

Community Theatre and Development Practices in the Nyanza Region of Kenya

by

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Abstract

Positing Community Theatre as an agency for development and is an effective way to encourage community dialogue, this article interrogates practices and efficacies of Community Theatre in Nyanza, Kenya. While contending that it has the potential to build developmental consciousness among community members on social issues affecting them, the study argues that Community Theatre provides an interesting way to explore cultural, socio-economic and developmental realities, thereby changing the way people think, socialize and act. Based on selected Community Theatre performances in Nyanza, this article analyses the practice and efficacy of Community Theatre as a social construction that is produced, regulated and consumed within specific cultural frameworks. Anchored in qualitative research, participant observation and post-performance discussions were used in data collection. The data responses obtained were organized into thematic analysed and interpreted strands, and thus, the findings show that Community Theatre is a crucial space in communities that can increase social issue awareness, influence beliefs and attitudes, prompt action, increase utilization of and support for services, explore popular misconceptions, and strengthen community support for recommended practices. Hence, Community Theatre is a safe space where communities can explore difference, question everyday life, and say the unsayable.

Critical Foundations of Community Theatre

Theatre was born societal. The embryo from which it has grown is the collectively motivated performance of massive societies. Its functions have no value in isolation to society. That is why Boal (1979) heavily underlines the social function of theatre. The divorce between theatre and society begins with the traditional assumption that theatre as any other branch of art can be fundamentally tied to the imperatives of “Art for Art’s Sake”. This assumption deliberately reiterates the archaic identity of theatre and alienates its value from society.

However, as opposed to this predated conceptual framework that demands the practice of theatre for pure artistic purposes; several types of new perspectives have been developing. Boal’s *Theatre of the Oppressed* (1979), Brecht’s *Epic Theatre* (1874), Baraka’s *Black Theatre* (1965) and Grotowsky’s *Poor Theatre* (1968) are some but a few of the flourishing concepts of theatre. In spite of their minor technical differences, all these concepts tend to agree for the reunification of theatre and society. In his *The Revolutionary Theatre*, Baraka (1965) points out that theatre should be revolutionary and inspire change in society. In congruence to this, Kershaw (1992) opines “... We must move beyond formalist analysis, -which treats theatre as if it were independent of its social and political environment-and consider performance as a cultural construct and as a means of cultural production” (p.5). Thus, the concept of Community Theatre itself is an integral part of the change that basically constitutes cultural movements (Kershaw, 1992). This is based on the observation that theatre, as an art, cannot be separated from the socio-cultural environment where it occurs.

In order to spur transformation in society, a number of theatre forms have emerged such as Theatre for Development (TfD), Community Theatre, Theatre in Education (TIE), popular theatre, Theatre for social change, Theatre of Necessity, and Participatory theatre. According to Byam (1999), TfD is “a phrase in the framework of theatre nomenclature, which was coined in Botswana in 1973 to describe an approach that attempted to reconcile Freirian concepts to a development project that used theatre as the stimulus that emerged from the quagmire of theatre terms with the distinct purpose of using theatre as a vehicle, a code to raising consciousness” (p.25). Thus, TfD is characterised by active participation of the community in which it is taking place, during which they identify their problems, reflect on how and why the problems affect them, and with the insights gained through an engagement with theatre performance, explore possible solutions. The goal of TfD is to stimulate community consciousness and reflection towards social transformation. TfD has also been referred to as popular theatre, Applied Drama or Theatre (Somers, 2004), Participatory Theatre, Community Theatre, Theatre for Social Change (Idoye, 1996), Theatre of Social Engagement (Kershaw, 1992), and Theatre of Necessity (Irobi, 2006). Noteworthy is that TfD has been widely utilized over the years by governments in Africa to promote state agenda on issues such as hygiene, birth control, agriculture, and effective methods for producing cash crops.

Jackson and Vine (2013) defines Theatre in Education succinctly as “a coordinated and carefully structured pattern of activities, usually devised and researched by the company, around a topic of relevance both to the school curriculum and to the children’s own lives, presented in school by the company and involving the children directly in an experience of the situations and problems that the topic throws up” (p.4). Despite the fact that there is a considerable overlap between Theatre in Education and Tfd, the two differ in terms of focus and target audience.

