

Essay on role of media in our life

[Sociology](#), [Population](#)



Part One

Surveys in both developed and developing nations have consistently shown that the media is the main, nay the most trusted, source of information for an overwhelming majority of the world's population. In this regard alone, it is justified to argue that the media has not faltered in its traditional roles of informing, educating and entertaining – for a keen mind will discern that the three roles are inextricably linked to dissemination of information. The argument posed in the preceding sentence is especially true of Radido Media Group (RGM). Owned by the revered Neko Group of Companies (NGC), it was founded in the year 1933 by the highly respected electrical engineer, businessman and philanthropist Jachien Mjinga. For far too long, this information has been virtually unavailable to the public. This has been so not so much because the media has been secretive but more so because the public, for some curious reasons, is never very interested in who owns media houses – especially highly professional and objective ones.

Yet, recent developments in the country forces us to convey this information, albeit subtly. How this is going to affect our approval ratings is something I leave for others to determine. What is certain is that we influence the country's mind thus culture and for this reason can escape this unhurt. One need not be reminded of how the media has aided the evolution of a global super-community in the last half of this century.

We have moved from Babel and are slowly adopting English as mankind's 'mother tongue'. Our dressing is becoming uniform. Our tolerance of other cultures and religious practices is growing by the day as our education

harmonises our thinking. These the media has furthered considerably. And that's not all. The media has acted as a voice of the voiceless, castigating authoritarianism and chiding ineffectual leadership. The media has exposed scandals in governments and laid bare the scum of the universe. These we have done exceptionally well especially with the advent of the online world. True, the online world – like our other inventions – comes with its attendant risks. The risk of libel is ever higher as blogs spawn. But, ultimately, the overriding factor is that the people have a right to information and a right to express themselves and the online community has been immensely successful in this regard. Of course certain restrictions have had to put in place to safeguard individual and corporate rights to privacy and dignity. For we cannot operate in a world where respect for other people's rights is downtrodden.

It can thus be argued that, in comparison to such as other traditional methods of delivering information as talks, books and public lectures, the media through such modes as television, radio, newspapers and the internet have been immensely successful in the responsibilities already enumerated. As already intimated, these modern media delivery methods come with a slew of attendant risks and limitations; core among them the risk of libel. Then there is the issue of inaccessibility by large sections of the world population due to such factors as poverty.

However, progress in technology over the last century has seen to it that we a multiplicity of choices and that, at least, even the remotest part of the globe has access to some form of media, notably radio. The media is trusted and as such must protect its integrity and that of the people.

Having said all that, I must say that the integrity of RGM is at stake and we can only do worse by concealing the truth on who owns us. In this regard, let the report on the refrigerator issue clearly state the owners of the electronics manufacturer and also state the other companies owned, including RMG. We need not spoon-feed since the people can analyse for themselves. That's the safest course.

Society evolves, and so does culture. Mankind's recorded history is replete with information that we have always used entertainment as a means of disseminating information thus culture. Cultural dances and folk-lores carried in them loads of information about a community's past and aspirations. Nothing has changed much today but for the fact that our own science and imagination has seen to it that the reach and influence of entertainment as a medium conveying information about culture is even wider. Movies, television and electronic games have now replaced folk-lores, songs and dances as means of communicating information.

Recent trends in Hollywood now influence world thinking. The youth ape hip-hop and its variants as news channels influence, nay softens, the older generation's hitherto rigid views of other cultures and religions. The young adore Dalai Lama, Nelson Mandela and Buddhism as the old learn the finer virtues that are in the teachings of Christianity, Islam and Zoroastrianism. Sports unite us as we learn about the Mexican wave and the sombrero. Movies being released into the market today are designed to venerate the supreme culture of our time; a culture of respect for scientific facts and a belief on the need for acquisition of knowledge. Iron Man and Wanted are just of the movies made to that specification. Comedies are following the

route too and the success of The Big Bang Theory sitcom is a manifestation of the same.

The young are especially influenced by more than one means. Electronic games have become a favourite, from the suburbs of New York to the ghettos of Kingston, Jamaica. The young play Need for Speed, FIFA 2007 and the many versions PlaySytation. We have evolved into a world where football and racing have become universal – if the popularity of these electronic is an indicator.

Of course, there are those who argue against movies and electronic games arguing that they promote violent aggressiveness. I may give them that. But not so easily. I certainly agree that many youth have lost the sense of purpose by becoming too obsessed with playing games. Some no longer interact socially, no longer exercise and have lost track of mankind's main – if only – objective of ridding the world of suffering. Some have lost sense of the need to acquire knowledge since electronic games have become an end in themselves. Let me reiterate that I give them that. But I certainly disagree with them on the asserting that electronic games are inherently bad, for that is not correct. Moving this world forward will need tolerance. Electronic games by creating a uniform area of interest have achieved that more than most religious teachings would. Moreover, some of these electronic games are educative. Let me also add that the argument that competition and war based electronic games promote violence is lopsided and subjective. There is no scientific basis for it. In fact, the truth may be reverse. For it were true, then those countries with the highest use of video games would be the most violent. They are not.

Reference

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