

The Effectiveness of Traditional Media as a Tool for Communication in Rural Development in Arigbajo Town, IFO Local Government, Ogun State Nigeria

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ABSTRACT Communication has been seen as an effective component or tool by which information is being transmitted or received while traditional media of communication refers to orthodox means of mass communication as accepted by various global communities and cultures from ancient times. Communication is regarded as the life component of human existence which rapidly enhances unity that leads to the changes in our society at large. Therefore, at this point it is so important to measure the role of traditional media of communication in knowledge sharing and understanding. Although modern media like Internet, Radio, Television, Magazine and Newspapers has been introduced over the traditional media of communication like the town-crier, oral poetry/narrative, festivals, folklore, music/lyrics, drama, market place, and storytelling, but the overruling role of the traditional media in knowledge sharing or communication and understanding can never be substituted or suggestively negotiated because rural means of communication still remain the epitome for the rural development. This research work enlightens Traditional Media of Communication as a tool for effective rural development. Questionnaires were used as an instrument for data collection. A total number of 100 questionnaires were distributed to the occupants of the community, out of which 97 were returned which were used for the analysis of this research work. Data collected was tabulated and analyzed using percentages. This research work also applauds that modern media ways of communication should also be used in addition with the traditional media of communication to improve national development.

INTRODUCTION

African society has different traditional ways of disseminating information through recognized official means like signs, sounds, and symbols. Manan et al. (2017) defined development as a progress of the individual well-being and the improvement of the quality of the life of the people. Communication is so vital to human existence just like the oxygen is essential to human life, because it helps to sustain the human society. Have we ever thought of how life will be without communicating in our life? No story to share with friends, watching television even writing letter to family or social network (Steinberg 2007). The process of communicating with people have changed with the advent of traditional media. Traditional media is also known as user-generated media. It educates and inform people about any development in a novel way and bring about a platform of two-way commu-

nication (Banerjee 2015). The traditional media are defined as 'those media which attempt to send a message to a particular set of targeted audience group in a given time in local dialect with entertainment (Mathiyazhagan et al. 2015). This research work shows the effectiveness of traditional media in Arigbajo community and all rural community in general. Communication can also be referred to as a social interactive tool, since it helps to promote collective actions and other social behaviors that make life meaningful and interesting for human existence, and because of its importance no society can progress or survive without communication process (Moemeka 1994). Message is very important in communication because the act of passing messages is communication itself. Everything we do with our body or with other medium such as the thoughts in our mind and the words we use for those thoughts, the sounds we make, our gestures, our facial expressions and perhaps

even our touch or smell all communicate information, this tells us how effective communication can be, it involves our every seconds' action, therefore, there is no communication without a message being passed across. Communication comes in different forms which include the intrapersonal, interpersonal, group, public, mass communication etc. All these are different ways through which we interact, associate, communicate, relate, share ideas, views, opinion, information, norms and values with ourselves and others. In communication, channels mean the medium or means through which communication is being passed or disseminated (Esimokha 2008). Because it is communication with a social conscience, development communication is oriented towards human beings, that is, towards the human aspect of development. Even though it is primarily associated with rural development, it is nevertheless also concerned with urban problems (Moemeka 2000). Nigeria is regarded as multi-channel communicator due to the different channels through which communication is being disseminated in both urban and rural settings which help to proffer a better result of what is being sent. It is successful and effective in reaching rural people because they emanate from the local culture and tradition of the people and they use familiar channel, the local language, pass relevant messages, address local issues, needs and problem and use local resources for development of the society. They are seen as the vehicle the common people employ for the delivery of their messages. Folk media are some of the most vibrant representation of traditional media because they reflect communication channel for, by and of the common people of a society or region (Reich and Godler 2017). In rural areas and developing nations, folk media represents the masses of people most deprived of specific messages. Thus, folk media cover a wide range of traditional communication channels, including storytelling, street theatre, puppetry, song and dance, market place, Town-Crier amongst others. Folk media are also representatives of a traditional way of life based on customs, beliefs and art that makes up a distinctive culture. It draws upon people's past, present and future, providing them with glimpse of reality that result in education and entertainment. However, African communities lay emphasis on events rather than date. These events and probably the date, formed part of their culture (Scan-

nell 2017). The meeting of two cultures often leads to cultural shock or what the scholars termed "clash of cultures". African communication scholars put more emphasis on the study of the modern media of communication which includes the radio, television, internet, and billboard, but due to lack of development most of the rural dwellers are not familiar with these modern media ways of communication.

