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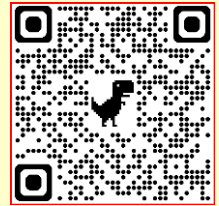
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Host community involvement in execution of water supply in Lagos State: A participatory development communication approach

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ABSTRACT

This study explores the adoption of participatory development communication approaches in the execution of the water supply systems at the host communities of Adiyari, Akute, Iju, and Isashi in Ogun and Lagos States, from where raw water is pumped, treated, and distributed for consumption in Lagos State. It is anchored on Participatory Communication Theory, a multi-track theory developed by Paulo Freire, and the Theory of Self-Reliance, which came into being following the adoption of two resolutions by the United Nations. A mixed methods design was adopted for the study, and this involves the quantitative technique of questionnaire administration and qualitative technique of in-depth interviews with participants. The study found that the systems' developer did not involve community stakeholders in the execution of the water projects and recommends that a development charter be enacted to compel developers or project donors to adopt the bottom-up approach by co-opting community stakeholders in the execution of future development projects.

KEY WORDS: bottom-up communication, community stakeholders, development charter, participatory communication, self reliance.

INTRODUCTION

The concept of community involvement in development connotes the process of applying communication methods to facilitate the involvement of community groups, research agents, and decision-makers at the planning, execution, and sustainability stages of any projects. Community involvement permeates all aspects of the development, not only at the point of exchange of information but also in involving stakeholders in decision-making and empowerment of the people. Some of the qualities that recommend community involvement are the offering of opportunities for horizontal dialogue and the feeling of local ownership among host communities. These principles provide adequate access for stakeholders to become

involved in the development process. While horizontal communication is concerned with providing opportunities for all persons to receive messages, local ownership provides evidence of sharing of responsibility for all persons to collectively agree on an issue. With community involvement, decision-making processes lie with the host communities, that not only play prominent roles in decision-making but also lead the process in the establishment of development projects. Community involvement is one of the paradigms of participatory development communication, a discipline that advances procedures for exploration of how communication can be used to transform the economic, political, and cultural structures

of any society from poverty and inequality to egalitarianism, based on communal participation in the development process.

Participatory development communication owes its origins to the declaration by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) in 1967 that mass media can make the development of resources in the developing world more sustainable. Bessette (2004, p. 13) describes it as the offspring of development communication and participatory research. In his view, the concept came from within “the framework of the apparent contribution of communication and the media to the development of countries of the Third World.” Ibuot, Majemu, and Nwantah (2021) define it as the use of the mass media, traditional, and interpersonal modes of communication to empower communities in their bid to discover solutions to their development problems and goals. Their postulation is that participatory development communication is a process in which community members are brought in to contribute and share ideas about how to bring about development to their communities. This view is shared by Reeves (2015), who asserts that participatory development communication seeks to transform the economic, political, and cultural structures of a community from the continuation of poverty and inequality through the process of community involvement. Her postulation, however, is that participatory development communication paradigms should be designed to encourage frameworks that enhance the creation of shared meanings and also provide people with tools for designing and implementing their development. Thus participatory development communication plays a key role in bringing together of stakeholders to address problems of the environment and to work towards bringing about improvement in their quality of life (Kheerajit and Flor, 2013; Anaeto and Solo-Anaeto, 2010).

Two major participatory approaches that focus on the various forms of participation in development communication have been identified. These are classified in communication as either genuine or pseudo-participation. White, Sadanandan, and Ascroft (1994, p. 17) describe pseudo-participation as “people’s participation in development in which the control of the project and decision-making power rests with planners, administrators, and the community’s elite.” Consultation that involves the exchange of information and collaboration among the parties involved is regarded as its hallmark. On the other hand, Servaes (1999, p. 198) defines genuine participation as a “process that affects the very core of the inherent power relationships in a given society,” a position that suggests that interactivity is vital to the success of any participation effort. Interactive participation serves as its point of reference. In interactive participation, stakeholders take part in the execution and even discuss issues of maintenance and sustainability of the projects. This also allows them to exercise control over local decisions, especially on how available resources are used, and so they have a feeling of belonging to the project. Van de Fliert (2010, p. 97), however, posits that ‘participatory communication’ does not imply making others participate but engaging stakeholders or groups in a dialogue. Her perspective is that participatory communication requires “open sharing of information and opinion in all directions, identifying areas of conflicting interests, and collective assessment and testing of options that can fulfill needs while capitalising on opportunities and compromising on conflicts.”

