Need for Creating Trained Professionals for Development Communication - A Case Study of an ODL based Programme

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ABSTRACT

Purpose: Nobel Prize-winner Amartya Sen and Jean Drèze in their book called An Uncertain Glory have made a valid argument for the need of greater understanding of social inequalities in India. Despite economic development. Despite being the second fastest growing economy of the world, it is no less a worry that India stands at 131st position in the Human Development Index of 2020. Every stakeholder is expected to contribute to the national development to improve the quality of living standards. In the multinational agencies' global efforts to improve the human living conditions, Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) are agreed upon by the United Nations' member countries, including India, which aims to achieve 17 SDG goals and 169 targets by 2030. Within this context, IGNOU's efforts are manifold, and from the media and communication discipline, it explored the need to provide educational interventions to train the professionals for the development sectors. Accordingly, a needs assessment study was carried out to gauge the felt demand and explored the academic frameworks for a Diploma programme in Development Communication. The present study is based on this research exercise to underline the role of academia in bridging the conspicuous gap between the policy making process and citizens at the grassroot.

Research Design/Methodology: The researchers developed two sets of data collection methods to measure the actual need for an academic programme on Development Communication, offered through Open and Distance Learning mode with the relevant inputs from the literature review. One method was to collect data through a questionnaire and secondly, through Focus Group Discussion.

Findings: The main findings of this study established the need for an academic programme in Development Communication. The Focus Group Discussion gave a framework for the proposed programme that centers around the basic concepts on developments, understanding necessary media skills and orientation on evaluation and monitoring through a scientific research approach.

Originality/Value: The entire research efforts have reinforced the established trends in the field of Development Communication education. The survey results gave empirical evidence for the need for this programme. The Focus Group Discussions provided a framework for the proposed Diploma programme, which reinforced the established norms such as pro-access, pro-participation and pro-government structure.

Paper Type: Case Based Study

Plenty Vs Priority: Need for Development within Media

Indian Media and Entertainment industry is growing at an average rate of 11.5% in 2015-19, and it is expected to continue at the rate 13.5% for the next five years (KPMG, 2019). Correspondingly, the Indian media industry's growth percentage translated into 780 million television viewers, 301 million newspaper readers and 159 million radio listeners, and 696 million internet users in India.

However, these staggering numbers have other dimensions. According to the National Sample Survey Organisation data of 2014 (The Hindu news report dated March 14, 2017), 'An estimated 8.8% of the rural population has computing ability. In urban areas, the figure is nearly four times higher, at 30.2%.' The statistics indicate that a vast number of Indian population is not within the ambit of the computing world, nearly 70% of them. However, the Statista Digital Market Outlook; 2015 to 2020 report, India had 696 million Internet subscribers in 2020. Based on a population count of 1.3 billion, it translates this into 51% Internet subscribers. Urban Internet Subscribers per 100 population is 98, and rural India gets just 33. Yet, this data reinforces the size of the disconnected majority population in India. TRAI's report on the 2020 scenario states that 'urban teledensity growth rate increased to 152.9% while rural teledensity increased to 56.4% in November 2019.'

Media and information outlets are accessible to 30-40% of the population. The significant level of the rural segment and sizable portion of semi-urban areas are inaccessible to these outlets. This situation may not create a congenial platform to speed up the standards of human living conditions. Few data reinforces this scenario.

In South Asia alone, there are 15% of the population living under $1.90 per day, and 281 million people are undernourished, 28% of women married before the age of 18, and 21% of the population still waiting for their electricity, 31% of the population still lives in a slum, 64% of total prisoners are unsentenced, and 70% of the population yet to hook to the broadband connections - according to UN data, 2012. To neutralise these vast gaps in the living conditions, globally, all the stakeholders have agreed to meet specific goals and targets.

In the present day context, there is a challenge before every one of us or every institution across the globe to meet 169 targets, that are framed into 17 goals. These goals were agreed upon by all nations worldwide in 2015 to achieve those targets by 2030. These 17 goals are called Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). These goals and targets are primarily meant for people, planet, prosperity, peace and partnership. Media and information may not provide a solution to these goals, but Media and Information Literacy (MIL) provides skills to empower citizens to be aware of their roles and responsibilities.

Across the globe, it is well-endorsed rights by the conventions and declarations that everyone has the freedom of expression, which includes the right to seek, receive and impart information. Any sort of developmental activity fundamentally requires the active participation of individual members of the respective social settings, so that the information flow should be free from the restrictions.

Free flow of information coupled with the media actors' safety would provide the platform for the diversity and pluralistic public platforms and public debate. These platforms will facilitate the ground for the better participation of marginalised and disadvantaged people. Yet other criteria for potential utilisation of developmental activities are public access to communication and information technologies. In all these parameters for the development, gender equality, and equal access between males and females are essential.

