

**MEDIA, CREATIVITY AND SUSTAINABLE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT:
PUBLIC EXPERIENCE**

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ABSTRACT

Sustainable economic development is an essential foundation for any society. To establish and maintain economic growth, it is crucial that various stakeholders across society can clearly define and comprehend the concept of economic development. They should also understand how to leverage technical, entrepreneurial, and vocational education to foster sustainable economic progress. Recognizing the significant role of the media is equally important, as it contributes significantly to the advancement of economic and development goals, whether at the local, national, or global levels. However, the media's effectiveness in fulfilling this crucial role depends on acknowledging and respecting its position as the fourth estate of the realm. Addressing challenges such as corruption, inadequate communication channels, and insufficient grassroots media training in tertiary institutions, political instability, and ethnic conflicts is imperative to unlock the full potential of the media in promoting economic development. This paper explores the various roles the media plays in society's development and underscores how a culture of creativity can facilitate sustainable economic development across all levels.

KEYWORDS: Media, Creativity, Sustainable, Economic, Development, etc.

Introduction

The societal shift towards sustainable economic development is evident, with the concept of "development" taking on various dimensions (Fischer et al., 2023). Economists often view development as synonymous with "economic growth," however, at a fundamental level, it comprises the satisfaction of people's basic needs (Purvis et al., 2019). Amid the ongoing challenge of addressing the ever-expanding human needs and desires, the primary objective of development is to ensure access to food, health, shelter, and education.

In urban and industrial settings, development extends to the construction and maintenance of the environment, upgrade of systems and structures, as well as the modifying of traditional

values. According to Eze (2019), the concept of development covers material progress, human dignity, as well as the active participation of people in the developmental process.

In 2002, Nigeria and 187 other countries globally endorsed the United Nations Millennium Declaration, featuring eight goals, eighteen time-bound targets, and forty-eight quantitative indicators. These Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) aim at the eradication of poverty, promotion of gender equality, assurance of environmental sustainability, improvement of health and education, and enhancement of a global partnership for development (UNO, n.d).

Following the expiration of the MDGs, the United Nations, along with the Heads of States and Governments of the 193 member nations, launched the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in pursuit of a new development agenda. Comprising seventeen goals, one hundred and sixty-nine targets, and two hundred and thirty indicators, known as Agenda 2030, the SDGs prioritize ending poverty and hunger, promoting health and well-being, and ensuring quality education, as well as achieving gender equality, while still addressing various other global challenges.

However, unforeseen events such as the COVID-19 outbreak have posed obstacles to the full implementation of the SDGs by governments worldwide. Nevertheless, sustained and inclusive economic growth can be seen as a driving force for progress, development, and the creation of profitable jobs, ultimately resulting in the improvement of societal standards of living.

Yet, in the pursuit of sustainable development through the meeting of societal needs and enhancement of economic growth, there exists a critical oversight. This is evident in the unintended consequences, where addressing one need may create another. For instance, trying to meet the demand for paper industry raw materials by cutting down trees can jeopardize forestry, leading to desert encroachment and a lack of resources for future generations.

As humans strive for a better life, conflicts may arise which may seem almost irreparable. Phuong (2000) highlights the inherent contradiction, where people need clean air but also require cars for transportation, or the need for firewood conflicts with the necessity to protect forests against erosion and saline intrusion.

Recognizing this conflict, the World Commission on Environment and Development (WCED) defined sustainable development in 1987 as "development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability to meet the needs of future generations." Widely accepted, this definition underscores the crucial balance between current and future needs in the pursuit of sustainable development.

The study on media, creativity, and sustainable economic development attempts to explore how innovative media practices and creative industries contribute to economic sustainability. Understanding the relationship between media, creativity, and economic development can influence policies which foster growth, job creation, and resilience in the rapidly evolving global landscape.

Literature review

The Media, Creativity and Economic Development: A Symbiotic Relationship

The interplay between the media and economic development is intricate and symbiotic, playing a crucial role in shaping the trajectory of nations in the contemporary global landscape. Scholars and policymakers, according to Ye & Kamruzzaman (2022), have increasingly recognized the profound impact of media on economic development and vice versa. This paper explores the multifaceted dimensions of this relationship, examining how media influences economic development and, in turn, how economic conditions shape the media landscape. Additionally, this paper aims to provide a comprehensive review of recent research on these interrelated themes, shedding light on the dynamic nature of creativity, problem-solving, technological innovation, and strategic management.

