

NTIENSE SUNDAY SIMON,
DR. PHILOMENA EFFIONG UMOREN AND
DR. BASSEY EFFIONG EYOH

AN ASSESSMENT OF DEVELOPMENT COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES ADOPTED BY THE NIGER DELTA DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION (NDDC) IN AKWA IBOM STATE

NTIENSE SUNDAY SIMON
Department of Mass Communication
Akwa Ibom State University
Obio Akpa Campus
ntiensesimon@gmail.com
08023621335

DR. PHILOMENA EFFIONG UMOREN AND DR. BASSEY EFFIONG EYOH

Department of Mass Communication
Akwa Ibom State University
Obio Akpa Campus

ABSTRACT

This research examined the Development Communication Strategies employed by the Niger Delta Development Commission (NDDC) in Akwa Ibom State: The study aimed at identifying the communication strategies adopted by NDDC for the development of communities in Akwa Ibom State, investigating their effectiveness, ascertaining the media channels deployed most and the challenges faced by NDDC in undertaking specific development projects in Akwa Ibom State. The survey research design was employed in this study. The population of the study was 4,979,000 according to the 2022 National Population Projection for Akwa Ibom State. The method of data collection was the administration of questionnaire on selected respondents and the face to face interview of officials of NDDC. It made use of descriptive analysis approach based on primary and secondary data collection. Based on the findings of the study, it was revealed that NDDC has been proactive in engaging the citizens about its programmes, activities, policies and plans. The commission evolved activities to educate, create awareness, build relationship and increase community participation in its programmes through the various media strategies such as press releases, conduct of press conferences, press tours, writing feature articles, rejoinders, granting interviews, hosting of meetings, public lectures and sponsorship of social events to drive down its development communication strategies in Akwa Ibom State. It was recommended that NDDC should invest more in its Public Affairs Unit, embark on more Public Relations activities to sustain its information and public education campaigns.

Key words: *Communication, Development, NDDC, Strategies, Programmes*

INTRODUCTION

Development and communication are interwoven and intertwined in development discourse. Development cannot occur in the absence of communication, as it is the engine that drives development efforts and made them yield results. Bassey (2021) posits that since communication is at the centre of every human activity, there is a positive correlation

between development and the operations of the mass media of communication in any society. Thus, communication is an integral part of development (Odoom, 2020). Despite the close relationship between these two concepts, there is a growing concern that the role of communication in development especially, in developing countries is not well documented. Opinions on how communication should be used to promote development differ especially in developing countries. Development experts, governmental bodies, donor agencies, research institutions, Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), and Community-Based Organizations (CBOs) – all have their own perceptions and views about the role and purpose of communication in development. This diversity of views, arguably compounds the misunderstanding of the role of communication in development discourse (Adedokun, 2010). There is therefore the need to broaden people's understanding of the relationship between development and communication. It is therefore critical for stakeholders in the field of development to strengthen the awareness and appreciation of these concepts, (development and communication) as failure to do this will reduce development communication into mere rhetoric (Odoom, 2020).

Development communication is the systematic and planned practice of communication through inter-personal medium and mass media for social change, (Castello, 2006). Development communication is premised on the idea that development is about change, and if development initiatives are to be sustainable, they should start with mechanisms that ensure broad participation by all those who have interest in the intended change (Mefalopulos, 2008). In Development Communication, rural people are at the centre of development initiatives and so communication is used in this sense for community mobilisation, participation, building confidence for awareness – raising, decision making, knowledge sharing, changing lifestyles, behaviour and attitudes (Adedokun, *et al*, 2010). Therefore, Communication is used as a tool to facilitate community participation in a development planning initiative (Quebral, 2012).

