

Broadcast Media and Climate Change Awareness in Nigeria: A Study of Residents' Perception in Edo State¹

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Abstract

This paper explores the perceptions of people in the Edo State about the report about climate change in Nigeria on the broadcast media. It is based on the Agenda-Setting and Perception Theories in that it explores the level of media exposure, relevance of the content and the subsequent change of attitude. The issue that inspired the research is that there is always a disparity between the high aggregate knowledge of climate change and the little exposure to climate content via Nigerian broadcast media. To fill this gap, the following research questions were formulated: How often do the residents of Edo state receive the information about climate change on broadcast media? What are the most reported problems? What is the effect of exposure to media on the minds of people? The research design was a survey research design by the use of a structured questionnaire that was given to 384 respondents in the three senatorial districts of Edo state out of which 372 respondents were retrieved and analyzed using descriptive statistics. The results indicate that general awareness of climate change is high but the real exposure towards broadcast media reportage is low. The most listened to platform was Radio, especially the Independent Radio and Edo Broadcasting Service. The most numerous issue that was reported was flooding whereas complex issues such as emissions and policy coverage gained minimal coverage. Media messages had a positive effect on the attitude of people

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who were reached despite the low exposure. It is concluded that the potential of broadcast media in Edo State have not been fully used in climate communication and suggestions will be to enhance better training of journalists, strategic environmental programs, and diversified broadcast messages to enhance the level of understanding and interest of the people on the issues of climate.

Keywords: Broadcast Media, Climate Change Awareness, Edo State, Environmental Communication, Public Perception

Introduction

One of the greatest threats to sustainable development nowadays is climate change, the consequences of which, including flooding, drought, desertification, and the unpredictability of rainfall, have been disrupting food production, infrastructure, and livelihoods worldwide (Turrentine & Denchak, 2021; World Health Organization, 2021). These manifestations are becoming more and more noticeable in Nigeria in the areas of agriculture, public health, and the economy (Nwankpa, 2022). Although there are global and national plans to curb these effects, the effect of the plans greatly relies on the comprehension and the involvement of the population.

The broadcast media especially radio and television have an important role in informing, educating, and mobilizing the people on environmental concerns (Obot, 2004; Asemah, Osife-Kurex & Verengkat, 2017). The media influence how people perceive and act towards climate change through the news, documentaries and talk shows. It is proposed that the relevance of a problem in the media contributes to the extent to which the general population considers this problem to be relevant (Agenda-Setting Theory, McCombs & Shaw, 1972), whereas, according to Perception Theory (Folarin, 2005), the level of individual awareness and reaction to a given problem is determined by how this message is decoded. Collectively, the theories above underscore the role of the media towards providing a framing of climate change as a national priority and arousal of behavior change.

Nevertheless, the broadcast stations in Nigeria have not succeeded in reporting climate change issues in a consistent manner as frequent movement to disaster reporting has been witnessed at the expense of providing regular public education (Boykoff & Roberts, 2007; Tagbo, 2010). According to the works by Woldemichael (2020) and Khan (2021), the African media are characterized by the tendency to report on climate stories in episodic forms, focusing on floods or droughts, without discussing what causes them

and encouraging adaptive behavior. In Edo State where people have to deal with flooding, deforestation, and land degradation regularly there seems to be little empirical research done on the impact of broadcast media reportage on individual awareness and perception on climate change.

Climate change is a highly debated issue on policy and scientific levels, but there is still an uneven understanding of the subject in Nigeria. A significant number of citizens are aware of the phenomenon of climate change, though they have an insufficient amount of knowledge on the causes, effects, and prevention methods (Yadav & Rani, 2011; Nsude & Nwafor, 2016). This knowledge gap seems to be filled with broadcast media that, however, seem to be underused or ineffective in their reporting on the environment (Asemah et al., 2017; Woldemichael, 2020). This paper will hence look at the effectiveness of broadcast media in Edo state in creating awareness and impacting the minds of the citizens on climate change.

This article, consequently, analyses the extent to which people living in the Edo State are exposed to the content of climate change as delivered by the broadcast media, the type of media platform mostly utilized, the kind of topics mostly covered and how satisfied and their attitudes changed as a result. Through the analysis of these dimensions, this study will help in adding to the increasing literature on environmental communication and media effectiveness in third world countries. It also offers evidence-based suggestions on how to enhance the broadcast media approaches to improve the climate change awareness and public involvement in Nigeria.

