

AUDIENCE PERCEPTION OF PUBLIC HEALTH CAMPAIGNS ON CROSS RIVER RADIO

Veronica Ehidame Bassey-Duke

Research Scholar, Department of Mass Communication, Cross River University of Technology, Calabar, Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

This study examined audience perception of public health campaigns on Cross River Radio. The study sought to compare individuals' actual and preferred methods of obtaining health messages; to ascertain the extent at which health messages are communicated through radio broadcast and to determine if the radio is an effective method to increase health knowledge and intentions to change health behavior. To achieve these, relevant studies were reviewed and the individual differences theory as well as the development media theory was adopted in this study to establish a workable theoretical framework. The study indicated among other things, that the role of radio broadcast in health promotion for sustainable health development throughout the world remains vital. Without the radio broadcast in complement with other media of communication, it might be difficult for health promoters and stakeholders to communicate effectively health information, monitor and co-ordinate health activities in the various parts of Cross River State. In the light of the findings, the study concluded that radio's health communication and campaigns in Cross River State and the entirety of Nigeria is perceived by the people to be an instrument for sustainable health development seeing that the information they disseminate is far reaching and is providing knowledge to the people on ways of combating diseases. With these, it was recommended that radio broadcasting as well as other media of communication should be seen as an integral part of governance in matters concerning health. Civil societies, the private sectors, parliaments, external agencies etc. should render support to radio stations in the area of health communication.

KEYWORDS: *Perception, Public Health, Campaigning, Radio*

INTRODUCTION

Public health campaign is the process by which information on health issues are disseminated to the public through various media in order to stimulate positive health attitude that enable people to take control of their lives and make healthy decisions concerning their wellbeing. Using interpersonal communication, community media, and modern information system, communication for health development is a tool for social transformation that aims to improve the quality of life of communities and vulnerable groups (Jenatsch & Bauer, 2016). Communication for health development has become necessary due to the different degrees of health issues bedeviling the society and impacting the society negatively. People's lives can be improved by prioritising communication systems and processes that improve the quality of their lives, especially for those who have been identified as vulnerable (Waisbord, 2001, p.121). If human-centered health development is the primary goal of health communication campaigns, the media such as radio, television and social media communication become veritable tools for health transformation as well as vehicles for positive change.

Health communication, according to Isah, (2010, p.23), is a strategy by which health needs can be met more effectively. To a large extent, health campaign helps to raise public awareness of important health issues and existing health services among the general public or specific groups of people. As a result, it has been shown to empower people by influencing them to take healthy actions through the use of various media to inform and persuade people in disadvantaged communities to adopt positive health behaviours.

Societal well-being depends on the ability to communicate effectively on a variety of levels. According to Baran and Davis (2012, p. 26) these requirements existed long before the printing press and the telegraph were invented by Johann Gutenberg and Samuel Morse, respectively. Broadcast media, such as radio and television, perform a variety of functions in the society, including surveillance, interpretation, connection, value transfer, socialisation, entertainment, and the dissemination of health-related information.

The study and practice of disseminating health promotion information, such as through public health campaigns and health education, as well as between a doctor and a patient, is referred to as "health communication" (Dutta-Bergman, 2004, p. 11). In order to influence individual health choices, health information should be widely disseminated. This is why the media are essential tools for effective public health campaigns. Radio is a remarkable tool for communicating health-related information to the general public. This is because radio can reach people at home, work, and in their cars, it is believed to have a larger audience than television, because it is less expensive and more portable. The prime time hour of radio can be listened to at any time because it is used to broadcast a wide variety of programmes. Radio is an excellent medium for disseminating health information because it reaches a wide audience instantaneously and is relatively inexpensive.

Radio has been used by healthcare professionals to broadcast health messages, to educate the public about diseases and illnesses. In order to ensure that people who are exposed to health messages are getting the information they need, "serendipitous learning via radio can serve as a major mode of gathering health information" (Dutta-Bergman, 2004). Radio has a big impact on people's lives because of how quickly it can get to them. For this reason alone, the prime-time radio broadcast hour may be a huge success, with the potential to have a significant impact on listeners behaviour in health-related areas.

