

CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

1.1 Background of the study

In the post-second World War years, development co-operation was based on transfer of technologies to developing countries. According to the model of social labour division in western cultures, technical knowledge transferred by extension services and utilized by farms (Roth, 2001). The introduction of western technology to non-western farmers was intended to increase production capacity and improve the market position of agriculture.

According to Israel and Wilson (2006), developing an understanding of extension sources and channels used by clients to obtain information is a pre-requisite for efficient educational programming because messages that go unheard or unseen cannot lead to change.

Though early extension effort based on direct communication with clients, changes in society and technology have resulted in programmes using diverse array of communication channels to reach clients, both directly and through surrogates.

Many clients, especially other people continue to rely on more traditional channels for agricultural information while using newer technologies as a complement (Howell and Hebron, 2004, Vergot et al, 2005, Boz and Ozca, 2010).

In a very concise way, development communication is application of the process. In other words, development communication is the use of the principle and practice to exchange ideas in order to fulfill development objectives. It calls for a point where we should stop thinking for the people in a patron –client form but should start thinking with them to meet

with their needs and wants to succeed (Nwosu, 1990). Development communication as a concept dates to the 1950s.

However, the attempt did not stop there; several research efforts have been put in place in order to authenticate the application of the concept of development communication. It is, therefore, considered a wise option in the pursuit of national development, as against the centralized media system where only the interests of the urban minority are taken care of (Okenwa, 1997).

In this dispensation, opinion leadership as it concerns the rural setting in the realization of the concept of development communication become not only important, but also very necessary. This is because, the rural dwellers thrive in an environment of interpersonal form of communication, opinion leaders assume priority and importance. In this respect, village and community opinion leaders serve as the linkage between their people and those that package development communication information and messages.

Communication in this regards, includes those situation in which a source transmits a message to a receiver with conscious intent to affect the latter's behaviour. It is a vital part of personal life and also important in different fields such as business, education, agriculture, rural development and other situations where people encounter each other. Unlike message sending, communication requires response of others. There must be sharing of meaning for effective communication to take place (Baron, 2002).

According to Ekumankama and Nwankwo (2002), the poor exposure of farmers to appropriate agriculture information is one of the major reasons for low yield recorded by many Nigerian farmers. This has been of great concern to agricultural communicators and policy makers in the country over years. This study therefore sought to ascertain the role of

opinion leaders in the development of arable crop farming in Odekpe in Ogbaru Local Government Area of Anambra State, Nigeria.

1.2 Statement of the problem

Nigeria has elaborate agricultural research and extension systems. A wealth of research results therefore exist in the agricultural research system in Nigeria. However, these results are not fully made available to the end-users, the farmers. Committee for Transformation of Anambra State (CTA, 1998) has identified limited accesses to agricultural development in West Africa. These implications, therefore, call for research as to find out which communication channels are available and which ones are being used to disseminate farm innovation messages to farmers? Which of the channels do the farmers prefer but are constrained in use? What is the relative usage of the channels by farmer? To what extent are messages relevant to agricultural information needs of the farmers?

1.3 Purpose/objectives of the study

The general purpose of this study is to ascertain the sources of agricultural information used by the arable crop farmers in Odekpe in Ogbaru Local Government Area of Anambra State. The specific objectives include to:

1. ascertain how interpersonal communication channels available and accessible to farmers.
2. determine whether interpersonal communication channels are sources of agricultural information.
3. ascertain how opinion leaders have been able to influence the development of arable farming.

4. determine farmers' acceptability of opinion leaders as the only credible source of information in terms of development communication messages open to the rural people.

1.4 Research questions

1. To what extent are interpersonal communication channels available/accessible to farmers?
2. To what extent does interpersonal communication channels serves as sources of agricultural information?
3. How do opinion leaders influence the development of arable farming?
4. To what extent do farmers accept the opinion leaders as the only credible source of information in term of development communication messages open to the rural people?

1.5 Scope of the study

A study of this nature ought to have a very wide scope but as a result of financial constraints this research has been limited to Odekpe Community in Ogbaru Local Government Area in Anambra State.

1.6 Significance of the study

The significance of this study is based on the importance of using the right channel of communication for rural development (interpersonal communication). It will provide a key for understanding and predicting outcomes of communication process. It will also reveal the needed platform on which the position of opinion leadership in pursuit of the objectives of using communication to bring about development will be appraised. However, it will also

add to stock of knowledge already existing in the area of opinion leadership and development communication.

1.7 Operational definition of significance terms

For the purpose of this study, some variables have been identified and defined.

Opinion Leaders: This is leadership by an active media user and who interprets the meaning of media messages or contents for lower-end media users.

