



**Assessing Pidgin English as a Development Communication for Rural Communities  
in Delta State: A Study of the Delta State Broadcasting Service (DBS) Radio**

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**Abstract**

*This study investigated the influence of Pidgin English on Development Communication programmes by the Delta State Broadcasting Services (DBS) radio, Warri, Delta State. In order to provide answers to the objectives of the study, a sample of 198 well-structured copies of questionnaire were administered on rural dwellers on randomly selected communities in Delta State. Findings revealed that there are several types of content that were peculiar and common on the Pidgin language programme on the radio station. These include issues surrounding economy and business, agriculture, music, social issues, etc. Findings also showed that the extent to which respondents preferred this type of language high and moderate. Finally, findings indicated that the use of Pidgin English on any of the radio programmes was capable of influencing socio-economic and political development in the rural communities under study. In all, the finding that indigenous language like Pidgin English could be potentially used to facilitate human and community development suggests that Western approaches to development in developing countries continues to be untenable. Among other recommendations, it was suggested that broadcasting stations should encourage more usage of Pidgin English language programmes in the schedules to encourage participation and ensure an all-inclusive communication process.*

**Keywords:** Development communication, Pidgin English, Radio, Rural communities

**1. Introduction**

The essence of the mass media is for development communication especially in the rural areas. The broadcast media for example have developed programmes targeted at the rural communities without the appropriate vehicles (languages). Though, all the local languages cannot be accounted for because of their multiplicity, but, there is a language that virtually everybody understands in Nigeria, that is Pidgin English. Once considered the language of the uneducated, Pidgin is one of the world's fastest evolving languages, and Nigerians of every age and social class can now be found greeting each other in its clipped, concise tones.

On this, Elugbe and Omamor note:

*The burden of communication was on Nigerians. They set pace. ...are reluctant to learn the English language. They however put words on the structure of the native languages which mostly exist in the oral medium,*



*hence, pidgin flourished in oracy, making spelling and the written grammar a non-issue (1991, p. 10).*

In addition, scholars have researched into the sound system of the Nigerian Pidgin English. They found out that the sketchy nature of their explications is partially linked to unavailability of empirical evidence alongside the fast developmental trend of the language or the multiplicity of regional and ethnical variation (Elugbe & Omamor, 1991; Mafeni, 1971; Oyebade, 1983). Besides, Ekpeyong (2010) opines that simplification, which is the hallmark of communication, is an important feature of *Pidginisation*. This makes Pidgin English inevitable as a vehicle for development communication. According to Akande (2008, p. 38), 'there is a sense in which pidgin could be regarded as a marker of identity and solidarity.' Pidgin English has assumed a significant role in communication in Nigeria, especially between and among ethnic groups that do not share common language (Ehondor, 2020). It has also acquired some status that emanates from the roles that it plays in Nigerian society. Ehondor (2020) highlights the importance of Pidgin English when she maintained that the language enhances the propagation of national ideas, socio-cultural, linguistic and political developments as well as peace and unity in the country since it is the only language that both the educated and uneducated, irrespective of their ethnic affinities, can identify with.

Communication is an integral part of human existence; the language of communication is by no means less important. Little wonder, Stockwell (2002) opines that, where two or more communities come in contact, a lingua franca or common language of communication emerges. Pidgin English has a far much larger number of speakers than what has been referred to by Bamgbose (as cited in Abdullahi-Idiagbon, 2007), as "Standard Nigerian English". It is a language that cut across other ethnic languages. This is perhaps why Ehondor (2020) notes that there have been several calls for the Nigerian Pidgin English to be used as national language which should be used to facilitate peace and effective communication in the country.