The points mentioned above and factors demand close and scientific scrutiny from the holistic approach to critically understand the interplay between the informed society and its developmental goals and targets. In the contemporary scenario, sustained efforts need to be explored the holistic training and research in the following areas:

According to UN declarations 2015, the 17 Sustainable Development Goals have specific 169 targets, directly linked to media and communication discipline. They are listed below:

- 3.c Substantially increase health financing and the recruitment, development, training and retention of the health workforce in developing countries, especially in the least developed countries and small island developing States;

- 3.7 By 2030, ensure universal access to sexual and reproductive health-care services, including for family planning, information and education, and the integration of reproductive health into national strategies and programmes;

- Goal 4. Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all;

- 4.a Build and upgrade education facilities that are child, disability and gender sensitive and provide safe, non-violent, inclusive and effective learning environments for all;

- 4.4 By 2030, substantially increase the number of youth and adults who have relevant skills, including technical and vocational skills, for employment, decent jobs and entrepreneurship;

- 4.4.1 Proportion of youth and adults with information and communications technology (ICT) skills, by type of skill;

- 4.7 By 2030, ensure that all learners acquire the knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable

development, including, among others, through education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, global citizenship and appreciation of cultural diversity and culture's contribution to sustainable development;

- 5.b Enhance the use of enabling technology, in particular information and communications technology, to promote the empowerment of women;

- 9.c Significantly increase access to information and communications technology and strive to provide universal and affordable access to the Internet in the least developed countries by 2020;

- 12.4.1 number of parties to international multilateral environmental agreements on hazardous waste, and other chemicals that meet their commitments and obligations in transmitting information as required by each relevant agreement;

- 12.8 By 2030, ensure that people everywhere have the relevant information and awareness for sustainable development and lifestyles in harmony with nature;

- 13.2.1 number of countries that have communicated the establishment or operationalisation of an integrated policy/strategy/plan which increases their ability to adapt to the adverse impacts of climate change, and foster climate resilience and low greenhouse gas emissions development in a manner that does not threaten food production (including a national adaptation plan, nationally determined contribution, national communication, biennial update report or other);

- 16.10 Ensure public access to information and protect fundamental freedoms, in accordance with national legislation and international agreements;

- 16.10.1 number of verified cases of killing, kidnapping, enforced disappearance, arbitrary detention and torture of journalists, associated media personnel, trade unionists and human rights advocates in the previous 12 months;

- 16.10.2 number of countries that adopt and implement constitutional, statutory and/or policy guarantees for public access to information;

- 17.6.2 Fixed Internet broadband subscriptions per 100 inhabitants, by speed;

- 17.8.1 Proportion of individuals using the Internet.

Similarly, with the lack of health care facilities in urban and rural areas, basic knowledge of healthy living gives immense benefits to the individual and the health systems. Seeking, understanding and sharing health-related information by the individuals and community workers are essential. Goal number 3 along with 1 and 2 focuses on health, nutrition and poverty.

Using digital and online tools for the pedagogical and learning process will enhance the knowledge generation, many studies prove it. SDG 4 concentrates on diverse educational needs, including digital literacy for education, ICT for lifelong learning and ICT for disabled people. Gender and media is yet another focus area of SDGs, but number 5 and 10 are dealing with gender equality and reducing inequality, respectively. Women empowerment through ICT, gender stereotypes and underrepresentation in media and communication systems are significant concerns. With the climate changes affecting every life on the earth, there is an urgent need to create awareness and participation. Media and communication systems are crucial to playing this role. Unfortunately, media in India are event-oriented and lack depth knowledge. Goal number 13, 14 and 15 are covering this area. Facilitating and promoting freedom of expression are yet another critical focus point of SDG - 16.

Based on these specific SDG targets, associated media and communication themes have been identified, but this list is not exclusive and open to further inclusion of thematic topics.

Health communication (SDG 1 & 2)

While health became an important social determinant, communication remains a necessity of social life. Taking both into a single concept gives the meaning that any type of communication can improve a society's health outcomes in health communication. A positive change in health outcomes due to the use of any mode of communication.

Health Information Literacy (SDG 3)

Information is sought, located, exchanged and interpreted in different ways. Health information literacy, the combination of literacy and health information is about communicating information and how individuals gain access, understand and use the information to promote better health.