RESEARCH PROBLEM

Health advocates, educators, and communicators have turned to social media and other forms of mass media to spread their message to the general public. In a recent study according to Nguyen & Bellamy, (2006), researchers discovered how people actually use and prefer to use health information. That is because the public health mission includes making sure that people and communities are informed about their health. Having access to information in a timely and accurate manner can be beneficial to individuals, groups, and entire societies. Effective health communication can influence people's awareness, knowledge, attitudes, self-efficacy, capabilities, and commitment to behaviour change. The mode and channel of communication also contribute to the success of the campaign.

Health educators and professionals frequently use a variety of approaches to bridge the gap between the real and desired means of acquiring vital health information. These could be through a variety of ways which include, face-to-face presentations and online advertising.

The advent and evolution of new media technologies over the last decade has become a threat to the efficiency of radio as a veritable instrument for public health education and outreach. Despite this development, many health education campaigns are still being propagated using radio announcements and programmes especially in rural communities. Health communication agents, practitioners and scholars seem to increasingly focus on the increasing availability of health information on the Internet as well as its appeal to a wider audience. Are health campaigns as appealing as they use to be? How appealing and efficient is public health campaigns on radio? This study therefore seeks to understand the perception of Cross River State residents on public health campaigns on CRBC radio.

Research Objectives

The broad objective of this study is to examine public perception of radio broadcast programmes on health matters. Specifically, the study sought to:

- Determine the most preferred medium for public health campaigns in Cross River State.
- Ascertain the extent to which residents of Calabar comply with public health campaign messages on Cross River Broadcasting Corporation Radio Station.
- Determine to what extent the public health campaigns on Cross River Broadcasting Radio Station have enhanced public health practices among residents in Cross River State.
- Suggest ways through which public health campaigns on Cross River Broadcasting Corporation can be enhanced.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Radio and Public Health Campaigns

Media campaigns particularly radio campaigns are deployed to influence the public's health behavior and perceptions based on the premise that media are powerful and can elicit a desired response from their audience vital information, education, persuasion and entertainment is responsible for arming the public with vital information. Radio as one of the mass media is a low-cost and passive form of communication that holds the capability to reach listeners in different languages, in different context such as home, work, stores, gyms or in personal vehicles (Smith, Menn, Lisako, and Mckyer, 2011).The pervasive nature of the radio, portability and accessibility makes it a sundry medium to gain information anywhere and anytime. Its audience/listenership cuts across all age brackets.

On the significance of radio in propagating health messages, radio is a tool for socialization, community mobilization and advocacy. It is an effective instrument for change due to its flexibility which makes it more adaptable than other forms of mass media. Radio is used to educate, inform, entertain, mobilise, persuade and enlighten the people on health issues. It is an agent of social change, community health mobilization, tool for development that supports two-way communication systems to enable dialog and that allow communities to speak out, express their aspirations and concerns and participate in community health development according to the United Nations Children Emergency Fund. Hence, it is a very important instrument for public health campaigns. To promote sustainable health development through health communication and campaign issues like drug abuse, vaccines/immunizations, maternal health, family planning, healthy living practices and disease prevention and cure eradication can help to improve health outcomes in the long run.

Radio as a development communication tool and medium offers effective broadcasting services beyond commercial and public service. Radio content are geared towards serving specific audience(s) which may often be overlooked by the mass media. Radio serves as a vehicle for development in the community, civil societies, agencies, NGOs. This medium of mass communication serves listeners a variety of content that may sometimes be overlooked by other media of communication. Different health programmes are communicated with the intention of creating awareness and sensitise the rural and urban people on health issues as it they concern them. Radio programmes advocate for change in attitude and behaviour of the listeners.

Deciding to use radio for health communication and advocacy entails that the media organisation determines the best way to use it, this is because when usefully employed, radio become reliable vehicle to health development of a nation.

The influence of radio communication in public health communication is aimed at increasing the number people who adopt healthy lifestyles. Health programmes on radio require that suitable information and messages are propagated to influence change in habit and lifestyle. This is usually done by designing and presenting messages primarily to convince the audience to learn to take healthy decisions and actions. Radio is a tool for public health campaigns and can be utilised in the following ways; Sensitisation campaign, advocacy, empowerment and raising or creating awareness.

