



Multimedia Campaigns and Rural Development Awareness in Borno State, Nigeria: Perceived Influence on Attitudes and Communication Challenges

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ABSTRACT

This study investigated multimedia campaigns and rural development awareness in Borno State, Nigeria: perceived influence on attitudes and communication challenges. The study adopted a cross-sectional survey research design. The population of the study was made up of 46 rural development stakeholders. The study sample consisted of 46 respondents: 19 community leaders, 12 media practitioners, and 15 NGO workers, using a multi-stage sampling procedure, within Borno State, Nigeria. A structured questionnaire titled Multimedia Campaigns Questionnaire on Awareness about Rural Development among Community Dwellers (MCQARDCD) was used for data collection. The instrument was subjected to scrutiny by three experts. The experts' corrections and observations aided the final production of the instrument. The reliability of the instrument was established using Cronbach's Alpha method. A reliability index of 0.96 was obtained. Two research questions and one hypothesis guided the study. Descriptive statistics of mean and standard deviation were used to answer the research questions, and ANOVA was used to test the hypothesis. The findings revealed that multimedia campaigns positively influence rural dwellers' attitudes toward participating in rural development programmes and that several factors limit their effectiveness in rural areas. It is therefore recommended that a multimedia campaign strategy should be adopted by relevant agencies to facilitate participatory communication for community involvement in developmental programmes.

Keywords: Multimedia Campaigns, Rural Development Awareness, Community Engagement, Media Platforms, Borno State

INTRODUCTION

Rural development remains a major component of sustainable national development because the social and economic transformation of rural communities is closely associated with improvements in livelihoods, access to services, community participation, food security, infrastructure, and human development. However, the achievement of rural development objectives depends not only on the provision of physical and economic resources but also on the ability of individuals and communities to obtain, understand, discuss, and use relevant development information. Communication therefore constitutes an important dimension of development because it can facilitate knowledge sharing, stakeholder engagement, participation, social mobilisation, and informed decision-making. Approaches to Communication for Development regard communication as a participatory social process through which communities and development actors increasingly exchange knowledge, build trust, deliberate on development priorities, and support sustained social change (Cardey, Eleazar, Ainomugisha, Kalowekamo & Vlasenko, 2024); (Food and Agriculture Organization, 2025); (Oseni, 2024).

The changing communication environment has expanded the range of media through which rural development information can be disseminated. Traditional media such as radio and television now coexist with social media, mobile communication, digital video, online platforms, community information systems, interpersonal communication, and other multimedia channels. This development has created opportunities for development agencies, government institutions, non-governmental organisations, community leaders, and media



practitioners to communicate development messages through multiple channels and formats. The FAO (2025) notes that inclusive Rural Communication Services increasingly combine local media, digital technologies, and participatory approaches to facilitate knowledge sharing, social inclusion, and stronger relationships between rural communities and institutions. Similarly, FAO's current Communication for Development framework emphasizes the integration of communication processes, local media, and information and communication technologies into rural development initiatives.

Multimedia campaigns are particularly relevant within this changing communication environment because they can combine different media formats and communication channels to communicate related messages to diverse audiences. A rural development campaign, for example, may employ radio discussions, television programmes, social media posts, posters, community meetings, short videos, interpersonal communication, mobile messaging, and community-based information networks. The combination of these channels can potentially increase the visibility and accessibility of development messages while providing different opportunities for audiences to encounter, interpret, discuss, and respond to information. Rather than treating communication merely as the transmission of information from development agencies to rural populations.

Rural development awareness is consequently more than simply exposure to development messages. It encompasses people's knowledge and understanding of development programmes, opportunities, services, policies, community priorities, and actions that can contribute to improved living conditions. Awareness may also influence how individuals perceive development initiatives and whether they consider such initiatives relevant, credible, beneficial, or worthy of participation. Effective communication can therefore contribute to the formation of attitudes by providing information, creating opportunities for discussion, addressing misconceptions, and connecting development initiatives with local experiences. (Cardey et al. 2024) argue that communication for development should encompass listening, trust-building, knowledge and skills sharing, dialogue, policy engagement, and learning for meaningful and sustained change. This perspective suggests that rural development communication should not be evaluated solely according to the volume of messages disseminated but also according to whether communication facilitates understanding, engagement, and participation.