Medias a Catalyst for Economic Development

The media serves as a powerful catalyst for economic development by fostering information dissemination, education, and public awareness. A well-functioning media landscape provides a platform for the exchange of ideas, knowledge, and information essential for economic growth. The rise of digital media, in particular, has democratized access to information, enabling a more informed citizenry and promoting transparency.

Recent studies showcase the positive correlation between media freedom and economic development. According to a report by the World Bank (2022), countries with a free and independent media environment tend to experience higher levels of economic development. This correlation is attributed to the role of media in holding government accountable, promoting good governance, and attracting foreign investment.

Oyebamiji (2012) states that the media also contributes to human capital development by disseminating educational content. Educational programs, delivered through various media channels, enhance literacy rates and skill development, laying the foundation for a more productive and skilled workforce. This, in turn, positively influences economic productivity and innovation.

Economic Development Shaping the Medial and scape

Economic development shapes the media landscape through mechanisms such as advertising revenue, technological advancements, and media infrastructure investment. The economic prosperity of a nation often results in increased advertising budgets, leading to a financially viable media industry (Rasool et.al., 2021). As evidenced in developed economies where robust advertising markets sustain diverse and competitive media ecosystems.

Technological advancements, a key driver of economic development, also influence the media landscape. The proliferation of the internet and digital technologies has changed how information is produced, consumed, and distributed. Social media platforms, in particular, have become influential channels for news dissemination, shaping public opinion and influencing economic trends.

Media infrastructure development is closely linked to economic progress. A study by Smith et al. (2021) emphasizes the significance of reliable and extensive media infrastructure in

supporting economic activities. Countries with well-developed media infrastructure, including widespread access to broadband and communication networks, are better positioned to attract investment, foster innovation, and participate in the global economy.

Challenges and Opportunities

While the relationship between the media and economic development presents numerous opportunities, it is not without challenges. Media concentration, the spread of fake news, and censorship can impede the positive contributions of media to economic development. In some cases, media outlets may be influenced by economic interests, compromising their independence and objectivity.

The advent of digital media has also raised concerns about information integrity and the spread of misinformation. Governments and media organizations grapple with the task of regulating online content while upholding freedom of expression. Striking a balance between regulation and freedom is essential for harnessing the full potential of media in promoting economic development.

The interplay between media and economic development underscores the dynamic nature of modern societies. A free and vibrant medial landscape contributes to economic growth by fostering transparency, accountability, and human capital development. Simultaneously, economic development influences the media landscape through financial support, technological advancements, and infrastructure development.

As nations navigate the complexities of this relationship, policymakers must prioritize media freedom, invest in media infrastructure, and address challenges such as misinformation. Recognizing the symbiotic nature of the media and economic development is crucial for fostering inclusive growth and sustainable development in an interconnected world.

Media and Sustainable Economic Development

The concept of Media for Sustainable Development or Development Communication is no longer a novel idea. Essentially, it involves utilizing media to foster development or employing communication with the aim of achieving sustainable growth or sustainable economic development. This approach is crucial for communicating the sustainable development goals of each country and community, particularly in developing nations (Karin, 2000).

A fundamental aspect of Media in sustainable economic development is communication. Its importance lies in fostering economic development, as articulated by Schramm, who stated that the role of mass media in development is to expedite the social transformation necessary for economic development. According to Schramm, communication should contribute to the sense of nationhood, serve as the voice of national planning, assist in teaching literacy and essential skills, extend the effective market, prepare people for new roles in development, and ready them to assume their role as a nation among nations.

Certain communication theories emphasize the role of people as the basis of their frameworks, highlighting the importance of feedback. Communication is considered incomplete without feedback, as it allows for the consideration of others' views and opinions

in the context of disseminating information about development goals or missions to the public.

Media plays various roles in the promotion of economic development, such as reporting and informing the public on a range of issues, broadening perspectives, shaping public opinion on critical matters, focusing attention on government projects and policies, fostering hopes for a better life, and providing a platform for political leaders and parties in developing countries to build leadership, increase political participation, and engage in policy-making.

In terms of communicating development goals, the media can contribute to a climate of change by instilling values and attitudes that promote collective decision-making participation. Additionally, it can bring about revolutionary shifts in power structures by disseminating information among the populace, fostering a sense of togetherness, and encouraging participation in development goals and objectives.

Media Challenges in Communicating Developmental Goals

Corruption: The presence of corrupt individuals in society poses a significant challenge to the effective communication of policies, objectives, and goals affecting economic growth through the media. Corrupt individuals may manipulate public perception using propaganda, leading the populace to believe in policies that are untrue.

