СОЦИОЛОГИЯ ЖУРНАЛИСТИКИ

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ИСПОЛЬЗОВАНИЕ МЕСТНЫМ НАСЕЛЕНИЕМ ГАЗЕТНЫХ МАТЕРИАЛОВ, СОДЕЙСТВУЮЩИХ РАЗВИТИЮ

Значимость газет для общественного развития в разных странах никогда не ставилась под сомнение, но было весьма сложно определить их роль в различных ситуациях и обществах. В связи с этим автор статьи изучил использование материалов, содействующих развитию, в газетах «Исоко Миррор», «Урхобо Войс», «Иджо Ньюз», «Уарри Войс» и «Аниома Уотч» этническими группами исоко, урхобо, иджо, итсекири и аниома в штате Дельта, Нигерия. Результаты проведенного исследования свидетельствуют о том, что наиболее востребованнными местным населением являются материалы о местных событиях и работе коммунальных служб (39,9%), оперативность этих материалов (33,4%) и широкий социальный охват (17,2%). Наиболее интересными для читателей газет оказываются разделы, содержащие советы (32%) и посвященные общественной пользе (24,1) и обычаям (10,8%). По мнению читателей, самые важные из проблем развития освещались в культурных (24,1%) и политических программах (24,1%).

Опрос показал, что большинство респондентов (72,9%) читали газеты от случая к случаю, 18,2% читали их часто и 8,8% – очень часто. Автор полагает, что привлечь население к чтению местных изданий поможет установка газетных киосков.

Ключевые слова: *развитие, передача информации, содействующий развитию, материалы, содействующие развитию, использование местным населением материалов, содействующих развитию.*

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INDIGENES' USE OF DEVELOPMENT MESSAGES IN NEWSPAPERS

The use of newspapers in the development process in different countries has never been questioned, although it has been quite difficult to determine its role in this process in different situations and societies. Against this backdrop, the study

investigated the use of development messages in the newspapers Isoko Mirror, Urhobo Voice, Ijaw News, Warri Voice and Anioma Watch by Isoko, Urhobo, Ijaw, Itsekiri and Anioma indigenes in Delta State, Nigeria. The results of the conducted survey revealed that the dominant gratifications indigenes derived from the above-mentioned newspapers were local awareness and utility (39,9%), immediacy (33,4%) and social extension (17,2%). Furthermore, the dominant satisfactions readers derived from reading the newspapers were for advice (32%), social utility (24,1) and habit (10,8%). The development issues that readers found most useful were in cultural programs (24,1%) and political programs (19,9%). According to the survey results, the majority of respondents (72,9%) read the newspapers occasionally, 18,2% often and 8,8% very often. The author believes that indigenes should be encouraged to read local publications with the establishment of newsstands by the community and local groups.

Key words: *development, development communication, development messages, indigenes' use of development messages.*

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INTRODUCTION

The potency of mass media for development purposes is what Gunter and Theroux (1977) cited in Moemeka (2000: 125) refer to as centralized media, which is predicated on the fact that authorities know more about development priorities and that a good and 'useful' message is capable of being accepted by people. Therefore, the mass media are tools for accelerating information dissemination and development purposes.

This study considers newspapers, one of such media of mass communication, as a channel of development information in Delta State, Nigeria. The first newspaper, *Iwe Irohin*, which was established by reverend Henry Townsend and published in Nigeria in 1859 (in Yoruba and English), crusaded the cause of the Egba people of Abeokuta. However, since Townsend stopped publishing *Iwe Irohin*, Nigeria has produced a number of newspapers in different forms, with communities and groups establishing local newspapers to represent their interests and those of their localities. In five of the ethnic groups in Delta State, Nigeria – Isoko, Urhobo, Ijaw, Itsekiri, and Anioma – there are numerous local newspapers. Among these are: *Isoko Mirror, Urhobo Voice, Ijaw News, Warri Voice, and Anioma Watch*. These newspapers are owned by individuals within the ethnic groups.

McQuail (2010: 28) has attested to the use of newspapers as a medium with key features of "topicality of contents and reference". The existing studies in the use of English-language newspapers for development purposes in Nigeria have mostly focused on national

newspapers. There are no known studies of the use of development messages content found in the five local newspapers by five ethnic groups in Delta State, Nigeria. It is against this backdrop that the study investigated the use of development messages by readers.

