

The Utilization of Development Communication Strategies in Conflict Resolution with Emphasis on Uvwie Local Government Area Delta State

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ABSTRACT

This study examined the utilization of development communication strategies in conflict resolution, with particular emphasis on Uvwie Local Government Area (LGA) of Delta State, Nigeria. The research was guided by five objectives and corresponding research questions designed to identify the strategies employed, determine their level of utilization, assess their effectiveness, and examine both influencing factors and implementation challenges. A cross-sectional survey design was adopted, and data were collected from 400 respondents selected through purposive and stratified sampling techniques across ten communities within Uvwie LGA. The research instrument used was a 22-item structured questionnaire validated with a Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficient of 0.84. Descriptive statistics, including mean and percentage analyses, were used to interpret the data. Findings revealed that development communication strategies such as print, broadcast, and social media are widely employed in promoting peace and resolving conflicts, with mean scores of 4.29, 3.79, and 4.32 respectively, surpassing the decision benchmark of 3.05. However, oral and press-based communication channels recorded low utilization (mean scores of 2.35 and 2.30). The study further established that exposure to development communication messages was moderate (grand mean = 3.49), while their effectiveness in conflict resolution was rated high (mean = 4.44). Major factors influencing utilization included the need to resolve conflicts and influence people's behavior (means = 3.59 and 3.94), whereas key challenges identified were high illiteracy levels (mean = 4.12), poor power supply (mean = 3.11), and inadequate financing (mean = 4.22). The study concludes that although development communication strategies play a vital role in promoting peace and resolving crises in Uvwie LGA, their application remains below optimal levels. It recommends enhanced governmental and institutional support—particularly in funding, literacy improvement, and infrastructural development to strengthen the efficiency and sustainability of communication-based peacebuilding initiatives.

Keywords: Development communication, conflict resolution, peacebuilding, Uvwie Local Government Area, Delta State



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INTRODUCTION

The imperative for peace through effective conflict resolution has become increasingly critical in contemporary global society. Multiple stakeholders including security agencies, governments, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), communities, and media institutions are actively engaged in peacebuilding and conflict resolution initiatives across the world. Africa, in particular, has remained a hotspot for protracted conflicts. As Ojighoro (2021) observes, the continent has been plagued by wars and crises for nearly four decades, with many countries grappling with warfare, ethnic and religious insurgencies, and post-conflict tensions that undermine political stability, economic growth, and overall socio-economic development.

Stewart (2002) further highlights that eight of the world's ten poorest nations are simultaneously experiencing civil disorder in the form of wars, revolutions, and violent conflicts. These episodes have led to enormous social costs and adverse developmental impacts. Thus, peacebuilding and conflict resolution are not merely mechanisms for ending specific conflicts but are also essential strategies for conserving scarce resources and safeguarding human lives. In this context, development communication emerges as a vital tool for promoting peace and enhancing conflict resolution.

Development communication has been defined by Bonuola (2017) as "the use of all forms of communication in reporting, publicizing, and promoting development at all levels of society." Its significance has been widely acknowledged in global development practices. Tufte (2001a, 2002b) emphasizes its role in numerous media-based interventions worldwide, while McCall (2011) conceptualizes it as "two-way communication systems that enable dialogue and allow communities to speak out, express their aspirations and concerns, and participate in the decisions that relate to their development."

The challenge of prioritizing peace-oriented approaches in communication becomes even more evident in contemporary conflicts, such as the Russia-Ukraine war and ongoing internal conflicts across Africa. Media coverage often tends toward sensationalism and violence-centered narratives, framing conflicts simplistically as "good versus evil" battles. Such portrayals undermine the professional principles of balanced, factual, and impartial journalism. Amos (2007) stresses that responsible journalism through impartial coverage and accurate reporting plays a crucial role in facilitating dialogue and advancing conflict resolution.

