

ASSESSMENT OF PUBLIC AWARENESS AND KNOWLEDGE OF MEDIA CAMPAIGNS ON ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES IN SOUTH-SOUTH ZONE

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Abstract

This article examines public awareness and knowledge of media campaigns on environmental issues in south-south states Nigeria. It argues that media campaigns are strong instrument in public awareness on environmental issues. However the remarkable progress made by media in providing environmental information in Nigeria, there are still substantial constraints to the effective management and development of the environment. The mismanagement of environment in South-South geopolitical zones has literally contributed to the problem of erosion and deforestation which has lead to deterioration of the environs. The study was anchored on two media theories- attitude change theory and social responsibility theory. Data were carefully collected through the instrumentality of questionnaire and were analyzed using tables, bar and pie charts. Findings revealed that South-south populaces were aware of sensitization campaigns about environmental management issues. It also revealed that they have a good knowledge and that their attitude in regards to environmental management has changed positively as a result of the media campaigns. Based on the findings, useful recommendations were made such as the media should not down play the issue of environmental hazards. They should play the agenda function by emphasizing on the effects of environmental degradation.

Keywords: Public Awareness, Media Campaigns, Environment Management, South-south Zone, Communication

Introduction

Environmental management that is socially relevant requires a socially aware population, as well as the means to direct government and private actions with consistency. This in turn, requires a strengthened formal education system that integrates both the individual citizens and society into content where environmental science can play a role. According to Day (2000: 79), Communications campaigns are varied, multi faceted, highly planned, and strategically assembled media symphonies designed to increase awareness, inform, or change behaviour in target audiences. It is no wonder that environmental communicators seek to harness this powerful aimed at informing and changing public opinion. Increasingly, mass media and social organizations have a large, more positive role to play in the dissemination, investigation and use of environmental guidelines and values. At the same time, these two components constitute the most effective mechanism for promoting concern for environmental quality. Likewise, legislation that takes a global approach and which has social consensus, supports the objective of maintaining the quality of life.

The Nigerian environment today presents a grim litany of woes. Every state suffers from one form of environmental problem or the other in varying degree. Take for instance in the South-south geopolitical states of Nigeria, the States are being literally ‘blown away’ by wind, erosion and the deforestation problems. For example, in Cross River State alone, more than 29% of the state is under tropical high forest, rich in biodiversity and economically valuable timber and non-timber forest products. Most of this forest is however, under the direct jurisdiction of the Federal Government of Nigeria as part of the National Park system and is closed to both community and state utilization. This has placed increasing pressure on the remaining forest outside the park, and both community forest (traditional/communally-owned forest areas) and the state forest reserves have suffered significant loss and degradation over the last couple of years owing to rapid farmland expansion and illegal logging. Also, the urban areas are being threatened by pollution of air and water and improper disposal of solid waste, plagued by soil erosion, deforestation, bush burning to mention but a few. (Uwem, 1997).

In the same vein, poverty and illiteracy are identified causes as well as consequences of environmental deterioration. The high level of poverty and illiteracy in this part of Nigeria (i.e. south-south geopolitical zone) is directly linked to the current level of environmental pollution and deterioration. The poor and illiterate are often more interested in issues related to their daily survival than environmental management; thus, lack of interest and awareness often lead to more reckless environmental behavior

which in turn breeds more environmental problems and leads to a vicious cycle of poverty. (Ekpenyong, n.d).

Apparently, the need to protect our environment is pertinent. This certainly led to the United Nigeria Conference on Environment ‘Stockholm Conference’ and the United Nigeria Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED). The conference came up with AGENDA 21 which spelt out the strategies for improving the quality of the environment. The document emphasized the need for environmental education as a weapon that could be used by the nation to arouse people’s consciousness, positively charge their attitude and instill in them those values and skills that can promote effective environmental management (UNESCO, 1992:13).

The public therefore, has the right to access environmental information held by public authority and making information about the environment publicly available to the media essential for achieving sustainable development (EIR, 2002:25); with access to environmental information, the people have full knowledge of the implications of their activities on the environment and are able to participate more effectively in decision making process that affect the environment (UNESCO, 1992: 14).

Statement Of Problems

Over the years, the media have been seen to be an important tool in creating awareness, informing and educating the masses on key issues that is paramount to the society. In spite of the remarkable progress made in providing environmental information in Nigeria, there are still substantial constraints to the effective management and development of the environment. These include uncoordinated policies and legal instruments, trees cutting, over grazing of pasture-land, weak data base, inadequate enforcement, institutional conflicts, and most importantly, ignorance of environmental management strategies. The mismanagement of environment in South-south geo-political zones has literally contributed to the problem of erosion and deforestation which has lead to deterioration of the environs. Recognizing the enormity of this threat to the society, the researchers deemed it fit to carry out this study which cardinally sought to finding out the extent of public awareness and knowledge of media campaigns on environmental issues.

Objectives Of Study

The specific objectives of this study were to:

1. To determine the level of awareness on environmental management among the people of South-south Nigeria.
2. To establish whether the knowledge level of the people in south-south Nigeria has increased due to their exposure to media.
3. To ascertain the attitude of the South-south people towards environmental management.