The development communication content of the local newspapers for investigation are in the areas of agriculture, health, political programmes, family planning, housing & environment, economic programmes, education, community self-help development, and cultural programmes.

The Problem

Studies on readers' use of development messages have focused on national newspapers published in English in Nigeria, while local newspapers have been largely disregarded. Very little chance was given to the possibility that such development messages might also be reported by the local press.

Newspapers therefore have a role to play in this regard, especially the local press. It is expected that for accelerated development to take place in the localities, issues of politics, agriculture, health, family planning and housing & environment should constitute key development programmes. This is in no way to suggest that other development programmes not mentioned here are not important in the development process. Readers are therefore expected to give these development items primacy of place in their choice and use of development messages.

Research Questions

The study was guided by the following research questions:

1. What gratifications do indigenes derive from the local newspapers; and to what extent do indigenes read these newspapers?
2. What satisfactions do indigenes derive from reading the local newspapers; and which development-oriented information items do readers find most useful?

Operational Definition of the Phrase "Indigenes' Use of Development Messages"

The indigenes are the ethnic groups of Isoko, Ijaw, Anioma, Urhobo, and Itsekiri, who read and use development messages in the following newspapers published by indigenes in their localities: *Isoko Mirror*, *Ijaw News, Anioma Watch, Urhobo Voice*, and *Warri Voice*. These are all local

newspapers, i.e. publications in the localities that provide a set of news values relevant to a local readership. However, the term "local newspapers" refers to the institution of local newspapers.

Literature Review

Perspectives on Development and Development Communication:

An important aspect of this study is to understand the concepts of development and development communication. First, the word 'development' means growth in the life of a person or society. Initially, development was viewed from the standpoint of Gross National Product (GNP). The underlying tenet was that development in a nation is viewed from the perspective of growth in the economy. Akinleye (2003: 61) observed that there was a time when development meant largely an accelerated growth of Gross National Product (GNP), per capita income and structural transformation in the economy. The key to national development was mainly increased rate in savings and capital formation, particularly material capital. The justification for the economic growth view of development is in the fact that at least it gives one greater control over one's environment. This, under normal circumstances, is expected to lead to greater freedom. For instance, economic growth enhances improved technical equipment and as such yields more abundant and more varied food with less labour. These economic benefits could also be far- reaching as they are able, in fact, to get to the people in the rural areas, apart from those who initially benefit.

Another dimension is introduced to the economic factor according to Olutula (2001) cited by Akinleye (2003: 61) in this way: "The classification of the countries of the world into two broad categories – developing countries and industrialized – used to be based almost on the economic criteria alone". In her view, the use of Gross National Product (GNP) per capita, low income, middle income and high income economies to group countries is a clear demonstration that, at that time, the conception of development was purely economic.

However, development is more composite and also human-centered. Oladipo (1996: 1) noted that:

> *Development in general is a process of economic and social advancement which enables people to realize their potentials, build self-confidence and lead lives of dignity and fulfillment. It is a process aimed at freeing people from evils of want, ignorance, social injustice and economic exploitation.*

While the emphasis above is human centered, Oladipo further postulates that the concept of development should have a paradigm shift which should focus more on the poor and less privileged and disadvantaged in society. Oladipo (1996: 3) therefore further conceptualizes Sustainable Human Development (SHD) in this way:

> *Sustainable human development is development that not only generates economic growth but distributes its benefits equitably; that empowers people rather than marginalizing them. It gives priority to the poor, enlarging their choices and opportunities, and provides for their participation in decisions affecting them. It is development that is pro-poor, pro-nature, pro-jobs, pro-women and pro-children.*

From the foregoing view, the indices of development are Human Development Index (HDI), Sustainable Human Development (SHD); people-centered development through people's empowerment, popular participation and putting people first; bottom-up development from the grassroots; environmental accounting and the restructuring of the world economic and financial system along with the UN system and the Breton Woods Institutions (Onimade, 1995: 3).

Comparatively, while the first school of thought views development as purely economic, with a strong bias for developing the economy of the state, with income per capita as a very important consideration, the second school of thought is people-centered. In fact, the more recent school of thought has pictured the old paradigm of development as shallow, by claiming that the central focus of development should be man and his well-being. This study is interested in the latter kind of development.