The relevance of communication to rural development is particularly important in contexts where rural populations experience information inequalities. Geographic isolation, inadequate communication infrastructure, limited digital connectivity, language differences, low levels of digital literacy, socioeconomic constraints, and unequal access to media can affect people's ability to receive and use development information. Recent work on rural communication services highlights the importance of inclusive communication systems that respond to the different information needs and circumstances of rural populations. FAO (2024, 2025) reports that rural communication services can strengthen access to timely and relevant information while creating platforms for dialogue, knowledge exchange, innovation, and collective action.

The Nigerian context illustrates both the opportunities and limitations associated with contemporary development communication. Communication has been recognised as an important instrument for mobilising citizens, increasing awareness, facilitating participation, and supporting development programmes. Ogbonnaya (2024), in a review of empirical studies on communication for development in Nigeria, argues that effective communication channels are important for engaging citizens, building awareness, and strengthening participation in development initiatives. At the same time, the effectiveness of communication is influenced by contextual conditions, including access to communication technologies, institutional capacity, audience attitude, and the ability of development actors to establish meaningful communication with communities.

Recent studies further demonstrate the growing importance of digital and social media in rural development communication. For example, (Nweze Nwonyi, Nwankwo, Alo, Imeze, Ogudu Nwogha 2025), in a study of selected local government areas in Ebonyi State, found that social media was being used for development communication, although its utilisation was constrained by poor internet access and low digital literacy. Their findings suggest that the availability of a digital communication platform does not automatically guarantee effective community participation or development communication. Similarly, research on social media and rural community development in Akwa Ibom State has examined the potential of social media to facilitate

stakeholder engagement and collective responses to rural development issues (Ikon & Ukpog, 2025). Recent evidence from Borno State provides a particularly relevant basis for examining this issue. Mu'azu and Mingyi (2025), in their study of development communication and sustainable development in conflict-affected communities of Borno State, found that respondents recognised radio as a trusted and effective channel for promoting sustainable development, while social media was perceived as useful for creating awareness but less credible as an information source. The authors recommended the integration of multiple communication channels, including radio, social media, and opinion leaders, to improve communication efficiency in conflict-affected communities. Their findings demonstrate that different communication channels may perform different functions and that effectiveness cannot be understood independently of audience perceptions, trust, and the local communication environment.

These studies indicate that the emergence of digital media has expanded communication possibilities but has also introduced new challenges concerning accessibility, participation, credibility, and digital inclusion. In another study (Guo and Ogbodo 2026), a comparative study involving rural communities in Nigeria and China identified poor electricity supply, weak network connectivity, high costs of digital devices, language barriers, illiteracy, and limited digital literacy as important constraints to effective digital-media use among rural populations.

The challenges become particularly significant in Borno State, where rural development and communication take place within a complex socioeconomic and post-conflict environment. Prolonged insecurity and disruption have affected communities, livelihoods, public services, social relationships, and access to development opportunities. Under such circumstances, communication can serve several interconnected purposes: providing information about development initiatives, rebuilding confidence, facilitating social mobilisation, connecting communities with institutions, encouraging participation, and supporting behavioural and attitudinal change. Consequently, the quality, credibility, accessibility, and relevance of development communication become important considerations in efforts to promote sustainable rural development.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. To what extent do multimedia campaigns affect rural dwellers' attitudes towards rural development?
2. What are the challenges limiting the effectiveness of multimedia campaigns in raising awareness among rural dwellers about rural development in Borno State?

HYPOTHESIS

Based on the research questions, the study will test the following hypothesis at the 0.05 level of significance:

1. There is no significant difference in the mean scores of the responses of community leaders, media practitioners, and NGO workers on the extent to which multimedia campaigns affect the rural dwellers' attitude towards the rural development programme.

