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# UTILIZATION OF TRADITIONAL COMMUNICATION MEDIA (TCM) FOR INNOVATION DISSEMINATION IN OBAFEMI OWODE LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA OF OGUN STATE

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## ABSTRACT

The study examined various traditional communication media (TCM) used by rural farmers as sources of information to improve their production in Obafemi Owode Local Government Area of Ogun State. Data were drawn from a sample of one hundred and twenty (120) randomly selected farmers using a structure interview schedule. The obtained data were described with frequency and analyzed using chi-square test. The results indicated that majority (62.8%) of farmers commonly received innovations through TCM such as discussion groups, market places, agriculture-based festivals, visits, cooperative society, traditional meetings, community elders, village squares, and relations. and found them effective. A significant relationship was established between farmers' perceptions of effectiveness TCM and effectiveness of TCM .The variables that had significant relationship with TCM was socio-cultural lifestyles of farmers ( $\chi^2 = 49.9, \alpha = 0.05$ ) and farmers' level of education ( $\chi^2 = 95.58, \alpha = 0.05$ ) Based on the findings, it is pertinent to direct deliberate efforts towards the integration of traditional media of communication into the innovation delivery system for rural farmers.

## INTRODUCTION

The Nigerian economy is still marked with the significant contributions of the rural populace. Nevertheless, the contributions rendered by the rural farmers that made up of the more than 80% of the Nigerian populace are producing below the optimum level when compared to their counterpart in the developed countries. In other words, increasing the economy base is essentially tied to increasing the agricultural productivity of rural farmers.

Agricultural extension system has been used strategically to increase the productivity and livelihoods of the rural farm families. Part of their interventions is to provide a reversible linkage between research and farmers through communication process. According to Ojiambo, (1995) and Kaniki, (1995), for a sustainable development, there is a direct relationship between the research and the utilization of research findings.

A weak linkage occurring between the research and users' system (farmers) in Nigeria and other developing countries has been a major limiting factor to increased agricultural and sustainable development (Arokoyo, 2005). In other words, increased agricultural productivity depends to a large extent on the ability of the extension agents to continuously disseminate useful agricultural technologies to farmers through sustainable media (Ewuola et al 2003, and Ogunsumi, 2003). More often than not, innovation adoption has been constrained for poor selection of proper communication media which sometimes lead to outright rejection or rejection after adoption of such innovations.

Although, the use of Information Communication Technologies (ICT) is gaining ground even in the rural areas of Africa but it is without its associated problems. The problems of access, connectivity, literacy, poverty, and rural infrastructures are the challenges confronting the use and spread of ICT in rural areas. (CTA, 2003, Arokoyo, 2005 and Omotayo, 2005). Meanwhile, the use of TCM has been identified as most influential in making adoption of innovations among the rural people (Aboyade, 1987 and Adedoyin, 1989). The sociology nature of the rural people often time makes communication to be more of interpersonal in approach than mass media where mutual interaction is restricted.

In retrospect, all sorts of TCM have been used while some are still in use. It is the concern of this study therefore, to analyze the various TCM and ascertain their effectiveness in adoption of innovations.

The farmers who are the main economic actors in the country should continuously be fed with useful technologies to improve their productivity for sustainable economic development. This could only be achieved if innovations disseminated are adopted by farmers. However, adoption has been limited because of inappropriate selection of communication media by extension agent resulting in low agricultural productivity. However, TCM have been found to be relevant in adoption decision. Although, various TCM have emerged their relative effectiveness in innovation dissemination is yet to be ascertain. Thus this study is intended to analyze the various TCM in relation to their effectiveness in disseminating innovation to rural farmers in Owode Local Government of Ogun State.

The study will provide answers to the following research problems:

1. What are the socio-economic characteristics of the respondents?
2. What are the traditional communication media (TCM) existing in the study area?
3. Which of these are commonly used?
4. How effective are the TCM in disseminating innovations?

The Hypotheses of the Study are:

- i) There is no significant relationship between farmers' perception of effectiveness of TCM and effectiveness of TCM.
- ii) There are significant relationships between effectiveness of TCM and farmers' level of education and socio-cultural life of farmers.

## METHODOLOGY

The study was conducted in Obafemi Local Government Area of Ogun State. A total of One hundred twenty farmers (120) were randomly selected for interview using a structured interview schedule. The obtained data were described and analyzed using frequency, percentages and chi-square test respectively.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

### *Personal characteristics of respondents*

In Table 1, a larger percentage (45.8%) was 55 years and above. It thus appears that the farming enterprise is still dominated by old people. The implication is that innovation disseminated may be resisted due to the adamant nature of the old people towards change. Their sex as described in the table was put as 81.7% males and 18.3% female. The rigor involved in farming may have discouraged female farmers from involving fully in the business. The majority (60.0%) had no formal education, implying a high literacy level in the area. This finding was in line with the report of Adeniyi (1997). This may have been the reason for their low participation in farmers' cooperative societies (35.8%) as compared to religious group (64.05).

It can be deduced that all the respondents were aware of the extension services in the study area. This indicates that the extension services are popular among the people. There is the tendency for farmers to begin to demand for extension services consequence of the high level of awareness. It is ascertained from table 1 that the majority (74.2%) had no contact with the extension agent. This could be as a result of the low extension -farmers' ratio in Ogun State. The implication is that the majority of the farmers are not benefiting from extension services which have implication for their low productivity.

