

MASS MEDIA AND AWARENESS OF THE SDGS AMONG RESIDENTS OF IDO LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA OF OYO STATE, NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are a collection of 17 interlinked developmental goals designed by the United Nations (UN) to ensure better and sustainable future for all citizens of the world by 2030. However, more than five years after their adoption, it appears that many Nigerians, especially those at the grassroots level, are unaware of their existence. This paper examined the Nigerian media and level of awareness of the SDGs among residents of Ido Local Government Area of Oyo State. Using survey method, the paper found out that the level of awareness of the SDGs among the respondents is low. The paper also argued that the Nigerian media are not doing enough to create awareness of the SDGs among Nigerians. The paper, therefore, recommended that government and stakeholder, including

Introduction:

Background to the Study

The important roles that communication plays in ensuring the smooth running and development of human societies have long been acknowledged. According to Muslim and Abegunrin (2017), communication has over ages continued to be a vital component of human life and existence. Apparently, one major way of keeping in touch with our contemporary world is through communication. Jowett and O' Donnell (2006), defined communication as a process of exchange in which sender and receiver create, acquire,

the media, should gear up efforts on sensitization and awareness on the SDGs.

Keywords: SDGs, awareness, sensitization, media, development, grassroots.

Transmit and use information. But for the purpose of this paper, communication will be simply defined as the process of sharing and exchanging of meanings, ideas, knowledge, information and thoughts. There is no doubt that effective and error-free communication process is needed to ensure social harmony and development of any society. Meanwhile, mass media are channels of the most rapid and effective means of disseminating information to large number of people. Rogers (1983) defined mass media as all those means of transmitting messages that involve a mass medium such as radio, television, newspapers and so on which enable a source of one or a few individuals to reach an audience of many. Similarly, Umuerrri and Galadima (2012) posited that mass media are those organs charged with the responsibilities of disseminating information, ideas, attitude and values to heterogeneous population simultaneously.

The implication of the above is that the primary functions of the mass media are to source for and disseminate information to members of the general public. This is the reason the media have always been acknowledged as one of the most powerful agents of socialization and mobilization. Corroborating this position, Ekeanyanwu (2007) stated that media exist as an organ for information sourcing and dissemination, educational promotion, surveillance, social enlightenment and mobilization. According to McMsair (2002), the media provide the social structure with an outlet for the expression of shared values. The media because of these important functions, have the capacity to advance national interests and promote certain values and behavioural patterns within a given society.

In Nigeria, the mass media have continued to be useful for social mobilization and enlightenment. According to Mbazie and Nnah (2012), the media in Nigeria have been active in critical national matters and have helped in sensitization and mobilization towards national development. There are evidences that the Nigerian media helped in creating awareness on previous national programmes and policies such as; Operation Feed the Nation (OFN), Green Revolution, War Against Indiscipline (WAI), Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP), Mass Mobilization for Self Reliance, Social Justice, and Economic Recovery (MAMSER), National Poverty Eradication Programme (NAPEP), National Immunization Programme, Universal Basic Education (UBE) etc.

Meanwhile, it appears that the level of awareness of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) among Nigerians is low. Many Nigerians, especially those living in rural communities, appear to be ignorant of the SDGs, almost six years after the United Nations came out with the development blueprint. It is in the light of this that this paper examined the mass media and awareness of the SDGs among residents of Ido Local Government Area of Oyo state, Nigeria.

Statement of the Problem

The Federal Government of Nigeria in a national voluntary review of the implementation of the SDGs carried out by the Office of the Senior Special Assistant to the President on SDGs (OSSAP-SDGs) in 2017 identified infrastructural deficits and technological gaps as major challenges to the implementation of SDGs in Nigeria.

The report, which was carried out to provide information on the progress and status of implementation of SDGs in Nigeria and to highlight key policies, institutions and regulatory measures put in place to create necessary enabling environment for the achievement of the SDGs, stressed the need to intensify efforts on advocacy and awareness on national SDGs targets.

On sensitization and advocacy, the document indicated that the Federal Government of Nigeria, through the OSSAP-SDGs had undertaken

numerous publicity and advocacy programmes, in partnership with relevant stakeholders, including the media.