Development Communication: It refers alternatively, as either a type of marketing and public opinion research, or the use of communication to facilitate social development.

Farmer: Is a person engaged in agriculture, raising living organisms for food or raw materials.

Arable Farming: It refers to the branch in agriculture that is concerned with the cultivation of mainly field crops on fertile or viable land, e.g. cereals, vegetable and plants that produce oil or cloth.

Influence: It embraces the way opinion leaders disseminate messages and affect the people to work, think or behave.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

2.1 Introduction

This chapter is concerned with the review of related study on the topic “Influence of Opinion Leaders in the Development of Arable Farming (A Study of Odekpe in Ogbaru Local Government Area, Anambra State). The chapter is arranged under the following headings.

- 2.2 Review of Concepts
- 2.3 Review of Related Studies
- 2.4 Theoretical Framework
- 2.5 Summary

2.2 Review of concepts

2.2.1 The Concept of Opinion Leaders

Opinion leadership as defined by Rogers et al (1988), is the ability to informally influence individual’s attitudes or behaviour in a desired way with relative frequency. Severin and Tankard (1979) refer to opinion leaders as members of small social group who influence other members of their group. Another way in which Severin and Tankard (1979) look at opinion leadership, is that it is a two-step flow of communication, in which messages flow from the media first and reach the opinion leaders, who then pass them to associates or followers who look to them as influential. This tells us that opinion leaders play an intermediary role between mass media and their followers, to influence them in their

innovation decision-making process. It can then be inferred that the role opinion leader's play, can be very valuable especially where the extension: farmer ratios are too wide. Katz and Lazarsfeld (1966) confirmed that opinion leaders do actually exceed non-opinion leaders in mass media exposure, and therefore have the capability of bridging the communication gap between extension and the farmers.

Characteristics of opinion leaders

Researchers have found out that opinion leaders are found at all levels, and have concluded that factors such as technical competence, monomorphism and polymorphism, social and physical accessibility, homophily and heterophily, differentiate leaders from their followers. These will be discussed individually below.

Technical competence

Personification of values or who one is, is another way of saying that the influential is someone that his or her followers wish to become as similar as possible with him, because of his or her admirable achievements. On the other hand, to be regarded as an opinion leader, one must be knowledgeable or competent in the area in which his or her leadership is sought. It is seldom that attention is paid to the opinions of people who lack these qualities. Other attributes that worth considering are that opinion leaders are well liked and respected by their communities for;

- Making wise decisions
- Operating with a clear understanding local needs and conditions,
- Proving successful in their particular occupations,
- Willing to be of service in helping to improve conditions in their communities and
- Having the same economic, social and cultural background as the people they lead.

The question that most researchers have is similar to that of Katz and Lazarsfeld (1966), that is who or what influences the influentials. This is a worthwhile question, because whatever or whoever does so, makes them to be more competent than their followers. Through investigations, Katz and Lazarsfeld (1966) become convinced that opinion leaders have more especially radio and printed media. It was further suggested by Severin and Tankard (1979) that mass media channels are relatively more important than interpersonal channels for earlier adopters (most of whom are opinion leaders) than for late adopters (most whom are the followers), because at the early stages, there are few interpersonal channels available to the early adopters. Cosmopolitaness is another factor that is believed to be contributing significantly to the competence of opinion leaders.

Another indication of the importance of competence in interpersonal communications is by looking at countries with a well developed mass media system. In this setting, farmers usually get their first information on innovations. However, they like to discuss it with somebody in whose competence and motivation they have confidence, before they decide to adopt. Farmers depend on good and trustworthy information for their livelihoods, and in this regard they turn mainly to farmers with a higher level of technical competence than they have themselves (Van den Ban & Hawkins, 1998). Opinion leadership being the type of informed leadership is earned, and can only be maintained by technical competence, social accessibility and conformity to system's norms (Rogers, 1988)

Social accessibility

It has been established by many authors that opinion leader has to be someone who is regarded knowledgeable in the area in which his or her opinion leadership is sought. However, knowledge without accessibility to other members of a social system will prevent

this knowledge becoming available to others. A study maintained, that to be a local leader, an individual must be willing to be of service in helping to improve conditions of his or her community, and also act as a mediator in spreading the teachings of extension worker to the neighbours and friends. What results from this initiative is popularity and respect from members of the community.

Apart from being more exposed to all forms of channels that communicate new ideas, opinion leaders are more socially accessible to their followers. In referring to their influence, Rogers (1958) also makes mention of credibility of the information, which is closely related to competence but not independent of accessibility.