4. To identify the preferred medium to effective environment management by indigenes of the South-south states.

Research Questions

The following research questions emanated from the stated statement of problems/research objectives.

1. What is the level of awareness on environmental management among the people of the south-south geo-political zone of Nigeria?
2. Has the knowledge level of the indigenes in the south-south states increased due to their exposure to the media?
3. What is the attitude of the South-south states indigenes towards environmental management?
4. What is the preferred medium by indigenes of south-south Nigeria on environment management?

Significance Of Study

The significance of this study will be anchored on three major areas namely, the academic significance, the professional significance and the theoretical significance.

Academically: There are few works done in regards to the role the media have played in environment management in our society. This study will add to the works done earlier on this. It will also serve as a reference materials to those that seek for knowledge in this field of study. In a nutshell, the academic community will use this work as a reference point in the area of media and environment management.

Professionally: Environmental management agency will stand to benefit from this study as this will enable them to plan and strategize on how to use the mass media to educate citizenry on their environment.

Theoretically: Theories can emerge from the outcome of this study. A proposed theory, ‘environmental information theory’ can be developed to address the subject of research. This theory can focus on why and how people think about their environment.

Literature Review

In this section, relevant materials that address the variable in the study are reviewed. This is done to give the study enough empirical base and theoretical backings.

Mass Media and Environmental Management in Nigeria

The need for the masses to be well informed on the effect of some industrial operations on their health and the hazard done to both biotic and abiotic environment should be paramount to media organisations. The undesirable effects of an abused environment have led to the call for sustainable environmental protection practice in our nation. The devastating effect of gas flaring, flood, burning of fossil fuel such as coal, wood,

deforestation, etc. has made it obvious that if our environment must be protected, the time to act is now. The call for environmental responsible citizens is paramount to our present environmental challenges. Environment responsible behaviour is a linear process but it can be influenced by the media. The media can be used to set agenda on issues relating to environmental management in our society. Evidence over the years has shown that the level of education has a role to play in environmental management. The importance of information dissemination on environmental management cannot be over emphasized. Government should ensure that information is provided to citizens, manufacturers etc. on the need to safe guard the environment.

In addition to this, the management of environmental commons requires in-depth knowledge of the politics of environment which include economic, social, human institutions and political forces in shaping the environment. According to Nwidum (2006), approximately 75 % of gas produced is flared annually which has led to ecological and physical damages in our environment. Water, land/soil, vegetation and even the atmosphere are no longer conducive as a result of gas flaring. Environmental damage has also led to the lost of wildlife, pollution of air, loss of fertile soil, etc. all these have caused serious health problems in the lives of people affected.

Government effort to protect our environment over the years has not actually yielded any meaningful fruit, Federal Environmental Protection Agency (FEPA) was established in 1988 and later upgraded into the present Federal Ministry of Environment, in 1992 it was mandated by Degree 50 to cover conservation of natural resources and biological diversity. In 1984, the monthly Environmental Sanitation Day was introduced by the government. On the other hand, Non Governmental Organisations such as Friends of the Environment (FOE), National Conservation Fund (NCF), etc have also contributed in one form or the other towards having a better environment. Of all these, the media can be used as a tool to educate the masses, create awareness, and change negative opinions in regards to environmental management. Massive campaign strategies by the media will go a long way in influencing Nigerians. Over the years, many have testified to the role the media has played in influencing people's perception on important issues.

To give credence to the above, a study was conducted by Onyelucheya (2003), he pointed out that there is need for environmental campaign across- the –board, he also noted that, environmental education will enlighten not only those in the grassroots but all other citizenry, government agency, industries etc. In addition to this, we will all agree that presently, environmental awareness programme is at dismally low level among Nigerians. To justify this claim, one can sample the opinions of few

Nigerians in the street and you will be surprised to know that only very few Nigerians are aware of environmental protection laws, effects of deforestation, global warming, gas flaring and others. However, the only significant knowledge most Nigerians have on environmental issues is environmental sanitation.

Majority of Nigerians know about environmental sanitation and some even practice it, it is not a bad idea but it is quite different from the world perception of environmental protection. Another ignorance of environmental management issues among Nigerians can be clearly seen in the role of Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), most Nigerians see and refer to them as refuse/waste collector. That is to say, they are not enlightened on environmental management protection.

Various efforts have been put in place by government such as setting up Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Environmental laws etc yet the problem seems not to have been addressed. However, in spite of government laudable efforts, lack of commitment to implementation of these laws and resolutions from conferences has also affected it. The good news is that, this can be addressed by educating the masses, by creating adequate environmental awareness campaigns and the media can deliver when it comes to this role.

Addressing this issue from an industrial perspective, most multinational and large corporations are aware of environmental issues than the medium and small organizations. The lack of awareness of environmental issues among industries coupled with lack of compliance can lead to environmental hazards in our society. Based on this, industries and large corporations should ensure that they are familiar with the laws and hazards caused as a result of their activities in the society. Environmental standards should therefore be complied with.

