CHAPTER II

Entertainment-Education Media Strategies for Social Change: Promises and Problems

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National governments face enormous social problems in the late i990s: rising rates of HiV and AiDS. uncontrolled population growth. simmering ethnic conflicts. burgeoning environmental problems and others. This chapter investigates the use of the entertainment-education media strategy to address such social problems. in recent years. certain entertainment media programs (utilizing the channels of radio. television. music. film. print andfolk media) have effectively promoted pro-social educational messages in countries of Latin America. Africa and Asia. Nine unique characteristics of the entertainment-education strategy that make it an attractive means of addressing social problems and the structural variables that can impede its pro-social goals are discussed. The chapter discusses the promises and problems of this communication strategy to bring about social change.

Social unrest, economic uncertainties, impending environmental catastrophes, infectious diseases and uncontrolled population growth are some of the enormous social problems facing the world community as we approach the 21st century. The rapid political, social and economic transitions in various parts of the world are producing a critical demand for creating effective, equitable and socially acceptable communication strategies that will help solve social problems. This chapter investigates how entertainment productions are being used to disseminate educational and pro-social messages and discusses the structural barriers that impede the use of entertainment media for development.

Combining entertainment and education to produce social change can be traced

263

historically to the timeless art of storytelling. In countries where a rich oral tradition still persists, folktales with moral messages are an integral part of people's informal education. Yet only in the past few decades have certain nations begun to methodically and purposefully produce entertainment productions to promote socially desirable beliefs and practices (Brown 1992a). In 1997, an estimated 75 entertainment-education media projects were in progress in more than 40 countries. Consider two examples of entertainment media programs that promote pro-social messages: ,

> In a 1989 episode of "My Two Dads," a popular television series in the United States, the two dads get drunk and then drive home together in their inebriated condition. Their irresponsible drinking and driving angers their daughter, who tells them they should have decided who would be the "designated driver" belore they began drinking. Similar prosocial messages encouraging the designated-driver concept were includee in 76 other U.S. television programs as part ofa two-month campaign between Thanksgiving and New Year's Eve (the heavy drinking season in the United States) of 1989, causing an increase in viewer awareness of the designated-driver concept (Dejong and Winsten 1990; Singhal and Rogers 1994).

> In a highly popular Indian television soap opera, "Hum log" (We people), a police inspector loses his eyesight in a bomb explosion while attempting to save a child. At the end of the episode, an epilogue by a famous Indian film star encourages audience members to sign eye donation cards. In the two weeks following the program, some 200,000 people signed eye and organ donation cards, including one youth club member who personally recruited more than 900 donors (Singhal and Rogers 1989a).

What these examples have in common is the purposeful use of entertainment media as part of an organized communication campaign designed to educate viewers about certain social issues. These types of messages-variously called pro-development, prosocial, enter-education and edutainment-incorporate persuasive educational messages in entertaining formats such as television soap operas, music videos and the like. We more generally call this approach of using entertainment for educational purposes the *entertainment-education stratf!.gy* in communication.

In this chapter we discuss the potential advantages offered by entertainmenteducation programs over contemporary programming alternatives. Yarious characteristics of entertainment media genres are identified that make them especially appropriate for transmitting educational-development messages. A comprehensive review of worldwide experiences of the entertainment-education strategy in radio, television, music, print and film is also provided. Finally, we discuss the promises and problems related to the use of the entertainment-education communication strategy, focusing on the structural barriers that should be carefully considered.

Entertainment-Education: A Promising Alternative

The entertainment strategy in mass communication grew out of a recognition of, and

as a counter to, at least two undesirable trends in contemporary mass media programm ing: (1) the entertainment-degradation program that is designed to shock or titillate viewers, and (2) the boredom-education program that cannot attract a sufficient number of viewers to be commercially viable. Howard Stern's syndicated "shock radio" program, popular television talk shows such as that of Jenny Jones and Jerry Springer, and tabloid newspapers like those scrutinized since the death of Princess Diana represent the first undesirable trend. The second trend is exemplified by the failure to produce popular children's educational programs for commercial networks.

The entertainment-education communication strategy provides a means to overcome the limitations of entertainment-degradation and boredom-education types of programs. Many producers are seeking to create programs that are entertaining, educational, socially responsible and commercially profitable. There are several advantageous characteristics of entertainment-education programs, though they are generally more complex to produce, require a greater degree of planning and analysis than entertainment programs and present difficult ethical choices.