Katz and Lazarsfeld (1966) indicated that the most promising prospect for the study of opinion leadership is that of the actual influence that is often derived from the compromise between higher estimations of competence and easier accessibility. High estimations of someone's competence and trustworthiness make that person more likely to influence, but since such person are often not accessible persons in the immediate environment, may thus often be able to exert influence at the right moment when it is needed. Off course, there cannot be frequent contacts unless individuals are physically accessible to one another. This means that the closer the individuals are to each other, the more they are likely going to have frequent discussions. The frequent contact also results in the development of norms of behaviour, implying that outsiders are often not trusted, especially by traditional villagers. Any deviance is normally discussed extensively in the neighbourhood. Contrarily, the problem with local ideas is that they may not be as valuable as those from outside, due to similarities that people who exchanges information often have.

2.2.2 The Concept of Development

For almost every writer a different definition of development exists. Important to first distinguish between:

- a. Development as a state or condition – static.
- b. Development as a process or course of change – dynamic.

Development is not purely an economic phenomenon but rather a multi-dimensional process involving reorganization and reorientation of entire economic and social system. It is a process of improving the quality of all human lives with three equally important aspects.

These are:

- Raising peoples' living levels, i.e., incomes and consumption, levels of food, medical services, education through relevant growth processes.
- Creating conditions conducive to the growth of peoples' self esteem through the establishment of social, political and economic systems and institutions which promote human dignity and aspect.
- Increasing peoples' freedom to choose by enlarging the range of their choice variables, e.g. varieties of goods and services.

2.2.3 The Concept of Development Communication

The term “development communication” was coined in 1972 by Quebral, who defines the field as:

...the art and science of human communication linked to a society's planned transformation from a state of poverty to one dynamic socio-economic growth that make for greater equality and the larger unfolding of individual potentials.

Edeani (1993), sees development communication as the use of all form of communication in reporting publicizing and promoting of development at all levels of society.” Yet another scholar, (Yoon in Umar, 2003), defines development communication as “the tendency to rely heavily on communication strategies in the effort to create adequate awareness about the developmental project meant to enhance the well-being of the inhabitants of given society and so doing, sensitize their adoption of the project.

Since development is a participatory process, the aim of a communicator should be to achieve participatory development communication which is “a common intent of involving people who were the subject of development in shaping the process.” (Yoon, 2001 in Umar, 2003:4).

From the foregoing, rural development communication could be referred as the deliberate and organized packaging of a two-way communication processing target at the rural dwellers with the aim of making them a part of the development of their potentials and their environment (rural areas). The essence is to get them informed on rural development policies and programmes of government, get and report their own views on how such policies could be achieved, tell them about project that are taking place or have taken place

(development news), mobilize them to be part of the rural development process in their own interest.

2.2.4 The Concept of Arable Farming

Arable farming refers to the branch of agriculture that is concerned with the cultivation of mainly field crops on fertile or viable land. The crops may be of various varieties such as cereals, vegetable and plants that produce oil or cloth. It usually requires less attention than livestock farming.

2.3 The Review

Some scholars have spent much ink, energy and time ensuring their best to development communication.

Development is the basic focus of Africa and because it thrives as a two-way flow process, these nations also strive to put in place channels carried along in the development process. This invariably makes communication an integral part of the development process.

Nwosu (1990:17), observed that development experiences in other parts of the developed world have continued to point to the fact that communication is central to rural and national development and that is catalytic effect to the development of the other sectors of nation's economy should never be neglected or underplayed. Communication for development has been described as "a researched and planned process, crucial for social transformation operating through three main strategies: advocacy to rise resources and political and social leadership commitment for goods; social mobilization for wider participation and ownership and programmes communication for practices of specific

participants in programmes” (Communication Handbook for Polio Eradication and Routine EPI, cited in Olubunmi, 2003:35).

Development itself is not basically targeted at achieving only economic and/or infrastructural goals as the layman thinks. It is a change process that seeks to better the life and environment of man largely through his own effort and in his own pace (Opubor, 1985:184). Simply says that “development involves the reaction of opportunities for the realization of human potentials.” Rogers (1976), defines development as “a widely participatory process of social change in a society, intended to bring about social and material advancement for the majority of people through their gaining control over their environment.” These and other definition shows that development has to be a two-way flow process, if the individual is to be carried along to ensure its success. But the fact that in a nation like Nigeria, and indeed, most nations of Africa, which have a greater percentage of their citizens dwelling in local areas, national development is better pursued from a rural development perspective according to Mabogunje (1981); “Rural development is the most effective means of improving the well being of the vast majority of a country’s populations.” He goes further to define rural development as “the improvement of the living in rural areas on a self sustaining basis, through transforming the social-spatial structure of their productive activities.”