Literature Review

Manan et al. (2017) defined development communication as an application of communication to the development process. He also pointed out, that development communication using principles, practices and ideas exchange can be used to achieve objectives for the development. Fardouly et al. (2017) reported an investigation on the overall frequency and the direction of appearance comparisons made in different form of traditional media and social media. The primary objective of social development communication is to create understanding, acceptance and willingness to participate in development and not to impose orders and regulations. Even though social development communication is primarily associated with rural development, it is also worried with urban, particularly sub-urban development. Although, the practice of development communication can be traced to the early 1940's, the term social development communication was first covered by Nora Quebral in 1972 as reported by (Manyozo 2008) who defined it "as the art and science of human linked into the society's planted transformation from the state of poverty to one of dynamic socio-economic growth that makes for greater equity and larger unfolding of individual potentials." Explaining the genesis of the term development communication, Quebra said he grew out of the field of agricultural communication. The term was coined to include apart from development, such as population, nutrition, health, education, housing and employment etc. Since all these areas require communication input and development communication was one of the discipline. This explains why development communication is described as the systematic use of communication in support of national development. We need to know that the effectiveness of development communication depends on the type and kind of audience, image of development bureau-

cracy and the interpretation of media practitioners which affects the interpretations of communication and its persuasive efficacy. Ebo (1996) reported that “traditional media of communication are also effective because they are integrated into african people most especially rural communities and they understand to be literate before they can use this media of communication because language and understand symbols are used to communication to them. In every broad sense, social development communication is the art and science of human communication applied to the specific transformation of a country (that is, economic, growth, modernization and industrialization) and the majority of its citizens (fulfillment of self-actualization, fulfillment of human potentials and greater social injustice etc.) through the development progress that will assist in increasing participation of intended beneficiaries at the grassroot level. Social development communication is the use of communication to promote development and it is quite different from other forms of communication. For instance, social development communication is different from international communication, cultural communication, interpersonal communication, public communication and organizational communication (Choi and Shin 2017). In all, the United Nation’s children fund (UNICEF) explains that development communication seeks not only to transfer messages but also to promote interactions around the messages for target audience to understand them better, accept them and practice the healthy behavior proposed not only but long enough to reap their benefits. Narula (2006) sees development communication as the systematic means of communication for national development. According to Daramola (2001), farmers need information on specific supplies, these are farm supplies like fertilizers and other things required on their farms and information on how to obtain credit facilities. There is no doubt that the traditional mass media can go a long way in improving this assertion. Nwosu (1990) said the media could act with other development changing factors to improve the lots of the masses of developing countries. Uma (1975) views rural development means; improving the standard of living of the masses among low income population who resided in rural areas. The traditional media are veritable tools to reach communities because the availability of modern media facilities is lim-

ited (Fearn-Banks 2016). The traditional communication system is the most accessible channel of communication to the rural people. Abdulla (2016) in advocating for the traditional media in rural society, states that: In this modern age of new information communication technologies and mass media, the cultural value of traditional media channels must not be disregarded. If we are to properly communicate with rural communities, we must learn more about them and have a better understanding on how to channel our development work through those communities via traditional communication channel as well (Soola 1999). For development communication programs directed at grassroots and cultural levels, it is important to include the use of traditional communication channels. This is because these media are part and parcel of the communities. Imperatively, the following concepts that are relevant and central to the focus of this study are reviewed (George et al. 2017).

Statement of the Problem

How effective are the traditional communication media, what similarities and dissimilarities exist between these media and traditional communication system of the community are all some of the problems this study is set out to look into. The problem therefore, is to find out how effective traditional media of communication are as a means of rural based communication. The study identifies the traditional communication tools mostly used by the people of the community in the past. Due to possible lack of maximum co-operation, this study might be limited to information collected from population figure of the community under study. The low literacy rate and the non-availability of previous study on the topic are part of the limitations.

Purpose of the Study

As stated in the introduction, the purpose of the study is to show the effectiveness of traditional media in Arigbajo Community and Community generally.

Objectives

- i. To explain the functions of Traditional media of communication in the society

- ii. To enlighten on the usage of traditional media of communication in the society
- iii. To explain the limitations in the traditional media of communication
- iv. To explain on how traditional communication enhance society in general

Research Questions

- i. What function does Traditional communication performs in the society?
- ii. Of what use is traditional media of communication in the society?
- iii. Are there limitations in the traditional media?
- iv. How does traditional communication enhance society in general?