This study examines the importance of Pidgin English as a development communication for rural communities' development in Delta State using the radio arm of the Delta State Broadcasting Services (DBS), Warri. The major ethnic groups in Delta State are Urhobo, Igbo, Izon, Isoko and Itsekiri. Many of these people claim a common ancestry; consequently, their cultures are similar. These similarities are manifested in their religious worship, music, dance, festivals, art and crafts. Despite the similarities highlighted, the ethnic groups have distinctive uniqueness in their respective languages and the way they communicate. The complexities in the ethnic composition of the people of the state give the Pidgin English, the 'unofficial mainstream language' superiority in inter-personal communication. This is reflected in a number of radio programmes aired on the Delta State Broadcasting Services (DBS). For example, "Naso We See Am", a long standing Pidgin English programme discusses political issues, social and human interest and other topical issues. The programme airs between 8am-10am on Saturdays. Another popular Pidgin English programme is tagged "Matter for Ground". The programme which focuses on



issues of general interests airs between 2pm-3pm every Wednesday. These programmes are considered valuable because they are target issues that address human challenges within the socio-political and economic structure. Such programmes are also perceived to raise the consciousness of the listeners towards the issues discussed.

However, it should also be noted that messages on the radio which are often transmitted in local languages tend to be well received by the target audience and appear to give the people a sense of belonging on several matters of public discourse. Nevertheless, the need for effective intercultural communication across these groups makes it necessary for the continual usage of Pidgin English across communities in the area. Findings from previous studies have accounted for the adoption of Pidgin English in the area of study. For example, one study reported that the mixed population (coexistence of neighbouring ethnic groups [Urhobo, Ijaw, Isoko, Igbo, Edo, etc]), mixed marriages and the cosmopolitan structure of Warri, Sapele, and its environs were all responsible for why Pidgin English is a more preferred means of communication (Ayenbi, 2014).

The popular adoption of radio as a veritable tool for mass grassroots mobilization makes the usage of Pidgin English indispensable for an effective dissemination of development information to the rural dwellers. Related evidences have highlighted the significance of the use of Pidgin English as a tool for human development (e.g., Motanya, 2017; Ojo & Ogunjimi, 2020). As an example, Motanya (2017) highlighted the possibility of using Nigerian Pidgin as a means of human development among members of the entertainment industry in Nigeria. While a number of these studies have looked at how Pidgin English could be employed to improve people's experiences, there is a dearth of knowledge with regards to how such communication could facilitate socio-political and economic development in rural communities.

It is against this backdrop that the researcher wants to investigate the importance of Pidgin English in disseminating development information in rural communities. This study, therefore, seeks to carry out an investigation into the influence of Pidgin English in Development Communication programmes by the Delta State Broadcasting Services (DBS) radio. The study among other things seeks to determine the kinds of development communication programmes listened to by rural community members. To examine the extent to which Pidgin English is preferred as a medium of communication for development in rural communities. To determine the perceived potential of Pidgin English usage in influencing socio-economic and political development in the rural community.

## **2. Literature Review**

### *Conceptual Review*

Nigerian pidgin is a term used to denote an English based pidgin; a marginal language used among Nigerians to facilitate communication needs in certain interactive contexts. Nigerian Pidgin has undergone a lot of modifications and re-modifications over the years by drawing its rich lexicons from various Nigerian indigenous languages as well as the contact language (English). The historical contact of the indigenous languages with English



language has metamorphosed into what we know today as Nigerian Pidgin. The unique and creative potential of the Nigerian Pidgin to create from a finite set of lexical items have continued to bring about effective intercultural communication process among Nigerians (Aboh & Ononye, 2019). It has also caused mutual interest and understanding between indigenous citizens and foreigners since it can be understood easily.

Usually, the absence of a common language of communication necessitated the creation and continual usage of Nigerian Pidgin English. Little wonder, Hudson (1982) sees Pidgin as “varieties created for very practical and immediate purpose of communication between people who otherwise would have no common language whatsoever”. Todd and Donnell (1991, p. 1) seem to agree with this view in their description of Pidgin as “a marginal language which arises to fulfill certain communication needs among people who have no common language.”

Although, linguistic scholars have not been able to reach a consensus on one generally accepted definition of pidgin, but one idea that runs through most of the definitions put forward is that Pidgin cannot be fully defined without a reference to its origin. The origin of Nigerian Pidgin English can be traced back to the contacts between European and Nigerians. In the analysis of Elugbe (1995, p. 285), “Nigerian Pidgin arose from the contact between multilingual coastal communities of Nigeria and the visiting European explorers/traders – first, the Portuguese, then, briefly the Dutch and finally, the English.”