Education and Media (SDG 4)

a. [a] *Media Information Literacy* is a combination of "knowledge, skills, attitudes, competencies and practices" which allow access, analyse, crucially evaluate, interpret, utilise, create and disseminate information and media products using the existing means and tools based on creative, ethical, and legal attributes of the society. It is at the core of "21st-century skills" or the "transversal competencies".

b. [b] *ICT Adoption for Learning and Disabilities*-ICT has transformed the learning process for people with disabilities. Providing them with an affordable, accessible platform to enhance their learning with the help of assistive technology. With real opportunities to access inclusive education and help overcome the exclusion of persons with disabilities from the general education system.

c.   [c] *ICT and Lifelong Learning -* The pursuit of learning throughout an individual's lifespan or 'lifelong learning' has become a key feature in the education agenda after adopting the SDGs in 2015. ICT plays a significant role in facilitating access to quality, lifelong learning opportunities and enhancing learning pedagogy.

Women Empowerment through ICT (SDG 5)

Women empowerment is crucial for sustainable development of a society. The inequality among genders in representation, participation and utilisation of ICTs is visible. ICTs such as computers, mobile and Internet penetration is low in women. The utilisation of ICT and information communication behaviour of women is different in case of diverse socio-economic conditions.

Gender Issues and Information Communication Technology

Sexual minorities, namely lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) people have a unique concern with social inequalities. The ICT platform has allowed them to communicate and share with the world without fear. The LGBT community has utilised social media and other online platforms.

Achieving Gender Equality through media

Media as an agent of socialisation has been historically annihilating women and the weaker sex by omission, trivialisation and condemnation. The new media can help bridge the gender disparity in media by increasing access to information, opportunities to learn and participate in the media processes to bridge the digital gender divide that would eventually provide better life opportunities, owing to the informed choices that they would be able to make.

Climate Change Communication (SDG 13)

The problem of climate change communication encompasses two dimensions: issue attention and media representation. While issue attention ascertains the volume of media coverage of climate change, media representation delves into meaning-making of text and image that cognises the dynamics of agenda-setting and framing climate change.

Environmental activism encompasses the development of environmental discourse and civic participation in accomplishing climate action. It explores how environmental activism is mediated in myriad ways through electronic, print and new media and ascertains new possibilities for building discourse communities and public mobilisation.

Freedom of Expression and Media Freedom (SDG 16(10))

Freedom of expression is imperative to live a dignified life and for the overall development of human beings. Freedom of expression has numerous facets, and it can only be exercised with the help of the media. Thus press/ media freedom is the functional aspect of freedom of expression.

With the above mentioned specific areas, the next ten years are declared a "Decade of Actions" by the international community to achieve state goals and targets by 2030. This study explores the necessity of development communication education within this stated framework from the perspective of life-long learning.

Review of Literature:

One of the broader concepts of the development communication process is that all the stakeholders should exchange information in a continuous process to reach the stated goals. Mainly, communication should be direct and continued between the development agencies and beneficiaries (Servaes, 2002). The journalism and mass communication departments play a vital role in this process - training the prospective communicators for the development sectors. Colle (2008) substantiated that, "teaching practitioners about communications for development will help solve the problems of designing, planning, executing and evaluating development projects."

At the macro level, development communication education aims to develop a positive orientation among the practitioners to concentrate on social issues and advocate for bringing desired changes in human society to meet living standards better. As stated by Quebral (2012), development communication education has evolved from a mere degree course in the initial stage to more sophisticated disciplines in contemporary scenarios. More importantly, the development communication education programmes gained prominence in third world countries where the human living conditions are a central point for major policy issues, particularly the welfare measures.

The entire exercise of Needs Assessment Survey of this present study revolved around the core concept of Xiaoge (2009, as quoted in Labor, 2017). According to Labor (2017), " Xiaoge claims that in order to observe how development journalism works, it must be seen from a three-pro mapping approach/types namely: pro-process, pro-participation, and pro-government. Pro-process functions articulate concepts of development by providing definitions, characteristics and background to the notion of development. Secondly, a journalistic act is said to be pro-participation if it is practical, praxis-driven and causes a sense of empowerment among the practitioners. Lastly, a development journalism output is pro-

government if it is used as a mouthpiece of those in power, for the purpose of creating information for the consumption of an audience."

The School of Journalism and New Media Studies explored the diploma programme in development communication areas with these conceptual frameworks.

National Need for PG Diploma in Development Communication:

The proposed Post Graduate Diploma Programme in Development Communication **(PGD-DC)** followed an IGNOU standard operating mechanism in Course Development. It started with a discussion in the faculty in which there was a unanimous opinion that a course in Development Communication is a much-needed intervention required in the School.

