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By

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ABSTRACT

The manifestations of hunger are fury, indignation, rage, deep loathing often propelled by injury, injustice, oppression and violence. This is exemplified by the unfortunate socio-economic conditions of most developing countries, and Nigeria in particular. It is more disheartening when majority of farmers who toil to make food available to the teeming populace are among those wallowing in abject poverty and pitiable circumstances. The potentials of farming in terms of the accruable benefits suggest that the issue of poverty should be alien to the farmers and farming communities, but the reverse is the case in Nigeria. It is a fact that most people in rural areas are farmers, hence, it can be deduced that those living under the prevailing severe poverty map in Nigeria are in the rural areas and subsistent farmers who are responsible for the bulk of food produced in Nigeria. This is why a voice is required to speak out and promptly too. In this circumstance, 'voice for the voiceless' is a phrase denoting interventions, speaking out and bringing to the fore the plights of the deprived, oppressed, poor, hopeless, hungry and angry people. The Nigerian farmer belongs to this class of people until recently when serious policy initiatives are directly targeted at their emancipation, though not yet over. In my research endeavour as Development Communication specialist, I recognise different stakeholders in the agricultural system and what makes communication impactful. After analyzing all the communication models relevant to development especially agriculture and social initiatives, I found a voice in the Berlo model referred to as Sender-Message-Channel-Receiver (SMCR) model with practical dimensions of the applicability of Entertainment-education. The aggregate of activities revolving round the model gives voice to the people as communication is about people. In this journey, I particularly recognize women, youth, media practitioners and medium or channels of communication as potent tools with numerous scholarly publications on contribution to the voice through voice in sender element, message and entertainment-education, as viable option with location of voice in channels of communication and understating receivers' circumstances as critical element. However, noticeable

deficiencies in the SMCR model motivated my search for an alternative, which takes into account the intent, emotion and knowledge of both the sender and the receiver in the process. This brought to the fore, my most cited globally Integrated Multimedia Development Communication Model published in the Journal of Development Communication in 2002. It is highly recommended for adoption in the design and implementation of development oriented programmes. Also my engagements in the 'Town' and the successes recorded, enabled me to come to the realisation of the need for a more cooperative and symbiotic relationship between the 'Town' and the 'Gown'. It was such an interesting interaction for me in cementing the notion of striving for excellence in whatever one does as this is the only true basis of achieving development both at the personal and societal levels. Furthermore, I'm currently in collaboration with students and colleagues in pursuit of giving voice to the voiceless with a robust agenda for new media, grievance redress and citizen engagement mechanisms as veritable roadmap in conflict resolution, efficient agricultural value chain development, and maximization of the potentials of Women and Youth in Agriculture.