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Theoretical and Practical Contributions of Wangari Maathai's Environmental Advocacy to Communicating for Development

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ABSTRACT

The theoretical and practical contributions of Wangari Maathai's environmental advocacy demonstrate a profound intersection between rhetoric and communication for development, yet this area remains underexplored. This study investigates how Maathai's rhetorical strategies effectively conveyed her environmental advocacy in Kenya, providing valuable insights for the field of development communication. The study analyzed a range of her works, including speeches, lectures, and articles, using an interpretivist approach to examine the depth and nuances in her messaging. Through a detailed analysis of her rhetoric, it was found that Maathai employed a combination of classical rhetorical appeals—logos, pathos, and ethos—to frame her arguments, provide credible evidence, evoke emotional connections, and establish her authority. These appeals were strategically utilized to communicate the urgency of environmental conservation, reveal the stark realities of ecological degradation, and underscore the moral and ethical imperatives driving her advocacy. Additionally, Maathai's use of rhetorical questions, metaphors, narratives, and biblical allusions enriched her appeals, enhancing her ability to engage and mobilize her audience. Her rhetoric also displayed characteristics traditionally associated with feminine rhetorical styles, such as sincerity and truthfulness, which helped to build trust and relatability. Personal testimonies and stories about her own experiences were particularly impactful, invoking compassion and fostering a sense of shared purpose among her listeners. The study reveals that these rhetorical techniques were powerful tools in rallying support for environmental policies, encouraging grassroots mobilization, and advancing environmental consciousness. The findings suggest that rhetoric, when strategically employed, has the potential to drive development communication efforts by mobilizing and empowering communities. This study, therefore, proposes that integrating rhetorical approaches in environmental communication and advocacy can enhance the effectiveness of messaging, policy influence, and public engagement. Theoretical and practical implications from Maathai's

approach underscore rhetoric's capacity to strengthen communication for development, particularly in advocating for environmental change.

Keywords: Rhetoric in Development Communication; Environmental Advocacy; Wangari Maathai; Mobilization and Conscientization.

INTRODUCTION

Environmental degradation has become a critical global issue that crosses national borders, affecting ecosystems, communities, and economies (Mason, 2012). The profound impact of deforestation, pollution, and climate change has awakened an urgent need for environmental preservation and sustainable resource management. The preservation of natural resources has moved beyond a mere ethical concern to an essential prerequisite for the survival of humanity and other living beings. The scientific understanding of climate change and global warming reaffirms what many traditional cultures have long recognized—that a healthy ecosystem is foundational for a sustainable economy and a stable society (Baer & Singer, 2018).

In this context, environmental advocacy has emerged as an essential movement to educate, mobilize, and inspire communities to take action toward preserving natural resources. The role of rhetoric in such advocacy is increasingly recognized as a powerful tool for influencing public opinion, shaping policy, and fostering collective responsibility. Rhetoric, with its capacity to persuade, mobilize, and create awareness, has the potential to turn environmental concerns into actionable goals and effect meaningful change.

Among the notable voices in environmental advocacy, Wangari Maathai, a Kenyan environmental activist and Nobel Peace Prize laureate, stands out. Through her work with the Green Belt Movement, Maathai championed reforestation, sustainable development, and women's empowerment in Kenya (Chikwendu, 2008). Her advocacy transcended Kenya's borders, inspiring efforts across Africa and beyond. Maathai's rhetoric, deeply rooted in the classical appeals of ethos, pathos, and logos, employed a unique blend of personal stories, metaphors, and cultural references that resonated with diverse audiences (Jones, 2017). These rhetorical strategies not only highlighted the urgency of environmental conservation but also fostered a sense of community and shared responsibility, making her environmental advocacy accessible and compelling.

Despite her significant contributions, the intersection of Wangari Maathai's rhetoric with development communication remains underexplored. Understanding how Maathai's rhetoric functions as a tool for development communication provides a valuable framework for environmental advocacy, particularly in African contexts where social and environmental challenges are intertwined. This research seeks to analyze how Maathai's rhetorical strategies contribute to communicating environmental issues, with the objective of identifying both theoretical and practical implications for development communication.

This study is guided by several research objectives: to examine the classical rhetorical appeals in Maathai's texts, to uncover the environmental concerns raised within her works, and to highlight the theoretical and practical contributions of her rhetoric to development communication. By focusing on these objectives, this research aims to shed light on how Maathai's rhetorical techniques can be adapted as tools for promoting environmental awareness, mobilizing communities, and shaping policies that address pressing ecological concerns.

This research contributes to the broader field of development communication by proposing rhetorical strategies for effective environmental advocacy, with particular emphasis on regions facing environmental and socio-political challenges. Through

Maathai's work, this study ultimately emphasizes the potential of rhetoric as a means to facilitate sustainable development and influence policy for the betterment of society.

WANGARI MAATHAI'S PROFILE

Wangari Maathai (1940-2011) was a renowned Kenyan environmentalist, political activist, and advocate for sustainable development, democracy, and women's rights. She made history in 2004 as the first African woman to be awarded the Nobel Peace Prize, an honor recognizing her "holistic approach to sustainable development that embraces democracy, human rights, and particularly women's rights" (Golding, 2014, p. 43). Maathai's contributions to environmental advocacy and her founding of the Green Belt Movement not only transformed landscapes across Africa but also redefined environmental activism as a tool for political and social empowerment (Mpande & Muneri, 2018).

Maathai was born in Nyeri, a lush region in Kenya's central highlands. Growing up in a rural village, she was immersed in a natural landscape abundant in biodiversity but also witnessed firsthand the detrimental impact of environmental degradation. Her community's reliance on natural resources instilled in her an early understanding of the critical link between the environment and livelihoods. After completing her primary education in Kenya, Maathai received a scholarship as part of the "Kennedy Airlift" program, an initiative funded by the United States to support promising African students. In 1960, Maathai moved to the U.S., where she began her academic journey in biology at Mount St. Scholastica College in Atchison, Kansas. She went on to earn a master's degree in biology from the University of Pittsburgh in 1966 (Kinefuchi, 2022). Her time in the U.S. was transformative; inspired by the civil rights and anti-war movements, she began to see the potential for organized activism to address systemic injustice.

Upon returning to Kenya, Maathai continued her studies in veterinary anatomy at the University of Nairobi, where she broke barriers by becoming the first woman in East and Central Africa to earn a Ph.D. and later chair a department in a Kenyan university. Her academic and professional success was instrumental in paving the way for women's participation in the sciences and higher education in Kenya. However, she soon expanded her focus beyond academia as she recognized that the root causes of poverty and inequality in Kenya were deeply connected to environmental and political issues. In 1977, Maathai founded the Green Belt Movement, a grassroots organization initially focused on addressing Kenya's deforestation crisis by encouraging communities to plant trees. Maathai saw trees as a practical solution to the challenges faced by rural women, who bore the brunt of environmental degradation through increased difficulty in accessing clean water, firewood, and arable land. However, the Green Belt Movement quickly evolved into a multifaceted advocacy platform, addressing issues ranging from economic empowerment to political oppression (Maathai, 2003).

