

Theatre for Development (TfD) and its Significance in Rural Development

Leila Keshavarzidindarloo^{a*}

^aPh. Division of International Science and Rural Development, Faculty of Bioscience-Engineering, Ghent University

Received 05 October 2021; revised 28 October 2021; accepted 17 February 2022

Research Article

Abstract

Regardless of the benefits that development has brought to some, it has largely bypassed the very people who most need a better standard of living: the masses in rural and semi-urban areas. The model of using participatory learning methods to explore the main concerns of a group and then creating a play to discuss the issues could be used in many situations. Theater for Development (TfD) is a relatively new way of using theater to enhance development in the real world. It is an art in which the Community Theater is used as a tool for mobilization, education, awareness, sensitization, and awareness of the community, all to achieve a change, either in individuals or in the community as a whole. This study aims to evaluate the relevance of theater in the concept of rural development and answer the question "What is the role of theater in the development process and how TfD can be a useful method for participatory development in the rural and semi-urban areas?" To obtain a comprehensive perception, this article goes further by explaining the TfD process and evaluating its advantages and disadvantages in the rural development process. The data used for this study is secondary data collected from previous studies using a qualitative and descriptive approach to interpret and analyze previous studies. This study argues that there is a strong link between development and theater and the latter can provide an opportunity to foster the process of development of marginalized groups in rural and semi-urban areas by creating a participatory platform that involves the local population in projects of development and make dialogue possible. However, there are some shortcomings in practice, such as fundraising or the influence of the governing systems that are the main investors that could misdirect the designated message. There are still gaps in the knowledge and practicality of the TfD method that should be overcome in the future.

* Corresponding author. Tel: +98-9050235008.

E-mail address: leilakeshavarz33@gmail.com

Keywords: Theatre for Development; Rural Development; Community Engagement; Participatory Development; Rural Areas; Theatre for Rural Development

1. Theatre for Development (TfD) and its Significance in Rural Development

Regardless of the benefits that development has brought to some, it has largely bypassed the very people who most need a better standard of living: the masses in rural and semi-urban areas. Many of the so-called poverty-focused projects have failed to focus on the key ingredients that would help the poor get out of the quagmire of poverty. Far more numerous have been the development projects that have made life difficult for the project's beneficiaries, turning them into peasants and tenants instead of helping them develop as self-sufficient farmers (Malamah, 1986: 233). This makes it clear that the rural population must be removed from the periphery of the communication process and placed in the center. Mda (1993) insists that the existing communication system, which is authoritarian in nature, is non-conductive and dysfunctional. He sees the need for decentralization and democratization of the existing order to give rural populations access to the messages produced by others and the media to produce and distribute their own messages (Ebewo, 2017: 77). In situations where there is deep mistrust, fear, and anger, theater is a useful means of bringing people together to share stories and trigger emotional responses. The model of using participatory learning methods to explore the main concerns of a group and then creating a play to discuss the issues could be used in many situations. Theater is a liberating and unifying experience, as well as fun (Manukonda, 2013). TfD is an excellent means of creating a richer image from the problems presented. The distance provided by an enactment allows discussion of even sensitive issues without community members feeling personally attacked (Asante and Yirenkyi, 2018).

This type of approach is one in which a group of people through dialogue, become aware of the specific situation in which they live, the reasons for this situation, and possible solutions. Learners (participants) through the process are more involved in the actual act of knowing rather than receiving a ready-made vision of social reality. This approach to mass education for development through the dramatization of urgent issues of the day has been experienced by different people in different parts of the world (Omoera, 2010: 50).

One of the main challenges in rural communities is whether people at the grassroots level are fully aware of development initiatives or "social change", as many governments in the developing world and their agents depend on the use of Euro-American media as a conventional way to communicate with people (Ebewo, 2017: 75). On the other hand, it should be considered that the objectives of all development programs are to escape poverty and oppression but in practice, it is observed that the provision of basic social services and amenities are all taken from the hands of these local communities and development plans for these communities are executed by "outsiders" who may not be directly affected by such plans (Chambers, 1997; Asante and Yirenkyi, 2018).