Further, it was taken up in the School Board Meeting in which all members, including the external experts, agreed and supported the need for the programme. It was stated, " The proposed programme will set up a much-required leakage between development and communication and will serve both the academic and professional needs of the learners who want to make a profession and career out of it".

Core Vision, Mission and Objective: The proposed PG Diploma in Development Communication will set up a much-required linkage between development and communication. It will serve both the professionals and learners' academic and professional needs who want to make a profession and career out of it. This programme will add to learners' skills to counter challenges in communicating essential aspects of development. The proposed programme will benefit media academics and industry, National and International Bodies/ NGO with a development goal.

It was also brought out that IGNOU should initiate a course like this as its cost practical and quality-oriented academic model will cater to all students who cannot do this course in the conventional stream because of financial and other reasons.

The traditional model of development communication is highly euro-centric. The proposed Diploma programme will ensure that appropriate space will be given to the Asian world view in all Western models. Also, the Sustainable development Goal, as identified by the UN (to be completed by 2030), will be at the core of academic pursuit. This programme focuses on developing communication, sustainable development, gender and media, development communication and extension, health communication, social and political communication, and development models through communication, media and rural development, climate change, and environmental communication.

The proposed Diploma will strengthen the Philosophy and Vision of the People's University by enabling all those learners who could not join such a programme in the conventional mode for different reasons.

MHRD-IGNOU Mission on GER: Also, IGNOU has been given the target of accelerating the enrollment to the extent of 52 per cent in the next five years in Open and Distance Learning (ODL). The proposed programme will cater to the MHRD/IGNOU target through massive enrolment and employment opportunities. The Govt has emphasised in all schemes and initiatives on the idea of Development and Communication, which will be the programme's primary focus.

The programme is suitable and ideal within the ODL framework. It will provide sound theoretical and skill knowledge for learners across India through a holistic combination of Print/Digital material, audio-visual lessons, counselling, and project work as admissible under the ODL framework.

This study's primary aims were to gauge the need for the proposed development communication-based programme offered through Open and Distance Learning. Accordingly, researchers conducted a national survey and focus group discussion; its data collection methods and findings are presented below.

Methodology:

The researchers developed two sets of data collection methods to measure the actual need for an academic programme on Development Communication, offered through Open and Distance Learning mode with the relevant inputs from the literature review. One method was to collect data through a questionnaire and secondly, through Focus Group Discussion.

For the need assessment survey, the researchers wanted to collect responses from three sets of respondents - 1] general students who wish to pursue his/her career in the development sectors, 2] faculty members from social sciences, more specifically from media and communication disciplines and 3] from practitioners in the field of development sectors as well as from the media industry.

Since IGNOU operates nationally and internationally, researchers decided to use Information and Communication Technology (ICT) tools to collect the Need Assessment Survey questionnaire's desired responses. Accordingly, the questionnaire was developed on Google Forms - it acts as a central point of collecting responses from the three mentioned segments. A Google Form questionnaire for this study was circulated in multiple online and digital methods to elicit diverse responses from students, faculty and practitioners.

In the initial steps, Google Form questionnaire link was posted on IGNOU's Homepage in June 2019. IGNOU's website received substantial page visits in a day. This particular posting was aimed at prospective students and faculty members and practitioners willing to give their feedback on the proposed academic programme.

Subsequently, researchers circulated an online questionnaire link to faculty members and practitioners through email. Researchers distributed the link through Facebook groups which meant for media and communication faculty and academic staff. Similarly, researchers also shared the link in public Facebook groups/pages which are meant for students. Thirdly, researchers shared a questionnaire link among practitioners of development sectors and media industry personnel through social media and email.

Researchers took all these efforts as mentioned above, concurrently during June and July 2019. Meanwhile, researchers posted reminders to motivate students, faculty members and practitioners to give their responses. With all these efforts, the study was able to collect 529 responses through an online questionnaire. Since many questions were compulsory, there was no option for the respondents to submit incomplete responses. The researchers considered all the 529 responses for the study; researchers prepared the data analysis and interpretation.

For the Focus Group Discussion, researchers invited 16 experts in the media education, media industry and development sector. Researchers of this study moderated the entire discussion centred around exploring the academic framework for a development communication programme.

Results of Need Assessment Survey:

A total of 529 respondents filled up the questionnaire circulated through IGNOU website, Google forms, Emails and other social networking sites among media and industry professionals and academics and students in offline and online mode during June -July 2019.