Literature review

Climate change is a characteristic topic of worldwide and nationwide discourse with the reason that it has profound effects on the ecosystem, economies, and human life. Its impacts in Nigeria like increase in temperatures, coastal erosion and unpredictable rainfalls have increased vulnerabilities and derailed development objectives. It is against this background that broadcast media have become more significant in the education of the population and communication of climate risks (Asemah, Osife-Kurex, & Verengkat, 2017). Broadcast media (radio and television) - provide instantaneous and convenient means to transmit information on the climate. Their capacity to enlighten such broad and multifarious audiences has been emphasized by Obot (2004) and the episodic and superficial nature of climate reporting by the African media has been criticized by scholars such as Boykoff & Roberts (2007) and Tagbo (2010).

The attitude that people have towards climate messages is defined by the influence exerted by public perception, which is organized by the manner in which information is packaged and communicated. According to Yadav & Rani (2011) the use of localized and relatable content improves the knowledge of the population and brings behavior change. Agenda-Setting Theory (McCombs & Shaw, 1972), and Perception Theory (Folarin, 2005) are both reflections of the media impact on not only the population focus but the interpretation and reactions of people on environmental hazards.

Although the media houses in Nigeria continue to increase in number, there are still sections that are weak in terms of consistency, clarity, and depth of climate reporting. The author notes that in most newsrooms, there are untrained staff, no or poorly organized environmental coverage, and no scientific basis of their coverage, which weaken the ability of the media to educate and mobilize the population on climate change (Woldemichael, 2020). The idea behind the broadcast media has to do with the employment of audio-visual communication technologies which represent information that is spread to heterogeneous and large groups of people. Obot (2004) points out that radio and television are the most preferred media to use when passing the information about climate because they are immediate and ubiquitous. However, research by Boykoff & Roberts (2007) and Tagbo (2010) has shown that in most African nations, there has been disparate media coverage of climate change as an episodic event such as floods as opposed to a systematic and constant occurrence. The aspect of public perception is key in grasping how media has been used to increase awareness on the issue.

Perception is the process of how the information is interpreted and understood by individuals according to the past knowledge, systems of belief and culture. Media messages on the risks of climate are highly influenced by the framing and clarity of these messages, which influence the beliefs of the population. As an example, Yadav & Rani (2011) state that when media material is clear, local and relatable, the understanding and elicitation of behavioral response can be enhanced greatly. Nigerian research seldom connects climate reportage with some form of tangible action as evidenced by a research gap that the study is filling through the perception-performance nexus of broadcast media.

This study has its theoretical foundation in the Agenda-Setting Theory which argues that the media have no power to tell people how to think but rather they are strong in telling people what to think. According to McCombs & Shaw (1972), the mass

communication agenda determines priorities in the people by the frequency and prominence of the issue. When the media houses focus on environmental issues consistently in issues relating to climate change, then chances are high that the general population will appreciate their seriousness.

The empirical studies in Nigeria indicate that, although there is an increase in the media, there are very few broadcasting stations with specific programmes on climate change. The research conducted by Woldemichael (2020) revealed that although the media is viewed as a reliable source of information, their performance is low due to poor investment in scientific reporting, insufficient training of journalists and poor feedback mechanisms.

To conclude, the role played by broadcast media in creating the awareness of the citizens as to climate change is central, as evidenced by the available literature. Nevertheless, there are gaps in the effectiveness and frequency of the execution of this role by the Nigerian media. The work expands the earlier research by narrowing down the scope to the perception of the residents on the broadcast media coverage in Edo State where the community is prone to climate risks but has little research on the role of the media.

Overview of broadcast media

According to Nweke (2001, as cited in Omale, Asemah, &Obaje, 2024), broadcast media refer to electronic media that are utilized in communicating information, entertainment, and other types of content to a large audience. This division embraces the radio and television that are dependent on electromagnetic waves to relay signals that can be picked up by other fit devices. Nweke argues that broadcast media is important in mass communication because it provides an avenue that facilitates the transmission of the audiovisual content generally to mass and diverse audience. Television and radio are the most effective means of communication of news, educational and entertainment programs. These media platforms are used to exploit electromagnetic transmission to make the content accessible to a large number of households and communities.