The World Bank (2006) defined development communication as the integration of strategic communication in development processes and programmes based on a strong understanding of indigenous realities. This shows that local contexts play a crucial role in development and development communication. Every community development initiative as a social development project requires effective communication, to reach the various groups of people who are involved in such development project in the participating communities. Aruma (2018) asserts that community development requires effective communication in order to be very successful in the participating communities. Community development is the process of helping a community to harness its full potentials using communication as a key component of sustainable development. Mobilising community members for development purposes is important, and this can only happen when there is effective communication which as a result leads to effective collaborative efforts among development partners and beneficiaries. This is to say, that communication is a central or the mediating factor facilitating and contributing to collective change process (Sarvaes & Liu 2007). Therefore, effective communication helps to move people from individual centered deficit model of learning, behaviour development and change to a collective and community-focused model of participation, appreciation and equity.

THE MANDATE OF THE NIGER DELTA DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION (NDDC)

According to the Niger-Delta Development Commission (Establishment Act; 2000 Act No 6), the Commission is saddled with the functions of: formulating policies and guidelines for the development of the Niger- Delta area, conceiving, planning and implementing, in accordance with set rules and regulations, projects and programmes for the sustainable development of the Niger-Delta area in the field of transportation including roads, jetties and waterways, health, education, employment, industrialisation, agriculture and fisheries, housing and urban development, water supply, electricity and telecommunications, causing the Niger-Delta area to be surveyed in order to ascertain measures which are necessary to promote its physical and socio- economic development, preparing master plans and schemes designed to promote the physical development of the Niger-Delta area and the estimates of the costs of implementing such master plans and schemes, implementing all the measures approved for the development of the Niger- Delta area by the Federal Government and the member States of the Commission.

NDDC is alive to its mandate in a social pact with the people. But it seemed, not much was known about their activities, arising from non-existent or ineffective development communication strategy adopted by the commission in the past. Expectedly an effective development communication approach/strategy in the recent past had created awareness, promoted collaboration, acceptance and participation from the host communities which eventually ensured participation, support, sustainability for development initiatives and benefits for the communities.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Community development depends on effective communication to thrive, as ideas, opinions and innovations are shared among the community members and development partners. Development communication therefore enhances the participation of community members towards the achievement of the goals for rural community development. At the inception of NDDC, several community development projects such as boreholes, clinics, schools, markets and farming projects initiated by the NDDC in Akwa Ibom State are currently in a deplorable state. Agricultural inputs such as seeds and fertilizers sent to the target groups were not put into use due to lack of knowledge of the benefits and the methods of applying them in farming. In other instances, projects such as boreholes have been abandoned because it was not what the people needed. Also, at the commencement of the activities of the NDDC in Akwa Ibom State, it was a tug of war between the benefitting communities and the NDDC during project implementation or execution caused mostly by lack or poor development communication strategies of the NDDC. This development was as a result of inadequate development communication strategies that did not involve the host communities in the formulation, implementation and sustenance of the projects/development initiatives by the NDDC or other development partners.

Okafor (2005) notes that when communities participate in their projects, they become empowered which in turn improves efficiency, transparency and accountability that enhances service delivery and also encourages donor's harmonisation. Moreover, when beneficiaries are not involved from the beginning, they tend to be more suspicious of projects/activities and, therefore, less concern to support them. Conversely, when communication is used to involve the community in the implementation of an initiative,

their support and commitment grow stronger. This study is therefore concerned with identifying the development communication strategies adopted by the NDDC in Akwa Ibom State that have resulted in the smooth operation of the NDDC in the recent past, investigate the effectiveness of these development communication strategies, ascertain the media channels used most by the NDDC, evaluate the contributions of development communication strategies adopted by the NDDC as well as find out the challenges faced by the NDDC in undertaking development projects in the communities in Akwa Ibom State.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The following objectives were formulated to:

- i. Identify the communication strategies adopted by NDDC in disseminating development programmes in Akwa Ibom State.
- ii. Ascertain the media channels deployed most by NDDC for the dissemination of development information to the benefiting communities in Akwa Ibom State.
- iii. Investigate the effectiveness of the development communication strategies adopted by NDDC for the development of communities in Akwa Ibom State.
- iv. Find out the challenges facing the effective Communication Strategies of NDDC in Akwa Ibom State.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- i. What are the communication strategies adopted by NDDC in disseminating of development programmes in Akwa Ibom State?
- ii. What are the media channels used most by NDDC in community development in Akwa Ibom State?
- iii. What is the level of effectiveness of development communication strategies adopted by NDDC for community development in Akwa Ibom State?
- iv. What are the challenges that hinder effective communication strategies of NDDC in Akwa Ibom State?

