

AN APPRAISAL OF DEVELOPMENT COMMUNICATION AS A TOOL FOR NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT IN NIGERIA

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Abstract

Any growth process needs effective communication, which is utilized for more than simply information transfer from one person to another. It is often used to make it easier for individuals to engage in developmental activities. Sociologists, psychologists, economists, and communication specialists agree that effective communication helps speed development. To effectively adapt to the possibilities and difficulties of social, economic, cultural, political, and technological changes, citizens often depend on knowledge and information. However, knowledge and information must be successfully transmitted to individuals to be valuable in growth. This highlights the crucial importance of developing communication in any society's discourse. The poor appreciation of the underpinnings of development communication has contributed to the exclusion and isolation of many people especially those at the rural areas from the process of development. Also, the demand on the part of the citizenry for participatory development in addition to substantial improvement seen in terms of technologies and globalization signify that efforts should be put in place by stakeholders in order to bridge the gap between the theory and practice of development. However, in order to achieve this, discussions on what constitutes development communication should be optimized. However, the primary emphasis of this research is on the role that development communication plays in Nigeria's national development. However, there must be more meaningful conversations on what constitutes development communication and a persistent interest and commitment by all stakeholders to the topic. This paper contributes to the effort of others to clarify the idea of development communication through a review of some existing literature under some headings. It also makes recommendations, such that the Nigerian government funds Nigerian mass media institutions to help them become better suited for development communication in the country's interest.

Keywords: Evaluation, Development, Communication for Development, Tool, and National Development

Introduction

The fundamental focus of development communication is the contribution that information and communication make to the social and economic advancement of a person, a community, and a country. It outlines what the media can do, either directly or indirectly, to raise the standard of living for both urban and rural populations. Particularly in development discourse, development and communication have essentially become twin sisters. Successful communication is a prerequisite for adequate growth.

Additionally, good communication indicates that development activities are having an impact. As a result, communication plays a crucial role in development initiatives. Although these two ideas go hand in hand, there is rising worry that the part of communication in development is not fully recognized, particularly in emerging nations. Divergent viewpoints exist regarding the best way to use communication to advance development, particularly in the developing world. Government entities, donor organizations,

research institutions, non-governmental organisations (N.G.O.s), and community-based organisations (C.B.O.s) are essential players in the development landscape.

Each of these groups has opinions about the function and goal of communication in the development context. This variance exacerbates the possibly incomplete understanding of the function of communication in development discourse. Therefore, it is crucial to implement additional initiatives to increase awareness of the connection between development and communication. Stakeholders in the area of effect must work to advance understanding and appreciation of the significance of these two notions. Inaction transforms development communication into a rhetorical event (Imoh, 2013).

Nowadays, one of the social sciences' most hotly contested terms is "development." The phrase is often used interchangeably with the terms "modernisation," "industrialisation," "social transformation," "progress," and "development," and like these other concepts, it is generally seen as something good and beneficial for the society in general and the community in particular. No matter the society, culture, people, or resources and traditions, development is advocated as a noble aim and considered absolute, inevitable, and universal. All human cultures have had development as one of their aims and ambitions. Given that it attempts to meet everyone's fundamental needs, especially those of the most disadvantaged members of society, it has an intrinsic functional value in improving the populace's socioeconomic status and way of life. The main goals of development should be to provide social fairness and raise the standard of living for its people.

According to Oyebade (2001), development is simply the capacity of a country to establish an effective political and economic structure that may lead to the growth and progress of a nation. This entails a robust economy capable of delivering a higher quality of life for the vast majority of the populace, a sustainable democracy, efficient bureaucracy, accountability in public service, social justice, and human rights. In its simplest form, National Development refers to a country's capacity to provide its citizens with the requirements of a happy life, such as access to quality healthcare, public transportation, and education. A weak economy manifests in pervasive poverty, diminishing quality of living, poor health conditions that increase mortality rates, and a quickly reduced life expectancy for the populace.