No matter the definition given to development, Opubor (1985:185) has observed that such definition in relation to Africa will be inadequate if it does not accommodate the rural development orientation. In his word:

Any notion or definition of development in Africa that does not take into account fundamental change for better, in the life style of the peasant farmer, the fisherman, the petty trader, the herdsman, or the labourers, is grossly inadequate. This perspective implies that development planned programmes must be designed to give their greatest beneficial impact in the rural areas, that they must involve labour intensive projects, that they must provide a capacity for the neglected majority of rural Africans to continue to better their lives largely through their own efforts.

Having established the fact that national development for any African nation becomes result-oriented, if approached from a rural development perspective, what remains is to map out strategies for message that will influence, persuade, and convince the realities to environment that is to say, how can rural development communication be packaged and channeled to the right target audience of local communication? In fact, this has been a major headache for mainly third world nations that is “how to reach the significant majority of their populations that are largely illiterate, poor and rural, with information on development programmes in order to improve their lifestyle (Nwuneli, 1985:103)

This then leads to the issues of broadcasting as a very potent, virile and vital facilitator of development communication in a nation like Nigeria, Nwuneli (supra), has pointed out that research evidence has led to “a generally held belief among development communication scholars that broadcasting, radio particularly could be the most effective media for transferring information on various social change programme from the government and other institutions to the masses living in the developing nations of the world.” This

postulation took cognizance of the fact that most rural areas and the social change policies targeted at this people are contained in rural development programmes.

Therefore, development communication can also be seen as a conscious effort by the sender to package messages and aimed at persuading, encouraging and convincing the receiver to adopt and participate in actualizing a development messages to the target audience often with a view in getting them adopted in a positive attitude towards development purposes whether rural or national.

The concept of development communication, according to the Everett Rogers (1976), had to acknowledge that “the dominant paradigm of development and modernization has passed.” This is because, towards the close of the 1970, as note by Ikechukwu Nwosu, the seeming euphoria over the modernization and diffusion theories of development communication had started dying down as new perspective, new data, and new project experience started emerging and posing challenges to the old order (Nwosu, 1990).

However, what might be described as the turning point for the study of development communication was the 1975 conference held in Honolulu to review the use of communication in economic and social development (Moemeka, 1991). At the conference, according to Andrew Moemeka, ‘the two best know pioneers in this era of study Daniel Lerner and Wilbur Schramn admitted at the model of trickle down.’ Communication in development had been ineffective. This approach is observed by Nwosu (1960), does not give any room for development media function of concretization as proposed by Paul Fierce (1977), or participatory communication approach recommended by Louis Rommiro Betran (1974), for the effective utilization of communication for development.

Nwosu (1960:68), noted further that, “we should stop thinking for the people in a patron client form” or “trickle down.” But system as propounded by dominant paradigm of the Igbo’s he added “we should start thinking with them to meet with their needs and wants if we want to succeed.”

In this dispensation, Moemeka, (1991), notes that the very congenial to this new paradigm of development, “the new model of development not only in physical terms.” Development communication according to him “stresses access to the media of communication participation in communication activities and relevance to the socio-cultural context.”

This assertion by Andrew Moemeka seems to be in concordance with what Daniel Lerner (1972), wrote on development communication, he summarized the objectives of development communication to include:

- To meet demand for social justice.
- To shape expectations in ways that maximizes satisfaction and minimizes frustrations.
- To sustain a dynamic equilibrium between the socio-economic situations.

It is therefore; means that even Lerner himself agree that the key role of shaping and maintaining a dynamic equilibrium is the major duty of communication. And as if to draw support for himself, he quoted Dr. Kriuk, then as saying that the supreme task of any less developed country’s communication: to persuade and convince the people to help discipline themselves to compromise their slow material progress with the spiriting of mental expectancy, with the means available to them at a given state of national development (Lerner, 1972).

Development communication is therefore, the art and science of human communication applied to speedy transformation of a country and the mass of its people through what Romirie Betran (1974), has described as identification and utilization to appropriate expertise in the development process that will assist in increasing participation of intends beneficiaries at the grassroots level. All these submission seems to be in line with what Govan Hasbro described in the 1980's as the best role for communication in development promoting "self reliance, participation, equity in distribution and a new rural development and leadership" (Nwosu, 1990:31).

In order to achieve these ultimate objectives, both the new development paradigm and the communication approach according to Rogers stress the need for the following:

- Popular participation in development planning execution, accompanied by decentralization of activities of the local level, self reliance and independence in development with emphasis on the potential local resources.
- Equality of distribution of social economic benefits information and education and integration of traditional with modern system. So that development is a synchronization of old idea with the exact mixture, somewhat different in each local (Rogers, 1976:130). Rogers, by highlighting on the out of the international conference on communication policies for rapidly development societies held at mash hand, Iran, (1975). The working groups of the body identified specific activities that development communication must strive to accomplish, if it must contribute effectively to development, this include:
 - Determination of needs of the people and the provision of sufficient citizen's access to communication system to serve as effective feedback to government.