The Green Belt Movement began with a simple but powerful approach: mobilizing communities, particularly women, to plant trees as a means of restoring the environment and enhancing local resources. As rural Kenyan women faced the consequences of deforestation, such as soil erosion and water scarcity, Maathai's organization empowered them to take control of their environment and livelihoods. By planting trees, women not only restored degraded landscapes but also gained economic independence, as the Green Belt Movement provided them with modest payments for their work. Maathai often described these women as "foresters without diplomas" who combined traditional knowledge with practical environmental science.

Under Maathai's leadership, the Green Belt Movement grew into a powerful grassroots organization. Over the years, it mobilized thousands of women and men to

plant millions of trees across Kenya and other African nations. Through environmental restoration, Maathai demonstrated the interconnectedness of ecology, economics, and social justice. She emphasized that environmental degradation, poverty, and inequality were deeply linked, and that addressing these issues required a comprehensive approach that tackled structural problems in governance, community development, and women's rights (Muthuki, 2006).

Maathai's activism extended far beyond environmental restoration. She saw environmental issues as symptomatic of broader systemic failures, including corrupt governance and a lack of democratic accountability. During the 1980s and 1990s, under the authoritarian regime of Kenyan President Daniel arap Moi, environmental degradation became a tool for political power, as vast tracts of forested land were appropriated for the benefit of the political elite. Maathai's campaign against these illegal land acquisitions and deforestation efforts became a critical part of Kenya's pro-democracy movement. In one of her most publicized campaigns, Maathai mobilized Kenyans to prevent the construction of a high-rise office complex in Nairobi's Uhuru Park (Rawat & Gaurav, 2023). This green space was essential to Nairobi's ecosystem, and Maathai's protests drew international attention. Despite facing threats, arrests, and even physical assault by government forces, she successfully halted the project, solidifying her position as a national symbol of resistance and resilience.

In 2002, after years of struggle against the Moi government, Maathai entered the political arena, winning a parliamentary seat with a sweeping majority and later serving as Kenya's Assistant Minister for Environment, Natural Resources, and Wildlife. In this role, she advocated for sustainable policies, including reforestation, water conservation, and land rights for marginalized communities. Her involvement in politics provided her with a platform to integrate environmental conservation into national policy and to challenge the deeply entrenched systems of corruption that had long hindered Kenya's progress. Maathai's lifelong commitment to environmental and social justice culminated in 2004 when she became the first African woman to receive the Nobel Peace Prize. The Nobel Committee praised her approach as a "holistic model for sustainable development that connects democracy, human rights, and environmental protection." Maathai's receipt of the Nobel Prize was groundbreaking; it recognized the interdependence of environmental sustainability, peace, and human rights, a connection that had previously been underappreciated. This international recognition allowed Maathai to bring global attention to the environmental challenges facing Africa and to inspire other nations to consider ecological sustainability as a pathway to peace and stability.

Wangari Maathai's influence extends far beyond her lifetime. The Green Belt Movement remains a model of grassroots environmental activism, having expanded its programs to include civic education, climate change mitigation, and the promotion of women's rights. By the time of her passing in 2011, the organization had planted over 50 million trees in Kenya and provided a foundation for countless other conservation and social empowerment initiatives across Africa. Maathai's work continues to inspire activists worldwide, underscoring the power of individual and community action to effect systemic change.

In her writings, including *Unbowed: A Memoir* and *The Challenge for Africa*, Maathai linked Africa's ecological crisis to its colonial history and ongoing political challenges. She argued that Africa's path to sustainable development requires reclaiming its cultural and natural heritage and promoting self-reliance. Her call to "reclaim the land, reclaim the culture, and reclaim the future" resonates today, as African nations face the dual challenges of climate change and development. Maathai's vision for a sustainable future, in which environmental conservation, democracy, and social justice are inextricably linked, remains as relevant as ever. Her life's work exemplifies the power

of environmental activism to foster community empowerment, challenge political corruption, and promote a holistic model of sustainable development that respects both human and ecological rights. Through the Green Belt Movement, Maathai left a lasting legacy that will continue to shape environmental, social, and political landscapes across Africa and beyond.

WANGARI MAATHAI'S USE OF RHETORIC

In analyzing Wangari Maathai's 10 texts that constituted the data for this study, the researcher was able to surface the rhetorical appeals applied in the texts. The analysis revealed an initial total of 128 instances where Maathai used logos, ethos and pathos as rhetorical appeals. Of this total number, logos accounted for 58 instances, pathos accounted for 37, and ethos were 33. The results also showed instances where a combination of appeals was used such as pathos/ethos and logos/pathos where the speaker's arguments seem to have reflected elements of two appeals.

However, because the researcher observed that Maathai often repeated narratives, arguments and strategies in her speeches and writings, sometimes with slight variations, yet ensuring that the themes and messages remained the same, this necessitated a reduction of data (Miles and Huberman 1994, cited by Sugiyono 2014). The researcher therefore focused on rhetoric that contributed to identifying or enhancing Wangari Maathai's thesis; in building the theme of the texts; in making a strong or weak argument; and in supporting her environmental advocacy.

CLASSICAL RHETORICAL APPEALS

Using Logos Appeal: Excerpts and Themes

As a classical rhetorical appeal, logos focus on using facts and the "if and then" clause to explain a concept or elaborate on a message (Eco, 1986). Wangari Maathai used the logos appeal in 10 excerpts or instances of her speeches, lectures, and articles included in the study. Table 1 shows the excerpts in texts that apply the logos appeal.

The themes in using the logos appeal in Wangari Maathai's texts were categorized into physical environment, socio-cultural, and governance and leadership. Under physical environment, the specific messages included the use of biodegradable containers to reduce pollution, climate change, and environmental degradation. For the socio-cultural theme, the specific message was about imbibing indigenous cultural systems and values. Meanwhile, the governance and leadership theme emphasized donor commitment to research and development, low level of environmental education among policymakers, and little attention on preventive measures that will sustain the environment.

Physical Environment (using biodegradable instead of plastic containers)

Using the logos appeal, Wangari Maathai endorsed the use of biodegradable casings instead of plastic containers as evidenced in these lines:

...I immediately wanted to replace the plastic containers distributed by the Green Belt Movement for its tree planting campaign with such biodegradable casings. This would make a big contribution in reducing flimsy plastic bags that are also used to package goods. They end up as waste that we later see on trees and hedges, in rivers and soils, at dumpsites and even in the stomachs of domestic animals... (Text 1, lines 16-20).

This argument is put up to prove that she had a pliable and adaptable personality and disposition to other cultures and ways of doing things as long as they offer better options than those already known.

Physical Environment

The strength of her claim on environmental degradation is anchored on evident facts and the strength of reasonability. She depicts a stronger strength of logic with an appeal to her audience's ability to think rationally with the following argument to support the need to focus on the environment and its sustainability:

...Faced with the challenges of climate change, environmental degradation, food shortages, worsening poverty and the global financial downturn, it is ever more important that we double our efforts to protect and rehabilitate the environment, reduce emissions of greenhouse gases, and provide especially the smallholder farmers around the world with sustainable ways of increasing their production and meeting their livelihood needs... (Text 1, Lines 49-53).

The strength of this argument is anchored on 'small holder farmers around the world' to elicit resounding support from the audience and perhaps to strengthen the claim that her advocacy goes beyond Kenya and embraces Africa and other places where small holder farmers exist.