Environmental Management: The Nigeria Experience

It is an undisputable truism that the process of integrating environmental management and development is gradually gaining a universal recognition in our dynamic world today. To support this claim, Ojike (2001) in Ugbomo (2002), carried out a study on *Environmental resources management and assessment for technological advancement: A chemist's view point*, he opined that the environment consists of three major components which are, the air, the water and the land. The three are interlocking systems that operate in a state of dynamic equilibrium. He also sees environmental management as that which is solely concerned with any action taken by society to prevent the decline in the quality of the environment as well as to bring about rapid and dynamic improvement to the society at large (Ojike, 2001) as cited in Ugboma (2002).

With the dumping of Koko Toxic waste in May, 1988, Harmful waste Degree No. 42 was established on November 25th 1988. This Degree paved way for the Federal Government to establish an apex body to be in charge of the protection of the Nigeria environment. Hence, the birth of Federal Environment Protection Agency (FEPA) through Degree 58 of 1988 gave the body the overall responsibility on environmental protection and natural resources conservation.

Ever since, FEPA has put in place several environmental management policies and these includes National Policy on the Environment, Guideline and Standards for Environmental Pollution control in Nigeria, Pollution Abatement Regulation (section 1.9), Hazardous and Solid Waste Management (section 1.15), Environmental Impact Assessment Degree No. 86 of 1992 and the National Guideline for Environmental Audit Report (EAR)

The volume of wastes tends to grow with the increasing population, production and consumption in Nigeria. According to Adegoke (1990), most industries in Nigeria do not treat their liquid waste in heaps close to their premises or out sketch of the town they operate from. Presently, no city in Nigeria can boast of functional sewage system, hence raw sewage is discharged into lagoons, rivers etc. However, it is only in few cases that some industries make use of septic tanks to collect sewage and discharged them. For effective control of waste, Waste Water Treatment (WWT) units should be constructed to treat contaminated waste water before discharging it. This must be continuously monitored to ensure effectiveness. Operators on the other hand should be made to understand the need to minimize solid waste generation in the manufacturing units. In addition to all the provisions made to control environmental pollution, routine check should be done in these industries and their environment to ensure that they comply with these.

For effective management of the resources found in our environment, Ojike, (2001) suggested that, there should be a long term research on land use and erosion as to identify possible situations that may revert to environmental degradation thereby avoiding the total collapse of ecological and environmental system in our society. Secondly, wildlife should not be treated as common property resources if we must guide against the extinction of some of the species in our environment. In other words, they should be treated as public property and laws prohibiting their extinction should be put in place by both the state and the federal government respectively.

In addition to the above, there should be systematic reforestation of fallow land with specially selected tree species such as baobab, acacias etc, and these trees can produce large quality of wood as well as regenerate the soil. On the part of erosion, it can be lessen to some extent through regarding, backfilling and re vegetating.

Legal Frame Work of Environment Management: The Sardonic State of Nigeria Law

At the international level, recent years have seen an appreciable growth in the level of understanding the dangers facing global environment. Issues like climate change or global warming are now common. These problems are now the subject of serious deliberation in the world today. The Stockholm Declaration of the Human Environment (1972) is said to be the “magna carta” on which human environmental laws stands. The Declaration states that “ The Natural resources of the earth including the air, water, flora and fauna and specially representative samples of natural ecosystem must be safeguarded for the benefit of present and future generations through careful planning or management as appropriate” (Stockholm Declaration, 1972).

However, in 1982, the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) held a session of special character to rekindle the spirit of Stockholm Declaration. The Rio de Janeiro conference (1992) also known as the “Earth Summit” was an international forum where strategies to fully integrate the relationship between environment and development into achieving a better economy was deliberated on.

Here in Nigeria, the problem of environmental protection laws appears to have engaged a significant high level of attention in 1988 when an Italian company dumped a toxic waste at a place called Koko in the former Bendel State. However, before this event, legislation like the Forestry Act 1958, Antiquities Act, 1958, Territorial Waters Decree of 1967, Oil in Navigation Waters Decree of 1968, Quarries Decree of 1969, Petroleum Decree of 1969, Land Use Decree of 1978, and Nigerian Criminal Code indirectly touched on environmental protection.

Environmental degradation constitutes a threat to man survival and to a large extent man has been responsible for this. Nwidum (2006) noted that there was no effort to check environmental degradation until 1972 “when the international community worked out a global sensitization and management strategy in Stockholm”. However, this led to the establishment of United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP).

Similarly, in a study conducted by Odigie (2005) on the Impact of Environmentally Hazardous Commercial Activities in Residential areas on Nigerian Environment and Residents, the study focused on Nigeria as an “environment”, an attempt was made to identify the occupational and business activities which fall within this category (environment). The legal aspect of environmental management was also addressed in the study. Odigie also noted that the Nigeria Judiciary has only few laws on environmental issues, laws relating to the protection of man and his immediate environment (Odigie, 2005:167). Every human being has the right to live in a conducive

environment, which protects his/her health, safety, etc. However, environmental pollution is a threat to such conducive life.