The anticipated benefits have not been obtained, particularly in emerging countries, despite efforts to improve the conceptual intents of development communication. The difficulty is compounded in Africa, where, according to Dervin (2019), cited in Imoh (2013), there is a lack of conceptual understanding of development communication. For instance, research has shown that there is still a lack of knowledge of the idea and what it should be used for, despite several training sessions for development communication, also known as communication for development, in the Near East area of Africa. Development communication is often only seen in the Near East as a tool for information collection or pure distribution, which is a minimal view of the idea. Additionally, the area of communication for development seems to

be characterised by some misunderstandings in nations like Ghana and Nigeria, which does nothing to support the theoretical and conceptual components of communication for development. During her research in Ghana, Owusu (2014) found that the country's development practice lacks a proper understanding and use of development communication.

The Concept of Development and Communication

Varied individuals have different interpretations of the idea of development. Others describe it as expansion, advancement, and modernity. However, development is a complex phenomenon that may be seen from various perspectives, including political, social, economic, spiritual, emotional, physical, and intellectual. According to Servaes (1999), development primarily involves increasing the number of commodities and services a nation offers. The lack of it indicates underdevelopment. Development is often thought of as a transition from one condition to another. In essence, development increases the number of products and services a nation can provide. The lack of it indicates underdevelopment.

To raise a particular society's living and economic well-being, policymakers, communities, and non-governmental organisations must make a consistent, concerted effort. Development is another name for the qualitative changes in people's social and economic circumstances (Servaes, 1999). The development of human capital, essential infrastructure, regional competitiveness, environmental sustainability, and social inclusion in health, safety, literacy, and other activities are a few examples of various areas where such measures may be taken. The enhancement of information flow throughout society via the media is a development component. Essential social services like power, portability, and roads are often available to the populace when development occurs. The welfare of those living in areas where development is taking place has generally improved. According to Coker (1970), "development is the process of change that attempts to achieve self-reliance and better living situations for the bulk of the people who are impoverished." The bulk of the poor lives in rural regions in developing or underdeveloped nations like Nigeria and Zambia. Because it is generally accepted that between 70 and 90 percent of people live in rural areas in third-world countries, development, according to Moemeka (1980), is a "change for the better in both the personal, cultural, socioeconomic, and political situations of the individual, and subsequently, of society." Rogerian sees development as "a widely participatory process of social change in a society, intended to bring about social and material advancement (including greater life) for the majority of people through their gaining control over their environment." According to Mabogunje, development is "a process of pushing the whole social structure higher to strengthen the ability of each member of society to achieve his innate potential and to deal with the changing conditions of his existence properly." He said that communication, and by extension, the mass media, are essential for every facet of a person's growth and every aspect of a country's development.

Development is described as "purposeful changes done in a society to accomplish what may be viewed generally as a different (better) condition of social and economic affairs" in the International Encyclopaedia (1988). Development is fundamentally reliant on

communication. Communication about development must start with the concept of development. It is a complex, value-filled idea that eludes a precise definition because of its many facets. Development is defined by Agbo and Ukozor (2000) as the process of social change that aims to improve the standard of living for all or the majority of people without endangering the natural and cultural environments in which they exist. It seeks to involve the general population as closely as possible in this endeavour, empowering them to control their destiny.

Edwards (1999) describes development as the purposeful process of diminishing material demands and improving people's capacity to live a life they consider good throughout the most outstanding possible spectrum in a population to contribute to the debates on development. Here, the emphasis is on lowering material desires and enhancing people's capacity for survival. Therefore, in Edwards' opinion, it is impossible to claim that progress occurred without considering human needs for material goods and their ability to live a life. Development may also be defined as the qualitative and structural changes in peoples' ecological, political, social, and economic facets. According to this concept, a town or country must experience qualitative and quantitative changes in all aspects of its citizens' lives—including cultural, economic, political, social, and ecological—for its people to declare that it has progressed (Sen, 2012).