Socio-Cultural

Wangari Maathai explained about resource utilization from the socio-cultural perspective or theme in her texts by stating facts to encourage her audience to imbibe values and traditional practices as echoed in the following excerpt:

...In respect of the 3R campaign, allow me to introduce to you a Japanese concept known as Mottainai, which embraces not only the 3Rs, but also urges respect, gratitude and utilization of resources without wasting or over-consuming. The Mottainai concept is embedded in Japanese tradition and faith-based practices. Japanese children learn to be respectful, grateful and accountable to future generations even as they grow up. Such intergenerational responsibility is important and should guide our political and socio-economic decisions... (Text 1, Lines 28-33).

Wangari Maathai's explanation of the concept of sustainability was perhaps more potent here because her text performed the basic role of informing the audience on the range of possibilities that global/world cultures may offer in finding solutions to the issues of sustaining the environment. She directly hinges her argument on successful environmental sustainability on policies and traditions that support preservation and moderation.

Governance and Leadership

Wangari Maathai's further appealed to her audience's common sense to rally more support for her advocacy when she declared that:

...This is an area where donor agencies should be encouraged to upscale. This was also supported by the African Union Ministers of Agriculture, Land and Livestock, who at their meeting in Addis Ababa in April called for a scaling up of conservation agriculture and agroforestry. They also called for the development of a climate change adaptation framework for African agriculture. If the principles of agroforestry are to be applied to several countries in Africa through a massive up-scaling with real impact, it will require training and a huge extension effort with serious donor commitment... (Text 1, lines 128-134)

Perhaps, the 'serious donor commitment' was a signal leading to a stronger signal using logos appeal to express the policymakers' low environmental education as contained in the excerpt below:

...Therefore, policymakers need a new education and mindset so that they appreciate and accept that trees and bushes on road reserves are good for the

environment, eyes and mental health. The argument that vegetation in cities promotes insecurity is unbelievably simplistic and misleading: We cannot turn the country into a desert in the mistaken believe that we shall be safer in a concrete desert... (Text 1, lines 227-231)

The same tone of objectivity, boldness, and rationality resonated in her exposition of the realities of foreign aid to Africa. She demonstrated in the next two arguments that examples work more forcibly on the mind to drive arguments than precepts. She combined the elements of logic with rhetorical questions to drive home the point that there are no illusions about the hypocrisy, complicity, inconsistency and insincerity of global authorities in the poor human conditions of Kenya and the global South.

...For example, most foreign aid to Africa comes in form of curative social welfare programs such as famine relief, food aid, population control programs, refugee camps, peace-keeping forces and humanitarian missions. At the same time, hardly available are resources for preventive and sustainable human development programs such as functional education and training, development of infrastructure, institutional and capacity building, food production and processing, the promotion of creative innovations and entrepreneurship (Text 8, lines 1557-1565).

In another speech, she also reiterated the stance taken above in the following words:

...Equitable distribution of resources cannot be affected unless there is democratic space, which respects the rule of law and human rights. Such democratic space gives citizens an enabling environment to be creative and productive. What is clear is that there is a close linkage between sustainable management of resources and equitable distribution of the same on the one hand and democratic governance and peace on the other. These are the pillars of any stable and secure state. Such a state has the enabling environment for development. People who are denied the three pillars eventually become angry and frustrated and undermine peace and security in their neighborhoods and beyond (Text 3, Lines 580-591).

Wangari Maathai underscored her determination and her focus and her use of logos to pose a challenge to stakeholders by appealing to their logic and common sense. With the structure and claims of her arguments (logos), it appears she leaves the audience with little opportunities to have different perspectives because the arguments seem

Using Ethos Appeal:

The ethos appeal is a technique where the speaker persuades the audience by citing credible sources, asserts personal authority and expertise, or demonstrates a high sense of morality. Ethos also pertains to the mutual influence that the speaker and the audience have on each other (writingcenter.gmu; McKay and McKay, 2010). Six specific messages on community development were identified in Maathai's texts. These were as follows: 1) having a credible movement supported by royalty; 2) a community vision entrenched with people's empowerment; 3) close linkage among good governance, sustainable management of resources, and peace; 4) having a spokesperson or ambassador for environmental values in community development; and 5) people's participation in governance; and 6) identification with culture as a plus for commitment to values on African environment (also considered as a socio-cultural theme).

For governance and leadership, ethos was used to emphasize the following messages: 1) long-standing credibility, vision of democracy and peace for the sake of the environment; 2) reward for outstanding leadership as measure of credibility and trustworthiness; 3) requisite knowledge and experience relevant to vision of empowerment; and 4) credibility and trustworthiness on governance and leadership, peace, and democracy relevant to environment.

Under the theme Pan African perspective to development, only one message was cited, specifically good intent, high sense of moral value, and long-term commitment to the needs of Africa. Likewise, the specific message on the physical environment focused on the commitment to tree planting that is aligned with top priorities and vision for the environment.

Community Development

In her speech to the World Congress on Agroforestry, Wangari Maathai declared that: "...The Green Belt Movement provides the grassroots link and advocacy, and as you probably know, HSH The Prince of Monaco and I are honored to play the role of patrons..." (Text 1, Lines 41-43). Wangari Maathai not only took the opportunity to quickly introduce the organization she led but went ahead to establish it as an advocacy mission. She also used that moment to establish the strong affiliation of her organization to royalty. By doing this, she attempted to underscore the credibility of her organization but the reality of her advocacy role.

Credibility and authenticity and keen vision were equally marshalled in the next speech excerpt:

...The Movement also identifies and subsequently educates citizens about economic and political issues which form important linkages with environmental concerns, and which are likely to have a negative impact on the environment. This is done through seminars, workshops and exchange visits. It also addresses the role of the civil society in protecting the environment, developing a democratic culture, pursuing participatory development, promoting accountable and responsible governance, which puts its people first, protecting human rights and encouraging respect for the rule of law...

Her sense of morality and commitment is also emphasized thus:

...When you start doing this work, you do it with a very pure heart, out of compassion. Listen to the statement from our pamphlet: "The main objective of this organization is to raise the consciousness of our people to the level which moves them to do the right things for the environment because their hearts have been touched and their minds convinced to do the right things, because it is the only logical thing to do. The clarity of what you ought to do gives you courage, removes the fear, gives you the confidence to ask..." (Text 7, Lines 1177-1183).

While attempting to establish her credibility, it appears it is uppermost in Wangari Maathai's mind to underscore her requisite qualification for the vision and to find opportunities to sneak in her academic and professional background and other relevant experiences as preparations that have earned her the position of a rhetor for the environment. In this way, her expertise, personal authority and credibility are suggested and further enhanced. This could be garnered from the following excerpts:

...I draw upon my experiences in 2nd and 3rd UN Conferences on Women, my experience at various universities, the National Council of Women of Kenya and several non-governmental organizations (NGOs), especially the Green Belt Movement (GBM). The privilege of a higher education, especially outside Africa, broadened my original horizon and encouraged me to focus on the environment, women and development in order to improve the quality of life of people in my country in particular and in the African region in general... (Text 8, Lines 1278-1282).

...As I tried to encourage women and the African people in general to understand the need to conserve the environment, I discovered how crucial it is to return constantly to our cultural heritage... (Text 6, Lines 933-935).