Socio-Demographic Details:
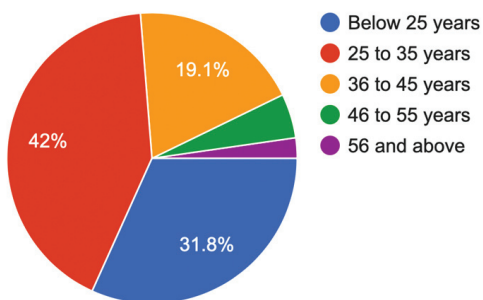
Age: The Survey was attended by media and industry professionals and academics and students across different age groups. About 31.8 per cent of people were at the age below 25. In the age group 25 to 35, 42 per cent of respondents participated. 19.1 per cent people participated in the age group 36 to 45.
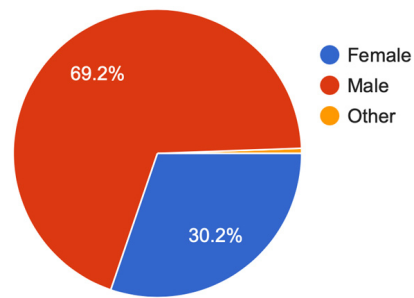

Gender: About 69.2 per cent males and 30.2 per cent of females participated in the survey and helped make a student and industry-friendly course.
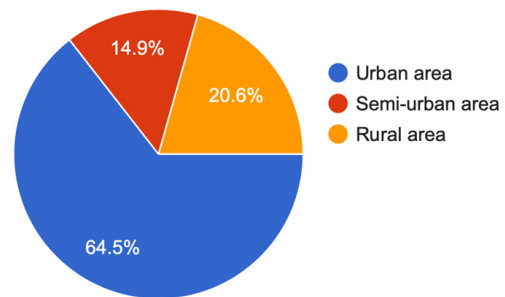

Location: About 64.5 per cent of the urban residents and 14.9 per cent of semi-urban residents, including the 20.3 per cent of rural area people participated in the process. All the respondents revealed their residence place along with their Email Id. Again researchers asked this question to ascertain the authenticity of each response.

Educational Qualifications:
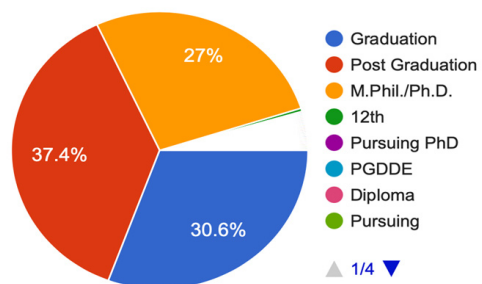
The respondents included 30.6 per cent of Graduate, 37.4 per cent Post Graduate 27 per cent having MPhil / PhDparticipated in the survey.

Present Occupation:
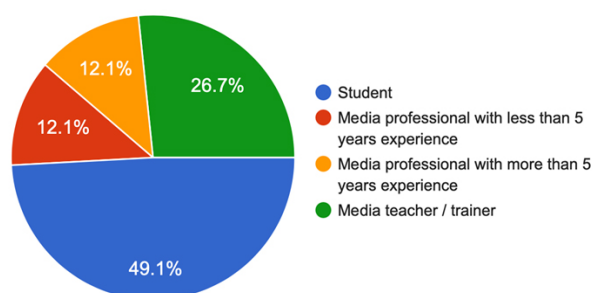
The respondents came from diverse sections of Students 49.1 per cent, Media Professionals 24.2 per cent, Teachers and Trainers 26.7 per cent.

Perception of employment opportunities:
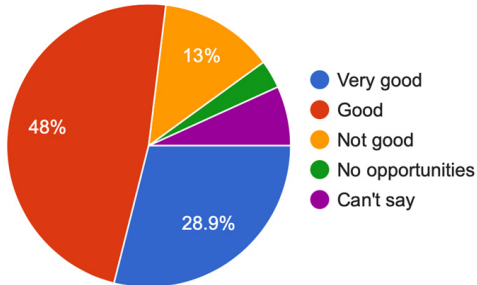
Totally 48 per cent of the participants have come out with the opinion that employment opportunities in Development Communication are good. 28.9 per cent feel that the opportunities are excellent, and 13 per cent have said that the opportunities are not good.
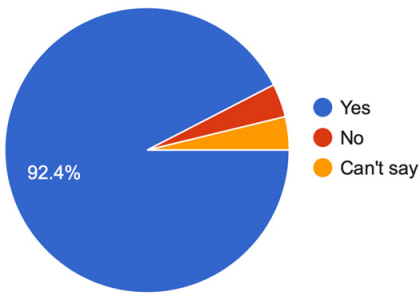

Need for an academic programme: About 92.4 per cent of the participants have said that there is a need for an educational programme, PG Diploma in Development Communication through Online and Distance Learning.
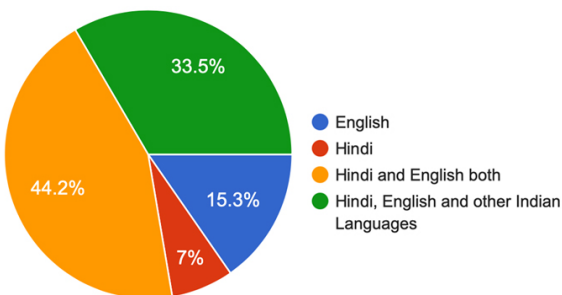
The desired medium of instruction: About 44.5 per cent of the respondents want both Hindi and English languages.

