

Patterns of Cultural Awareness and Rural Development of Local Audience: A Study of Harmony FM 105.50 Idofia, Kwara State

Muhammad Kabir Yusuf, PhD
Department of Mass Communication,
Nasarawa State University, Keffi.

Abstract : Information is central to all forms of human activity. No matter the field; there is the need for exchange of information to ensure completion of task. Inefficiency will be the results, where this exchange of information is slow or there is a break down. For this reason, information is regarded as vital resources that need to be properly developed, because it has boomerang effect on society. Consequently, a society that has poor communication and information infrastructure perpetually lags behind others that have efficient information infrastructure (Moemeka 1985). Rural radio helps to achieve development in the rural areas, as issues of development are aired to audience in the form of various programs and individuals are exposed to happenings in and around their society, through listening to these program communication serves as the basic element of interaction and information sharing in life. Communication creates pool of ideas, strengthens the feeling of togetherness, the exchange of messages and translates through thoughts, into action. Radio communication educates on new issues inherent in the society. For example, issues on politics, business, current affairs etc, are aired to create awareness. Radio serves as an agent of social mobilization; people are moved to delivering a certain goal, based on their awareness of their rights and responsibilities to the society. Thus this study examines the place of Harmony Fm Idofian, Ilorin, Kwara State in rural development.

Introduction

This study is an attempt to examine how rural development programme can be effectively organized and implemented at the local governments or grass root levels. Radio broadcasting to put it into its historical concepts was introduced into Nigeria in 1933 by the then Colonial Government. It relayed the overseas service of the British Broadcasting Corporation through wired system with loudspeakers at the listening end. The service was called Radio Diffusion System, RDS. From the RDS emerged the Nigeria Broadcasting Service, NBS, in April 1951. Mr. T.W. Chalmers, a Briton and Controller of the BBC Light Entertainment Programme were the first Director-General of the NBS.

The Nigerian Broadcasting Corporation, NBC, came into being in April 1957 through an Act of Parliament No. 39 of 1956. The Director General was Mr. J.A.C Knott OBE. In 1978, the Nigerian Broadcasting Corporation was re-organized to become the Federal Radio Corporation of Nigeria, FRCN. The NBC was instructed to handover its stations that broadcast on medium wave frequencies in the states to the State Governments and it took over short wave transmitters from the states. The Broadcasting Corporation of Northern Nigeria, BCNN, was merged with the NBC Stations in Lagos, Ibadan and Enugu to become the present day FRCN. Most Radio Nigeria FM/SW/MW stations are on air for an average of 18 hours a day though a significant number are on air for 24 hours each day. These basically consist of 3-5 hours of network and the remainders are

local programmes. Network airtime is made up of News, Sports, Current Affairs, Drama/Light Entertainment, Youth/Children, and Public Enlightenment. The cooperation (FRCN) is 100 percent owned by the Nigeria Government and at present the government owns and operates the cooperation. The cooperation was established by Act of the Parliament No. 39 of 1956 with the Ministry of Information as its supervisory ministry. Essentially, it was set up to offer public service broadcasting, and in so doing, promotes government programs and policies. The operation of this enterprise is inadequately funded by government through budgetary appropriation and supplemented by meager internally-generated revenue.

Today, the FRCN, as a public service broadcaster with its headquarters in Abuja, has national stations in Enugu, Ibadan, Kaduna, and Gwagwalada (FCT); plus a Lagos Operations Office. These National Stations and Lagos Operations Office control the 37 FRCN FM/MW/SW stations spread across the country reaching more than One Hundred Million listeners, broadcasting in 15 languages, catering to the diverse broadcast needs of a multi-ethnic Nigeria, uplifting the people and uniting the Nation. The cooperation began introducing FM transmitters in some locations in Nigeria in 2007 bringing closer its activities to the people. Harmony FM 105.50 Idofia, Kwara State is perhaps among the new FM stations that were established in line with FRCN effort of expanding its activity to the rural areas of Nigeria for greater and sustainable development. The FM station was commissioned by the Honourable Minister of Information and Communication then, on the 15th of December, 2009 to commence operation. As a policy the station is considered as a subsidiary station of the National Network. The station broadcast local interest programmes during part of the day, and then relayed programming for its National Network during the rest of the broadcast day.

The Radio Station (Harmony) does face competition from other stations both private and public owned one in Kwara and other neighboring states, all of which broadcast in similar range targeting the same audiences. But the Harmony Radio historical connection to its audiences, its perceived reputation of impartiality and its effective deployment of delivery technologies appear to have given it an edge over its rivals. The station's survey (Harmony 2003) shows that its audience figures are consistently higher than the other stations around Kwara State.