Additionally, according to Zakaria (2011), development is a transformation process that leads to an improvement or progress in people's political, economic, and social life. Beyond agreeing with Bassand's definition of Development, Zakaria (2011) thinks that planning is necessary for development. Planning in this context refers to any acceptable procedures and initiatives used by interested parties to effect change.

According to Eade, "Development is about the empowerment of men and women to bring about positive changes in their respective lives; about personal growth which is combined with public action; about both the process and the result of challenging poverty, oppression, and discrimination; and about the realization of human potential through social and economic justice. The method of altering lives and society is what matters most. An underdeveloped nation exhibits many traits, including poverty, social inequality, unemployment, low productivity, and rising foreign debt. All development plans must work to lessen these barriers on the populace.

The founder of the Ghanaian Institute for Cultural Affairs (I.C.A.) Okrah contests the notion that wealthy nations can transfer progress to underdeveloped ones. He maintains that there is no such thing as a developed nation since progress is an ongoing process of responding to difficulties.

Additionally, development is a participative process of social change in a society that aims to bring about material and social growth, which include more freedom, equality, and other desirable traits for the vast majority of people by giving them more influence over their surroundings. According to Rogers' concept, stakeholder involvement is crucial to meeting people's social and material needs. This implies that the final goal of development initiatives,

regardless of the methods used by stakeholders, should be a change in people's material, environmental, and social elements. Additionally, Stiglitz, as described in Odoom (2019), describes the development as a trend away from conventional relationships, obsolete ways of thinking, and traditional production processes and toward more contemporary ones. According to Stiglitz, development is moving from primitivism to modernity. Therefore, no one can ever claim to have observed growth as long as they are stuck in old methods. This necessitates the use of technologically advanced and institutionally current modes of operation.

To broaden Stiglitz's definition, however, Servaes (2008) argues that development should be regarded as a multi-dimensional process encompassing significant changes in social structures, popular attitudes, and a shift from an unsatisfactory to an excellent national state of existence. According to Servaes (2008), fulfillment is being financially secure and spiritually comfortable with one's material circumstances. According to Sen (2012), development is the process of enhancing peoples' opportunities and freedoms. Self-esteem, proficiency, good condition, and political engagement are among the capabilities.

Development, according to Ribeiro (2005), is a process that ensures empowerment, advancement, economic and sophistication, or environmentally friendly equilibrium. It may be argued that Ribeiro's viewpoint on the significance of material desires for change is consistent with that of Rogers and Edwards. However, Bassand, as noted in Nemes (2005), concurs with Ribeiro's (2005) demand for attention to be devoted to protecting the ecosystem or environment (2005). According to Umehali and Akubuilu (2006), development entails multifaceted adjustments to structures, attitudes, and institutions, accelerating economic upturn, decreasing disparity, and eradicating extreme poverty. Development entails self-sustaining socioeconomic reforms, economic growth, and equity or social justice elements. A common viewpoint in the definitions provided by Ribeiro, Umehali, and Akubuilu (2006) is the modification of a people's economic growth. Ribeiro is confident that ecological stability is vital for national growth, while Umehali and Akubuilu (2006) say nothing about it. Like Umehali and Akubuilu (2006) contend that social justice and equality are essential components of any meaningful growth, Ribeiro (2005) have taken an inconspicuous stance on these issues. Umehali and Akubuilu (2006) further support Servaes' claim that progress requires better structures and attitudinal adjustments. Furthermore, according to Servaes (2008), development is fundamental, inherent, unequivocal, growing, invariable, and persistent. Servaes (2008) tends to relate development and modernisation as a result.