METHODOLOGY

This research work was conducted among the citizens of Arigbajo Town, Ifo Local Government, Ogun State Nigeria; using qualitative approach through survey questionnaires which were administered to a sample of 100 occupants of the community using sampling technique. Returned questionnaires were 97 which shows response rate of ninety-seven percent. Data was presented and summarized in a tabular form using the simple frequency method with the number of respondents, responses expressed as a percentage of the total number of respondents in the study. The data collected were structured and analyzed using the statistical analysis of the simple frequency method. Tables were used for the presentation, illustrations and analysis of collected and collated data. The units of analysis of this study are the citizens of Arigbajo Community.

Analysis and Interpretation of Data

<i>Copies of questionnaires distributed</i>	<i>Copies of questionnaire properly filled</i>	<i>Copies of questionnaire not properly filled</i>
100	97	-

RESULTS

This part focused on the analyses and interpretation of data on the demographic profile of the respondents, using the variables of age and gender as tools of analysis.

As shown in the Table 1, in terms of age group of respondents ten percent are in between 18 and 25 years category, sixty-one percent are in 26-35 years category, while twenty-six percent are in 36-45 categories. It was found out that the majority of the respondents are within the age category of 26-35 years while 36-45 category (26%) is the second largest.

Table 1: Distribution of respondents by age

<i>Age</i>	<i>Number of respondents</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
18-25	10	10
26-35	59	61
36-45	25	26
46 and above	3	3
Total	97	100

Table 2 illustrates the gender of the respondents who are respondent of Arigbajo Town. The table shows that twenty-one percent (20 respondents) of the respondents are males and seventy-nine percent (77 respondents) are females. So most of the respondents are female.

Table 2: Distribution of respondents' gender

<i>Sex</i>	<i>Number of respondents</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Male	20	21
Female	77	79
Total	97	100

Table 3 illustrates the marital status of respondents. The table shows that sixty-two percent (60 respondents) of the respondents are married, thirty-five percent (34 respondents) are single, one percent (1 respondent) are widow while two percent (2 respondents) are divorced. This analysis explains that most of the respondents are married.

Table 3: Distribution of respondents by status

<i>Status</i>	<i>Number of respondents</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Married	60	62
Single	34	35
Widow	01	1
Divorced	02	2
Total	97	100

Table 4 illustrates the occupation of respondents. It indicates that 64 (66% of the respon-

dents) are farmers, 21 (22% of the respondents) are traders, 5 (5% of the respondents) are student while one percent are in the category of others. This explains that most of the respondents are farmers.

Table 4: Distribution of respondents by occupation

<i>Occupation</i>	<i>Number of respondents</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Farmer	64	66
Civil Servant	05	5
Student	06	6
Others	01	1
Trader	21	22
Total	97	100

Table 5 shows that 60 (62%) respondents believe that traditional media of communication is being used in the town while 8 (8% of the respondents) sounds neutral. Therefore, sixty-two percent of the respondents made use of traditional media of communication.

Table 5: Do Arigbajo people make use of traditional means of communication?

<i>Variables</i>	<i>Number of respondents</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Yes	60	62
No	8	8
I don't know	29	30
Total	97	100

Table 6 shows that the respondents identified the traditional media of communication. The largest respondent with the largest percentage is eighty-three percent.

Table 6: Distribution by means of communication

<i>Variables</i>	<i>Number of respondents</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Yes	60	62
Town crier	5	5
Masquerade	1	1
Gong	05	5
Bell	06	6
All of the above	80	83
Total	97	100

As shown in Table 7, 50 (52% respondents) says the Town crier is the most credible means of communication, twenty-one percent of the respondents choose carnival as their choice. The largest percentage shows that town crier is the most credible means of communication.

Table 7: Which of these traditional means is credible?

<i>Variables</i>	<i>Number of respondents</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Town union	8	8
Friends	13	13
Town crier	50	52
Carnival	20	21
Age union	06	6
Total	97	100

Table 8 shows that the largest population of the town says the traditional media is limited, 29 respondents don't know while nine percent say No. This explains that the media is limited to modern facilities.

Table 8: Are there limitations in the traditional media?

<i>Variables</i>	<i>Number of respondents</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Yes	59	61
No	9	9
I don't know	29	30
Total	97	100

In Table 9, 30 (30% of the respondents) rated the effectiveness of traditional media as good, 50 (52% of the respondent) rated the media as effective. This shows that traditional media is very effective in the rural areas.

Table 9: How would you rate the effectiveness of tradition media?

<i>Variables</i>	<i>Number of respondents</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Fair	09	9
Poor	08	8
Effective	50	52
Good	30	31
Total	97	100

Table 10 shows that the traditional tool that entertains the community mostly is the festivals

Table 10: Which of these media entertains the community?