Governance and Leadership

She indirectly asserted a long-standing credibility and brings a deeper insight into her broader vision of democracy and peace for the sake of the environment in this statement:

...Allow me to remind your excellences that when the Norwegian Nobel Committee honored me with the Nobel Peace Prize in 2004, it intended to send a new and historic message to the world: to rethink peace and security. It wanted to challenge the world to discover the close linkage between good governance, sustainable management of resources, and peace... (Text 2, Lines 347-350).

While receiving the Nobel Peace Prize Award, Wangari Maathai did not forget her commitment to Kenya and Africa and the world:

...Committee, Excellences, Ladies and gentlemen, I stand before you and the world humbled by this recognition and uplifted by the honor of being the 2004 Nobel peace Laureate. As the first African woman to receive this price, I accept it on behalf of the people of Kenya and Africa and indeed the whole world... (Text 5, Lines 853-866).

Her attempt to underline that she became the first African woman was not to be seen as a show of self-pride, but a strategy to lay a foundation of trustworthiness, credibility, and perhaps authority. Wangari Maathai also did not forget to identify herself with 'women's movements' in addition to her commitment to peace, democracy, and the environment for the purpose of establishing trust and credibility. She anchored this commitment with the endorsement of the Norwegian Nobel Committee;

...Those of us who have been working on peace, democratization, environment movements, in women's movements, we always felt that indeed these issues are related, but nobody could have said it so dramatically and with so much persuasion as the Norwegian Nobel Committee ... (Text 4, Lines 680-683).

Particular note may perhaps be taken of the iteration of her credentials and experiences in the first of the excerpts as the second excerpt serves to complement her 'experiences in the 2nd and 3rd UN Conferences on Women', 'the National Council of Women of Kenya', and her 'focus on the environment, women and development.'

Pan African Perspective to Development

Good intent, high sense of value and morality, as well as time tested commitment were echoed in these lines from her speech as keynote speaker at the 3rd Annual Nelson Mandela Lecture:

...During the last thirty years of working with the Green Belt Movement I saw the need to give our people values. The man whose birthday we celebrate today exemplifies these values. For example, the value of service for the common good. How shall we motivate our men and women in the region, willing to sacrifice and volunteer so that others may have it better? The values of commitment, persistence and patience, to stay with it until the goal is realized. The love for the land and desire to protect it from desertification and other destructive processes... (Text 3, Lines 535-541).

Physical Environment

Wangari Maathai did not forget to bring in the positive impact of her advocacy for tree planting and the acceptance and appreciation of that role by the appropriate authorities and stakeholders when she stated that:

"...It is encouraging that the FAO statistics indicate that the planting of trees on farms is increasing even as trees in forests are decreasing due to deforestation..." (Text1, Lines 60-62).

Maathai revealed in these lines her sensitivity to the need for associating with credible sources for trustworthiness. She appears to have successfully utilized the ethos appeal specifically to introduce the Green Belt Movement as her organization and establish its mission and its affiliations to credible sources. The ethos also became an avenue to showcase her high sense of values, her advocacy role, as well as her long-standing credibility.

Other Rhetorical Strategies

Wangari Maathai's also employed strategies such as: 1) biblical allusion; 2) rhetorical questions; 3) metaphor; and 4) narrative. In using the rhetorical strategies mentioned above, Wangari Maathai reiterated the existing themes in her texts, namely, community development, governance and leadership, and socio-cultural. The themes were used mostly solely or in combination as observed in one of the excerpts (Table 4). The specific messages embedded in the use of other rhetorical strategies also reinforced the previously identified messages in the use of classical rhetorical appeals.

Biblical Allusion

Wangari Maathai's determination to press home her point on ensuring the defeat of disempowerment led her to the Holy Bible for a story that she considered was a clear demonstration and perhaps a perfect example of liberation. To her, liberation was not about joining the crowd to offer the 'beggar' coins for perhaps his daily upkeep, but it was about using what was in the people's full power to change, to raise the beggar from the ground of his despondency and dependence to a position of wholeness and true freedom.

...Such disempowerment and the triumph over it remind me of a story in the Bible that I love. (It is in Acts 3:1–10.) It's the story where Peter and John went to the temple for prayer. As they approached, they came across a beggar, who was crippled since birth. The beggar must have had all the characteristics of a disempowered person: poor, self-effacing, dejected, low self-esteem, no self-pride and no sense of well-being. He did not even dare to look up to the people from whom he was begging. He was too ashamed of his status. The Bible says that he bowed his head his face and stretched his hand for alms. Peter and John, upon seeing him in that dehumanized and humiliated state, said to him "Look up"! That must have been a bit startling, because people did not usually talk to him. Peter went on, "Silver and gold we do not have, but what we have we give to you." And, taking him by the right-hand Peter helped the lame man stand up saying, "In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk!" And much to his surprise, he felt his limbs get strong and he rose up and walked forward with confidence and pride. The Bible says he went with Peter and John into the temple jumping and praising God." He was an empowered man: no longer a beggar, no longer dehumanized. ... (Text 3, lines 615-635).

The healing of the beggar by Peter and John by giving him the confidence to rise and walk was related to Maathai's conviction that liberation was much more than efforts towards daily sustenance and was firmly grounded in freedom from 'begging', as would be seen in the story:

Rhetorical Questions

Three excerpts on using rhetorical questions in Wangari Maathai's texts focused on the theme governance and leadership as indicated below:

'...So why are her people so poor?... (Text 3, line 526)

'...What shall we do to conserve this forest?... (Text 6, line 933)

...how can you be in a continent that is so rich and have people who are so poor?... (Text 10, Line 2450).

On the other hand, one excerpt was noted which reflected the theme on socio-cultural with emphasis on losing the warmth of human relationship in caring for the environment:

‘What happened to the compassion, to the care, to the sense of service that must have dominated that period when those Nuns lived?’ (Text 10, line 2383)

The rhetorical questions that Wangari Maathai applied in her texts were seen as being consistent with her advocacy, thesis, and purpose. They underscored her challenge to the audience to search for solutions to the environmental issues and concerns that have affected the common man.

Metaphor

The researcher found two excerpts in which metaphor was used in Wangari Maathai’s text. What is perhaps worthy of note in one of these two excerpts is the artful infusion of the metaphor by which Wangari Maathai made her point to the audience. The metaphors seemed to give unusual depth and knowledge to Wangari Maathai’s intent and message. It is believed that the metaphors will help the audience to recognize and comprehend her message. The references therefore served to trigger and enliven the audience and persuade them to take action. She also conveyed her tripod stand of peace, democratic space, and environment in the following way:

...I was inspired by a metaphor that I have been using. The metaphor is an African, traditional stool with three legs. A traditional African stool is actually made from one log and then three legs are chiseled out and a seat is also chiseled out in the middle so that when you sit, you sit on this basin, which rests on three legs. I compare the three legs to the three pillars that the Norwegian Nobel Committee identified. One leg is that of peace. The other is that of democratic space, where rights are respected women’s rights, human rights, environmental rights, children’s rights, where there is space for everybody, where minorities and the marginalized can find space. The third leg is the environment, that needs to be managed sustainably, equitably, and in a transparent way, the resources of which also need to be shared equitably... (Text 4, Lines 684-693).