Modernisation alone is not development since one might result in the other. Luke notes that both concepts are the newest intricacy used in hegemonic jargon to characterise the post-war social structure, which vitiates the idea of equalising growth and modernisation. According to Luke, European countries invented the labels "colonialism," "westernisation," "Christianization," and "civilising mission" to characterise and defend their dictatorial actions in African, Asian, and Latin American countries. With the never-ending demands for democracy in the majority of these

countries and the countless aftermath of colonialism and the slave trade, words like "colonialism," "westernisation," and "Christianization" were reluctantly relegated to the background, and the terms "development" and "modernisation" took their place. It is generally accepted that modernisation and modernity are present in all countries and do not necessarily have to be related to a particular cultural or political location to be meaningful. Despite this acknowledgment, Alhassan (2004) claims that it is incredibly problematic to view development as modernisation because the two concepts do not sufficiently convey the same meaning. Alhassan (2004)'s concern stems from his conviction that modernisation has primarily been a transfer of Euro-American experience or progress to the regions of the world with less developed material infrastructure. He does, however, acknowledge that modernisation is vital in the discussion about development because it allows a member of a traditional society to see each other as a part of their country, which is a member of the community of modern nations. This individual's sense of the universe is clung to village life. Alhassan (2004) is concerned about the seeming overvaluation of materialism in conceptualising growth, which is likely implied in his fear. Although this author tends to agree with Alhassan (2004)'s critique of using modernity as a primary indicator of progress, he also believes that modernisation's components are essential to understanding whether or not development has occurred in a particular culture. Development cannot take place in banal, archaic, or esoteric terms; instead, it must demonstrate a clear transition from outdated to more effective new methods of carrying out the same tasks.

Development is both a material reality and a mental condition in which society secures the means to have a better life, according to Todaro and Smith, as described in Odoo (2019). Through this procedure, the institution assures everyone to experience improvements in their quality of life, money accumulation, and intellectual stimulation. Society employs a variety of institutional, social, cultural, and economic activities to improve living circumstances. The definition by Todaro and Smith emphasises three fundamental problems. First and foremost, development entails excellent distribution and availability of necessities like food, shelter, health, and security. Second, development entails raising the quality of living concerning social concerns like households and national income, education, and cultural values to increase the material well-being and esteem of both individuals and nations. Thirdly, by releasing people from the constraints imposed by factors like ignorance, human suffering, and dependency on the people and national governments, development attempts to increase the range of individual and gross national product and social options.

From the criteria mentioned above, development raises people's quality of life by increasing their earnings, consumption, food access, and medical services. People's lives are sustained in part by this. Formation of social, political, and economic institutions that support decency, dignity, and self-pride is another aspect of development that aims to improve people's sense of self-worth. Furthermore, development seeks to enhance people's satisfaction and understanding of worth by expanding the variety of options

available to them, such as commodities and services. Additionally, development is a comprehensive process meant to enhance a people's material and psychological well-being. It concerns the transformation of institutions, attitudes, and structures and the sustainable achievement of a people's environmental well-being. Because growth has many facets, coordinated efforts are needed to understand how it manifests in daily life. Development policymakers need to be aware of a range of concerns from many societal sectors to completely comprehend the fundamental components necessary to bring about change in society.

Focusing development initiatives more on the rural majority than the urban minority is the most effective strategy to achieve national development in a developing country like Nigeria. Because of this, rural development is on par with national development in some underdeveloped nations. Bonuola (1987) stated that rural development "involves extending the benefits of development to the poorest among those seeking a livelihood in the rural areas." If everything is equal, it can begin a country's general growth. Any developing nation's total population will grow directly or indirectly depending on how its' rural population grows. This is because rural development is a tried-and-true strategy for advancing a country. Verifiable arguments support this claim. First off, between 70 and 90 percent of people in developing nations live in rural areas. Only 10 to 30 percent of people have access to metropolitan regions. Second, most of a country's natural resources are in rural areas. Thirdly, due to the benefits above, rural residents contribute more directly or indirectly to emerging nations' political, social, cultural, and other institutions (Bonuola, 1987). Given the factors above, responsible governments in several emerging countries have shown a greater interest in fostering rural development. The Nigerian government has been working to strengthen rural areas of the nation via initiatives and programs to combat poverty. Even in metropolitan regions, where "quality of life is also quite bad, notably in the slums and shantytowns of large cities," the laudable efforts would have improved the majority of lives if it weren't for deep-rooted systemic corruption that still cries out for a durable solution in society (Coker, 1970).