LITERATURE REVIEW

Concept of Development Communication

The adoption of the declaration on the use of the media gave international legitimacy to what the developing countries had already adopted as their media philosophy- development communication (DEVCOM), otherwise known as development journalism (Udoakah 1998). According to Udoakah (1998;7),

“Development communication therefore, is a remonstrance against western domination of the world information market. It is a new philosophy for the use of modern media of mass information in the developing countries. It is journalism introduced to meet the developing needs of the developing nations. Development communication is corrective, integrative and revolutionary in nature. It is journalism of hope and change. It proclaims and extends values in society. It seeks to persuade citizens to accept that their happiness lies in and is enhanced by their adoption of innovations”.

Development communication is the only way beneficiaries of projects can become the main actors in any successful development programme (FAO, 2014). This suggests that development communication is indispensable in any meaningful development process. Following the near lack of understanding of the concept, it is important that efforts are put in place to help bring clarity to development communication. Development communication is defined as the planned and systematic use of communication through inter-personal channels, ICTs audio-visuals and mass media for social change. Indeed, if development initiatives are to be sustainable, they must start with mechanisms that ensure broad participation by all those who have some interest in the intended change. Where a segment of the society is ignored in the pursuit of development services, the outcomes of such decision may be tragic.

According to the World Bank (2006), development communication is the integration of strategic communication in development processes and programmes based on a strong understanding of indigenous realities. This shows that local contexts play a crucial role in development and development communication. Development programmes and interventions will not result in desired change unless the process is characterized by an ongoing culturally and socially relevant communication dialogue among development service providers and recipients (Mefalopulos, 2003). Owusu (2014) further defines development communication as a deliberate effort of sharing information using appropriate techniques between stakeholders to reach a common understanding which supports and sustains the goals of social, economic, political and cultural development. This implies that development communication focuses on consciously making efforts to share information between stakeholders using proper techniques and tools with the sole aim of enhancing the social, economic, political, cultural and ecological aspects of people. In communication for development, rural people are at the centre of any given development initiative, and so, communication is used in this sense for people's participation and community mobilization, decision making and action, confidence building for raising awareness, sharing knowledge and changing attitudes, behaviour and lifestyles (FAO 2006).

Community Development

The beginning step in defining community development is to define "community". As mentioned previously, the community can refer to a location (communities of place) or a collection of individuals with a common interest or tie whether nearby or widely separated (communities of interest). A review of the literature conducted by Mattessich and Monsey (2004) gives definitions of the community as people who live within a geographically defined area and who have social and psychological ties with each other and with the place where they live or a grouping of people who live close to one another and are united by common interests and mutual aid.

A community is also referred to as a combination of social units and systems which perform the major social functions (and) the organization of social activities. These definitions refer first to people and the ties that bind them and second to geographic locations. They remind us that without people and the connections among them, a community is just a collection of buildings and streets. In this context, community development takes on the mantle of developing stronger "communities" of people and the social and psychological ties they share. Indeed, this is how community development is defined in much of the literature. Discussions that reflect this aspect focus on community

development as an educational process to enable citizens to address problems by group decision making. (Mattessich & Monsey, 2004). Equally, it could be described as involvement in a process to achieve improvement in some aspect of community life where normally such action leads to the strengthening of the community's pattern of human and institutional relationships.