Kuftenic (2001) notes that the roots of Community Theatre can be traced to the liberation struggle of the 1960s and 1970s, where Community Theatre was used to rally the people to participate in the struggle. In this sense, he refers to Community Theatre as “community based” or “grassroots” theatre (p.2). Kuftenic further argues that Community Theatre shares generic similarities with Drama and Theatre-in-Education and concludes that this type of theatre is usually not seen as popular or mainstream theatre, and can take on various forms (p.2). However, it is imperative to point out that in Africa (Kenya being no exception), there is a seemingly an intrinsic relationship between Tfd and Community Theatre. The two forms of theatre are often viewed as one and the same. However, in framing our interpretation of Community Theatre in this article, we considered Tfd as a primary contributor to Community Theatre whereas Theatre in Education was framed as a secondary influence and contributor in support of the key principles of the use of Community Theatre.

In this article, we view Community Theatre as the drama for a community that appropriates artistic practices for its own desires, which are not always in accordance with those of mainstream Applied Theatre practices. It is as a practice of using theatre as an agency for development and education in a given community predicated on highly participatory methodologies. This conceptualization concurs with Cohen-Cruz (1999) who avers that “community based-theatre, a popular mode allied with identity politics and targeting under-represented groups in quest for collective expression” (p.115). Thus, it enables the powerless social groups to confront the governing systems of values, symbols and beliefs in the community.

It is important to note that Community Theatre is concerned with addressing an entire society’s way of life while Theatre for Development is always engaged in a specific developmental issue. Despite the fact that Community Theatre borrows a lot from Theatre for Development in terms of planning, its overall focus is the lifestyles and longitudinal social patterns of a people, often considered as Theatre for Social Change. Objectively, Community Theatre is not only about education, development or change, but it also interrogates the socio-cultural and geopolitical living conditions of people.

The central model of Community Theatre performances in Nyanza is the use of local life materials and traditional modes of communication. For instance, George, a leader of Bageka Community Theatre group, makes a clarion call “abanto ba’ minto igwa” (our people listen) with the vocal shape and range, the audience, which is part of the performance, responds “eeeeee ntotegererete” (yes, we are listening). This antiphonal structure continued until the leader is satisfied with the attentiveness of his audience then proceeds to render the intended message to them. This incident is one of the many traditional markers of message delivery. Noteworthy is that all public events in the rural Nyanza region oscillate in the diachronic continuum of traditional practices and contemporary modes of performance.

The above observation corresponds with Johansson (2011) who argues that Community Theatre “is a highly mobile and challenging phenomenon which cuts through cultural layers of time and space as well as demographic and generational difference” (p.5). Far from elite theatre performances, the majority of Community Theatre groups in the region make use of oration, drumming, dancing, drumming, storytelling, dramatic dialogue and post-performance discussions in the interactive sphere of performance with spectators (community members). During the performances, more often than not, there is a blurred distinction between the performers and the spectators as members of the community often respond spontaneously by joining the performers.

Further, Johansson points out that Community Theatre readily alters between registers of style, aesthetics and vernacular (p.5). This proposition rendered itself clear to us as we observed various theatre groups in the region perform to their respective communities. Vernacular languages (*Dholuo*, *Ekegusii* and *Kuria*) dominated the performances as performers took the spectators through various issues affecting their communities. For example, Mwangaza a Community theatre group operating in Siaya County took the audience through the spatial-temporary memory of wife inheritance through the enactment of the *tero buru* ritual. In this, the group projected a vision of communal continuity different from the traditional conceptualization as envisaged in the practice of wife inheritance hence urging the people to abandon the age-old cultural practice which has been rendered obsolete with modern ways of ensuring communal continuity, given the HIV/AIDS pandemic. Similar diachronic performances were witnessed in theatre groups working among the Abagusii and Kuria. In these and many other cases analysed here, the alteration between traditional practices, long-established aesthetics, and local languages meet the present-day issues which cut across taboos, beliefs and tacit cultures in the region. Thus, Community Theatre is indeed the most site-specific cultural practice and mode of intervention used in sensitizing communities in the region on issues affecting them, and also noteworthy is that its local adaptability depends on its malleability and exchangeable elements (Johansson, 2011).