Sustainable Water Supply in Lagos

Sustainable water supply is a fundamental requirement for human existence. It has been observed over the ages, as one of the major factors that influences human migrations and settlements. It is also one of the key resources behind population density in any

settlement. Human and animal settlements thrive in ecosystems with an abundant supply of water and migrate from arid and desert ecosystems with a lack of water supply. This explains why the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) proclaimed at its 78th session on December 23, 2003, that the years 2005–2015 should be celebrated as the International Decade for Action on Water for Life. The proclamation was to the effect that “the relevant United Nations bodies, specialised agencies, regional commissions, and other organisations of the United Nations system deliver a coordinated response to make ‘Water for Life’ a decade for action” (WHO/UNICEF, 2005). As a result, the World Health Organisation (WHO), in collaboration with the United Nations International Children’s Education Fund (UNICEF), strove to ensure that the target of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), that provided for access to safe and potable drinking water for all and the provision of appropriate sanitation to enable humanity to become free from diseases, was achieved.

Moreover, by January 2015, the United Nations, at its annual International Zaragoza Conference in Rio de Janeiro, with the theme “Water and Sustainable Development: From Vision to Action,” declared that by 2030, it plans to achieve universal and equitable access to safe and affordable drinking water for all. A report of the UN-Water Zaragoza conference (2015) recognises that water is not only at the heart of sustainable development but also a key determinant in all aspects of social, economic, and environmental development that should command a central focus of any framework for poverty eradication. Goal 6 of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) focuses on ensuring the availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all.

However, despite declarations in the Millennium Development Goals, with its successor, the Sustainable Development Goals, and efforts of the Lagos State Government, a remarkable shortfall is still perceived in the demand-supply ratio of available potable water in Lagos State. Oluwafemi, Jakpor, Bohme, Kishimoto, and Lobina (2016) remark that the water supply master plan of Lagos State estimates a daily supply of 540 million gallons (mgd), whereas the state’s facilities are programmed to produce and deliver 210 million gallons of water per day (mgd), a shortfall of 330 million gallons (mgd). Owolabi (2014) found that the inability of the Lagos State water supply systems to meet the potable water needs of the ever-rising population in the state has resulted in a situation where 55 per cent of the population of the rural suburbs of Epe, Ikorodu, Badagry, and Ibeju-Lekki LGAs depend on wells and springs to meet their needs.

The Lagos State Water Corporation’s master supply plan (2010–2020) indicates that the water supply systems have a right of way measuring 180 kilometres of transmission mains and 2,215 kilometres of distribution mains. Currently, it is only able to connect about 200,000 homes to water supply, with some of its pipelines being not only very old but also dilapidated and in need of replacement to enable them to adequately cope with modern demands. Another major challenge is that of powering the water supply systems. The Iju waterworks pioneered power generation from coal, as it had to boil the raw water before reticulating or pumping it to the end-users. Later, and following the phenomenal growth in the population of Lagos, the waterworks discontinued the boiling process and adopted electricity to power the pumps. Former Lagos State Governor Babatunde Fashola commissioned the Akute Power Plant in 2010 as a pilot public-private partnership to provide electricity at Akute for the pumping of raw water for reticulation to the Iju and Adiyan water supply systems (Oluwafemi *et al.*, 2016).

The Iju waterworks was built in 1910 and commissioned by the Colonial Governor General, Sir Frederick Lugard, in 1915, while the first phase of Adiyen waterworks was commissioned in 1991. Akute intake works was built in 1953 and underwent major expansion in 1972, while Isashi Waterworks was commissioned in 1977 to cater to the needs of the second World and African Festival of Arts and Culture (FESTAC) in Lagos.

Theoretical Underpinnings

This study is anchored on two theories: the Participatory Communication Theory and the Self-Reliance Theory.

Theory of Participatory Communication

The theory was developed by Paulo Freire in 1970 and emphasises dialogue, or two-way communication, as a means of providing consensus for sustainable action in development activities. In his classic work, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (1970), Freire describes dialogue as an existential necessity because it is one of the ways that people use to achieve significance as human beings. For dialogue to be able to transform the world, it must not be the privilege of a few people but a right that is available to everyone. Thus, participatory communication or dialogue is "not carried out by 'A' for 'B' or by 'A' about 'B,' but rather by 'A' with 'B,' mediated by the world, which impresses and challenges both parties, giving rise to views or opinions about it" (Freire, 1970, p. 93). Furthermore, he postulates that such encounters should not be "a gift or an imposition—bits of information to be deposited in the students' (or community stakeholders') heads—but rather an organised, systematised, and developed "re-presentation" to individuals of the things about which they want to learn more."