It is now increasingly understood that the poor, the true experts on poverty, the people who experience it day after day, are rarely consulted about what they need and want to develop. These people rarely have they been allowed to participate in decisions that affect their lives in a way that would unleash their creative energies and abilities. Excluded from participation in their own development process, the poor have been treated as objects to receive development packages rather than people who have first-hand knowledge, born of a harsh and bitter experience, of how to survive and thrive in a harsh and hostile environment. The failure of development programs and the

failure to involve people in their own development process are inextricably intertwined (Malamah, 1986: 233).

The Theater for Development (TfD), understood as an art form oriented from acting and problem solving, is a process used to educate and raise awareness among both young and old people and to unify and articulate the community on socioeconomic, political, environmental, and religious issues. To achieve this goal, TFD works on emotions, feelings, aspirations, and sensitivities to awaken and galvanize the public who, is the majority to take decisive action in the directions of development within politics (Umenyilorah, 2014: 36). Activities related to women, as well as youth empowerment and development, transformation of rural communities through sensitization and awareness, education, and direct intervention in critical problem areas, are the main objectives of this approach (Oyigbenu, 2009: 109).

2. Research Questions

There is no doubt that there is a connection and/or relationship between theater and development, since theater, as a discipline, has not only been used as an instrument of entertainment and preservation of culture but also works effectively to instruct and educate. As a human device, the theater serves as a tool to investigate imperfections in society in order to encourage and reinforce changes for the better. The implication of this is that the roles it plays are related to development (Adeyemi, 2015: 23). That brings us to the purpose of this paper to try to find answers to the following questions;

- What is the role of theater in the development process and how can TfD be a useful method for participatory development in rural and semi-urban areas?
- How can TfD reach our marginalized and impoverished masses who need to discover how they can improve the quality of their lives? (Malamah, 1986).

3. Literature Review

Theater as an art form is a recreation of an event, which can be real or imaginary, and is communicated to an audience through the medium in which the artist seeks to contact his audience (Umenyilorah, 2014: 34). The evolution of the theater has religious rituals and ceremonies as a fundamental value. The first forms of theatrical practice among the Greeks, Romans, and Egyptians have religious bases and connections (Asante, Yirenkyi, 2018: 591). Rituals and other religious practices involve imitation actions and are mostly human-centered and therefore have been linked to human existence for a long time (Asante and Yirenkyi, 2018: 591). Therefore, it is established that the theater was born social and it is the source of collectively motivated performance of massive societies. And its function does not have value in isolation for that society either (Diang'a and Kebaya, 2016: 2). It is the power of theater to attract and engage all human senses and its ability to influence and affect through the effective use of images, what Asomba (1986) calls the 'photosensitive minds of members of an audience during a performance, that makes it an obvious pivot in building communities, not nations (Olalekan et al., 2010: 108).

The community plays an important role in formulating the what, how, and when of the process, often taking the lead by providing stories from their own lives or research within their own. "These stories, in the exact words of the narrator, are then woven together ... by the community itself, to narrate the life of the community." It is also the community that finds the theatrical means of expression and reforms itself through that knowledge (Haedicke, 1998; Makhumula, 2014: 113).

Generally speaking, development represents the design of ideas and practices to bring about positive change in human societies. It has been argued before that it is a function of society's ability to organize human energies and productive resources to respond to opportunities and challenges. Rodney (1972) saw development as a multifaceted process in which material well-being is the ultimate goal at the individual level, the achievement of which is closely linked to the state of society as a whole (Lamela, nd: 4). The discovery of the link between theater and development dates back to early days of philosophy when Aristotle and his pupil Plato affirmed that theater, whether in literary or performative form, has a contribution to make to the development of society (Nasidi, 2003; Olalekan, 2010: 107).