Furthermore, in Odigie (2005:167), the Nigeria constitution provides that, “the state shall protect and improve the environment and safeguard the water, air, land, forest and wildlife of Nigeria” He also noted that the RIO Declaration on Environment and Development “provides that human beings are at the centre of concerns for sustainable development and are therefore entitled to healthy and productive e life, in harmony with nature”.

In section 38 of the Federal Environmental Protection Agency Act provides: The Agency shall establish guidelines and standards to protect and enhance the quality of air the public inhale so as to promote healthy living for Nigerians, and their animals. The Peru Constitution stipulated that every human being has the right to live in a healthy environment, ecologically balanced and adequate for the development of life and preservation of country side.

Odigie (2005:118), in his work, revealed that similar law is recognized in Edo State (Nigeria), for instance the Edo State Environmental Sanitation Edict, provides, “making noises or nuisance through the regular use of sound equipment, of any description, in a manner to cause hearing discomfort to a neighbour or the immediate public is prohibited. However, the noises from religious, traditional and social ceremonies are excluded”.

Take for instance, in a case between “M.KO. Abiola v. Felix Ijema, the defendant operated a poultry farm of about 400 chickens at the back of his house that adjoined the plaintiff’s building at Surulere, an area designed as residential. The plaintiff complained about the excessive noise made by the chickens in the early hours of the morning which prevented him from having a good sleep, odious smell emanating from the poultry, and rats and flies escaping from the poultry in to his house there by disturbing his comfort and impairing his health”. Dosunmu, in his judgment stated that:

... every person is entitled as against his neighbor to the comfortable and health enjoyment of the premises occupied by him, and in deciding whether in any particular case, his right has been interfered with and a nuisance thereby caused, it is necessary to determine whether the act complained of is an inconvenience materially interfering with the ordinary physical comfort of human existence, not merely according to elegant or dainty modes and habits of living, but according to plain and sober and simple notions obtaining among Nigerian people (Odigie, 2005 :170).

Environmental protection laws appear to be adequate, but the impact/ implementation of the relevant laws are however minimal due to the disregard Nigerians have for Environmental and Town Planning Laws. Nigeria like many other developing nations is predominantly an illiterate society and as such most of Nigeria citizens are ignorant of their rights to

healthy environment. The few that knows these rights are unable to assert it due to the high cost of legal charges. One of the major duties of environmental protection agencies at both federal and state level is to create awareness on environmental issues through public campaigns.

Education as a Panacea for Environmental Management

The Federal Environmental Protection Agency (FEPA) was established by decree 58 of Dec. 30th, 1988 with the statutory responsibility to protect and develop the environment while the agency can be assumed sufficiently enlightened; there is still the need for re-education of the agency on environmental management. The objectives of environmental education should be tailored towards erasing wrong notions (misconception) surrounding environmental degradation. Most people see pollution as something common with only developed countries, others sees it as common with large industries, all these are wrong misconception of the term pollution. Environmental education can help in enlightening citizens more on this and the use of mass media as earlier mentioned will be of great importance if this objective must be achieved, also both secondary and tertiary institutions should be made to teach students on the need to protect their environment.

Environmental education will go a long way in creating awareness among citizens, industrialists and even government on how ecology relates to security issues, economic development etc. this form of awareness will also make the masses to see environmental crusaders as pro-sustainable development agencies and not the other way round (anti-development).

It is pertinent to point out that environmental education is not the – all and all, but it should be adopted along side with other ways/strategies such as environmental laws and implementation. Still on this, Odigie (2005) stated that to sustain the forest for future generation, the masses should be educated on the need not to harvest trees more than the rate at which they are planted. Tree planting should be encouraged by individuals, Government and even Non-Governmental Organisations.

A Call for a Sustainable Environmental Development/Management

The rate at which the population of the world is increasing, it is likely that in the nearest future environmental resources will be inadequate when compared to the large population that make use of it and as such the need to extend sustainable environmental development/management is of immediate importance. Brundland, (1987) defined sustainable development as “the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.”

In, Obasohan and Oronsaye, (2009:42), study on the effects of pollution on man and his environment. They noted that man’s activity both deliberate and in deliberately has caused pollution to man directly or

indirectly, they pointed out that activities such as deforestation, industrialization and urbanization have contributed to environment breakdown. However, they concluded the study by saying “man has to work to protect the balance of the ecosystem by not overstressing the environment and plan ahead for generations to come” (Obasohan and Oronsaye, 2009).

On the hazardous nature of environment, more than 184 deaths are recorded daily in different parts of the world due to triggered natural and man-made hazard while 94 percent of the world’s major environmental disasters and its related deaths were in developing countries (UNISDR, 2005). Also, about 75 percent of the world’s population (i.e. over 100 countries) lives in areas that have been affected at least once by earth quake, tropical cyclone, flood, or drought between 1980 and 2000 (IFRC/RC, 2002).

However, below are some of the environmental hazards, their health effect and their effect on productivity faced in our society as a result of environmental mismanagement.