At least nine characteristics of entertainment make it especially appropriate for disseminating pro-social messages that provide education and advance development goals (Piotrow 1994). Entertainment is (1) perennial, (2) pervasive, (3) popular, (4) personal, (5) pleasurable, (6) persuasive, (7) passionate, (8) profitable and (9) practical. Entertainment is *aperennial* communication genre; it was present thousands of years ago, it is here today, and it will likely continue to flourish in the future. The entertainment media are *pervasive.* expanding in all countries in various forms. Entertainment is universally *popular;* people across cultures like to be entertained. Entertainment media programs can present educational content in a more *personal* manner than is often possible in real life. For instance, while a personal friend might be hesitant to discuss various family planning options, a character in a television soap opera can more openly communicate such personalized information. Issues that may be difficult to discuss interpersonally, such as the mistreatment of children, contraception, AIDS, illiteracy and spouse abuse can be more openly addressed through media characters on entertainment programs.

Entertainment is *pleasurable;* it represents play and can provide "release" or "escape" (Stephenson 1967). Entertainment media characters and messages can be *persuasive* in encouraging audiences to adopt pro-social attitudes and behaviors, such as following more healthful lifestyles, reducing relationship conflicts and attempting to control various types of stress. Entertainment programs are *passionate;* they can stir strong audience emotions about a social issue or educational issue. For instance, the treatment of the topic of AIDS in a television soap opera is not just "one million dead and 30 million HlY-infected," but the suffering of Charlie, who is dying of AIDS, who is married to Molly and whose suffering is also the suffering of their families (Lozano and Singhal 1993). Entertainment programs earn high audience ratings, are more attractive to commercial sponsors and thus are often *profitable.* In sum, entertainment represents a *practical* way of carrying educational-development messages. Large audiences can be reached at reasonable costs per person with pro-social messages. Many countries are now

capitalizing on the practical feasibility of creating and implementing entertainmenteducation programs through a variety of media.

Development Media Theory and Entertainment-Education

One reason why the entertainment-education strategy is being implemented in much of the world is because of its grounding in development media theory. The central focus of development media theory is to foster a partnership between national governments and maSs media to promote rural and national development (Musa 1997). Media organizations and professionals and government agencies and officials are expected to work closely together to achieve national goals rather than assume an antagonistic relationship. McQuaii (1984) identified the development media theoretical perspecti'Je as an alternate model to the four traditional historical models of media and society (authoritarian, libertarian, social responsibility, and soviet or neoauthoritarian). which do not accurately describe media systems in much of the Third World (94).

The primary purpose of media, according'to development media theory, is to promote economic development, social change and nation building. Although much of the focus of development media theory has been on the print media (Edeani 1993; Kunczik 1988, 83), the use of electronic media, particularly of entertainment radio and television programs, has gained more attention as media systems and media access have expanded in many developing nations. The view that media are national tools of development is prevalent where governments exert strong control over the mass media. The entertainment-education strategy has especially flourished in countries where media are regarded as a powerful means of development.

The Entertainment-Education Strategy in Radio

With more than two billion radio receivers in the world-roughly one for every three people-radio reaches out to larger audiences worldwide than do television, films, print media or other mass media. In-developing countries where resources are generally scarce, radio represents an especially viable medium to carry entertainment-education messages. Radio can effectively reach audience individuals of less education and lower socioeconomic status who are usually the primary target audience for educationaldevelopment messages. Radio receivers are relatively inexpensive, portable and carry educational-development information that can be tailored to meet specific local needs. Radio programming can be produced cheaply and quickly, and it can be easily duplicated, stored, retrieved and distributed on audiotapes (Gilluly and Moore 1986).

The entertainment-education communication strategy in radio began more than four decades ago in England, when in 195 I the SBC began broadcasting "The, Archers," a radio soap opera promoting agricultural innovations among British farmers. Through an entertaining story line, "The Archers" provides a wealth of educational information to the

farming community, such as new crop-planting techniques, new methods to boost crop

yields, pest ~ontrol strategies and animal disease prevention (Food and Agricultural Organization 1987). At the peak of its popularity in 1955, "The Archers" was regularly heard by two out of every three adults in Britain. Although the diffusion of television in Britain during the I950s and 1960s reduced the program's audience, "The Archers" continued to be broadcast in 1998, making it the longest-running radio soap opera anywhere in the world. Research suggests that "The Archers" played an important role in the rural transformation of Britain, helping a relatively small-scale. inefficient British agricultural economy become one of the most efficient in the world (Food and Agricultural Organization 1987).

