

Research article

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Halima Ibrahim Musa, Joan Tirwyn Hassan

Academy Public Relations Department, Nigerian Defence Academy, Kaduna, Nigeria

Department of Mass Communication, Kaduna State University, Nigeria

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Assessment of the Nature of Communication Between Kaduna State Government and its Residents in Disseminating Urban Renewal Messages

HALIMA IBRAHIM MUSA

Academy Public Relations Department,
Nigerian Defense Academy,
Kaduna, Nigeria
Email: musaibrahimhalima@gmail.com

JOAN TIRWYN HASSAN

Department of Mass Communication,
Kaduna State University,
Email: joanhassan1007@gmail.com

Abstract

Communication is multifaced; it can be vertical, transactional, two-way or participatory, depending on the actors and the context. It is invaluable to the success of any institution be it family, organizations, socio-economic and political spheres. The success of any state or nation, lies on its ability to communicate its functions and policies to its relevant publics and stakeholders with an avenue for feedback. The nature of communication matters in assessing the efficacy of the communication act between and among the parties involved. It is against this philosophical view this paper explores the nature of communication between the Kaduna State government and its residents in the dissemination of messages on its Urban Renewal Project. Survey Method and In-depth Interview were adopted with a total of 400 copies of questionnaire administered to residents of the State using Multistage Cluster Sampling Technique. The Interview was conducted with Communication experts of the various components of the Urban Renewal Project. The study found the nature of communication between the government and the residents as a two-way traffic with the residents fully aware and engage with the various communication tools adopted by the state in disseminating these messages through various media platforms including radio, social media handles, and face-to-face enlightenment, amongst others. The study recommends the need for Kaduna State government to expand the avenues for



participatory communication to enhance citizen's engagement, which would in turn create more awareness on developmental projects.

Keywords: Communication, Nature, Urban Renewal, Kaduna, Nigeria.

Introduction

Communication is the key to successful interaction and a vital tool for exchanging ideas and fostering understanding and collaboration. Establishing an adequate information flow between the Government and its citizens is crucial. The Government should listen to the needs of its citizens and acknowledge its shortcomings in meeting citizens' expectations. This commitment fosters transparency within the Government (Adeyemi, 2011).

Communication can take various approaches, such as participatory, horizontal, or vertical (Theophilus, 2022). It can be two-way, upward, downward, transactional, or conversational (Kumar, 2023). Good Communication provides an avenue through which the government can inform the citizens of specific roles to achieve the administration's aims and objectives for the betterment of the citizens and society.

According to a World Bank-sponsored article published in ComGap in 2009, the Government's three primary communication functions are informing, advocating or persuading for policies and reforms, and engaging citizens. These communication functions are responsible for improving effectiveness, building broad support and legitimacy for programs; responsiveness, knowing citizens' needs and responding to them; and accountability which involves explaining government stewardship and providing mechanisms to hold governments accountable. Communication also helps update the citizens on the Government's activities, allowing them to voice their opinions on its policies and achievements. This goes a long way in determining how the citizens will perceive the Government, which can be effectively achieved through the mass media (Selano & Kep, 2023).

Relatedly, the World Bank's 2009 ComGap report on enhancing the quality of the public sphere notes that good governance is distinguished by state capability, responsiveness, and accountability, with Communication playing a pivotal role. Consistent Communication can impact policy and reforms, coordinate inter and intragovernmental relations, and lead to an efficient and effective governance system. However, many countries lack effective Communication with the public and do not adopt the right communication strategy.

Thus, beyond just communicating with the people, the nature of the Communication goes a long way in determining the efficacy of the Communication between the Government and the people and the multiplier effect on governance, further strengthening and solidifying the relationship between the Government and the people they serve. The nature of Communication, whether participatory, vertical, two-way, transactional, conversational, or participatory, has varying impacts and produces different effects on the recipients and the overall efficacy of the communicative act.



Against this backdrop, this article explores the nature of Communication between the Kaduna State government and its residents regarding the communication messages designed and disseminated for the implementation of the State Urban Renewal Project.

