

The Double-Edged Sword of Social Media: Opportunities and Challenges for Community Development

Abstract

Although social media platforms have been hailed as powerful tools for marginalized communities to express themselves, this phenomenon has also raised important questions about their capacity to facilitate meaningful developmental efforts in these communities. Regardless of the potential benefits of social media, concerns have been raised about its ability to drive tangible positive change in rural areas, highlighting the need for a more nuanced understanding of the relationship between social media and development. This research explored the potential of social media to facilitate community development, with a particular emphasis on its utilisation and effectiveness in supporting developmental initiatives at the local level. Within the framework of participant development communication theory, this study adopted a qualitative research design, drawing on data from participants purposively sampled from Insiza, a rural district in Zimbabwe. The evidence suggests that negative perceptions and inadequate coordination have hampered social media's potential to improve the lives of villagers. Based on the findings, I argue that the capacity of social media to facilitate development in rural areas is often overestimated. I contend that educating villagers on effectively utilising social media platforms can unlock enormous benefits for their communities.

Keywords: *Community development, social media, rural communities, whatsapp, facebook*

¹ Mandla Ndlovu

<https://orcid.org/0009-0006-8215-0927>

Affiliation

¹ Zimbabwe Open University, Department of Media and Journalism Studies, Faculty of Arts, Culture and Heritage Studies, Masvingo, Zimbabwe

Corresponding email

ndlovum@zou.ac.zw

DOI: 10.38140-joheti-2025v1i1a2

Received: 28 February 2025

Accepted: 19 March 2025

Published: 4 April 2025

Copyright:

© The Author(s) 2025.

Published by: Central University of Technology, Free State

This is an open access article distributed under Creative Commons Attribution (CC BY 4.0) licence.



1. Introduction and Background to the Study

Although social media offers several opportunities to African communities (Bhanye et al., 2023), the same platforms also pose some threats. Mohale (2020) argues that “countries that have liberalized the usage of social media have experienced extensive development across diverse fields” (p. 1). For Lachapelle (2011), “because of the nearly ubiquitous and equal access to social media and networking, citizens and practitioners alike can promote active, representative and diverse participation in community decision-making” (p. 4). Rashid and Rafiq (2018) assert that social media platforms can be used to establish community engagement and manage the public to ensure that project goals are met. Ghriga et al. (2016) suggest that “community development practitioners should identify active influencers in the network and utilize them to enhance their leadership and quality information sharing and communication” (p. 419). The International Labour Organization emphasised that sustainable development and poverty alleviation can only be realised if people in rural areas are involved. Social media marks a significant shift from technology-driven innovation towards user- and community-centred innovation (Lallana, 2015). ICTs are vital in targeting marginalised groups, facilitating decision-making processes, and empowering rural communities (Munyua, 2000).

“The use of social media and networking is significant as a community development tool in terms of building relationships, improving communications, documenting development efforts, sharing information in real-time, and informing and reaching a wider audience than was possible at any time

in history” (Lachapelle, 2011, p. 3). The same scholar goes on to state that “social media tools contribute to giving development a new participatory approach which goes beyond just words but is rooted in action” (p. 4). Wittkower (2010) argues that social media has eliminated the problem of space and time. He reiterates that social media has enabled people to join virtual communities. In this regard, people can utilise online platforms to form groups and exchange ideas regardless of geographical location. Similarly, Lallana (2015) asserts that “social media helps to build intentional communities of common concerns and convictions” (p. 26). These are virtual communities that citizens choose to join and are free to leave when they desire. Bhatnagar and Schwere (2000) argue that “social media have enabled the people in virtual communities to use words on screens to exchange pleasantries and argue, engage in intellectual discourse, conduct commerce, make plans, brainstorm, gossip, feud, fall in love, create a little high art and a lot of idle talk” (p. 4). McCosker (2015) suggests that once people are connected, they can engage in activities that stimulate development in their area.