All of these concepts of community development focus on the process of teaching people how to work together to solve common problems. These conceptions, however, show that community development should be considered as both a process and an outcome. Therefore community development is simply (i) taking collective action and (ii) the result of that action for improvement in a community in any or all realms: physical, environmental, cultural, social, political, and economic.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This work is anchored on three theories namely: The Interactional View Theory; The Development Media Theory and Information Integration Theory. The Interactional View Theory was propounded by Paul Watzlawick in 1967 and it asserts that communication is equal to content and relationship. "Every communication has a content and relationship aspect such that the latter classifies the former and is therefore metacommunication." Its interactional view, illustrated the difference with a two word message: The content level provides information based on what the message is about, while the relational level "gives off" information on how the message is to be interpreted. For example, the content of the comment "You're late" refers to time, but at the relational level the comment typically implies a form of criticism of the other's lack of responsibility or concern.

The relevance of this theory to the study is that NDDC should be mindful of its information, statements and speeches as these can affect the smooth operations of the NDDC in Akwa Ibom State. Also, information sent to members of the public should not be ambiguous, but precise, friendly, capable of integrating all its publics, and sustaining robust and healthy communication with its teaming publics.

The Development Media Theory was propounded by Dennis McQuail in 1987 and it sees the media as pivots for national development. McQuail (1987) states that the central thesis of the theory is that the mass media in developing nations should be used for "the primacy of the national development task (economic, social, cultural and political); the pursuit of cultural and informational autonomy; support for democracy; and solidarity with other developing countries, (p.131)." Kadijat (2009:128) notes that "Development Media theory advocates media support for an existing political regime and its efforts to bring about national economic development. By supporting government development efforts, the media aid the society at large. This theory argues that until nation is well established and its economic development well underway, media must be supportive rather than critical of government. Journalists must not speak against government efforts to promote development but, rather, assist government in implementing such policies."

The development media theory thus deals with the structure and performance of the media in developing countries and "encompasses a great variety of socio-cultural, economic and political conditions which, however, tend to converge in a primary concern to use the media for development purposes," (Folarin, 2002, p.38). The relevance of this theory is that, it has given the media the basis to cover NDDC development activities and showcase them to the world. This theory insists that communication and involvement of the

beneficiary communities will lead to the success of the development projects and attainment of goals in the benefiting communities. Also, the relevance of this theory to the study lies in the basic principles that there can be no development without communication; as the mass media is seen as having the potentials to act as key agents of change in spreading modernisation messages to remote traditional communities and replacing the structures of life, values and behaviours with one seen in modern western societies (FAO, 2011).

Information Integration theory and model was propounded by Norman H. Anderson in 1970 and it describes how a person integrates information from a number of sources in order to make an overall judgment. Information Integration Theory differs from other theories in that it is not erected on a consistency principle such as balance or congruity but rather relies on algebraic models. The theory is also referred to as functional measurement, because it can provide validated scale values of the stimuli.

This theory is relevant to this study because NDDC needs a lot of information from different stakeholders to make an informed decision and operation during project nomination, execution and handing over to beneficiaries. Also, the theory presupposes that NDDC should carry all its stakeholders along and listens to the affected publics before taking a particular action(s) on an issue.

RESEARCH DESIGN

The researcher adopted interview and survey as research design for this work. This study investigated the contributions of development communication strategies adopted by NDDC in the development of communities in Akwa Ibom State. The work is restricted to development programmes of NDDC in Akwa Ibom State. The population of the study was derived from the 2022 National Population Commission (NPC) Projection for Akwa Ibom State by which stood at 4,979,400. The researcher relied on Philip Meyer's (2010), statistical guide to pick three hundred and eighty four (384) subjects as sample size for the study.

This is shown in the table below;

Table 1:

Population Size	Sample Size
500,000 or more	384
100,000	383
10,000	370
5,000	357
3,000	341
2,000	322
1,000	248

Philip Meyer Statistical Guide (2010)

SAMPLING TECHNIQUE

The multi-stage sampling technique was adopted where the 384 subjects were selected proportionately from the 10 Federal Constituencies of the state according to their

population. Officials of NDDC were also interviewed for their in-depth information about NDDC and its operations. Structured questionnaire was used for data collection in this study.