Owing to this contact, there was an immediate need to communicate in a common language. A Portuguese Pidgin was developed initially before it was replaced by a pidgin which was English based (Pidgin English) and spoken till today. Jowitt (2000:13) opines that Nigerian Pidgin undoubtedly originated and developed its standard forms during the period of 300 years that elapsed between the sixteenth and nineteenth centuries. Its vocabularies are drawn from English, with Portuguese probably the source of such common words as ‘dash’, ‘palavar’ and ‘sabby’ (or ‘sabi’).

The European emissaries, especially the English were probably not interested in learning local Nigerian languages. This could be as a result of their pride or simply because of the diversities in local Nigerian languages. The English lord their language over Nigerians. Nigerians had to accommodate the English language by resorting to some ‘makeshift’ form of English (Elugbe, 1995). Jowitt (2000:13) also buttresses this in his assertion that the Nigerian Pidgin “served as a language of communication for trade between Englishmen and Nigerians living along the Nigerian coast and Pidgin was used because it could be learned easily by both races.”

The peculiar usage of Nigerian Pidgin as a first or second language is common among the people of Delta, Rivers and Edo states of Nigeria where it is predominantly used among the speakers for communication needs. Nigerian Pidgin English is also spoken in other parts of Nigeria. It is a language that unifies the Nigerian socio-linguistic and ethnic differences.



More so, Jubril (1995) as cited in Elugbe (1995:293) hints thus:

*Today, the function of Nigerian Pidgin has become more extensive. Apart from expanding its territorial spreads as a lingua franca on ethnically heterogeneous areas..., is now used in radio and television broadcast and in poetry and drama.*

Some academics have even adopted Nigerian Pidgin English in their works. One of such renowned scholars, Professor Tunde Fatunde who writes plays in Pidgin has this to say: "Nigerian Pidgin is the only language possessed in common by all..." (Fatunde, 1996:243). This probably explains why many writers have had to do works in Pidgin, thus depicting the popularity and wide usage of the language as a medium of communication in Nigeria and across West Africa. Other renowned scholars that have written classical books in Nigerian Pidgin English are Aig-Imouekhuede, Amos Tutuola, Ezenwa Ohaeto, Edwin Oribhabor and Ken SaroWiwa to mention but just a few.

It goes without saying that the Nigerian Pidgin English is a language on its own right. What makes it stand out among all other languages is its congenital nature – in terms of grammar, tense and aspect of formation: it resembles African tone languages. This explains why it is spoken and understood with ease in most African countries. This particular quality of pidgin makes communication in it more effective, especially in an illiterate and semi-literate area. Besides, from the increasing usage of Pidgin English for jokes, humours, cartoons to its usage in literature, news cast, public enlightenment programmes, it is obvious that it can no longer be referred to as the language of people with lower social status and 'unskilled labourers as described by Agheyisi (1971:30).

The above underscores the importance of Pidgin English in communication; development communication in particular. In the market places, almost every illiterate market woman in the South-South and South-East of Nigeria speak it fluently. About 80 percent of illiterate market women in the South-West now speak it, and it is the fastest growing in that region. Not less than 50 percent of illiterate market women in the North-West, North-Central and North-East of Nigeria also speak pidgin (Alabi, 2012). Since development communication is an attempt to influence the people to accept new ideas, to win citizens for new ways of doing things, its success depends on the quality of persuasion and the type of change the citizens are persuaded to accept. That is why Laninhun (2003:83) advises thus: "development communicators should, therefore, adopt a persuasive language and as much as possible, use the language of target audience."

Language experts say that the Nigerian Pidgin had, for a long time, been viewed as an effective medium of unhindered self-expression in inter-personal communication. According to Azubuike (2013), Pidgin is a second language for another 75 million Nigerians. Azubuike posits that Nigerian Pidgin is derived partly from the Edo-Delta area of the country, but varies among the speakers. He also claims that dialects of Pidgin exist, including that of Warri, Sapele, Benin, Port-Harcourt, Lagos especially in Ajegunle, and



Onitsha, noting that Pidgin has gained more popularity for dealings in the nation's socio-economic activities.