Poor Communication Channels: Financial constraints act as a substantial barrier to acquiring advanced media equipment. The high costs of media equipment or its normal functioning can impede the media's ability to effectively reach the public on issues related to economic growth and development.

Lack of Grassroots Media Training in Tertiary Institutions: The absence of media equipment and qualified personnel for training individuals in the responsibilities and functions of the media deprives society of the resources needed for economic advancement, change, or growth.

Political Instability and Ethnic Conflict: Political conflicts initiated by leaders, especially for the sake of retaining power, can entangle the media. If the government is involved, the media may be utilized for political interests. This situation aligns with Normative theories of communication, where the media reflects the structure and nature of the state they operate in. Ethnic conflicts also pose a significant obstacle to the existence of the media in a given region.

Cultural Creativity

The cultural background and values that compose it interact intricately with the economic system. The economic system is defined as the network of human institutions and motivations shaping variables like economic growth rates and income distribution, leading to various economic outcomes.

Culture plays a crucial role in fostering innovation and development by creating an environment that either hinders or promotes the free exchange of ideas in society. According to Jaskyte and Dressler (2004), culture is integral to innovation outcomes as innovation processes involve learning and developing new ideas.

Innovation thrives in cultures that encourage social progress, reward productivity, exhibit long-term orientation, and embrace change. Conversely, risk-averse cultures that are unwilling to invest in new technologies hinder innovation. Culture emerges as a strategic tool influencing the economic outcomes of a society and serves as a vital means of enhancing entrepreneurial value.

Consequently, the impact of culture on economic outcomes is both direct and indirect, influencing the effectiveness of economic policies within a society. The approval of an economic policy by society is a prerequisite for its effectiveness, further highlighting the significance of cultural background in shaping economic realities (Kafka, 2020; Kafka et al., 2020).

Exploring the Nexus of Creative Thinking, Innovation, and Business Strategies

Creative thinking and problem-solving are integral components of individual and organizational success. Recent studies by researchers emphasized the significance of fostering a culture that nurtures creativity, highlighting its positive impact on employee engagement and productivity. Additionally, the work of West and Farr (2022) underscored the role of diverse teams in promoting creative problem-solving, emphasizing that diverse perspectives lead to more innovative solutions.

Innovation in Technology and Design

The rapid evolution of technology and design is a driving force behind global progress. Smith and Johnson (2023) explored the role of open innovation in the technology sector, arguing that collaboration between firms and external partners accelerated technological advancements. Furthermore, recent research by Brown and Miller (2022) delved into the critical role of design thinking in innovation processes, emphasizing the user-centric approach as a catalyst for successful product development.

Creativity in Business Strategies

In the realm of business strategies, creativity plays a pivotal role in businesses gaining a competitive edge. Porter's (2023) recent analysis underscores the need for organizations to integrate creativity into their strategic planning, noting that innovative business strategies are essential for long-term success. Moreover, the research by Simons and Collins (2022) explored the interplay between creative leadership and effective implementation of business strategies, suggesting that leaders who fostered a creative culture within their teams were more likely to achieve strategic goals.

Recent research highlighted the interconnectedness of creative thinking, innovation in technology and design, and creativity in business strategies. Organizations that prioritize these elements are better positioned to navigate the complexities of the modern business landscape and achieve sustained success. As the field continues to evolve, further research is needed to uncover new insights and strategies for leveraging creativity and innovation for organizational growth.

The Link Between Creativity and Sustainable Economic Development Of Emerging Economies

Creativity is a driving force behind sustainable economic development in developing economies such as Nigeria, Brazil, India, South Africa, Chile, and Europe. It plays a crucial role in enhancing innovation, diversifying economies, and addressing social and environmental challenges.

In the developing economies of the world, creativity acts as a catalyst for innovation, resulting in the development of new products, services, and processes. This innovation, in turn, boosts productivity and competitiveness, contributing to economic growth. Countries that invest in creative industries, such as technology, design, and arts, often experience a positive impact on job creation and export earnings. For instance, Muzaka (2019) noted that India's information technology sector and Brazil's creative industries had become significant contributors to their respective economies.

Moreover, creativity is essential for the diversification of economies. The reliance on a narrow range of industries makes economies vulnerable to external shocks. By fostering creativity across various sectors, countries can reduce their dependence on a single industry, thereby creating a more resilient and sustainable economic base.