The researcher employed two research assistants trained on how to administer the questionnaire and guide the subjects on how to complete them within the confines of research ethics. Copies of the questionnaire were administered on the selected respondents according to the already determined sampling procedure. Also, a face to face interview was done with officials of NDDC. Data gathered from the administration of the structured questionnaire were analysed using simple percentage in a tabular format to ease understanding of results.

DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

Table 2: Distribution of Respondents’ on the Development Communication Strategies adopted by NDDC in Community Development in Akwa Ibom State

	Responses	No. of respondents	Percentages
A.	“NDDC Hour” news programme in Television stations in Akwa Ibom State.	180	48.65%
B.	Public Awareness Campaigns, “NDDC and You” in radio stations in Akwa Ibom State.	95	25.68%
C.	Television documentary programmes	53	14.32%
D.	Town hall meetings	42	11.35%
	Total	370	100

Table 2 indicates that 180 (48.65%) of the respondents mentioned “NDDC Hour” programmes in Television stations in Akwa Ibom State as one of the development communication strategies of the NDDC. A total of 95 (25.68%) of the respondents went for public awareness campaigns “NDDC and You” on radio stations in Akwa Ibom State, 53 (14.32%) of the respondents decided on Television Documentary programmes while 42 (11.35%) of the respondents agreed on town hall meetings as some of the development communication strategies of the NDDC.

Table 3: Distribution of Respondents’ on the Media Channels Used by NDDC in Akwa Ibom State

	Responses	No. of respondents	Percentages
A.	Television	131	35.71%
B.	Radio	87	23.51%
C.	Newspaper	124	33.51%
D.	Town crier	28	7.57%
	Total	370	100

Table 3 indicated that 131 (35.71%) of the respondents mentioned television as one of the traditional media channels used by the NDDC in the dissemination of information. 87

(23.51%) of the respondents went for radio, 124 (33.51%) of the respondents decided on newspaper while 28 (7.57%) of the respondents went for town crier as some of the means of communicating NDDC messages to its teeming publics.

Table 4: Distribution of Respondents’ opinions on the effectiveness of the Development Communication Strategies used by the NDDC for community development in Akwa Ibom State

	Responses	No. of respondents	Percentages
A.	Dissemination of Information	160	43.24%
B.	Fasten understanding of the operation of the NDDC	77	20.18%
C.	Facilitation of the management of conflict	66	17.84%
D.	Building of harmonious relationship	67	18.11%
	Total	370	100

Table 4 showed that 160 (43.24%) of the respondents said that dissemination of adequate and accurate information to the members of the public is one of the contributions of development communication strategies adopted by the NDDC for community development in Akwa Ibom State. A total of 77 (20.81%) of the respondents chose fastening of the understanding of the operations of the NDDC, 66 (17.984%) of the respondents mentioned the facilitation of the management of conflict while 67 (18.11%) of the respondents agreed on the building of harmonious relationship as some of the contributions of development communication strategies adopted by NDDC for community development in Akwa Ibom State.

Table 5: Distribution of Respondents on the challenges that impede the efficacy of the Development Communication Strategies by the NDDC in Akwa Ibom State

	Responses	No. of respondents	Percentages
A.	Most NDDC media programmes are in English Language	100	27.63%
B.	Some communities in Akwa Ibom State have no electricity and poor communication facilities.	40	10.81%
C.	Hostility of some benefiting communities	64	17.30%
D.	Outright blackmail or falsehood against the NDDC	166	44.86%
	Total	370	100

Table 5 unveiled that 100 (27.63%) of the respondents stated that most NDDC media programmes are in English Language and that is one of the factors that hinder the effectiveness of the development communication strategies used by the NDDC in Akwa Ibom State. A total of 40 (10.81%) of the respondents said that some communities in Akwa Ibom State have no electricity and poor communication facilities, 64 (17.30%) of the respondents mentioned hostility of some benefiting communities while 166 (44.86%) of the respondents talked about outright blackmail or falsehood against the NDDC by some

corrupt community leaders as some of the hindrances to the effectiveness of the development communication strategies of the NDDC in Akwa Ibom State.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

RESEARCH QUESTION 1 - What are the Development Communication Strategies Employed by NDDC in Community Development in Akwa Ibom State?