Freire describes the top-down and bottom-up models as the two major communication strategies that guide community development. The top-down, which is also called the 'banking style' of communication, amounts to depositing ideas or projects into other people or their environment for their consumption, without having respect for their views. Communication in the top-down or 'banking style' category is observed to be such that resists dialogue, while the bottom-up style, which is also described as the 'problem-posing style,' regard dialogue as indispensable to the act of knowing and have the capacity to unveil reality.

Self-Reliance Theory

The theory was developed in 1973 following the United Nations' decision to establish a New International Economic Order (NIEO). It is associated with sustainable economic development, which Nwokoye (2009) describes as a developmental quality that can be ascribed to a nation, a people, or a person. It implies being fully equipped and functional to provide an individual with life-sustaining materials, and is considered one of the leading theories in the alternative development communication model that gives power or independence and autonomy to rural dwellers to determine their affairs. Oso (2002, p. 19) posits that through self-reliance, "rural dwellers could own a radio station and make their own programmes based on their own daily experiences and interests." This means that following its adoption, community stakeholders can make maximum use of available resources in their environments with little or no external support. Anaeto and Solo-Anaeto (2010, p. 17) align with Oso and posit that the theory provides a platform for community stakeholders to "define their development problems, set goals, devise strategies, and make decisions independently and in accordance with their own social and cultural needs."

White (1981) defines its application along three distinct lines. These are: self-reliance in ideas and initiatives ('endogenous'), self-reliance in funding and control ('autonomy'), and self-reliance in materials and manpower ('self-sufficiency'). Endogenous development is evident when local people decide what they want or require support in their efforts to achieve the same. In the second characterisation of self-reliance, realised as autonomy, the community controls the process of development, rather than the nature of the project. The argument in favour of this approach is that community stakeholders can organise funds for their project and thus remove the tendency for dependence on external sources. The third sense of self-reliance is described as 'maximum self-sufficiency.' This approach entails a community's use of its own "manpower and materials as far as possible to meet its needs in each respect, rather than either receiving them as help from elsewhere or buying them after collecting funds" (White (1981, p. 117). This type of self-reliance is not only generally found to be cheap, but it also makes use of indigenous labour.

Methodology

This study adopted the mixed-methods design. The methodology entails the application of quantitative and qualitative techniques in data gathering. A mixed method of research is a procedure for collecting, analysing and 'mixing' both quantitative and qualitative research methods in one study to be able to have a better understanding of the research problem. The reason for the adoption of the mixed methods design is that the quantitative approach to research hints mainly at the use and application of mathematical and statistical procedures and techniques for data gathering and analysis but lacks the ability to provide in-depth views, outlooks, or experiences of participants. The integration of quantitative and qualitative methods, therefore, leads to the aggregated use of their areas of strength for the solution of research problems.

The host communities of the 52 water supply systems developed by the Lagos State Water Corporation (LSWC), made up of four major, 31 mini, and 16 micro waterworks, with Akute Intake Works constitute the population of this study. From this number, host communities of three major and functioning water installations at Adiyen, Iju, and Isashi were selected for the study. A fourth location, the Akute water intake and power plant, was also selected because of its strategic importance as source of the raw water that is pumped for production at Adiyen and Iju.

Snowball sampling method was adopted in the selection of the 50 in-depth interview participants, while purposive sampling method was adopted in the administration of the 520 copies of the survey questionnaire.

Results

Research question: How have participatory development communication approaches influenced community involvement in the execution of the water supply systems at Adiyen, Akute, Iju, and Isashi communities in Ogun and Lagos States?

Table 1: Participants' responses on their involvement in the execution of water supply systems in host communities

S/N	Statement	All the time Freq. (%)	Most of the time Freq. (%)	Some time Freq. (%)	A little of the time Freq. (%)	None of the time Freq. (%)	Mean	Std. Dev.
1	Community stakeholders were used for the construction of the project	22 (5.4)	53 (13.0)	91 (33.2)	118 (38.9)	125 (30.6)	2.34	1.20
2	Developer sought assistance from traditional rulers on the supply of skilled workmen	25 (6.1)	64 (15.6)	102 (24.9)	108 (26.4)	110 (26.9)	2.48	1.21
3	Developer embarked on capacity building programmes for community stakeholders	41 (10.1)	46 (11.3)	94 (23.2)	97 (23.9)	128 (31.5)	2.45	1.30
4	The developer partnered with community stakeholders to ensure that the project was executed by community residents	23 (5.6)	49 (12.0)	91 (22.3)	111 (27.2)	134 (32.8)	2.30	1.20
5	The developer instituted and funded community grants or scholarship schemes for the residents	29 (7.1)	48 (11.7)	89 (21.8)	94 (23.0)	149 (36.4)	2.30	1.27
6	Our youths were allowed to exercise responsibility over labour issues	41 (10.0)	65 (15.9)	97 (23.7)	122 (29.8)	84 (20.5)	2.65	1.25