Radio broadcasting is a staple of the media landscape. Passive radio communication can reach people in different languages at home and other settings such as work, stores, gyms, or personal vehicles. making it a low-cost method of communication. According to Arbitron, (2000), the vast majority of radio listening takes place outside of the home, making it a transportable and available medium in a wide range of settings and situations. Ephraim (2020) states that,

Currently in Nigeria, community radio together with more established state-and privately-owned radio stations work together to disseminate public information to listener in cities, towns and at the grassroots. Radio functions not just as a mass medium for disseminating general information and entertainment, but also in particular as a medium for disseminating public health information as witnessed during the Ebola outbreak in 2014 and the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020.

In Nigeria, radio is viewed as a vital tool for distributing information, educating and informing people, strengthening national integration, and creating a sense of national pride. Many people believe that health-related attitudes and behaviours are shaped by what they hear on the radio. As Beaudoin *et al.* (2007) point out, radio is are more powerful and has a greater impact on health-related information and campaigns than other media. Electronic media are primarily used in one of two ways. For Beaudoin and others, these are primarily ritualistic and instrumental. When people use mass media in a ritualised way to pass the time or to divert their attention, they are passively gathering information about their own well-being and the state of the world around them in the form of health, education, and political viewpoints.

The potential for radio to provide information, inspiration, and instruction to rural residents is further asserted by Hetherington (2020). Most rural dwellers, according to this view, are illiterate with a few exceptions who work in the production of food fibers and raw materials. Those who work in agriculture are likely to need information about the specific supplies they need. When it comes to planting seeds, using pesticides, and operating machinery and new technology, they need to be well-versed in all of the necessary information. In addition, they should be familiar with the steps involved, as well as the names of the vendors from which they can purchase these items.

In rural areas, non-farm economic activities like food processing, banking, textiles (including weaving and raffia work), and tailoring are in high demand. Besides woodworking and metalworking, they need to know how to fix radios and televisions as well as automobiles, watches, and other miscellaneous items. It is a common belief that radio technology is more adaptable and more reliable and remains one of the most powerful communication tools of the 21st radio provide real-time information and has the ability to reach across borders even where reliable news is scarce.

A study on electronic media support for agricultural adult education in Delta State, Nigeria by Bradner (2019) found that the radio has performed poorly because of poor quality transmitters, the absence of local broadcast stations, and the lack of grassroots reporters. It was found that participants in the study actually received and preferred health information from a variety of sources, from the study's perspective, the people of Cross River State may not accept and heed all of the health information that is broadcast over the airwaves. According to Beaudoin et al (2007), residents who choose to rely solely on radio health information may also be associated with their findings. As a result, public opinion is influenced by individual bias.

Public Health Campaigns in Cross River State

Some health communication issues in Cross River State are as follow:

Vaccination for Filariasis: The Controversial Filariasis eradication efforts in some parts of Cross River State suffered a serious setback in 2000 and 2001 due to widespread rumour and misconceptions among the residents about the vaccine's safety. Radio and traditional rulers had to be used by the state government to dispel people's fears about vaccine safety.

Family Planning Program: The radio in Cross River was seriously engaged by the government on the issue of family planning. Using media health communication, Cross River residents learned about the social and economic consequences of having an unplanned family. Regular radio broadcasts, along with other forms of media, brought attention to health consequences for women who have children year after year, as well as the economic impact that results in children who are ill-prepared for school and who are unable to access health care. Cross River State people became more aware of the importance of family planning as a result of radio health communications. Vaccination sessions are regularly organised and broadcast on the radio in Cross River. In recent years, health officials have emphasised the importance of mothers' roles in Nigerian children's lives during these immunisation sessions (Odorume, 2015). That is exactly what the radio was used for, and it worked very well for those who did not have access to TV programmes. This effort however, did not exclude print media like newspapers and magazines and flyers.