Research by Mbagwu (2019) indicates that social networks are assuming greater importance in community development, neighbourhood cooperation, and social mobilization. “The use of social media and social networking has become a significant force in political organising, social interaction, and economic development” (Lachapelle, 2011, p. 13). According to Medoff and Kaye (2011), “the social network sites, Twitter, blogs, instant messaging, and other online applications have facilitated participatory communication at the grassroots level” (p. 17). Commenting on how social media supports community development initiatives, Lallana (2015) highlighted that social media provides the much-needed platforms for effective interpersonal communication. He gave an example of a group with over 12,000 members from 170 countries. “The group uses social media to ensure that its members stay updated with the latest information, can highlight their work through video, exchange information and resources, and expand their global network of colleagues by connecting with others in the field of ICTs for agricultural and rural development” (Lallana, 2015, p. 26).

In the United States of America, social media has been used as a platform for agricultural advocacy, where people are organised and directed through these channels. Advocacy initiatives such as ‘Farming and I Grow It’ and the Agriculture Proud Farm Blog are notable examples that illustrate the use of online platforms to support farming projects. In Britain, Niven (2011, as cited in Lallana, 2015) highlighted that social media became instrumental in the ‘Keep Britain Tidy’ online campaign. “Keep Britain Tidy became popular on Facebook and Twitter when the organisation encouraged its followers to take photos of litter in their areas and share them as Twipic” (Lallana, 2015, p. 26). In India, Shailashree (2019) found that social media-centred citizen journalism has created many development activists for grassroots development. Social media platforms have impacted social, political, and economic life in Africa (Adelaja, 2013). In their research on how social media enhances social mobilization and development in Nigeria, Dunu and Uzochukwu (2015) assert that social media empowers different individuals to work together and achieve a common goal. Contrary to these assertions, a study by Mohale (2020) on how social media affects development in Africa pointed out that some individuals abuse online platforms to the detriment of developmental goals.

The studies by several scholars (Niven, 2011; Lallana, 2015; Shailashree, 2019; Dunu & Uzochukwu, 2015) agree that social media has been successfully used to facilitate people-centred development projects at the grassroots level in countries such as India, the United States of America, Britain, and Nigeria. However, its impact in Zimbabwe may be distinct due to the country’s unique socio-economic circumstances. Building on this, this research interrogates the potential of social media, its utilisation, and its effectiveness in supporting developmental initiatives in Insiza, a rural district located in the Matabeleland South Province of Zimbabwe. The research aims to accomplish the following primary objectives: to identify the social media platforms commonly used in Insiza and assess their potential in supporting developmental processes; to interrogate the challenges hindering the effective use of social media in rural areas; and to propose practical solutions to address these challenges. The paper is subdivided into the following main sections: introduction and the study’s

background, review of related literature, methodological considerations, findings and discussion, conclusions, and recommendations.

1.1 What is Community Development?

Mbagwu et al. (2019) assert that “community development is a process whereby those who are marginalised and excluded from society are enabled to gain self-confidence and join with others” (p. 5383). Given the social inequalities characterising most rural communities in developing countries, it has become clear that involving all citizens is the solution to the developmental problem. Schutte (2016) asserts that involving the community and enabling them to participate is fundamental to the success of any development initiative. Shailashree (2019) reiterates that “the process of rural development has been pushed aside in favour of the urban upcoming rich after media privatisation, leading to the proliferation of private and public broadcasting and ICT in favour of consumerism and entertainment” (p. 27). Community development is an action taken by community members themselves in response to the challenges confronting them (Omale & Ebiloma, 2005). For Ukomadu (2018), “community development is all about a community trying to improve the living conditions of community members by themselves; it is a response to a perceived or felt need by community members” (p. 35). Based on the reviewed literature, I define community development as a multifaceted process comprising grassroots-level activities aimed at transforming the lives of community members and their environment.

1.2 Social Media as a Catalyst for Communication

Shailashree (2019) argues that “the role of communication is as important at the grassroots level as it is at the national level” (p. 1). Ghriga et al. (2016) reveal that “social media and networking provide a free and ubiquitous method of communicating, sharing information, and involving a diverse constituency in community development efforts” (p. 415). In the same vein, Shailashree (2019) notes that “enhanced communication commitment for rural development makes it imperative to create an appropriate communication infrastructure at the grassroots level” (p. 1). Considering this, social media platforms have engaged even those villagers who were previously excluded during the fourth estate era to enhance their communication systems. Lachapelle (2011) describes social media as a means of conveying information to wider audiences where individuals also play an active role. Guru (2011) contends that “grassroots communication systems must be managed in terms of developing an appropriate communication network, interacting with other government, non-government and media organisations, and coordinating the communication activities with the rural development project activities” (p. 12). Furthermore, Lallana (2015) notes that “social media allows communities to form quickly and communicate effectively” (p. 11).