### *Existing traditional communication media (TCM)*

Table 2 showed the various TCM existing in the study area. It can be deduced by the data that all the TCM have been utilized by the respondents in one form or the other. It therefore implies that all the TCM have potentials as usable and useful communication media in rural area. Table 3 revealed the commonly utilized TCM for innovation dissemination in the study area. As deduced from the table, the majority (64.0%) of the respondents commonly received innovations through town crier, market places, friends and neighbour, community elders, cooperative society Agriculture-base- festival, traditional meetings,

Discussion groups village squares, visit and relations. It can be implied that these TCM have been useful in dissemination of innovations in the study area. They are therefore accessible and preferred by the farmers.

Table 1: Distribution of respondents by personal characteristics N=120

Characteristics	Frequency	Percentages
Age (year)		
≤ 30	10	8.3
31-45	20	16.7
46-55	35	29.2
above 55	55	45.8
Sex		
Male	98	81.7
Female	22	18.3
Education attainment		
No formal education	72	60.0
Primary school education	34	28.3
Secondary school education	14	11.7
Social Participation		
Religions group	77	64.2
Farmers cooperative society	43	35.8
Awareness		
Yes	120	100
No	-	-
Contact		
Full contact	24	20.0
Partial contact	7	5.8
No contact	89	74.2

Source: Field survey, 2004

Table 2: Distribution of respondent by existing TCM

Medium of Communication	Percentages* (%)
Cultural activities/festivals	18.0
Religious centers	14.00
Cooperative society	58.0
Agriculture based festivals	62.0
Age grade clubs	12.0
Traditional drums/talk drums	22.2
Community elders	56.0
Town criers	56.0
Folk tales or plays	27.0
Oral Literature/poems (Ewi)	19.0
Praise singer	22.0
Social clubs	28.0
Traditional meetings	58.0
Discussion groups	68.0
Contact/local leaders	18.0
Village square	54.0
Visits	59.0
Non-verbal signals	11.0
Relations	73.0
Community schools	8.0

Source: Field survey, 2004. \*Multiple responses were recorded

Table 3: Commonly used (TCM)

Medium of communication	Percentages* (%)
Town criers	76.0
Market places	64.0
Friends and labour	76.0
Community Elders	56.0
Cooperative society	58.0
Agricultures based festival	62.0
Traditional meetings	58.0
Discussion groups	58.0
Village square	54
Visits	59
Relation	73.0

Source: field survey, 2004, multiple responses were recorded

Table 4 revealed the effectiveness of TCM in innovation dissemination. From the table, market places friends and neighbour, community leader, cooperative society, agriculture- based- festival, traditional meetings, discussion groups, village squares, visits and relations were effective TCM. By implication these TCM may have led to adoption of innovations in the study area. There is the tendency in each case of the TCM to foster mutual interaction directly or indirectly which often serve as impetus for diffusion of innovation. However, cultural activity/festival, non verbal signals and community schools were not effective probably because of the inherent associated problems such as different culture, different interpretations to non verbal signal and literacy level of farmers thus presenting them as inappropriate media for innovation dissemination. From Table 5, the null hypothesis was rejected. It was thus concluded that a significant relationship existed between farmers' perception of TCM and effectiveness of TCM. As illustrated in Table 6, a significant relationship was established between effectiveness of TCM and such variables like farmers' level of educational and social cultural life of farmers.

Table 4: Effectiveness of TCM

Effective TCM	%*	Less effective TCM	%	Not effective TCM	%
Town crier	78.0	Religious centers	50.0	Cultural activities/ festival	50.0
Market places	67.0	Traditional/talking drums	56.0	Non-verbal signal	55.0
Friends and labour	78.0	Oral literature/poem Ewi)	54.0	Community school	70.0
Community Elders	56.0	Praise singer	65.0		
Cooperative society	60.0	Contact farmers/local leaders	69.0		
Agriculture-based- festival	65.0				
Traditional meetings	57.0				
Discussion groups	69.0				
Village square meetings	58.0				
Visits	59.0				
Relation	76.0				

Source: field survey 2004, \*Multiple responses were recorded.

Table 5: Summary of Chi-square test between effectiveness of TCM and farmers' perception of TCM.

Variable	d.f	$\chi^2$ cal.	$\chi^2$ tab.	Decision
Farmers' Perception	1	28.16	3.89	S

$\alpha = 0.05$ , level of significant, S = Significant, d.f = degree of freedom.

Table 8: Summary of Chi-square test between effectiveness of TCM and selected farmers' characteristics

Variables	d.f	$\chi^2_{cal.}$	$\chi^2_{tab.}$	Decision
Farmers level of education	3	95.8	7.8	S
Farmers' socio-cultural lifestyle	4	49.9	9.5	S

$\alpha = 0.05$ , Level of significant, S = Significant, d.f = degree of freedom.

#### CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The use of traditional communication media, TCM has been found to be in conformity with the socio-cultural life and literacy level of farmers. Hence, they have been perceived by rural farmers as useful and effective in dissemination of innovation. The implication of these findings is that traditional communication media are very accessible, relevant and effective at rural farmers' level. Based on the findings, the study therefore recommends the following:

- i) Traditional communication Media such as town crier, market places, friends and neighbors, community leads, cooperative society, agriculture-based festival, traditional meetings discussion group, village square, visit and relations should be integrated into innovation delivery system to facilitate full adoption.
- ii) Traditional communication media should form part of the innovation package to encourage adoption.
- iii) Traditional communication media should be the medium used in the disseminating innovation to rural farmers for their preference by farmers which are capable of stimulating their interest toward adoption.
- iv) Traditional communication Media are best be used to communicate innovation to all categories of Farmers for they are capable of removing socio-cultural barriers.

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