The reason for this is based on the concepts of development as advanced above, and, in addition, development should focus on localities. The justification for this position is that the concepts of development viewed above are from a broad perspective of development as they relate to countries, economies and societies at large with a focus on alleviating people's suffering. While these concepts remain relevant and will continue to remain relevant, the argument has been whether the concept should continue to cover these broad perspectives alone. Therefore, it seems logical to look at development from a standpoint that is relevant to this study. From this perspective, development is seen as a change in all spheres of human endeavours and the economy of a state and, in particular, Sustainable Infrastructural and Human Developments (SIHD), which must impact positively on localities. The

focal point of view therefore is the localities, which bear great responsibilities for development. One should not overemphasize this point because the state and national governments have always been involved in development.

Another important aspect of the study is to understand the concept of development communication. It refers to the channel of communication through which development information is disseminated, for instance newspapers. According to Udoakah (1998) cited by Laninhun (2003: 79), development communication is about how communication can be used for organized development. It is an attempt to influence the public to accept new ideas, to win citizens over to new ways of doing things. Development communication is therefore corrective, integrative and revolutionary in nature. It is result-oriented. Salawu (2001: 13–134), citied by Laninhun (2003: 79), also notes that development communication "stresses access to the media of communication, participation in communication activities and the relevance of content to the socio-cultural context".

Moemeka (1991) defines development communication as the application of the process of communication to the development process. In other words, development communication is the use of the principles and practices of exchange of ideas to fulfill development objectives.

From the foregoing reviews, development communication implies the use of the media to highlight and emphasize development issues with a people-oriented bias. This therefore clearly suggests that the newspaper can indeed be used as a vehicle for development communication in localities and in the rural setting to spread knowledge and information in order to contribute to changing people's behaviour and creating development.

The recourse to advancing this concept is that the localities have a crucial role to play in development. Scholarly evidence abounds that laments the failure of the national press to be a prime mover of development (Aboyade, 1987; Adesanoye, 1990).

Empirical Literature Review

We provide empirical literature that is related to the study. On the global state of newspapers, Kung, Picard, and Towse (2008: 18–39) have said that there has been a gradual worldwide decline in newspaper reading. This above position is supported by Elvestad and Blekesaune (2008: 432) in their study of percentage of non-readers in the adult population of some European countries in 2004. The countries used for

the study were Norway, Switzerland, Estonia, Germany, United Kingdom, Poland, France, Spain and Greece.

Ogbemi (2007: 222) investigated newspaper readership in Port Harcourt to find out among other things which newspaper is read most by respondents of Port Harcourt, capital of Rivers State, Nigeria, and whether gender, educational level, and income affect readership in the city. The survey research method and the Uses and Gratifications Theory were applied. Results revealed that the majority of respondents (60,5%) read newspapers daily. Also, results showed that respondents with higher income are more prone to read newspapers than those with lower income. Men will also read newspapers more than women. Umuerri (2014: 145) investigated the readership and use of development messages of two selected Isoko newspapers in Delta State, Nigeria. The local newspapers are *Isoko Mirror* and *Isoko Times Extra*. The survey method was employed and results showed that there was a high level of awareness of the Isoko newspapers with 172, or 71% of the respondents answering in the affirmative. In addition, the highest number of development items respondents claimed they found in the selected newspapers was democracy messages: 57, or 23%. The study was conducted in the two Isoko council areas of Isoko South with headquarters in Oleh and Isoko North with headquarters in Ozoro.

Theoretical Framework

This study was guided by the Uses and Gratifications Theory. Little John (1992) observed that the approach focuses on the consumer, the audience member rather than the message. This approach imagines the audience member to be a discriminatory user of the media. It views the members of the audience as actively utilizing media contents, rather than being passively acted upon by the media. Folarin (2005: 91) provides further insight to this theory when he notes that the question is in who uses which contents from which media under which conditions and for what reasons

The scenario, according to Folarin, is this: An individual has some needs related to communication; He/She selects the media that appear likely to satisfy those needs; He/She selectively consumes the content; An effect may or may not occur (Kunczick 1988).