Principal Health and Productivity Consequences of Environmental Mismanagement

Environmental Problem	Effect on Health	Effect on Productivity
Water pollution and water scarcity	More than 2 million deaths and billions of illnesses a year attributable to population, poor household hygiene and added health risks caused by water scarcity.	Declining fisheries, rural household, time and municipal costs of providing safe water, aquifer depletion leading to irreversible compaction, constraint on economic activity because of water shortage.
Air pollution	Many acute and chronic health impacts, excessive urban particulate matter level are responsible for 300,000 – 700,000 premature deaths annually and for half of childhood chronic coughing, 400 millions – 700 million people, mainly women and children in poor rural areas, affected by smoking indoor air.	Restrictions on vehicle and industrial activity during critical episodes, effect of acid rain on forest and water bodies.
Solid and hazardous wastes	Diseases spread by rotting garbage and blocked drains. Risks from hazardous waste typically local but often acute.	Pollution of ground water resources.

Soil degradation	Reduced nutrition for poor farmers on depleted soils, greater susceptibility of drought.	Field productivity losses in ranged 0.5 – 1.5 percent of Gross National Product (GNP) common on tropical soils, offsite situation of reservoirs river – transport channels and other hydrologic investments.
Deforestation	Localized flooding leading to death and diseases.	Loss of sustainable logging potentials and of erosion prevention, water shed stability, and carbon sequestrating provided by forest.
Loss of bio diversity	Potential loss of new drugs.	Reduction of ecosystem adaptability and loss of genetic resources.
Atmospheric Changes	Possible shifts in vector – borne diseases, risks from climate natural disasters, diseases attributable to ozone depletion (perhaps 300, 000 additional cases of skin canceria year worldwide, 1.7 million cases of cataracts).	Sea – rise damage to coastal investments, regional changes in agricultural productivity, disruption of marine food chain.

Source: (World Development Report, 2009, the Concepts of Environmental Management

According to UNDP (1992), Environmental management is a set of more dynamic, action oriented tools that assist in formulating, implementing and monitoring strategies to protect, enhance and conserve the environment; it requires effective utilization of resources. Any development project that adopts environmental management principles such as systematically reducing inputs (raw material or energy), recycling waste and re-using waste water can protect the environment and reduce production costs (UNDP, 1992). Environmental degradation is often caused as a result of inadequate development. The imbalance between Nigerian population and her resources has led to environmental problem. Nigeria as a nation is yet to achieve these objectives.

Theoretical Frame Work

To drive home the message of this research, the researcher anchored the study on two theories, the Attitude-Change Theory and Social Responsibility Theory.

Attitude-Change Theory

The Attitude Change Theory was developed from propaganda theories in the 1930s during World War II. This theory explains that in

human, there are pre-existing attitudes, whether biological or psychological which have to be changed if selected messages must have any effect on the target audience (Baran and Davis, 2012:175). Again, it explains that these pre-existing attitudes are in-depth and, therefore, stand as barriers to effective penetration of messages for desired change. Thus an intellectual and emotional strategy of communication will influence change if properly channeled to do so. Change in evaluations and perceptions of an individual's predispositions will take place if the required modification favour his expectations, if it is tied to someone he admires, or if it is bound to be beneficial to him (Wood, 2000: 539).

In addition to this, Breckler and Wiggins (1992: 407) opined that attitude has a profound influence on behavior. It influences the perception of objects and people's exposure and comprehension of information. Eagly and Chaiken (1995: 413), also view attitude from an angle of effects and evaluation when they described attitude as a tendency or predisposition to evaluate an object or symbol of that object in a certain way. This means that, one's attitude is affected by intrapersonal and inter personal factors relative to acquired knowledge.

Relating this theory to the topic of discussion, the attitudes or mental predispositions of the people in the South-south geopolitical zone can be positively changed and made to see the need to be environmental friendly. This attitudinal change can be achieved to a large extent through the use of the mass media since the media is an effective tool for the transformation of attitudes.

Also, the media can be used to create awareness which in-turn can change the mindset of the indigenes into a positive one on how and what to do to keep the environment safe for all.

Social Responsibility Theory

The idea of this theory "arose from the fears expressed that the free market of ideas was being threatened by ownership restrictions to rich individuals or large corporations" (Ndolo, 2005:35). The general demand for a socially responsible press is as a result of the strong belief that sentiments, deliberate distortion of facts or genuine errors of misinformation could threaten the guaranteed sovereignty, oneness, peace, security and progressive development of a nation. This perceived threat may not be narrow to the nation's social fabrics alone. It could even affect, to a large extent, the nation's information dissemination system which is highly needed during natural disasters such as erosion, flood etc. However, the Hutchins Commission of 1947 states that every responsible press devotes itself to the service of public interest. It, further, said that this could be done through the provision of accurate, truthful and complete accounts of the day's events to

the public, as a matter of binding obligation. This responsibility is even more needed during national emergencies such as environmental disasters.

The propositions of this theory, according to the Commission, are as follows:

- The media have obligations to the society, and media ownership is a public trust.
- News media should be truthful, accurate, fair, objective and relevant
- The media should be free, but self-regulated
- The media should follow agreed code of ethics and professional conducts.
- Under some circumstances, government may need to intervene to safeguard the public interest (McQuail, 2010: 170).