The Urban Renewal Project is the brainchild of the immediate past Governor of Kaduna State, Nigeria, Nasir El-Rufai. Its aim is to rebrand and transform the State, and this idea stems from the administration's 2015 campaign manifesto. The Urban Renewal Project initiative is segmented into distinct components: roads, Mass Transit, Housing and enhanced land use, Street Lights, Parks and Recreational Centers, Markets and Neighborhood Centers, and Waste Management. Different bodies are responsible for implementing the plan in accordance with the Kaduna Infrastructure Master Plan (KADIMP). The State's Master Plan was first published in 1967 and updated in 2010 to provide a suitable environment for residents (KDGS, 2019).

In the realm of public policy, effective Communication serves as a crucial instrument in realizing policy objectives. The ongoing emphasis on transparency and proactive public policy communications remains essential in the current working agendas of many developing countries' governments. In the Central Region of Vietnam, public policy communications exhibit distinctive features influenced by unpredictable patterns of policy adoption, geographical distance, and economic disparities compared to the capital city, Hanoi.

Studies across different countries revealed a correlation between the nature of Communication and the success of government-funded projects and programs. For example, a study by Aji, Tsuroyya, and Dewi (2017) explored bridging Communication between the public and Government with a focus on Kelompok Informasi Masyarakat (KIM) Surabaya, which found that KIM contributes to the two-way exchange of information. Its role includes disseminating programs and forwarding complaints and suggestions from the public to the Government while recommending the utilization of various channels in communicating with the public.

Similarly, a 2013 study on citizens' participation and technology by the National Democratic Institute, conducted across seven countries, revealed that Communication and media can effectively establish platforms and opportunities for citizens to voice their opinions, noting that a deficiency in both political will and technical capacity in numerous democracies hinder efforts to engage citizens in policy-making or furnish them with precise data on government performance. Communication is therefore important in development.

Just as effective communication tools are instrumental in achieving government policies, inadequate communication can significantly disrupt their effectiveness (Canel and Sanders, 2013). Exploring and examining the nature of Communication between policy makers and the people in the implementation of public policies, projects, programs, and reforms is essential to the success of the project.



Statement of Problem

There have been studies and public analysis on the Urban Renewal Projects of the Kaduna State government from different perspectives such as infrastructure, development, socio-economic and political angles. However, an extant literature search on the subject returned no article from the angle of Communication and media.

The nature of Communication plays significant role in the implementation of government policies, projects and programmes. While there are existing studies on the role of Communication in project implementation for development in various countries, there is a notable absence of such research with a focus on Kaduna State. This paper, therefore, looks into the nature of Communication adopted in disseminating messages on the Urban Renewal Project of Kaduna State Government with a view to ascertaining how this impacts the Urban Renewal Project.

Literature Review

Understanding Urban Renewal

Urban renewal is a purposeful endeavour to transform the urban environment through planning and extensive adjustments to existing city areas, aligning them with current and future demands for urban living and work. This process constitutes a comprehensive community neighborhood redevelopment program that entails substantial improvements to the city's physical structure. The aim is to enhance the aesthetic quality and overall liability of urban life (Smith, 2021).

In its operations, urban renewal plays a pivotal role in reconstructing aging urban spaces, contributing to the improvement of physical, socio-economic, and ecological aspects within urban areas (Du, Zhang, Wang, Zhi and Huang, 2020, p. 12). It serves as a proactive measure against the proliferation of slums and blight by focusing on rehabilitating and conserving deteriorated areas. Beyond the renovation and upgrade of existing infrastructure, urban renewal operates as a strategic framework, addressing the challenge of segregation between social classes and working concurrently towards integrated development and social equity.

Urban renewal has been in operation since the inception of permanent human settlements. Evolving alongside the course of history and the passage of time, established cities undergo a perpetual process of transformation, inevitably encountering the need for continuous regeneration (Wu, 2010). It wasn't until the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries that there emerged relatively coordinated endeavors involving local governments, reform groups, and business interests. Their aim was to eradicate the tangible signs of urban decay (Macdonald, Malys and Maliene, 2009).



The revitalization of Paris by Haussmann is considered the inaugural large-scale urban renewal project. Nevertheless, the United States was among the pioneering nations to establish dedicated national programs for urban renewal (Roberts, 2000). The issue of declining urban neighborhoods has been acknowledged in the United States since the mid-nineteenth century, prompting substantial efforts over the years to combat decay and revitalize cities nationwide. Various developed nations of Europe and Asia embraced the urban renewal process, redeveloping and restructuring to a high standard compared to what they were decades ago. The developing nations are currently undergoing various Urban renewal projects, Nigeria inclusive. This study, thus, focuses on Urban Renewal efforts of the Government of Kaduna State, Nigeria.