METHODOLOGY

The study adopted a descriptive cross-sectional survey research design. The population comprised 46 **respondents**. The study sample consisted of 46 respondents: 19 community leaders, 12 media practitioners, and 15 NGO workers, using a multi-stage sampling procedure. Simple random sampling was employed to select the sample from the target population. A structured questionnaire titled Multimedia Campaigns Questionnaire on Awareness about Rural Development among Community Dwellers (MCQARDCD) was used for data collection. The instrument was subjected to scrutiny by three experts. The experts' corrections and observations aided the final production of the instrument. The comments and suggestions of the three experts showed that the instrument is valid, with a Kendall's Coefficient of Concordance of 0.890 and 0.889 for the instruments. The reliability of the instrument was established using Cronbach's Alpha method to measure the internal consistency; the instrument was administered to 46 respondents who would not be part of the sample

selected for the main study, but had similar characteristics. The instrument was administered once, which provided a reliability estimate for the instrument composed of items that are scored dichotomously and an essay test having items of varying point values that respondents answer, such as “strongly agree to strongly disagree. A reliability index obtained was 0.96, which is considered reliable (Ugodulunwa, 2020). Descriptive statistics of mean and standard deviation were used to answer the research questions, with a critical mean score of 2.50, which served as the benchmark for decision-making, and ANOVA was used to test the hypothesis.

FINDINGS

Research Question One: To what extent do multimedia campaigns affect the rural dwellers’ attitude towards rural development?

Table 1

Means and Standard Deviations on the Influence of Multimedia Campaigns on the Attitude of Rural Dwellers Towards Rural Development in Borno State

	CL			M.P			NGO		
S/N	$\bar{X}$	SD	Remark	$\bar{X}$	SD	Remark	$\bar{X}$	SD	Remark
1.	3.27	.70	Agree	3.36	.92	Agree	3.38	.65	Agree
2.	2.73	1.03	Agree	3.36	.67	Agree	3.23	.83	Agree
3.	3.33	.62	Agree	3.36	.51	Agree	3.46	.52	Agree
4.	2.73	1.10	Agree	3.55	.69	Agree	3.00	.91	Agree
5.	3.53	.64	Agree	3.55	.52	Agree	3.54	.66	Agree
Grand Mean	3.12			3.44			3.32		

Key

CL = Community Leader

MP = Media Practitioner

NGO = Non-Governmental Organization

Table 1 presents the mean analyses of the Community leaders, media practitioners, and NGO workers' responses on the attitude of multimedia campaigns on the attitude of rural dwellers towards rural development in the study area. In the table, the three groups of respondents agree that multimedia campaigns have influenced the attitude of rural dwellers towards rural development in the study area, as the corresponding means of the items are all above the criterion mean of 2.50. Also, the grand means of $\bar{X} = 3.12, 3.44,$ and 3.32 are above the criterion mean. This implies that multimedia campaigns have positively influenced rural dwellers' attitude towards rural development.

Hypothesis One: There is no significant difference in the mean scores of the responses of community leaders, media practitioners, and NGO workers on the extent to which multimedia campaigns affect the rural dwellers' attitude towards the rural development programme.

Table 2

One-way Analysis of Variance of Mean Scores on the Extent to which Multimedia Campaigns Affect the Rural Dwellers' Attitude Towards Rural Development Programmes

	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	16.917	2	8.459	.721	.493
Within Groups	422.313	36	11.731		
Total	439.231	38			



Key

CL = Community Leader

MP = Media Practitioner

NGO = Non-Governmental Organization

Table 2 presents the results of a one-way between-groups Analysis of Variance conducted to explore the difference in the mean scores of Community leaders, media practitioners, and NGO workers on the extent to which multimedia campaigns affect rural dwellers' attitudes towards rural development programmes. The $F(2, 36) = .721, p > 0.05$. Since the p-value of 0.493 is higher than the 0.05 level, the null hypothesis was retained. The mean scores of the three groups showed the extent to which multimedia campaigns affect rural dwellers' attitudes toward rural development programmes. The post hoc LSD-Tukey-HSD test indicated that the mean scores for community leaders ($\bar{X} = 15.60, SD = 3.79$), media practitioners ($\bar{X} = 17.18, SD = 2.99$), and NGO workers ($\bar{X} = 16.62, SD = 3.31$) did not differ significantly.

Research Question Two: What challenges limit the effectiveness of multimedia campaigns in raising awareness among rural dwellers about rural development in Borno State?