In various developing countries, radio entertainment formats such as soap operas, comedies, music programs and talk shows have been used to convey educationaldevelopment messages. In Jamaica, since 1959, radio scriptwriter Elaine Perkins has created several highly popular radio soap operas addressing a variety of educationaldevelopment issues. "Raymond, the Sprayman" promoted the government's mosquito eradication campaign In 19~9; "Hopeful Village" promoted integrated rural development from 1963 to 1976; "Stella" addressed social issues important to the middle class in 1967 and 1968; "Dulcimina" addressed problems faced by rural-to-urban migrants from 1967 to 1980; "Life at the Mimosa Hotel" promoted tourism in Jamaica during 1984; and "Naseberry Street" promoted family planning and encouraged sexual responsibility from I 985 to 1989 (Hazzard and Cambridge 1988; Cambridge 1992). Research indicates that Perkins' radio soap operas have been highly popular with radio audiences and have met a wide variety of educational goals (Hazzard and Cambridge 1988; Stone 1986).

Similar entertainment-education radio soap operas have been broadcast in other developing countries. Johns Hopkins University's Population Communication Services, one of the leaders in entertainment-education programming, collaborated with family planning associations of various African countries to launch several highly effective radio soap operas: "Fakube Jarra" in Gambia(1990); "Family Affair" in Ghana (1990-93); "Ezina-Uno" (Our family) in Nigeria (1988); and "Akarumwa Nechekuchera" (Υou reap what you sow) in Zimbabwe (1989-92). Audience ratings were high for each of these radio soap operas. Listeners also demonstrated sharp increases in knowledge and more favorable attitudes toward family planning. In addition, a small percentage of the audience was persuaded to adopt family planning methods. Since 1993, Tanzania has broadcast a highly popular radio soap opera, "Twenda na Wakati" (Let's go with the times) to promote family planning and HIV/AIDS prevention messages, with confirmed behavioral effects (Rogers, Vaughan and Shefner-Rogers 1995). India broadcast a highly popular entertainment-education soap opera, "Tinka Tinka Sulch" (Happiness lies in small things), in 1996-97 (Singhal and Rogers forthcoming).

In sum, the entertainment-education communication strategy in radio has been implemented in a number of countries, using a variety of radio formats, with generally positive outcomes. Because entertainment-education radio programs seek to promote specific values, beliefs and practices that are often lacking, they encourage social discussion about conflicting values, beliefs and practices and increase the flow of development information (Donohue, Tichenor and Olien 1975). In this sense, radio

programs that address controversial or sensitive topics, such as sexual responsibility and family planning, have a greater potential to promote social change than less salient programs do.

Nevertheless, language limitations and limited access to radio in rural areas represent ongoing challenges for entertainment-education radio producers. Radio programs must reach rural populations that are often spread out over large geographic regions and out of reach of low-power radio transmitters. In homogeneous rural communities where the primary channels of communication are interpersonal (Viswanath and Finnegan 1995), the effects of radio programs are strongly mediated by community leaders who can endorse or criticize development messages.

The Entertainment-Education Strategy in Television

Entertainment-education television programs seem to be attracting large audiences throughout the world, especially in developing nations. Television audiences have expanded rapidly in nations like the People's Republic of China, which has more than 800 million television viewers; in India, which has more than 400 million television viewers; and in Indonesia, which has an estimated 100 million television viewers. Millions of new television viewers are added to the world television audience each year, especially in countries of Asia, Africa and Latin America.

One common characteristic of television programming in developing nations is the growing popularity of entertainment programs such as television soap operas (Katz 1979; Brown 1992b). By the mid- I 980s, soap operas were the most watched type of television program in Latin America (Rogers and Antola 1985) and are rapidly becoming the most popular genre of television in Asia (Brown 1990). Popular soap operas have attracted audiences of more than 600 million viewers in China, 300 million viewers in India, and 60 million viewers in both Brazil an~ Mexico (Singhal and Rogers 1994).