Communication and the Nature of Communication between the Government and the Governed.

In a communicative relationship, when a government engages with the public, political power acts as a facilitator, delivering content that aligns with the principles of equality and freedom for the people. These communicative dynamic underscores that equality and freedom are inseparable from the exercise of political power. According to Kumar (2023), by nature of Communication, at least two parties are involved. One way "involving information style and sender to be able to receive only" or two-way process . . . the receiver doesn't present his or her reaction to sender." With two-way Communication, the receiver sends his feedback to the sender after receiving the message." It can also be conversational, in a variety of styles, for example, upward direction, down the way and horizontal. Kumar further submits that Communication is media or channel based which could be common and non-verbal or mixture of spoken and non-verbal media.

By nature of Communication, according to an article by Nomad University, we are looking at a process, which is constantly changing. It is reciprocal and alternating, response from one communiqué triggers a stimulus from the other and becomes a communicate in its own right. The article added that Communication is a social process - the interactive nature of the act, as human beings are social. Communication is an interdependent process, which vary based on actors involved and the contextual nature of it. Communication also involves many actors- someone to start the Communication, somebody to receive, the message to share, the channel to connect the encoder and decoder together.

Communication between a state and its citizens should be objective, two-way, and effective, as a government's decision-making is enhanced by the input from the people. When citizens actively monitor their Government, there is an improvement in both decision-making and the formulation of sound policies. Communication serves as a crucial tool in improving governance, and certain key instruments include media, civic activism, and electronic governance. These tools contribute to enhancing the capability, accountability, and responsiveness of governments. For example, Communication through civic activism, by fostering increased interactions between civil society and raising citizens' awareness, leads to heightened transparency in government operations.



Media plays a role in communicating between the Government and the governed. Government officials are being interviewed by journalists to know how far they are going in carrying out their responsibilities assigned to them. The media serves as platforms where citizens express their opinion on what they feel about the Government. Additionally, via various media outlets, the Government can use it to send messages to the citizens on the various works it does for their benefit and development and that of the State and country at large. When there is Communication between the Government and the governed it creates room for transparency (ComGap 2007; Pasquier, 2018; Kaizen Institute, 2024; IPR, 2024).

Ethics of Government-Citizen Communication

The process of governing in democracy relies on constant exchanges of information and Communication about public policies, ideas and decisions, between members of the Government and political parties and also between those who govern and those who are governed. According to Fairbanks et al. (2007) "A healthy democracy requires an informed public and a government that is transparently accountable for its actions to those who elected it". Lee (2012) is of the view that providing information and accountability are established goals as "the democratic purposes of government public relations: media relations, public reporting and responsiveness to the public as citizens" (2012:12). These goals can be implemented directly or indirectly. Directly, when governments inform citizens through public relations, which is the most common way of transmitting information about public policy and the use of public funds. The growing computerization of government functions (e-government) has been guided by the same goal: facilitating direct contact between citizens and boosting the Government's ability to respond to their questions and criticisms

The "democratic purposes" of government public relations may also be achieved indirectly through news coverage. This can either be the result of the Government's initiative, normally through press office strategies (e.g. press releases, press conferences, interviews), or when news stories arise from journalists' investigation with government information sources (e.g. PR professionals) or non-official sources (e.g. politicians or civil servants).

The responsibility for drawing up and spreading government messages normally falls on the desk of communication professionals and stakeholders. Civil servants may belong to a communication department/service within different government organisations at national, regional or local level. They are in charge of keeping citizens informed, boosting public knowledge about public policy and the way it is created, as well as enhancing bidirectional Communication and feedback with journalists and citizens (Garnett, 1992; Grunig, 2008; Lee et al., 2012).

Thus, the ethics of government-citizen relationship in governance, is to a great extent, determined by the nature of Communication between the two parties.