However, four years after the document was issued, it appeared that the level of awareness of the SDGs is relatively low among Nigerians, especially those outside the government, academic and corporate circles. Therefore, it became imperative to critically examine the roles of mass media in creating awareness on SDGs among Nigerians, using Ido local Government Area of Oyo state as a case study.

Objectives of the Study

The main objective of this study is to examine the mass media and awareness of the SDGs among residents of Ido local Government Area of Oyo state. The specific objectives are as follow:

- (i) To ascertain the level of awareness of the SDGs among residents of Ido local Government Area of Oyo state,
- (ii) To identify the medium through which residents of Ido local Government Area of Oyo state are mobilized and enlightened on the SDGs.

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are a collection of 17 interlinked developmental goals designed by the United Nations (UN) to be a blueprint to achieve a better and sustainable future for all citizens of the world. They are global developmental goals which aimed at eradicating poverty, protect the planet and ensure prosperity for everyone with the stipulated period of fifteen years. The SDGs replaced the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) that operated from year 2000 to 2015. The SDGs were set up in 2015 by the UN General Assembly and were intended to be achieved by the year 2030. The 17 goals are:

S/N	Goals	Targets
1.	No poverty	To end all forms of poverty everywhere.
2.	Zero hunger	To end hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture.

3.	Good health	To ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages.
4.	Education	To ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all.
5.	Gender equality	To achieve gender equality and empower women and girls.
6.	Clean water	To ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all.
7.	Clean energy	To ensure access to affordable, reliable sustainable and modern energy for all.
8.	Economic growth	To promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all.
9.	Industry and Infrastructure	To build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation.
10.	No inequality	To reduce inequality within and among countries.
11.	Sustainability	To make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable.
12.	Responsible consumption	To ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns.
13.	Climate action	To take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts.
14.	Life underwater	To conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development.
15.	Life on land	To protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss.
16.	Peace and justice	To promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development,

		provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels.
17.	Partnership	To strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development.

Source: United Nations SDGs document

Mass Media and the Quest for Development

Mass media have remained powerful drivers of development in many societies. Baran and Davies (2003) opined that the media are powerful and influential, as they have the capacity to mould the consciousness of the people, to either support or reject particular developmental agenda or public policy. They suggested that there are links between media exposure, audience motivation to seek orientation, and audience perception on public issues. The implication of this is that the media have the capacity to build consensus needed to drive development. According to McQuail (2010), "the media always provide channels by which the state and other powerful interests address the people". They also promote the circulation of news and opinions among members of the public on issues. From the above, it is clear that mass media are powerful in shaping people's opinion needed to change people's attitude and to mobilize them to embrace or reject certain development agenda.

Apart from enlightenment and mobilization, mass media also perform the function of aggregating the interests of the citizenry. Okoro and Diriri (2009) noted that the media should strive to serve as a platform that will link divergent groups together, thereby existing as a stabilising element in the society. The implication of this is that citizens are enabled to participate freely in discussions relevant to public good through the media. Uwerri and Galadima (2012) identified the roles of media in ensuring development to include the following;

Motivational role

The mass media should always strive to motivate members of the public towards the attainment of development in the society. MacBride et al. (1980) cited in Umerri and Galadima (2012) declared that the media should motivate their audience towards “the promotion of the immediate and ultimate aims of each society”.

Public enlightenment

The mass media as powerful and influential agents of socialization has the duty to enlighten their audience on developmental programmes and policies. This can be done through news, editorials, jingles, public announcements and advertisements.

Social responsibility

The Social Responsibility Theory of the press is based on the assumption that media, as the watchdog of the society, should be socially responsible by being objective in their reportage. It also states that media as the fourth estate of the realm have some responsibilities to perform for the development of the society and promotion of certain values.

Theoretical Framework (Agenda Setting Theory of the Press)

There is a nexus between development and mind-set of people of a particular society. This means that there is usually the need to rally the support of the people in support or against particular developmental agenda or programme. In other words, constant efforts should be made to set agenda for people to follow. This is the basic assumption of the agenda setting theory of the press propounded by McCombs and Shaw in 1972. Agenda setting theory of the press is based on the assumption that the media are powerful and have the capability to mould the consciousness of the people. Dominick (2002) noted “when we say that the media have an impact on agenda setting, we mean that they have the ability to choose and emphasize certain topics thereby causing the public to perceive these as important.”