Theoretical Framework

The study is anchored on development media theory. According to McQuail in his book mass communication theories (1987) seeks to explain the normative behaviours of the press in countries that are conventionally classified together as developing countries. The theory owes its origin to the UNESCO's MacBride Commission set up in 1979. This theory is opposed to dependency and foreign domination and to arbitrary authoritarianism. It accepts economic development and nation building as overriding objectives. Press freedom should be opened to restriction according to economic

priorities and the development needs of the society. In the interest of development ends, the state has the ultimate control (Ndolo, 2005). The theory holds that the media have a role to play in facilitating the process of development in the developing countries. According to the development media theory, the media are to be used to serve the general good of the nation. The media are seen as agents of development and social change in any community thus, the theory says that the media should be used to complement government's efforts by carrying out programmes that will lead to positive behavioral change among the people. The development media theory according to Okunna (1999), accepts that economic development and nation building should take precedence over some freedom of the press and of individuals. In addition, the theory advocates that the mass media should assist the government in the task of nation building and that government should control the media as well as journalist to achieve this goal. Summarily, the fundamental tenets of the theory as identified by McQuail (1987) are:

Radio as a Tool for Rural Development in Nigeria: Prospects & Challenges

- Media should accept and carry out positive development tasks in line with nationally established policy;
- Freedom of the press should be opened to restriction according to economic priorities and development needs of the society;
- Media should give priority in news and information to link with other developing countries, which are close geographically, culturally or politically;
- In the interest of development ends, the state has the right to intervene in or restrict media operations and devices of censorship, subsidy and direct control can be justified; and
- Journalists and other media workers have responsibilities, as well as, freedoms in their information gathering and dissemination tasks.

The theory is relevant to the study because it lays emphasis on using the media to develop the society. This implies that the media have the capacity to positively affect the society. Thus, the media need to be employed to bring about social, political and economic development in the society. Rural areas generally refer to areas in a country that are not fully developed. They are areas in a nation where you still have high traditional lifestyles that cannot be found in the urban areas or centres. Udoaka (1998, p. 49) avers that when the word “rural” is mentioned in Africa, certain things are conjured in our minds. These images, according to Udoaka centre on acute un-development and poverty and they manifest themselves in the form of bad roads, lack of water supply, poor housing, poor sanitation and high rate of illiteracy. Udoaka further observes that the word brings to mind geographic locations in African, with populations of hungry, wretched looking people and stunted, kwashiorkor riddled children. It conjures the image of a people, who suffer in the farms, from

morning to evening, but whose harvest is not commensurate with the efforts and time spent; it conjures the image of people who are starving, eating at best, once in a day after returning from the market.

Rural areas are such areas that lack the necessary infrastructure to make a meaningful living. They lack infrastructure like good roads, electricity, portable water, good market, banking institutions, good schools, health centres, etc. Those in the rural areas need to go to urban areas whenever they need such infrastructures. For example, people in the rural areas normally go to the towns and cities whenever they need healthcare services. This explains why Anaeto and Anaeto (2010, p. 12) argue that what is seen in the rural areas in Africa is the picture of poverty, unemployment, hunger, non-availability of infrastructure, illiteracy, lack of basic social amenities, like portable water, good roads and hospitals, etc. In the same vein, Aderanti (1982), cited in Asemah (2011) notes that living conditions in the rural areas are relatively poor. Colgate (2009), cited in community as an area where people's living condition is very poor. Rural community as noted by Colgate, cited in Nwabueze (2010) is better defined by looking at its characteristics, which include high level of illiteracy, low productivity, cultural homogeneity, one way of communication and absence of infrastructure, among others.

From the foregoing therefore, the rural areas are the villages and the communities that are outside the cities, towns and state capitals in a country. Contrary to what is obtainable in the urban areas; closeness of the people to the natural environment, greater social homogeneity, smallness of the communal aggregates, predominance of agricultural occupations and relative sparse population are what are discernible in the rural areas. Rural dwellers as disadvantaged people, whose houses seldom have running water and electricity, who live in extreme survival crises during rains, sun, wind, storms, harmattan, blizzards and drought, who possess no good roads, no portable water, are acutely isolated.

Development

Development as a concept is broad and therefore, does not subject itself to a single definition. It indeed covers a wide range of human endeavours. According to Asemah (2010), development is a process of change in attitude, social structure and general acceleration of economic growth, through reduction of poverty and inequality. Asemah (2011) notes that development in human society is a many sided process. At the level of the individual, it implies increased skills and capacity, greater freedom, creativity, self discipline, responsibility and material well being. The achievement of any of these aspects is very much tied in with the state of the society as a whole. Development involves the creation of opportunities for the realisation of human potentials. Human beings have certain basic

requirements, which must be satisfied so that they can properly function in the society. Among these are enough food, employment and the elimination of the kinds of inequality, which lead to poverty. Asemah (2010) sees development as a gradual process of bringing about positive attitudinal change in the people. It is a continuous process of improving their living conditions, through positive change. The essence of development according to Asemah is the development of people with change in their attitude, leading to change of habit. This means that just changing things without concurrent change of habit or attitude is not a healthy development. Development is seen as a changing process of knowledge, attitude and practices. It is in this context that the writer looks at development. Keghku (2005, p. 53) says that development generally implies change.