In view of the above, it is right to argue that the Nigerian media is expected to inform and educate the masses on environmental issues. The public expect the media to be at the fore front of disaster management, and as such the public should not be left out on important issues relating to environmental management.

Methodology

In a study like this, the survey method of data collection is appropriate. Survey method has become an indispensable research method because of the nature of this study.

The population of this study comprises of the six States in South-south region of Nigeria. The populations of these states are proposed by the National Population Commission (NPC) was:

States	Population
Akwa-Ibom State	3,902,051
Bayelsa State	1,704,515
Cross River State	2,892,988
Delta State	4,112,445
Edo State	3,233,366
River State	5,198,716
Total	21,044,081

(Source: National Population Commission: 2006).

The **sample size** of the study comprises of four hundred (500) people drawn from the various South-south states in Nigeria. The Taro Yamane’s formula was used to get the sample size. The copies of the questionnaire were administered based on the population strength of each of the states selected. Thus:

$$\text{Akwa- Ibom had: } \frac{3,902,051}{21,044,081} \times \frac{500}{1} = 93 \text{ copies of questionnaire}$$

Bayelsa had: $\frac{1,704,515}{21,044,081} \times \frac{500}{1} = 40$ copies of questionnaire
 Cross River had: $\frac{2,892,988}{21,044,081} \times \frac{500}{1} = 69$ copies of questionnaire
 Delta State had: $\frac{4,112,445}{21,044,081} \times \frac{500}{1} = 98$ copies of questionnaire
 Edo State had: $\frac{3,233,366}{21,044,081} \times \frac{500}{1} = 77$ copies of questionnaire
 Rivers State had: $\frac{5,198,716}{21,044,081} \times \frac{500}{1} = 123$ copies of questionnaire

Based on this, Akwa-Ibom, had 93 copies of the questionnaire, Bayelsa, 40 copies of the questionnaire, Cross River, 69 copies of the questionnaire, Delta, 98 copies of the questionnaire, Edo 77, and Rivers State, 123 copies of the questionnaire. These copies of questionnaire were administered to individuals in these states based on convenience method. At the end of the distribution, a total of 480 copies of the questionnaire were returned, this account for 96 % of the total number of questionnaire distributed. The huge success of this was as a result of the close monitoring of these copies of questionnaire by the researchers.

The expert-jury validity method was adopted for the validation of the research questionnaire. This method involves setting up a panel of experts that will evaluate and critique the content of the questionnaire. For the purpose of this study, three (3) experts in the field of Mass Communication were selected for this. Experts first critiqued the questionnaire independently before meeting the research team for discussion. Panel of judges’ contributions improved the quality of the questionnaires as suggestions made were effected immediately.

The essential point used in the explanation and **analysis of data** was the information obtained from the respondents through the copies of the questionnaire. Data collected were equally presented in tables and simple charts.

Data Analysis And Presentation

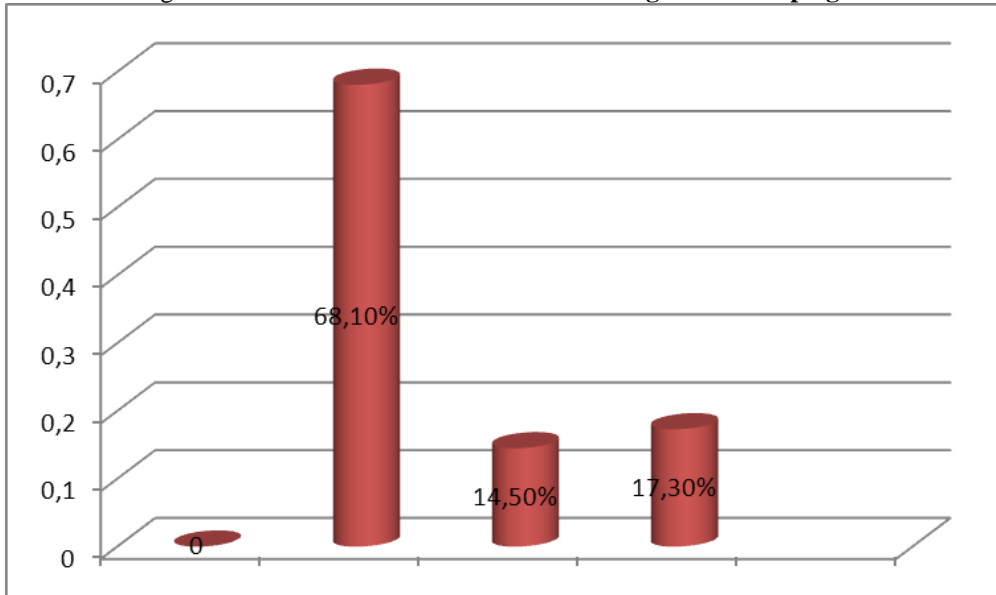
The data presented here answer the research questions raised in the study.