Social media platforms offer various new options for people to engage and exchange ideas (Baym & Boyd, 2012). These developments have reshaped life in unimaginable ways. For Bussu (2016), social media promotes community events. Additionally, Chen et al. (2012) note that online sites foster the development of local online storytelling. In the same vein, Paek et al. (2013) assert that social media influences the behaviour of citizens. Even offline, people continue to spread social media campaigns.

1.3 Barriers to Social Media Adoption in Community Development

On the other hand, scholars like Svensson (2015) have expressed pessimistic views, positing that although social media can facilitate municipal engagement, it does not empower citizens. Lachapelle (2011) notes that “the skills required to be social network-savvy can be overwhelming, particularly for those without much time to invest in initial learning” (p. 5). According to Aruleba and Jere (2022), “the challenges facing rural areas in adopting social media include that most people in these communities are ill-educated and find it hard to acquire IT skills. Mobile devices and other technology-enabled devices may be too expensive to afford due to low income” (p. 2). In his study in Nigeria, Ukomadu (2018) found that “community development through social media is elitist in nature” (p. 42). He states that “it takes some measure of financial comfort for one to remain active on some applications like

WhatsApp... the person must have an Android or iPhone, and these do not come easy" (Ukomadu, 2018, p. 42). Furthermore, Murunga (2018) noted that while social media may quickly disseminate news, users are not regulated and do not adhere to any ethical standards. This may lead to invasion of privacy, pollution of public discourse, and inciting violence, especially in young democracies with a history of ethnic conflicts, of which Zimbabwe is one.

2. Participatory Development Communication Theory

I used the Participatory Development Communication theory as a theoretical lens to interrogate how social media facilitates rural development. Bessette (2003) explained participatory development communication as a planned activity based on, on the one hand, participatory processes, and, on the other, media and interpersonal communication, which facilitates a dialogue among different stakeholders around a common development problem or goal (p. 109). Theorists like Robert Chambers, Mohnan Giles, Paulo Freire, and Kristian Stokke support the concept, suggesting that it involves citizens' participation. "The cores of participatory development communication are rooted in the active participation of the receiver and the involvement of stakeholders who work with the communities" (Badar, 2018, p. 110). In this theory, Bessette (2003) suggested that people should play active roles in building their livelihoods rather than being mere recipients. Participatory Development Communication theory is relevant to this research because of its collaborative approach to development. The theory is also applicable to this research when considering the views of scholars like Schuttes (2016), who noted that community development projects have, over time, been marred by challenges owing to a lack of participation by community members. Additionally, Holcombe (1995) notes that the poorest people in the world have suffered because of a lack of involvement in developmental activities. Community participation means that people contribute effectively to the development of their area (Bafo, 2006). Given the diversity of media platforms we have today, it is critical to align community development with more relevant and specific media platforms. This view is also shared by Bordenave (1994), who argues that to build a participative society, one must consider adopting community media rather than commercial media platforms. Considering this, social media offers villagers much-needed interactive and participatory opportunities.

3. Methodology

The research adopted a qualitative design, informed by the interpretive paradigm. Domegan and Fleming (2007) assert that qualitative research enables researchers to interrogate and gain deeper insights into a problem. This approach is suitable for the study due to its advantages, including the ability for qualitative researchers to examine phenomena in their original environments and draw conclusions based on issues raised by participants (Denzin & Lincoln, 2003). Myers (2009) adds that qualitative research allows researchers to engage with individuals within their social and cultural contexts. Building on these advantages, qualitative design is the most appropriate method for exploring how villagers use social media to promote development in rural areas. I employed a purposive sampling technique to select 50 respondents from Insiza. Data collection was conducted through in-depth interviews, targeting participants who were 18 years old and above and owned a smartphone. The collected data was analysed and categorised into relevant themes, as presented in the following section.