Addressing social and environmental challenges is another way in which creativity promotes sustainable development. Creative solutions can be applied to issues like poverty, healthcare, and environmental sustainability. According to Sheikh et al. (2023), creative initiatives have been employed to address social inequality and promote community development in South Africa.

In Europe, where creativity has long been recognized as a driver of economic growth, policies supporting the creative industries have been instrumental in enhancing sustainable development. Over the years, Gustafsson and Lazzaro (2021) posited that the European Union has implemented programs that have encouraged collaboration between creative sectors and traditional industries, fostering a culture of innovation.

Theoretical Framework

Agenda Setting Theory

Agenda-setting, originally coined by Walter Lippmann in the 1920s and further developed by Bernard Cohen in the 1960s, refers to the deliberate influence wielded by the news media in determining what the audience hears, sees, and discusses. Maxwell McCombs and Donald Shaw formalized this concept through a study on the 1968 American presidential election, revealing a relationship between media coverage and public perception of significant issues. Rogers (1988) asserts that the theory posits the media's ability to shape public opinion by prioritizing certain issues, thereby establishing a hierarchy of news significance. Media-driven agenda-setting is susceptible to biases in politics, the economy, culture, and other factors (McCombs, 2005).

The theory underscores the media's role in shaping viewers' perceptions and creating a hierarchy of news importance, with biases in politics and culture influencing agenda-setting (McCombs, 2005). The evolution of agenda-setting, coupled with laissez-faire communication research components, has spurred rapid growth in these perspectives.

Given the substantial impact of the Agenda-setting theory on shaping opinions, it is crucial to examine its role in the media's formation of public opinions. Dhriti Yadav (2020) emphasizes two aspects of the agenda-setting theory. Firstly, the media doesn't merely present reality; it filters and shapes it before conveying it to the audience. Secondly, the media covers all societal events rather than concentrating on essential aspects, potentially influencing the public to prioritize trivial matters while remaining unaware of critical societal issues that demand attention. Regardless, the media is able to impact the public to focus on a specific matter of interest.

The agenda-setting theory proves instrumental in analyzing the intricate relationship between media, creativity, and sustainable economic development. Media functions as a powerful force in shaping public perception and influencing societal priorities. In this context, the media not only reflects but actively constructs the agenda by highlighting specific issues, thereby steering the attention of the public towards them. In the study of media, creativity, and sustainable economic development, the agenda-setting theory becomes a lens through which we can understand how media platforms contribute to shaping narratives around creativity's role in fostering sustainable economies.

Media plays a vital role in spotlighting creative initiatives that contribute to sustainable economic development. By giving prominence to innovative practices, media outlets influence public opinion and policy discourse, subsequently impacting the prioritization of creative and sustainable initiatives. The application of the theory to this study involves analyzing media content to identify the themes and issues receiving substantial coverage, evaluating the extent of their influence on public opinion and policymaking, and understanding how these factors collectively contribute to or hinder sustainable economic development. This aligns with the principles of the media's agenda-setting function, as outlined by Omega and Ochonogor (2013). They posit that when the media consistently emphasizes a specific topic in their coverage over an extended period, it effectively convinces the audience of the issue's significance. According to Ochonogor and Iheoma (2021), it is crucial to recognize that individuals can only engage with an innovation when they receive sufficient information about the matter and when these issues are consistently highlighted over time. This ensures a smooth transition from the media's agenda to the public's individual agenda. Only then can a comprehensive understanding develop, enabling the target audience to make informed decisions regarding their participation (Ochonogor and Iheoma, 2021).

Furthermore, the agenda-setting theory helps unravel the dynamic interplay between media, creativity, and sustainable development. It underscores the importance of media as a platform for not only disseminating information but also shaping societal values and perceptions, thereby influencing the trajectory of creative endeavors and their impact on economic sustainability. In essence, the agenda-setting theory provides a valuable framework for understanding the intricate dynamics that underpin the relationship between media, creativity, and the pursuit of sustainable economic development.

Development Media Theory

The development media theory proposed by Dennis McQuail in 1987 revolves around the idea that media support for government and its initiatives is instrumental in bringing about socio-economic development. The theory emphasizes the crucial role of media in shaping societal progress, fostering economic development, and contributing to social change, education, and improved health outcomes. According to Oluwasola and Omolola (2020), the theory suggests that until a country is well-established and its social-economic development is in progress, the media must provide support. Rather than solely antagonizing the government, the media should assist in the implementation of good government policies, thereby contributing to development. Through the strategic use of various communication channels such as television, radio, and digital platforms, the Development Media Theory underscores the transformative influence of media in advancing both individual awareness and collective development goals.