Malaria Control: The fight against and control of malaria have been helped by radio health communications and campaigns. People have been made more aware of the dangers of the disease and the steps that can be taken to prevent its spread and its treatment as well. Radio in Cross River State, in particular, has played an important role in preventing and combating malaria. Educating people about causes of malaria and treatment options is essential because it is prevalent among the society's poorest members, Odorume, (2015). As a result, regular radio talks, drama, and the likes are produced and aired to help teach the populace how to eradicate mosquitoes. Malaria campaigns such as (roll-back-malaria) are regularly broadcast on the radio, emphasising the importance of using mosquito nets while sleeping and keeping our surroundings clean.

HIV/AIDS: There has been a tremendous amount of radio health communication on HIV/AIDS in Nigeria since the disease was first identified in Nigeria. Adverts and slogans on AIDs have appeared on both television and radio, and the Cross River Radio health programmes have educated the public about the disease. Articles and cartoons about the problem can be found in a variety of publications. When it comes to HIV/AIDS, health care providers often use the media to inform, sensitize, educate, encourage, and direct the public attention and focus. Radio in Cross River State vigorously communicated about HIV/AIDs to its listeners as part of its initiative and social responsibility to combat the pandemic.

COVID -19: COVID-19 was reported to have been in existence for about four months before it was discovered in February, 2019. Hewlett and Hewlett (2020) state that in 2019, the Yangtze River region around Wuhan, People's Republic of China (PRC), reported cases of Corona virus disease.

In Cross River State, radio health communication about the pandemic kick started when the first recorded case of Covid19 in Nigeria was recorded. The Cross River Broadcasting Corporation radio was agog with health communication about the pandemic through programmes like "My Show Healthy, Wealthy Wise" on Saturdays by 7:45PM. This radio programme informed the citizenry about everything they needed to know about the disease from its origin, causal agents, symptoms sign and preventive measures aid behaviours to adopt.

Health and government officials in Cross River State realised how critical it was to communicate with the people, especially in the wake of the Covid19 pandemic. Campaigns were launched in English and local dialects to inform the public of the danger level, effective personal prevention measures, and measures being taken to control it. To underscore the seriousness of the pandemic and the danger it poses to sustainable health development in Cross River State, radio health information on COVID19 was intensive.

It is clear from the information provided above that immunisation campaigns in Cross River State have been greatly aided by radio health communication, in addition to other forms of communication. On the basis of the recognition of the importance of health development, radio's contributions are significant, (Abone, 2008).

PUBLIC PERCEPTION OF RADIO HEALTH CAMPAIGNS IN CROSS RIVER STATE

Public perception of health information from a particular medium vary from one person to another It is concerned with understanding people's opinion on the effectiveness of health-related campaign, what influences their thinking, understanding, awareness as well as their decision to accept the message of the campaign.

Public perception of health information can help to give insight into the effectiveness of the campaign. Public perception is very important in health campaigns as it may lead to the identification of areas that need to be modified and it can either be positive or negative. The manner at which people perceive health programmes on radio may or may not elicit the required response to the messages especially in this digital dispensation where there is information overload in the internet as well as internet radio which is embellished alongside news with music, text, graphics, speech formats and video.

The versatility of the internet seems to be threatening the conventional radio particularly as it is now available from cable, telecommunication and satellite. Radio audience(s) now have options to choose from aside the portable radio, the multimedia computer devices also allow the streaming of information through internet-enabled radio. How acceptable and efficient is the internet radio in the campaign on public health issues and how convenient is it for people to avail themselves this information particularly in the face of socio-economic, cultural and individual constraints is an issue of concern.

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation, UNESCO, explained that it is indisputable that digital technology has dominated the modern means of transmitting information, but radio remains the primary source of information for most people in the world. Radio has long assumed a great popularity as the choice medium for information especially when it comes to reaching the rural populace in Nigeria. A study by Felix Olajide. *et al*, (2022) on public perception of radio campaign messages in managing Covid-19 pandemic in selected states in Nigeria examined public perception of Nigeria Center for Disease Control (NCDC) radio campaign messages in managing the Covid-19 pandemic in three selected states in South-West, Nigeria. Using the instrument of questionnaire survey research design, the research findings indicate that residents in these selected states in South-West Nigeria reported that exposure to radio campaign messages on Covid-19 preventive measure influenced the awareness and adoption of Covid-19 preventive measures. The study then recommended that communication experts leverage the reliability and spread of radio among the populace to disseminate public health messages.