Role of Communication to achieve development goals at national and global levels:
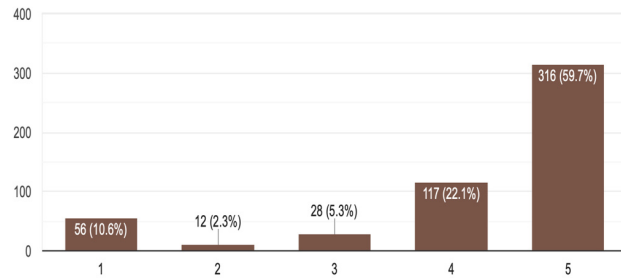
About 59.7 per cent of respondents have expressed strong agreement that communication can play a critical role in achieving development goals at National and Global Levels. Only about 10.6 per cent feel that communication may not play an essential role in achieving development goals at national and global levels.

Role of state and the central government in creating awareness and delivery of Social Welfare Schemes to achieve inclusive development
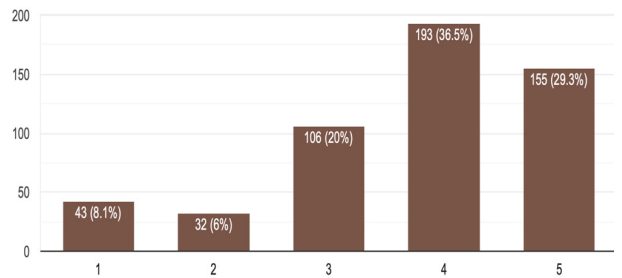
About 36.5 and 29.3 per cent of the respondents Agree and Strongly agree that the state and central governments are using different communication tools to create awareness and delivery of social welfare schemes to achieve inclusive development.

Role of Multinational Donor Agencies in using Development Communication tools to achieve Sustainable Development Goals:

About 38.6 and 33.3 per cent of respondents have expressed Agree and Strongly Agree respectively that apart from the government, different international agencies (UN, UNDP, UNICEF, UNESCO etc.) are effectively using Development Communication tools to achieve Sustainable Development Goals and only 5.3 per cent have disagreed.
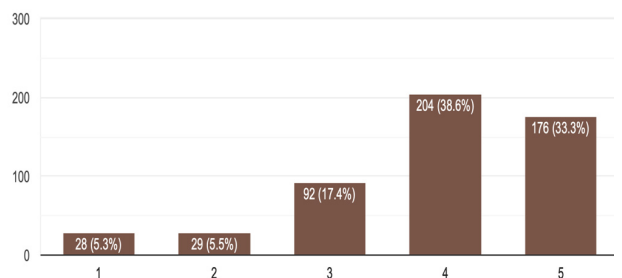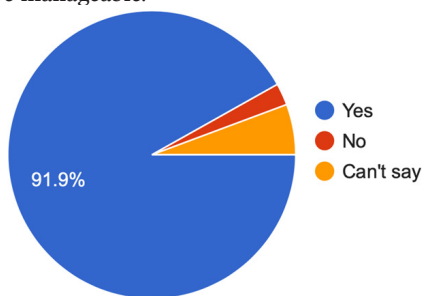
The expectation on Programme Fee:
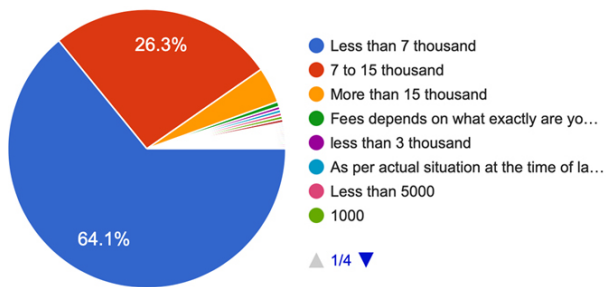
About 64.1 per cent of respondents feel that the programme fee should be less than 7 thousand, and about 26.3 per cent said that a fee between 7 to 15 thousand would be manageable.

Willingness to pursue similar programmes:

About 91.9 per cent of the respondents have stated that if a Development Communication programme is offered, they would like to join and suggest to their friends.