The theory is captured by Katz (1959: 2) in this way: "...it is the programme that asks the question, not "what do the media do to people?" But "what do people do with the media?" The theory is based on the following assumptions as stated by Blumler and Katz (1974: 23) thus:

1. The audience is assumed to be an active user of mass media.
2. Each audience member must discern which medium will best gratify his or her needs for a given use.
3. Media outlets compete with other sources of gratification and mass media cannot satisfy all human needs.
4. Empirical data assessment can help determine the goals of mass media consumers since users are self-aware enough to accurately describe their motives.
5. Judgments about the cultural relevance of mass media must be withheld in order to avoid speculation on popular culture.

According to Katz et al (1974: 511), the framework for the uses and gratifications theory is as follows:

(1) The audience is conceived of as active, an important part of mass media use is assumed to be goal-directed.
(2) In the mass communication process much initiative in linking need gratification and media choice lies with the audience member. This places a strong limitation on theorizing about any form of straight line effect of media content on attitudes and behavior.
(3) The media compete with other sources of need satisfaction.
(4) Many of the mass media uses can be derived from data supplied by individual audience members themselves.

Drawing on this theory, the readers identified in this study are those of Isoko, Urhobo, Ijaw, Itsekiri and Anioma ethnic groups who are crucial to our discussion. The concept of uses and gratifications implies the use of the local newspapers i.e. *Isoko Mirror, Urhobo Voice, Ijaw News, Warri Voice* and *Anioma Watch*. The identified audiences above are expected to use the local newspapers for personal benefits by reading the contents in the areas of agriculture, health, education, cultural, community self-help development, housing and environment, family planning, political, and economic programmes, and also, by seeking appropriate advice and taking action based on the information provided in the newspapers.

Therefore, the Uses and Gratifications Theory places emphasis on the foregoing development areas and how the audiences use these needs. The audiences are those of Isoko, Urhobo, Ijaw, Itsekiri and Anioma and we looked at how the demographics of gender, age, education level and income influence their use of the newspapers. These audiences from the theory can be applied to the local media. The local newspapers are *Isoko Mirror, Urhobo Voice, Ijaw News, Warri Voice* and *Anioma Watch*. Therefore, the audiences of Isoko, Urhobo, Ijaw, Itsekiri and Anioma indigenes present a good example for a demographic study.

Theoretical Roots of The Research Questions

Research Question one: What Gratifications do indigenes derive from the local newspapers; and to what extent do indigenes read the local newspapers?

This research question originated from assumption one (1) of Blumler and Katz's (1974: 23) Uses and Gratifications Theory: "The audience is assumed to be an active user of mass media'.

Research Question Two: What satisfactions do indigenes derive from reading the local newspapers; and which development-oriented information items do the readers find most useful? The root of this question is from assumption two (2) of Blumler and Katz's (1974: 23) Uses and Gratifications Theory, which states: "Each audience member must discern which medium will best gratify his or her needs for a given use".

Methodology

A survey method was adopted in conducting the research and was used to study the population of Isoko, Urhobo, Ijaw, Itsekiri and Anioma in Delta State, with a focus on their use of the following newspapers: Isoko Mirror, Urhobo Voice, Ijaw News, Warri Voice and Anioma Watch for purposes of development messages.

The population of five ethnic groups of Isoko, Urhobo, Ijaw, Itsekiri, and Anioma make up the total population of Delta state, which is 4 112 445 of which 2 069 309 are males and 2 043 136 are females (2006 National population commission). The literate population of Delta State is 2 708 088. It is assumed that the literate population represented the reading population. Gbadegesin, Olopoenia and Jerome (2005: 6) note that "a population is the set representing all measurements of interests to the research".

The convenience sampling technique was used to draw sample from the population. Convenience sampling, according to Olayinka,Taiwo, Raji-Oyelade and Farai (2006: 356), is a non-probability sampling strategy that uses the most easily accessible people (or objects) to participate in a study.

Five sets of the same questionnaire were administered with the help of trained research assistants in the five locations of Oleh, Asaba, Patani, Effurun and Warri. A total of 130 copies of the questionnaire were each administered to respondents in the five locations. In Oleh, copies of the questionnaire were distributed to the following quarters of Eviewoh, Okporoh and Uzorkpah. Each of the quarters had 43 copies of the

questionnaire except Uzorkpah, which had 44, totaling 130, out of which 128 of the questionnaire were returned. In Effurun, copies of the questionnaire were distributed to the following quarters of Enerhen and Ebrumede with each having 65 and all were returned by respondents. In Patani, copies of the questionnaire were distributed to two quarters of Ekise and Abare, each quarter had 65 126 copies of the questionnaire were returned. In Warri, 65 copies of the questionnaire were distributed to the two quarters of Ajamimogha, and Okere, while 129 copies were returned. In Asaba, 65 copies each of the questionnaire were distributed in Ogbogonogo and Okpanam, while 127 were retrieved from respondents.