Rural Development

Rural development is a concept that is used to describe a strategy that is designed to improve the economic and social life of the people in the rural areas. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) sees rural development as a process of socio-economic change, involving the transformation of agrarian society, in order to reach a common set of development goals, based on the capacities and the needs of the people (Owo, in Nwosu, 2007, p. 305). To Anibueze, in Nwosu, Aliede and Nsude (2005, p. 36), rural development is a strategy that is designed to improve the economic and social conditions of a specific group of people, that is, the rural people. It involves extending the benefits of development to the poorest, among those who seek a livelihood in the rural areas. Rural development in general, is used to denote the actions and initiatives taken to improve the standard of living in non-urban neighborhoods, countryside and remote villages. These communities can be exemplified with a low ratio of inhabitants to open space. As earlier noted, rural areas are such areas in a country that lack necessary social amenities and infrastructures which are necessary for good living. Thus, there is the need for advancement and growth in these rural areas. The process of bringing about this advancement and growth in the rural areas is what is referred to as rural development. Anaeto and Anaeto (2008, p. 1) observe thus: Rural development is a subset and an important part of national development. The idea and concern for rural development stems from the fact that majority of the people in the developing countries reside in rural areas. And the fact that development of the nation cannot be achieved without the development of the rural areas. Even the developing countries have recently come to realise that unless the rural areas are well-developed, hardly would any meaningful development occur in these countries.

The above assertion implies that rural development is part of national development, because when rural communities are not fully developed, the objectives of national development cannot be achieved. No country can boast of development when its rural communities have not been positively affected. This perhaps explains why Moemeka (1985, p. 9) explains that rural community education

entails all activities like social, economic, educational, political and cultural, which touch on the lives of rural communities, knowledge of which is essential to purposeful living and progress. Onabajo, cited in Anaeto and Anaeto (2010) say that rural development entails interventions aimed at improved productivity, increased employment/ incomes for the target groups, as well as, minimum acceptable levels of food, shelter, education, health and housing. Rural development according to Anaeto and Anaeto (2010) is a subset and an important part of national development. The idea and concern for rural development stems from the fact that majority of the people in the countries reside in the rural areas. Rural development efforts attempt to bring about self reliance in the rural communities in a country. New practices, ideas, innovations and methods, are introduced and when the rural dwellers accept these practices, it leads to economic gains.

The Need for Rural Communication

The concept of rural communication refers to the communication of news about rural areas. It consists of gathering newsworthy information about rural areas, packaging them in any form of journalistic writing and presenting them through a mass medium, most especially community media. Rural areas as earlier noted, are those areas that are totally based in the countryside. Such rural dwellers need information about the happenings in the society, so as to make them have a better living. Anibueze, in Nwosu, Aliede and Nsude (2005, p .38) avers that there is high rate of ignorance in the rural areas, beyond the poor physical development of such areas. The rural dwellers, Anibueze avers, “need to be empowered with knowledge of the fundamentals of population and development. This is because, the rural person becomes a nuisance when he or she does not have access to information; that is, basic information like modern family needs, nutrition, women rights, child rights, etc.

Communication will play a very significant role in helping the rural dwellers to live a worthwhile life. Thus, Nwuneli, Onuora, cited in Asemah (2011) argues that the rural dwellers need accurate information that will enable them to live and appreciate the activities of the government of the day. Nwuneli avers that since the rural dwellers are involved in the task of feeding the nation, they need information on several issues, including information on loan opportunities offered by the government and how to dispose off their farm proceeds. The rural dwellers need information about health care, weather, family planning, agriculture, etc. Nwuneli concludes his argument by saying that when the rural dwellers do not get the necessary information, in a well-coordinated fashion, they lose confidence in the government and the society at large.

The basic role of rural news reporting in any society is to foster development at grass roots level. By reporting news about the rural areas, development needs in these areas are made known to government, policy makers, change agents and stakeholders in the society (Nwabueze, 2010).

The Place of Radio in Rural Development

Since the dawn of civilisation about two and half million years ago, every society's growth, survival and continuity depends on among other things, a system of communication, through which people exchange ideals, feeling; an economic system for the production of goods and services, a health system to counteract disease and ensure human reproduction; a sociopolitical system to maintain control and order and a defence system to protect their territories against external aggression (Ugboaja, 1985). Ndolo (2006) observes that the partial success of modern mass media application for development works, especially in the rural areas have resulted in various calls by communication scholars for rural development agents in the field, for a greater utilisation of indigenous communication channels for rural development. According to Moge kwu (1990), the importance of rural radio in the introduction and sustenance of change in rural communities is undeniable, yet, successive Nigerian leaders have continued to utilise the Western mass media as the panacea for rural development, thus, there is a pressing need to improve and create more rural stations and create programmes that will meet the needs of the rural dwellers, thereby, bringing about national development. Radio can be used to mobilise the people at the grass root level for community development and national consciousness. No serious mass-oriented development programme, especially in rural communities in Africa ever succeeds without the active involvement of the people within the traditional system.

Rural radio programme serves as a source of cultural, political, health and other educational and enlightenment programmes for the masses, leading them towards self-actualisation and national development. It is in this light that Okam (1981) submits that much of the failure that attends government mass-oriented programmes are traceable to the fact that policy makers at the national level fail to utilise this powerful and credible medium. Radio can be used as a source of entertainment through arts and cultural festivals, musicals and dramatic performance, by local singing groups, masquerades and other music and drama groups. Radio is a medium of communication through which the individuals share the world around them and beyond their immediate environment. Radio in a country should influence social and, especially the political fabric. The social objective of using radio to mobilise people in Nigeria entails the area of education, information and entertainment. It is essential to provide through radio a kind of general education for people, irrespective of their educational background. This would be by a combination of formal and informal form of education.