Opinion regarding the overall programme:

Most respondents felt that the Development Communication programme will prove to be crucial and fill in the gap which has been observed by social analysts from time to time. This programme will provide a good opportunity for the media professional and students to enhance their skills in this area. Development Communication is the need for India's hours, and there must be a focus on it through academic activities.

The participants have also responded that this programme may focus more on Development Communication tools for social awareness. Development Communication course must be linked with science, technology, IT, Medial, environment problems, agriculture, food and water, energy sources, population growth, digital India, and various govt. Schemes etc.

Respondents argued that the course needs to offer a skill development and professional dimension and not a completely academic one.

The programme may be designed from the technological revolution perspectives in India along with global contexts.

It will be a milestone programme on media education in our country. It will help to implement the several development schemes of the government at the grassroots level.

If the programme is offered, this will be useful for development professionals in rural and areas.

The course must be available in all languages and at an affordable cost to ensure its massive outreach. Price should be affordable so that more students can afford to join.

Many respondents recommended that it should offer the programme in regional languages also. The fee should be below 3 k. If regional languages offer more learners will join.

Research-based assignments should be there with a focus on project work in this programme is optional. Focus on ethical issues pertinent to the core idea of this programme.

This programme may focus on combining digital India and social communication as it is the need of the hour.

Development Communication courses must be linked with science, technology, medical issues, environmental problems, agriculture, food and water, energy sources, population growth, digital India, and various govt. Schemes etc.

Focus Group Study:

There were 16 professionals from the media education, Open and Distance Learning, media professionals and development practitioners in this Focus Group Discussion (FGD). It was conducted within the premises of IGNOU in February 2020. The discussion's main points identified the academic framework and incorporated these frameworks within the Open and Distance Learning format. Researchers moderated the entire discussion, and significant facts are presented below.

- Experts suggested three primary focus areas for the proposed programme- developmental concepts, necessary media skills, and research training.

- The programme should encompass the training modules that should address the international as well as national issues.

- In the developmental concepts, efforts need to be made to incorporate training modules that give an overview of the sociological and economic aspects, national policies and political climate towards developmental processes, adequate training on core issues which confronts human society like climate change, health, water crisis, education and human rights.

- The programme syllabus needs to highlight the role of government's efforts in areas of public welfare, and that

needs to be contextualised within the performance of mainstream media.

- Participants of FGD recommended that the programme should be offered within the broad framework of the University. FGD suggested that the programme address the core aim of the IGNOU, reaching the unreached. The whole discussion on development in the developing countries perspective revolves around the uplifting of human living standards.

- The following programme structure was proposed during the FGD:

S. No.	Course Title
1	Fundamentals of Development and Communication
2	Human Development and Communication
3	Media in Development Communication
4	Development Journalism for Social Change
5	Development: Information and Communication Technologies
6	Option 1: Research Methods in Development Communication Option 2: Project Work/Workbook

Recommendation and Conclusions:

With 2030 being the target to achieve 17 Sustainable Development Goals and its 169 targets, it is the right time to offer a tailored programme on Development Communication. The Need Assessment Survey results significantly demonstrate a felt need for a programme to train the practitioners in development communication areas. Since this programme is being developed and will be offered in the Open and Distance Learning mode, it will benefit the working professionals from the development and prospective practitioners.

As per the FGD results, the proposed programme structure combines three demonstrated frameworks of Xiaoge (2017), the proposed courses can be classified into the following matrix:

- Pro-process - Course 1 and 2

- Pro-participation - Course 3 and 5

- Pro-government - Course 4 and 6

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Annexure 1

Reviewers Comment

Reviewer's Comment 1: The study brings out the need for creation of trained professionals for communication development. The use of data collection methods for the study were exceptionally comprehensive which includes questionnaire method and focus group discussion. The findings of the study will be of immense importance to the policy makers to frame a programme according to the requirements of the industry.

Reviewer's Comment 2: The study seeks to strengthen the existing trends in the field of Development Communication education. The study is well-designed and lays the foundation for the need of academic frameworks for a Diploma programme in Development Communication. The author brings the need for a programme to create trained professionals through education.

Reviewer's Comment 3: The study focuses on the need to offer a tailored programme on development communication. The results of the study significantly demonstrate a felt need for a programme to train the practitioners in development communication areas. The suggestions of the study are very practical and bring out the requirements for training professionals.