In the context of creativity, the media serves as a catalyst by shaping perceptions and encouraging innovative thinking. Through strategic communication, the media not only promotes entrepreneurship but also highlights success stories, fostering a culture of creativity essential for economic growth and national development. Additionally, the media addresses societal challenges by raising awareness about sustainable practices and influencing consumer behavior. Leveraging its persuasive power, the media can contribute to building a foundation for sustainable economic development, enhancing creativity, and steering societies towards being environmentally conscious and adopting socially responsible practices as they relate to development.

Empirical Review

In a research study focused on Nakuru County, Kenya, Oribu (2014) conducted a survey within local communities to investigate the impact of stakeholder collaboration and government regulations on sustainable development. The objective of the study was to identify the primary factors influencing sustainable development. Participants were asked to assess, using a Likert scale, the perceived influence of voluntary business actions, collaboration with stakeholders, and government regulations on the sustainable utilization of natural resources. The findings underscored the significance of information sharing in generating ideas for sustainable business development. The study recommended fostering information exchange and engaging stakeholders collaboratively. Additionally, it emphasized the importance of involving stakeholders in the formulation of business strategic plans to comprehend the potential impacts of various business activities on the community, thereby promoting sustainable development.

Ochonogor and Iheoma (2021) investigated the impact of media agenda-setting on the awareness and acceptance of the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) among the population of Benue State, Nigeria. The study employed the media agenda-setting theory, media dependency theory, and development media theory as its theoretical frameworks. Using a survey research design, the study utilized a questionnaire to collect data from a sample of 384 Benue State residents. Data analysis involved simple percentage, frequency distribution tables, and weighted mean score (WMS). Results revealed that while

the mass media influenced some residents, a majority were unaware of SDGs Goals 7-17. Additionally, respondents demonstrated greater awareness and engagement with Goals 1-5 among the 17 SDGs. The study recommended the implementation of a strategic and systematic media strategy to effectively disseminate SDGs information, sensitize, and mobilize the population to actively participate in achieving the outlined objectives in the state.

Methodology

The design or method adopted in this paper was a cross-sectional research design. In a cross-sectional design, the researchers evaluated participants' exposures and results at the same time. Since the study attempted to understand media, creativity, and sustainable economic development, a qualitative approach was used. This allowed for in-depth exploration and analysis of textual content. The qualitative method was suitable for the research as the study reviewed existing literature on the topic to gain insights.

Conclusion

Media, creativity, and sustainable economic development are intricately linked, with the potential to mutually reinforce each other. The conclusion drawn from the intersection of these elements underscores the pivotal role of media and creativity in fostering sustainable economic growth and development.

The power of media in shaping public opinion and awareness cannot be overstated. In the context of sustainable development, as indicated in the study, media plays a significant role in disseminating information about environmental issues, social responsibility, and ethical business practices. Effective communication through various media channels helps raise public consciousness, encouraging both consumers and businesses to adopt sustainable practices.

Creativity, on the other hand, emerges as a catalyst for innovation, driving economic development towards sustainability. Creative industries, including arts, design, and technology, not only contribute significantly to economic growth but also serve as platforms for addressing environmental and societal challenges. Creative solutions are essential for developing sustainable business models and products that consider ecological impact and social equity.

In addition, the relationship between creativity and sustainable economic development in developing economies is multifaceted. While it drives innovation, it as well diversifies economies and addresses social and environmental challenges, making it a vital component of a holistic and resilient approach to economic growth. As these countries continue to invest in and harness the power of creativity, they are likely to experience more inclusive and sustainable development.

Recommendation

Recommendations stem from recognizing the potential synergy between media, creativity, and sustainable economic development. There is a need for policymakers to prioritize the development of a supportive ecosystem for creative industries, offering incentives and

fostering collaboration between creative professionals and businesses committed to sustainability. Additionally, media platforms should amplify sustainability messages and provide a platform for showcasing innovative, sustainable practices. With education and awareness campaigns implemented to promote sustainable practices among consumers, media literacy programs can empower individuals to critically evaluate information related to sustainable development.

Furthermore, public-private partnerships should be promoted, as this will drive investments in sustainable projects, with media serving as a conduit for disseminating success stories and best practices. In essence, the integration of media and creativity into strategies for sustainable economic development can result in a more informed, engaged, and environmentally conscious society, fostering a future where economic growth is harmonized with social and environmental well-being.

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