4. Findings and Discussion

The following section presented the findings of the study

4.1 Adoption of Social media Sites at the Village level

To gauge the level of adoption of social media sites in the Insiza rural community, participants were questioned on how they use various platforms. Sixty-four per cent of the participants highlighted

that they use both Facebook and WhatsApp. An additional thirty-six per cent of the studied population indicated that they use WhatsApp only. These statistics confirm not only that social media platforms have been embraced by the villagers, but also that many users prefer WhatsApp to Facebook. These results corroborate the perspective of earlier scholars who argued that social media platforms are characterised by their borderless and inclusive nature. Wittkower's (2010) observation that social media has overcome spatial and temporal limitations, thereby empowering individuals to choose from a diverse range of virtual communities, is particularly pertinent in this context. In this scenario, and by leveraging the pervasive reach of social media, development practitioners can tap into its potential to propel village-level development initiatives.

4.2 Accessibility of Social Media Platforms

As respondents indicated that they use Facebook and WhatsApp, I then analysed the frequency with which they access these platforms. The findings showed that a staggering 86% of participants use WhatsApp daily, implying a near-ubiquitous state of connectivity among users, with most being available 24/7. Consequently, WhatsApp emerges as a viable tool for disseminating information to enhance development at the village level. Participant 4 buttressed this observation by saying; *I chat on WhatsApp with friends and relatives here at the village every day...* Participant 11 echoed similar sentiments; *I am always on WhatsApp day and night; anytime I chat with different people, some who are family members and some who are not related to me.* These results support Lachapelle's (2011) argument that social media are a means of cascading information to wider audiences, where recipients can also play an active role. Contrary to this result, Participants 1, 3, 26, 36, and 44 concurred that they frequently access Facebook and WhatsApp platforms, but inadequate network infrastructure is an obstacle. They indicated that they sometimes go for hours without a network connection in their areas.

Research results also highlight that Facebook is not extensively used in Insiza, with data affordability being the main constraint. Participant 2 stated, *I want to access Facebook, but I cannot afford to buy data for it. If I had money, I could utilise both Facebook and WhatsApp, but I do not have enough money, as I am unemployed.* Also, Participant 17 pointed out that the high cost of data and deepening poverty levels in the village affect her social media accessibility: *I cannot afford to buy data for Facebook because I need to buy food for my family. As I speak, food for my children is not enough at home. I must balance things. If I access WhatsApp, which is the platform used by many people in this area, it is enough.* These findings suggest that the potential of social media to drive development at the village level is restricted by financial constraints. Despite their enthusiasm, villagers are often limited to using a single platform, with WhatsApp being the preferred choice due to its popularity and user-friendly interface. This finding resonates with Ukomadu's (2018) argument that high data costs are a significant barrier to effective social media utilisation. Data is a critical enabler of online participation, and its absence can greatly diminish the benefits of social media.

4.3 Can the WhatsApp Platform facilitate Community Development?

Following Schutte's (2016) argument that community participation is essential for successful community development initiatives, I explored participants' engagement with community development WhatsApp groups. It was found that most rural people are not part of community development WhatsApp groups. Sixty-four per cent of WhatsApp users indicated that they are not members of any community WhatsApp group where developmental issues are discussed. Only thirty-six per cent of the members revealed that they belong to WhatsApp groups that discuss development matters. These results suggest that while villagers are increasingly embracing social media, they are not necessarily using it to promote development in their areas, contrary to Shailashree's (2019) emphasis on social media as a grassroots development resource. Participant 43, for instance, revealed that many people in his village use social media platforms for communicating non-community development messages: *"We use WhatsApp to send messages, and share jokes, pictures, and videos. We do not have developmental groups in this area."* Participant 31 commented, *"I use WhatsApp to communicate with my husband who works in town. I also communicate with other relatives and friends concerning life issues."*

Participant 19 echoed similar sentiments: *"I have never heard about a development group in this village; perhaps it is something we must consider. I am noticing that it is something we must have. We will try to create one. The groups that we have are family groups where we discuss our family issues."* Considering these findings, social media is underutilised in enhancing developmental initiatives. However, the platforms have brought about a paradigm shift in village-level communication, rendering geographical distances insignificant and fostering a sense of global connectivity. The results support Lallana's (2015) view that "social media helps to build intentional communities of common concerns and convictions" (p. 26). Consistent with this perspective, Medoff and Kaye (2011) contend that social network sites facilitate interactive communication, allowing individuals to engage in meaningful dialogue and collaboration at the grassroots level.