The copies of the questionnaire were given to students, teachers, civil servants, politicians and businessmen, as the areas surveyed were made up of these different groups of respondents. Because the different groups of respondents had diverse demographic variables of age, gender, education, and economic levels, convenience sampling was thought necessary. A sample of 650 respondents was chosen, out of which 640 copies of the questionnaire were returned by respondents. Since convenience sampling was thought necessary to include all the demographic variables of age, gender, income, and level of education, a uniform sample size of 130 respondents was further chosen to represent each of the five localities of Asaba, Effurun, Warri, Patani, and Oleh. The copies of the questionnaire were distributed by trained researchers to offices, homes, schools and business premises or centers. Five trained research assistants distributed and retrieved the copies of the questionnaire in the following areas: two research assistants in Asaba; one each in Oleh, Warri, and Patani. Copies of the questionnaire were self-administered in Effurun. Frequency counts and simple percentages distribution were used for data analysis and presentation.

Results and Discussion

Research Question One: What gratifications do indigenes derive from the local newspapers; and to what extent do indigenes read the local newspapers?

This research question sought to determine the gratifications indigenes derived from the local newspapers, and the extent to which indigenes read the local newspapers. It examined whether the local newspapers play a leading role in shaping perception as well as reality in the localities. To answer this question, the starting point was to determine the gratification of indigenes when they read the monthly and weekly local newspapers. The information on this is provided in Table 1 below.

Table 1

Gratifications Indigenes derive from the Monthly and Weekly Newspapers: Total Indigenes Gratification Cross Tabulations

Monthly Newspapers					Weekly Newspapers					
S/N	**Gratifications**	**-**	**Oleh/IM No, %**	**Patani/IN No, %**	**Warri/WV No, %**	**No. of Monthly**	**Effurun/UV No, %**	**Asaba No, %**	**No. of Weekly**	**Total**
1	Immediacy	Count % within immediacy	16 23,5	12 17,6	11 16,16	39	18 26,4	11 16,1	29	68 (33,4) 100%
2	Local Awareness and Utility	Count % within Local Awareness and Utility	20 24,6	16 19,7	14 17,2	50	22 27,1	09 11,1	31	81 (39,9) 100%
3	Entertainment	Count % within entertainment	05 26,3	03 15,7	02 10,5	10	06 31,5	03 15,7	09	19 (9,3) 100%
4	Social Extension	Count % within Social Extension	08 22,8	05 14,2	07 20	20	10 28,5	05 14,2	15	35 (17,2) 100%
	Total	**Count % within gratifications**	**49 24,7**	**36 17,7**	**34 16,7**	**119 58,6**	**56 27,5**	**28 13,7**	**84 41,3**	**203 100%**

Keys: IM = Isoko Mirror, IN = Ijaw News, WV = Warri Voice, UV = Urhobo Voice, AW = Anioma Watch

Table 1 shows that the gratifications of indigenes when they read the monthly and weekly newspapers were for local awareness and utility, immediacy, and social extension in that particular order. However, the monthly and weekly newspapers presented different gratifications for readers.

The monthly newspapers presented 119 (58,6%) items of gratifications by indigenes in the localities of Oleh, Patani and Warri, as against 84 (41,3%) of gratifications in Effurun and Asaba by the weekly newspapers.

On the aggregate, one can safely infer that readers' gratifications consisted in being informed for local issues and news events in their immediate environment, as this accounted for the total indigenes' gratifications as follows: "local awareness and utility" (81), "immediacy" (68), and "social extension" (35).

It was also necessary to ascertain their frequency of reading the local newspapers. The data are presented in Table 2 below.