Radio and indeed community radio remain a potential tool for raising awareness and knowledge level about health issues in Nigeria especially in rural areas of the state. Health organization agencies seeking to communicate health messages particularly preventive campaigns should consider investing in community radio.

Similarly, a study on Effectiveness of the Radio as a Health Information Source by Matthew Lee et al (2011) views radio as a source of health information and acknowledges its contributing factors to listener's intentions to change health related behavior Smith, Menard, Lisako and Mizkyie (2011) After listening to the health talk programme, 27.3% of the 99 participants who completed the internet-based survey instrument indicated they regularly obtained health information from radio and 68.7% from the internet. The study further showed that 92.9% of the participants reported an increase in knowledge and 65.7% reported intention to change their behavior towards health-related issues. This study reports that participants were more likely to report behavior change intentions if they obtain health information from multiple sources and were another suggest making radio content available via internet as well.

With the world becoming a global village, the convenience of media and increased level in literacy, a combination of radio content in social media should make public health campaigns not only preferable source but more importantly effective as well. Cell phones are now common commodity both in the urban and rural communities in Nigeria. People move around with their mobile phones thereby making it easy to receive radio health campaigns, upload or streamed on Facebook, YouTube, Instagram, etc.

Theoretical Framework

This study is anchored on the Agenda Setting theory and the Influence of Presumed Influence model.

The agenda setting theory posits that the media has the ability to influence the importance placed by the news media on any topic of public interest. That the media can direct the level of attention placed on a topic deemed worthy of public interest. Agenda-setting theory is concerned with the way the media attempts to influence viewers, and establish a hierarchy of news prevalence.

Influence of Presumed Influence (IPI) model is an important media effect model propounded by health communication scholars that explains the underlying mechanism of media effect and their impact on behavior, this theory holds that, individuals believe that, media campaign messages have the ability to influence opinions and behaviours. That

opinion and behaviour concerning a particular media type can be influenced based on the belief that the media influence can institute change. The media is believed to be able to spread important information on public health issue, particularly through radio campaigns. That the behaviour of an individual's can be influenced by his or her perception of media effects. The state that "Presumed exposure and presumed influence are the two major components of this model, and its dynamics are in two stages; the general belief that the media especially the radio has a wide reach, and individuals tend to extrapolate the small sample of media messages they are exposed to as representative of media contents and the general belief of a wide media reach and media exposure leads to the presumed influence of the media messages on behavior". The IPI model posits that public health campaigns on radio may influence the target audience moderately as well as create awareness. According to Felix, Oyedji, [Adelabu](#), [Sanusi](#), [Adaja](#) and [Talabi \(2022\)](#), their perception of media influence motivates them to change their opinions and behaviour on a particular media topic. The IPI model is explained as an" indirect media effect model that explains the underlying mechanism of media messages and their impact on behaviour.

Based on this assertion, this study which is geared towards investigating the perception of Cross River State residents of the public health campaign on CRBC Radio with regards to the level of awareness, understanding, adherence and practice (adoption) of the campaign messages It is also to find out to what extent the audience are exposed to public health campaigns and if they are influenced by their perception of radio campaigns on CRBC Radio.

METHODOLOGY

The survey research method was adopted for this study. Data was collected based on the level of audience perception and perceived opinion on public health campaigns on CRBC radio in Cross River State, Nigeria.

The population of the study is 631,000 according to Macrotrends growth ratings as at 2022 where people of 25 years and above who are literate were the participants. This group of persons within the age bracket were chosen based on the premise that they are capable of taking decisions for their health as well as access the most preferable channels for health information.

Taro Yamane sample formula was used to determine the sample size which were 400 residents of Calabar Metropolis. The metropolis is comprised of two local government area, namely; Calabar South Local Government Area and Calabar Municipality. Using random sampling method, five streets were selected from each local government for equal distribution of research instrument. In Calabar South, the following streets were selected; Ekpo Abasi Street, Mayne Avenue, Nelson Mandela Road, Mount-Zion Road and Edgerly Road. Calabar Municipality, Ndidem Usang Iso Road, Marian Road, Essien Town, Ikot-Ansa Road and Ikot Omin. The convenient sampling method was used in administering the questionnaire to the respondents. Valid copies of questionnaires retrieved were 394.