Table 1: Awareness of Environmental Management Campaigns in South-South Nigeria

Awareness	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Yes	327	68.1%
No	70	14.5%
Not sure	83	17.3%
Total	480	100%

Field survey 2013

Figure 1: Awareness of Environmental Management Campaigns



The data as presented above explain that 327 representing 68.1% respondents were aware of sensitization campaigns about environmental management, 70 (14.5%) respondents said they were not aware of the campaigns while 83 representing 17.3% of the respondents said they were not sure whether or not there were campaigns against environmental management. This data indicate that, awareness level about environmental management is relatively high.

The table below provides answer to research question two of the study under investigation.

Table 2: Showing Knowledge level increased due to exposure to Environmental Management Campaigns

Exposure	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Yes	275	57.3%
No	125	26.0%
Not sure	80	16.7%
Total	480	100%

Field Survey 2013

Figure 2: Exposure to Environmental Management Campaigns

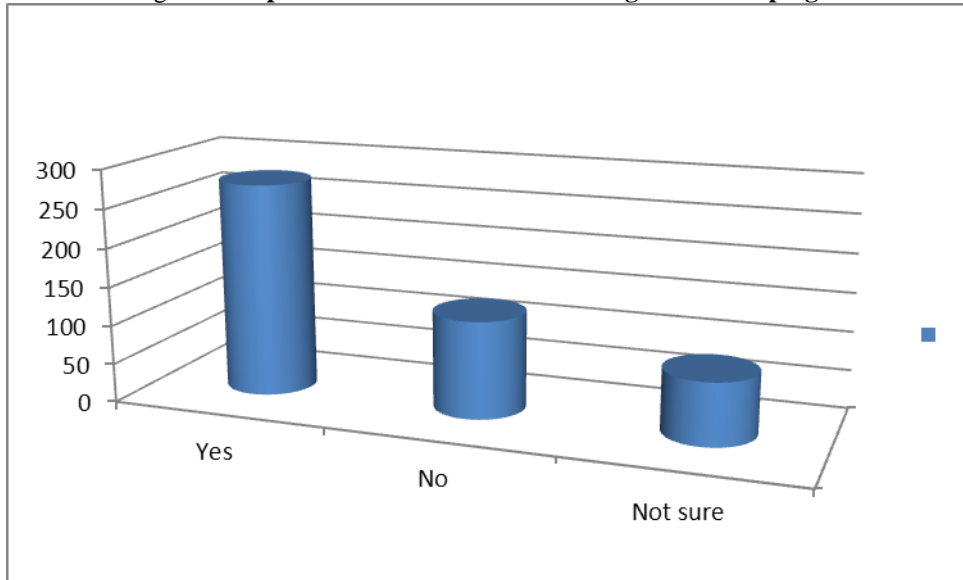


Table two and figure two shows that 275 (57.3%) of the respondents were exposed to environmental management campaigns, 125 (26%) were not exposed to this campaigns while 80 (16.7%) of the respondents were not sure of their exposure to the campaigns. This data explain that awareness about campaign programmes does not guarantee exposure to the programmes as people tend to be selective on whether or not to participate in the programmes.

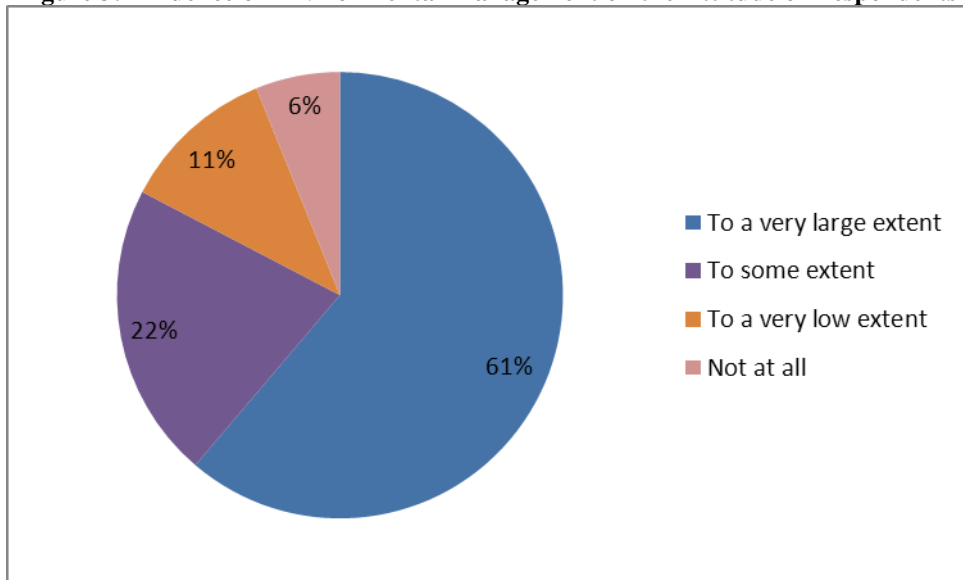
The table below provides answer to research question three:

Table 3: Influence of Environmental Management on the Attitude of Respondents

To what extent has an environmental management campaign influence your attitude?	No of Respondents	Percentage
To a very large extent	290	60.4%
To some extent	102	21.2%
To a very low extent	56	11.6%
Not at all	32	6.6%
Total	480	100%

Field survey, 2013

Figure 3: Influence of Environmental Management on the Attitude of Respondents



The above table and figure shows that media campaign on environmental management has positively influenced the respondents since 290 respondents representing 60.4 percent agreed that the campaigns have influenced them to a very large extent, 102 representing 21.2 percent said to some extent, 56 respondents representing 11.6 percent said to a very low extent, while 32 respondents representing 6.6 percent said the campaign has not influenced their attitude.