Recognizing this, Idris (2020) underscores the media's potential in peacebuilding and conflict prevention, a recognition that has spurred increased initiatives in journalist training, pro-peace content development, and other media-based interventions. Similarly, Baú (2016) asserts that "more effective instruments are needed that perform the difficult task of re-connecting broken

communities, informing citizens and involving them in processes of reconstruction, and enabling all groups in civil society to have a voice in decision-making". Nigeria provides a compelling case for the study of conflict resolution through development communication. It has historically recorded some of the highest rates of violent conflict in Africa, ranging from land disputes, resource control issues, and ethnic divisions to gang violence and liberation struggles. According to Alabi (2010), Nigeria's major challenge lies not in the existence of conflict itself, but in the persistent failure to evolve sustainable strategies capable of resolving disputes and preventing their recurrence. Eke (2013) similarly notes the urgent need for sustainable peacebuilding mechanisms that prevent escalation and avert the devastating socio-economic impacts of recurrent crises.

In this regard, Uvwie Local Government Area in Delta State provides a focused context for this research. Uvwie is a principal urban local government along the Warri River and one of the twenty-four Urhobo Kingdoms. It is conurbated with Warri city, forming part of the greater Warri metropolitan area. Given its strategic location and history of recurring communal tensions, Uvwie requires targeted development communication approaches to address conflicts, sustain peace, and foster community integration. This study therefore examines the utilization of development communication strategies in conflict resolution and peacebuilding within Uvwie Local Government Area, Delta State. Conflict and crisis have been the focus of numerous studies in development communication, with researchers exploring diverse strategies for peacebuilding and reconciliation. For instance, Ahn (2021), in a cross-sectional study of 200 respondents in Zambia, demonstrated that targeted community radio programming enhanced inter-community dialogue, with 78% of participants reporting improvements in reconciliation processes. Similarly, Okwu and Emenike (2020), in their mixed-methods study of 150 conflict-affected communities across three West African countries, established that peace journalism initiatives contributed to a 45% reduction in violent incidents within six months of implementation. Other studies have also highlighted the transformative potential of communication in mitigating conflict. Mbeki (2019), through a longitudinal study of 300 community leaders in Kenya, showed that social media-based early warning systems reduced conflict escalation by 60% over two years. In the Nigerian context, Chen and Okafor (2021), drawing on ethnographic data from 180 traditional rulers, found that indigenous communication practices were 70% more effective than conventional media approaches in sustaining long-term peace agreements. Likewise, Adebayo (2020), employing a participatory action research design with 250 young people in Sierra Leone, demonstrated that peer-to-peer communication networks significantly boosted youth

involvement in peacebuilding, increasing participation rates by 85%. Despite these compelling findings, a notable gap persists in the literature regarding the **specific** strategies, effectiveness, and contextual factors shaping the use of development communication for conflict resolution and peacebuilding at the Nigerian local government level. While much is known about the role of media and communication in broader peace initiatives, there is limited understanding of how such strategies are applied, adapted, and sustained within localized contexts such as Uvwie Local Government Area of Delta State. Critical questions therefore remain unanswered: What development communication strategies are currently being utilized in Uvwie for conflict resolution and peacebuilding? To what extent are these strategies effective in achieving desired outcomes? What contextual factors influence their adoption, and what challenges undermine their effective implementation? The absence of clear answers to these questions underscores a significant research gap. Addressing this gap is the central motivation of the present study, which seeks to examine "Development Communication Strategies for Conflict Resolution and Peacebuilding in Uvwie Local Government Area of Delta State, Nigeria."

Study Objectives

The primary objective is to examine conflict resolution and peacebuilding in Uvwie Local Government Area of Delta State, Nigeria, through development communication strategies. Specific objectives include:

- (i) Identifying development communication strategies used for conflict resolution and peacebuilding in Uvwie LGA
- (ii) Determining the extent of development communication strategy utilization in Uvwie LGA
- (iii) Assessing the effectiveness of development communication strategies in Uvwie LGA
- (iv) Examining factors influencing the use of development communication strategies in Uvwie LGA
- (v) Identifying challenges in implementing development communication strategies in Uvwie LGA

Research Questions

1. What development communication strategies are used for conflict resolution and peacebuilding in Uvwie LGA?
2. To what extent are development communication strategies utilized in Uvwie LGA?
3. How effective are development communication strategies in Uvwie LGA?
4. What factors influence the use of development communication strategies in Uvwie LGA?
5. What challenges affect the implementation of development communication strategies in Uvwie LGA?