Community Theatre is framed as a unit of the holistic cultural activities in a community. It creates its own context in the community as there could not be an already established audience. By doing this involves the larger cultural scenario of the community (Kershaw, 1992: 6-7). 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 of asserting their own identity and achieving “cultural, social, economic, and political equity” (p.122). Culture helps the process of Community Theatre begin with a new context and structure along with the ideological identification/transaction, direct participation, and real needs of the community. Above all, every activity that makes Community Theatre has to be embedded in the cultural context of the larger community.

Community Theatre gives first hand opportunities to community members to participate in the creation and performance of community dramas. The direct participation of community members in this dramaturgical process has a couple of advantages. It helps to meet in the performance one of the decisive elements of Community Theatre such as “creating a sense of ownership in the participants’ own cultural heritage” (Kellin, 2001: 155). This sense of the community’s cultural heritage also bears signs and materials that could show, as Kershaw (1992) argues, the overall socio-political and economic structure of the community (p.246). The participation of the community in the process of dramaturgy is thus very imperative in that it helps to capture the gist of the community’s storytelling, songs and dances. These storytellings, songs and dances are capable of demonstrating ideologies of the community that are both dominant and oppositional.

Community Theatre is also concerned with drawing attention to and/or revealing the hidden stories of a community (Prentki & Preston, 2009:9). The community members are thus the “drivers” of the creative input and create grassroots reflection and performance in a shared collective form of socio-cultural empowerment (van Erven, 2001: 2-3). As described by van Erven, the collective story of the community becomes the impetus for change and as such any move towards development lies within the community. This can instill a sense of agency as communities can gain a greater understanding of their situation and can make informed decisions regarding their communities and themselves (Govan, Nicholson & Normington, 2007: 82). Prentki and Selman (2001) assert that community theatre, like Theatre for Development, holds the opportunity for development where communities speak for themselves through theatre and do not rely on external, centralized “theatres” that speaks for townships, rural settlements and the suburbs (p.120).

It is against this background that this article sets out to explore the potential of Community Theatre beyond mere cultural interventions in society to posit a geopolitical and socio-economic development agenda in communities through generating a unique process by which they can dialogue and also dare to offer imagined solutions to issues affecting them.

Research Design

This article engaged a qualitative research approach. Strauss and Cobin (2007) view qualitative research as research that is not produced by means of statistical or other quantifying procedures, but rather seeks to gain understanding of an object or phenomenon studied through exploration and acknowledgement that the object/phenomenon of study changes depending on the way in which the object is perceived and interrogated. Qualitative research can be used to research on lived experiences, emotions, performances and socio-cultural phenomena. Rather producing concrete answers to questions posed in this study, the conclusions drawn enabled the writers to argue that the practice of Community Theatre among communities in Nyanza has impacted on their lives. The practice and efficacy of Community Theatre as the frame of reference for this study influenced the study of the approach and use of Community Theatre in Nyanza.

In accordance with McMillan and Schumacher's (1993: 373) thinking, this study viewed reality as multidimensional, as interactive and as a shared social experience that is interpreted by individuals. This supports the notion that knowledge and meaning are not created in isolation from contexts (Freire, 2006:11-12). This study approached the practice and efficacy of Community Theatre among communities in Nyanza as an interactive and shared social experience in the community. In line with Strauss and Corbin's (2007) views on qualitative research procedures, this study also followed procedures of information collection such as reviewing documented sources on Community Theatre, its practices, communicative aesthetics and reflections on how it impacts on communities, thus, we collected data from the field using data collection methods outlined below.

Primary Data Collection Methods

This study espoused two methods of data collection because we noted that a "good research usually benefits from the use of a combination of methods. In other words, researchers should not only consider that which is the most appropriate method for the study of their chosen topics or problem but also what combination of research methods will produce a better and deeper understanding of it" (Hansen *et al*, 1998:1). The methods that we employed were participant observation and post-performance discussion. Hence, this study relied on participant observation as a method of data collection. Hansen *et al* (1998:3) notes that, "participant observation can be one of the most exciting, challenging and potentially rewarding of all mass communication research methods." With the help of the Community Theatre officials, we observed community members as we actively participated in theatre activities such as dancing, acting, and singing to mention but a few.

We also observed community members perform live on stage, and we observed community members discuss in groups the performances they had been watching. Observation therefore made us part and parcel of Community Theatre and helped us create rapport, win their trust, and collect first-hand information from the participants.