The implication of the above is that the mass media force members of the public to give attention to certain issues by constantly presenting such issues. The agenda theory is anchored on the assumption that the media, through the emphasis they place on some issues in the society, determine the amount of interest and importance that will be attached to such issues by members of the general public. According to Asemah (2011), “the media make us to think about certain issues, they make us to think or feel that certain issues are more important than others in the society.” He added that by so doing, the media is directly or indirectly setting the agenda for the public to follow.

Folarin (2002), identified some of the elements involved in agenda setting to include; prominence given to the reports through headlines display, pictures and layout in newspapers, magazines, films, graphic, or timing on radio and television. In their own view, Wimmer and Dominick (2006) suggested that the media set agenda by choosing to publicize what kind of things people discuss, think and worry about. They added that people’s opinions are powerfully shaped by the media since most of the issues we talk about are based on what we have seen, heard and read from the media.

Research Methodology

This is to explain the procedure employed in gathering and analyzing data for the study. The method used for this study is survey through administration of questionnaires. The study area is Ido Local Government Area. Ido is a Local Government Area in Oyo State, Nigeria. Its headquarters is located in the town of Ido. It has an area of 986 km² and a population of 103,261 at the 2006 census. Ido Local Government is among the six council areas in the Ibadan less city. Other Local Governments are: Akinyele, Ona-ara, Lagelu, Egbeda, and Oluyole.

The study population for the survey is made up of 400 residents of Ido local Government Area. Four major communities within the council area were purposively selected. The communities were; Apata-Ganga, Omi-Adio, Apete and Ologun Eru. These communities are the densely populated areas within the council area. In each of the four selected communities, 100 questionnaires were randomly administered among residents.

Quantitative data collected through the use of questionnaires were analyzed using descriptive statistics. The researcher also relied on

theoretical propositions in analyzing the data. This is to enable the researcher to look for similarities or points of departure in respondents' responses and theoretical propositions.

Results and Discussion

The total number of 400 questionnaires were sent out to be administered in the four communities selected within the Ido Local Government Area of Oyo state, but 396 were returned. The returned questionnaires were analyzed as follow:

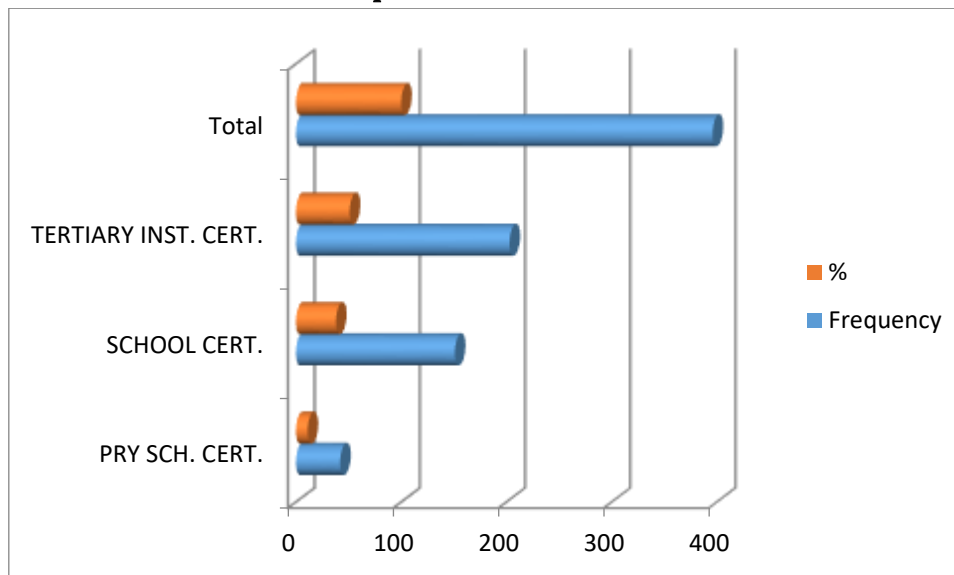
Sex Distribution of the respondents

Sex	Number	Percentage
Male	228	57.6%
Female	168	42.4%
Total	396	100%

Source: Field Work, 2020

The above table shows that the total number of 228 of the respondents are males, while 168 of them are females.