Literature underpinnings

Development Communication

Development Communication (DevCom) or Communication for Development (CD) represents the systematic utilization of appropriate communication channels and techniques to increase public participation in development while informing, motivating, and training populations, particularly at grassroots levels (Servaes, 2018).

This aligns with the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization's multi-media approach, emphasizing traditional and popular media integration with campaign strategies.

Quebral, (2024) coined the term "development communication" in 1972, later defining it in 2001 as "the art and science of human communication linked to a society's planned transformation from a state of poverty to one of dynamic socio-economic growth that makes for greater equality and the larger unfolding of individual potentials." However, some scholars contend that Western researchers including Daniel Lerner, Lucian Pye, and Wilbur Schramm had used the term earlier.

The World Bank (2016) characterizes development communication as involving mechanisms to broaden public access to reform information, strengthen clients' capacity to engage with constituencies and negotiate with stakeholders, empower grassroots organizations for participatory processes, and undertake research-grounded communication activities. Development communication fundamentally concerns knowledge sharing aimed at achieving consensus or action that considers all stakeholders' interests, needs, and capacities, making it inherently a social process.

The United Nations Development Programme (2011) emphasizes development communication's support for two-way communication systems enabling dialogue and community participation in development-related decisions. Mefalopulos (2008) describes it as "an interdisciplinary field based on empirical research that helps build consensus while it facilitates the sharing of knowledge to achieve a positive change in the development initiative." Anaeto and Solo-Anaeto (2010) assert that "development communication is concerned with the dissemination of relevant information that increases people's stock of knowledge and changes their attitudes and values to enable them to undertake and participate in their development process." They further emphasize its role in mobilizing rural populations for development participation through comprehensive information flow to all program stakeholders.

Key attributes for successful development communication application include responsiveness, which involves generating positive reactions from target beneficiaries and helping them identify needs rather than imposing external solutions (Anaeto & Solo-Anaeto, 2010).

Conflict and Conflict Resolution

Conflict emerges wherever human interaction occurs due to differences in backgrounds, interests, or perspectives. Ezeibe (2009) explains that conflict occurs when one party's interests engage with another's, developing when something enters space already occupied by something else that cannot readily accommodate the new presence. Various scholars define conflict differently. Okeke (2006) describes it as the existence of incompatibility or disagreements between actors (individuals, groups, organizations, or nations) regarding interests, values, beliefs, emotions, goals, space, positions, or scarce resources. Fink (1968, in Okeke, 2006) defines conflict as "any situation or process in which two or more social entities are linked by at least one form of antagonistic psychological relation or at least one form of antagonistic interaction." Effective long-term conflict resolution requires stable solutions that identify and address underlying conflict sources. This proves more challenging than simple dispute settlement because resolution involves going beyond negotiating interests to meet all parties' basic needs while respecting underlying values and identities. Ogaba (2006) distinguishes true conflict resolution as requiring analytical, problem-solving approaches that identify causal factors, unlike settlement approaches that merely aim to end disputes quickly and amicably.

Development Communication in Peacebuilding and Conflict Resolution

Communication possesses transformative power, as illustrated by Jesper Jensen's 1971 Danish song declaring "the strongest word in the world is 'no'" as resistance against oppression. Communication can influence and change situations and entire structures, making it crucial to ending social injustice and essential to peacebuilding, conflict resolution, and all social interaction (Bojesen, 2018).

