

# Communicating masses and mass communication: Finding the voice of

## African masses

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**Abstract:** This paper examines the new and emerging nature of communication which provides the new duality of the imperatives of communicating masses, away from the traditional nature of communication which provides for mass communication only. Rather than communicating to the masses, the new concept of modern communication stipulates a mass response/interactive model, instead of the traditional one-way linear mode of communication. Modern technology, especially the computer and digitization, has opened up lots of opportunities and empowerment to the mass of the citizenry. In the new communication era, this fundamental has become very important to democracy and good governance. The paper notes that, in Europe and America, technology is increasingly offering a platform for the masses to talk or initiate dialogue. There is also an increasing appreciation of local indigenous language productions to reach the mass of the people with amazing results. However, in Africa, the process is faced with several constraints, that of poverty, education, apathy and even laws and regulation. The paper believes that access and affordability of the new media by the majority of the African people is cardinal to the development of Africa.

**Key words:** mass communication; voice of African masses; democracy

### 1. Introduction

#### 1.1 The mass media

Generally, mass communication media makes it possible to deliver messages to millions of people roughly at the same time. The source or creators of these messages are usually organizations and the audiences, and are composed of individuals. "Mass communication" is also the term used to describe the academic study of the various means by which individuals and entities relay information through mass media to large segments of the population at the same time. It is usually understood to relate to newspaper and magazine publishing, radio, television and film, as these are used both for disseminating news and for advertising.

There are many theories and principles of mass communication, the general definition of mass communication however is that it is the transmission and reception of messages on a large scale. Most mass communication is done on an interpersonal basis meaning that is done on a face-to-face basis, i.e., between the sender and the receiver. The received message can be responded to instantly meaning that there is feedback.

The study of mass communication is particularly concerned with how communication serves to create, animate and influence human societies. It is Wilbur Schramm who stated that communication is the tool that makes human societies possible; every human endeavor implies communication at some level. Societies can be animated by to positively react to media influence. Mass communication does this by raising issues that fuel

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