Radio is an effective tool for development communication. From the market women, artisans, drivers, farmers, teachers, students, roving nomad, to the fishermen on the creeks in the Niger Delta, radio has become a common place for information, entertainment and education. Almost immediately it appeared in Nigeria, radio became a veritable tool for propaganda and mass mobilization in the hands of the governments and non-governmental organisations. This development may not be unconnected with the unique qualities of radio that endeared it to development practitioners. Radio is cheap both to transmit and receive signals; it is easy to operate; it cuts across literacy barrier; it is portable; and it can be easily powered with battery, therefore, non-availability of electricity is no barrier. Radio also reaches very far into remote places where there is no access to other mass media.

Despite the aforementioned qualities of radio, one factor that could mar the success of any radio broadcast is the wrong selection of language in the content. Even Ojebode (2003, p. 90) confirms this when he said "the ability to hold audience while the development news bulletins lasts is often elusive to the news programmer and reader". For the listeners' attention to be sustained the programmer has to speak in the language the audience understand or they would turn off the radio or simply switch stations.

The information dispersing and the enlightenment role of radio is the commonest of its functions. Radio disseminates information to people about health, agriculture, education, economy, road safety, amongst other issues of development. According to Ojebode (2003, p. 93), "the common formats used are lectures (or straight talk), news, entertainment, especially drama, discussion and jingles". Mohanty (1994) passionately holds that radio broadens the mental horizons of the listeners. Through its news dissemination and education, radio 'transports' people from their obscure corners of the world into anywhere anything considered newsworthy is taking place. When radio focuses its searchlight on an issue, a person, place or thing, no matter how strange such may be to the listener, (it, he or she) as from that moment on, starts to fall within the listener's frame of reference (Ojebode, 2003). Development, as we know, is beyond infrastructure, financial buoyancy or 'modernization'. It is all about what in Iwayemi (2001)'s summation is an overall improvement in the total quality of life of the people. This means that personal intellectual development is very important in development.

In another dimension, the mobilizing ability of radio cannot be over emphasized. It has been a veritable medium in mobilizing the people to support development programmes like campaign against polio, HIV/AIDS, family planning, adult education and a host of others. In addition to this, radio can be the unifying factor of a nation (Matelski, 1993). This function of the radio becomes more necessary now that the issue of militancy, terrorism and political interests are threatening the continued existence of Nigeria. Ojebode (2003) believes that radio helps engender the evolution of a bottom-up agenda setting. Calling-in programmes and that which makes provision for grassroots to actively take part in



programme production in their natural setting are the peak of participatory vis-à-vis development communication.

#### *Empirical Review*

Tsegyu and Asemah (2013) examined the perception of the public on the role of rural broadcasting in sustainable development in Nigeria. A survey research design was adopted to address the objective of the study. Data were elicited among adults in Lapai LGA of Niger State. Results showed that rural broadcasting played an important role in communicating development messages to the people in the rural communities; findings further showed that rural broadcastings provides information on health, education, government programmes, and agricultural related issues. While these findings have identified the important role of development communication as well as the kinds of development communication programmes that are provided in the community under study, they have not looked at how specific languages could assist in promoting community development. The present study attempts to fill this gap.

Also, Gana (2007) carried out a study among university lecturers with an attempt to find out if highly educated Nigerians also speak Pidgin English, and if they do, to whom do they speak it and where? The findings from this study concluded that university lecturers speak Nigerian Pidgin, not only to uneducated Nigerians, but also among themselves and even in the classroom occasionally to get the attention of their students. This work also revealed the fact that Nigerian Pidgin is not only the language of people from the Niger Delta Region of Nigeria as many believe, but a language spread across different states of the nation.

Onjewua and Okpe (2015) investigated the preference for pidgin instead of Standard English by students of English as a foreign language. The study adopted a survey approach to elicit data from students in a Nigerian institution. Findings showed that many of the students in the sample preferred the use of Pidgin English especially in areas outside the formal school settings. These studies on the extent of Pidgin English usage have shown that many people prefer the use of the language within formal and informal settings. These highlighted its significance in different settings. Nonetheless, there is dearth of knowledge with regards to the extent to which people in rural communities appreciate its use on radio programmes. The present study therefore attempts to fill this gap by examining the extent to which radio listeners in Delta communities appreciate the use of Pidgin English as a means of communication on radio.