Note: Figures in parentheses are percentage distributions (ii) Figures outside the parenthesis are frequency distributions. Source: Field Survey Data (April-May, 2021)

The results will be presented in quantitative and qualitative forms. Quantitative because the variables of interest were quantified and measured using standardised measures that were adjudged reliable and valid. The second aspect of the results is qualitative and is based on the series of in-depth interviews conducted during the research. The study, which is concerned with community involvement in the execution of sustainable water supply in host communities in Ogun and Lagos States, was based on certain objectives. These informed the direction for both the quantitative and qualitative analysis of data. The research question seeks to determine how community involvement in the execution of water supply systems at Adiyin, Akute, Iju, and Isashi communities was influenced by the adoption or non adoption of participatory development communication approaches.

Results from Table 1 show that out of the three major aspects of community involvement in execution considered in this study—partnership in construction, capacity building of youths, and community control over labour issues—partnership in construction and capacity building of community youths accounted for the highest change observed in the dependent variable. The total

variance for capacity building was 10.1 per cent, while the exercise of responsibility over labour issues had a total variance of 10 per cent. The specific percentage contributions of the other dimensions were assistance from traditional rulers for the supply of skilled workmen (6.1 per cent), and instituting and funding of community grants for training of community residents (7.1 per cent). Youths' exercise of responsibility over labour issues had the highest mean score of 2.65, followed by the developer's request for assistance from the traditional rulers for the hiring of skilled workmen in the host communities, with a 2.48 mean score. The lowest mean score of 2.30 was shared by the developer's instituting and funding of community grants for training of residents, as well as partnership to ensure that the systems were executed by community stakeholders.

The low mean scores of these variables indicate that they did not receive the required attention in the host communities. It is noteworthy that the least preferred approach from the significant results is the use of community stakeholders for systems' construction. Its low total variance (5.4 per cent) is indicative of the fact that the participatory development communication principle of community involvement was not a vital consideration in the minds

of the water supply systems' developer. However, the best participatory development communication principle adopted by the water supply systems' developer is empowerment, with youths being allowed to exercise responsibility over labour issues, especially in the supply of menial labour for the construction works. The other significant variable was the developer's provision of training opportunities, as they accounted for the largest contributions to the variances seen in the participatory development communication approaches adopted during the execution of the water supply systems. The research question is clarified because water supply systems' developers can know what approaches of participatory development communication (PDC) to adopt during the execution of the water supply systems.

Qualitative Data

In the analysis of the in-depth interviews, the dominant participatory development communication approach observed was that of non-involvement of community stakeholders in the execution. Nine of the 15 traditional rulers in the four communities responded that there was no community involvement in the execution of the water supply systems, while six said there was community involvement. However, all the four production managers said that host community stakeholders were carried along during the execution of the systems. Among the 31 community development associations (CDAs) and community development committees (CDCs) chairmen, 24 responded that they were not involved in the execution of the water supply systems, while seven said they were involved. The interviewees who spoke as CDAs or CDCs chairmen, traditional rulers, or production managers said the communities' stakeholders were not fully involved. The traditional rulers admitted that the only community involvement exercise that took place had to do with negotiations for money from the government for the land they were taking over. According to a traditional ruler:

We became involved because the government took our land and established something there without giving us a kobo. Before the developers could do anything, they would meet with the *Omo Onile* (children of landowners). If they wanted to embark on employment, they consulted the Oba (king) to say that this project is being sited here and that the Oba should give them one or two of their people. They consult the Oba and Baales (chiefs) within before embarking on any project.

The responses of CDAs/CDCs chairmen are similar to those of traditional rulers. Below is how they answered:

We were not involved. They imposed the water pipelines passing through this place on us.

We have not been involved in anything because they have not given us anything.

All we know is that they acquired the land and put the water there. We also know that the water belongs to the Lagos State government.