To many academics, the word "communication" has distinct meanings. For instance, according to Clevenger, cited in Owusu (2014), communication is any dynamic process of information sharing. Therefore, communication is the process of exchanging information more actively. Mefalopulos (2003) defined communication as transmitting information and messages. According to Bertalanffy, cited in Owusu (2014), communication is frequently about the flow of information within a particular system. O'Reilly and Pondy, cited in Owusu (2014), defined communication as sharing data between two or more individuals or groups to arrive at a common understanding, supporting Bertalanffy's definition. Beyond simply concurring with the authors above, Warnock et al. added a fresh perspective when they argued that communication is the capacity to impart information, make one's voice heard, and engage in discussion and debate. According to Keyton (2011), communication is the act of imparting knowledge and a shared understanding to another person. Increasing an institution's profile or enabling information

flows inside a company are two specific meanings of the word "communication."

The distinction between "communications" and "communication" must be clear. Instead of focusing on its informational character and media output, communication generally refers to the communication process, stressing its dialogical and analytical roles. "Communications" mainly relates to activities and goods, such as media products, services, and information technology (the internet, satellites, broadcasts). Theoretically, methodologically, and practically, this difference matters. Once more, there is a clear distinction between informal and formal communication. A person who can use communication effectively and professionally need not necessarily be a good communicator. Although everyone can communicate, not everyone can do it strategically, using their understanding of fundamentals and real-world experience. A professional (development) communicator can create successful plans using the complete spectrum of communication techniques and methods to accomplish desired goals because they have a thorough understanding of the necessary theories, concepts, methodologies, and practices of C4D. It is important to emphasise that social change is a significant problem with any communication system. Systems of communication both serve as social change agents and indicators.

Researchers like Alhassan (2004), Mefalopulos (2003), and Keyton (2011) claim that social change frequently occurs unilaterally, from oral to mediated communication systems. While contemporary culture is used to mediate system, traditional society is familiar with the verbal system. Modernisation is mainly seen as a process of communication. According to Lerner, a researcher with a solid and influential voice in the area of C4D, modernisation is essential for societal transformation. Communication systems are also anticipated to undergo modernisation.

Nevertheless, achieving that calls for tackling all the regional and national cultural barriers that impede social transformation. To persuade or appeal to emotions, to persuade or appeal to reason, to instinct, to amuse, to educate, to enlighten, to develop and promote relationships, and to influence behaviour are other reasons we communicate. Verbal and nonverbal communication is the two main types of communication.

The Modern Nigerian Society

Nigeria is a growing nation in West Africa and has a young democracy. Igbo, Hausa, and Yoruba are the dominant ethnic groups in the country, which has a land mass of about 98 million hectares. There are also over 120,000 autonomous communities, over 150 million people, over 250 ethnic groups, many of which are suspicious of and hostile toward one another (especially in political matters), over 250 mutually incomprehensible languages, 1000 dialects, two major opposing religions (Christianity and Islam), and a third African Traditional Religion (A.T.R.). 60% of people live in rural areas; 60% are illiterate and innumerate by western standards; the illiterates primarily act like animals due to their lack of education, which aims to turn animals into humans. The nation also had a 28-year military dictatorship, which harmed its media, economic, political, educational, health, and

infrastructure sectors. In a corrupt country, journalists are poorly compensated, and there is a high level of media corruption, including brown envelope journalism, bribery, journalism of terrorism, sensationalism, plagiarism, slanting news stories, selling those stories to other media outlets, distorting the truth and withholding information, publishing half-truths and intentional falsehoods, misapplying advocacy journalism, and other practices. Due to the reasons above, journalists in the country have turned into magpie and worshipping megaphones of the political, corporate, and government middle-class allies. Although President Goodluck Jonathan's administration has brought about a small "breath of fresh air," which restored hope and sparked a national renaissance, the nation is still at a crossroads between decadence and democracy at the moment, leaving Nigerians to wonder and ask challenging questions of our leaders.