Furthermore, Al-hassan et al. (2011) focused on the influence Simli Radio to the livelihood improvement of the people in the Tolon-Kumbungi and Savelugu-Nanton Districts of the Northern Region of Ghana. Using a multi-stage sampling approach to elicit data from respondents, the authors reported that the radio programme impacted positively on community members' awareness and knowledge of solutions capable of influencing development. In economic terms, the study found that the radio programme had been successful in promoting SMEs (Small and Medium Enterprises) operators as well as



improving sales and income. Also, Fombad and Jiyane (2016) employed a case-study design to investigate the role of community radio stations in chosen areas of the KwaZulu Natal Province of South Africa with reference to rural development and information dissemination among rural women. Findings revealed that despite being perceived as a support structure for information sharing in rural communities, the impact of information dissemination towards community development initiatives among women is largely unknown. Shahzalal and Hassan (2019) attempted to underscore the role of communication programme about sustainability on rural development among 300 community radio listeners in Bangladesh. Following analysis of data, results showed that peculiar media characteristics of community radio positively improved acceptability of communications regarding sustainability.

So far, findings from studies on the potential impact of Pidgin English usage in influencing development in communities have been mixed. While some studies have identified the potential of communication media programmes in improving actual development in rural communities, one study could not ascertain such effect in their sample. As a result, the study attempts to add to or extend previous knowledge by showing how such potential might be uniquely perceived in our current sample.

#### *Theoretical Review*

The study is anchored on Development communication theory. Development communication theory is a social process designed to seek a common understanding or consensus among all the participants of a development initiative, and leading to joint action. This implies that development communication must take into account the perspective of the people in the social system.

According to Schramm (1979, p.1) as cited in Baran (2002), development communication will be “the local area, local activity, local decision making, a two-way, horizontal, not a one-way communication.” As a result of transformations taking place around the world in this 21st century, the view of development has shifted from one of imposing Western ideas onto underdeveloped nations to looking at the processes of participatory efforts by local people as the key to achieving social change.

When development communication is conveyed in the language the targets are not at home with, they despise the message and treat the conveyors with hostility. This is why development communication agents and scholars have been very particular about the vehicle (language) of development messages. In relation to the concept under study, any development information should be passed in the language that that majority of the targets understand in order to ensure an effective communication. Any communication media that wish to succeed in Delta state must ensure that there are enough Pidgin programmes to get popular acceptability amongst the populace.

Going by the pervasiveness in the usage of Pidgin English in Delta State and the passion for it by its speakers, it goes without saying that the determinant of media patronage might be premised on whether or not a medium speaks their *cherished* language. This behooves





communicators, development communicators especially, to use the language the people love when communicating for development purposes so that their target would be totally integrated into the objectives of such messages.

**3. Methodology**

The survey method was used to ascertain the pulses and agitations of the target audience (*ruralites*) of Pidgin English programmes. The unanimous adoption of radio as a veritable tool for mass grassroots mobilization makes the usage of Nigerian Pidgin English absolutely necessary for an effective dissemination of development information to the rural dwellers. Questionnaire was the instrument for data collection. The total population The sample size for this study is 196. With 95 percent level of confidence (confidence interval - ± 10%), an estimated level of development communication at 50% (.5) and a permitted margin of error at .07 (7 percentage points), the researcher determined the said sample size for the study with the Cochran (1963, p. 75) Equation ‘1’ which yields a representative sample for population that are large and it is as follows:

$$n = \frac{[Z]^2(p q)}{e^2} \dots\dots\dots 1$$

$$n = \frac{[Z]^2(p)(1-p)}{e^2} \dots\dots\dots 2$$

Where: n= sample size, Z<sup>2</sup>= confidence level, p= rate of occurrence or prevalence (the estimated proportion of an attribute that is present in a population), q= complement of p and e= margin of error.