This shows that stakeholders in the host communities were not involved in the project execution. This is largely because some interviewees were not around at the time, particularly at Iju, where the water supply system was installed in 1910. Results of this study show a preponderant absence of involvement of the community stakeholders by the water supply systems' developer. Whereas stakeholders in the host communities expected that the water supply systems' developer would partner with them in the construction of some civil engineering works, they were not offered such tasks.

Rather, these responsibilities were farmed out to specialists or contractors. A Baale in Akute expressed dissatisfaction following the non-involvement of his citizens and, in particular, the water supply system developer's inability to empower stakeholders in the community, thus:

When contractors got the jobs, they asked labourers to come and work, and workers, not just indigenes of Akute, came to do the work. They negotiated for their wages and did the assigned tasks.

A CDC chairman aligned with the position of the Baale when he said:

We have not been involved, and the water corporation has not given us any work at all.

Another form of empowerment can be captured in the provision of potable water for stakeholders in the host communities. A traditional ruler at Isashi who recounted typical benefits or empowerment programme expected from the water supply system's developer said:

Nothing. Anyone can see it. Two years ago, they came from Alausa, the Lagos State Government Secretariat, to have a meeting here. They said they wanted to restore water for people of the community and that they would give water to each house. What the director said was that they would make the Kabiyesi's (king's) house serve as an example, that they would make water available to the Kabiyesi, and from there, other people would be paying a little money to get the form to enjoy water. But since then, nothing has happened. No single benefit.

The absence of empowerment programmes has also created an attitude of self-reliance among community stakeholders. They drill boreholes to produce water for their own use and even to sell to those who cannot afford to drill their own. A CDA chairman at Iju said:

People living beside the waterworks in Iju now have to develop boreholes, and those who do not have money for boreholes, dig wells. This is not proper, it is not good.

A Baale said:

If people use their money to get boreholes done in their private houses, you can't come and request money for water you did not supply. People will get angry over it.

Apart from the non-involvement approach, there was the consultative approach, which indicates that there was a level of involvement by stakeholders who were alive at the time. Their consultation was apparently followed by manipulation by the colonial, and later federal and the state governments. Thus, the community stakeholders gave up their lands for the water supply systems, following promises that they would be compensated and their children employed, but these promises have in most cases not been fulfilled. However, some stakeholders said that though their communities were consulted through the Baales and other community leaders, most often, the communities were not involved because the developer of the water supply systems did not partner with them on project construction but executed the water supply systems through contractors.

Discussion

The research question sought to determine the influence of participatory development communication approaches on community involvement in the execution of the water supply

systems in the Adiyen, Akute, Iju, and Isashi communities in Ogun and Lagos States. The constructs investigated were partnership in construction, capacity building of youths, and community control over labour issues. However, a summary of responses from the survey shows that the variable of partnership in construction did not contribute significantly. Its low total variance suggests that the systems' developer was not persuaded to entrust the construction of the waterworks to the local stakeholders. The developer was not also influenced by the desire to partner with local residents on the execution of these systems. The analysis shows that there was a high total variance in the approach of allowing youth to exercise responsibility over local issues or training residents to work on the systems.

In the in-depth interviews, responses suggested that there was no involvement of the stakeholders in the execution of the water supply systems in the host communities. Community empowerment is considered the process of obtaining opportunities for marginalised people to enable them to access increased control and an improved quality of life for themselves. Empowerment is associated with encouraging such marginalised people to develop skills that will enable them to become self-sufficient so that they will be able to earn sustainable incomes and thus eliminate the need for charity or welfare in the future. Maton (2008, p. 5) defines it as "a group-based participatory, developmental process through which marginalised or oppressed individuals and groups gain greater control over their lives and environments, acquire valued resources and basic rights, and achieve important life goals and reduce societal marginalisation." Empowerment plays a vital role in the development process. Though associated with degrees of tokenism in the development ladder, it is at this level that citizens begin to have some degree of influence.

Arnstein (1969, p. 220) explains that the degree of placation of the youths depends on "the quality of technical assistance they have in articulating their priorities and the extent to which the community has been organised to press for those priorities." This is a position that Cadiz (2005, p. 150) supports, as he defines empowerment as a prerequisite to "putting local people in control of development processes where communication is an integral component." Stakeholders' claims of non-involvement in the execution of the water supply systems suggests that the developer did not set out to empower the people. Several existing studies have focused on the scenario of a lack of involvement of the local communities in the design or implementation of policies, programmes or even projects, with many researchers acknowledging that a top-down approach is one of the major factors that can impede a community's development. When local stakeholders are not engaged from the beginning of a project, there is always room for problems or failures. Tufte and Mefalopulos (2009, p. 15) are of the view that this is often experienced when communication to the various stakeholders "failed to achieve expected changes due to people's initial lack of involvement or to their limited or contradictory understanding of issues."