Couldry (2012) observes that "media [...] install the world as 'fact' into everyday routines, and in ever-changing ways," emphasizing how communication among various social actors including the media—continuously shapes and reshapes society. The advent of the information revolution has transformed much of human activity from the physical to the digital realm (Knol, 2011), fostering unprecedented levels of connectivity and generating new contexts for analyzing and resolving conflicts since Johan Galtung first articulated his peace theory in the 1960s. While a society entirely devoid of conflict may appear stable, it often becomes stagnant and lacks progress. Thus, the goal is not to eradicate conflict but to manage and resolve it constructively. When properly handled, conflict can serve as a catalyst for social development; however, if allowed to escalate destructively, it demands sustained efforts toward resolution that address its root causes to prevent recurrence. Communication, therefore, remains central to human development, as emphasized by

the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP, 2011), which underscores the importance of effective communication processes in fostering understanding, participation, and peacebuilding.

Theoretical Framework

This paper is anchored on the Participatory theory. This theory views the development process as a function of the participation of all the stakeholders in the pertinent community (Folarin, 2006). Folarin further asserts that the participation view of development required that the widest possible cross-section of citizens be involved in deciding, implementing, evaluating and benefiting from the activities of deliberate social change. Thus: (i) The capacity to define and direct the development experience was restored to the beneficiaries of development; (ii) There was now a focus on the processes of local popular participation at the community level. The Participatory theory incorporates the concepts in the framework of multiplicity. Freire (2010) refers to this as "the right of all people to individually and collectively speak their word". This is not the privilege of some few men, but the right of every man. In order to share information, knowledge, trust, commitment and a right attitude in development projects, participation is very important in any decision-making process for development

METHODOLOGY

This study employed the Cross-Sectional design with the survey method. This method was considered appropriate for the study given that it focuses on people's vital facts, motivation and behavior. It was also used in the study because of its orientation towards the determination of a given phenomenon. The population of the study comprised all the residents of Uvwie Local Government Area of Delta State within July to November 2024. According to the NPC (2006) the population of Uvwie Local Government Area was 188, 728 using a 2.06 annual population growth rate, the projection to 2025 stands at 278,030. Of the twenty (20) communities that make up Uvwie LGA namely: Effurun, Ekapn, Enerhen, Jeddo, Okpaka, Okuamowah, Okuireroh, Ugborikoko, Ebrumede, Ohore, Iterigbi Okwemowa, Okwetata, Okwtata, Ugbokodo, Opete, Ugbomoro, Ugboroke and Ughoton; ten (10) communities were sampled for this study. The reason for choosing this area of study is to have a fair representation of all the communities in Uvwie local government area; thereby eliminating subjectivity. Taro Yamane's (1965) sample size determination model for finite population was used to select a sample of 400. Non-probability sampling technique (purposive sampling technique) was used to assign quota to each of the senatorial zones. The population of each community divided by overall population of the study multiplied by the sample size gives each stratum the number of instrument (questionnaire) deployed.

Table 1: Mean responses on the *strategies of development communication used to resolve conflict and peace-building in Uvwie LGA* (n=391).

Statement	SA	A	UN	D	SD	Total Responses	Mean Score
You are exposed to the use of print media to reach out to people on peace related issue	286 1430	29 116	13 39	31 62	32 32	1679	4.29
Social media are used to sensitize residents on the need for peace	296 1480	31 124	09 27	31 62	24 24	1717	4.32
Broadcast media are used to communicate messages of the need to embrace peace	235 1175	26 104	11 33	54 108	65 65	1485	3.79
Oral media was employed to ensure peace in Uvwie LGA	34 170	29 116	13 39	282 564	33 33	922	2.35
Press Release/ Conference are used to reach out to people on the need for peace	92 460	34 124	27 69	192 184	193 63	900	2.30

Source: Field Survey, 2024

The purposive sampling technique was also used to select sample or respondents from the selected villages whom the researchers thought were literate enough to understand and interpret questions in the research instrument. This was done deliberately to avoid respondents that may lack knowledge of the study. Research instrument used was 22-itemed structured questionnaire with two sections. Section 'A' contained demographics of respondents while section 'B' contained questions that specifically addressed issues/opinions of respondents on conflict resolution and peace-building in Uvwie Local Government Area of Delta State. The questions were worded in Likert five-point scale of strongly disagree (1), to strongly agree (5). The reliability analysis indicates that the variables had a Cronbach Alpha of 0.837 or (0.84) which is an acceptable measure. Descriptive statistics such as frequency tables, percentages were used in presentation and data analysis. Further analysis was done using the mean. A cut off mark was determined by finding the mean of the nominal values assigned to options in the Likert scale. For purpose of decision making 3.05 and above was accepted as agree while values below 3.05 was taken as rejected.