A study by Maculan and Moro (2020) on strategies for inclusive urban renewal recommends that urban renewal projects should prioritize the creation of pluralized spaces that respect regional culture and prevent the displacement of residents, noting that residents' participation in the urban renewal process, contributes to achieving a mutually beneficial outcome for both the Government and the residents. Relatedly, a study by Coffey International Development (2007) on "Communication between the government and the governed," pinpoints the fundamental elements of good governance as capability, accountability, and responsiveness, reinforced through the exchange of information within the societal subsystems such as religion, State, political parties, family, etc.). This idea is in tandem with the assertion that effective flow of information and dialogue among citizens, governments, and other actors is crucial for strengthening these pillars, as articulated by Luhmann in 1990. Furthermore, the study asserts that Communication, information dissemination, and dialogue play integral roles in governance, assuming a positive correlation between Communication and good governance.

Relatedly, study by Shen, Wang, Xu and Li (2024) on unveiling citizen-government interactions in urban renewal in China, focusing on spontaneous online opinions, regional characteristics and government responses, adopts a text mining method and regression model to evaluate unstructured user-generated data and explore the determinants of government responsiveness in urban renewal. The results revealed more public opinions on urban renewal in economically developed regions than in less developed regions with project progress inquiry and quality problem related topics having significant positive impacts on response timeliness. The study recommended bottom-up participation as it generates valuable public feedback and opinions, promoting transparency and accountability in the urban renewal program.

Theoretical Framework: Participatory Communication Theory

The study adopts Participatory Communication theory. Participatory Communication is about involving all the stakeholders in the development activity with the aim of achieving social change and empowerment. According to Tufte and Mefalopulos (2009), it allows for sharing of information, perceptions and opinions among stakeholders, thereby facilitating their empowerment. It focuses on dialogical Communication rather than linear Communication; it promotes bottom up Communication (Prakesh and Karki, 2022) to allow for the participation of all and sundry. The theory views participation of all stakeholders as a tool to achieve a pre-established goal defined by someone external to the community involved. In social movements or reforms, participation itself can be a goal as an empowering process.

Participatory Communication is an approach based on dialogue, which allows the sharing of information, perceptions and opinions among the various stakeholders and thereby facilitates their empowerment, especially for those who are most vulnerable and marginalized. Participatory Communication is not just the exchange of information and experiences; it is also the exploration and generation of new knowledge aimed at addressing situations that need to be improved (Ali and Sonderling 2017).



To be genuinely participatory and truly effective, Communication should occur among all parties affected, ensuring all have similar opportunities to influence the outcome of the initiative. Optimally participatory Communication would be part of the whole project process, from beginning to end. This approach promotes the active involvement of stakeholders in investigating options and shaping decisions regarding development objectives and facilitates empowerment (Subedi and Karki 2022). The emphasis is on participatory and collective processes in research, problem identification, decision-making, implementation, and evaluation of change.

The participatory communication process in reforms and policy implementation involves, communication assessment, communication strategy design, implementation of communication objectives and monitoring and evaluation of the outcome of the communication campaign.

Participatory Communication Theory provides the foundation for this research by highlighting the importance of inclusivity and dialogue. It aligns with the study's goal of assessing how the Kaduna State Government communicates with residents and fosters participation in urban renewal initiatives. It provides a participatory platform for stakeholders to receive information and contribute to discourse on issues, especially on topics of general public interest. It empowers marginalized or less-represented groups by ensuring their involvement in decision-making processes. The theory, therefore, underpins the idea that Kaduna State residents should have a platform to air their views and opinions on the urban renewal projects since the project directly affect their lives.

The theory further emphasizes reciprocal Communication where feedback from residents is valued and acted upon. This aligns with the research's focus on evaluating the nature of Communication between the Kaduna State Government and its residents.

Methodology

The study adopts mixed method, utilizing both quantitative and qualitative methods to provide a robust framework for understanding the nature of Communication between the Kaduna State Government and its residents, with survey as methodology while questionnaire and In-depth Interview as techniques of research and data collection instruments. Residents of Kaduna State were sampled using Multi Stage Cluster Sampling Technique, involving the researcher dividing the samples into groups at various stages, after which the simple random sampling was employed.