In this excerpt, she displayed a skillful use of metaphor to ensure understanding, retention, and perhaps sympathy with her advocacy. This was evident in the stool imagery with which she conveyed her tripod stand of peace, democratic space, and environment. She chose the stool because of its universality to all cultures and builds a ‘story’ around it to enhance a better understanding of her message and intent.

Narrative

Wangari Maathai’s use of imagery and storytelling skills take a new turn and introduce the audience to the humorous, simple, and unassuming personality of Wangari Maathai as she used humor as an ice breaker and a preparation for her serious advocacy. It might seem from the story that she understands the need to first make her audience comfortable before going ahead to more serious matters.

...And I just want to share with you my experience when we landed in New York. I say coming to New York was like landing on the moon. Fortunately, I was constantly in the company of my friend Agatho Wangeci with whom I had studied at St Loreto Limuru. These were the schools in Kenya, but both of us were to attend Scholastica together, so together we figured, we decided to figure out this strange city called New York and share our experiences as we walked in the busy streets of New York we were lucky not to be knocked out since we spend

most of the time staring up at the skyscrapers. We seemed to sway in the wind and touch the clouds. It was amazing. ... In New York I rode in elevators to the 20th on 30th floors at lightning speeds. I was convinced my stomach and heart would not arrive at the same time as the rest of me. How relieved I was when I reach the ground floor again and got out...I have never seen escalators before in my life...it reminded me of a dragon, and I thought ...well everybody else is stepping on it so I better do the same. While I made it safely to the next floor, one of my shoes didn't, and I looked back wondering how I would ever recover it. I had no idea there was another escalator going down on the other side (Text 9, Lines 2313-2339).

What was perhaps Wangari Maathai's trademark or signature story that wrapped up her thesis and purpose in her texts was the story of the Hummingbird. It was a story that featured prominently in her speeches and seemed to capture the depth and essence of her advocacy, as well her perspective of the stance of several stakeholders to the challenges of rallying support for development. What seems ingenious about the story is that it is conveyed with the image of a hummingbird, a North American bird. This choice of imagery that was consistent with the knowledge and experiences of her audience and demonstrated Wangari Maathai's strategy in conveying her messages with instruments, objects, and discoveries that embodied the experiential level of her audience:

...there was this in the forest, huge fire raging in every direction. And all the animals came out of the forest scared stiff, worried, feeling helpless and they all stood by the edge of the forest completely feeling like there was nothing they could do about the fire. It was too big, raging too high. It would kill them. It would finish them. All they could do was watch, except this little Hummingbird. The Hummingbird said, "I'm going to do something about this fire. So the little bird flew as fast as it could to the nearby stream and picked one drop of water, flew back and put it on the raging fire and it rushed back again and picked a drop of water and brought it and put it on the fire and all the mean time the other animals are watching and they are amazed that the Hummingbird is trying to do what seemed to them to be impossible and the little bird is just going up and down, as often as it can, as fast as it can, not paying attention to all the discouragement that is coming from some of these animals. Some of them with the big beaks that could have brought much more water than the little beak of the Hummingbird. And they were telling the Hummingbird there is nothing they can do about this fire, 'the fire is too big, you are too little. You have little wings. You have a little beak; you have a little body. There's hardly anything you can do to this fire. You might as well come and join us', but the little bird wouldn't hear of it. The little bird just kept on going up and down as fast as it can. The little bird said 'I am doing the best that I can. For me that is the greatest thing because sometimes you feel you are so little, you are so helpless and if you can only have the confidence, the determination, the commitment of the hummingbird, you too can say I am doing the best I can (Text 9, lines 2342-2369).

Apart from the classical strategies of logos, pathos and ethos, the use of narrative remained most central in the other strategies used by Maathai to convey her advocacy. The reason perhaps is not far-fetched. Narratives, as could be seen in the highlighted excerpts, play the role of exemplars, case studies, eyewitness accounts, or serve as testimonials. They usually follow inductive arguments. They often help in increasing recall, easing comprehension and also provide a depiction of experiences of the speaker especially, and legitimizes the speech and its message. According to Dahlstrom (2019), "narratives are intrinsically persuasive because they describe a particular experience

rather than general truths. Narratives have no need to justify the accuracy of their claims, the story itself demonstrates the claims.” Duarte (2010) reinforces this viewpoint by offering a broader context: narratives play a vital role in fostering trust with an audience, enhancing knowledge retention, and motivating audiences to learn and take action. Stories, being naturally engaging for the human brain, serve as a bridge between logical reasoning (logos) and emotional appeal (pathos). When an audience is emotionally attuned to facts, the likelihood of them responding and acting on the information presented significantly increases.

Thesis and Purpose of Maathai’s Texts

To identify the thesis and purpose of the texts, the researcher was guided by the following question: What is the overall argument of Wangari Maathai? Wangari Maathai’s arguments became clearer from earlier excerpts and findings on her use of classical appeals and other strategies?

Wangari Maathai’s argument in the texts for this study was that environmental challenges are more pronounced on the common man. She was convinced that solutions to environmental issues and concerns need attention, enlightenment, and involvement of the common man, but equally requires the dedication and true commitment of global stakeholders. Such sentiments are prevalent in the following excerpts:

...If it is a crime to kill half a million people in Rwanda in 1994, it should be a crime to steal millions of dollars from ordinary Africans, thereby causing the death to millions of innocent people through sustained hunger and malnutrition, lack of adequate health care, and inflationary prices which make it impossible for millions of Africans to provide their families with basic needs. Why is this type of a crime tolerated by the international community? Why is the victim to blame while the culprit goes free and lives in comfort?

... There are no funds for development of their own cultural, spiritual and social programs which would empower people and release their creative energy. Such programs find sympathizers... (Text 8, lines 1557-1565).

In the context of gender and development, Wangari Maathai views the African woman is akin to the window of the home of the common man. The African woman has a role to play and deserves a central place and attention in the search for solutions to the environment. Wangari Maathai holds the view that sustainable and transparent management of the environment can only succeed where there is peace, true democracy, and committed leadership. She believes fairness and justice are evident only when there is an equitable distribution of available resources. This means that sustained development, good governance, and peace should go together.

Consequently, Wangari Maathai’s used her speeches, lectures, and articles for two purposes: 1) to share the realities of environmental challenges especially on the most vulnerable in Kenya, the rest of Africa, and the world; and 2) to galvanize the thoughts of stakeholders along the path of visible change. She was seen as committed to influencing stakeholders on the environment with an advocacy that combines networking and a subtle pressure.

Characteristics of Feminine Rhetoric

The study sought to identify what characteristics of feminine rhetoric were manifested in the texts of Wangari Maathai. The researcher discovered a preponderance of feminine characteristics according to Campbell (1989). The characteristics according to Campbell (1989) are: 1) use of personal experience and extended narrative; 2) creation of inductive arguments or reasoning by the speaker; 3) addressing the audience as peers; 4) identification and encouraging the audience; and 5) inviting the audience as peers (Table

5). In the search for these characteristics, the researcher was able to identify the following excerpts that illustrate four of the five characteristics: 1) use of personal experience and extended narrative (14 excerpts); 2) creation of inductive arguments or reasoning by the speaker (51 excerpts); 3) addressing the audience as peers (9 excerpts); and 4) identification and encouraging the audience (2 excerpts).