Development Communication as a whole

The only way project beneficiaries can take the lead in any successful development programme is via development communication. This shows that effective development communication is crucial to any worthwhile development activity. Given the overall lack of comprehension of the idea, initiatives must be made to improve the communication around development. Development communication is the methodical and planned communication for social change using interpersonal channels, I.C.T.s, audio-visuals, and mainstream media. Initiatives for development must begin with systems that guarantee widespread involvement by everyone with a stake in the desired change if they are long-lasting. The results of such a choice may be disastrous if a section of society is disregarded in the pursuit of development services.

According to Naribo (2012), conveying a development message is part of development communication. She said, quoting Edeani, that "the use of all means of communication in the reporting, publicising, and advocacy of development at all levels of society" is what development communication is. Okunna (1999) quoted Quebral to provide an alternate explanation of the term, who defined it as "the art and science of human communication applied to the quick change of a country and the mass of its people." Based on these criteria, development communication is an effective catalyst for a change for the better in the environment. When effectively managed, it may drastically change a country's economy for the sake of its people.

Development communication, according to World Bank as described in Owusu (2014), is the incorporation of strategic communication into development processes and programs based on an in-depth knowledge of indigenous realities. This demonstrates the critical role that local settings play in Development and Development communication. According to Mefalopulos (2003), development programmes and interventions will most times not produce the intended change unless the process is marked by a continuous relationship between development service providers and receivers appropriate to their cultures and societies. To create a shared understanding that encourages and maintains objectives of social, economic, political, and cultural development, Owusu (2014) defines development communication as a purposeful effort

to share information using suitable strategies across stakeholders. This suggests that development communication is concentrated on actively spreading the news among stakeholders using appropriate approaches and instruments to develop people's social, economic, political, cultural, and ecological aspects.

According to the World Bank, C4D entails developing procedures to increase public access to information about reforms, enhancing clients' capacity to pay attention to their constituents, and negotiating with stakeholders. Improve people's situations; also entails engaging in research-based communication activities and enabling grassroots organisations to attain a more participatory approach. According to the F.A.O., C4D utilises a variety of instruments and strategies to address a social process focused on the conversation. Again, pursuing change at several levels, such as listening, creating a sense of trust, exchanging information and skills, creating policies, arguing, and learning, is necessary for long-lasting and significant change.

C4D is a more comprehensive idea that includes information sharing and stakeholder interaction at all stages of development. The foundation for mutual discussion among all participants, facilitating and building partnerships and ties that assist in successfully solving development challenges, and assuring their involvement all depend on well-planned communication strategies, procedures, and methodologies. This highlights the need for all development institutions to consider how to advance C4D, particularly in developing countries, and to exchange experiences, establish shared understandings, and come to agreements on policies and initiatives for a better way of life.

In essence, development communication is the purposeful use of communication to advance development. It focuses on utilising communication to alter or enhance people's lives. The function of the development communicator in describing the development process to the general public in a manner that is accepted is crucial. To accomplish this goal, a development communicator needs a deeper grasp of communication and development processes. The development communicator must be knowledgeable, skilled, and professional in their application. They should also be aware of their audience.

Additionally, a development communicator organises and disseminates pertinent development messages and information to all stakeholders to ensure their comprehension, acceptance, and application to promote development. To transform socioeconomic situations of people, a development communicator employs various communication methods and instruments to create a shared understanding among stakeholders. The goal of development communication is to utilise communication to promote development. Development communicators write or create programmes on topics connected to action to develop a shared understanding among stakeholders on the development process and what is needed of them. Without adequate communication research, the development of communication activities can never be successful. Therefore, good communication research must be conducted before developing a communication plan. Communication specialists shouldn't create communication

campaigns or strategies without all the necessary information to guide their choice. As a development communicator, you must do further research to gather pertinent information, spot gaps, or confirm project assumptions. Failure to do so will be detrimental to one's purpose as a communicator for progress. One may have a deeper grasp of what must be done and the most effective way to do it by researching topics that are important to others.