Electronic media generally, according to Asemah (2011), provide the public with information. Electronic media serve as watchdog and do not abuse power. For education, there is thrill of learning from the source material. Radio as an electronic media, is expected to play the role

of improving and changing social, cultural, political and technological thinking, which will, in the long run, have positive results on the process of rural development. This sensitive role expected to be played by radio is not far from the fact that it shows special qualities in disseminating information. Radio is so powerful that it brings political, economic and social news to any community or group of communities faster than other medium. Nwuneli, cited in Asemah (2011) in his own contribution on the role of radio, says, it has brought stimulus into the house, brings about competitions within families, thereby, grooming people who will contribute positively to the process of development. This fact agrees with the idea of Wigwe (1988) because of the emphasis on grassroots development. Salama (1978) notes that radio serves as an opinion leader in its news commentary and editorial. It mirrors the society in programmes like drama that present issues relevant to society in action which creates easy understanding and learning. It informs and educates the listeners in its discussion and documentary programmes. It entertains in its light programmes like musicals, sports comedy and dances. It also seeks to improve the society in its special occupational programmes geared towards agricultural business and other related areas. In essence therefore, radio can be employed to pass across vital information about latest techniques in agriculture, trends in agricultural extension services, etc, to the generality of rural dwellers. Radio has been used to promote and support the cause for nature holding and to this end, Moemeka (1985) remarks that a local broadcast media like radio, if well managed, fully operated, will provide a continuous flow of educational information on all aspects that affect the lives of rural communities and also arouse their awareness with a view to changing what is detrimental to their lives. Thus, radio can be effectively used to promote health related issues. Radio educates, informs and enlightens the public of which the rural populace are included. Wigwe (1988, p .115) while writing on development communication says: The key role assigned to radio is to inform, educate, enlighten and entertain. The rural mobilization and development process therefore, demands from the media the responsibility of making attainable enlightenment and aspiration of the rural populace. Towards this end, the mass media support service, should therefore promote dialogue between the designers of rural development process and programmes. They will mirror to each group in a relentless manner, the programmes that have been implemented, how it has been accepted, its short coming, areas of improvement and the reactions of the beneficiaries.

All these coupled with the medium's appeal to both the literate and illiterate audiences make radio the most fertile medium. Radio is the most effective medium of information at the grassroot level in Nigeria. It has assumed this powerful dimension because of many factors like, natural disposition, coverage area and cost. From the view point of Tafida (1986), cited in Asemah (2011), broadcasting (radio) is so powerful; it brings political, economic and social news to any community or any group of communities. Wigwe (1988) believes that radio broadcasting has credible role to

play in disseminating information to the masses at the grassroots level for development purpose. Information in this sense involves the social, political and economic aspects.

Another contributor, Adaba (1987), cited in Asemah (2011) argues further that there is an essential communication role for radio broadcasting at the local level. Within an over-all national system, there is a clear need for radio broadcast to be used to motivate and mobilise the people at the grassroots, so that they can participate actively in the development of their own society. This fact agrees with the idea of Wigwe (1988) because of the emphasis on grassroots development. Iyimoga (1987) asserts that communication's role in authentic rural development is that of providing access to information from the urban areas where modern ideas would be diffused to rural sectors and motivating and mobilising the rural populace to accept and react favourably to those new ideas. According to Asemah (2011), of the mass media generally available to Africans, radio is the most widespread and accessible. And because of its special qualities, radio can be a major force in bringing about development, that is, to any quantitative and qualitative improvements in the lives of the people. It is carried out in isolation from the direct involvement of extension services and is literally opened in the sense that programmes are directed at unorganised audience. The advantage of this strategy is that, since radio is widely diffused and readily accessible, even in peripheral areas, it can reach large audiences at a low cost. And because it reaches more rural people in third world than any other medium, its potential to bring about increase in knowledge and provide motivation for shifts in practices is considerable. Radio just like television is a tool that can be used to bring about positive attitudinal change in the audience. Radio helps to achieve development, both in the rural and urban areas, as issues of development are aired to the audience in the form of various programmes and individuals are exposed to happenings in and around their society, through listening to programmes.

Radio as a Tool for Rural Development in Nigeria: Prospects and Challenges

Radio can be employed to pass vital information about the right attitude, behaviour, knowledge, techniques and skills, which are expected from the members of the public. Radio has been found to be one of the most effective media of transforming a hither-to, under-developed society to a developed polity. Ojebode (2003) concurs when he says that with few years of its emergences, radio has metamorphosed from being an object of private concern, to a political and development instrument in the hands of governments and NGOs. The information dispersing and the enlightenment role of radio is the commonest of its functions. This disseminating function according to Asemah (2011), covers information to people's alertness to health, agriculture, education, economy, politics, etc. In this case, lectures, news, entertainment, drama, discussions etc, can be used. Radio stations in Nigeria often relay special programmes that promote rural development. More so, radio has the capacity to mobilise support for government programmes. Thus, the

government at various levels - local, state and national, have used both radio and television to mobilise support for its programmes. Arulogun and Adesiyani (n.d) notes that successful governments in Nigeria have used the media to console people and reassure them of their support in times of fire disaster, religious crisis, flood and other catastrophic events. During the crises in plateau state, the government relied heavily on the mass media in holding together the people; not only in terms of crisis, but also for the continuous peaceful coexistence of the different ethnic groups. Both private and public television and radio stations have introduced programmes, relayed jingles that lay emphasis on the need for peaceful coexistence.