Television soap operas have promoted a wide range of educational-development goals. Miguel Sabido, a creative writer-producer-director at Televisa, the Mexican national television network, produced I I series of *te/enove/as* (television novels in Latin America) from 1967 to 1982 to educate the public about important values, beliefs and practices intended to advance development in Mexico (see table I I. I). These programs promoted the cultural history of Mexico, adult education and literacy, family planning, sex education, nationalism, women's status and better treatment of children (Brown, Singhal and Rogers 1988; Nariman 1993). Sabido's pro-social telenovelas were inspired by the pro-social impact of the highly popular Peruvian telenovela "Simplemente Maria" (Simply Mary), which motivated hundreds of thousands of Latin American women to enroll in adult literacy and sewing classes (Singhal, Obregon and Rogers 1994). Sabido helped develop the theoretical basis of the entertainment-education strategy in television by utilizing dramatic theory (Bentley 1967), the theory of myths and archetypes (lung 1970) and social learning theory (Bandura 1977) to create Televisa's pro-social telenovelas.

TABLE' I 1.1 MIGUEL SABIDO'S ELEVEN ENTERTAINMENT-EDUCATION SOAP OPERAS BROADCAST IN MEXICO

Year	Title	Theme
1967	"La Tormenta" ("The Storm")	The French invasion of Mexico
1967	"Los Caudillos" ("The Leaders")	Mexico struggle for independence
1968	"La Constitucion" ("The Constitution")	Principles underlying the dralling of Mexico's Constitution
1970 1969	"EI Carruaje" ("The Carriage")	Story of Benito Juarez, a hero of Mexico's freedom struggle
1975-76	"Ven Conmigo" ("Come with me")	Adult education
1977-78	"Accompaname" ("Come Along with Me")	Family planning
1979-80 1980	"Vamos Juntos" ("When we are together")	Responsible parenthood
1980-81	"EI Combate" ("The Battle")	Adult education and literacy
1981	"Caminemos" ("Let's Walk Together")	Sexual responsibility among teenagers
1982	"Nosotras las Mujeres" ("We the Women")	Status-of-women
	"Por Amor" ("For Love")	Family planning

Source: Singhal, Rogers, & Brown (1993a)

The success of Mexico's telenovelas inspired other countries to produce entertainment-education television dramas. Nigeria broadcast a 30-minute weekly dramatic television serial called "Cock Crow at Dawn" in 1980 and 1981 to promote the adoption of modern agricultural practices among middle- and upper-class farmers. A study of the impact of the program indicated that its entertainment and educational content Influenced regular viewers to increase their use of better farming practices (De-Goshie] 986; Ume-Nwagbo] 986).

During 1984-85, "Hum Log" (We people), a pro-social television soap opera in India, earned audience ratings of up to 90 percent (Singhal and Rogers 1988). The educational messages in "Hum Log" included fair and equitable treatment of women, family harmony, appreciation of cultural diversity, family planning and national unity (Singhal and Rogers I 989a). Extensive research indicated that despite certain limitations, "Hum Log" met most of its pro-social objectives (Brown] 990; Brown and Cody 1991; Singhal 1990). "Hum Log" was followed in 1987 by Kenya's "Tushauriane" (Let's discuss), the country's first indigenously produced television soap opera. "Tushauriane" became the most popular program in the history of Kenyan television, meeting many of its pro-social objectives (Muehiri 1989; Muroki 1989).

Other important television series with educational-development messages include Turkey's "Serceler goc etmez" ("Sparrows Don't Migrate"), part of a massive family planning campaign that reached 20 million television viewers and encouraged 250,000 Turkish women to adopt modern contraception methods (Kincaid ct al. 1993; Singhal and

Rogers I 989b), Mexico's "Las buenas Costumbres" ("Polite Society"), which promoted sexual responsibility; Egypt's "Wa ma Zala Nanneel Yagree ("And the Nile Flows On") and "Ana Zanana" ("I'm a nag"), which promoted family planning; Brazil's "High Stakes," which encouraged viewers to overcome drinking problems and to help alcoholics; Pakistan's "Hawwa Ki Beti" (Daughter of Eve), which promoted self-reliance, dignity and adult literacy among the underprivileged (Zuberi 1991), and "Aahat" (Approaching sound), which promoted family planning; Japan's "Oshin," a story of human endurance and success, which was also immensely popular in Iran, China, Poland, Thailand and Belgium (Mowlana and Rad 1992; Svenkerud, Rahoi and Singhal 1995); China's "Ke Wang" (Aspirations), which promoted family harmony, higher women's status, volunteerism and respect for elders (Wang and Singhal 1992); and India's "Hum Raahi" (We travelers), which promoted gender equality and smaller families (Ram 1993).