Theater for Development (TfD) is a relatively new way of using theater to enhance development in the real world. It is an art in which community theater is used as a tool for mobilization, education, awareness, sensitization, and awareness of the community, all with the purpose of effecting changes, either in individuals or in the community as a whole (Mda, 1993). The Theater for Development thus becomes an interactive process that uses reality and fiction to create the experience of performance within the framework of Community Development (Asante and Yirenkyi, 2018: 594). It is safe to say that the Theater for Development encompasses the following face-to-face activities, with people or "puppets", before an audience: -a dance production, spoken word theater or comedy; a piece of music, singing; participatory or improvisational techniques using any or all of these. The theater for development process can also be defined as a progression from less interactive theater forms to a more dialogic process, where theater is practiced with or by people (Manukonda, 2013). In this sense, TfD offers a practical and theoretical exploration of how communities can use the arts to create social transformation on their own terms. The underlying components of all of TfD's work are democracy, participation, and sustainability (Knight and Brown, 2005: 1). As Wiler and Feiner (2001) point out, the ultimate goal of this cultural intervention is "to increase opportunities for marginalized and oppressed groups to represent themselves and the world around them as a means to assert their own identity and achieve cultural, social, economic and political equity "(Diang'a and Kebaya, 2016: 6). Tyranny, social ills, and underdevelopment (Umenyilorah, 2014: 35) are some of the problems that could be addressed through theater filters in society.

3.1. Different Terms

The extremely eclectic and discursive nature of Theater for Development makes defining it quite problematic and elusive. Different critics, researchers, academics, and professionals have assigned the concept a plethora of names, posters, labels, and tags. These vary from Community Theater, Popular Theater, Participatory Educational Theater, Educational Theater, Alternative Theater, Campaign Theater, Resistance Theater, Agitprop Theater, Protest Theater, Liberation Theater, and Opposition Theater, to name just a few. Although the nomenclature seems to vary, the essence of all these variants remains the same; anticipating the idea of theater at the service of transformation and social reform (Odhiambo, 2008: 4). But it is safe to say that theater for development could be classified under a general term as applied theater, which aims to treat social problems to improve standards (Umenyilorah, 2014). Whatever the methodology adopted by professionals in this sphere of activity, their objectives are united around the theme of promoting human and social development (Desai, 1991; Ebewo, 2001, 2004, 2005, 2007, 2017: 78).

The older term, Popular Theater, is strongly linked to a more politicized performance related to social debate beyond a narrow vision of the development of the world, and possibly needs to be claimed by radical artists (Plastow, 2014: 115). One of the distinctive characteristics of Popular

Theater is its social content (Umenyilorah, 2014: 34). As Popular Theater is described as destined to empower the common man, it brings consciousness with a critical conscience crucial to the fight against the forces responsible for poverty, social ills, and all the social and development problems of society and tries to transform behaviors of the individual in the right direction for personal improvement (Manukonda, 2013: 1). Community Theater was introduced as a type of theater that provides the opportunity for development where communities speak for themselves through theater and do not depend on external centralized theaters that speak for municipalities, rural settlements, and suburbs. The basis of research in this approach are lived experiences, emotions, actions, and sociocultural phenomena (Diang'a and Kebaya, 2016: 7).

A term introduced mainly by Augusto Boal † is Theater of the Oppressed which describes a set of dramatic techniques with the purpose of bringing light on the systemic exploitation and oppression within common situations. The different techniques that, these poetic uses are; Newspaper Theater, Image Theater, Invisible Theater, and its main technique; Forum Theater. ‡ His goal is to transform viewers into actors (Coudrey, 2017). The theater of the oppressed is equal parts performance, activism, practice, and educational forum. It is from activism, which refugees, the homeless, minority groups and other populations are using to fight the problems of oppression that can cause poverty. The Theater of the Oppressed is not like a typical play or musical where the cast rehearses for weeks to create a perfect show. It is highly improvised and involves audience participation, thus transforming a passive audience into an active one (Coudrey, 2017).

In order to avoid confusion in the future and in order to simplify rather than generalize, in this article the term Theater for Development has been chosen to serve the purpose of this study, therefore it has been used as a general term to refer to whenever any other term has been used in the original literature.