There was no particular excerpt in Wangari Maathai's delivery to suggest her invitation of the audience. However, all of the excerpts found to support 'addressing the audience as peers' also seem to infer her 'inviting the audience as peers. Perhaps it may be implied that since her advocacy is geared towards stimulating her audience to action, this is already an invitation.

Use of Personal Experience and Extended Narrative

At her Nobel lecture in 2004, Wangari Maathai strategically concludes her speech with a personal experience from her childhood:

...As I conclude, I reflect on my own childhood experience when I would visit a stream next to our home to fetch water for my mother. I would drink water straight from the stream because it was clean. Playing among the arrow roots I tried in vain to pick up strains of frog eggs believing they were beads with which I could adorn myself. But every time I put my little fingers under these beads they would break, later I saw thousands of tadpoles, black energetic and wiggling through the clear water against the background of the brown earth. This is the world I inherited from my mother. Today 50 years later my stream has dried up. Women walk longer distances to fetch water which is not always clean, and the children may never play with the tadpoles and frog eggs and they may never know what they lost. The challenge as I stand here today is to restore these homes for the tadpoles and give back to the children... (Text 5, Lines 916-926).

This story was successfully woven to become a wake-up call for action for the beauty of the past to be restored so that generations to come may enjoy the same beauty. Maathai's sincerity, truthfulness, and the use of her story may have succeeded in winning the compassion of the audience and their hearts to her cause. This is a feature of feminine writing. The picture of vulnerability, poverty, and search for help becomes more realistic with this unusual stance of the speaker. While she achieved the power of drawing the people closer to her to earn her trust and believe in her authority as depicted in the shared experience, her level of authority and trust increased in the eyes of her audience because the rhetorical strategy showed that she had the requisite ability to solve problems and stand by her principles.

The next extended narrative of Wangari Maathai's lived experience may prove beyond all reasonable doubt that she has the ability to solve problems based on principles:

...This is what happened between me and President Moi. In 1989, the president wanted to take over Uhuru Park, the only park left in Nairobi. He was going to build the highest building in Africa, sixty-two stories. Next to the skyscraper he was going to put a four-story statue of (so you could pat his head from the fourth floor). All of downtown Nairobi would have had to be restructured. That building would have been so intimidating, that even if some land in the small park remained, no one would have dared come near it. Very intimidating. So, it was completely wrong. It also would have been an economic disaster, as was borrowing money to do it, putting us in greater debt. It was truly a white elephant. But he wanted it because it was a personal aggrandizement. And so, we raised objections, and said this was the only park that we had in the city where people who have no money could come. Not even a policeman could ask you to move; it

was an open space. A lot of people joined in and agreed, even those people who were going to invest, who then decided that it was probably not a very good idea. We staged a protest in the park and were beaten by the police. We were only a small group of women, because, at that time, in 1989, there was a lot of fear. I had taken the matter to court, arguing that this park belonged to the people and that it could not be privatized. The president was only a public trustee, so for him to now go and take what had been entrusted to him, to take it, and privatize it, was criminal. We lost the case, which in the court meant that we had no business raising the issue and complaining about the park. But we won in the end because those who were providing the money withdrew, due to the outcry from the public. And members of parliament actually suspended business to discuss the Green Belt Movement and myself, recommending that the Green Belt Movement should be banned as a subversive organization. They did a lot of dirty campaigning to discredit us, including dismissing us as, “a bunch of divorcées and irresponsible women.” Well, I gave them a piece of my mind, that people kept talking about for the rest of the time. “Whatever else you may think about the women who run the Green Belt Movement,” I said “we are dealing here with privatizing or not privatizing a public park. We are dealing with the rights of the public and the rights of the people. These are the kind of issues that require the anatomy of whatever lies above the neck...” (Text 7, Lines 1195- 1225).

Wangari Maathai shared her plight and revealed how militant a cause could get, as well as her zeal and determination in ensuring that her vision for a better life for the people materializes even in the face of intimidation, blackmail, and distraction. She sent a strong message of resilience in the face of incompetent authority. It is a ‘no retreat and no surrender’ experience but the capstone of the excerpt is that it speaks of the experiences of ‘the women who run the Green Belt Movement.’ The audience are poised to see the strength, capabilities, and bravery of the leader of a women’s movement. The story paints a portrait of a resilient woman who remains steadfast in the face of challenges, as highlighted by Museta (2017). Personal experiences and detailed narratives often function as compelling evidence to reinforce the speaker’s arguments. These elements are intended to educate the audience while also allowing the speaker to deviate subtly from the direct message. Rather than conveying ideas explicitly, extended narratives and personal experiences are used to illustrate points, ultimately enhancing the speaker's persuasive efforts. They act as supporting evidence designed to convince the audience.

Creation of Inductive Arguments or Reasoning by the Speaker

A closer study of the following excerpts reveal that they are not just inductive reasoning but also that they have a purpose and confirm held views on feminine rhetoric style:

...Without the political will and commitment, not only are we endangering our water systems, biodiversity, tourism and agriculture but also, in not such a distant future, pyrethrum, wheat, tea and coffee industries... (Text 1, lines 192-194)

Maathai makes a conclusion on endangering water system that goes beyond what is in the premises of her argument. In the next excerpt, she achieves her induction by enumeration:

...Without skills, people will always find themselves locked out of productive, rewarding economic activities that would give them a better share of their national wealth. They find themselves unemployed or underemployed and they are certainly underpaid. They get trapped in a vicious cycle of poverty and sometimes crime (Text 3, Lines 564-570).

In the following excerpt, she achieved this by description and association, by not only likening the environment to a system that is central to her audience’s life and is a part of it:

...The environment is an intricate way joined, is related, is intertwined, in our lives on an everyday basis. It is not something we think about or talk about or learn about sometimes. The air we breathe, the water we drink, the food we eat everything we do has to do with the environment. We need to take this concept and make it holistic, so that we can think in a holistic manner, and learn to protect the base on which everything else depends (Text 4, Lines 798-803).

Addressing/Inviting the Audience as Peers

By addressing the audience as her peers, Wangari Maathai is seen to have chosen this style to relate to the listener and use that opportunity to further stimulate their thought for

action. However, the strength of this device is the use of pronouns such as 'we, 'us' as can be seen from the examples below:

...The long-term solution is for us to go back to the basics... (Text 4, Line 797).

...If we do so, then we are prepared to capture that image of the traditional African stool with its three legs: democracy, peace, and sustainable management of our resources. Then we can have a peaceful, secure base upon which development can take place... (Text 4, Lines 849-851).

...We value the opportunity to participate at the commemorations of the May 18 Democratic Movement and honor and respect those who lost their lives in search of democracy... (Text 2, Lines 329-330).

...We commend the leadership of the former President Kim Dae-Jung for the progress that continues to be made to realize democratic governance, peace, and reunification of the two Koreas... (Text 2, Lines 337-339).

...We need to strengthen those three pillars... (Text 4, Line 721).

...Those of us who have been working on peace, democratization, environment movements, in women's movements, we always felt that indeed these issues are related... (Text 4, line 680-681).

This style of relating to the audience draws the audience closer to what might seem a natural conversation. It might make the audience feel like they are having a conversation or chat with a close friend. All of this helps the audience the position of the speaker and make them want to attribute more credibility to her and more validity for what she is saying.