The study focused on two senatorial zones of the three senatorial zones of the State- Kaduna North and Kaduna Central. Four local governments were selected from each of the two senatorial zones initially clustered, bringing a total of eight local governments selected for the study. Specifically, in Kaduna North Senatorial Zone, the study selects Ikara, Makarfi, Lere, and Zaria local governments while in Kaduna Central Senatorial Zone, the study selects Igabi, Kaduna



North, Kaduna South, and Chikun local government areas. According to the Kaduna State Bureau of Statistics, the population of its residents is 9.4 million. Using the Taro Yamani formula which is $n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2}$; which 'n' is the sample size; 'N' is the population size and 'e' is the margin of error which is 0.05; with a confidence level of 95%, a total of 400 participants were randomly selected and administered the questionnaire. Response rate was 394 questionnaires retrieved and analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS).

For the in-depth Interview, five (5) Communication Experts from the Urban Renewal Components were purposively selected and interviewed to provide information on their agencies, after which the data were analyzed.

The methodological design effectively captures both the frequency and nature of Communication between the Kaduna State Government and its residents. By integrating quantitative data from surveys and qualitative insights from interviews, the study provides a holistic understanding of the dynamics of the nature of Communication. This approach highlights the strengths of the Government's communication strategies.

Data Presentation and Analysis

To understand the nature of Communication between the Kaduna State government and residents of the State on the Urban Renewal Project, the study explores questions on the demographic variables of the respondents and other questions relating to the research topic. Specifically, the study probed on awareness of the communication tools used in disseminating messages on urban renewal projects, frequency of receipt of the messages, whether the residents have opportunities to express themselves to the Government, communication tools used by residents to provide feedback to the Government, nature of Communication used in disseminating information on the urban renewal project, and whether the Government of Kaduna State listens to the residents.

Below is the analysis of the responses to the questions posed:



Table 1: Awareness of the communication tools used in disseminating messages on urban renewal projects

Response	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Yes	345	87.9	87.9	87.1
No	49	12.1	12.1	99.0
Total	394	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: Field Survey, (2023)

From the table above, the findings show that majority of the respondents are aware of the various communication tools/ platforms used in disseminating Urban Renewal Projects by Kaduna State Government. Respondents who answered "Yes" 87.1%, while those who answered "No" 12.1%, total 100%.

The interview with the Communication officer of the Kaduna Capital Authority corroborates this finding:

Extract 5: *"We have robust community engagement; we have what we call the ambassador program where we have a representative from the community who provides information regarding happenings in their various communities. We engage with community heads, and hold workshops; we have various social media accounts like Twitter handle, Instagram, Facebook, and a website, we also call for press briefings. We believe that there is a disconnect between the citizens and the government; the government is out to bridge the gap by engaging highly with the residents on various happenings of the state, especially on Urban Renewal".*

From the findings above, despite the fact that the government has adopted various means of communicating with the residents such as through X (Twitter), Facebook, Instagram as well as its official website, it acknowledges a slight disconnect between the citizens and the government.

Table 2: Frequency of Receiving the Messages

Frequency of Receiving Messages	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Daily	94	23.9	23.9	23.9
Weekly	76	19.3	19.3	43.1
Biweekly	41	10.4	10.4	53.6
Once a Week	65	16.5	16.5	70.1
None of the Above	113	28.7	29.9	100.0



Frequency of Receiving Messages	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Total	394	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field Survey, 2023

From the table above, the result shows that 23.9% of the respondents receive messages on urban renewal daily, 19.3% receive it weekly, 10.4% receive it Biweekly, 16.5% get it once a week, while 28.7% answered none of the above.

The result in table 2 above is in line with the interview conducted with the Communication Officer 2 of Kaduna State Urban Planning Development Agency:

Extract15: "we have our unit handled by the PRO handling Communication with the public, we have a Twitter handle, Facebook, website which we communicate with our audience almost daily. We do press releases from time to time, we do periodic radio programs on weekly basis updating the public regarding the urban renewal project of Kaduna State."

Table 3: Whether the respondents have opportunities to express themselves to the Government

Opportunity to Express to Government	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Yes	288	73.1	73.1	73.1
No	106	26.9	26.9	100.0
Total	394	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field Survey, 2023

Table 3 shows 73.1% of the respondents, a significant number, have the opportunity to express themselves to the government; while 26.9% of the respondents do not have the opportunity to express themselves to the government.