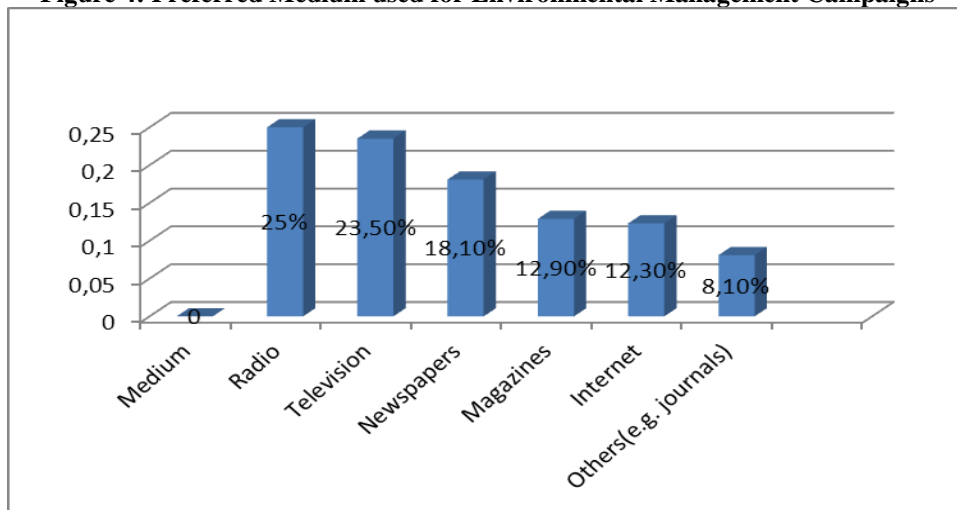
Table 4 was used to answer question four:

Table 4: Preferred Medium used for Environmental Management Campaigns

Medium	No. of Respondents	percentage
Radio	120	25%
Television	113	23.5%
Newspapers	87	18.1%
Magazines	62	12.9%
Internet	59	12.3%
Others(e.g. journals)	39	8.1%
Total	480	100%

Field survey 2013

Figure 4: Preferred Medium used for Environmental Management Campaigns



The table and figure above shows that 120 (25%) of the respondents preferred listening to environmental management campaigns on radio, 113 of the respondents representing 23.5 percent preferred watching it on television. Respondent that prefers newspapers were 87 representing 18.1 percent, 62 or 12.9 percent prefers magazines. Those that prefer internet were 59 (12.3%), while those that prefer other sources were 39 representing 8.1 percent. This indicates that majority of the respondents prefers listening to the campaign on radio stations.

Findings

This study assessed public awareness and knowledge of media campaigns on environmental management in South- south Nigeria. Using the survey research design, data collected and analyzed led to the following findings. The data gathered indicate that, 68.1% of the respondents were aware of sensitization campaigns about environmental management issues. This clearly indicates that most of the South-south indigenes are aware of media campaign. On the knowledge level of the indigenes in regards to environmental management, collected data (57.3%) shows that the respondents have a good knowledge of what environmental management is all about. The study also revealed that due to media campaigns, attitude of respondents in regards to environmental management issues has changed positively. Also, on the proffered medium, the information collected and analyzed revealed that most respondents prefer listening to environmental campaigns on radio station rather than any other means of communication.

Conclusion

The results of the findings showed that most publics of South-south states of Nigeria are socially aware of media campaigns on environmental

management values. On the whole, the data unveiled that South-south indigenes are aware of sensitization campaigns on environmental management issues as well as have a good knowledge of what environmental management is all about. Even though their level of exposure to media campaign has increased their knowledge on environmental issues, which have lead to a change of attitude/behaviour towards the sanitization of their environment in which they dwell in, few of them (indigenes) of South-south states are aware that- gas flaring, bush burning, deforestation etc has something to do with environment management. Based on this, some recommendations were made.

Recommendations

The study revealed that the South-south indigenes are aware of media campaigns on environmental issues and this knowledge has brought about positive change of attitude toward an environment that is clean for a healthy living. With this, the researchers further recommend that campaigns should be highly planned, strategically assembled and structured to effectively appeal to the few that have negative attitudinal of environmental hazards if complete success must be achieved.

- Government, International Organizations, NGOs, and Individuals should collectively work hard to ensure that the issue of environmental management is made known to all.
- Education can also be a gateway towards reducing environmental hazards in our society. Environmental studies should be included into our academic curriculum. This will help to sensitize people on the effect of environmental hazards.
- On the other hand, the media should not down play the issue of environmental hazards. They should play the agenda function by emphasizing on the effects of environmental degradation.
- The study, also, recommends that campaign planners, should increase their campaigns on environmental issues, this will make the public's to be aware and conscious of their environment.

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