Identification and Encouraging the Audience

As a goal of the feminine speaker, Maathai used this style to identify with her audience's interests, values, or personalities. By doing this, Maathai seems able to achieve a degree of inclusivity. In the process, Maathai achieves a central aim of inspiring/motivating, encouraging or empowering the audience as the next excerpt proves:

...Do not be overwhelmed. I want to encourage you to be hummingbirds (the hummingbird story) ... (Text 1, Line 316).

While identifying with and encouraging her audience, Maathai is also inspiring them and looking for areas of commonality or commonness that she can use to seal a bond that will elicit the commitment of the audience to her goals:

...And I was personally very intrigued yesterday when we arrived at the Mirage Hotel and as soon as we went to the reception I noticed that this was somewhere where religious people had been and there were pictures of nuns almost petrified and I looked to the right and there was a little chapel and we went into that little Chapel and I couldn't help move back in time and realize that this is a place where there were people who believed in something, who served people ,who needed support ,who needed help, who needed service and that they gave it very

generously out of love for greater things mostly out of love for God, and throughout the evening my mind kept on going back to this time in the past when these nuns lived in this beautiful building which has now been transformed into a hotel and I kept wondering what they would think if they were to come back they were alive today and saw the kind of life that we now live (Text 10, Lines 2374-2387).

According to Doran, (2010), sociolinguists have characterized female language as emotional, pleasing, supportive, and conciliatory. This language is used as tool to invite audience or people into conversations, to address the audience as peers and signify common identity with them. This language was claimed to have developed through women's activities such as gossiping and telling bedtime stories. The descriptive anecdotes and personal disclosures that seeped through their personal experiences and extended narratives were meant to establish feelings of shared experience and feelings of intimacy.

Maathai's feminine rhetoric seem to reflect how modern social contexts seem to have spawned brand new rhetorical challenges for feminism in the form of confrontation and public protest.

THEORETICAL AND PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS OF WANGARI MAATHAI'S ENVIRONMENTAL ADVOCACY TEXTS

Wangari Maathai's rhetorical approach in her environmental advocacy provides both theoretical insights and practical applications for communication in development (Griffin & Pindi, 2018). The classical rhetorical appeals—logos, ethos, and pathos—are often regarded as relics of ancient times, yet they retain substantial relevance in modern development communication. While scholars have moved toward newer methodologies, classical appeals still offer a foundational toolkit for building credibility, empathy, and logical coherence in communication. Development practitioners today are tasked not only with technical expertise but also with relational “people skills” that are crucial for impactful advocacy. The classical appeals thus form an arsenal of “native intelligence” for change agents, equipping them with the judgment, prudence, empathy, and credibility needed to effectively address complex social and environmental issues.

THEORIZING RHETORIC IN DEVELOPMENT COMMUNICATION

Based on Maathai's environmental advocacy, this analysis proposes theoretical assumptions on the role of rhetoric in communicating for development, particularly through the use of rhetorical appeals and feminine rhetorical strategies. These assumptions offer a foundation for further qualitative and quantitative research into rhetoric's effectiveness in communication for social change:

1. Rhetoric as a Behavioral Change Tool

Rhetoric provides an alternative method for communicating environmental messages and influencing behavioral change, acting as a bridge between advocacy and community engagement.

2. Facilitating Environmental Learning

3. By using rhetorical techniques, communicators can make environmental concepts, values, and principles more understandable and relatable, aiding in public awareness and education.

4. Emotional Engagement for Stakeholder Comprehension

Environmental messages benefit from emotional resonance; pathos, in particular, can amplify stakeholder understanding and foster a personal connection to environmental issues.

5. Resource Awareness and Mobilization

Rhetoric aids communicators in identifying available resources, potential obstacles, and community assets that can support environmental advocacy.

6. Identifying Impacted Stakeholders

Rhetoric helps delineate who is most affected by environmental concerns, providing clarity on the issues and stakeholders involved, which is vital for targeted advocacy.

7. Revealing Political, Cultural, and Social Barriers

Effective use of rhetoric exposes underlying social, political, and cultural barriers to environmental solutions, guiding advocates in developing contextually relevant strategies.

PRACTICAL CONTRIBUTIONS OF RHETORIC IN ENVIRONMENTAL COMMUNICATION

The analysis of Maathai's use of rhetorical appeals offers actionable guidance for development communicators to integrate ethos, logos, and pathos in their environmental messages:

1. Using Ethos Appeal

Ethos establishes the communicator's credibility and builds trust. For environmental advocates, ethos allows the audience to perceive the communicator as knowledgeable, sincere, and invested. When Maathai's values and commitment to environmental stewardship are expressed, it strengthens audience trust and reinforces her message's authenticity.

2. Using Logos Appeal

Logos demonstrates an advocate's knowledge and expertise, essential for convincing audiences of the environmental message's validity. Maathai used logos by presenting factual evidence and logical conclusions, which are critical for informing audiences and providing a grounded basis for the urgency of environmental issues.

3. Using Pathos Appeal

Pathos connects the audience emotionally, drawing them into the message's human impact. Maathai's use of pathos allowed her to convey the personal and communal costs of environmental degradation, appealing to empathy and shared concern for future generations.

4. Other Rhetorical Strategies

Additional strategies such as rhetorical questions, metaphors, personal narratives, and allusions enhance Maathai's rhetorical style, often serving as mnemonic devices that deepen audience engagement. These techniques highlight the real-world impact of environmental issues, making abstract concepts relatable and actionable.

FEMININE CHARACTERISTICS OF RHETORIC IN MAATHAI'S ADVOCACY

Feminine rhetorical characteristics, such as sincerity, truthfulness, and personal narratives, are integral to Maathai's advocacy (Worthington, 1999). These elements build a sense of camaraderie and relatability, inviting the audience to empathize with and invest in her environmental message. By positioning herself as a peer, Maathai achieved inclusivity, inspiring a shared commitment to environmental action.

1. Empathy and Relatability

Maathai's personal stories of environmental struggles in Kenya convey a shared experience, fostering compassion and understanding. This "peer-based" communication reinforces a sense of equality between Maathai and her audience, motivating collective engagement.

2. **Inductive Reasoning**

Maathai often used inductive reasoning to create relatable arguments. By drawing from her own experiences, she highlighted common challenges faced by communities, allowing her audience to see the broader relevance of her local insights.

PROPOSED FRAMEWORK FOR RHETORIC IN ENVIRONMENTAL ADVOCACY

This framework synthesizes rhetoric, feminism, and environmental advocacy based on Maathai's work in Kenya and East Africa, aiming to outline how rhetoric can be used to advance environmental advocacy and communication. Though context-specific, the framework underlines rhetoric as a legitimate approach in development communication.

1. **Primary Purpose and Function**

The primary purpose of rhetoric in environmental advocacy is to raise awareness, sharing realities of environmental challenges and spurring stakeholders to take action.

2. **Expected Outcomes**

The application of rhetoric is expected to impact policy, protect the environment, foster sustainable livelihoods, and ensure long-term environmental conservation.

3. **Key Stakeholders**

Effective environmental rhetoric engages communities, governments, the private sector, donors, and other relevant actors, ensuring a collaborative response to environmental issues.