The Entertainment-Education Strategy in Music

The worldwide popularity of music makes it a potentially potent vehicle to carry educational-development messages to audiences. Very little of this potential has been used for pro-social purposes to date. Isolated attempts have been made to utilize music as part of an integrated communication campaign to educate viewers about pro-social issues (Coleman 1986).

In 1986, a unique entertainment-education project utilizing rock music was launched in Spanish-speaking Latin American countries: two rock music videos that promoted sexual abstinence and contraception, entitled "Cuando Estemos Juntos" (When we are together) and "Detente" (Wait). The first song was number one on the pop music charts within six weeks of its release in Mexico and became a top-rated song in I I other Latin American countries (Church and Geller 1989).

Johns Hopkins University's Population Communication Services (JHUIPCS) provided the impetus for launching "Cuimdo Estemos Juntos." Formative evaluation revealed that the common denominator for young people throughout Latin America was rock music. The lyrics of the songs and the two singers were carefully selected. The two teen-age singers- Tatiana, a f~male 16-year-old from Mexico, and Johnny, a male 17year-old from Puerto Rico--urged their teen-age audience not to have sex. Radio and television stations could play the song without paying a broadcast fee if they accompanied the music with an announcement of the address and telephone number of a local family planning counseling center that offered services to teen-agers. This strategy helped channel the teen-age audiences' knowledge and attitudes into action (Church and Geller 1989; Kincaid et al. 1988).

A typical Mexican radio station played the song about 14 times per day for about four months, providing massive audience exposure to the sexual responsibility messages (Coleman and Meyer 1990). An evaluation of the song's effects in Mexico indicated that it encouraged teen-agers to talk more freely about teen-age sex, reinforced teen-agers who already had decided to practice restraint, sensitized younger viewers to the importance of

the topic an~ disseminated information about contraception (Kincaid et al. 1988).

Building on the prior experience ofTatiana and Johnny in Latin America, JHUlPCS launched a popular music campaign in 1988 in the Philippines to promote sexual responsibility among Filipino teen-agers. Two songs, "That Situation" and "I Still Believe," sung by 16-year-old female Filipino artist Lea Salonga and members of the Puerto Rico-based rock group Menudo, were produced, each of which became number one on the popular music charts in the Philippines (Coleman and Meyer 1990). JHU/PCS's entertainment-education efforts in the Philippines had two components: commercial and institutional. The commercial component established each song as a commercial hit with a social message, and the institutional component linked the songs and their messages to a telephone hotline, where young adults received information, counseling and referrals about their problems. In addition, television spots (centered on sequences of "That Situation" and "I Still Believe") showed teen-age crisis situations associated with premarital sex and unwanted pregnancy, encouraging the teen-agers to "Dial-a-Friend" for counseling. Trained professional counselors staffed four telephone hotlines that averaged over 1,000 calls a week from teen-agers wanting to discuss sexual responsibility. A study of the campaign indicated that the songs positively intluenced knowledge, attitudes and behaviors related to sexual responsibility among Filipino teenagers (Rimon 1989).

In 1989, JHUlPCS launched two popular music videos, titled "Choices" and "Wait for Me," which promoted family planning in Nigeria. Sung by King Sunny Ade, a famous singer of West African music, and Onyeka Onwenu, these two songs were part of an integrated communication campaign. Research indicated the songs were highly popular both in urban and rural areas, encouraged couples to talk more freely about sex and family planning and persuaded couples to use contraceptives (Kincaid et al. 1992).

The Entertainment-Education Strategy in Film

Despite the rapid growth of television and video services, feature films remain a popular mode of entertainment in many countries. Driven by motives of profits and boxoffice sales, commercial feature films rarely promote educational-development themes in aconscious manner. Educational themes are usually a by-product ofa film's entertainment appeal. Some notable examples include "Cry Freedom" about Apartheid in South Africa, "Gorillas in the Mist" about preserving the environment, "Mississippi Burning" about the civil rights movement in the American South, "Children ofa Lesser God" about physically disabled people, "Schindler's List" about the Holocaust, and "Philadelphia" about AIDS in the workplace.