According to Obot (2004), broadcast media is a potent channel of transmitting information, shaping the opinion, and facilitating a much-needed communication on a large scale. It encompasses radio and television which are highly available and have profound impact to the society. Equally, Griffin (2000, as cited in Omale et al., 2024) describes the broadcast media as a unidirectional communication system where

information, entertainment or messages are sent out by a single entity to a wide audience using radio and television. Griffin further emphasizes that broadcast media operates in a unidirectional manner, with content generated and delivered from a central point like a radio or TV station to numerous receivers, allowing for mass dissemination without direct feedback from the audience.

According to Napoli (2011), broadcast media is a type of mass media that delivers content to a large audience through a single channel. It includes radio, television, and satellite broadcasting. The broadcast media through their programmes can create awareness of fuel subsidy removal and its implications to society. Broadcast media offers the most recent commentary and analysis on a variety of topics, including politics, economics, agriculture, health, sports, psychological and emotional concerns, music, theatre, the fine arts, and even comic books (Chekwube, Nkwam-Uwaoma & Nwaoboli, 2023). Important news, for instance, has huge, strong headlines and pieces connected to them are accompanied by "Graphics"/pictures.

Asemah (2011) notes that the mass media, especially the broadcast media are vital promotional tools believed to be persuasive, capable of convincing any audience to accept ideas, whether from the government, individuals, or institutions, because of their strategic and innovative ways of designing and presenting media contents (messages) primarily to convince the target audience to support a trend. Asemah (2011) notes that what the media emphasise is what the audience or society prioritises; this makes the media a vital tool for information dissemination and attitude change in cultural, health, or political concerns.

An overview of perception

Perception refers to our sensory experience of the world. It is the process of using our senses to become aware of objects, relationships, and events. It is through this experience that we information about the environment around us (Cherry, 2024). Perception is the process of being aware of or comprehending sensory information. The Latin word perception, which means receiving, gathering, the activity of taking possession, and apprehension with the mind or senses, is where the word "perception" comes from (Rao & Narayan, 2018). This Latin term served as the basis for the English word "perception".

Similarly, Quick & Nelson (2017) define it as the act of processing information about another person or circumstance. This definition has made it very clear that the

opinions we make about other people or things rely on the amount of information that is available to us and how effectively we can understand the information that we have. To put it another way, even if you and a group of other people are given the same set of information about a specific event, person, or group of people, you may still reach different conclusions because of individual differences in how you interpret the data. Perception requires exposure to stimuli, as well as a specific level of attention paid to the stimuli before the stimuli are understood by the audience Ezinwa (2014 as cited in Ezegwu, Ezeji, Chukwuemeka & Chime-Nganya, 2024).

Perception is the process of interpreting sensory input by constructing meaning for what one sees, feels, touches, and hears based on one's background of experience (Defleur&Defleur, 2010 cited in Abamba, 2024). People make meaning out of situations based on their previous experiences. Perception is the process of being aware of or comprehending sensory information. Mohammed (2008 as cited in Kajuru, 2015) states that the process of communication is influenced a lot by the perception of the target audience. How you perceive an individual will determine how you communicate with the person. Pearson (2005 cited in Kajuru, 2015) opines that perception influences our experience and assessment of others and our communication with them. The scholar also added that Perception affects self-concept, self-efficiency and presentation of one's self.

The conceptual basis of climate change

Climate change has emerged as one of the most pressing development challenges facing Nigeria in recent times. Its impact on the country's socio-economic structures and environment is intensifying existing vulnerabilities (Nwankpa, 2022). Experts estimate that climate change currently costs Nigeria around \$100 billion annually, a figure projected to rise to \$460 billion by 2050 (Ekeruche, 2022). Climate change is the term that is used to describe regular variations in Earth climate, which are caused by atmospheric changes and the interrelations of geological, chemical, biological, and geographic systems (Jackson, 2024). It is different than normal short-term changes in weather because it includes long-term changes in average weather conditions, including becoming warmer, or having more or less rain or dryness over an extended period of several decades or more, as explained by Turrentine & Denchak (2021). It is common knowledge that climate change is one of the major environmental, social, and economic problems facing the world today. It is a change of weather patterns over a very long duration, decades or even millions of years. This has become a critical international issue

whose effects are gaining momentum. Some of its effects include a rise in sea levels, more severe weather pattern, a high rate of occurrence and intensity of storms, floods, droughts, and wildfires. Such environmental disturbances are also the cause of more profound social challenges, including poverty, malnutrition, and other health and economic issues (Asemah, Osife-Kurex & Verengkat, 2017). Climate change has immense consequences to the human life and day-to-day activities. Its impacts can be seen in the increasing number of natural calamities, global warming and melting ice cap in the poles. Yiping (2011, as cited in Asemah et al., 2017) points out that climate change is an existing and real issue that is faced differently by different countries and people. Its effects are severe and frequent typhoons, extended droughts, food production disruption, poor sanitation, increased health related problems.

