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**8 pp**

**Includes the abstract and table of contents of the thesis, which traces Ghana's political, economic and social development during the 1970s and 1980s, and the incipient role of project communications, including efforts made in setting up printing and communications facilities.**

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DEVELOPMENT SUPPORT COMMUNICATION AND THE ROLE OF THE  
COMMUNICATION SPECIALIST:  
A PERSPECTIVE FROM A PROJECT IN GHANA

by

Gary Richard Gleason

An Abstract

Of a thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of  
the requirements for the degree of Doctor  
of Philosophy in Mass Communications  
in the Graduate College of the  
University of Iowa

July, 1981

Thesis supervisor: Associate Professor Joseph Ascroft

## ABSTRACT

This study explores the concept and practice of development support communication and the role of the communication specialist in development.

Beginning with a review of recent literature on development and communication research the study finds that old concepts of modernization and diffusion of innovations have become inappropriate as a definition of development and as a basis for designing communication strategies to support international and national projects. New perspectives emphasizing participation by clients in planning social change and new strategies for equitable, grass roots programs are gaining dominance in the field.

A model of the communication process founded in a humanistic approach which postulates mass media producers as agents of the audience, was chosen as a conceptual guide to assist in a communication support project.

This model's utility is demonstrated as it assisted in analyzing the project experience and in an effort to delineate parameters for development support communication.

The study utilizes participation by the author in a communication support project in Ghana to describe of an attempt to design and set up an agency for operationalizing client-centered communication strategies through media production, training, and programming assistance. This description details accomplishments, failures, and changes the project made in response to unanticipated environmental constraints.

Analysis of the project showed that development support communication is not restricted to media production and training. It encompasses a approach to human problem solving in development assistance.

Based on project interpretation, the study proposes general functions and qualifications for those attempting to implement development support communication.

These functions include examination of institutional plans, structures, and goals and assistance in modifying them to improve the potential for client participation and organizational coordination. Other functions include monitoring project implementation to assess problems that occur on the ground and allow for advocacy within the institution for maintenance of a client-centered operational model.

Through presenting, analyzing, and discussing the Ghana project in the framework of communication research on development, the study assists in mapping the new field of development support communication.

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