4.4 Can the Facebook Platform Enhance Community Development?

This study also examined Facebook's capacity to facilitate community development in Insiza. Informed by Shailashree's (2019) perspective on the critical role of effective grassroots communication systems in rural development, it was revealed that Facebook is not commonly used by participants, with users primarily leveraging the platform to reconnect with friends and acquaintances. Participant 21 stated: *"I have never posted anything about community development. I use Facebook to post my pictures for my friends to see. I also share my achievements and feelings. Whenever there is a burning issue, I throw it on Facebook to see people's reactions and comments."* Participant 35 also indicated: *"I access my Facebook account frequently to check on news updates. Facebook contains a lot of news sites where I read for free, so whenever I want to read news, I just go to Facebook. I also chat with friends, especially those in South Africa. I have never seen a story about the development of our area on Facebook."* Consistent with the underutilisation of WhatsApp, the results suggest that Facebook is not being leveraged to support development initiatives at the village level. Although this finding may seem counterintuitive to community development principles, it resonates with Bhatnagar and Schwarze's (2000) argument that "social media have enabled the people in virtual communities to use words on screens to exchange pleasantries and argue, engage in intellectual discourse, make plans, brainstorm, gossip, fall in love, create a little art and a lot of idle talk" (p. 4). The findings also align with Svensson's (2015) view that social media sites are tools of municipal engagement that do not empower citizens. In line with this, the penetration of Facebook in the village does not automatically translate to its effective use in promoting development.

On the other hand, Participants 41, 1, 7, 9, and 17 indicated that they created a Facebook page for their old school, where other former students joined. The group aims to assist their former school with resources. It is paramount to note that the idea of creating their school's Facebook platform resonates with the principles of participatory development theory, which emphasises the significance of information sharing in solving developmental hurdles. However, the participants indicated that the school's Facebook platform is not fully utilised for its intended purpose. *"We have a Facebook page for our former school; I am a member of it. It is a closed group; you can see it if you open Facebook, but you cannot see what we discuss; you must seek permission to join... We normally share various stories, especially reminding each other about our school days and how teachers used to treat us,"* stated Participant 41. This lack of effective development engagement on Facebook can be attributed to factors such as a lack of coordination and control. Members tend to post topics of their choice because of the absence of strict rules that guide them and tie them to the aim of the platform. This result is in line with Guru's (2011) observation that "grassroots communication systems must be managed in terms of developing an appropriate communication network and coordinating the communication activities to aid the rural development activities" (p. 12).

5. Challenges encountered in adopting social media platforms to facilitate development

Inspired by Aruleba and Jere's (2022) identification of the challenges facing rural areas in adopting social media, I explored the difficulties social media users encounter when engaging in

developmental discourses. It emerged that users rarely participate in discussions on developmental topics. Seventy-two per cent of participants felt that social media users are more active when jokes are shared than when a community development topic is posted. Participant 2 stated, *"Whenever a developmental topic is under discussion, a quarter of the group members participate; the rest remain quiet; they do not talk. They only appear when they want to share jokes and trending issues."* Additionally, participant 48 revealed, *"Our WhatsApp group has rules; matters that are not related to development, including jokes, are not allowed, but people always post them. At first, we were strict; those who shared irrelevant content were removed, but nowadays people just post what they want."* This behaviour may be attributed to several factors, such as lack of interest and the financial incapacity of users to take part in developmental initiatives. As highlighted by Mohale (2020), the adoption of social media can be a double-edged sword, yielding both positive and negative outcomes that must be carefully considered. The success of developmental projects hinges on individuals' ability to pool resources together. Nevertheless, a substantial majority of respondents (62%) identified lack of capital as a significant barrier to their participation in such projects, despite their enthusiasm. Building on this result, the paper reiterates that lack of capital is one of the contributors that negatively affects the use of social media to facilitate development at the community level. While Omale and Ebiloma (2005) discovered that community development is primarily about actions taken by community members themselves to improve their areas, this study's results indicate that villagers possess a nuanced understanding of their community's developmental needs but are unable to translate this awareness into tangible actions due to lack of capacity and resources, perpetuating poverty.