And second, post-performance discussions were also utilized in collecting data for this study. The main aim was to uncover audience's reactions, reflections and trajectories on issues raised by the performances. The audience was divided into smaller groups, separate groups for females and males as well as those of the youth and elders, depending on the situation and sensitivity of issues under discussion. Largely, the post-performance discussions centred on ways the audience perceived what they had watched, the meanings they ascribed and/or accrued from the performances, the feelings, and the attitudes and emotions they experienced. The discussions also sought to clarify and contextualise performance sensibilities and suggested interventions. Post-performance discussions allowed multiple views, new ideas, a renegotiation of ideas and audience consensus building on issues raised by the performances, enabling the researchers to gain valuable insights and articulate responses on the potential of Community Theatre to spur various discourses in society.

Data Analysis

Data analysis involved searching for patterns of data in the form of recurrent behaviors moving from the description of empirical data to the interpretation of meaning. Findings from participant observation and post-performance discussions were recorded, transcribed and then analysed. Data generated was sorted and arranged into different themes and later organized into categories (coding) in readiness for analysis. In our analysis of the findings, we engaged thematic content analysis which moves beyond counting explicit words or phrases and focuses on identifying and describing implicit and explicit ideas within the data (Bernard and Ryan, 2010). This article gave primacy to the practices and efficacy of Community Theatre among community members established through the targeted audiences' perceptions, attitudes and experiences of the performances that they watched collectively. Using systematic thematic content analysis, we also organized responses into thematic strands and synthesized this body of information into a structured qualitative narrative.

Interpretation and Discussion of the Findings

The Community Theatre performances attracted huge crowds of people. Despite the grim topics and motives, performances were regularly enlivened by eager audience comments and roaring laughter during and/or at the end of each performance. The crowds were largely mixed in nature with men, women, children, young and the old alike participating in the performances and post-performance discussion.

Our findings show that Community Theatre performances in the region were largely organized in a process epitomizing site-specific features of the region not by means of a prescribed order, but rather by a participatory popular dimension from actors and spectators. Notably, when development determinants and/or risk factors were identified and mapped out by a local theatre performances on their turf, attempts were made to demystify such developmental issues in the performances based on a people's shared experiences, thereby urging the people to take up agency towards development. Often issues such as innovative farming methods and diversification, poor infrastructure, and environmental conservation were articulated from both the performances and post-performance discussion in which self-reflective discussions ensued. The community theatre performances, therefore, were able to provoke public responses with a perlocutionary efficacy that led to change of mindsets and people's perceptions towards development in their areas.

Evidently, the various community theatre performances' luminal interfaces between the social and the artistic values were enacted with a negligible representational distance. This is so because most of the issues explored were as though particular strips of daily behavior were grafted onto a shared arena and set into a performance at a slightly elevated tempo and heightened mood. This was evident from the performers' manner of speaking, allusions, jokes, choice of props, intrigues raised and from the rest of the elements of performances were, to say the least, lifelike - a situation where and when the people play people, to paraphrase Mda (1993).

More importantly, most of the performances that we witnessed showed a latent understanding of issues affecting the people and relied on ingenious use of local language colour, which involved the appropriation of local proverbs, wise sayings, local figures of speech, and other witty colloquial expressions in relaying the intended messages to the audience. However, at the end of the day, familiar theatrical qualities became less significant compared to the open-ended post-performance discussions where issues related to development as predicated in the performances were discussed at length and without fear of victimization. In this way, community theatre performances prompted a shared sensibility for what lies behind abstract development concepts in the region to actual, and easily understandable, real concepts that the people could identify with.

Findings from Usonga and Yala areas of Siaya County showed that Community Theatre not only invents new ways of acting out issues affecting people in the area, but it also represents a viable alternative to communal practices as well as daily discourses. This implies that the performativity Community Theatre or put differently, the commanding effects of artistic innovations and social regulations, not only enacted contentious issues in the County but also (re)negotiated their agency. For instance, the contestations that underlie wife inheritance were widely explored in theatre performances in Usonga and Yala areas. Despite the modern day social advancements, wife inheritance is rife in Siaya County. In one of the performances titled "The Little Secrets" by Mwangaza Community Theatre group in Yala, wife inheritance was a key focus. The play's storyline highlighted the vicious cycle of wife inheritance and the dangers it posed to the social development of society.

