

**INFORMAL MODES OF COMMUNICATING DEVELOPMENT
INFORMATION TO THE GRASS ROOT COMMUNITY IN UGANDA: A
CASE STUDY OF MAKINDYE DIVISION, KAMPALA DISTRICT**

BY

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ABSTRACT

The study examined informal modes of communicating development information to the grass roots communities in Uganda. The case study Makindye Division in Kampala District. The objectives of the study were to: establish the informal modes of communication used in the Division; find out the advantages of informal modes over formal modes of communication among the grass roots communities; establish barriers to informal modes of communication; and recommend how best the informal communication modes could be used to mobilize grass root communities.

Major findings of the study revealed that the majority of the grass roots people were illiterate, poor and in poor state of health; both formal and informal modes of communication existed in Makindye Division; although the formal modes were recognized their effectiveness had little or no impact on communities mainly due to illiteracy and poverty. Furthermore, the majority view was that information needs among the grass root communities concerned poverty alleviation, health, education and unemployment; that almost all the people at the grass root acknowledged that it was due to lack of information that they remained slaves of poverty, ignorance and disease.

Major conclusions of the study revealed that the possible reason for the failure of formal media (radio, TV and Newspapers) was because they served only a small section of the elite who might not necessarily be in the mainstream production activities. Consequently, the grass roots communities continued lacking basic information, which was the catalyst for development. In addition, failure of the formal media at the grass roots level was due to its undemocratic structures, which operated in an extremely centralized fashion with a sharp concentration on power, resources and services to the rich elites. The communication system neglected the grass roots communities by only transmitting the values and ideologies of the ruling elites.

The study recommended: the strengthening of community development centers, where informal modes of communication could be encouraged to make people well informed; identification of grass roots community information needs carefully matching the proposed system (informal modes) to the socio-cultural realities of these communities; communication technologies needed to be decentralized to the grass roots communities to give both these communities access to information

produced, and also enhance their development. Lastly, theatre practitioners should be helped to perform plays that carry messages bearing such themes as nutrition, literacy, health and agriculture in grass roots communities.