6. Conclusions and Recommendations

The evidence presented above supports the following conclusions: While many scholars have over-emphasised social media's ability to integrate users, I conclude that the potential of social media to drive development at the village level is currently exaggerated, given the numerous gaps that must be bridged before meaningful results can be expected. The potential of social media platforms to empower rural development is hindered by poor coordination, negative attitudes, network connectivity challenges, and financial constraints, leaving villagers unable to harness available opportunities. Social media users are fragmented, making it difficult to mobilise them to achieve development goals. Instead of enhancing development initiatives, online platforms are primarily used for one-to-one personal communication, neglecting their potential for broader social and economic impact. Effective collaborative engagement is lacking among social media users, making it difficult to utilise these sites for development purposes. This article also concludes that WhatsApp dominates the social media landscape in rural communities, serving as the preferred platform for communication. WhatsApp is the most popular and user-friendly platform for people in the village. Considering the findings and conclusions, the following prescriptions are given:

In line with Guru's (2011) assertion that "grassroots communication systems must be managed in terms of developing an appropriate communication network..." (p. 12), I suggest that development project officials create WhatsApp groups that include all villagers in a particular area, allowing them to interact online. Once villagers are accustomed to online discussions, they can establish local platforms. This will enable government and non-governmental organisations to encourage, supervise, and guide community members in achieving development goals. As social media has been embraced by villagers, there is a need to educate users on how to effectively utilise these sites to facilitate developmental initiatives in their areas. Villagers must be organised into small groups or committees that can deliberate on specific issues affecting their communities. Through social media, villagers can be given opportunities to propose solutions to their problems. Development coordinators should be introduced to guide social media users on the best ways to utilise platforms to promote community development.

Considering the study's findings, which showed that villagers are financially incapacitated to contribute resources needed to support developmental initiatives, there is a need for funding. Once funds are available, they will motivate villagers to contribute non-monetary resources such as labour and other necessary skills. Involving the villagers will also help to establish a sense of ownership, whereby they see themselves as owners of the project. Villagers should be encouraged to establish community WhatsApp groups where they can report developmental gaps in their areas and receive updates on the progress of developmental initiatives at a broader level. Lastly, those villagers who are illiterate should be encouraged to use audio features on WhatsApp platforms to share their views.

References

- Adelaja, O. (2013). The impact of social media on the social, political, and economic environments in Africa. In A. Olorunnisola & A. Douai (Eds.), *New media influence on social and political change in Africa* (pp. 319–335). IGI Global Scientific Publishing. <https://doi.org/10.4018/978-1-4666-4197-6.ch019>
- Aruleba, K., & Jere, N. (2022). Exploring digital transforming challenges in rural areas of South Africa through a systematic review of empirical studies. *Elsevier*, 16, 1-13. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sciaf.2022.e01190>
- Badar, F. (2018). Guy Bessette. Involving the community: A guide to participatory development communication. *Journal of Media Studies*, 33(2), 109-115. https://pu.edu.pk/images/journal/ICS/PDF/07_V_33_2_2018.pdf
- Baym, N. K., & Boyd, D. (2012). Socially mediated publicness: An introduction. *Journal of Broadcasting and Electronic Media*, 56(3), 320–329. <https://doi.org/10.1080/08838151.2012.705200>
- Bessette, G. (2003). Participatory development communication: Reinforcing the participatory NRM research and action process. <http://www.idrc.ca/fr/ev-85055-201-1>
- Bhanye, J., Shayamunda, R., & Tavirai, R. C. (2023). *Social media in the African context: A review study on benefits and pitfalls*. *The Palgrave Handbook of Global Social Problems*. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-68127-2_366-1
- Bussu, S. (2016). Big Local online: The social media presence of Big Local: How areas are using social networks. Local Trust. https://localtrust.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/local_trust_big_local_social_media.pdf
- Domegan, C., & Fleming, D. (2007). *Marketing research in Ireland: Theory and practice*. Gill and MacMillan.
- Ghriga, N., Shang, R., & Shurriah, R. (2016). Tracking community development from social media. *International Conference on Information Systems (ISD2016 Poland)*, 413-420. <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/330466613>
- Guru, M. C. (2011). *Grassroots development communication*. Sarup Book Publishers.
- Kaplan, A., & Haenlein, H. (2010). Users of the world, unite! The challenges and opportunities of social media. *Business Horizons*. <http://openmediart.com/log/pics/sdarticle.pdf>
- Here is the corrected text in APA 7th edition style:
- Lachapelle, P. (2011). The use of social networking in community development. *Community Development Society*, Spring, 17, 2-8. <https://www.ruralsehub.net/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/the-use-of-social-networking-in-community-development.pdf>
- Lallana, E. C. (2015). *Exploring social media's role in development*. United Nations Asian and Pacific Training Centre for Information and Communication Technology for Development. <https://repository.unescap.org/handle/20.500.12870/5323>