Climate change refers to the changes in weather patterns which have happened over long periods of time, including variations in temperature, rainfall, the state of such natural features as the oceans, ice sheets, and impermeable surfaces. It is affected by several natural phenomena, including variations in solar radiation and internal climate system changes. The effects of climate change are extensive, with rising temperatures causing health concerns such as heatstroke, cardiovascular disorders, and stress from heat. These illnesses not only deteriorate with time but also cause a sizable number of fatalities. The World Health Organization estimates that between 2030 and 2050, climate change will be responsible for approximately 250,000 fatalities (World Health Organization, 2021).

Global climate change as a phenomenon is an occurrence that has been taking place over several decades in the history of man. In recent times, governments and individuals have tried to take necessary steps to reduce the amount of carbon that is being emitted into the environment by human activities. This has resulted in the creation of new policies, as well as, the changing of old ones to imbibe ways that the emission of harmful substances into the atmosphere can be reduced (Aboaba, 2021). The effects of climate change can be seen all around the world from the rising sea levels and the reduction in glaciers around the poles of the earth, the earth is getting warmer. From the research carried out by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), there has been an increase in the rate of greenhouse gas emissions which has caused the temperature of the earth to increase by 0.2°C every decade, this rate is expected to reach the threshold of 2°C

by 2050. These gradual temperature changes will bring adverse conditions that will greatly affect not just human beings but other species and whole ecosystems.

Climate change refers to long-term shifts in weather patterns, influenced by natural factors like solar radiation and internal climate changes. Owing to its increasing influence, scientists, governments, international organizations, civil society and most importantly the mass media are becoming increasingly involved. The media also contribute to the increase of awareness regarding climate change problems.

Broadcast media and climate change awareness

The media plays a very significant role in informing the people about the situation of the climate change and assists in creating awareness and a wider insight of the gravity and effects of climate change. Yadav & Rani (2011) assert that the media has an important role to play in fighting climate change by exposing both the causes and its negative effects to the human beings. The mass media can empower people through their platforms to be enlightened about the problems of global warming, greenhouse effect, ozone layer depletion, acid rain and the work of environmental groups like the Greenpeace. The media can also help to advocate responsible consumption of natural resources as well as sustainable operations. The media is quite critical during climate related disasters and this is because it is the one that gives timely and right information prior to, at the time, and after the occurrence of such events. This also assists in controlling the perception of anxiety among people and reducing the adverse effects of disasters due to transparent, objective, and informational reporting.

As Woldemichael (2020) claims, the media are potent vehicles which can deliver the latest events of the world to the audience on the daily basis, and highly impact the way people perceive climate change and environmental safety. Although the media have done commendable work in reporting on issues relating to climate, they have not given adequate attention to the topic or intensive coverage. They also have failed to hold policymakers responsible and more deliberate, holistic conversations (Woldemichael, 2020). Consequently, there is a need to ensure that the media particularly the mass media cover climate change issues clearly, inclusively, and relatably.

Their reporting must reduce complicated information about climate and present it to the people in a simplified actionable form to ensure that the citizens respond in an informed manner and to have more people to be interested in the environmental matters. To a greater extent, World Health Organization (WHO) observes that the increased

awareness and in turn awareness of the impacts of climate change will pave way to behavioural change and also support the action taken by society to reduce greenhouse gases emissions. The awareness of climate change is usually regarded as necessary in the area of the popularization of mitigation and adaptation policies.

Individuals who are more exposed and aware of hazards may begin to normalize risks to cope psychologically with them (Khan, 2021). Yet, Khan (2021) and Nsude & Nwafor (2016) argue that public awareness of climate change lies behind scientific progress, adding that community awareness and information about the options available to confront the problem.

The key to a successful climate change plan is effective public engagement. As a result of increasing scientific evidence and greater media coverage, public concern, awareness and understanding of climate change has increased (Boykoff & Yulsman, 2013 cited in Khan, 2021). By increasing public awareness and knowledge about climate change, citizens can become more engaged in decision-making, which in turn can impact the community's awareness and knowledge. As a result of public awareness, education, and participation, public behavior and action regarding climate change can be transformed (Khan, 2021).