4. Methodology

TfD is an instrument of social change within the framework of development approaches. It is related to development much more than theater (Manukonda, 2013). This approach is found in the theory of media for development or what Folarin (1998) described as a wide variety of socio-cultural, economic, and political conditions that border on the effective use of media for

† Augusto Boal (1931-2009) was one of the leading playwrights and theater directors in Brazil. joined the São Paulo repertoire company, the Arena Theater, and became a director in 1956. As Brazil grew more oppressive after the military coup, Boal began writing plays that relied on censorship, the oppression and torture enacted by the Brazilian military regime. His innovative works combined visual and dramatic arts, as well as music. In 1971, Boal was imprisoned and tortured by the military police for his subversive activity, and later exiled. In exile he wrote *Teatro del oprimido* and *Torquemada*. (Brown University, n.d.)

In 1981, Boal organized the first International Festival of the Theater of the Oppressed in Paris, and a year later he ran and successfully won the position of Vereador de Rio, which is as city councilor. In this role, Boal developed a type of theater forum, the Legislative Theater, to identify key issues in the city. Using this concept of a forum, he used theater dynamics to discuss what kind of legislation needed to be enacted to address community issues. The resulting discussions and demonstrations became the basis for the current legislation presented by Boal in the House of Vereadores. (Dartmouth University, n.d)

‡ This technique is simultaneous dramaturgy, in which the actors begin to perform short scenes that enact aspects of their daily life (domestic violence) and then ask the audience to come up with an idea that will help the oppressed character break out of the situation. The audience can interrupt the show and intervene by standing up and suggesting solutions to the actors who will improvise it immediately. The viewer helps rewrite the play while the actors are still performing their roles. In Forum, although spectators are allowed to go on stage and interpret the characters, substituting themselves for the actors to find a way out of the situation (Coudray, 2014).

development purposes. Specifically, the theory considers the role of the media in society as the essential objective to stimulate and sustain social development in areas such as cultural, socioeconomic, political, and technological development, national integration, socioeconomic modernization, promotion illiteracy, and cultural creativity (Folarin, 1998; Yerima, 2007; Olalekan et al., 2010: 109). Theater for development as a community participation approach for rural development is based on the principles of Integrated Participatory Communication (CIP) which, according to (Bessette, 2004), is to involve the local community in the identification of a problem of development (or a common goal), discovering its multiple dimensions, identifying possible solutions (or a set of actions) and making a decision on a specific set of actions to experiment or implement (Asante, Yirenkyi, 2018: 597). In this article, the aim is to study the previous studies carried out on TfD and combine it with rural development approaches. In doing so, a qualitative approach was applied using the descriptive and semi-analytical method to achieve a broader definition of TfD and its implication in the rural context.

5. Discussion

5.1. TfD for Rural Area (Theater for Rural Development)

Rural development is a process designed to create a condition of economic and social progress for the entire community with its active participation and the greatest possible confidence in the initiative of the community. It is an encouragement for communities to change their own affairs in a constructive way. Policymaking from above has refused to learn from the mistakes of the past. This is because, very often, the identification and the final development project to be built becomes the exclusive prerogative of bureaucrats and technocrats in urban centers who are alienated from the masses in rural areas. Bureaucrats, following established official criteria, move away from the realities of rural poverty. Therefore, the consultation and, more importantly also, the participation in decision-making of the rural inhabitants are consequently lost (Umenyilorah, 2014: 37). TfDs' emphasis is specifically on development goals and issues such as adult education, rural community mobilization, and mass awareness. It is a tool deliberately selected by a group of intellectuals and development workers for the meeting of "people and dresses", to accelerate the modernization process in both rural and peri-urban areas (Hussaini and Tsaku, 2017: 8). The TfD approach provides an opportunity for people in rural areas to come together, think and share ideas about a common problem. Rural people for whom change is sought become integral parts and stakeholders in the change process. Theater for Development raises awareness through the use of local or indigenous art forms. The use of indigenous art forms offers the audience the opportunity to be more identifiable with the situations as they are presented in the performance and throughout the participation process (Asante and Yirenkyi, 2018: 600). Acting on the problems that affect people in the area also represents a viable alternative to communal practices, as well as daily speeches (Diang'a and Kebaya, 2016: 14). In this sense, TfD in rural areas means; community performance by the community and for the community, an intra-community education, empowerment, and development (Umenyilorah, 2014: 39). Dramatization of local community problems in agriculture, health, sanitation, village self-reliance, and identification of villagers' problems are used to communicate problems in a way that local people can understand. Post-performance discussions would facilitate a process of community education, mobilization, and collective action (Malamah, 1986: 231).