Data presented in Table 2 confirmed that NDDC informs its various publics about the policies of the commission, creates awareness about the programmes, activities and plans of NDDC, through the various media strategies. The interviewees also agreed that NDDC issues press releases, conduct press conferences, press tours, writes feature articles, rejoinders, grant interviews, host meetings, public lectures and sponsors social events to drive down its development communication in Akwa Ibom State and adopts the language that the specific target audience understands in its various media programmes such as local languages for the rural dwellers as well as place premium on the provision of mechanisms for feedback, documentation and response to inquiries promptly.

RESEARCH QUESTION 2: What are the Development Communication Channels used by the NDDC in Akwa Ibom State?

From the information computed in Table 3, most respondents said that NDDC have made massive use of the print and electronic media to disseminate accurate information to members of the public, made use of social media platforms, official websites and other online fora to share information, respond to complaints and interacts with indigenes of Akwa Ibom State and publishes newsletters, bulletins and press releases to give out new developments, key updates and success stories to the people of Akwa Ibom State. The interviewee also said that NDDC sponsors community events like football tournament, organizes Town Hall meeting or outreach programmes to directly interact with members of the public.

RESEARCH QUESTION 3: What are the Contributions of Development Communication Strategies adopted by NDDC to Community Development in Akwa Ibom State?

Data from Table 4 showed that majority of the respondents and officials of NDDC confirmed the contributions of the development communication strategies used by NDDC for community development in Akwa Ibom State to include: provision of relevant information, provision of opportunities for dialogue and discussion, provision of opportunities for sharing information, unifying factor in community development activities, indispensable tool in all stages of community development as well as motivation of the members of a community for community development.

Other contributions of development communication strategies used by NDDC for community development in Akwa Ibom State as affirmed by the officials of NDDC are the facilitation of conflict management, crises settlement and building of harmonious relationship between the stakeholders of Akwa Ibom State and officials of NDDC, concerted professional efforts to correct the misrepresentations, disinformation and biases against NDDC through feature articles and press releases, as well as built and maintain a positive public image, reputation and brand visibility of the NDDC.

RESEARCH QUESTION 4: What is the level of Effectiveness of Development Communication Strategies Used by the NDDC for Community Development in Akwa Ibom State?

The information presented in Table 5 is based on the positive responses of the majority of respondents and the officials of NDDC, Uyo Office that development communication strategies used by NDDC for community development in Akwa Ibom State were highly effective because they reduced the bureaucratic bottle necks and hoarding of information by officials of NDDC, entrenched a robust two-way information flow between the NDDC and indigenes of Akwa Ibom State, and offered quick responses to complaints raised by stakeholders in Akwa Ibom State.

The interviewees said that the indicators of effectiveness of development communication strategies used by NDDC for community development in Akwa Ibom State included quick accessibility to information about NDDC, creation of awareness and fast understanding of the policies and operations of the NDDC, extended reach of the NDDC messages to its target audience, increased interest and participation of the community members in NDDC community development projects, less community hostility to the NDDC officials, amicable settlement of conflict and crises management as well as near-absolute peace in Akwa Ibom State.

RESEARCH QUESTION 5: What are the Challenges faced by the NDDC in adopting the Communication Strategies for Community Development in Akwa Ibom State?

Data on Table 6 showed that majority of the respondents agreed that there were challenges hindering the effectiveness of the development communication strategies used by NDDC for community development in Akwa Ibom State. The challenges ranged from foreign and alien media programmes and contents, un-interactive and non-participatory media programmes, no/poor internet services, communication facilities and electricity infrastructure, poor execution and outright abandonment of NDDC community development projects, bad attitude, prejudices, culture, traditional and religious beliefs of some members of the benefiting communities, political view and legal restrictions in some NDDC states, ignorance of members of the benefiting communities as well as unfair treatment of the benefiting communities.