The media is not just expected to report on mere issue rather report incidents and happenings that are of great important to the public. When incidents with great significance to the environment and to the health of people take place in the society, the media expose such incident and make the public aware of them.

Why media houses fail to prioritize climate issues

Despite the increasing severity of climate change, many media houses in Nigeria and other developing countries fail to prioritize its coverage. This gap can be explained by a number of related reasons:

Absence of expertise and professionalism

Most journalists do not have formal training or knowledge on how to report on complex issues concerning the environment and as such, they struggle to report on these issues (Woldemichael, 2020; Asemah, Osife-Kurex, & Verengkat, 2017).

Poor perceived news value

Climate change is perceived as a long-term and slow-onset problem, which does not attract the immediacy, conflict and novelty that attract newsworthiness (Boykoff &

Roberts, 2007). Consequently, such subjects can be relegated by editors and producers to less dramatic stories.

Resource constraints

Environmental reporting takes time, financial resources and the availability of technical specialists. The newsrooms facing low resources are not in a position to allocate resources to such stories (Tagbo, 2010).

Irregular editorial policies

Hopelessly, without proper outlined editorial policies or environmental reporting requirements, the coverage tends to be reactive instead of proactive, long-term or strategic (Woldemichael, 2020).

Commercial forces

The media houses and commercially owned ones in particular are more concerned with content that will bring an audience and advertisers. Stories about climate are often perceived as not so profitable (Napoli, 2011).

Political interference or apathy

When industries are linked to environmental degradation and have political interests in the media houses, such media houses may not cover them in critical ways because they are either afraid of such reprisals or they are simply not interested as it is not a priority issue (Boykoff & Roberts, 2007).

Audience disinterest or fatigue

The level of interest or care of the audience regarding climate change is often quite low unless there is a personal impact. Climate stories will not have an easy time drawing attention without local and relatable content (Yadav & Rani, 2011; Khan, 2021). These issues have led to the low coverage of climate change in the broadcast media of Nigeria even though people are ready to listen to it when appropriately packaged.

Theoretical framework

A theory is one that is used in the process of understanding, explaining, questioning, generalizing knowledge and predicting events or phenomena. According to Asemah (2022, p.118), communication theories underscore the aspects of communication that play a crucial role in human life, and how people make, communicate and decipher messages as part of their conduct and interpersonal relationships. In this research, two theories were used as anchor; Agenda-Setting Theory and Perception Theory.

Agenda-setting theory

This theory was originally conceptualized by Walter Lippmann in 1922, further developed by Bernard Cohen in 1963, and empirically popularized by McCombs & Shaw (1972) following their study of the 1968 U.S. presidential election. Agenda-Setting Theory proposes that the media may not always tell the public what to think, but it is successful in telling them what to think about. That is, media coverage influences the salience of issues in the public mind. According to Lippmann (1922, as cited in Popoola, 2015), the media help to create “pictures in our heads.” Asemah, Nwammuo, & Nkwam-Uwaoma (2017) also noted that what audiences prioritize or worry about is heavily shaped by what the media emphasize. If climate change is frequently and prominently covered in the media, the public is more likely to regard it as an important issue.

Perception theory

Perception Theory helps explain how individuals receive and interpret messages, influenced by cognitive processes, social background, and prior experiences. According to Schiffman & Kanuk (2007), perception refers to the process through which individuals make sense of sensory data depending on the expectations, previous information, and beliefs. With regard to media consumption, the issue of perception is not passive as Folarin (2005) argues that perception is influenced by the elements of education, culture, and context. Therefore, despite the media shaping the development of the agenda on climate change, the perception of such messages by people determines their comprehension and response to the content of the message. The selective perception (Berelson & Steiner, 1964) also demonstrates that people always pay attention to the messages that are consistent with their already held opinions and ignore the conflicting information. Agenda-Setting and Perception Theories are the complete package of this study. Although Agenda-Setting Theory is used to clarify how the broadcast media can make the issue of climate change salient in the public discourse, Perception Theory can be used to explain why different people react to the media content differently. Simply put the media can communicate their concern about climate (agenda-setting), however how the audience translates the message into their own behavioral patterns (perception) is filtered by their own personal, cultural or cognitive frames. Thus, successful communication relating to climate change should not be focused on content (agenda) only, but, the characteristics of the audience and the context (perception) are to be also taken into account to create substantial awareness and response.