In recent years, several filmmakers have consciously implemented the entertainment-education strategy in film. In the United States, Randall Frederick, a Los Angeles-based producer, has produced several entertaining films on topics of alcoholism, drug dependency and substance abuse (Rogers et. al. 1989). John Riber. a Zimbabwe-based filmmaker, has produced numerous entertainment-education films in India, Bangladesh,

Sri Lanka, Zimbabwe and Uganda, each a big commercial success. Riber's films have addressed such development themes as family planning ("Consequences"), AIDS prevention ("It's Not Easy" and "More Time"), status of women ("Neria"), literacy ("Bor Holo, Dor Kholo" ["It Is Dawn, Open the Door"]), and oral rehydration therapy (ORT) ("Sonamoni" ["Golden Pear"]). These films met their educational as well as commercial objectives, drawing huge audiences and contributing to their quality of life (Hill 1993; Wray 1991).

The Entertainment-Education Strategy in Print

The entertainment-education strategy in print can take many forms. Various examples are available of entertaining stories in print that derive moral-educational lessons for the reader: *Aesop's Fables. thePanchtantra* (a collection offive books with 84 entertainment-education-style short stories) in India, and Dr. Seuss' children's books in the United States. Comic books represent another potential vehicle for entertainment-educational messages. In India, the *Amar ChUra Katha* (Eternal picture stories) comic book series uses a narrative technique to present historical events, the lives of great people and mythological figures, all in an entertaining manner. Mexico, Japan, Thailand and various other countries have a long tradition of using comic books for cultural and educational functions. Johns Hopkins University's Population Communication Services is working with publishers in developing countries to create comic books to address AIDS prevention, teen-age pregnancy, drug abuse, prostitution, gambling and other issues.

Fun-to-read, informational booklets represent another unique form of entertainment-education in print. For example, by presenting information in picture-art form, health professionals seek to make concepts more accessible and understandable to the public. This entertainment-education strategy has spawned a new profession-the information architect, whose task is to present complex and potentially dull educational information in an interesting manner.

Another popular mechanism of implementing the entertainment-education strategy in print is feature stories, which help focus the attention of the readers toward an educational-development topic. Often such stories are found in the lives of celebrities (Rogers et al. 1989). For example, stories about Rock Hudson's struggle with AIDS (Rogers and Dearing 1988) and Magic Johnson's HIV infection (Basil and Brown 1994) put the issue of that epidemic on the American mass media, public and policy agendas. Media exposure to the O. J. Simpson criminal trial increased public concern for spouse abuse (Brown, Duane and Fraser 1997). Stories about celebrities concerning healthrelated issues, the environment and drug and alcohol abuse have gained widespread audience attention through the print media.

Structural Barriers to Effective Entertainment-Education

Within any given sociocultural context, there are important structural barriers that

can impede the effectiveness of mass media messages (Tichenor, Donohue and Olien 1973; Viswanath and Finnegan 1995). We identify six potential barriers to entertainmenteducation messages: (I) the social structure of communities, (2) social conflict, (3) the organizations that control information, (4) the media environment, (5) language, and (6) infrastructure limitations.

The first structural condition that can hinder the effects of pro-social educational messages is the degree to which members of a community collectively share values and beliefs (Viswanath et al. 1994). For example, the subjugation of women is practiced by many population segments of developing countries, thus opposing pro-women's programs such as the Indian television soap opera "Hum Log." In Nigeria, the leader of one of the fastest-growing churches during the 1970s, W. F. Kumuyi, discouraged church members from watching television and owning television sets (Ojo 1992, 145), thus hindering the government's use of television to diffuse development messages. Distrust of governmentrun media can also present a structural barrier. Nigeria's 1983-85 "War Against Undiscipline Brigade" was launched as a top-down environmental campaign but had only limited effects due to the government's heavy-handed approach (Bala Musa, personal communication, November 1998).

When community values and beliefs are homogeneous, however, pro-social messages can be adopted very rapidly .. The strong message of self-reliance promoted by the Japanese TV soap opera "Oshin" has contributed greatly to its popularity and social influence in nations like Japan, China, Iran and Thailand (Singhal and Udornpim 1997).