RESULTS

Table 1: Most Preferred Medium for Effective Public Health Campaign by The Residents of Cross River State

Medium	Number of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Radio	192	48.7
Television	68	17.3
Print	58	14.7
Internet	76	19.3
Total	394	100

Source: Field work 2021.

Table 1 shows that 192 (48.7%) of the respondents preferred the use of radio as a tool for effective public health campaign to other media while 58 (14.7%) chose print.

Table 2: Audience Awareness of Health Campaigns on Radio Programmes in Cross River State

Level of Awareness	Number of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Aware	344	87.3
Not Aware	50	12.7
Total	394	100

Source: Field work 2021.

Table 2 shows that 344 (87.3%) of the respondents are aware of health campaigns on various radio programmes in Cross River State. While 12.7% which is 50 responses were not aware

Table 3: CRS Residents Awareness of Health Campaign Programmers on CRBC Radio in Cross River State

Level of Awareness	Number of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Aware	332	84.3
Not Aware	62	15.7
Total	394	100

Source: Field work 2021.

Table 3 shows that 332 (84.3%) of the respondents are aware of health campaigns on CRBC Radio in Cross River State while 62 (15.7%) not aware.

Table 4: Most Common Health Campaigns on CRBC Radio in Cross River State

Health Issues	Number of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Malaria	42	11.4
Covid-19 Vaccination	228	57.9
Filariasis	25	6.3
Monkey Pox	45	10.7
HIV/AIDS	54	13.7
Total	394	100

Source: Field work 2021.

Table 4 shows that, the most frequent health campaign on CRBC Radio is campaign on Covid-19 vaccination which has 228 (57.9%) thus affirming it while the least featured is filariasis with 25 (6.3%) in affirmation.

Table 5: Influence of Crbc Radio Public Health Campaigns on Residents of Cross River State

Extent of Influence	Number of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Influenced	316	80.2
Not Influenced	70	17.8
Neutral	8	2.0
Total	394	100

Source: Field work 2021.

Table 5 indicates that 316 (80.2%) respondents agreed that public health campaigns on CRBC Radio influenced their adherence to health messages while 70 (17.8%) disagreed and 8 (2.0%) were neutral.

Table 6: Adherence to Public Health Messages on CRBC Radio After Exposure to Messages

Practices	Number of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Adheres to healthy behaviour before campaigns	160	40.6
Did not adhere to healthy behavior before campaigns	234	59.4
Total	394	100

Source: Field work 2021.

Table 6 shows that before exposure to public health campaigns on CRBC Radio, 160 (40.6%) adhered to healthy behaviour while 234 (59.4%) did not.

Table 7: Challenges Against Adherence to the Public Health Campaigns on CRBC Radio

Challenges	Number of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Cultural norms	26	6.6
Lack of political will	38	9.6
Lack of public trust	58	14.8
Source bias	84	21.3
All of the above	188	47.7
Total	394	100

Source: Field work 2021.

Table 7 reveals that 188 (47.7%) respondents being majority of respondents claim that cultural norms, lack of political will, lack of public trust, source bias constitute challenges against adherence to the public health campaigns on CRBC Radio while 84 (21.3%) states that source bias is also a factor.

Table 8: Factors That May Influence Adherence to the Public Health Campaigns on CRBC Radio 105.5 FM

Factors For Adherence	Number of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Increased media campaigns	92	23.4
Strategic Media Campaigns	72	18.3
Audience specific campaigns	42	10.7
Credible source	56	14.2
All of the above	132	33.5
Total	394	100

Source: Field work 2021.

Table 8 shows that 132 (33.5%) agreed that Increased media campaigns, strategic media campaigns, audience specific campaigns, credible sources of information are factors that may influence adherence to the public health campaigns on CRBC Radio while 92(23.4%) indicate increased media campaign only.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The discussion of findings of the study is based on the research questions.