- Provision of horizontal and vertical interactive communication leakage at all levels of society and communication channels through which people have the capacity to communicate with one another in order to accomplish co-ordination necessary for human and material development.
- Provision of relevant information.
- Support for specific development project and social services.
- Raising people's awareness of development projects and opportunities and helping to fasten attitudes and motivations that contribute to development (Moemeka, 1991). But understanding the very roots of development communication concept argues Nnamdi Okenwa is not the key thing. The key thing according to him is being able to apply it, so that the more than 80% of rural dwellers in Nigeria will be involved under the development effort (Okenwa, 1997). This therefore, underscores the fact that "both traditional and modern means of communication should be of synchronized for them to have a situation of overall national development in Nigeria" (Ebo, 1996). This trend or no doubt puts Ikechukwu Nwosu on the right-footing, when he admonished that contemporary development communication practitioners and researchers should for instance, note that there seems to be some amount of consensus as among experts this subject that the early dominant theories and models of rural development.

Mona Agbagha (1995), defines opinion leaders as those who by virtue of their placement and/or experience in a society or group look up to as imitators at action and innovators also for general direction and guidance. Nathan Okonkwo Nkala

(1990), moves further by identify structures or corporate affiliation with powerful potentials and influence.

- Age-set system, where tasks are assigned to define age-grade for the benefit of their entire town.
- Ozo title alliance, as a prestigious embodiment of complete fulfillment on the hierarchy. The Onowu (view point) of Ozo title holder commands attention in the 5th traditional settings.
- The guild of women and their various sub-groups are voliferious social, these social organization political units of a town or group or village seems to possess an intrinsic channel authority and communication. He also asserts that the political function of the two exercised by an extrinsic lawyer of authorities which may affect the government of the community.
- The Igwe and his cabinet chiefs
- Chairman or resident general, and union functioning outside the two where every indigene finds themselves in a close.
- The warrior age grade, usually response for public work and enforcing defaults in levy collections.

In this leadership arrangement Nnamdi Okenwa posited the temperature leadership whether in a community or a large society that has meaning. First it defined as an art of influencing the behaviours of a group of people in order to achieve specific objectives and goals. Since there are varieties in human behaviour and thoughts, and in order to bring together the varied behaviour, it is necessary to influence human thoughts and actions so that a particular pre-determined goals or objectives can be achieved (Okenwa, 1997).

Community opinion leadership which has to do with community leadership in its entirety agree by Okenwa is the work of a leader within the community to take effective action, it has five major activities to it which include; decision making, communication, motivating, selecting and developing people. All aimed at influencing the community person to participate in every socio-economic or political change that is general towards development (ibid). Humphrey Nwosu (1990), supports the claim that the traditional institution like the ones mentioned above play important roles in bridging the information gap between rural and urban populations.

The role of communication is an important one at the level of the smaller community, the village, and neighbourhood, centre of employment or living environment. There is an increasing trend towards seeking solutions for social problems including development of public health, sanitation, adult literacy, the status, needs of women, and care of children in a flexible and decentralized way through community organization and through producers and consumers co-operations.

2.4 Review of Related Study

A study related to the present study was reviewed.

2.4.1 Remaketse, F. W (2005). The role of opinion leadership among maize farmers (A Study of Lesotho)

The study by Remaketse Frederick showed that opinion leaders are important sources of information and fulfil an important function in the diffusion of agricultural information. The importance can be deduced from respondents' use of various sources of information. Opinion leaders or fellow farmers is one of the most frequently used sources, and is only

surpass by the radio, which can be attached to the governments' policy of daily presentation of agricultural programs.

2.5 Theoretical framework

One theory formed the foundation for this study. It is:

2.5.1 The Two-step Flow Theory

The two-step flow theory as propounded by Paul Lazarsfeld, Bernard Berelson and Hazel Gaudet in 1940 states that mass media effects are shaped by existing social relationship as well as rival (or other alternative media) sources of information and power. The assumption here is that mass media messages move first to relatively well-informed individuals (opinion leaders) who frequently attend to mass communication. From the opinion leaders, information flows “through interpersonal channels to individuals who had less exposure and are dependent upon others for their information.”

This theory (the two-step flow theory) is applicable to this study because it really expresses the relationship that existed between the mass media, opinion leaders and their dependents.