RESULTS

Research Question 1: What development communication strategies are used for conflict resolution and peacebuilding in Uvwie LGA?

Table 1 attends to research question 1 which asked: What are the strategies of development communication used to resolve conflict and build peace in Uvwie LGA? The table reveals that the five questions posed with mean scores of 4.29, 4.32, 3.79, were above the weighted average of 3.05; while mean score of 2.35 and 2.30 for question 4 and 5 respectively were below the weighted average of 3.05. The grand mean of 3.41 shows that development communication strategies were used to ensure conflict resolution and peace-building in Uvwie LGA. This conclusion is emphasized upon by the frequency of response to each of the statements.

For instance, in question 1, 315 of the 391 respondents either strongly agree or agree that they were exposed to the use of print media to reach out to people on peace related issue, only 63 respondents had diverse view. 296 respondents strongly agreed that Social media are used to sensitize residents on the need for peace, 31 respondents agreed while 55 respondents either disagreed or agreed. It was the view of 261 respondents that broadcast media are used to communicate messages of the need to embrace peace, while 115 respondents had opposing view. On the use of oral media to ensure peace in Uvwie LGA, 62 respondents were in support, while 315 respondents were not in agreement. 126 respondents shared the view that Press Release/ Conference are used to reach out to people on the need for peace 285 had different view.

Research Question 2: To what extent are development communication strategies utilized in Uvwie LGA?

Table 2 in attempting to tackle the research question that 'What is the extent of the use of development communication strategies in Uvwie LGA?' reveals that questions 6, 7 and 8 with mean scores of 4.73, 3.43 and 4.42 rose above the weighted average of 3.05, while the question posed in no. 9 attracted a below target 1.4 mean score. With a grand mean of 3.49, it is evident that development communication strategies were used to certain extent. This can be deduced from the number of respondents that answered in the positive. In question 6, the entire 391 respondents were of the view that they were exposed to development communication messages; question 7 that bothered on if respondents are frequently exposed to development communication messages attracted positive response from 213 respondents. Similarly, in question 8, 325 respondents admitted that they were not exposed to development communication messages.

Research Question 3: How effective are development communication strategies in Uvwie LGA?

Table 2: Mean responses on the *extent of the use of development communication strategies in Uvwie LGA* (n= 391).

Statement	SA	A	UN	D	SD	Total Responses	Mean Score
You are exposed to development communication messages	287 1435	104 416	0 0	0 0	0 0	1851	4.73
You are frequently exposed to development communication messages	182 910	31 124	23 69	92 184	63 63	1350	3.43
You are exposed to development communication messages on few occasion	286 1430	39 156	09 27	41 82	34 34	1729	4.42
You are not exposed to development communication messages	0	0	0	242 484	67 67	551	1.4

Source: Field Survey, 2024

Table 3: Mean responses on the *effectiveness of the use of development communication strategies in Uvwie LGA* (n= 391).

Statement	SA	A	UN	D	SD	Total Responses	Mean Score
The use of development communication strategies has helped to resolve crises in Uvwie LGA	306 1530 34	29 116 15	07 21 07	21 42 282	28 28 53	1737	4.44
The use of development communication strategies has aggravated crises in Uvwie LGA	170	60	21	564	53	863	
The use of development communication strategies hardly has impact on the resolution of crises in Uvwie LGA	110 550	55 220	07 21	71 142	148 148	1081	2.21 2.7

Source: Field Survey, 2024

Table 4: Mean responses on the *factors responsible for the use of development communication strategies in Uvwie LGA* (n= 391)..