Problems Associated with Using Radio for Rural Development in Nigeria

There are so many factors that hinder development communication in Nigeria. This informs why most social development programmes in Nigeria often fail. Among the problems are:

Communication Related Problems

The communicator plays a very significant role in the process of communication. The communicator is the man or woman who disseminates the information. The communicator has a big task to play in order to affect the people positively with his social development messages. If in the process of communication, the communicator is weak or bad, it will negatively affect the whole communication process.

Message Related Problems

The message is the actual physical product of the communicator. The message is the contents, the feelings, notions, ideas, etc, which we pass across to the people, so as to affect them. In communicating social development programmes, the communicator has to use the right codes, symbols, languages, etc. Thus, Nwosu (1990) says that one of such problems is the use of correct codes and symbols for communicating messages. This has to do with correct language, diction or right choice of words. What is called for here is correct use of whatever language you are using to communicate to your audience.

The message must also appeal to the people's interest and value, before it can get their attention. The people, especially those in the rural areas are easily influenced when communicated messages are in line with their pre-existing attitudes. The message must reflect the culture, belief, attitudes, etc, of the people. The message according to Nwosu, must have some utilitarian values before it can catch people's attention, arouse their interests and possibly, move them to action. The message must also have attention getting devices such as bold heading, carefully selected typography, boxes and illustrations in order to be effective. However, many communicators in Nigeria do not yet seem to realise the import of good message presentation or are not putting into

adequate practice what they know on this issue. The general trend is that, most communicators know what to say but, they do not know how to say it well. Any message that does not contain any substance will not be effective, even if it is well written, spoken or presented.

Illiteracy

Many Nigerians still cannot read and write, especially those in the rural areas. Illiteracy can serve as a hindrance to social development. Such people are functionally illiterate and constitute a major obstacle to effective flow of information or media communicated messages. The illiterates cannot be reached through newspapers and magazines even when they are produced in their local languages.

The Use of English Language by the Electronic Media

Most development communication messages are still carried out in English language, even when they are aimed at the rural dwellers. Despite the fact that radio and television sets are made available to Nigerians, research has shown that there are still by far, more English language programmes in Nigerian radio and television stations than local language programmes. Virtually all the broadcast programmes in our stations are produced in English language. This implies that the rural dwellers are not taken into consideration thus, the message will not have any effect on them.

Multiplicity of Language In Nigeria

There are so many languages in Nigeria and there is always a kind of confusion on which one to use to communicate development messages that will touch on every ethnic group. The problem of multiplicity of languages in Nigeria is largely responsible for the inefficient system of communication in Nigeria. Nwosu (1990) notes that there seems not to be an absolute agreement on the actual number of languages in Nigeria. While Frank Ugboaja says we have 178 Nigeria languages, William Hatcher says that we have 250 languages in Nigeria. Nwosu maintains that mediated message still go to literate Nigerians who can read and write English or any of the local languages while the majority of Nigerians who are illiterate and live in rural areas are still cut off from the flow of mass mediated information.

Lack of Audience Feedback

Feedback is very important in communication process. Little or no audience feedback can also hinder the social development programmes. Feedback according to Asemah (2009) is the reaction to the message sent to the receiver. The way the receivers (target audience) understand the message can affect their reactions or responses. Feedback, whether positive or negative, is necessary for effective two-dimensional or multi-dimensional communication process. It is important for the

communicator to find out through feedbacks how his messages are perceived, good? bad?, etc. If the feedback is negative, he (communicator) will be able to make necessary adjustments that will improve and sustain his communication effort. The audience- members can also help by participating more in the communication process through feedback mechanism. Feedback is important because it enables the communicator to know whether the audiences actually understand the message and whether they are willing to practise what they have been told.

Ownership Problem

One of the sickening features of the media in the third world is the fact that very large chunks of mass media are owned by government. For this reason, most media houses are seen and treated as an extension of civil service and operations are structured along civil service codes and conducts. The mass media therefore are caught in the web of bureaucratic bottlenecks, which has hindered meaningful development. Stressing the danger associated with undue governmental and institutional control, Akinyele (2003) argues that there is the tendency to always want to please the power that be or fingers that feed the media practitioner to the detriment of development ideals. There is the popular saying that “he who plays the piper dictates the tune”. Most media houses in Nigeria are owned by the government and in many cases, they end up being the mouthpiece of the government, which is for communicating government's various activities to the populace. This according to Nwosu does not make for balanced, extensive and fair communication. The privately owned media are not also left out of this problem of undue interference. Both the print and broadcast media suffer from the problem of undue influence, interference or control by their owners. Thus, it behoves on the professional communicators in Nigeria to try hard to overcome this negative impact of undue ownership control of communication.