2.6 Summary

This chapter succeeded in reviewing the variables which are the concept of opinion leaders, concept of development concept of development communication and so on. It also reviewed other relevant literatures related to the present study. However, it was equally expanded to contrast significantly the Igbo's perception of some phenomenon and examined one theory; the two-step flow theory is relevant to the study.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

This chapter discussed the method used in the research. It contains explanation of the following: research design, population of study, sampling techniques/ sample size, description of research instrument as well as method of data collection and analysis.

3.1 Research design

This means the structuring of investigation aimed at identifying variables and their relationship. It is used for the purpose of obtaining data to enable the investigator test hypotheses or answer research questions by providing procedural outline for conducting the study (Ohaja 2003). This study therefore, adopted the survey method in data collection through questionnaire.

3.2 Population of the study

Population refers to the theoretical and hypothetical grouping or aggregation of all elements, as defined for a given study (Okoro, 2001, p. 56) as gathered from the net. According to Eze (2008 p. 87), population refers to the total items about which information is desired. From 2006 population census, Odekpe in Ogbaru have eighty-eight thousand four hundred and thirty six (88, 436) people.

3.3 Sampling techniques/sample size

This is a quantity or portion of something which has been selected as representative of the population or universe of study (Okoro, 2011, p. 7). The sampling technique adopted in the study was the purposive sampling technique. The purposive sampling was used because the researcher had certain characteristics in mind. Therefore, the researcher

purposively selected a sample size of 250 respondents from the entire population of 6,268 as the sample size for this study.

3.4 Description of research instrument

The study adopted the questionnaire as its data gathering instrument. Nnamdi, (1996) views questionnaire as a set of questions designed to gather information or data for analysis, the results of which are used to answer the research questions. Twelve (12) items were drawn and administered to the respondents. These items were divided into two section, 'Section A' contained items on the demography of respondents and 'Section B' contained items that answered the questions.

3.5 Validity of data gathering instrument

The questionnaire used for the study was thoroughly examined by the researcher's supervisor for clarity, accuracy and comprehension.

3.6 Method of data collection

Data was collected using the questionnaire which was administered face-to-face to the respondents by the researcher. Out of 250 copies of questionnaire distributed, 250 copies were retrieved. This represented a response rate of 100%.

3.7 Method of data analysis

The data collected were presented in frequency tables and simple percentages which offer easy and clear understanding of the data by potential users.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

The purpose of this study was to determine the Influence of opinion leaders in the development of arable farming in Odekpe, Ogbaru Local Government Area. This chapter is concerned with the presentation and analysis of data collected through the use of questionnaire distributed to the respondents. Two hundred and fifty copies of the questionnaire were distributed and 250 copies retrieved. This represented a response rate of 100%.

4.1 Analysis of Demographic data

Item one in the questionnaire answered questions on the demography of the respondents.

Question 1: Sex?

Table 1: Response to Question 1

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Male	175	70%
Female	75	30%
Total	250	100%

On the table 1 above, 175 respondents representing 70% were males while 75 respondents representing 30% were females.

Question 2: Age Range

Table 2: Response to Question 2

Response	Frequency	Percentage
18-25	23	9.29%
30-35	30	12%
40-45	51	20.4%
50-55	66	26.4%
60-65	80	32%
Total	250	100%

On table 2 above, 23 respondents (9.2%) fall within the age range of 18-25, 30 respondents (12%) fall within the age range of 30-35, 51 respondents (20.4%) fall within the age range of 40-45, while 66 respondents (26.4%) fall within the age range of 50-55 and 80 respondents (32%) fall within the age range of 60-65.

Question 3: Marital Status?

Table 3: Response to Question 3

Response	Frequency	percentage
Married	157	62.8%
Single	93	37.2%
Total	250	100%

On table 3 above, 157 respondents (62.8%) are married, 93 respondents (37.2%) are single.

Question 4: Education Qualifications?

Table 4: Response to Question 4

Response	Frequency	Percentage
FLS/SSCE/GCE	103	41.2%
OND	72	28.8%
HND/B.Sc/BA	67	26.8%
M.Sc/PhD	8	3.2%
Total	250	100%

On table 4 above, response on education showed, 103 respondents (41.2%) attained FSLC/SSCE/GCE, 72 respondents (28.8%) had attained OND, 67 respondents (26.8%) had attained HND/B.Sc./B.A and 8 respondents (3.2%) had attained M.Sc./Ph.D.

Question 5: In which of the listed profession do you belong?

Table 5: Response to Question 5

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Students	20	8%
Civil servants	14	5.6%
Business/trader	60	24%
Farmer	156	62.4%
Total	250	100%

On table 5 above, 20 respondents (8%) are students, 14 respondents (5.6%) are civil servants, 60 respondents (24%) are business/trader while 156 respondents (62.4%) are farmers.

