

Anambra State Residents' Attitude towards Radio Campaigns Messages on Compliance to Covid-19 Protocols

Gloria Eberechukwu Nwodu

Department of Mass Communication, Chukwuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu University, Igbariam Campus. Anambra State, Nigeria

Prof. Ifeyinwa Nsude

Department of Mass Communication, Ebonyi State University, Abakaliki Ebonyi State Nigeria.

Nkiru Camilla Emechebe Ph.D

Department of Mass Communication, Tansian University Umunya, Anambra State. Nigeria. &

Chika Thonia Ezeali

Department of Mass Communication, Alex Ekwueme Federal University, Ebonyi State

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.37745/ijirmmcs.15/vol9n12333>

Published: 22nd January 2023

Citation: Nwodu G.E., Nsude I., Emechebe N.C. and Ezeali C.T.(2023) Anambra State Residents' Attitude towards Radio Campaigns Messages on Compliance to Covid-19 Protocols, International Journal of International Relations, Media and Mass Communication Studies, Vol.9, No.1, pp.23-33

ABSTRACT: *The study examined Anambra state residents' attitude towards radio campaign messages on compliance to covid-19 protocols, with the objectives includes: to determine the level of awareness of Anambra state residents to radio campaigns messages of covid-19 protocols; to determine the extent radio campaigns influenced residents' compliance to use of face masks and to ascertain the level of influence of radio campaigns on residents' compliance to hand washing etiquette. The forms of delivering the campaigns considered were radio jingles, radio dramas, public service announcements, and sponsored health talks. The Population for the study was 5,932,516, four hundred (400) participants were surveyed across six (6) purposively selected local government areas in Anambra State. The study found that majority of the residents are highly aware and knowledgeable about COVID-19 radio campaign messages. The study also found that the radio campaign messages has highly influenced the audience to use face masks and also adhere to hand washing protocol.*

KEYWORDS: Covid-19, attitude, radio campaigns, compliance

INTRODUCTION

COVID-19 has continued to ravage all parts of the world since it was announced in late 2019. A month after the announcement of COVID-19, China provided huge public health interventions to curtail the spread of the virus. Within three months' other cities within China confirmed 13,415 cases of COVID-19 infection with 120 deaths (Udeh-Akpe, Onyima, & Ginikachukwu, 2020). The rapid spread of the virus to other parts of the world put all nations on check. Within one year of the virus, there was hardly any nation that has not experienced significant impact of COVID-19, justifying the reason for being declared a global pandemic by the World Health Organisation. Coronaviruses (CoVs) are a big family of viruses and are highly contagious which are easily found in multiple animal species, such as rats, mice, chickens, turkeys, calves, dogs, cats, rabbits and pigs. According to scientists, COVID-19 is caused by severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus (SARS-CoV). Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) which is caused by SARS-CoV2 was at first seen as an epidemic put later on, it was declared a pandemic by WHO in 11th March 2020 due to its speed of transmission, morbidity and mortality rate.

Radio campaign entails a series of well-planned, structured and highly publicized communication aimed at sensitizing the public as well as mobilizing support for or against an issue, policy or object. It can be seen as a set of activities aimed at achieving broader change in policies, behaviours and attitude from an audience. Radio campaigns can be categorized under three broad typologies: advocacy, enlightenment and persuasive campaigns (Stachowiak, 2013). Advocacy campaigns are meant to elicit support for or against an issue, policy, event, etc. Enlightenment campaigns are meant to create awareness on or provide knowledge/information about an issue, object, etc, while persuasion campaigns are meant to persuade/dissuade target audiences to adopt or drop/reject certain behaviours or practices (Nwodu, 2018). No wonder Nsude (2021) says media shape public opinion and influence public policy and powerful because they penetrate every segment of modern day society and effectively influence how people view themselves, their neighbors, their communities and their world. Imperatively, media production in this article is referring to radio programmes, broadcasts, drama, music sound track, etc.

The peak of the pandemic, a lot of radio campaigns were mounted by all the radio stations in the study area. These campaigns were aimed at promoting the COVID-19 protocols such as coughing and sneezing etiquette, hand washing, face covering/mask wearing, social/physical distancing, avoidance of crowded space, and travel restrictions etc. One thing is to run radio campaigns and another is for the audience to comply with the messages. Audience attitude media messages and effect of such message on the audience are important in communication studies reason being that it evaluates the success of the media campaigns. Consequently, this study sought to ascertain whether the residents of Anambra State, were exposed to and their attitude towards the several radio campaigns messages on compliance to covid-19 protocols; use of face mask and hand

washing etiquette. The general objective of the study is to determine the attitude of Anambra State residents towards radio campaigns on compliance to covid-19 protocols. The specific objectives are to: determine the level of awareness of Anambra state residents to radio campaigns messages of covid-19 protocols; determine the extent radio campaigns influenced residents' compliance to use of face masks and ascertain the level of influence of radio campaigns on residents' compliance to hand washing etiquette.