Social conflict represents a second structural variable that can enhance or impede the acceptance of media messages (Viswanath and Finnegan 1995). Pro-social programs like the family planning soap opera "Tushauriane" in Kenya kindled the salient social conflict regarding the primacy of sons over daughters. Health prevention films by writer-director John Riber in Africa have attacked the common belief that disease is an act of God's judgment that cannot be avoided. In both these examples, controversy about social bel iefs increases the dissemination of development messages through interpersonal channels.

Organizational structures that control the flow of information, such as political leadership, control of development capital, the pool of technical expertise and the availability of policy-makers for strategic planning, can create structural barriers to effective entertainment-education. India's successful adoption of Mexico 's entertainmenteducation soap operas was due to Prime Minister Indira Gandhi's personal involvement in sending a creative team from India to Mexico. Thus, India's Doordarshan was given the necessary funding and personnel to carry out the project. In contrast, the lack of strategic planning by policy planners in Nigeria during an environmental campaign directly hindered the adoption of the campaign messages. Nigerian citizens were ordered to clean up the streets but were provided no public trash cans by the government.

The media environment-such as media access, source credibility of media and credibility of media personalities promoting pro-social messages-is a factor that also can become a structural barrier. In the music video campaigns in the Philippines to promote sexual responsibility, many audience members did not have telephones to call the toll-free hotlines to talk with counselors. Also, the unexpectedly high volume of telephone calls

overloaded the phone banks, and thus many calls could not be answered.

The language used in media messages can also become a structural limitation of entertainment-education media. For example, Japanese animators who produced the popular television series "Superbook" had a difficult time creating traditional Old Testament Bible characters without East Asian facial features. When "Superbook" was translated into Romanian by Romanians living in Belgium, audiences in Bucharest and Hungary complained about the Transylvanian accents (Janet Evanski, personal communication, October 1993).

Infrastructure factors also can create structural barriers to entertainment-education. Audience members' contact with change agents may be limited by exclusive social networks. Literacy rates may be low in rural areas where educational print materials are distributed. In Bangkok, for example, many young women at risk for HIV infection migrated from rural areas of Thailand, often limiting their ability to access lifesaving information. The inability to carry out audience research may also inhibit the use of entertainment-education programs. Formative research is needed to adequately develop and pretest pro-social programs before the production process is completed to allow for modification. In many developing areas with limited resources, research funds are not available. In addition, research designs may be difficult to execute. For example, little is known about populations who do not receive entertainment-education programs because of the ethical problem with arranging for control and treatment areas (Rogers, Vaughan and Shefner-Rogers 1995).

The results of structural barriers that inhibit the effectiveness of entertainmenteducation programs can widen knowledge gaps between the information rich and the information poor (Tichenor, Donohue and Olien 1970). Like many development strategies, the entertainment-education communication strategy is also prone to the weaknesses of the modernization school that embodies a hierarchical approach to development. This is especially true when national media are involved.

To reduce the potential of increasing knowledge gaps, development communication scholars have been recommending a decentralized and participatory approach to development communi«ation, citing the widespread and systematic failures of the centralized mass media approach promoted by Western nations during the 1950s, 1960s and 1970s (Closepet and Tsui 1991; Mody 1991; Rogers 1976; Wang and Dissanayake 1982). Use of traditional folk media for development is consistent with the new decentralized participatory approach because it is often produced at the community level. Although it is difficult to marry traditional artistic forms with the electronic media, the Thai folk opera "Mau Lam" provides an example of the implementation of this strategy (Katz 1979). Singers in Thailand traveled widely promoting development themes through musical narratives. The adoption of the "Mau Lam" to radio and television exemplifies more of the "bottom-up" approach to entertainment-education. To be successful, participatory development planners must control information about the topic or issue addressed, have access to popular media- and create face-to-face interaction and community mobilization in response to the topic or issue addressed by entertainmenteducation messages.

Summary and Discussion

Use of the entertainment-education strategy for social change yields both promises and problems. The promises of entertainment-education are that media-based programs can effectively be used in underdeveloped areas of the world to improve health, provide education, increase agricultural productivity, reduce illiteracy, promote pro-social values and' improve the overall quality of life. The rapid expansion of mass media channels and the accompanying proliferation of entertainment options provides development planners with an unusual opportunity to reach millions of people with pro-social messages. The ubiquitous nature of entertainment can be used to educate people in every social, pol itical, economic and geographical environment.