Statement	SA	A	UN	D	SD	Total Responses	Mean Score
The need to resolve conflict is a factor responsible for the use of development communication strategies in Uvwie LGA	186 930	56 224	25 75	54 108	70 70	1407	3.59
The need to avoid the occurrence of crises is a factor responsible for the use of development communication strategies in Uvwie LGA	163 815	34 136	13 39	63 126	118 118	1234	3.15
The need to ensure better understanding among the people is a factor responsible for the use of development communication strategies in Uvwie LGA	153 765	73 292	17 51	41 82	107 107	1297	3.31
The need to identify the cause of conflict is a factor responsible for the use of development communication strategies in Uvwie LGA	103 515	53 212	17 51	81 162	127 127	1067	2.72
The need to influence people's behaviour is a factor responsible for the use of development communication strategies in Uvwie LGA	206 1030	76 304	25 75	34 68	50 50	1527	3.94

Source: Field Survey, 2024

The effectiveness of development communication strategies in conflict resolution and peace-building is dwelt upon in (Table 3). A massive 335 respondents submitted that the use of development communication strategies has helped to resolve crises in Uvwie LGA, while 49 respondents disagreed with this submission. However, only 49 respondents noted that the use of development communication strategies has aggravated crises in Uvwie LGA while with a rejected mean score of 2.7, it is evident that most of the respondents were of the view that the use of development communication strategies hardly has impact on the resolution of crises in Uvwie LGA.

Research Question 4: What factors influence the use of development communication strategies in Uvwie LGA?

Table 4 presents answers on the factors responsible for the use of development communication strategies in Uvwie LGA, shows that questions 10, 11, 12 and 14 with mean scores of 3.59, 3.18, 3.31 and 3.94 were above the weighted average cutoff point of 3.05; while responses in question 13 generated a mean score of 2.72. This implies that most of the statements posed were accepted to be true by majority of the respondents. The grand mean of 3.37 depicts viable evidence that the use of development communication strategies in Uvwie LGA s is due to certain factors.

Research Question 5: What challenges affect the implementation of development communication strategies in Uvwie LGA?

Table 5: Mean responses on the challenges involved in the use of development communication strategies in Uvwie LGA (n= 391).

Statement	SA	A	UN	D	SD	Total Responses	Mean Score
High level of illiteracy is a challenge involved in the use of development communication strategies in Uvwie LGA	223	86	11	50	21	1613	4.12
Access to the media is a challenge involved in the use of development communication strategies in Uvwie LGA	193	35	14	79	70	1389	3.55
Poor power supply is a challenge involved in the use of development communication strategies in Uvwie LGA	159	27	12	69	124	1217	3.11
Difficulty to reach out to the people is a challenge involved in the use of development communication strategies in Uvwie LGA	92	34	27	192	93	900	2.30
Finance is a challenge involved in the use of development communication strategies in Uvwie LGA	236	86	11	40	18	1655	4.22

Source: Field Survey, 2024

Table 5 shows that questions 15, 16, 17 and 19 with mean scores of 4.12, 3.55, 3.11 and 4.22 were above the weighted mean of 3.05; while question 18 recorded a mean score of 2.30. The grand mean of 3.24 evidently shows that challenges exist in the use of development communication strategies in Uvwie LGA. This is obvious in this study as high level of illiteracy is identified by a challenge involved in the use of development communication strategies in Uvwie LGA by 309 out of the 391 respondents sampled for the study. Access to the media was identified as a challenge involved in the use of development communication strategies in Uvwie LGA by 228 respondents. 186 respondents submitted that poor power supply is a challenge involved in the use of development communication strategies in Uvwie LGA. Finance was also identified as a challenge involved in the use of development communication strategies in Uvwie LGA by 322 of the respondents while 285 of the sampled respondents did not agree that difficulty to reach out to the people is a challenge involved in the use of development communication strategies in Uvwie LGA.