$$n = \frac{[1.96]^2 \times 0.5(1-0.5)}{0.07^2} \dots\dots\dots 3$$

$$n = \frac{3.8416 (0.25)}{0.0049} = 196 \dots\dots\dots 4$$

Respondents were randomly selected from across the rural communities in five selected Local Government Areas in Delta State. The selected Local Governments Areas include Oshimili North, Ethiope west, Sapele, Uvwie and Warri North. The total population of the entire areas selected was 1,003992 according to the National Population Commission (2010). The population includes all adult men males and females in study areas. The DBS radio Pidgin English broadcast covers all the areas of focus in the study. A multi-stage random sampling was employed during the sampling. This is a three stage sampling method. First, a systematic sampling was used to select five local governments from the 25 local government areas in Delta State. Since the focus of the study was on only the rural dwellers, the rural areas in the randomly selected five local government areas were clustered into rural and urban, and the same simple random technique was repeated to finally select the streets and respondents proper. The questionnaire was administered by the help of ten (10) research assistants, each was given 20 copies of the questionnaire. The questionnaire was used to collect relevant data from the respondents drawn from randomly selected rural communities in Delta state. Descriptive and inferential statistics were used in



analyzing data. Mean and standard deviation was employed to describe data on the key research objectives that were raised in the study.

#### 4. Results

A total of 196 respondents were randomly selected from across the rural communities in five selected Local Government Areas in Delta State. However, 192 copies of the questionnaire were completely returned. This represented 98% of the questionnaire administered. Findings obtained from the study's objectives are presented as follows.

Objective1: Determine the kinds of development communication programmes listened to in Pidgin English by rural community members

Table 1: kinds of development communication programmes listened to in Pidgin English

Kinds of Programmes listened to	Programme Title		P
	"Naso We See Am" n(%)	"Matter for Ground"n(%)	
Politics	172(89.6)	56(29.2)	.061
Agriculture	111(57.8)	98(51.0)	.071
Economy and businesses	123(64.1)	99(51.6)	.070
Music	62(32.3)	89(46.4)	.561
Religion	44(22.9)	65(33.9)	.881
Health	77(40.1)	128(66.7)	.092
Environment	98(51.0)	89(46.4)	.065
Social issues	133(69.3)	120(62.5)	.932

Source: Authors' Computation

Data in Table 1 shows the kinds of development communication programmes listened to in Pidgin English by rural community members in the study area. As shown in the table, respondents listened to more of political contents on "Naso We See Am" relative to "Matter for Ground." Programmes or contents agriculture, economy and business, environment and social issues were more listened to on "Naso We See Am" relative to "Matter for Ground." On the other hand, more respondents listened to health and musical issues on "Matter for Ground" compared to "Naso We See Am". Across each of the programmes an Independent Chi-square analysis was performed and result showed that there were no significant differences between the Pidgin language programmes under study. A further observation of the table is an indication that there are several types of contents that were peculiar and common on the Pidgin language programme on the radio station.



Objective2: Examine the extent to which Pidgin English is preferred as a medium of communication for development in rural communities

Table 2: the extent to which Pidgin English is preferred as a medium of communication for development in rural communities

Extent to which Pidgin English is preferred	Programme Title	
	“Naso We See Am” n(%)	“Matter for Ground” n(%)
High	73(38.0)	92(47.9)
Moderate	88(45.8)	73(38.8)
Low	8(4.2)	18(9.4)
None	23(12.0)	9(4.7)
Total	192(100)	192(100)

Source: Authors’ Computation

Information in Table 2 shows the extent to which Pidgin English is preferred as a medium of communication for development in rural communities. Comparing scores from both Pidgin language programmes, it could be revealed that the extent to which respondents preferred this type of language high and moderate. Very few proportion of respondents reported that Pidgin English is less preferred.

Objective 3: Determine the perceived potential of Pidgin English usage in influencing socio-economic and political development in the rural community

Table 3.the perceived potential of Pidgin English usage in influencing socio-economic and political development in the rural community

Items	SD	D	A	SA
I think the use of Pidgin English on any of the radio programmes makes it possible for me to be informed and participate in politics	12(6.3)	34(17.7)	92(47.9)	54(28.1)
I think the use of Pidgin English on any of the radio programmes makes it possible for me to know about business and how to avoid being lazy	15(7.8)	22(11.5)	66(34.4)	82(42.7)
I think the use of Pidgin English on any of the radio programmes makes it possible for me to know about what is happening in my environment and to take precautions	17(8.6)	21(10.9)	86(44.8)	68(35.4)
I think the use of Pidgin English on any of the radio programmes makes it possible for me to know more about health issues and how to prevent disease	23(12.0)	11(5.7)	90(46.9)	68(35.4)
The use of Pidgin English on any of the radio programmes keeps me entertained and keeps me in a right frame of mind	19(9.9)	26(13.5)	54(28.1)	93(48.4)