In the process, people need to be made to initiate their own project needs and follow all stages of implementation to completion and maintenance for sustainability and derived values and benefits.

For the promotion, mobilization, and awareness-raising through the efforts of non-governmental organizations that should seek to work together with rural communities around the need to build pit latrines, the digging of wells for drinking water, the need for family planning, and literacy "(Oyigbenu, 2009: 114). The benefits of using a participatory method in the context of Tfd in rural areas are;

a) Villagers may be illiterate in English, but they are certainly not ignorant, naive, or unintelligent; the equation illiteracy = ignorance in the context of T.F.D. it is the most erroneous. Furthermore, it is not necessary to be literate to actively and functionally participate in the new genre of theater as a means of promoting self-development.

b) T.F.D. it is a learning and teaching exercise and it is an educational, enabling, mobilizing, and transformative tool for development. c) It can generate solidarity and unity both within the village and between villages (Malamah, 1986: 237).

The problems of the rural area that can be identified in the process are mainly: lack of drinking water, poor systems, and management of garbage disposal, lack of access roads, poverty, and low level of awareness on health issues. It is essential to promote reflections, mobilize and raise awareness among rural and urban inhabitants so that they can face their social, economic, and political challenges and solve them (Omoera, 2010). Theater for rural development (THIRD), community theater for rural development (CTHIRD), and Popular Theater (Abah, 1992) are the common terms used to describe the practice of Tfd that assist the development process in rural areas (Osuya, 2001; Omoera, 2010).

It should be taken into account that sometimes Tfd practices are spilled in the rural community by external practitioners who do not have a comprehensive perception of rural communities. Considering that rural communities are proactive agents of change, their exclusion from the design, development, and implementation of Tfd activities, together with the difficulties in obtaining and securing financing for the promotion of conventional theater activities, are just some of the problems that are likely to arise, be a tool for raising awareness and mobilizing local communities for economic, political, and environmental development.

Theater is a popular art that, like any other art, must have its origin in the community. The best way to develop it and communicate it to the audience can be done by people who speak the same language as the audience, people who, must share sets of concepts, images, and ideas that allow them to think and feel, and thus interpret phenomena, in more or less similar ways (Inyang, 2016: 149).

5.2. Topics and Priorities

In general, in addition to the political issues addressed by Tfd, common issues to be considered in rural areas are non-formal education, hygiene, health education, social ills, wastewater disposal, the environment, women's rights, violence against women, child abuse, malnutrition, prostitution, drugs, street children, literacy, etc. Every type of Tfd program relies on the power of word of mouth through people dealing with the situation, taking part in a project, or watching a critical play (Manukonda, 2013). It should be considered that the theme chosen for each society depends on the answer to the following questions:

- What topic is important for the group to talk about? • What problems would you like to address? (As part of identifying a need)
- Who is important to listen to this topic or to raise awareness?
- Is there someone who can be directed at a policy-making level? (As part of determining your audience) (Knight and Brown, 2005: 2).

Based on the responses provided and the identified priorities of the target society, Tfd will address the issues and goals. Topics that could raise a wide range of issues in the community include; the evils of religious intolerance, the evil of insurgency, the problems of unemployment, the disadvantages of inter-ethnic wars, etc. When a play is written with any of the aforementioned points as the central theme or focus and brought back to the community, to be acted out and carried out, it is as if the people are "preaching themselves" and advocating for change (Arogunmasa, 2019).