Methodology

The survey research design was used in this study, and it is suitable in the acquisition of quantifiable information on the opinions, attitudes, and experiences of people. The choice of the design was due to its ability to capture data of a fairly large and diverse population in a relatively brief period with the ability to statistically analyze and generalize results. Since the study sought to evaluate the perception of the residents towards the reporting of the climate change issues by the broadcast media, it was best to use a survey as the most appropriate method of recording the patterns of awareness, exposure and behaviour change in response across the entire Edo State.

The study sample included the adult population of the Edo State which is divided into three senatorial districts Edo South, Edo Central and Edo North. The choice of these districts was to obtain equal representation of geographical and socio-cultural diversity of the state. A Local Government Area (LGA) was purposely chosen in each senatorial district in terms of accessibility and media coverage.

A total of 384 respondents were established as sample size based on Krejcie & Morgan (1970) sample size determination table, which is a statistically valid basis of deciding on a sufficient sample based on large population. To achieve representativeness, the three senatorial districts were proportionately sampled to ensure the research sample reflected the population. The mixed sampling process is therefore the multi-stage and stratified random sampling methods where it can be assured that various demographic characteristics like gender, level of education and occupation were sufficiently covered in the research.

A structured questionnaire that was to be completed to provide the answers to the question of awareness levels, exposure to broadcast media, the most preferred channels, perception of reportage, and the change of the attitude turned out to be the main source of data collection. The questionnaire was divided into questions on a Likert scale and close ended questions to ensure that it can be easily quantified and analysed. The tool was broken into parts that responded to the research objectives of the study.

In order to assure content validity, the questionnaire was examined, by three people aged between 60 and 70 years with background knowledge of Mass Communication and Environmental Studies, who were evaluated to determine the clarity, relevance and alignment of the questionnaire with the objectives of the study. The pilot test was done in Auchi (Edo North) with 30 respondents who were not included in the

final sample. The pilot test allowed to refine the ambiguous questions and better respondent choices. The instrument was tested to determine the reliability of the instrument, which was done by the Cronbachs Alpha reliability test that gave a coefficient of 0.82 which shows that there was a high internal consistency and reliability of the measurement items.

Data Presentation and Analysis

Among the 384 questionnaires distributed, 372 respondents returned the questionnaires, which corresponded to the response rate of 96.9. The Statistical Package of the social Sciences (SPSS) version 25 was used to process the data. Frequencies and percentages were the methods used to describe the responses and give the data in a table form.

This analytical approach was appropriate for identifying patterns and trends in residents' awareness, media exposure, and satisfaction levels with broadcast reportage of climate change issues. Most people who were exposed to broadcast climate programs gave positive attitudinal change, which might have been brought by the coverage by media.

Table 1

Respondents' knowledge about climate change issues in Nigeria

Response	Frequency (n)	Percentage
Yes	278	74.7%
No	71	19.1%
Can't Tell	23	6.2%
Total	372	100.0%

Based on table 1, a significant proportion of the respondents (74.7%) are aware of the issue of climate change in Nigeria. This shows that there is a great degree of general awareness of the population under survey. The level of ignorance was confessed by only 19.1%, and the level of indecision was 6.2%.

Table 2

Exposure to broadcast media reportage of climate change

Response	Frequency (n)	percentage(%)
Yes	89	23.9%
No	256	68.8%

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Can't Tell	27	7.3%
Total	372	100.0%

Table 2 shows that the exposure to climate change information by the broadcast media is only found in 23.9% of respondents, although the overall awareness of the general population was quite high as indicated in Table 1. A notable 68.8% had never seen such reportage implying that the broadcast media is not doing well to spread the content on climate change.

Table 3

Level of exposure to broadcast media reportage

Response	Frequency (n)	percentage
Very High	29	7.8%
High	42	11.3%
Can't Tell	18	4.8%
Low	151	40.6%
Very Low	132	35.5%
Total	372	100.0%

Table 3 indicates that 76.1% of all respondents are in the Low or very-low exposure category, which supports the previous observation that broadcast media coverage or reach is inappropriate. A very high and high exposure level was reported among only 19.1 percent.