Question 6: Are Interpersonal Communication Channels available /accessible to Farmers?

Table 6: Response to Question 6

Response	Frequency	percentage
Yes	215	86%
No	35	14%
Total	250	100%

On table 6 above, 215 respondents (86%) admitted that interpersonal communication channels are available and accessible to farmers, while 35 respondents representing (14%) said no.

Question 7: Are Interpersonal Communication Channels Sources of Agricultural Information?

Table 7: Response to Question 7

Response	Frequency	percentage
Yes	231	92.4%
No	19	7.6%
Total	250	100%

On table 7 above, 231 respondents (92.4%) said yes interpersonal communication channels is a source of agricultural information, 19 respondents (7.6%) said no interpersonal communication channels does not serve as sources of agricultural information.

Question 8: Do you think opinion leaders have influence in the development of arable farming?

Table 8: Response to Question 8

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	229	91.6%
No	21	8.4%
Total	250	100%

From the table above, 229 respondents (91.6%) said yes to the question while 21 respondents (8.4%) said no to the question.

Question 9: Are Interpersonal Communication Channels a preferable means for you?

Table 9: Response to Question 9

Response	Frequency	percentage
Yes	242	96.8%
No	8	3.2%
Total	250	100%

From the table above, 242 respondents (96.8%) admitted that interpersonal communication channels is a preferable means while 8 respondents (3.2%) said no, that interpersonal communication channels is not a preferable means.

Question 10: Are opinion leaders the only credible source of information in terms of development communication messages open to the rural people?

Table 10: Response to Question 10

<u>Response</u>	<u>Frequency</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
Yes	182	72.8%
No	68	27.2%
Total	250	100%

On the table above, 182 respondents (72.8%) said yes opinion leaders are the only credible source of information in terms of development communication message open to the rural people while 68 respondents (27.2%) said no.

Question 11: Do you have opinion leader in your area?

Table 11: Response to Question 11

<u>Response</u>	<u>Frequency</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
Yes	246	98.4%
No	4	1.6%
Total	250	100%

On the table above, 246 respondents (98.4%) said yes they have opinion leaders in their area, while 4 respondents (1.6%) said no they have no opinion leaders in their area.

Question 12: Do opinion leaders facilitate the achievement of development communication objectives?

Table 12: Response to Question 12

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agreed	115	46%
Agreed	80	32%
Neutral	20	8%
Strongly disagreed	20	8%
Disagreed	15	6%
Total	250	100%

From the table above, 115 respondents (46%) strongly agreed that opinion leaders facilitate the achievement of development communication objectives, 80 respondents (32%) said agreed, 20 respondents (8%) said neutral, 20 respondents (8%) said strongly disagreed, while 15 respondents representing (6%) said disagreed.

4.3 Discussion of findings

In this section, the data collected from the survey on the topic “Influence of Opinion Leaders in the Development of Arable Farming (A Case Study of Odekpe in Ogbaru Local Government Area, Anambra State)” would be discussed. The data contained in the fully completed copies of questionnaire retrieved from two hundred and fifty respondents would be discussed. Responses on research questions would be discussed.

Research Question 1: to what extent are interpersonal communication channels available/accessible to farmers?

The aim of this research question was to find out the extent interpersonal communication channels were available/accessible to farmers. The data on table 6 was used to answer this research question.

The data on table 6 showed that 215 respondents (86%) admitted that interpersonal communication channels were available and accessible to farmers while 35 respondents (14%) answered no.

From the above finding, it is obvious that a good number of the farmers agreed that interpersonal communication channels are available and accessible to them.

Research Question 2: to what extent do interpersonal communication channels serve as sources of agricultural information?

The aim of this research question was to find out how interpersonal communication channels serve as sources of agricultural information.

The data on table 7 answered this research question. Table 7 showed that, 231 respondents (92.4%) answered yes that interpersonal communication channels serves as sources of agricultural information, while 19 respondents (7.6%) answered no.

From the findings above, it shows high degree of acceptability to the research question.

Research Question 3: how do opinion leaders influence the development of arable farming?

The aim of this research question is to find out how opinion leaders influence the development of arable farming.

The data on table 8 answered this research question. Table 8 showed that, 229 respondents (91.6%) answered yes, that opinion leaders influence the development of arable farming while 21 respondents (8.4%) answered no.

From the findings above, it showed that majority of the farmers agreed that opinion leaders influence the development of arable farming.

Research Question 4: to what extent do farmers accept the opinion leaders as the only credible source of information in terms of development communication message open to the rural people?

The aim of this research question is to find out how farmers accept the opinion leaders as the only credible source of information in terms of development communication messages open to the rural people.