Citation

Editorial Excerpt

The article has 0% of plagiarism which is the accepted percentage as per the norms and standards of the journal for the publication. As per the editorial board's observations and blind reviewers' remarks the paper had some minor revisions which were communicated on a timely basis to the author (Ramesh , Arul & Pramod) and accordingly all the corrections had been incorporated as and when directed and required to do so. The comments related to this manuscript are noticeably related to the theme **"Need for Creating Trained Professionals for Development Communication"** both subject-wise and research-wise. The paper is an empirical study which explored the need to provide educational interventions to train the professionals for the development sectors. The author conducted a needs assessment study to gauge the felt demand and explored the academic frameworks to develop a programme for Development Communication. The main findings of this study established the need for an academic programme in Development Communication. The Focus Group Discussion gave a framework for the proposed programme along with the major details required for the programme development. The study brings out pragmatic suggestions for further development of a programme on Development Communication. Overall, the paper promises to provide a strong base for the further studies in the area. After comprehensive reviews and editorial board's remarks the manuscript has been categorised and decided to publish under **"Case Based Study''** category.

Acknowledgement

Disclaimer

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Need Assessment Survey

* Required

Need Assessment PG Diploma in Development Communication

Dear Media Teachers & trainers / Media Professionals/ Students

The School of Journalism and New Media Studies, IGNOU, New Delhi is planning to propose a one-year (2 semesters) PG Diploma in Development Communication through online and Distance Learning mode. As we all know that the Open and Distance Learning is not limited to traditional correspondent learning based on printed study material only. It includes printed study material, weekend contact classes, audio-video lessons and different components of e-learning.

This survey is a part of need assessment study for proposed PG Diploma in Development Communication. You are requested to spare few minutes to fill this small questionnaire (2 sections) to provide your valuable inputs. All information provided by you will be used only for the need assessment study purpose and kept strictly confidential. If you have any query about the survey, please feel free to contact me.

Thank you for your participation.

Dr. Ramesh Yadav
Email: rameshyadav@ignou.ac.in
Phone: 011-29571606, 9999446868

SECTION : 1

1.   1. Name
_____

2.   2. Age *

Mark only one oval.

( ) Below 25 years

( ) 25 to 35 years

( ) 36 to 45 years

( ) 46 to 55 years

( ) 56 and above

3.   3. Gender *

Mark only one oval.

( ) Female

( ) Male

( ) Other

4.   4. Residing in *

Mark only one oval.

( ) Urban area

( ) Semi-urban area

( ) Rural area

5.   ⌐ City/town/village
_____

6.   ∟ State
_____

7. Email ID

_____

8. Educational qualification *

Mark only one oval.

◯ Graduation

◯ Post Graduation

◯ M.Phil./Ph.D.

◯ Other: _____

9. Present occupation *

Mark only one oval.

◯ Student   *Skip to question 10*

◯ Media professional with less than 5 years experience   *Skip to question 10*

◯ Media professional with more than 5 years experience

◯ Media teacher / trainer

12. 3. What should be the medium of instruction ? *

Mark only one oval.

◯ English

◯ Hindi

◯ Hindi and English both

◯ Hindi, English and other Indian Languages

Section : 2 (for Prospective Students)

10. 1. How do you perceive the employment opportunities in the field of Development Communication ? *

Mark only one oval.

◯ Very good

◯ Good

◯ Not good

◯ No opportunities

◯ Can't say

11. 2. Do you think there is a need for an academic programme , PG Diploma in Development Communication through Online and Distance Learning mode ? *

Mark only one oval.

◯ Yes

◯ No

◯ Can't say

13. 4. Communication can play an important role to achieve development goals at national and global levels. (1=Strongly Disagree, 2=Disagree, 3= Neutral, 4= Agree & 5=Strongly Agree)

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Strongly Disagree	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	Strongly Agree

14. 5. The state and central governments are using different communication tools for creating awareness and delivery of social welfare schemes to achieve inclusive development. (1=Strongly Disagree, 2=Disagree, 3= Neutral, 4= Agree & 5=Strongly Agree) *

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Strongly Disagree	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	Strongly Agree

15. 6. Apart from governments, different international agencies (UN, UNDP, UNICEF, UNESCO etc.) are effectively using development communication tools to achieve Sustainable Development Goals.(1=Strongly Disagree, 2=Disagree, 3= Neutral, 4= Agree & 5=Strongly Agree) *

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Strongly Disagree	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	Strongly Agree

16. 7. What should be the programme fee (in rupees) ? *

Mark only one oval.

◯ Less than 7 thousand

◯ 7 to 15 thousand

◯ More than 15 thousand

◯ Other: _____

17. 8. If a programme on above lines is offered, would you like to join it or suggest to your friends ? *

Mark only one oval.

◯ Yes

◯ No

◯ Can't say

18. 9. Your opinion or suggestion for the proposed programme (Optional).

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____