Table 2

Frequency of Reading the Local Newspapers

S/N	Locations/ Newspapers	Very Often No. %	Often No. %	Occasionally No. %	Number of Respondents No. %	Total
	Monthly					
1	*Oleh/IM*	5(10,2) (27,7)	8(16.3) (21,6)	36(73,4) (24,3)	49(24,1)	100%
2	*Patani/IN*	3(8,3) (16,6)	6(16,6) (10,8)	27(75) (18,2)	36(17,7)	100%
3	*Warri/WV*	3(8.8) (16.6)	4(11.7) (10.8)	27(79.4) (46.5)	34(16,7)	100%
	Sub-Total	11	18	90	119	
	Weekly					
4	*Effurun/UV*	7(12,5) (38,8)	11(19,6) (27,7)	38(67,8) (79,1)	56(27,5)	100%
5	*Asaba/AW*	-	8(28,5) (21,6)	20(71,4) (13,5)	28(13,7)	100%
	Sub Total	7	19	58	84	
	Total	**18(8,8)**	**37(18,2)**	**48(72,9)**	**203**	**100%**

Keys: IM = Isoko Mirror, IN = Ijaw News, WV = Warri Voice, UV = Urhobo Voice, AW = Anioma Watch

The table above shows that 72,9% of the respondents read the newspapers occasionally. Other frequencies with which respondents read the newspapers were "Often" (18,2%) and "Very Often" (8,8%). This result is an indication that readers of local newspapers in Delta State were few and the reason for this is not far to seek, as illiteracy is still a problem in Nigeria. This has led to poor reading habits. For instance, Moemeka (2000: 142) cites the *Europa Year Book* (Vol. 1: 1992) as having given the following statistics on this:

> *Cameroon with a population of 112 million (1989) has 29 daily newspapers hampered by high production costs, limited readership... Egypt with a population of 53 million (1990) has 17 daily newspapers hampered by high illiteracy rate.*

That information is also a reflection of what occurs in most African countries and Nigeria, in particular. Therefore, only a few respondents read the papers regularly. This is not consistent with the finding of Salawu (2003) that a majority of respondents 227 or 63,1% read Yoruba newspapers. The author had investigated the readership of Yoruba newspapers for development messages.

Research Question Two: What satisfactions do indigenes derive from reading the local newspapers; and which development-oriented information items do the readers find most useful?

This research question sought to investigate the satisfactions derived by indigenes when they read the newspapers; and the development information that readers find most useful. There was therefore a need to carry out a comparison between satisfactions derived by indigenes when they read the monthly and weekly newspapers. The information on this is provided in Table 3.

Table 3

Comparison of Satisfactions of Indigenes when they read the Monthly and Weekly Local Newspapers. Total Indigenes Satisfactions Cross Tabulations

S/N	Satisfactions	-	Oleh/IM No. %	Patani/IN No. %	Warri/WV No.%	No.% Monthly	Effurun/UV No. %	Asaba/AW No. %	No. % Weekly	Total
1	Habit	Count % within Habit	06 27,2	03 13,6	03 13,6	12	08 36	02 9,0	10	22(10,8) 100%
2	Convenience	Count % within Convenience	03 20	02 13,3	04 26,6	09	04 26,6	02 13,3	6	15(7,3) 100%
3	Social Utility	Count % within Social Utility	12 24,4	09 18,3	10 20,4	31	10 20,4	08 16,3	18	49(24,1) 100%
4	Escape From Problems	Count % within Escape from problems	02 14,2	04 28,5	02 14,2	08	03 21,4	03 21,4	6	1(6,8) 100%
5	Advice	Count % within Advice	17 26,1	12 18,4	11 16,9	40	16 34,6	09 13,8	25	65(32) 100%
6	Entertainment	Count % within Entertainment	05 27,7	02 11,1	02 11,1	09	06 33,3	03 16,6	9	18(8,8) 100%
7	Escape from boredom	Count % within Escape from boredom	04 20	04 20	02 10	10	09 45	01 0,5	10	20(9,8) 100%
	Total	**Count % within Satisfactions**	**49 24,1**	**36 17,7**	**34 16,7**	**119 58,6**	**56 27,5**	**28 13,7**	**84 41,3**	**203 100%**

Keys: IM = Isoko Mirror, IN = Ijaw News, WV = Warri Voice, UV = Urhobo Voice, AW = Anioma Watch

The table shows that there were more indigenes who derived satisfactions reading monthly newspapers than they did reading weekly newspapers. This information can be gleaned from the table. Also, "Advice" (65), and "social utility" (49) were the major or leading satisfactions derived by indigenes when they read the local newspapers. When separated differently, however, the local newspapers presented different levels of satisfactions to readers. *Urhobo Voice,* a weekly, was the leading local newspapers in this direction with (56) items, followed by *Isoko Mirror* (49), *Ijaw News* (36), *Warri Voice* (34) and *Anioma Watch* (28). The inference that can be drawn is that the readers prefered to use to use the local newspapers to solve specific needs of development by relying on the newspapers for advice and using for social utility.