Table 4: Communication Tools respondent used to express themselves to the Government

Communication Tool	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Social Media	143	36.0	36.3	36.3
Radio/Television	27	6.8	6.9	43.1



Communication Tool	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Newspapers/Magazines/News Bulletins	6	1.5	1.5	44.7
Interpersonal/Group Communication	19	4.8	4.8	49.5
All of the Above	46	11.6	11.7	61.2
Some of the Above	153	38.5	38.8	100.0
Total	394	99.2	100.0	

Source: Field Survey, 2023

From the table above, the findings show that 36.3% of respondents use social media to express themselves to the Government, 6.9% use Radio/Television, 1.5% use Newspaper, and Magazines, 4.8% use interpersonal/Group Communication, 11.7% use all of the above platforms to express themselves to the media, and 38.6% use some of these platforms.

This corresponds with the interview conducted with the Communication Officer of Kaduna State Road Agency:

Extract 8: "like I said earlier we use various media outlets to communicate with residents of Kaduna State on Urban Renewal Project the Road Component which is my area of specialty. There is a phone program conducted where we allow residents to call and express their opinions regarding happenings in the state, especially on Urban Renewal. Also, via our social media platforms residents reach out to us and we respond immediately we get their messages."

The finding in Table 4 indicates a digital divide, with social media having the highest percentage with high accessibility in urban areas. A significant percent of resident indicate that they use some of the platforms which are the social media, conventional media, interpersonal and group communication to get information on urban renewal messages. The implication of this is those with limited internet access may not benefit much from the much use of the social media channel as source of news on the urban renewal project.

Table 5: The Nature of Communication used in disseminating information on the urban renewal project

Nature of Communication	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Participatory/Interactive	112	28.4	28.4	28.4
Two-way/Horizontal	118	29.9	29.9	58.4
One-way/Vertical	69	17.5	17.5	75.9



Nature of Communication	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Not Sure	95	24.1	24.1	100.0
Total	394	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field Survey, 2023

From the table above, the result shows 28.4% of the respondents view the nature of communication used in disseminating Urban Renewal message as Participatory/ interactive, 29.9% view it as two-way/horizontal, 17.5% view it as one-way/vertical, while 24.1% are not sure.

The implication is the nature of communication is mostly participatory and interactive and a two-way process which gives room for the participation of the residents in the project as well as room for feedback.

Table 6: Whether the Government of Kaduna State Listens to the Governed

Government Listen to the Governed	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Yes	227	57.6	57.6	57.6
No	167	42.4	42.4	100.0
Total	394	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field Survey, 2023

Table 6 found majority of the respondent 57.6% perceive the government of Kaduna state as responsive, while a significant proportion 42.4% believe the government does not listen to them. The dissatisfaction from a significant percentage of the respondents indicates a disconnect between the government and the governed, which can be attributed to factors such as digital divide in form of unequal access to digital tools or devices, and the internet. This can serve as barrier to information sources, can hinder citizens' participation in governance and can affect feedback mechanism. When the people cannot hear and be heard, it can lead to public criticism or resistance, which can negatively impact on the success of government policies.

Thus, although the government actively adopts and deploys social media in disseminating information on the urban renewal project, the digital divide may prevent equitable access to these tools. Residents in rural or underserved areas, or those without internet access, may not benefit from the government's online communication efforts.



Table 7: Age Groups and Media Preferences

Age Groups	Social Media	Radio/TV	Newspapers	Group Communication	All of the Above	Some of the Above	Total
18–24	50	5	2	4	10	30	101
25–34	60	8	1	5	15	40	129
35–44	25	10	2	6	10	35	88
45+	6	23	1	4	5	41	80
Total	141	46	6	19	40	146	394

Source: Field Survey, 2023

From the table above, it shows that Social Media was the most used medium, with 141 respondents (35.7%) across all age groups positioning it as the most preferred media platform. “Some of the Above” received the second-highest responses, with 146 respondents (37.0%) combining multiple media channels. Other categories like Radio/TV (46 respondents, 11.6%), Newspapers (6 respondents, 1.5%), Group Communication (19 respondents, 4.8%), and All of the Above (40 respondents, 10.1%).

Interestingly, Social Media appeared as the most preferred media for the age groups 18-24 and 25-34, with 50 and 60 responses, respectively. Age group 35-44 and 45+, went with the option “Some of the Above,” and “All of the Above,” with 35 and 10 responses, respectively, implying they prefer some of the media, a combination of social media and mainstream media. This reflects a shift toward diversified media consumption.