The interviewees agreed that other hindrances to the effectiveness of the development communication strategies used by NDDC for community development in Akwa Ibom State included brazen hostility of the benefiting communities, unfriendly attitude of leaders of some benefiting communities as well as complete blackmail and deliberate falsehood by leaders of some benefiting communities against the NDDC.

CONCLUSION

From the results of the study, NDDC has adopted a number of development communication strategies towards community development in Akwa Ibom State such as “NDDC Hour” on television stations and the “NDDC and You” on radio stations. The study equally identified the media channels used by the NDDC to include television, radio, newspaper, town hall meetings, courtesy visits and personality interview in Akwa Ibom

State. The development communication strategies adopted by the NDDC for community development in Akwa Ibom State have contributed to the provision of relevant information, provision of opportunities for dialogue and discussion, provision of opportunities for sharing of information. The study confirmed that the programmes of NDDC have been hindered by political blackmail and falsehood.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of the research, the following recommendations were made:

- i. NDDC should invest more in its Public Affairs Unit, embark on more Public Relations activities, and sustain its information and public education campaigns. The Public Relations Unit should give crucial information to the benefitting communities in time.
- ii. Public Affairs Unit of NDDC should partner with the media in Akwa Ibom State for sustenance of media relationship and wider reach of NDDC messages. The strategies should make more use of both the traditional and the new media channels. Effective use of the social media, online blogs, NDDC Twitter handle and websites should be encouraged.
- iii. NDDC in Akwa Ibom State should collaborate and establish linkages with other NGOs and development partners to bring more community development projects to the communities as part its development strategies.
- iv. Media Unit of NDDC must continue to monitor and audit negative media reports about NDDC and correct the misrepresentations at all times. The Public Relations Unit of NDDC must provide a feedback mechanism that will receive, document and respond swiftly to complaints and enquires made by the residents of Akwa Ibom State.

REFERENCES

- Adedokun, M. O., Adeyemo C. W. & Oloeunsola E. O. (2010) The impact of communication on community development. *Journal of Communication*, 1(2), 101-105.
- Aruma E. O. (2018) Role of Communication in Community Development. *International Journal of Network and Communication Research*, 5(1), 1-10.
- Aruma, E. O. (2009). The role of entrepreneurship education in promoting community development enterprises in Nigeria. In P.O.M Nnabuo (Ed.) *African Journal of Educational Research and Development (AJERD)* 3, 189-194.
- Bassey, B. E. (2021). Mediatisation of development: An empirical review of the strengths and weaknesses of the mass media in the reportage of development in Nigeria. *AKSU journal of social sciences*, (1(2), 53- 65.
- Communication for development <www.fao.org/sk/kn/en.html. (assessed on February 22, 2010)
- FAO (2000). Application of ICTs for enhancement of extension linkage, coordination and services. Proceedings of a sub-regional workshop, Hammamet, Tunisia, 22-24 November 2000.
- FAO (2010). Tracking Initiatives in communication for development in the Near East. Rome: FAO.
- FAO (2014). Application of ICTs for enhancement of extension linkages, coordination and services. Proceedings of a sub-regional workshop, Hammamet, Tunisia. Pp 22-24.
- FAO, (2005) 9th United Nations communication for development roundtable, FAO Rome.