5.3. Process

The respective processes for practicing Tfd in the target communities are; research, report, create the story, rehearse the play, act out the play, and discuss after the performance. It should be noted that evaluation and impact evaluation are also part of the process but are always outside the normal project period. Evaluation usually occurs sometimes after the entire process has been completed (Asante, Yirenyi, 2018: 595). Typically, primary data collection methods in the research phase are based on in-depth interviews, focus group discussions, real-life case studies / oral testimonies, and participant observations (Diang'a and Kebaya, 2016: 11). A common Tfd project consists of the following steps for its implementation:

- a) Professionals live within the community, or may visit the community continuously for an extended period (the emphasis at this stage is to adapt to cultural norms, build trust/relationships, and observe daily life);
- b) Community members create shows based on themes related to the causes of their underdevelopment;
- c) Professionals investigate and link key issues with NGOs and GOs that may be related to the cause/solution of the problem (in many cases it may affect the Ministry of Health or Education);
- d) Solutions are created through participatory theater in which the community performs interventions;
- e) Action plans are created for community, governmental and international application (Breed, 2002: 2).

5.4. Pros and Cons

Tfd offers an alternative route to development goals, as the tools used focus on the dynamics of human relationships and experience. While traditional development practices offer external assistance through financial aid or loans, Tfd works within the target community to define the causes of underdevelopment and find viable solutions that promote self-government (Breed, 2002). While Tfd is used as an information gathering and development implementation tool, it also functions as a methodology for team building, cultural identification, and conflict resolution. The theater creates an open space to play their own and others' roles so that communities have the opportunity to question and challenge social hierarchies, gender roles, and discrimination (Breed, 2002: 3). In a nutshell and to close the discussion, it can be said that without any doubt, the importance of Tfd could encompass a wide variety of development issues in the community, especially in the local context and more marginalized areas. The significances of Tfd in rural communities are;

- An effective means of communicating sensitive topics.
- A powerful means of emotionally involving community members
- A powerful tool to stimulate community action

- A way to give a voice to the voiceless
- A sustainable tool for community awareness and mobilization (Inyang, 2016: 153).

However, like any other tool, Tfd also faces restrictions and challenges that can put its notion into deep lethargy. The limitations in the implementation of Tfd in rural communities could be from the following problems;

- Difficulty with obtaining funding (This supports Eugene van Erven's observation that funding is often available to Tfd if it is part of community development or wellness activities rather than for the promotion of art itself)

- Lack of a common frame of reference (Starting a Tfd program can be an overwhelming experience, especially with regard to the orientation of community members relative to that of the initiator. This experience is linked to the absence of a shared framework reference that Boal in *Teatro Legislativo* § identifies as the first problem one faces when rehearsing theater with community groups, referring to the time when the theater group was obviously interested primarily in the entertainment element of the theater while their plays more or less emphasized the educational element).

- Lack of political support

- Corrupt or oppressive leaders (Inyang, 2016: 155) could stop or redirect the presented ideology.

Additionally, other fundamental inconveniences that could hamper Tfd practices could be described as a lack of time to prepare, perform, and rehearse. It is also notable that sometimes in the presence of a large audience to please the audience group, the message would be compromised. The government could interfere in the process and manipulate the announced ideology since it is the source of financing for the project in most cases, trying to pursue its own agenda or closing the program if it does not support the current political system. People expect the theater to make drastic changes, while it should be accompanied by other promotional efforts (Alexander, 2020). This could cause an ideological gap between the target community and Tfd practitioners, as the funding agency might have different interests.

The Theater for Development is not transferable from one country to another, not even from one region to another. You can't just connect to a new context. It is a scientific and very complex process and must be consciously and carefully adapted to each situation, as well as contextually organized (Malamah, 1986: 237).