Dearth of Qualified Personnel

One of the problems facing development communication has to do with the quality of personnel. Most of those in the business of development communication are not really experts in various aspects of development studies. Most are at best experts only on core communication courses, without basic knowledge in other social science courses like rural sociology, economics and other related development studies, which promote sustainable human development.

Presentation Analysis and Interpretation

The issue of the “effect of media in rural development a case study of Harmony FM Radio took me to Idofian, Ilorin and some selected members of FRCN network service Abuja, which serve as our population survey. In this study, data were collected from two set of questionnaires that were distributed to the people of Idofian, Ilorin and media practitioners respectively. The motive is to

identify the role of mass media plays in rural development using Harmony FM Radio which is a sub station of FRCN broadcasting service as a case study. Besides, it is also my objectives in this study to know the extent they have succeeded in improving the cooperate development of these rural dwellers using Idofian and Ilorin people as a test case and if possible proper solution to the imbalance via development.

To provide the required data for the results, we distributed two set of questionnaires to the respondents which comprise of the Idofian and Ilorin towns who have 60 questionnaires, while some selected staffs of Harmony FM broadcasting service and other media practitioners have 40 questionnaires. From the 100 questionnaires that were distributed and due to some unforeseen circumstances only 91 were duly completed and collated. However, the findings are, therefore presented in the tables with percentage where necessary to express the degree. Copy of the questionnaire will be duly attached as appendix 1.

Questionnaire collected for analysis are presented under the following distribution.

S/N	CATEGORY	NO OF QUESTIONNAIRES	COLLECTED
1	Harmony FM Employees	20	18
2	Media Practitioners	20	18
3	Rural Dwellers	60	55
	Total	100	91

Analysis

Out of the total sample of 100 questionnaires given to the respondents, 30 which is 30% are from Idofian people and another 30 which is 30% are distributed to Ilorin people. Then 40 which is 40% were distributed among the staff of Harmony FM and FRCN broadcasting service.

RESPONDENTS	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
IDOFIAN	30	30%
ILORIN	30	30%
MEDIA STAFF	40	40%
TOTAL	100	100%

RQ 1: Is the mass media a veritable tool for rural development?

RESPONSES	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
YES	50	83%
NO	10	17%
TOTAL	60	100%

The total number of 50 respondents which are 83% of the rural population said that the media is a veritable tool for developments while 10 respondents which is 17% disagreed the question.

RQ2: Which of the media would you consider the long lasting solution for rural development?

RESPONSES	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
ELECTRONIC	50	83%
PRINT	10	17%
TOTAL	60	100%

Another aspect was preferred medium between electronic and print, which is considered a long lasting solution for rural development. 50 which are 83% consisting of Idofian and Ilorin populace said electronic media, while 10 representing 17% said print media.

RQ3: Do you have any access to electronic gadget?

RESPONSES	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
YES	58	97%
NO	2	3%
TOTAL	60	100%

Again 58 which are 97% of the rural population agreed to have access to any electronic media gadget, while 2 which are 3% disagree. This indicates that 58 (97%) of the sampled respondents have access to electronic media gadgets while 2 (3%) have no access to electronic media gadgets. the finding of this research reveals that majoring of the populace have access to electronic media gadgets.

RQ4: If yes, in your opinion what electronic media would you suggest for use in enlightening the rural dwellers on the rural development?

RESPONSES	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
RADIO	40	67%
TELEVISION	20	33%
TOTAL	60	100%

The table aims at determining the effective electronic media for the rural development. a close study for the figure in the table reveals that 40 which is 67% of the rural population suggested radio, while 20 which 33% suggested television.

RQ5: What is your opinion about the suitability of time in disseminating of information to enhance rural development?

RESPONSES	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
MORNING	30	50%
AFTERNOON	10	17%
EVENING	20	33%

The total number of 30 respondents which are 50% suggested that morning is suitable in disseminating of information to enhance rural development, 10 respondents which are 17% suggested afternoon while 20 respondents which are 33% suggested evening to be suitable in disseminating of information to enhance rural development.

RQ6: Did government programmes in the media contribute to the development of rural communities of Kwara State?

RESPONSES	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
YES	45	75%
NO	15	25%
TOTAL	60	100%

Similarly, the total number of 45 respondents which are 75% agreed that government programs contribute on rural development while 15 respondents representing 25% were ignorant of any government programme on rural development.

RQ7: Are illiteracy and language barrier problems to rural dweller understanding of media programmes?

RESPONSES	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
YES	55	92%
NO	5	8%
TOTAL	60	100%

The table above indicates that the respondent's responses in this order 55 which are 92% out of the rural population said yes, while 5 which are 8% said no.

RQ8: In your opinion, do you think at village level that face to face communications by government official are better than media?

RESPONSES	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
YES	20	33%
NO	40	67%
TOTAL	60	100%

From the figure represented in the table above based on the responses in the questionnaire distributed. it is discovered that 20 which are 33% agreed that village level face to face communication by government officials or use of public address system by government officials are better than the media, while 40 which are 67% of the sample respondents disagreed.