The play revolved around a widow who had just endured the mourning period, but showed signs of distress. It later turned out that her brother-in-law had appropriated almost all the material wealth left to her by her late husband in his quest to inherit her. Not willing to be inherited, the widow decided to seek legal redress on the matter. Though a bold step, the widow was shown being in a legal quandary because of the moral authority of the legal system regardless of the fact that she knew too well that the law was on her side. This situation was further prompted by the fact that rumour went round that her brother-in-law had oiled the judge's hands before rendering the final judgment on the matter. The widow's fears came to bear because what followed was a pig show in that the judge ruled in favour of her brother-in-law.

In utter disbelief of the turn of events, some members of the audience clapped their hands, whistled and shook their heads. This taciturn at the end of the performance created an entry point into post-performance discussions. The critical questions that we sought to answer through the debates were: what is the view of the audience in regard to the customary practice of wife inheritance, the legal system, and what needed to be done in order for the community to move forward? Despite the fact that the debates were heated, the participants were in agreement that corruption, repugnant norms and practices, disrespecting individual rights and freedoms and all forms of gender discrimination were key contributors to underdevelopment in the region. A common consensus was reached that for the area to move forward and to realize its development, there was need for the people to join hands and fight such vices from their midst.

At the Manga division of Nyamira County, a play titled "Me; Over My Dead Body" by Kerora Community Theatre was performed more than five times in the different villages, culminating into a grand performance during the division's 2014 Madaraka day celebrations. The play was based on a long-running problem of inter-clan leadership tussles which have held back meaningful development in the division. Reconciliation efforts were underlined at the tail end of the play as the performance focused on what can be achieved with a united effort. Out of nowhere, immediately, the play came to an end during the Madaraka celebrations, a joker stepped into the acting area and asked the people what they were going to do. The joker posed: "Was it a fair depiction?"

Do these things happen among us? And so, what are we going to do?" A deafening silence followed immediately as the Joker walked away from the podium. Some of the area leaders seated in the main dais exchanged glances while others held their head in between their hands and looked down. The Joker's action and utterances can be read as one of the many ways of emphasizing the participatory dimension in Community Theatre practices (Mda, 1993 and Johansson, 2011). And in this way, as Johansson (2011) emphasizes, the spectator assumes a double role as a theatrical witness and social player in the communal events.

At the Marani division of Kisii County, a performance titled “Lest we forget” by Minto Community Theatre provoked action among members of the community. The play’s storyline illustrated the consequences and/or significance of local problems and issues, thereby engendering discussions and possible solutions to the problems identified. The play highlighted problems such as the near-absent accessible road networks, lack of health centres, alcoholism, and inappropriate farming in the area. Interesting to note of the performance is how it was able to situate the region’s development discourse within the communal time and space. The performance broke into song detailing their view of development in the area, thus:

..... Let’s get together, young, old, male, female... we all know that discord is the problem to development. Look the people of Bobasi, they have a good road now, because of their unity; the people of Bonchari have a good market now, because of their harmony; the people of Boraru have clean water now, because of their organisation...

The above song exemplifies how development activities get lyrically inscribed in community theatre performances as a clarion call for people to work together for a common goal. The song provocatively takes a roll-call of activities that have been attained as a result of unity, harmony and organisation, as key antidotes to development. The song ends with a call for the people to unite if development is to be attained in the area

Notable in post-performance discussions that ensued is that the debates centred on underdeveloped in the area which was hinged on poor leadership. Large and unsustainable families and trigger factors such as poverty, poor education, rampant alcoholism, increased rates of crime, and pressure on available arable land were also discussed. The community members were all in agreement that there is a need to change their lifestyles and work together to develop their area. The post-performance discussions made the people in the area see the need to revamp an earlier abandoned colonial dug-out as a means of providing alternative clean drinking water instead of drinking from polluted streams.

The discussions also made them see the need to embark on a self-help counter-funded mini-water borehole project and later a health centre in the area. This realization is echoed by Habtu (2006) who observes that Community Theatre is a rather participatory theatre in which the people themselves engage issues about their own lives for their immediate consumption which promotes development by stimulating dialogue within them using their own familiar artistic expressions like songs, dances, proverbs, mimes, local norms, cultures, etcetera.