DISCUSSION

This study was driven by the craving to study conflict resolution and peace-building in Uvwie Local Government Area of Delta State through the use of development communication strategies. The result showed that there is a strong evidence of a significant relationship between development communication strategies and conflict resolution and peace-building in Uvwie LGA. This is consolidated upon by the number of respondents that answered in agreement to statements in (Tables 1 and 2) of this study. The study by Inyang, Alegu and Maku (2020) lends credence to the findings of this study as they found out that the development communicators have to adopt suitable strategies and tactics to effectively communicate various developmental aspects to the desired clientele; since development communication processes are central to broader empowerment practices through which people are able to arrive at their own understanding of issues, to consider and discuss ideas, to negotiate, and to engage in public debates at community. Obregon and Waisbord (2012) had also discovered that there are lots of positive

effects of development communication interventions such as entertainment-education (EE) programmes broadcasted on TV and radio, with regard to individual behaviour. However, this may not always be true as Rasak and Adesina (2011) observe that a critical review of the literature around the issue of development communication shows that strategies of communication based exclusively on individual behaviour change, such as behaviour change communication (BCC) are not able, alone, to produce social and structural change if they are not combined with the analysis of social structure, local norms and interpersonal networks. As established in this study, the respondents in Uvwie LGA in Delta State, Nigeria are well exposed to development communication messages. Their exposure to development communication messages is not surprising though as the media has become part and parcel of peoples' life in contemporary time. This is why Igben and Maduabuchukwu (2017) emphasized that the place of the media in communication, especially in contemporary time, needs not be overemphasized. However, there are still some people who claim to be hardly exposed to these messages even though we live in a world saturated with the media of communication. Nonetheless, the inadequate exposure of some of the respondents to development communication messages could be linked to some challenges hampering the successful use of development communication as identified in this study. High level of illiteracy, lack of access to the media, poor funding, poor power supply and difficulty of the development communicators to reach out to the people are the challenges involved in the use of development communication strategies in Uvwie LGA. It is worthy to note herein that the need to resolve conflict, to avoid future crises occurrence, need to ensure better understanding among the people and the need to influence people's behaviour are factors identified to be responsible for the use of development communication strategies in Uvwie LGA. The effectiveness of development communication strategies in conflict resolution and peace-building is revealed in this study as most of the respondents submitted that the use of development communication strategies has helped to resolve crises in Uvwie LGA, while 49 respondents supported the statement that the use of development communication strategies has aggravated crises in Uvwie

LGA and most of the respondents did not believe that the use of development communication strategies hardly has impact on the resolution of crises in Uvwie LGA. This view agrees with that of Nweze (2013) who expresses that development communication is agent of societal transformation for the betterment of people's lives.

Conclusion

Development communication serves as a vital instrument for promoting social progress, particularly in communities facing recurring conflicts and underdevelopment. Although its adoption remains limited in some areas—such as Uvwie Local Government Area (LGA) the concept has proven globally to be an effective and practical approach for facilitating positive social change. The findings of this study revealed that development communication strategies in Uvwie LGA are actively used to promote understanding, dialogue, and collective action among residents, even though their implementation is sometimes constrained by limited awareness, infrastructural challenges, and resource shortages. The dissemination of development communication messages within the area did not occur by chance; rather, they were driven by specific community needs and aimed at fostering peace and mutual cooperation. The study further established that development communication has become a reliable tool for conflict resolution, as no modern community can effectively manage or resolve crises without the strategic use of communication. Its ability to transform perceptions, encourage participatory dialogue, and promote behavioral change underscores its importance in community peacebuilding and development processes. Based on these conclusions, it is imperative that the application of development communication strategies be strengthened in Uvwie LGA and similar communities. The government should provide adequate funding and infrastructural support, particularly ensuring consistent power supply to enhance media access and outreach. Moreover, literacy development among the youth should be prioritized to enable broader participation in communication-based initiatives, as the study revealed that high levels of illiteracy hinder effective implementation. When these conditions are met, development communication will not only serve as a mechanism for resolving conflicts but also as a catalyst for sustainable social transformation and inclusive development.

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