6. Conclusion

Theater for development or "Tfd" is, in terms of terminology, a relatively recent invention. But as a practice, its origin is as distant in history as that of the theater itself (Osofisan, 2004; Mbachaga Desen, 2011). Theater, in particular, could be used as a force for progressive change and transformation in our society. It is one thing that drama, performed on stage, more easily equips the masses to scream in the face of dehumanization. This is done through awareness, leading people to self-realization and self-definition (Umenyilorah, 2014: 35). In this sense, it can be affirmed that the Theater for Development is an instrument of awareness. On another level, the lack of awareness on the part of the grass roots can impede development process The aim of raising consciousness is to

⁵ This form of theater is an extension of the Forum theater and arose when Boal became a member of a powerful regional council. He encouraged small theater companies to use the Forum theater to ask people what laws they would like to see invented or changed. Even without a cooperative member of parliament, as in the Boal situation, a development group can use it locally to see what aspects of the group the people it works with would like to change (Scott-Danter, 1999).

change perspective in a critical and positive direction. TFD has become a way to galvanize community groups and through which community art forms are validated. Theater in the context of development is an ongoing process. It is not an end in itself, but a means to the development objective (Umenyilorah, 2014: 38). TFD brings together amateur and professional actors, social workers, and health officials, in a broader movement to help communities forced into poverty and underdevelopment, transform into voluntary social organizations seeking more proactive citizenships. Its distinctive feature is to extend the theater of political consciousness to programmatic activism through which communities set agendas for their own social development, as well as devise means to negotiate with governmental and non-governmental organizations (Amkpa, 2005: 161).

Performances at TFD can educate audiences in rural areas as well as artists since these performances are culturally appropriate and be open to dialogue. They bring up a grassroots conversation where the community doesn't respond well to authorities. This method is portable, recordable, and cost-effective with the help of community volunteers. It is also public so that people do not feel invaded by the message. Understanding and participation do not require literacy and are accessible to all. The theater brings the community together to have fun and participation by reaching more people (Alexander, 2020). This may seem promising in theory, but it faces so many social ills due to leadership problems such as poor governance, lack of inclusion of the masses in decision-making processes, economic imbalance, the struggle for power, power tussle, control and domination by those in power and their cronies among others which have over the years been the bane of the society's development in many of the target countries in the developing world (Hussaini and Tsaku, 2017: 1). It is important to create a platform to solve these problems and facilitate the path of development with the assistance of TFD activities and make the most of it, as TFD has proven to be an effective tool for the participation of marginalized groups in the process of development. Making TFD part of the rural community is possible through channels such as:

- Forge a culture-sensitive TFD (traditional culture and political culture);
- Develop community capacity to improve performance. It should focus on acquiring appropriate knowledge, cultivating positive attitudes, and developing the appropriate skills necessary for action;
- Promote an activity that stimulates positive competition between them, such as the awarding of prizes to the best groups;
- Monitor and evaluate the activity in a well-designed and well-implemented monitoring and evaluation program that should clearly define what is to be monitored. This should be done before the theater program; to establish the baseline and then measure again after each theatrical activity; to determine the changes that are taking place (Inyang, 2016).

It should be noted that TFD is a broad topic and there is a lack of resources and data on its practicality in many areas, therefore this study suggests more comprehensive research in this field in the future so that the potentials of TFD are discovered and be seen in a new light.

References

- Adeyemi, O. S. (2015). The Praxis of Theatre for Development in Curbing Social Menace in Urban Slum in Lagos State. *Journal of Education and e-Learning Research, Asian Online Journal Publishing Group*, 2(2), 22–27.
- Alexander, L. (2020). *Theater of the Oppressed and Social Change*. The Borgen Project.
- Arogunmasa, O. Y. (2019). *Sustaining Internal Security: The Inevitability of Theatre for Development*. Federal College of Education (Sp), Oyo. Published.