Source: Authors’ Computation

Note. SD=Strongly Disagree, D= Disagree, A= Agree, SA= Strongly Agree

Data in Table 3 present the perceived potential of Pidgin English usage in influencing socio-economic and political development in the rural community. According to the table,



the potentiality of Pidgin English to facilitate development communication across rural communities was highlighted by many of the respondents. As an example, a majority of the respondents (76.0%) either 'agree' or 'strongly agree' that the use of Pidgin English on any of the radio programmes makes it possible for me to be informed and participate in politics. The same response pattern was observed across all the items in the table. The findings are an indication that the use of Pidgin English on any of the radio programmes is capable of influencing socio-economic and political development in the rural communities under study.

#### *Discussion of Findings*

This study seeks to carry out an investigation into the influence of Pidgin English in Development Communication programmes by the Delta State Broadcasting Services (DBS) radio. Three major findings were observed. First, results revealed that there are several types of contents that were peculiar and common on the Pidgin language programme on the radio station. These include issues surrounding economy and business, agriculture, music, social issues, etc. these findings are consistent with previous studies such as that of Mu-azu and Shivram (2017) which noted that similar development programmes were found in the contents of radio programmes in some Ghanaian communities. The findings from the present study did not only add to knowledge of development communication in a different setting, it offers new insight into how a local language that has the capacity to disseminate different types of information in communities that highly differentiated.

Second, the findings from the present study indicate that that the extent to which respondents preferred this type of language high and moderate. Very few proportion of respondents reported that Pidgin English is less preferred. These results corroborate findings from previous researches (Gana, 2007; Onjewua & Okpe (2015) which revealed that Pidgin is widely preferred in both formal and informal settings. Put together, these findings point to the reality that Pidgin English is preferred by many. And such general position might be explained by Ayenbi (2014). According to the author, the mixed population, mixed marriages, cosmopolitan structure of towns and cities might account for why Pidgin is generally preferred. Finally, findings from the third objective of the study indicated that the use of Pidgin English on any of the radio programmes was capable of influencing socio-economic and political development in the rural communities under study. The findings are consistent with results from extant studies (e.g., Al-hassan et al., 2011; Shahzalal & Hassan, 2019). On the other hand, our findings oppose those of

Fombad and Jiyane (2016), which failed to conclude that developmental communication actually influences development of people in rural communities. Our findings extends previous studies highlighted because they point at the potentiality of Pidgin language in facilitating actual development. Put together, the current findings highlight the significance of Pidgin English in radio broadcasting. The findings could also provide important insights for community interventions and stakeholders within the media industry as they attempt to use radio as a medium for transforming communities. The use of Pidgin English could be



appropriately employed in initiating such interventions. The findings finally confirm some of the pillars of the development communication theory which the present study hinged. As an example, the finding that indigenous language like Pidgin English could be potentially used to facilitate human and community development suggests that Western approaches to development in developing countries continues to be untenable.

### **5. Conclusion and Recommendations**

Language is the vehicle of communication. In a situation where two or more persons who have different languages come together for the purpose of communication, there would always be communication failure. In Nigeria, for instance, where there are hundreds of languages, the absence of a common language necessitated the popularization of Pidgin English; which itself arose from the contact between multilingual coastal communities of Nigeria and the visiting European explorers/traders. This study was set out to probe how well the radio arm of Delta Broadcasting Station had used the most popular and unifying language (Pidgin English) in transmission and the attendant results on their audience. The study revealed that much importance had not been attached to Pidgin English programmes by the grassroots broadcasting house for rural communities' development.

Arising from the findings, the following recommendations were made for effective broadcast of development communication programmes of radio and television for rural communities. Broadcasting stations should encourage more usage of Pidgin English language programmes in the schedules to encourage participation and ensure an all-inclusive communication process. Also, the people should be consulted on a regular basis to know the language that suits them best in the transmission of development messages; this gives the people the opportunity to decide on their own instead of imposition of what the programme planners thought are best.

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