

A REPORT ON THE PARTICIPATORY AUDIO AND VIDEO PRODUCTION WORKSHOP

Resource Person- Debarun Dutta

Dated – 22nd January – 26th January 2020

OVERVIEW: The Department of Mass Communication and Journalism, Tezpur University has initiated a workshop from 22nd to 26th of January. It was conducted by Mr. Debarun Dutta, the executive director of Drishti. The workshop gave broad understanding about participatory audio/video, community media.

The workshop was basically done to understand about the concerns of community and development through of participatory audio/video.

The workshop included planning a proper strategy to conduct facilitation to the students, which also involved basic technical training for the students of Fakhruddin Ali Ahmed High School, Tezpur.

The workshop was very beneficial for the students of Borghat and Panchmile, where they were able to learn about the basics of videography and interviewing techniques. On the other hand, we also learned so many useful things from the workshop. It is a very good step to educate the students about the power of a camera and how they can use it as a tool to solve their problems.

The intended output of the workshop was to create three short films on three different issues in the community/school. Of which, topics were decided by the students themselves, we worked as a facilitator throughout the process of making the movies.

A participatory video is a form of participatory media in which a group or community creates its film. The idea behind this is that making a video is easy and accessible, and is a great way of bringing people together to explore issues, voice concerns or simply to be creative and tell stories. It is therefore primarily about the process, though high quality and accessible films (products) can be created using these methods if that is the desired outcome. This process can be very empowering, enabling a group or community to take their action to solve their problems, and also to communicate their needs and ideas to decision-makers and/or other groups and communities. As such, PV can be a highly effective tool to engage and mobilize marginalized people and to help them to implement their forms of sustainable development based on local needs.

1st session begins on 22nd January morning at 10 AM where we discussed poverty and tried to understand it from different angles and then we discussed underprivileged people and also shared our thoughts on that. The 2nd session started at 2:30 PM where we made a pitch document on the issues of the community and school. We made three different documents by three groups and our group made a pitch document on the development of Napam M.V. School and we also made a presentation on that document. We made some blunders in the initial attempt, which Debarun Dutta corrected and from which we acquired some important tips.

The next day 23rd January we interacted with the students of Napam M.V school and F.A.A High school. In the morning session, we interacted with the students of Napam. There was a total of 10 students all were girls and these students gave us some very useful information about their school. The issues that they highlighted were no electric fan facility in their classroom, no drinking water facility in their school and the students also mentioned the poor washroom facility in the school.

The next session (4th session) was started at 3.30 p.m. where we interacted with students of Borghat. These students gave us some serious issues to work on, they told us about the practice of child marriage in their community, noise pollution by their neighbourhood and alcoholic, etc. Some of the students themselves had experienced these issues in their community and they shared their own experiences in the interaction. After selecting three issues we made three groups of students for shooting and scripting three short films. We made our planning for training the students later that evening.

On 24th January, we started to train the students. It was our 5th session of the workshop and in the first phase, we taught the students about the basics of videography through presentations which include different shot sizes, framing, angles, etc. Later we also give them some tips for interviewing people and then we gave them our phones to shoot different shots and to interview each other they were very interested to perform the given tasks and they completed it very easily.

The next day (25th January) the students shot the entire video. There were two boys Biplab and Muksidul both of them handled the camera beautifully and a girl of class X named Himadri interviewed the students and the teachers. We were very happy to see them working very nicely because we just taught them the earlier they and they were doing it with the least flaws.

Later that day we visited a youth club of LGB institute of mental health. Where Debarun Dutta had a session with the club members and he showed us some participatory videos.

We started our editing of the video on 26th January. It was a very long and lengthy process but fortunately, we completed the editing before evening and we screened all three films in the conference hall.

The key challenge of the workshop has to be time management because we had a very short deadline and making a participatory short film takes a lot of time. We have to train the students properly to shoot the film and then we have to complete the shooting and editing in 24 hours. We somehow managed everything by working overtime and we learned a life lesson from this workshop.

From this workshop especially in my case, I learned to never underestimate anyone. These school kids of class IX and X are very talented according to their age. Especially the two boys who handled the camera and the girl who interviewed everyone was doing their work so calmly and perfectly that I never felt to interrupt them at any time. They were doing the same thing that we taught them earlier in the training session and in some cases better than we had expected.