In the case of Community Theatre performances at Kihancha, Ntimaru, and Kegonga areas, actors and spectators were up against a historical trajectory with scenarios not only of colonial disruptions of social structures, but also a domestic history of gender inequalities, land ownership and female genital mutilation. The democratic relevancy of Community Theatre towards the development discourse had to do with advocacy in the social, health and economic spheres. Thus, it is imperative to note that ethical and political issues were no doubt intricately linked to the social wellbeing, but in our opinion, issues relating to development outweighed dichotomies like right or wrong, or the political left or right.

In areas like Ntimaru and its rural neighbourhoods, Community Theatre performances that we witnessed focused with even greater agency on various life-threatening calamities such as HIV/AIDs, poverty, and social alienation. In this area, issues to do with banking and sound financial management practices were embedded in the performances, albeit tacitly. It is worth noting that this region is amongst the most underdeveloped with the highest poverty index in Nyanza (GOK, 2013). Theatre performances in this area have therefore devoted their energies on issues related to development and underdevelopment. Socio-cultural issues like schoolgirl pregnancies with trigger factors such as poverty, male-dominated schooling and ensuing premature and forced marriages were highlighted as hindrances towards equitable gender development.

Consequently, post-performance discussions in the area forestalled topical debates on high-rates of school girl drop-outs. On the one hand, school girl pregnancies were related to the paradoxical stance of reproaching youth of their unchecked drinking habits, bad morals and disrespect of traditions that used to prohibit promiscuous lifestyles. On the other hand, the issue made the people acknowledge the failure of the community and parents to guide and supervise youth, let alone engage them with income generating activities or other meaningful activities to develop themselves.

A much more serious critique arose when the misbehavior of the village leadership was divulged. A village sub-chief was heavily reprimanded after it became clear that both he and his son have been responsible for several unwanted pregnancies in the village. The community's actions were in tandem with Chuku-Okoronkwo (2012: 686) who sees community theatre as a process of "discussing development as a group, and catalysing the discussion rather than presenting solution to the community".

Further, Chuku-Okoronkwo (2012) argues that the kind of process of change this theatre prescribes, therefore, is such that emanates endogamously rather than exogenously; such that it builds from within, rather than from outside.

Clearly, we witnessed this kind of change as spirited post-performances debates ensued. For instance, at Ntimaru Township, commanding and passionate pleas were voiced by elders participating in one of the post-performance discussions on the need for development.

Using illocutionary force and belligerent metaphors, the elders decried the poor state of health facilities, the near impassable access roads, and the lack of clean water in the area. The then leadership of the area tried to explain, however, it took on the same to no avail. Eventually, an agreement was reached where the leadership was asked to prioritize provision of health facilities and clean water as part of its immediate development goals in the township. The fact that the leadership of Ntitaru Township was forced to align its development policies in line with the community's requirements underscores the power of community theatre. This concurs with Johansson (2011) who sees community theatre as a forum for redress actions which allows community members to renegotiate the validity of policies and practices, thereby directing development to areas of need.

Conclusions

In the light of the foregoing in assessing the efficacy of Community Theatre as a means to foster development in this region was predicated on two aspects: first, whether the intended purpose of Community Theatre to engender critical debates on socio-economic transformation was accomplished, based on a case by case analysis as shown in our findings? Secondly, whether the Community Theatre performances in one way or another impacted on a people's mindset? Hence, as seen in our analyses of the findings, our assessment of the practice of Community Theatre in Nyanza was broadened to consider its area-specific and democratic potential as a means to foster socio-economic development.

Findings from this study have shown that Community Theatre is a suitable alternative mode of intervention in the socio-economic transformation discourse of an area, considering that it is adaptable to specific social situations rather than to an invariable or fixed mode of expression. Furthermore, our analyses have distinguished Community Theatre as a form of performance that brings together various groups of people in society to dialogue on issues affecting them.

Also, our findings have shown that the specialty of Community Theatre operates by keeping a sharp focus on the local state of affairs in that political, cultural, social and economic issues are explored in community theatre as witnessed in various performances in the region. This auspicious quality can be seen as an antidote to the region's development since community theatre offers micro-political, economic and social solutions to local challenges.

By enacting life-size situations in the public domain; by breaking the silence on issues such as alcoholism, inter-clan wrangles, wife inheritance, poor leadership and development projects which do not ventilate the wishes of the people, the practice of Community Theatre in the region plays a pivotal role in the sensitization and enlightenment of people and thus observed in matters of development, the promoting of the individual, as well as collective consciousness and the offering of sites for people to air their views regarding development matters.

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