Section B' For the Media Practitioners

This section attempts to identify the media practitioner's role in rural development. It consists of seven questions that are used to collect and analyzes data on the role of mass media awareness in rural development.

RQ9: Is there any communication gap that exists between Kwara State government and its rural dwellers?

RESPONSES	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
YES	25	81%
NO	6	19%
TOTAL	31	100%

Out of this the media practitioners sampled which 25 persons representing 81% agreed that there is communication gap that exist between the kwara state government and its rural dwellers while 6 respondents which are 19% disagreed.

IJSER

RQ10: Should rural development be attributed to the effectiveness of the mass media?

RESPONSES	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
YES	20	65%
NO	11	35%
TOTAL	31	100%

The total number of 20 media practitioners which are 65% attributed effectiveness of the press to the rural development, while 11 respondents which are 35% disagreed.

RQ11: Do you think that language selection is a major factor to be considered in dissemination to the rural dwellers?

RESPONSES	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
YES	27	87%
NO	4	13%
TOTAL	31	100%

The total number of 27 Harmony FM and FRCN staffs which are 87% agreed that language selection is a major factor to be considered in dissemination of information to the rural dwellers while 4 which represented 13% disagreed.

RQ12: Ineffectiveness of media station causes under development of rural communities?

RESPONSES	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
lack of needs	10	32%
lack of incentive	15	48%
lack of electricity	6	20%
Total	31	100%

The table above aims at finding out the major problems of the Harmony FM staff in reaching the rural communities of Idofian Ilorin and neighboring villages . A close study of the figure reveal, that 10 respondents which are 32% attributed lack of good roads such as a major problems in reaching the rural communities, while 15 respondents which represent 48% attributed it as lack of incentives and 6 respondents while 20% attributed it as lack of electricity.

RQ13: In your opinion what do you think militates against exposure of rural dwellers to mass media?

RESPONSES	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Illiteracy	15	48%
Poor reading listening skills	10	32%
Poverty	6	20%
Total	31	100%

The total number of 15 Harmony FM staffs representing 48% attribute that illiteracy does militate against exposure of rural dwellers to mass media, 10 respondents which represent 32% attributed it to poor reading and listening skills and 6 respondents which are 20% attribute it to poverty.

Discussion of Findings

The data collected from the study are hereby carefully analyzed and interpreted. The researcher tested and discussed the hypotheses according to the research questions in the study.

H1: That electronic media is considered a long lasting solution to rural development. Based on the answers on question 2,3,4 which are related to the hypothesis statement (see appendix), it was observed 50 respondents representing 83% support it while 10 respondents which are 17% disagreed, believing in print media.

H2: That people of Idofian and Ilorin towns are aware of government programmes on rural development. Question 6 and 7 were used to test hypothesis (H2) received support 58 (97%) of the population were of the view that they are aware of government programmes on rural development programmes. Moreover, question 7 (appendix) showed that 58 respondents (97%) were of the view that the programme has encouraged them to enable on rural development see table xi.

H3: That illiteracy among the rural dwellers is the major factor militating against understanding of mass media programme. Question 8 according to the table, it was obvious that 55 (92%) respondents agreed that illiteracy and language barriers hold rural dwellers understanding of media programmes. Therefore, based on the answer on questions 8 and 12 to which are related to the hypothesis statement are related to the hypothesis statement (see appendix) the responds received support.

H4: That rural development is attributed to the effectiveness of the media. Question 11 and 13 were used to test hypothesis H4 on “effectiveness” (see appendix), a close study of table xv proved that hypothesis H4 received support. 47% (83%) confirmed that rural development is attributable to the effectiveness of the media. it was observed also in table xix, research question 15, (see appendix) that militates against exposure of rural dwellers to mass media, 10 (32%) attributed it to poor reading and his listening skills and 6 (20%) attributed it to poverty.

Conclusion

Radio is an important tool for entertaining, informing and educating the society. Electronic media generally provide the public with information. Radio as an electronic medium can be used to play the role of improving and changing' social, cultural, political and technological thinking, which will in the long run, have positive results on the process of rural building. Due to the fact that radio can be used to educate, inform and socialise the society, rural radio becomes a medium that can contribute to the development of rural community. This is based on the fact that rural dwellers appear to be left out on developmental issues as a result of the level of illiteracy in the rural community. Radio is easily accessible and affordable, easily understood and accepted. It does not demand any complexity in broadcasting or listening. It can be used or listened to anytime and anywhere.

The unique nature of radio is such that, it appears to be one medium of mass communication that the rural dwellers can easily identify with. Thus, this brings about the need for the establishment of numerous radio stations in our various rural communities in Nigeria. How can this be achieved,

given the nature of cultural diversity in Nigeria? More so, illiteracy is still a big question in the Nigerian society. How can rural radio be made acceptable and comprehensive despite the alarming rate of illiteracy in the rural areas?

Lastly, with the persistent economic crisis thriving in the rural areas, how can rural dwellers use radio to benefit and how can radio meet or provide their needs? These are questions that government, media organisation scholars and all stakeholders need to consider as they consider radio developmental programmes/works in rural communities.