RESEARCH QUESTION 1

Determine the Preferred Medium by the Populace for Public Health Campaigns in Cross River State.

The most preferred medium for public health campaign by the residents of Cross River State is radio. Table 1 revealed that 48.7% of residents in Cross River State indicated that majority of the people view radio as the most preferred medium for public health campaigns. The data revealed that 19.3% indicated the internet while 17.3% preferred TV as tools for effective public health campaigns.

The result revealed that, despite the appeal and versatility of the other media, particularly the internet this finding supports the UNESCO assertion that at the global level, it remains the most widely used medium even in Nigeria and across Africa. The reason being that, radio is more accessible, cost-effective, portable and can be found at the grass-root even among those without access to digital technology, Ephraim (2020) explained this assertion that, radio helps to disseminate public information to a large audience, ranging from cities to the rural areas and it does not only function as a mass medium of information dissemination but as a medium for disseminating public health information.

Radio is a powerful medium and helps to promote health information and increase awareness. Asemah, Anum and Edegoh,(2013) states that radio being an electronic medium is an important tool for entertainment, information and education of the society which invariably can lead to improving and changing social, cultural, political and technological thinking, which will in the long run, have positive results on the process of society building.

The popularity of radio among residents of CRS is reflected in the level of awareness of public health campaigns which shows that 87.3% of respondents are aware of various public health campaigns on radio. Table 3 also revealed that the residents of Cross River State are aware of the various health programs being aired by CRBC Radio 105.5 FM. This was reflected in the result which had 84.3% of respondents in affirmation and 15.7% disagreed.

The first step towards taking the right decision in behaviour change is awareness. Being aware of the role of radio in disseminating public health information as well as the various health messages is the right step in the right direction, though awareness of public health issues can sensitise the public to act but may not encourage the practice or sustenance of the health behaviour. Abdi and Gautam(2017)state that awareness creation about how disease are transmitted, ways of preventing them using appropriate messages can actually motivate community members to act but cannot be said to guarantee the sustenance of the act.

RESEARCH QUESTION 2

Ascertain the extent to which residents of Calabar comply with public health campaign messages on Cross River Broadcasting Corporation Radio Station.

The result on table 5 reveals the extent to which CRBC Radio public health campaigns on various diseases have influenced the adherence of CRS residents to health messages. Majority of the respondents, 80.2%, agreed that public health campaign on CRBC Radio influenced their adherence to public health messages. This corroborates the assertion of the agenda setting theory which stipulates that, the media, in this case, the radio can stimulate interest in a topic of value to the public. This could include setting agenda for a particular health issue in a bid to draw attention of the public to it. Table 6 revealed the extent of influence after exposure of Cross River State residents to public health campaigns. The findings reveal that, 234 (59.4%) of respondents agreed that public health campaigns on CRBC Radio did not influence the decision to adhere and practice positive health behavior, while 160 (40.6%) agreed. This is an evidence that health messages on CRBC Radio, 105.5 is achieving the desired result of creating awareness on the need to practice or cultivate healthy behavior to prevent or curtail the spread of diseases. The more aware the people are of the risk and effect of the presence, nature and communicability of a disease, the more the possibility of adhering to healthy life style.

The mode of influence of presumed (IPI) model also demonstrates that the media, particularly radio campaign can spread important information on public health issue as well as influence opinions and behaviours to necessitate change. The extent of compliance to these campaign messages is a parameter for measuring the efficiency of radio as an instrument of change as well as the effectiveness of the message.

RESEARCH QUESTION 3

Determine to what extent the public health campaign on Cross River Broadcasting Corporation (CRBC) Radio Station have enhanced public health practices among residents in Cross River State.