- Landmarks – Achievements of the Olusegun Obasanjo Administration, Federal Ministry of Information and communication, Abuja, 2007
- Mefalopulos, P. (2003). “Theory and practice of participatory communication: The case of the FAO project “Communication for Development in Southern Africa” unpublished PhD thesis, The University of Texas, Austin.
- Mefalopulos, P. (2005). *Media and global change: Rethinking communication for development*. Nordicom and CLASCSO.
- Mefalopulos, P. (2008). *Development communication source book: Broadening the boundaries of communication*. The World Bank, Washington, D. C.
- Niger-Delta Development Commission (Establishment etc) Act 2000 Act No 6 Laws of the Federation of Nigeria. Available at https://www.chr.up.ac.za/images/researchunits/bhr/files/extractive_industries_database/nigeria/laws/Niger_Delta%20Development%20Commissi_pdf Accessed 20th February, 2024.
- Nwodu, L. C. (2004). “Community Relations as Critical Factor in Managing Niger Delta Crisis.” In: I. E. Nwosu & D. Wilson (Eds). *Communication, Media and Conflict Management in Nigeria*. Enugu: ACCE/Prime Target.
- Nwodu, L. C. (2006). *Journalism practice: News, aesthetics, ethics and laws*. RhyceKerex Publishers.
- Nwodu, L. C. (2007). *Corporate public relations management*. Precision Publishers Limited.
- Nwodu, L. C. (2009). “System Theory Media and Public-Private Partnership for Nigeria’s Development. An Applicatory Analysis.” In: O. S. A. Obikezeet al. (Eds). *Dynamics of Public-Private Sector Management in Nigeria*. Enugu: RhyceKerex.
- Nwodu, L. C. (2010). “Community Relations” In: K. O. Nworgu (Ed.) *Mass Communication Theory and Practice*. Owerri: Ultimate Book.
- Odoom, D. (2016). Conceptualising decentralization: reflecting on some existing literature. *Applied Research Journal*, 1, (4) 21-38.
- Odoom, D. (2019). “The impact of Cocoa life project interventions of world vision Ghana on Beneficiaries on the Wassa East District, Western region” unpublished Ph.D. thesis University of Cape Coast.
- Odoom, D., Kyeremeh, C. & Opoku, E. (2014): Human resource capacity needs at the District Assemblies: A study at Assin south District in Ghana. *Journal of Sustainable lopment*, 7, (5) 177-188.
- Okafor, C., (2005). “CDD: Concepts and procedure.” Paper delivered at the LEEMP workshop in Kainji National park, New Bussa.
- Onabajo, O. (2005). *Essentials of Media Relations*. Concept Publications Limited.
- Onabanjo, O. (2005). *Community Relations in Action*. Concept Publishers.
- Onah, F. O. (2012). *Managing public programmes and projects*. University of Nigeria Press Ltd.
- Onah, F. O. (2015). *Human resources management* (4th ed.). Enugu: John Jacob’s classic publishers Ltd.
- Owusu, E. (2014). “The role of communication in sustaining development projects. The case of Ejura Sekyedumase Municipality, Ghana” MSc, KNUST.
- Sarvaes, J. Liu, S. (Eds.) (2007). *New approaches in communication and community development moving targets: Mapping the paths between communication, technology and social change in communities*. Penang, Malaysia: Southbound.

- Servaes, J. (2000). Advocacy strategies for development communication, in Servaes, J. (ed.). *walking on the other side of the information highway. Communication, culture and development in the 21st century*. Penany: Southbound.
- Servaes, J. (2008). *Communication for development and social change*. UNESCO, India Sage Publications.
- Servaes, J. A. R. A., (2002). *Principles of participatory communication research: its strengths and weaknesses*.
- Udoakah N. 1998. *Development communication*. Sterling-Horden Publishers. www.neuchalinitiativenet (Assessed on February 22,2010).
- UNICEF (2008). *Communication for development and social change*. London: Sage Publications.
- UNICEF, (2008) *Towards better programming. A handbook on behaviour development communication in Water and environmental sanitation programmes*. Unpublished document, UNICEF WES technical guidelines series No. 4, Programme Division Guideline series, New York.
- UNICEF, (2009). *Towards better programming. A handbook on behaviour development communication in Water and environmental sanitation programmes*. Unpublished document, UNICEF WES technical guidelines series No. 4, Programme Division Guideline series, New York.
- Warnock, K. S. (2007). *The case of communication in sustainable development*, Panos London, White Lion Street London N1 9PD United.
- Wikipedia (2021). Niger Delta Development Commission. Available at https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Niger_Delta_Development_Commission Accessed 20th February, 2024.
- World Bank (2006). *Information and communication for development*. World Bank: Washington, D. C.
- World Bank, (2006). “Social Development Notes”, No. 13. World Bank: Washington, DC.