

## **Types and Role of Print Media**

*Presented by Masautso Phiri to the Media Literacy Workshop held in Solwezi on November 19 – 23, 2006*

This is our second visit to Solwezi. We first came here April 26-29, 2004 and a lot has happened since then.

The same people came - Robby Makayi, a veteran journalist as the main resource person, assisted by Masautso Phiri and Daniel Sikazwe then with MISA Zambia.

Then more than 100 participants attended the workshop. They included five chiefs and/or their representatives. There is no community radio station in Solwezi and in North Western province generally.

The chairman of the organising committee welcomed the participants. He said the primary goal of Solwezi Community Media Association (SOCOMA) was to provide a channel for communication to the community. SOCOMA used to publish a newspaper *Solwezi Now* but publication had now been suspended.

## **Types of print Media**

- a) Flyers – these can be occasional or a one-off.
- b) Newsletters – A4 size, can be regularly produced – weekly, fortnightly, monthly etc.
- c) Brochures – a one-off – to commemorate something.
- d) Magazines – regular, can be weekly, monthly, bimonthly, quarterly or yearly.
- e) Tabloid – can be daily, weekly, fortnightly, monthly etc
- f) Standard (American), Broadsheet (British) – daily, weekly, fortnightly, monthly etc.

In Livingstone two new publications have come up – *Livingstone Today*, *Southern Guardian* and another new paper – the *People's Voice*.

In Mazabuka – the *Mazabuka Times* has been revived and it has started publishing.

## **Role of the Print Media**

What is the role of newspapers? Some of your responses may be that of:

- Informing the public
- Educating the public

- Entertaining the public.

But is this true? Do newspapers do this? Let us take Zambian papers – *Times, Mail and Post* – do these newspapers inform, educate and entertain us?

(Gauge the views of the Participants on this issue)

A study done in Australia showed that the print media was not (the study was published in the *International Journal for Quality in Health Care*.

- A good source of community education – especially in areas of safety and quality
- Assist members of the community to participate in addressing issues of safety in health services.

A second study has been published in a book in India regards the foreign relations between India and Pakistan

- Task of educating people on foreign-policy is largely performed by the elite
- English language newspapers role is crucial in making the views and opinions expressed accessible to a wider audience
- Study focuses on the entire Indo-Pak relations' post 1989 based on the content of five English language newspapers each from India and Pakistan.
- Elite in both countries have prioritized bilateral issues and discussed possible solutions on each issue
- Study reveals the parameter of mistrust and apprehensions within which opinions are conceived and articulated

### **EXAMPLE 1**

#### **The role of the print media in informing the community about safety in public hospitals in Victoria, Australia: the case of 'golden staph'**

By Christine F. Walker<sup>1</sup> and Struan W. Jacobs<sup>2</sup>

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**Objective.** In this article the authors explore how the print media contribute to information and education of the community on issues of safety and quality in the health services, since this is an important avenue of such information and education for many members of the community.

**Study design.** The authors undertook a qualitative study of a random sample of articles in the Australian print press between 1996 and 2004 where 'golden staph' was presented as a major issue of risk to the safety of consumers of health services. The content of each article was examined with reference to several criteria including title, the source of the article, and the metaphorical language employed by the journalist.

**Results.** Results show that while the articles are substantially accurate as sources of information on concrete events, they do not serve as sources of education on issues of safety, typically apportioning blame and serving to maintain the status quo.

**Conclusion.** The authors conclude that print media are not a good source of community education in areas of safety and quality and do not assist members of the community to participate in addressing issues of safety in health services.

(Keywords: **antibiotic resistance, community education, consumer participation, 'golden staph', infection control, media, popular press, safety**)

## **EXAMPLE 2**

*Elite Perceptions in Foreign Policy: Role of Print Media in Influencing India-Pakistan Relations, 1989-1999*/Smruti S. Pattanaik. New Delhi, Manohar, 2004, 191 p., \$20 (pbk). ISBN 81-7304-577-1.

Contents: Introduction. 1. Kashmir: a zero-sum game. 2. Alternative mode of solution of the Kashmir issue: an analysis of options. 3. Nuclear standoff: from elitism to populism. 4. Indo-Pak trade: hostage to politics. 5. Indo-Pak bilateral talks: need for a pragmatic approach. 6. Conclusion. Bibliography.

"The task of educating people on foreign-policy issues is largely performed by the elite. Although people in India and Pakistan have a keen interest in the furtherance of bilateral relations, various intricacies of the relations are not known to the masses.

It is the elite who inform the masses regarding various issues and the existing challenges to their resolution. This prepares people to be more amenable to changing circumstances and appreciate solutions that strengthen peace in the region.

In this context the English language newspapers role is crucial in making the views and opinions expressed accessible to a wider audience thereby generating well-informed opinions that act as crucial inputs in foreign policy making.

The present study focuses on the entire gamut of Indo-Pak relations' post 1989 based on the content analyses of five English language newspapers each from India and Pakistan. It reflects the trends in bilateral relationship and how elite in both the countries have prioritized various bilateral issues and discussed possible solutions on each issue.

It also reveals the parameter of mistrust and apprehensions within which opinions are conceived and articulated. What generates hope and optimism in the topsy-turvy path of Indo-Pak relations is the convergence of realization on both sides that war is not a solution and negotiation, however tedious, is the only path to peace and development. This study encapsulates that with every setback and pessimism there is a reinvigorating new dynamism in building peace and renewed attempts are tirelessly made to reach out to each other."