Contemporary emphasis is, however, on the need for participatory or needs-based and socially acceptable planning instead of the conventional top-down developmental approach often adopted by governments, which has always failed to capture the needs of the community (Imran, Ross, and Luxmore, 2014). This scenario explains the basis of the theory of self-reliance that is prevalent in Nigeria and other countries in sub-Saharan Africa. It involves the desire to improve the living conditions and/or quality of life of people using homemade resources or initiatives. Kim and Ismail

(2013, p. 586) remark that the widespread acceptance of self-reliance as a new blueprint for community development in most African countries has "the tendency to give greater stimulus and cohesiveness to community development in the affected states or communities." This principle is related to self-help and mutual help, which enables the people to make use of resources that would, otherwise, have remained dormant and thereby perpetuate the ignorance and poverty of the community (Fonchingong and Fonjong, 2003, p. 199).

Participatory development communication operates on the principles of horizontal dialogue and local ownership of projects among community stakeholders. In horizontal communication all participants are offered the opportunity to communicate at an equal level, irrespective of their status or roles (Kincaid and Figueroa, 2009). For this to happen, sufficient involvement or access for all the participants is required, and this apparently informs Beltran's (1979, p. 17) assertion that access is a "precondition for horizontal communication since, without comparable opportunities for all persons to receive messages, there can in the first place be no democratic social interaction." Yoon (1996) argues that local ownership of projects is realisable when there is a collective agreement on a shared sense of responsibility for arriving at a solution. This means that the decision-making power should rest with the local communities so that they can exercise control over their lives and environment. Local ownership of development projects can be explained in situations where the planning and execution of projects have been carried out in community-driven and collective decision-making fashion. The participatory approach or local involvement is best captured by the former President of Tanzania, Julius Nyerere, who describes participatory development as the only true way in which local people can be persuaded to accept and assimilate developmental changes. Nyerere (1973), cited in Graham (1976), argues that:

People cannot be developed, they can only develop themselves. For while it is possible for an outsider to build a man's home; an outsider cannot give a man pride and self-confidence in himself as a human being. He develops himself by making his own decisions, by increasing his understanding of what he is doing and why, by increasing his knowledge and ability, and by his own full participation—as an equal—in the life of the community he lives in.

Without local involvement, therefore, development is considered 'uneven' and 'fragmented' as it tends to undermine members' interests (Kincaid and Figueroa, 2009). This position ties with Freire's (1970, p. 96) postulation that "it is not our role to speak to the people about our own view of the world, nor to attempt to impose that view on them, but rather to dialogue with the people about their view and ours." The execution of the water supply systems in Adiyen, Akute, Iju, and Isashi, without the involvement of community stakeholders, defies a major tenet of participatory community development, which is that all the stakeholders collaborate from the beginning of the project to the end. As Dinbabo (2003) remarks, the participatory approach, in contrast to the traditional or conventional community development approach, offers greater emphasis on capacity building, youth empowerment, self-reliance, and project sustainability.

Community involvement is a very important aspect of the development process, as its absence can make or mar the sustainability of such projects. Maina, Biwott, and Ombaka (2020, p. 1) support this view as they posit that "without community buy-in,

a project may never get off the ground or will not be accepted once it is completed." The absence of participatory development communication approach of community involvement in the execution of the water supply systems deprives the host community stakeholders of feelings of local ownership, which in turn produced attitudes of passivity in community stakeholders. This scenario typifies rejection of the World Health Organisation's Jakarta Declaration on Health Promotion into the 21st Century (1997) and the Ottawa Charter for Health Promotion (1986), which provide that community involvement is necessary for good local governance, while empowerment should be at the heart of effective health promotion. These declarations provide for an increase in community capacity and individual empowerment in projects. They also place a premium on the improvement in capacity of communities through practical education, leadership training, and access to resources.

Conclusion and recommendation

The developer of the water supply systems did not adopt the genuine participatory development communication approach of interactive participation to enhance community involvement in the execution of the water supply systems. This absence created passive involvement among the stakeholders and a general lack of involvement among the stakeholders in the host communities. It is recommended that a development charter be enacted to compel developers or project donors to adopt the bottom-up approach by co-opting community stakeholders in the execution of future development projects in the country. It should do so by partnering to ensure that some construction processes are devolved for execution by community stakeholders.

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