

REVIEW

THE MEDIA'S CONTRIBUTION TO SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT:

the case of fishermen in Catalonia, Spain,
and in Corumbá, Brazil.

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RODRIGUEZ BRAVO, Ángel; MONTOYA VILAR, Norminanda; MAS MANCHÓN, Lluís; VIANNA, Ruth Penha Alves. El papel de la inclusión comunicativa sobre el potencial de desarrollo: análisis comparativo de las comunidades de pescadores del Litoral Catalán con las de la Cuenca del Río Paraguay. Alicante: Editorial Club Universitario, 2012. 210p.

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The book produced by lecturers at the Autonomous University of Barcelona is the result of a research project carried out in Catalonia, specifically in the city of Vilanova i La Geltrú, and in Brazil, in the city of Corumbá, Mato Grosso do Sul. The study is an important reflection on the contributions of the general media in the development of fishing communities in these two regions. The authors experienced life with the two groups of fishermen, given the importance that these communities have for local development, for whom fishing represents the main economic resource. Other important research issues include: product shortage; and the extinction of this economic activity.

In addition, the authors considered the two distinct environments: first, the marine fisheries economy and second, river fishing. Also, the research and text take into account the differences in the social, political, technological and economic development of the two communities. In the first pages, the text devotes attention to the choices made and methodological models used to undertake the comparative study. It proposes hypotheses that ultimately, were proven mostly to be true (though certain divergences are also noted), thus representing the fruit of a thoroughly devised methodological model.

The researched material, in addition to this model, make the text richer, despite the fact that the two places are very different and therefore, seemingly inappropriate for a comparative study. This is significant because, in order for the authors to develop a methodological

study with this type of theme, the compared social environments must meet the following conditions: (1) they need to be located in geographic areas far enough apart to ensure they do not influence one another; (2) there should be social nuclei similar in population size and production activity; (3) access to media, resources, and very different communications infrastructure, is necessary, demonstrating a clear and documented doubt that the first is embodied in a developed communicative field and the second in an environment with an immediate degree of precariousness; (4) there need to exist similar problems of non-adaptation to the recent development of their environment, which seriously affect their survival and force profound changes in their productive, economic and social lives (RODRIGUEZ BRAVO UT2 *et al.*, 2012).

In this sense, the authors have chosen the case study method as the most appropriate methodological approach, in order to develop the study plan and meet the research objectives. This choice is based on the studies of MARTÍNEZ CARAZO (2006)

[...] en un procedimiento metodológico de este tipo suele ser necesario trabajar con fuentes múltiples de datos; su punto de partida es el planteamiento de las preguntas de investigación y el núcleo central de su fiabilidad metodológica es la confrontación de estas fuentes (triangulación) en busca de sus elementos comunes y de sus contradicciones (RODRIGUEZ BRAVO *et al.*, 2012, p. 26).

Therefore, the objective of the study is clearly defined in order to investigate, from the strict perspective of the receiver represented by the two communities, which is the real contribution degree that perform the infrastructure and the media to their users, to the receptive community, in order to help them in daily survival and adapt to the changing place, and to overcome the crisis of their core business, fishing, the changes as the political and economic policies that are defined by governments.

Thus, RODRIGUEZ BRAVO *et al.*, (2012) point out that the work focuses on exploring whether there are real connections between the phenomenon of availability of means of communication and communicative inclusion/exclusion with the ability to develop included or excluded communities, since the authors understand a community's ability to develop as its ability and willingness to adapt to changes in the social environment that influence directly everyday life.

The book includes a detailed historical and geographical review of both locations of the study, emphasizing the differences in the level of technological development and, especially, the availability and accessibility of media for both communities. From this perspective,

it is noted that, despite major differences, the problems faced by both communities and the media's influence or contribution, are not dissimilar.

Thus, RODRIGUEZ BRAVO *et al.*, (2012) point out "similarities" (sic) that validate the comparative study, indicating that both professional communities are located in environments whose ecosystems are subjected to progressive ecological deterioration; they lack a culture that fosters socially and environmentally friendly behavior. In addition, they have been forced, by law, to reduce the number of workers, while in Vilanova i La Geltrú and Corumbá, fishermen have no control over the marketing of fish.

In Vilanova i La Geltrú, fishermen are provided with quality equipment, including boats with radars, electronic devices for both navigation and fishing, whereas fishermen in Corumbá have a craft activity without any electronic resources that can enhance their productivity.

Regarding media resources, the fishing community in Vilanova i La Geltrú has three television stations with digital signal, six radio stations and six newspapers; in Corumbá there is a local newspaper, three news websites, a local television station and three radio stations, in addition to the communication media based in regional centers in Barcelona, Catalonia, and in Campo Grande, Mato Grosso do Sul, which are also accessible to both communities. Despite these differences, the prospects of the study point to similarity of media access and the role they play in the development of these communities.

The result of the research and the object of the text lead the authors to conclude "con claridad" that, in the case of the communities studied, the availability of information and communication technologies (ICT) and access to resources and communication infrastructure, do not show any determinant influence on the ability to adapt to the diversity of the social and economic environment. Finally, RODRIGUEZ BRAVO *et al.*, (2012, p. 141) emphasize that

[...] el resultado de esta investigación pone, pues, en cuestión la teoría de la inclusión-exclusión comunicativa para el desarrollo de los pueblos y muestra que la inclusión real no depende solamente de la disponibilidad de infraestructura mediáticas ni de la "inclusión" informativa o informática de las comunidades, sino del conocimiento, uso y gestión adecuada de estos medios de comunicación.

It is therefore a high-quality study that aids understanding of the methodological procedures in this type of research, as well as offering important research focus for reception studies.

NOTE

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