



Conceptualizing the role of Social Marketing in Communication for Development : For the convergence of approaches and methods

M. Velmuradova

► To cite this version:

M. Velmuradova. Conceptualizing the role of Social Marketing in Communication for Development : For the convergence of approaches and methods. 2013. hal-01582277

HAL Id: hal-01582277

<https://hal.science/hal-01582277>

Preprint submitted on 7 Sep 2017

HAL is a multi-disciplinary open access archive for the deposit and dissemination of scientific research documents, whether they are published or not. The documents may come from teaching and research institutions in France or abroad, or from public or private research centers.

L'archive ouverte pluridisciplinaire **HAL**, est destinée au dépôt et à la diffusion de documents scientifiques de niveau recherche, publiés ou non, émanant des établissements d'enseignement et de recherche français ou étrangers, des laboratoires publics ou privés.

**Conceptualizing the role of *Social Marketing* in *Communication for Development*:
For the convergence of approaches and methods.**

Maya Velmuradova, IRSIC – Aix-Marseille Université

Keywords: Social Marketing; Communication for development ; modernization paradigm ; alternative paradigm ; convergent communication ; theoretical analysis

Extended abstract:

The idea to utilise the Communication explicitly for achieving the Development goals and objectives emerged in the same time as the idea of the Development Support itself, early after the Second World War in USA (Rogers & Hart, 2002). The researches on Propaganda, Mass Medias and their influence on Public Opinion highlighted the potential ability of Communication to change the social Behaviour. It got spread within the Development field, aiming to solve the post-war reconstruction problems nationally and internationally (Melkote, 2002). At that time, the evolutionary theories were used to define the only way of Development. The anthropological notion of cultural Diffusion served to prescribe the mode of communicating the technical progress advancements to the rural communities, in a vertical “Centre - Periphery” manner. The *Dominant Diffusionist paradigm* was born (Lerner, 1958; Schamm, 1964; Rogers, 1962, 1976).

However, the critical voices began to rise up from late 60's, pointing out the numerous defaults in this linear unilateral conception of Development Communication and in its ethical background. Under the influence of neo-Marxist critical school, Dependency theories and the critical pedagogy, the communication researchers started to search for

new ways of achieving the Development goals through Communication. Refusing to be the passive absorbers of the ideas that are not necessarily adapted to the local context and value-neutral, they opted for an *Alternative paradigm* for Development Communication (Beltran, 1976, 1980; Diaz Bordenave, 1976; Quербal, 1973). Within this paradigm, the conscious of structural factors and self-determining local communities are “empowered” and capable to actively participate in a dialogical elaboration of development policies, becoming a start-point of the information flows. The prescribed modes of communication in this case are the “Periphery – Centre” and the “Periphery – Periphery” (Freire, 1970; Beltran, 1980; Huesca, 2002; Dagron & Tufte, 2006).

These ideas were picked up by the mainstream Development Communication research and the Social Marketing has been integrated into the Development Communication agenda (Melkote, 2002). Constrained by the public administration sector reforming, the policy makers and the communicators have agreed to listen to the voice of the final users, aiming at improving the Development support programs efficacy. Nowadays, the audience studies are done prior to the program realisation, and the *Social Marketing* strategies and techniques are used to convince the users about the service benefits. The relationships between the Marketing and Development are theorised by the Social Marketing, the MacroMarketing & the Communication researchers (Drucker, 1958; Kotler & Zaltman, 1971; Dholakia & Sherry, 1987; McKee, 1988; McKee & al. (eds), 2000; Dholakia & Dholakia, 2001; Andreasen, 1997, 2004; Steeves, 2002; Singh, 2002; Melkote, 2002; Cabanero-Verzosa & Mitchel, 2003; Andreasen & Herzberg, 2005; Talukdar & al, 2005; Roman, 2005; Kotler & al., 2006).

However, the “Marketing” term is not as popular as it seems within the Development sector (McKee, 1988, 2000). Its techniques may be seen as “manipulative”, while the

commercialisation of the public interest goods in a “business-like” manner may appear dangerous. On the other hand, the users’ *participation* in audience studies is considered as not sufficient by the Alternative paradigm partisans. It is seen as a “*mean*” to achieve the Development goals imposed by the external agents. The self-determined Development is proclaimed, where the local community participation in the “goals setting” would be an “*end*” by itself (Huesca, 2002; Dagron & Tufte, 2006).

What is the role of Social Marketing in Communication for Development: is it a “Good” or an “Evil”? Are the two above paradigms really incompatible? The present theoretical essay provides complementary arguments in favour of the Convergent Communication for Development (Singh, 2002; Wilkins, 2008), integrating both the “diffusion” persuasive methods and the “participative” ones. The Social Marketing for Development could play a major role in this integrative framework. Indeed, it provides the theoretical bases for the discussion and the conceptualisation of the “objects of change” (“upstream” and “downstream” factors), as well as for the “communication modes” (“push” and “pull” methods) (cf. table 1 here under).

We will first present a short overview of the Development Communication paradigms and approaches, their advantages and critics. Then, we will propose a critical analysis of the postulates that “oppose” the Persuasive Communication / Social Marketing for Development on one side and the Participative Communication on the other side. On the basis of this critical analysis, we will provide our theoretical support for the convergence of these two approaches within one integrative multi-methodological and inter-disciplinary framework (table 1).