The data on table 10, 12 answered this research question.

Table 10 showed that, 182 respondents (72.8%) answered yes, while 68 respondents (27.2%) said no.

Table 12 showed that, 115 respondents (46%) strongly agreed, 80 respondents (32%) agreed, 20 respondents (8%) said neutral, 20 respondents (8%) said strongly disagreed, 15 respondents (6%) disagreed.

From the findings above, it was observed that opinion leaders are the only credible source of information to the people. It was also observed that opinion leaders facilitate the achievement of development communication objectives.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The objective of this study was to determine the “Influence of opinion leaders in the development of arable farming (a study of Odekpe in Ogbaru L.G.A., Anambra State). Survey research design was adopted, using the questionnaire for gathering of data. Sequel to the analyses of data and discussion of findings, this chapter presented the summary of finding, conclusion and recommendations.

5.1 Summary of findings

The study assessed the farmers use and preference of extension communication channels in Odekpe, Ogbaru LGA, Anambra State, Nigeria. The findings showed that:

1. Interpersonal communication channels are available and accessible to farmers in Odekpe and the general public to obtain information on improved farm technologies.
2. The farmers response to a large extent revealed that interpersonal communication channels serves as sources of information on new agricultural technologies.
3. The opinion leaders influence are major sources of development in the arable farming system.
4. Opinion leaders are seen and accepted as link between development and the rural people.

5.2 Conclusion

Interpersonal communication channels were generally found to be more available, accessible and used by farmers than the mass media to obtain information messages on improved farm technologies in Anambra State.

Extension agents were not readily available and used by the farmers. The study shows limited use of mass media by the farmers in obtaining farm information.

Television and newspaper were hardly accessible to and used by farmers. Many farmers indicated television as the most preferred channel if it were available and accessible to them.

5.3 Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusion of this study, the following was made:

1. Rural radio booster stations and community rural television stations should be established to feature special programmes targeted at rural farmers.
2. Efforts should be made to employ more extension agents (the farmers most preferred channel) to ensure access and available information techniques on agriculture.
3. Government should always carry out a pre-project research before embarking on any developmental projects that concerns the people.
4. For effective connectivity with the rural farmers, agricultural extension project should be cited in the rural areas for their benefits to learn improved farming.

5.4 Suggestions for further studies

It is hoped that future researchers will improve on this study if further research is carried out, using more refined tools, a larger sample size and probably another geographical area. This will give the study a wider scope and empirical lift.

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APPENDIX A

Department of Mass Communication,
Caritas University,
Amorji-Nike,
Enugu.

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am a student of the above-named institution and currently carrying out a research on “Influence of Opinion Leaders in the Development of Arable Farming (A Study of Odekpe in Ogbaru L.G.A., Anambra State).

Please, your information is highly needed and shall be held in strict confidence for the purpose of this research which is an academic requirement for the award of B.Sc. in Mass Communication.

Thanks for your co-operation.

Yours faithfully,

Nwokike Anayo K.

APPENDIX B

Questionnaire on: Influence of Opinion Leaders in the Development of Arable Farming (A Study of Odekpe in Ogbaru L.G.A., Anambra State).

Instruction: Please do not write your name on the questionnaire copy. Tick your correct answer in the appropriate box provided.

SECTION A: PERSONAL DATA

1. Sex (a) Male () (b) Female ()

2. Age range (a) 18 – 25 () (b) 30 – 35 () (c) 40 – 45 ()
(d) 50 – 55 () (e) 60 – 65 ()

3. Marital status: (a) Married () (b) Single ()

4. Educational Qualification: (a) FSLC/SSCE/GCE () (b) OND ()
(c) HND/B.Sc./B.A () (d) M.Sc./Ph.D ()

5. In which of the listed profession do you belong?
(a) Student () (b) Civil servant ()
(c) Business/Trader () (d) Farmer ()

SECTION B

6. Are interpersonal communication channels available/accessible to farmers?
(a) Yes () (b) No ()
7. Are interpersonal communication channels sources of agricultural information? (a)
Yes () (b) No ()
8. Do you think opinion leaders have influence in the development of arable farming?
(a) Yes () (b) No ()
9. Are interpersonal communication channels a preferable means for you?
(a) Yes () (b) No ()
10. Are opinion leaders the only credible source of information in terms of development
communication messages open to the rural people?
(a) Yes () (b) No ()
11. Do you have opinion leaders in your area?
(a) Yes () (b) No ()
12. If yes to the above question, do these opinion leaders facilitate the achievement of
development communication objectives?
(a) Strongly Agreed () (b) Agreed () (c) Neutral ()
(d) Strongly Disagreed () (e) Disagreed ()