- Asante, E., & Yirenkyi, S. M. (2018b). Engaging Communities for Development Action: The Theatre for Development (TfD) Approach. *International Journal of Development and Sustainability*, 7(2), 589–603.
- Bamuturaki, K. (2016). *Theatre for Development as a Participatory Development Process in Uganda: A Critical Analysis of Contemporary Practices*. University of Exeter.
- Breed, A. (2002b). Playback in Theatre for Development. *Centre for Playback Theatre Website*. Brown University. (n.d.). Augusto Boal | We Cannot Remain Silent. Brown University Library. Retrieved from: <https://library.brown.edu/create/wecannotremainsilent/biographies/martinha-arruda/>
- Coudray, S. (2017). *The Theatre of the Oppressed*. Copyright (c) 2016 - 2021 Culture Matters Co-Operative Ltd; FCA Registration No: 4347; Registered Office: 8 Moore Court, Newcastle NE15 8QE. <https://www.culturematters.org.uk/index.php/arts/theatre/item/2455-the-theatre-of-the-oppressed>
- Dandaura, E. (2010). Theatre for Development: Ideology Versus Theatre Aesthetics and The Emerging Framework for Development Entertainment. Dartmouth University. (n.d.). Augusto Boal. The Montgomery Fellows Program. Retrieved September 23, 2021, from <https://montgomery.dartmouth.edu/augusto-boal>
- Diang'a, R., & Kebaya, C. (2016). Community Theatre and Development Practices in Nyanza Region, Kenya. *A Journal of Theatre and Media Studies*, 10(1), 1–24.
- Ebewo, P. (2017). Applied theatre as an alternative communication approach for the development of rural communities in Africa. *Communitas*, 22, 75–86.
- Hussaini, U., & Tsaku, J. (2017). Democracy and Human Rights in Nigeria: Proffering a TfD Approach. *Journal of Peace and Conflict Resolution*, 1–17.
- Inyang, E. (2016). Community theatre as instrument for community sensitisation and mobilisation. *Tydskrif Vir Letterkunde*, 53(1), 149–159. <https://doi.org/10.4314/tvl.v53i1.10>
- Knight, G., & Brown, C. (2005). *Theatre for Development Source Book*. Village Volunteers, May, 1–16. <https://villagevolunteers.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/07/Theatre-for-Development.pdf>
- Lamela, Maikano A. (n.d). *Community Theatre as A Strategy for Development: The Jauro- Abare Example*. Department of English, Gombe State University.
- Makhumula, C. (2014). Participatory Dramaturgy in Theatre for Development. *Journal of Humanities*, 23, 109–123.
- Malamah-Thomas, D. H. (1987). Innovative community theatre for integrated rural development (C.T.H.I.R.D.) in Sierra Leone-the telu workshop experience, 2-16 November, 1986. *International Review of Education*, 33(2), 229–238. <https://doi.org/10.1007/bf00598484>
- Manukonda, R. (2013). Theatre - Communication That Captivates and Enchants. *Global Media Journal-Indian Edition*, 4(2), <https://www.caluniv.ac.in>
- Mbachaga, D. J. (2011). Theatre for Development, Participatory Monitoring and Feed Back: The Example of Ikyaan and Amua Communities in Benue State, Nigeria. *The Performer Journal*, 13, 112–124.
- Odhiambo, C. J. (2005) Theatre for development in Kenya: interrogating the ethics of practice, Research in Drama Education: *The Journal of Applied Theatre and Performance*, 10(2), 189–199, DOI: 10.1080/13569780500103836
- Odhiambo, C. J. (2008). *Theatre for Development in Kenya in Search of an Effective Procedure and Methodology*. Stellenbosch University. Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences. Dept. of Drama. <http://hdl.handle.net/10019.1/20919>
- Olalekan, G., Kayode, J., & Hussein, S. (2010). Theatre and Development: Opportunities and Challenges in a Developing World. *Journal of Communication*, 1(2), 107–112.
- Omoera, O. (2010). Theatre for Development in Rural Nigeria: The Andaha Community Experience. *AMA: Journal of Theatre and Cultural Studies*, 5, 45–58.
- Oyigbenu, A. (2009). Strategizing Drama as Tool for Advocacy and Rural Development: Challenges for Non-Governmental Organizations in Nigeria. *African Research Review*, 3(4).

- Plastow, J. E. (2014). Domestication or transformation? The Ideology of Theatre for Development in Africa. *Applied Theatre Research*, 2(2), 107-118. ISSN 2049-3010, https://doi.org/10.1386/atr.2.2.107_1
- Scott-Danter, H. (1999). Theatre for development: a dynamic tool for change. *Forced Migration Review*, 6, 22-24.
- Umenyilorah, C. U. (2014). Theatre as Tool for Development in Nigeria. *IOSR Journal of Humanities and Social Science*, 19(6), 34–40.