Given many development issues rural residents experience and the need to change development efforts' concepts and trajectories, C4D is even more crucial to rural development. According to F.A.O., to improve people's conditions, particularly in rural areas, communication should be used primarily to increase community's mobilisation, decision-making, and action, as well as to build confidence to raise awareness, share knowledge, and alter attitudes, behaviours, and lifestyles. According to Adedokun et al. (2010), it is because of this that communication may be considered a valuable instrument for growth. The authors say that communication is anticipated to be both a tool for encouraging people participate in a development planning of projects and a way of overcoming the development's many problems. Of course, this is impossible without communication channels and forms and their importance, particularly in the debate on growth.

Nigeria's National Development through Mass Education

Education is the "process by which people acquire the skills and resources essential for its existence, and transfers this via formal and informal ways to the next generation," according to Ajayi Dayo, (1979). The following have been cited as the foundations for human education by famous thinkers while going back to Plato's time, including Rousseau, Dewey, and others: (1) Education for culture and courtesy, (2) Education for personal empowerment, (3) Education for democracy and public enlightenment (4) Education for human capital and economic growth (5) Education for national power, The National Policy on Education recognizes the significance of education as a potent force for good change and emphasizes the following: "The most crucial tool for bringing about change in every society is education. An educational revolution must accompany any major shift in a society's intellectual and social vision." In light of the earlier claims, Coker (1970) noted that: "The most important tool for bringing about substantive change in general and fundamental transformation in the intellectual and social orientation, in particular, is education. Education serves as the growth engine in many senses." In reality, "one cannot have a meaningful and successful life without any education, especially in the current era of technology and knowledge," according to the author. Because of this, the Indian Supreme Court ruled that the idea of the right to life includes the fundamental human right to education (Coker, 1970; Duyile, 1979; Ebeze, 2002; Naribo, 2012).

Integration of Development Communication for National Development

Integration, in the words of Okunna (1999), "means an effort at permanent togetherness; it is a try to have individuals of diverse race, culture, religion, and language live together in harmony in a community." In addition, Udoakah quoted Burton to say that social integration is "not only an alliance of antagonistic entities kept

together exclusively by external constraints." It is an action that unifies a multiethnic community based on respect, cooperation, acknowledgment, and mutual understanding. When a society "...is made up of the diverse race, culture, religion, and language and that there is a hostile connection between the many groups that make up the society," according to Udoakah, the notion of integration comes to mind.

Fundamental Functions of Developmental Communication

a). Transformative function - This aims to bring about societal change in the direction of high quality of life, which may be attained in several ways by ensuring that every baby in every household receives all the necessary vaccinations. Some nations may implement methods to provide adequate food for the populace. Some countries may dispel all the misconceptions relating to diverse religions and societal conventions methodically and scientifically. And one fantastic tool for achieving these goals might be communication.

b). Developmental Communication as a function of socialization and development. Some societal norms are kept alive through communication. By fulfilling these roles, development communication aims to foster change and offer new ideas that can lead to social change. These values give each society's citizens an identity and a sense of belonging. Sometimes a society's ambitions are ingrained in its ideals. Now, other cultures may be affected by other societies' values, traditions, and beliefs. The new entering sets of values may force the people from their territory if they are not cautious. By educating individuals about this trap, communication may play a crucial role. It may also be very beneficial by bringing the richness of a society's people's values, rituals, beliefs, and, most importantly, goals to light.

The integration of interpersonal communication techniques with traditional and emerging media platforms, such as broadcast, print, and I.C.T.s, is supported by development communication and full participation of all stakeholders in the development process is also beneficial. Anyanwu (1999) believes efficient communication is essential for community development at the grass-root level. Effective communication promotes the exchange of views and ideas, the spread of worthwhile ideas, and the rejection of unimportant ideas. Therefore, excellent communication makes it easier for the community to participate in local development. However, how information is expressed will determine whether or not communication is thriving, particularly in the context of development. There are several modes of communication that various organisations use to accomplish specific goals. These classifications of communication are thus influenced by the objectives and roles that communication serves in organisations. UNICEF mentions the three primary forms of communication. These include communication on behaviour change, social mobilisation, and advocacy. Practical usage of these communication methods is seen in C4D.