Furthermore, there was need to investigate the development messages that readers found most useful in the monthly and weekly local newspapers. The information on this can be gleaned from Table 4.

Table 4

Development Messages Respondents Find Most Useful in the Monthly and Weekly Local Newspapers

Monthly					Weekly					
S/N	**Development**	**-**	**Oleh/IM No. %**	**Patani/IN No. %**	**Warri/WV No. %**	**No. of Items in the Monthly**	**Effurun/UV No. %**	**Asaba/AW No. %**	**No. of Items in the Weekly**	**Total No. %**
1	Agriculture	Count % within Agriculture	1(20) (2)	1(20) (2,9)	1(20) (2,9)	3	-	2(40) (7,1)	2	5 (2,4)
2	Health	Count % within Health	2(11,1) (4,1)	1(5,5) (2,7)	3(16,6) (8,8)	6	11(61,1) (19,6)	1(5,5) (3,5)	12	18 (8,8)
3	Political Programmes	Count % within Political Programmes	6(16,6) (12,2)	11(30,5) (30,5)	6(16,6) (7,6)	23	6(16,6) (10,7)	7(19,4) (25,)	13	36 (17,7)
4	Family Planning	Count % within Family Planning	1(50) (2)	1(50) (2,7)	-	2	-	-		2 (0,9)

Table 4

5	Housing and Environment	Count % within Housing and Environment	1(16,6) (2)	-	-	1	4(66,6) (7,1)	1(16,6) (3,5)	5	6 (2,9)
6	Economic Programmes	Count % within Economic Programmes	9(34,6) (18,3)	4(15,3) (11,1)	-	13	8(30,7) (14,2)	5(19,2) (7,8)	13	26 (12,8)
7	Education	Count % within Education	10(28,4) (20,4)	6(17,1) (16,6)	4(11,4) (11,7)	20	12(34,4) (21,4)	3(8,5) (10,7)	15	35 (17,2)
8	Community Self-Help Development	Count % within Community Self-Help Development	8(30,7) (16,3)	4(15,3) (11,1)	7(26,9) (20,5)	19	5(19,2) (8,9)	2(7,6) (7,1)	7	26 (12,8)
9	Cultural Programmes	Count % within Cultural Programmes	11(22,4) (22,4)	8(16,3) (22,2)	13(26,5) (38,2)	32	10(20,4) (17,8)	7(14,2) (25)	17	49 (24,1)
	Total	**Count % within development items**	**49 24,1**	**36 17,7**	**34 16,7**	**119 58,6**	**56 27,5**	**28 13,7**	**84 41,3**	**203 (100)**

Table 4 presents data on development messages that respondents/ readers found most useful. The summary of the data shows that respondents preferred "cultural programmes" (24,1%) to other development messages reported in the local newspapers. The result emphasized the point that culture is a way of life of the people which they always want to cling to.

Another high-ranking subcategory of development messages which readers find most useful in the local newspapers are political programmes. The attraction to political programmes by indigenes is not

surprising, since the love to have power derives from political office. It is generally believed that with power at their disposal, people can overcome other challenges of development. Okigbo (1990) corroborated this in his study on sources of political information in rural Nigerian community.

However, the respondents' rating of family planning subcategory (0,9%) is an indication that issues of family planning are not taken seriously. This result is not consistent with Omoera's (2010) study and rating of family planning programmes through the use of broadcast media. The researcher investigated the use of broadcast media in family planning matters in Ebele Community in Igueben Local Government Area of Edo state.

Recommendations

Based on the findings, the study recommends the following:

1. Indigenes should be encouraged to read local publications. This can be done with the establishment of newsstands by the community, local groups or non-governmental organizations.

2 While it is laudable that indigenes continue to cling to age-old traditions of their cultural beliefs, it is necessary for them to accept certain alterations that may be made on some aspects of these traditions, which may be barbaric and or which may have become inimical to local aspirations. Some of these new cultural aspirations should be issues for discussion and subsequent publication in newspapers.

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