Table 4

Broadcast media channels accessed

Channel	Frequency (n)	Percentage
Independent Radio	18	21.8%
Edo Broadcasting Service Radio	78	21.0%
Edo Broadcasting Service (TV)	64	17.2%
Independent Television (ITV)	45	12.0%
Speed FM	41	11.0%
Nigerian Television Authority (NTA)	27	7.3%
Bronze FM	22	5.9%
Others	14	3.8%

Total	372	100.0%
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Table 4 shows that the most visited medium of content concerning climate change is radio. The Independent Radio (21.8%) and Edo Broadcasting Service Radio (21.0%) are the leading two channels, which have a 42.8 percent total percentage of all the responses, which shows that there is a great deal of preference given to radio channels. The television stations, such as Edo Broadcasting Service TV (17.2%) and ITV (12.0%) are also the followers, however, with lower reach compared to radio. There is also a good listenership of speed FM (11.0%). Smaller patronage can be seen towards NTA (7.3%), Bronze FM (5.9%), and others (3.8%). This trend indicates that the most popular and available broadcast medium on which to pass the information concerning climate change in Edo State is through radio.

Table 5*Climate change issues mostly discussed*

Issue	Frequency (n)	Percentage
Flooding	148	39.8%
Waste Management & Recycling	89	23.9%
Deforestation and Land Degradation	45	12.1%
Energy and Emissions	37	10.0%
Drought and Desertification	23	6.2%
Others	30	8.0%
Total	372	100.0%

Table 5 reveals that flooding is the most talked about issue of climate change (39.8%), probably because it is the most common, and its effect is experienced immediately in most parts of Nigeria. Other issues such as energy and emissions are addressed somewhat less, which implies unequal reporting on the problem of climate.

Table 6*Change in attitude after media exposure*

Response	Frequency (n)	percentage
Strongly Agree	139	37.4%
Agree	156	41.9%
Undecided	14	3.8%

Disagree	25	6.7%
Strongly Disagree	38	10.2%
Total	372	100.0%

As indicated in Table 6, approximately 79.3 percent of respondents (Agree + Strongly Agree) acknowledged that exposure on the broadcast media had a positive influence on their attitude towards issues of climate change. This demonstrates that in the event of media coverage, the media proves effective in creating awareness, as well as behavior change.

Table 7

Satisfaction with Broadcast Media Reportage

Response	Frequency (n)	percentage(%)
Highly Satisfied	33	8.9%
Satisfied	42	11.3%
Can't Tell	25	6.7%
Less Satisfied	128	34.4%
Not Satisfied	144	38.7%
Total	372	100.0%

External validity Table 7 shows that most people (73.1%) are dissatisfied with the way broadcast media cover climate issues (Less Satisfied + Not Satisfied). This may be explained by the lack of air time, superficial content or ineffective use of messages.

Results

The research involved the analysis of the responses of 372 residents of the Edo State in order to research their awareness, exposure, perception and satisfaction with the broadcast media coverage of climate change issues. The data were analysed with Statistical Package of the Social Sciences (SPSS, version 25) and descriptive statistics frequency distribution and percentiles distribution were summarised by using tables 1-7. Results of Table 1 indicate that 74.7 percent of the sample said that they were aware of the problems of climate change, which means that the overall awareness of the Edo residents is rather high. Table 2 however indicates that the exposure to broadcast media reports on climate change was reached only by 23.9% and 68.8% indicated no exposure. This gap illustrates that knowledge about the climate change is not always related to media usage but could be caused by alternative sources of information like interpersonal

communication or social media. Additional findings (Table 3) indicate that there is low exposure level as 76.1 percent of the respondents indicated that their exposure was low or very low. Radio is the leading broadcast media in Table 4 with the most accessed being Independent Radio (21.8) and Edo Broadcasting Service Radio (21.0) with the television stations like EBS-TV (17.2) and ITV (12.0) coming second. As can be seen in Table 5, the most discussed climate change problem is flooding (39.8), closely preceded by waste management and recycling (23.9), and deforestation (12.1). More complicated problems such as energy emissions and drought are underserved. Table 6 reveals that 79.3 percent of the respondents said they agreed or strongly agreed that exposure to the broadcast media affected their perception on climate change. Nevertheless, Table 7 has reported that 73.1% said that they were less satisfied or not satisfied with the quality of broadcast reportage, indicating that though exposure might have a positive impact, media coverage is not sufficiently profound and consistent.