Table1. “Push” or “Pull”? Convergence of Development Communication approaches

		Mode of communication		
O b j e c t o f C h a n g e		Diffusion «Top-down», horizontal « PUSH »	Participative «Bottom-up» « PULL»	« Convergent » (all modes)
	Individual / social Behavior (“downstream”)	(1) Change of individual & social behavior via persuasion approaches (Diffusion, Entertainment, Social Marketing)	(3) Change of individuals via participation approaches (Dialogical pedagogy (P.Freire)	(1 & 3) Individual / social behavior Change, by all modes of communication, in network
	Structural / institutional factors (« upstream»)	(2) Change of structural inequalities, critical school (Empowerment, UNESCO & al; Media advocacy; ‘upstream’ Social Marketing)	(4) Structural / institutional Change, initiated by local community (Social Mobilization; Media Advocacy; Social Movements)	(2 & 4) Structural / institutional factors Change, by all modes of communication, in network

Andreasen, A. (2004). *Social Marketing and Social Change* (presentation). Washington DC: Georgetown University;

Andreasen, A. R., & Herzberg, B. (2005). “Social Marketing Applied to Economic Reforms”. *Social Marketing Quarterly*, 11(2), 3-17.

Beltran, L. R. (1980). “A Farewell to Aristotle: Horizontal Communication”. *Communication*, 5, 5-41.

Beltrán, L.R. (1976) “Alien premises, objects, and methods in Latin American communication research”. In E. M. Rogers (Ed.) *Communication and development: Critical perspectives* (pp. 15-42). Beverly Hills: Sage.

Cabanero-Verzosa, C. & Mitchel, P. (2003). *Communicating Economic Reform* (Working paper). Washington DC : World Bank.

Dholakia, N., & Sherry Jr., J. F. (1987). “Marketing and Development: A Resynthesis of Knowledge”. *Research in Marketing*, 9, 119-144.

Dholakia, R., & Dholakia, N. (2001). “Social Marketing and Development”. In Bloom, P. & Gundlack, G. (Eds.), *Handbook on Marketing and Society*. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE.

Díaz Bordenave, J.D. (1976). “Communication of agricultural innovations in Latin America: The need for new models”. In E.M. Rogers (Ed.), *Communication and*

Development: Critical Perspectives (pp. 43-62). Beverley Hills, CA: Sage.

Drucker, P. F. (1958). "Marketing and Economic Development". *Journal of Marketing*, 22(3), 252- 259.

Freire, P. (1997 [1970]). *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. New York: Continuum.

Gumucio-Dagron, A., & Tufte, T. (Eds.). (2006). *Communication for social change anthology: Historical and contemporary readings*. New Jersey: CFSCC.

Huesca, R. (2002) "Participatory Approaches to Communication and Development". In Gudykunst, W. B. & Mody, B. (Eds.) *Handbook of International and Intercultural Communication*. Thousand Oaks: Sage.

Kotler, P., & Zaltman, G. (1971). "Social Marketing: An Approach to Planned Social Change". *Journal of Marketing*, 35(3)

Kotler, P., Roberto, N., & Leisner, T. (2006). "Alleviating Poverty: A Macro/micro Marketing Perspective". *Journal of Macromarketing*, 26(2), 233-239.

Lerner, D. (1958). *The passing of traditional society: Modernizing the Middle East*. Glencoe, IL : Free Press.

McKee, N. (1988). *Social marketing in international development: a critical review*. (MSc). Florida: College of Communication, The Florida State University.

McKee, N., Manoncourt, E., Yoon, C. S., & Al. (Eds.). (2000). *Involving People, Evolving Behaviour*. Southbound and UNICEF.

Melkote, S. (2002). "Theories of development communication". In W. Gudykunst and B. Mody (Eds.), *Handbook of International and Intercultural Communication*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

Quebral, N. C. (1973). "What Do We Mean by 'Development Communication'". *International Development Review*, 15(2), 25-28.

Rogers, E. M. (1976). "Communication and Development: the passing of dominant paradigm". *Communication Research*, 3(2), 213-240.

Rogers, E.; Hart, W. (2002) "The Histories of Intercultural, International and Development Communication". In Gudykunst, W. B. & Mody, B. (Eds.) *Handbook of International and Intercultural Communication*. Thousand Oaks: Sage.

Roman, R. (2005). "The Place of Theory in Development Communication: Retrospect and Prospects". *Communication Yearbook*, 29, 311-330.

Schramm, W. (1964) *Mass media and national development*. Stanford: Stanford University Press/UNESCO

Singh, J. (2002) "Communication Technology and Development: Instrumental, Institutional, Participatory and Strategic Approaches". In Gudykunst, W. B. & Mody, B. (Eds.) *Handbook of International and Intercultural Communication*. Thousand Oaks: Sage.

Steeves, H. (2002). "Development Communication as Marketing, Collective Resistance and Spiritual Awakening", In Gudykunst, W. B. & Mody, B. (Eds.) *Handbook of*

International and Intercultural Communication. Thousand Oaks: Sage

Talukdar, D., Gulyani, S., & Salmen, L. F. (2005). "Customer Orientation in the Context of Development Projects: Insights From the World Bank". *Journal of Public Policy & Marketing*, 24(1), 100-111.

Wilkins, K. (2008). "Development communication". In W. Donsbach (Ed.), *International Encyclopedia of Communication*. New York: Blackwell. Pp1229-1238