the line of increasing industrial productivity as Kenya geared for industrialization in the year 2020.

Year 2002 was significant to Kenya in a number of ways. Since the onset of multiparty politics, the ruling party Kenya Africa National Union (KANU) was trounced by National Rainbow Coalition (NARC). The government led by NARC embarked on a serious economic recovery strategy. The Economic Recovery Strategy for Wealth and Employment Creation (ERSWEC) 2003- 2007 (GOK, 2003) was a product of a conscious consideration for revamping the economy and sought to support the development plan 2002-2008 (GOK, 2002). The ERSWEC aimed at reducing national poverty level; ensuring regional, gender and socio-economic inequalities; and advanced increased in social services within devolved units. One such unit is the Constituency Development Fund (CDF); Constituency Bursary Fund; and the Local Authority Transfer Fund. Critical to this planning period was the many public sector reforms that were to be undertaken by the Government. Free Primary School Education (FPE) is the most celebrated product of this development plan. The ERSWEC was the precursor of the latest development blueprint popularized as Vision 2030. In this plan, Kenya envisions itself as a middle income nation which offers its citizenry quality life yet remains globally competitive and prosperous nation (GOK, 2007). Vision 2030 stands on three pillars: Social; political; and political pillars which are supposed to guide the current path of Kenya toward development.

The path marked above for Kenya's development has swung within the approaches and theoretical perspectives. During the modernization era, Kenya was central to the idea to modernize the Third World countries. Of the many of the studies that Schramm conducted on mass media and their place in modernization, Kenya was one of the sites he visited (Singhal, 1987). It may be true therefore that Kenya appropriated both the positive and negative packages that accrued from the modernization paradigm. The post-independence Kenya suffered and Kenyans still suffer from the effects of ineptitude rule. Corruption scandals have tarnished each successive government. Many policies on development, just as other policies, were given a political angle and had a common denominator – that they were roadside declarations to woo political nemesis. The utter disregard of the rights and creativity of Kenyans characterized its dependency paradigm model. The notoriety of the provincial administration as caretakers of the strongman in the Strong State model of dependency has had untold suffering.

Two cases suffice for illustration: the district focus for rural development (DFRD) and the education radio programs. Although noble programs, the DFRD (which is the precursor of the constituency development fund (CDF) and Local Authority Fund (LATF) and now devolution) was envisaged as a participatory model where the people would choose projects that would be given priority in the development agenda.

Interesting, the silent discourse of the citizenry was evident when politicians and civil servants (and during the KANU era there was no much difference between party officials and government officials) hijacked the ideas of the people and the District Development Committee were competition forums for partisan interests. This explains why and how the programs died.

The radio programs were the in thing during the 1980s. Students would be gathered to listen to prepared course content to which they would respond to the concerns of the talk and their teachers would respond to them. The programs targeted key educational sectors that the country hoped would improve their concerns. To this point, that was a noble project. At the launch of the program was ready to run, neither the teachers nor their students had their concerns factored in the preparations of the programs. As a result, the radio educational programs were the height of centrifugal policy undertakings.

Pradip's (2008) discusses possible ways to explain poverty that may resonate with the situation in Kenya. For the better part, poverty has been explained in terms of a mindset where the laziness is given as a reasonable clarification for poverty. The second possible justification for poverty levels is the lack of resources; lack of access and human rights regard could compound the many reasons that led to the *NGOnization* of Kenya.

Readings on health and development communication serve to stir Kenya's development agenda in multiple ways. For the purpose of this paper, we choose to discuss three: Education; Health; and Devolution. There is need to revamp the delivery of education content in Kenya. The methodology with its roots in the colonial system serves very little to deconstruct the apathetic situations that so much demean development. The student in Kenya ought to have their creativity nurtured. Under development in Kenya has been explained in terms of money staying at the headquarters.

The new constitutional dispensation in 2010 saw a creation of 47 Counties (GOK, 2010) a move that was hailed by friend and foe. Devolution therefore was construed as the solution to development. The failure to embrace the ideals of development communication could be a reason why counties are not performing as would be expected. Development communication perspectives have to focus on the devolution institutions in Kenya least the country will lose its golden moment to develop.

The health sector in Kenya has had enough of its challenges. Significantly, the health sector has experienced a significant number of NGOs and CBOs in the country. Kenya has a place to meet the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and specifically where the goals touch on health. Such goals include: eradicate extreme poverty and hunger; to achieve universal primary education; to reduce child mortality; improve maternal health; combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases; and ensure environmental sustainability. So what happens to these goals when they get a new twist in 2015 to Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)? The tripartite agenda for Kenya at independence was to fight diseases, ignorance and poverty. An audit of the Kenya situation is evident that sporadic at times serendipitous projects have been advanced to solve these three problems. It is imperative that a multiplicity approach is adopted so that these failures can get out of the development route. Significantly the coverage of health issues in mass media in Africa and by extension in Kenya is wanting. The findings by Torwel & Rodney (2010) and those of Batta (2013) paint a gloomy picture of the continent. Media in Kenya should take keen interest in health issues and possible give such issues the prominence given to politics.

5. Concluding Remarks

The vast material on development communication seems to suggest an Aristotelian mean and the moderation principle. The multiplicity approach to development issues seems to be the 'best of the two possible worlds'. Adopting developmental approaches means that the people to whom the programs would benefit from the development have to be incorporated in the design and implementation the development programs. The ultimate end of development is the citizenry of the country and this truth has to sink deep among policy makers and implementers. Scholarship also points to the fact that the participant and the trainers are both learners and the forums for development should not have ivory tower experts who know everything.

They should instead tap from the wealth of experiences of the people and use their *Sankofa* (their local forms of communication and community rituals) such as storytelling, singing, social drama and proverbs as they both seek to develop. Finally, the State has a central role in development. The Weberian perspective is that States are strong and capable to enforce development. The Weberian school was in response to the Marxist school of thought that conceptualized the State as weak always fighting for the interest of the dominant class only to suppress the poor. Kenya as State has a role in development has in that the government ought to allocate resources and prepare budgets. These processes have to trickle down to the counties where county head can incorporate the services of ward administrators to solicit views of citizens in planning and budgeting for development. Similarly the decisions taken by the country on development have to be communicated to the citizens.

6. References

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