Findings

Although the majority of the respondents are well aware of what climate change involves, not many people seek information on climate change using broadcast media. This indicates that there is a possibility that other informal or online channels can contribute more to the creation of awareness. The most powerful and reachable mediums of communicating environmental messages in Edo State are the radio. This observation is in line with previous works by Obot (2004) and Woldemichael (2020), who highlighted the coverage of radio in sub-Saharan Africa. Here, floods prevail in the broadcast climatic content and issues related to renewable energy, response to policy and emission are not frequently discussed. This shows bias in thematic reporting on the environmental issue in Nigeria and superficiality. Although the exposure is low, people who see the climate information on broadcast media tend to form more positive attitudes towards the environment, which is why Agenda-Setting Theory should be accepted. Nevertheless, the discontent with the quality of reportage implies its inability to maintain the interest of the public. The lack of technical accuracy, a lack of contextualization, and lack of training of journalists in climate communication may be associated with the dissatisfaction of people who participated in the survey.

Discussion

The findings of the study validate the main principles of the Agenda-Setting and Perception Theories. The Agenda-Setting Theory is based on the assumption that framing

issues through the media affects how the masses will view the issue (McCombs & Shaw, 1972). Despite the fact that climate change is a big issue in the world, Edo State broadcast media have not perceived it as a priority in their programming. The exposure levels were low (Tables 2 and 3), which indicates that climate change is yet to become a steadfast media agenda. Accordingly, the masses do not view it as a problem that can be addressed immediately or acted upon even though people are generally aware of the consequences. Meanwhile, Perception Theory (Folarin, 2005) assists in understanding why the attitudinal change is positive among those who are exposed to the contents of the broadcasts (Table 6). The cultural, educational and experiential contexts influence the interpretation of climate messages to the audience. The more the respondents were able to connect media messages with the local realities (e.g., frequent floods in Benin City), the higher the likelihood that the respondents would moderate their attitudes and behaviors. The level of exposure and the level of satisfaction (Table 7) however, show that such perception-based change is shallow and inconsistent. The predominance of flooding in the media coverage (Table 5) can be used as an example of what Boykoff & Roberts (2007) referred to as episodic framing media coverage characterized by the emphasis on a report on short-term, dramatic issues, but not on systemic environmental challenges. This superficial framing does not allow people to see climate change as a complex issue that takes a long period. Effectively, broadcast media in Edo State are not doing their best as environmental education and environmental advocacy agents. To do better, broadcasting organizations need to adopt strategic environmental communication through various formats such as documentaries, expert interviews, and community conversations in order to maintain the engagement. Moreover, providing science-based reporting training to the journalists and changing perspectives to a more localized approach to storytelling might serve as the solution between the information and action gap.

Conclusion

The study finds that the residents of Edo State, in general, assume high levels of awareness concerning climate change, yet their exposure to the broadcast media on covering the issue is very low. Radio media is still used as the main avenue of environmental information, however the programming is small, sporadic and more inclined to floods. Both Perception and Agenda-Setting Theories are confirmed by the study, which demonstrates that media coverage can have a positive influence on the

development of understanding and perceptions of the masses when it takes place. Nevertheless, the low frequency, scientific richness, and variety of broadcast climate news do not support long-term social activity and awareness of the policies. To accomplish its role in climate action in Nigeria, broadcast media should be institutionally committed to environmental journalism, capacity building among reporters and partnerships with environmental agencies and researchers. Recurring, neighborhood-based and situational programming can be used to convert civic awareness into active efforts on climate change, leading to the promotion of wider sustainability and community resilience.

Recommendations

On the findings and conclusions of the study, the following recommendations can be offered:

1. The broadcast media in Edo State ought to increase the coverage of climate change beyond flooding and cover drought, waste, emissions, and desertification to deliver varied, inclusive and community-oriented environmental news.
2. Radio, television, and digital medium should be used to enhance in reporting climate by becoming more interactive through engagement in formats such as documentaries, panel shows, and dramatizations instead of just news bulletins.
3. To enhance the scientific quality and uniformity of climatic reports, media agencies need to train reporters, use simple language, and shape reports to the local issues of the environment.
4. Awareness programs can be used to educate the residents of Edo State to practice environmentally friendly practices such as waste management, planting of trees, and energy-saving practices to minimize the threat of climate-related risks.
5. Broadcast media ought to utilize their credibility by engaging environmental institutions, civil society, and academic institutions to design efficient, successful, and compelling strategies of communicating the climate change issue.

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