

Contribution 1:

Dear Bill Ryerson,

Thank you for your series of commentaries on the Youth and Media Discussions in the Week 3 program of which you have excelled in your responses to reactions and questions. Also, all the participants need commendations, especially Miguel Sabido who after performing well with his TV Shows have also got time to lend his views to make this program very successful.

I also share the idea that, men in the area of behavioral change is high because men are able to make their voices and intentions felt and heard in public while women reserve their comments, though they might know how to develop concepts and give good answers to issues for conceptualization.

This is coming from the background that in the olden days in some parts of Africa, especially Ghana, cultures were not permitting women to speak in public forums and even in family gatherings. If a woman has a concern, she has to make her voice heard through the husband or a senior male person in the family setting. Thanks to the Beijing Conference. Life is changing gradually in society and gingering the spirit of women and I believe there is more room for improvement. This might be the cause for more men listening to the radio in Ethiopia than women.

I again recommend PMC for looking at the country's constitution, laws and policy statements in addressing population issues. Cultures and laws differ from country to country. In my opinion, I think that the creative team should determine what behaviours should be considered positive and what behaviours should be considered negative because of the background of various cultural norms and practices.

Also, I think that the listeners of radio and readers of the various media tools should be made to determine how the media power should be used with regard to setting sexual and reproductive health norms and issues.

Mr. Ryerson, using the radio as an intervention to mitigate or reduce social issues such as health and education, I believe that it is very strong and the impacts will be very high, if a critical research is done on the existing problem and a vivid information is given as a clue to solving the problem. I also believe that program output in terms of cost will be highly reduced. For all you know people might feel the problem but how to get answers to these problems will be another thing. So if people hear on air that the antidotes that they are looking for are been aired on radio in their own local languages, the listeners will sell the information to other relatives/friends and colleagues making the gaps of unlistening group very limited and will enhance positive behavioural changes.

Thank you for the over all comments and the resources given me on the UNFPA website about the strategy of long-running serialized dramas. I hope to study and use in our background to ensure some form of changes in behaviours though not on radio but on educative platforms.

Sorry also for keeping long in responding. I had been in our project village where we do not have access to the internet. Have a good working week. Good afternoon.

Yours faithfully,
Asamoah Owusu-Akyaw

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Contribution 2:

Dear all,

I'd like again to congratulate you upon the really interesting discussion we are having. As a participant from Bulgaria and student of medicine in the capital Sofia, I'd like to give my input on this week's questions:

What is the difference between theater and educational theater or theater in education? The biggest difference is the intended effect they have upon the audience. The real theatre conveys some idea, but an idea different for every play and for every author. It may also influence in some way the views of the audience and at some extent modify their behaviours, but the latter are not exactly meant and happen accidentally. On the other hand educational theatre has for objective the behavioral change or it is in fact a classic type of BCC. The aim is to influence the preventional habits in a young audience, a task difficult by itself, but also rewarding in the long-term (less HIV-infected and STIs)

* How can peer theater deliver compelling messages to young people and still be seen as entertainment?

The answer lies in the perception of the audience for "entertainment". Any theatre or other type of entertainment should meet the expectations and the requirements of its audience. For example, what is funny in the USA, is not obligatory such in other countries (I have in mind that many Bulgarians find American popular shows silly and boring).

So how to make educational theatre entertaining? First of all, we have to examine the audience, find out what is nice for them, and then combine it with the idea we are conveying. Also monitoring and evaluation techniques should be included - what is entertaining at some stage, may cease to be so later on.

* Can live theater influence and/or change knowledge, attitudes and behavior?

Again it depends on the specific perception by the audience. A good live theatre may have such influence, but in my humble opinion BCC is hard to attain so it won't happen accidentally in live theatre. In brief, yes theatre may have a deeper influence on its audience but behind that effect lies enormous work by the creators, actors and so on.

Yours,

Kami

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Contribution 3:

Hellow Friends,

*To my understanding the difference between Theatre and Theatre in Education (Educational Theatre) is basically the approach they are taking. Theatre in normal circumstances involves performance per se. Educational Theatre in the other part has the element of involving the audience. So the earlier aims at entertaining and passing the message while the later intends to communicate not to inform. In the course of communication, Educational Theatre encouraging dialogue which provides room for the audience to learn more from the artistes and vice-versa. At this point, the process allows either parties to learn new knowledge, skills and experiences.

*Peer theatre is able to concurrently deliver compelling messages as well as entertain young people because it allows interaction without boundaries and with minimum fear due to the nature of the participating group.

*Live can do these, especially when it is in participatory nature. The reason behind this reason is the fact that participatory theatre is a two way communication which encourages the audience to become part of the process. This is also true because it normally originate from the community itself. A good live theatre is the one developed as the result of a research conducted in a community and the performance done as a feedback as well as a forum to bring change and come up with solutions for arising issues and problems.

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