4. **Core Content Themes**

The content focuses on the physical environment, governance and leadership, community development, and socio-cultural dynamics, all tied to stakeholder interests and addressing who is impacted, the causes and consequences of environmental issues, and possible solutions.

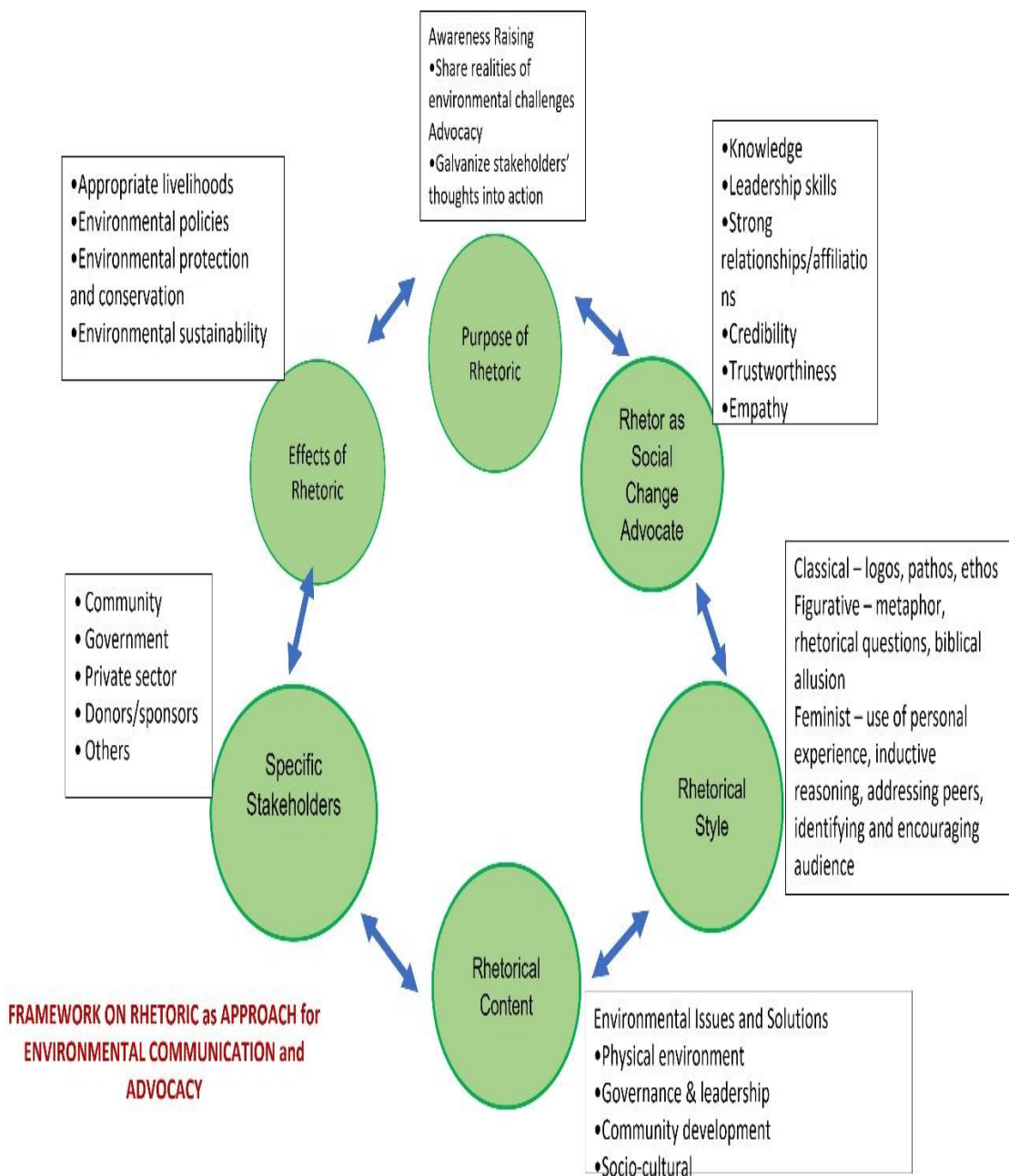
5. **Rhetorical Style**

Classical appeals (logos, pathos, ethos) and supporting rhetorical strategies (e.g., metaphors, rhetorical questions, allusions) are combined with feminine characteristics such as personal experience and empathy, fostering a more inclusive approach to advocacy.

6. **Qualities of the Advocate**

Effective rhetoric in environmental advocacy requires communicators to embody knowledge, credibility, empathy, and trustworthiness. Maathai exemplified these qualities, presenting herself as a trustworthy advocate with a deep understanding of both the environmental issues and her audience's cultural context.

This framework highlights how rhetorical approaches, rooted in both classical theory and modern feminine characteristics, can be leveraged by environmental advocates to communicate effectively, bridge cultural divides, and inspire meaningful action in the pursuit of environmental sustainability.



CONCLUSION

This study underscores the importance of rhetoric as a powerful tool in development communication, particularly for environmental advocacy. Rather than viewing classical appeals like logos, ethos, and pathos as outdated, development communication should embrace these rhetorical strategies as essential elements that deepen understanding, enhance empathy, and foster trust between practitioners and communities. Effective communication in development relies on “people skills” that acknowledge and respect cultural dynamics, ensuring that messages resonate with stakeholders and support meaningful social change.

Furthermore, incorporating a feminine rhetorical style—marked by emotional engagement, supportiveness, and conciliation—can create a more inclusive, relatable,

and persuasive communication style that aligns well with community-centered advocacy. This approach facilitates not only individual empathy but also a collaborative spirit that bridges stakeholders, enhancing receptiveness and commitment to environmental action.

From a policy perspective, there is a need for comprehensive guidelines that define the role of environmental communication within a broader framework that includes governance, socio-cultural dimensions, and community development. Such policies can ensure that environmental advocacy is not restricted to physical issues alone but embraces a holistic view that addresses the interconnected challenges communities face. Grounded in good governance and peace, this policy framework would provide practitioners with a clearer understanding of their scope and empower them to advocate for sustainable and impactful environmental solutions.

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Speech/Article and Date

1. Keynote address at the Second World Congress of Agroforestry in Nairobi, Kenya August 24, 2009.
2. Sustained Development, Democracy, and Peace in Africa delivered in in Gwangju, South Korea. June 16, 2006.
3. Rise Up and Walk Speech during The Third Annual Nelson Mandela Lecture in Johannesburg, South Africa July 19, 2005.
4. Inaugural World Food Law Distinguished Lecture in Howard University, Washington DC May 10, 2005
5. Nobel Lecture during the Nobel Peace Prize ceremony in Oslo, Norway. December 10, 2004.
6. The Cracked Mirror article written for *Resurgence* magazine (UK). November 11, 2004.
7. Speak Truth to Power This article is taken from *Speak Truth to Power*, a book on activists around the world and edited by Kerry Kennedy May 4, 2000.
8. Bottlenecks to Development in Africa in Beijing China August 30, 1995.
9. Chicago Humanities Festival Presents: Wangari Maathai (A Chicago Humanities Festival talk by Kenyan politician and environmental activist Wangari Maathai.) Source(<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NR5pYkClsfE>)
10. Wangari Maathai's Speech at World Forum Lille opening session on October 9, 2008. Source (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mSYcmaPRRjU&t=27s>)