Table 3

Means and Standard Deviations on the Challenges Limiting the Effectiveness of Multimedia Campaigns in Raising the Needed Awareness Among Rural Dwellers about Rural Development in Borno State

		CL			M.P			NGO	
S/N	$\bar{X}$	SD	Remark	$\bar{X}$	SD	Remark	$\bar{X}$	SD	Remark
1.	3.07	1.03	Agree	3.45	.93	Agree	3.15	.99	Agree
2.	3.40	.63	Agree	3.45	.89	Agree	3.31	.48	Agree
3.	3.40	.51	Agree	3.18	.87	Agree	3.54	.66	Agree
4.	2.27	1.28	Disagree	3.09	1.04	Agree	2.38	1.12	Disagree
5.	3.07	1.03	Agree	3.64	.67	Agree	3.15	.99	Agree
6.	3.27	.70	Agree	3.00	1.29	Agree	3.15	.55	Agree
Grand Mean	3.08			3.30			3.11		

Key

CL = Community Leader

MP = Media Practitioner

NGO = Non-Governmental Organization

Table 3 presents the mean analyses of the Community Leaders, Media Practitioners, and NGO Workers on the Challenges Limiting the Effectiveness of Multimedia Campaigns in raising the Needed Awareness among Rural Dwellers about Rural Development in Borno State. The mean and above the Enclave mean of 2.50 houses. Community leaders and NGO workers agreed on all other items except item 4, one of the common rural challenges; most of the challenges limiting rural dwellers' access to multimedia materials, with means of 2.27 & 2.38, respectively, are below the Enclave mean. Based on the groups' grand means (3.08, 3.30 & 3.11), which are above the Enclave mean of 2.50, all the issues mentioned are challenges limiting the effectiveness of multimedia campaigns in raising the needed awareness of rural development programmes among rural dwellers.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

This study investigated multimedia campaigns and rural development awareness in Borno State, Nigeria, as they affect the attitudes of rural dwellers and communication challenges. The findings established that multimedia campaigns positively influence rural dwellers' attitudes towards participating in rural development programmes. This finding is consistent with previous research on development and participatory communication. Oseni (2024) reported that participatory communication facilitates community involvement in development initiatives and contributes to attitudinal change, leading to community ownership and sustainability. The finding is further supported by evidence from rural multimedia campaigns. FAO (2025) demonstrated that combining radio with village-level presentations and other communication channels can improve knowledge and strengthen intentions to adopt recommended development practices. Such evidence suggests that the influence of multimedia campaigns may extend beyond information dissemination to affect people's willingness to respond to development messages and participate in development activities. Thus, the positive attitude reported by respondents in the present study may be associated with the ability of multimedia campaigns to provide information, reinforce messages through different channels, and create opportunities for engagement with development issues. The findings also revealed that there is no significant difference in respondents' responses on the extent to which multimedia campaigns affect rural dwellers' attitude towards the rural development programme.

The findings further revealed that respondents generally agreed that several factors limit the effectiveness of multimedia campaigns. This finding is consistent with previous empirical evidence on rural development communication. Guo and Ogbodo (2026), in a comparative study involving rural communities in Nigeria and China, identified poor electricity supply, weak network connectivity, high costs of digital devices, language barriers, illiteracy, and limited digital literacy as important constraints to effective digital-media use among rural populations.

RECOMMENDATION

Considering the findings of the study, the following recommendations were made:

1. Rural development partners should adopt multimedia campaigns to facilitate participatory communication for community involvement in developmental programmes.
2. Government should subsidize the high cost of digital devices and network services for effective digital-media use among rural populations
3. Campaign designers should select channels according to local access, language, trust, and literacy needs rather than assuming that digital channels are accessible to all rural residents.
4. Government agencies, NGOs, and rural development partners should plan communication campaigns that combine appropriate channels and provide opportunities for two-way dialogue with communities
5. Community leaders, media practitioners, and NGO workers should be involved in the design, dissemination, and monitoring of development messages, with mechanisms for community feedback
6. Where the verified findings identify device costs, connectivity, or electricity as barriers, relevant institutions should explore practical measures to improve access, including partnerships with local communication providers and use of low-cost, low-bandwidth or offline channels

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