Yet the problems associated with entertainment-education are formidable. We highlight some of the important implications derived from the past two decades of research on entertainment-education media. The problems associated with the ethical, economic, social, political, conceptual and methodological aspects of entertainmenteducation messages are closely linked with some of the structural barriers previously

discussed.

First, the potential of using entertainment-education media strategies to benefit societies presents ethical dilemmas that emanate from the central ethical question: Who will determine what is right for whom? (Brown and Singhal 1990, 1994). In multicultural societies where ethnic, religious and political tensions are great, it is difficult to determine what values, beliefs and practices are considered pro-social (Brown I 992a). This dilemma is a structural problem because the social structure of each social system and those in control of information will determine what social values or beliefs should be promoter

by media.

Second, the economic results indicate that entertainment-education programs can be commercially profitable when production capital is available. A key concern abou incorporating educational messages in entertainment programs has centered on the 10\\ audience ratings traditionally associated with educational programs. The experiences o soap operas in Latin America, Asia and Africa; of music videos in Latin America, th, Philippines and Africa; of films in Africa and Asia; and of radio broadcasts in thl Caribbean, Indonesia and England indicate that entertainment-education programs CUI receive very high audience ratings, can attract commercial sponsorship and can yield. profit (Brown et al. 1988; Brown I 992b; Hazzard and Cambridge \988; Kincaid et al 1992; Gilluly and Moore 1986). Even a single program can gain enormous support. Fo example, the animated entertainment-education television series "Superbook" ha attracted commercial and government sponsorship in over 40 nations since 1992 (Browl and Fraser 1997).

A third implication of the entertainment-education strategy is that media used t· promote social change can have unintended effects due to uncontrolled variable~ Research indicates that entertainment-education messages have produced measurabl knowledge. attitudinal and behavioral changes in audiences (Brown 1990; Ball-Rokeacl

Rokeach and Grube 1984; Rogers et al. 1989; Singhal and Rogers 1994; Sabido 1989; Wang and Singhal 1992; Winnard, Rimon and Convisser 1987), but there are many intervening variables. These intervening variables include parasocial interaction (Brown and Cody 1991; Brown and Basil 1995; Singhal, Obregon and Rogers 1994; Svenkerud, Rahoi and Singhal 1995), the type of persuasive strategy employed (Singhal, Rogers and B~own 1993a), the level of audience effect intended (McGuire 1989; Singhal and Rogers 1989a), the cumulative effects of the me,ssages (Rogers and Storey 1987), the use of multiple media sources (Sabido 1989; Singhal, Rogers and Brown 1993b), the use of mass media messages with community, small-group, and individual action options (Singhal, Rogers and Brown 1993a), and demographic variables such as gender, language, ethnicity and culture (Brown 1990; Brown 1992a; 1992c; Singhal, Rogers and Brown 1993a, 1993 b). Several of these variables represent the sociodemographic composition and social organization of communities, two important aspects of social structure (Viswanath et a!. 1994) ..

The political environment presents a fourth implication of using the entertainmenteducation communication strategy. Oftentimes there **are** competing values and philosophies regarding the nature of educational messages as social values and norms evolve over time. The opening of communist countries to religious programming like the animated children's television series "Superbook," which prompted more than two million viewer letters from Russians and Romanians in less than a year, provides a good example of how social conflict and transformation affect media use (Brown and Fraser 1997). **In** both nations, the rapidly changing political climates produced a favorable situation for utilizing a certain type of entertainment-education message. The governmental political system and the political climate of public opinion in a country are important structural conditions to analyze when considering the production and use ofentertainment-education programs.

During the remainder of the 1990s, countries will be spending billions of dollars to sponsor, design and implement development communication programs throughout the world. By considering the structural barriers to entertainment-education programs-particularly the social structure, media philosophy and practice and control of information in a social system-policy planners can more effectively use media and resources for development. As social problems become more acute and as countries continue to adopt development media theory to maintain social control and promote social change, national governments and private social and political organizations will be motivated to make greater use of the power of the entertainment media to meet societal needs.

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