- Mbagwu, F., Kaledoye, U., Ekwealor, N., Osilike, C., & Okeke, N. (2019). *The place of social media in community development: Implications for community-based education*. *Journal of Engineering and Applied Sciences*, 14(2), 5382-5384. <https://www.mendeley.com/catalogue/474bac2b-875b-3093-af79-b4ea0e0a6244/>
- McCosker, A. (2015). *Social media activism at the margins: Managing visibility, voice, and vitality effects*. *Social Media + Society*, 1(2). <https://doi.org/10.1177/2056305115605860>
- Medoff, N. J., & Kaye, B. (2011). *Electronic media: Then, now, and later*. Elsevier, 269-281. <https://shop.elsevier.com/books/electronic-media/medoff/978-0-240-81256-4>
- Mohale, G. T. (2020). The implications of social media use on development in Africa: A development theory perspective. *Global Journal of Management and Business Research: G Interdisciplinary*, 20(1), 63-72.
- Murungi, K. M. (2018). Influence of social media on community development: Lessons from Kenya. *International Journal of Social Science and Technology*, 3(6). <https://www.ijssstr.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/3.October-2018.pdf>
- Omale, I., & Ebiloma, J. A. (2005). *Principles and practice of community development in Nigeria*. Aboki Publishers.
- Omar, A. S., & Ondimu, K. O. (2024). The impact of social media on society: A systematic literature review. *The International Journal of Engineering and Science*, 13(6), 96-107. <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/381800701>
- Paek, H. J., Hove, T., Jung, Y., & Cole, R. T. (2013). Engagement across three social media platforms: An exploratory study of a cause-related PR campaign. *Public Relations Review*, 39(5), 526-533. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pubrev.2013.09.013>
- Rashi, R., & Rafiq, M. N. (2018). Impact of social media on community development in District Swat, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. *International Journal of Scientific & Engineering Research*, 9(4), 1509-1520. <https://www.ijser.org/researchpaper/Impact-of-Social-Media-on-Community-Development-in-District-Swat-Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa.pdf>
- Sandberg, A. (2009). Intuitive pirates: Why do we accept file sharing so much? <https://blog.practicaethics.ox.ac.uk/2009/04/intuitive-pirates-why-do-we-accept-file-sharing-so-much/>
- Shailashree, B. (2019). Social media for grassroots development. *International Journal of Humanities and Social Science Invention*, 8(2), 27-33. [https://www.ijhssi.org/papers/vol8\(2\)/Ser%20-%201/F0802012733.pdf](https://www.ijhssi.org/papers/vol8(2)/Ser%20-%201/F0802012733.pdf)
- Schutte, D. W. (2016). Community development and participation: A conceptual revisit. <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/307560360>
- Svensson, L. (2015). Empowering rural youth with Facebook: Lessons from a local Swedish case study. *Community Development Journal*, 51(3), 436-451. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/26165074>
- Ukomadu, C. (2018). The role of social media in community development in Nigeria: The Owe Unity Forum (Oaf) model. *Journal of Humanities and Social Science*, 23(5), 34-43. <https://doi.org/10.9790/0837-2305083443>
- Wittkower, D. E. (2010). *A reply for Facebook critics*. In D. E. Wittkower (Ed.), *Facebook and philosophy*. Chicago and La Salle, IL.