<i>Variables</i>	<i>Number of respondents</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Radio	10	10.5
Age grades	5	5
Friends	12	12
Town crier	20	20.5
Festivals	50	51.5
Total	97	100

which has the largest respondents (50) that is, fifty-one percent while the least is 5 (5% respondents). This shows that the festivals entertain the community mostly.

Table 11 shows that 62 respondents agreed that traditional media has strongly contributed to the development of their town, 22 respondents (23%) says development has been fairly while thirteen percent of the respondents are neutral. This explains that traditional media has contributed very well to the development of the town.

Table 11: How traditional media contributed to the development of Arigbajo town?

<i>Variables</i>	<i>Number of respondents</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Fairly	22	23
Very well	62	64
Not at all	13	13
Total	97	100

Table 12 shows that 45 respondents (46%) say traditional media are effective channels while 30 respondents (31%) agreed that the channels are effective while 10 says (11%) they are fairly good. This explains the traditional media are effective in the town.

Table 12: How effective are the channels of traditional media?

<i>Variables</i>	<i>Number of respondents</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Fair	7	7
Bad	5	5
Good	30	31
Fairly good	10	11
Excellent	45	46
Total	97	100

Table 13 shows that 65 (67%) of the respondents agreed to the fact that traditional media is an effective tool for rural development.

Table 13: Traditional media as an effective tool for rural development

<i>Variables</i>	<i>Number of respondents</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Yes	65	67
No	10	10
Not at all	22	23
Total	97	100

Table 14 shows that 50 (52%) of the respondents are positive to the impact of traditional media. 20 (20.5%) of the respondents are negative to the impact of traditional media. 27 (27.5%) of the respondents are neutral to the impact of traditional media.

Table 14: The impact of traditional media

<i>Variables</i>	<i>Number of respondents</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Negative	20	20.5
Positive	50	52
Neutral	27	27.5
Total	97	100

Table 15 shows that 35 respondents of the population (36%) says traditional media is important to their culture while thirty-one percent agreed its relevant while twenty-three percent says it's irrelevant. This explains that traditional media is of relevance because it has the largest percentage of respondents.

Table 15: The relevance of traditional media to culture of respondents

<i>Variables</i>	<i>Number of respondents</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Important	35	36
Irrelevant	22	23
Indifferent	10	10
Relevant	30	31
Total	97	100

Table 16 illustrates the response of respondents on socio-cultural transformation. The respondents with the largest percentage (62%) explains that transformation has taken effect while twenty-one percent says it has not.

Table 16: Response to socio-cultural transformation with the aid of media

<i>Variables</i>	<i>Number of respondents</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Yes	60	62
No	20	21
I don't know	17	18
Total	97	100

DISCUSSION

From this research work, and the results of the analysis from this study based on the responses of the respondents of Arigbajo Town,

most especially from the major areas of the research questions with the corresponding percentage like making use of the traditional means of communication with a response of sixty-two percent of the respondents, rating of the effectiveness of the traditional media of communication with a response of fifty-two percent of the respondents, contributions of traditional media of communication to the development of Arigbajo town with a response of sixty-four percent of the respondents and the effectiveness of the traditional media as a rural development with a response of sixty-seven percent of the respondents. Therefore, from the result of the finding there is a strong indication that traditional media of communication is an important tool for effective rural development most especially in Arigbajo community as against reported by (Fearn-Banks 2016). Also from the finding of this result it supported a previous work as reported by (George et al. 2017) that traditional media of communication is a parcel and very important means of communication for rural area community. Traditional media are endogenous channels of communication, developed and used by the local people to meet their needs for information, education and entertainment. It could also be referred to the multi-channel communication process employed by traditional societies to interact with one another as also reported by (Akinleye 2002).

CONCLUSION

The use of traditional media of communication in disseminating information or news to the grassroots is a strategy designed to improve the economic and social life of a specific group of people in rural populace. It involves extending the benefits of development to the poorest among those who seek a livelihood in the rural area. Communication process in rural development is not merely a matter of transmitting information but about how things can be done better by using available facilities. Government needs to give appropriate and sufficient attention on the development needs of the rural population which makes up the largest prospective of the total population of a country.

RECOMMENDATIONS

From the findings presented above, the following recommendations and suggestions are considered relevant:

- ♦ Traditional media of communication should be effectively utilized and influence grass-root through their content.
- ♦ Modern and traditional means of communication should work in collaboration in order to report credible news.
- ♦ They should see their tools as an important instrument to stimulate demand for the entertainment industry.
- ♦ The use of traditional media in dissemination of information should be encouraged by the government because the traditional media of communication is also a heritage of any society.
- ♦ Modern media ways of communication should also be used in conjunction with the traditional media of communication to improve national development.

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