To make sustainable development aim a reality, stakeholders, including the government, N.G.O.s, C.B.O.s, and business organisations, need more outstanding and commitment since

development is multi-dimensional, its strategy and expression should be as well.

CONCLUSION

According to the researcher's results thus far, communication about development positively affects the country's national development. If properly handled, this communication may also help the economy develop more. In reality, this study concludes that development communication is a potent economic development catalyst and should be utilised more effectively to promote national growth in Nigeria.

Because of the rising wealth disparity, participatory development has become essential at all levels. Calls for all-inclusive development approaches from various stakeholders, including development researchers and practitioners, combined with ongoing technological advancements, globalization, and explosive growth, particularly in social media, have increased the need for efficient development communication. These demands are warranted given the rising poverty levels, filth, famine, and illnesses, particularly in emerging nations, which continue to dominate international discussions. In times like these, people would look to development communication as a motivating factor to advance the state of the globe. In essence, communication for development should center on a well-planned use of communication to support growth. Creating a common understanding among stakeholders via various communication technologies, techniques, and instruments is the goal of C4D, which aims to improve people's socioeconomic circumstances.

Modern communication research serves as the foundation for the development of communication projects. Data is essential to establishing communication strategies and techniques. A thorough grasp of pertinent communication theories, concepts, typologies, and models, as well as how they apply to development, is necessary for successful development communication. Additionally, since development is a complex, multi-dimensional idea, its theoretical underpinnings and actualization are equally intricate and varied. Finally, every effective development communication plan must be able to forge an agreement and generate a common understanding among stakeholders.

RECOMMENDATIONS

A. To the Government of Nigeria and its Agencies:

(i). Nigerian government should properly equip the mass media institution for development communication and in the interest of the nation's development; additional financial assistance should be provided.

(ii). The Government should endeavour to democratise the media landscape of the country further since this would promote improved development communication and advance Nigeria's overall development.

(iii). They ought to contribute to lowering the levels of commercialization, bureaucratization, and other similar phenomena in the country's mass media system since doing so would improve communication for the country's growth.

(iv). In providing financial support, the government should assist in strengthening their moral and material assistance to the country's media sector.

(v). To foster the country's growth, creating a specialized institution or centre for development communication in Nigeria is advisable.

(B). To the Institution of Nigerian Mass Media

(i). While the Nigerian government and its agencies are doing their jobs, the country's media institution has to offer communication for its growth with more professional attention.

(ii). The media outfits should try to maintain a professional distance from party politics to speak objectively for the country's economic progress.

(iii). Financially sound private organisations are advised to build media or education centres for communication on National Development.

(iv). Private organisations that currently operate media outfits or educational institutions in the nation need to use them to promote communication development for the growth of the local economy.

(v). Private organisations should successfully persuade members to participate in this communication activity.

(C). To Individuals in Nigeria

(i). Nigerians should support the excellent work being done by the government, its agencies, Nigerian media outlets, and private groups throughout the nation in the communication job necessary for the growth of the country's economy.

(ii). The researcher again does not make any claims as to the perfection of this work due to several study limitations. He advises inquisitive Nigerians to do more studies of this kind to learn more about the function of development communication in the growth of Nigeria's economy to complement and update this work. The knowledge gained during the procedure should be used correctly.

(iii). Citizens of the nation are advised to pay closer attention to and correctly execute communications intended to further the country's growth.

(iv). Opinion leaders in Nigerian society should exert a more substantial positive effect on each of their followers to encourage them to take communication for the country's progress seriously.

(v) Individual members of society must, on the other hand, demonstrate that they are reliable partners in the process as the sources of such communication keep their word. All these attempts at development communication should help Nigeria's economy grow, either directly or indirectly.

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