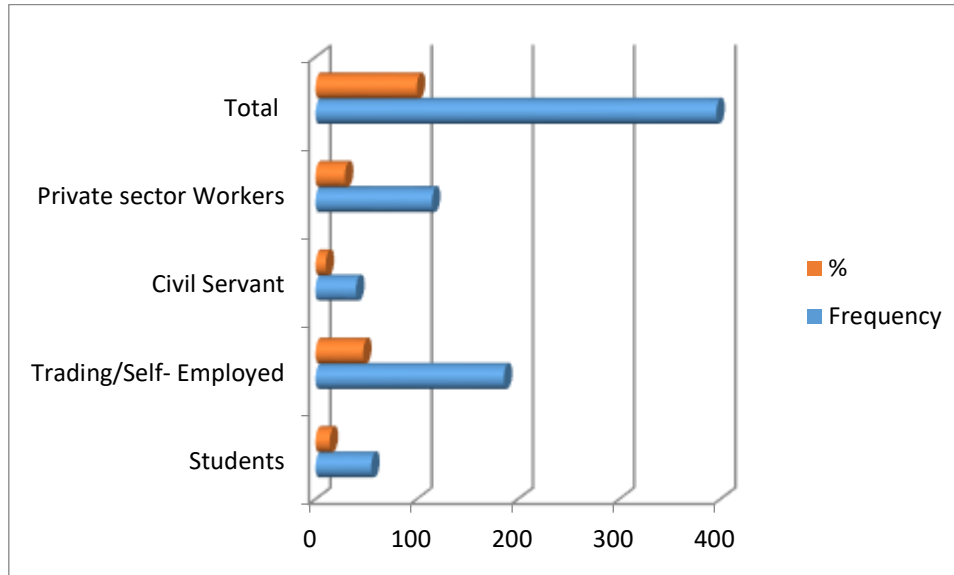
Educational status of respondents



Total number of 203 (making 51.3%) of the respondents attended tertiary institutions of learning, 151 (38.1%) are educated up to secondary school

level, while only 42 (10.6%) of them acquired only primary school education. This indicates that majority of the respondents are have formal education.

Occupations of respondents



Source: Field work, 2020

From the above, it can be seen that the total number of 186 (46.9%) of the respondents are traders and self employed, 115 (29.5%) of them are working in the private sector, 55 (13.8%) of them are students, while only 47 (9.8%) of them are civil servants.

Respondents' most used medium

Medium	Number of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Newspaper/Magazine	35	8.8%
Television	47	11.8%
Radio	314	79.3%

Source: Field work, 2020

The above table shows that only 35 (8.8%) of the respondents preferred to read newspapers and magazines, 47 (11.8%) of them preferred watching

television, while 314 (79.3%) of them preferred to listen to radio. This indicates that radio is the most used media among the respondents.

Awareness of SDGs among Respondents

Level of Awareness	Number of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Not aware	249	62.8%
Partially aware	81	20.6%
Aware	66	16.6%

Source: Field work, 2020

The above table shows that the total number of 249 (62.8%) of the respondents are not aware of the SDGs, 81 (20.6%) of them are partially aware, while only 66 (16.6%) of them are aware of the global developmental goals, more than five years after they came into existence. This shows clearly that there is low level of awareness of SDGs among residents of the Ido Local Government Area of Oyo State.

Have you come across sensitization/awareness program/news on your preferred mass media?