In a bid to understand the extent which the public health campaign programme on CRBC Radio in Cross River State have enhanced public health practices among residents of Cross River State, the need to know the level of awareness, the most common health campaigns and the extent of influence became imperative. Table 3 revealed that the level of awareness of public health campaigns programmes on CRBC Radio is high with 84.3% of respondents affirming to this assertion while 15.7% disagreed. The implication of this result is that, CRBC Radio conforms to the assertion that radio is a veritable tool for awareness creation. It is personalized, has unlimited reach, affordable and cost effective. Therefore, many people have access to it. This was emphasized in the study on public perception of radio campaign messages in managing COVID-19 pandemic in selected states in South-West Nigeria conducted by Felix *et al* (2022) that radio particularly, community radio remains a potential tool for raising awareness and knowledge level about health issues in Nigeria. Also, that exposure to campaign messages on COVID-19 preventive measure influenced the awareness and adoption of COVID-19 preventive measures. The findings strengthen the assertion that radio is a powerful tool for influencing public health decisions and actions. Table 4 shows that, the most common health campaign as selected by 57.9% respondents is the COVID-19 vaccination while HIV/AIDS campaigns had 13.7% respondent's affirmation. Campaign for the prevention against malaria, monkey pox and filariasis had 11.4%, 10.7% and 6.3% respectively. This implies that, series of public health campaigns were being streamed on CRBC Radio 105.5 and also getting the assertion of the audience. This is the right step towards creating awareness possibility of adhering to healthy life style.

RESEARCH QUESTION 4

Research Question 4 Suggests Ways through Which Public Health Campaigns on CRBC Radio, 105.5 Fm Can Be Enhanced.

In a bid to bring to limelight the various ways that would enhance the public health campaigns on CRBC Radio, 105.5 Fm, the need to understand the challenges became imperative.

Table 7 shows that, there are several factor that pose a hurdle to public health campaigns on CRBC Radio, 105.5 Fm. The findings reveal that 47.7% affirmed that, societal norms, lack of political will, lack of public trust and source bias are among the challenges that may contribute to resident's refusal to adhere and practice health information on radio. Generally, the aforementioned factors have always constituted a challenge against most developmental efforts including health issues in Africa and Nigeria as a whole. The influence of culture on health attitude or life style is deep and detrimental. Cultural influence on health decisions are vast and could manifest through the perception of the people about health information. Culture could be individualistic or collectivistic and can affect how people view certain health information. Cultures can give rise to different views on human health, as well as on causes of illness. This is because all

cultures tend to have different explanations to the causes of illness, the cure and how it should be handled. This can have a profound effect on their willingness to use it. Lack of political will, public trust and source bias also constitute problems due to previous experiences, failure and fear of new information also affect the compliance to health messages.

Table 8 revealed some of the factors that may influence adherence to the public health campaigns on CRBC Radio, 105.5 Fm. The findings revealed that increased media campaign, strategic media campaigns, audience specific campaigns and having a credible source of information will improve the quality of public health campaigns emanating from the radio station. Therefore, CRBC Radio, 105.5 Fm the public health campaigns should be increased and up scaled, the messages should be positioned strategically. This implies that messages should be intentional and targeted appropriately.

The uniqueness of the different audience segments requires audience specific health messages because there is a relationship between individuals, community and societal factors. This enables public health campaigns to address the range of factors that put people at risk. Their belief, knowledge, culture and environment influence how they handle public health messages. Therefore, health messages should be tailored having these interfering factors in mind. The more effective public health campaigns are, the more the possibility of adherence will be.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

There is still a critical role for radio broadcasts to play in health promotion around the world. Health promoters and stakeholders may have difficulty disseminating health information, monitoring progress, and coordinating efforts around the world if they do not have access to radio broadcasts in addition to other forms of communication as well as . The purpose of this study was to draw attention to Cross River State's radio health communication efforts. Radio has contributed significantly to the success of health programmes by informing and educating the public. Successful outcomes include eliminating filariasis, educating people about family planning, and containing the Coronavirus (COVID19) pandemic.

Radio's health communication and campaigns in Cross River State and Nigeria are perceived by the people as an instrument for sustainable health development because the information they disseminate teaches people how to prevent and curtail the spread and treat diseases. Moreover, radio broadcasting and other media of communication should be viewed as an essential part of governance in health matters. Radio stations involved in health communication should receive support from a variety of sources, including civil society, business, government, and other external organisations. In order to reach a wider audience, media professionals should make an effort to incorporate health communication or messages into their programming as well as incorporating public health campaign in social media, informing, sensitizing and educating.

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