Other types of media such as group communication, radio and tv and newspapers are the least preferred with the newspaper as the least favorite media across all four age groups- 18-24 (2), 25-34 (1), 35-44 (2), 45+ (1). Additionally, it is worth noting that 45+ age group prefer Some of the Above,” with 41 responses, with radio/tv as most preferred media, and the least (6) in terms of social media preference.

Thus, reflecting on the media preference of the residents of Kaduna State, it can be deduced that younger age groups are more reliant on digital platforms for communication and information. Older age groups, particularly 45+, show a preference for combined or multiple media channels, reflecting a more traditional and diverse approach to media consumption. Also, the high percentage of respondents who chose “Some of the Above” suggests that many individuals prefer a mixed-media approach, rather than relying on a single platform.



This is also in line with the interview with the communication officer of Kaduna State Road Development Agency on the nature of media consumption by residents of Kaduna State:

Extract10: *"All these strategies are effective because they cut across all the residents of Kaduna State. When we want to get to the youth we use Social Media because they are very active on the platform, when we target the elderly we make use of conventional media. So, we try our best to see we simultaneously combine all these platforms to get to various residents of Kaduna State".*

Discussion of Findings

From the findings of the research, it is evident that the nature of communication between the Kaduna State Government and its residents in disseminating Urban Renewal message is mostly participatory/interactive and two-way, evident in the dominant percentage of the respondents who choose these options. This is in line with the participatory communication theory that emphasizes a two-way and inclusive communication rather than a linear communication.

It was also found that a high percentage of the residents believe they are given opportunities to express themselves to the government, and they mostly do so through the social media platforms, where they engage with the handles of the State government. Others engage through radio programmes, television, newspapers, bulletins, and interpersonal/group platforms. The study further revealed a digital divide with some resident having a feeling of not being heard. Therefore, there is need for the provision of internet access such as free hot spots, for some residents of urban areas who cannot access the internet, especially those residing in urban-slums so they can receive information and be heard, too.

The study concludes that no doubt, there is two-way communication between the government and the residents of Kaduna State on the Urban Renewal Project. The government uses different communication tools to disseminate information on the project to the residents and the residents interact with the government through the same media tools and platforms. This is in line with a study by Aji et.al (2017), which found that KIM Surabaya media, plays a role in the two-way flow of information between the government and the people.

Additionally, the finding of this study is consistent with study by Maculan and Moro (2020) on strategies for inclusive urban renewal, which recommended that urban renewal projects should prioritize the creation of pluralized spaces that respect regional culture and prevent the displacement of residents, noting that residents' participation in the urban renewal process, contributes to achieving a mutually beneficial outcome for both the government and the residents.

The finding further correlates with the outcome of a study by Coffey International Development (2007) on Communication between the government and the governed, which pinpoints the



fundamental elements of good governance as capability, accountability, and responsiveness, reinforced through the exchange of information within the societal subsystems such as religion, state, political parties, family.

Conclusion

The nature of communication between Kaduna State Government and its resident in disseminating urban renewal messages is two-way, with residents having the opportunity to express themselves to the government while the government is able to monitor feedback and respond to them, accordingly. Additionally, understanding that residents are aware of and engage with communication tools indicates that the government can strengthen participatory governance by increasing transparency and encouraging feedback and listenership. It goes a long way in improving trust between the government and residents, fostering better cooperation.

Recommendation

This article can serve as a reference for future studies on public communication strategies and for practitioners designing similar frameworks in other regions. It is hoped that it will broaden the knowledge of researchers, policy makers and members of the public interested in exploring the nature of communication between the government and the governed in policy and project reforms and implementation.

The study recommends government to continue to open doors for citizens engagement and feedback and government policies and programmes targeted at the welfare and wellbeing of the people – the main beneficiaries of any public project. There is need for the expansion of internet access and promotion of digital literacy programs in the cities and rural areas to include more citizens in participatory governance and to address the issue of digital divide. A Periodical review and analysis of the effectiveness of communication tools and processes is recommended. Campaigns to educate residents on using digital tools for government communication and the importance of Urban Renewal should be organised. Research should be encouraged on the barriers to effective communication to identify key obstacles and strategies to address them. On a final note, the impact of communication on government policy implementation in Kaduna State and Nigeria should be further explored.

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