Recommendations

Radio is a medium that can be used to mobilise the rural dwellers and even urban dwellers for development purposes if effectively used. The paper therefore recommends that:

1. Radio messages should be designed in line with the pre-existing attitudes of the rural dwellers. That is, the people's culture, belief, etc, should be taken into consideration when designing radio programmes.
2. Radio stations in Nigeria should endeavour to use local dialects, especially when the radio programme is aimed at the rural dwellers. The people will pick more interest in programmes when local languages are used.
3. Radio programmes, that are developmentally oriented should be targeted to the rural dwellers in order to encourage improved farming, community development, personnel and home hygiene and participation in democratization process.
4. It is important for government and the public to know that effective communication with rural dwellers will increase their active participation in the life of citizens in the country. To this end, it is recommended that radio stations should be well funded to produce programmes that would serve the purpose of educating and informing the public on issues relevant to them.

IJSER

References

- Abdullahi T.A. (2011). *Media Consumption amid contestation: Northern Nigeria's engagement with the BBC Worldwide Service*. PhD Thesis awarded by the university of Westminster.
- Adesiyan, E.A and Arulogun C.F.O (n.d). *Communication and National Development*. Ibadan: Spikenard Publishers Nigeria Limited.
- Akinfeleye, R.A. (2005). *A Research and Training Agenda for a Viable Community Radio Sector in Nigeria: A Paper Presented at the National Validation Seminar on Building Community Radio in Nigeria, Held at Chida International Hotel, Abuja*.
- Anaeto, S. G. and Anaeto M. S. (2010). *Rural Community Newspaper: Principles and Practice*. Ibadan: Stirling- Horden Publishers. Anaeto, S.G and Anaeto, M.S. (2010). *Development Communication: Principles and Practice*. Ibadan: Stirling Horden Publishers.
- Anaeto, S.G., Anaeto, M.S. and Tejumaiye, J.A. (2009). *Newspaper and Magazine: Management, Production and Marketing*. Ibadan: Stirling Horden Publishers limited.
- Anibueze, S. (2005). "Career Prospects in Rural Journalism", in Nwosu, I.E., Aliede, J.E and Nsude, I. (Eds). *Mass Communication: One Course, Many Professions*. Enugu: Prime Targets Limited.
- Asemah, E.S .(2011). *Mass Media in the Contemporary Society*. Jos: University Press.
- Asemah, E.S .(2011). *Selected Mass Media Themes*. Jos: University Press.
- Coglate, I. (2009). Concept of Rural Community Journalism. Prevention and Treatment 3, Article 0004.allAfrica.com *FRCN (2007, 2010). Journals Publication*.
- J.Nwuneli O. (1984). *Strategy for an Integrated Mass Media System for Rural Development*, Africa Communication Review vol.1 and 2
- McQuail, D. (1987). *Mass Communication Theories: An Introduction*. California: SAGE Publications Inc.
- Moegekwu, M. (1990). "Message, Media and Mobilisation. The Imperative of Ruralisation. Nigeria Journal of Mass communication Vol. I.
- Moemeka, A. (1985). *Local Radio Communication Education for Development*. Zaria: ABU Press.
- Moemeka, A.A. (1985). *Local Radio: Community Education for Development*. Zaria: ABU Press.
- Ndolo, I. (2006). *Mass Media System and the Society*. Enugu: Rhyce kerex Publishers
- Ndolo, I. E. (2005). *Mass Media System and the Society*. Enugu: Rhyce Kerex Publishers. NMCA. Enugu." Nnoli, O. (1981). *Developmental/ Under- development: Is Nigeria Developing in Path to Development?* Daka: Codesira.
- Nwabueze, C. (2010). *Reporting: Principles, Approaches and Special Beets*. Enugu: To Shelfe Publishers.

- Nwosu, I.E. (1990). "The Rural Press as Vital Component of the Rural Information System," in Nwosu, I.E. (Ed). *Mass Communication and National Development*. Aba: Frontier Publishers Limited.
- Nwabueze, C. (2010). *Reporting: Principles, Approaches and Special Beets*. Enugu: To Shelve Publishers.
- Ojebode, (2003) "Radio as a Development Communication Media" in Soola, O. (ed). *Communicating for Development Purpose*. Ibadan: Craft Publication.
- Opubor A.E (1985). *Mass Communication and Modern Development in Mass Communication in Nigeria*. A book of reading Enugu fourth Dimension Publishing Company.
- Salama, G. (1978). *Television in a Developing Country*. Jos: Government Press.
- Udoaka, N. (2001). *Issues in Media Practice*. Ibadan: Striling – Horden
- Ugboaja, F. (1985). "Ora Media in Africa" in Uaboaja, F. (ed). *Mass Communication, Culture and Society in West Africa*. Munchem: Hanszell.
- Ugboaja, F. (1985). "Ora Media in Africa" in Uaboaja, F. (ed). *Mass Communication, Culture and Society in West Africa*. Munchem: Hanszell.
- Wigwe S.I.J (1988). *The Media and Integrated Rural Development*""", Damatob, J (Ed). *Mass Communication in Africa: A Book of Reading* Enugu: Delta Press.

IJSER