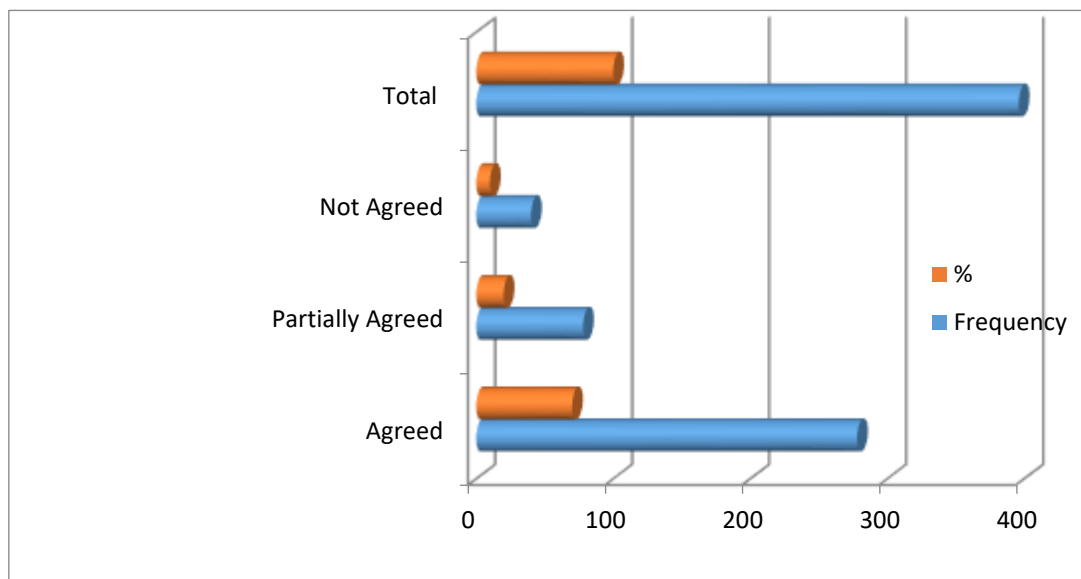
Response	Number of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Yes	73	18.4%
No	301	76.1%
Do not take note	22	5.5%

Source: Field Work, 2020

Only 73 (18.4%) of the respondents have come across sensitization/awareness program/news on their preferred mass media. The total number of 301 (76.1%) of them have never come across any such thing on their preferred medium, while 22 (5.5%) of them did not take note of sensitization/awareness program/news on your preferred mass media? The implication of this is that the media are not setting agenda on the SDGs,

by not giving prominence to its promotion. The agenda-setting theory explains the power of media as relates to public opinion. McCombs and Shaw, Davie and Maher (2006) assert that “agenda-setting theory of mass media is one of the most influential and powerful theories in the field of communication studies”. They explain that the media exert strong influence on the public agenda, as the media remain a powerful force in shaping the opinion of members of the public. This is because the media create awareness on issues they consider important and shift the attention of the public toward such issues. The basic assumption of these agenda-setting theory is that the media predetermine what issue are regarded as important at a given time in a given society. According to Sentas and Ogoshi (2016), the theory advocates that mass media, as an institution, should be seen as being responsible for raising issues they consider vital to the platform of public discourse and draw public attention to them.

Do you agree that the Nigerian media are not doing enough to create awareness on SDGs



Source: Field Work, 2020

The total number of 278 (70.2%) of the respondents agreed that the Nigerian media are not doing enough to create awareness on the SDGs, 78

(19.4%) of them partially agreed, while only 40 (10.4%) of them disagree that the media are doing enough to create awareness on the SDGs among Nigerians. This is corroborated by the fact that only 73 (18.4%) of the respondents said they have come across sensitization/awareness program/news on SDGs on their preferred mass media.

Conclusion

The study was able to establish that the media have important roles to play in ensuring development in the society. The media usually play these roles by setting agenda for people to follow. The SDGs are global developmental goals set by the United Nations. They are 17 developmental goals set up in 2015 by the UN General Assembly and were intended to be achieved by the year 2030. Meanwhile, this study found out that there is low level of awareness of the SDGs among residents of Ido Local Government Area of Oyo State. The study further found out that the Nigerian media are not doing enough to create awareness on the SDGs among people in grassroots communities. Many of the respondents claimed that they have never come across any sensitization/awareness programmes or jingles on the SDGs on their preferred mass media.

Recommendations

Nigerian media organizations should be encouraged to give prominence to the promotion of awareness and sensitization on the SDGs, through programmes, news and jingles. Also, since the study was able to find out that radio is the most used media among the people of Ido Local Government Area of Oyo State, the Oyo State Government should use numerous radio stations located across the state to create awareness on the SDGs among residents of the state.

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