The study was delimited to residents of Anambra State. Anambra State is made up of twenty-one Local Government Areas (LGAs) politically, the state is divided into three senatorial districts; each senatorial district consists of seven LGAs. The researchers studied the people residing in the state. The study focused on radio COVID-19 protocols campaigns comprising jingles, radio dramas, public service announcements, and sponsored health talks, etc on radio stations within Anambra state. The radio stations include Anambra Broadcasting Service (ABS), Purity Fm, Odinigbo FM, Radio Sapentia, Authority Fm, Radio Nigeria, these stations were chosen based on their reach, geographical locations, consistency of broadcast programmes during the peak of the first and second wave of the COVID-19 pandemic

LITERATURE / THEORETICAL UNDERPINNING

COVID-19 has proved to be a global health issue given that it is on a daily increase, and according to Ogbodo, Onwe, Chukwu, Nwasum, Nwakpu, Nwankwo, Nwamini, Elem, Ogbaeja (2020) ...its spread has had enormous, far reaching global implications. COVID-19 has high affinity for lower respiratory track and it is highly contagious. Its symptoms include; fever, body pains, cough, runny nose, cold, fatigue, shortness of breath, diarrhea etc. Scientists have said if cases are not dictated early and treated will result in more serious symptoms like multi-organ failure (like kidney, heart etc), septic shock, blood clots which might lead to death. People that are at high risk of contracting covid-19 include; Poorly treated Diabetic patients, chronic Kidney diseases patients, people suffering from heart diseases, cancer patients on chemotherapy, organ transplanted patients undergoing chemotherapy, patients with any chronic diseases, and aged persons.

There are some safety measures approved by NCDC and other global health organizations like WHO, to prevent and or curtail the spread of covid-19 in the communities (WHO, 2020, NCDC, 2020). These protocols by NCDC are measures that require change in individual behaviors, attitudes and health practices aimed at reducing the rate of infection among people, reduce risk of infection of person-to-person, person-to- community. These protocols include; social/physical distancing, coughing/sneezing etiquette, hand washing etiquette, use of face mask etc. The Africa Centers For Disease Control And Prevention (Africa Cdc).(nd) defines social distancing as "an accepted strategy to delay and reduce the magnitude of outbreaks of pandemic influenza"(p. 2). The Nigerian Centre for Disease Control (2020) defines social distancing as a strategy to reduce physical contact between people with the aim of slowing down and reducing the spread of COVID-

19 in a community. This measure talks about maintaining at least 2 metres (6 feet) physical distance between yourself and individuals, closure of activities that will cause any form of gathering including schools, places of worship, and sporting and social events. The term “physical distancing” is also a behavioural practice required to reinforce the need to stay at least 6 feet from others, as well as wearing face masks (Maragakis, 2020).

Another protocol is the use of face masks, covering coughs and sneezes, hand washing, and keeping unwashed hands away from the face. Coughing / sneezing etiquette is one of the approved measures for personal and collective hygiene practices in this era of COVID-19 pandemic. According to Center for Disease Control (CDC) coughing etiquette like covering coughs and sneezes, and keeping hands clean prevent the spread of COVID-19. To help reduce or stop the spread of Coronavirus, the CDC, NCDC, and WHO recommend that people should cover their mouth and nose with a tissue when they cough or sneeze, throw used tissues in the trash, and If you don't have a tissue, cough or sneeze into your elbow, not your hands (NCDC, 2020, DC, 2020, WHO, 2020).

A study done by Egwumba & Nnatuanya (2020) investigated COVID-19 pandemic and health seeking behavior among Anambra State, Nigeria. The researchers looked at the knowledge level of the Awka-South residents' and the barriers towards health-seeking behaviour among the respondents. The study found among others that majority of the respondents experienced one form of sign and symptoms of illness during COVID-19 pandemic; fear of being diagnosed with COVID-19 was the major barriers to health seeking behavior during COVID-19 pandemic and taking of local herbs were used by majority of the respondents during the pandemic. Umeji & Eleanya (2020) did a study of the assessment of the impact of COVID-19 on the Nigeria Labour Market. The paper which was an analysis of how COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in the loss of jobs in Nigeria and the paper concluded that pandemic has led to an increase in the level of unemployment rate in Nigeria.

Mbachu, Azubuike, Mbachu, Ndukwu, Ezeuko, Udigwe, Nnamani, Umeh, Ezeagwuna, Onah, Ezeh, Okereke, & Orji-Ifeanyi, (2020) COVID-19 infection: Knowledge, attitude, practices, and impact among healthcare workers in a South-Eastern Nigerian state. A total of 403 health care workers participated in the web-based, cross-sectional study. A total of 357 (88.59%) out of the participants were highly knowledgeable, 328 (81.39%) had good preventive practices of COVID-19. While 101 (25.06%) of the respondents had a poor attitude to work, result also showed that about half (48.64%) of participants had been negatively affected by COVID-19.

Assessment of Nigeria Television Authority (NTA) Ongoing Programme Awareness Campaigns on Coronavirus in Nigeria by Anietie, Ime, Akpan, Mfreke, Edidiong, Omotayo, Abraham, Micheal, & Emmanuel, (2020). The study was aimed at; assessing the type of programmes awareness presented on NTA that create awareness on coronavirus in Nigeria, to assess the

effectiveness of the programmes awareness on coronavirus in Nigeria and to examine the impact of ongoing NTA programme awareness on coronavirus in Nigeria. The study adopted ex post facto research design, the target population was all health care workers in University of Uyo Teaching Hospital, University of Port Harcourt Teaching Hospital, University of Benin Teaching Hospital and University of Calabar Teaching Hospital, making the population 12,104, Sample size of 320. Study found 210 (70%) respondents which is the highest in the responses consented to the fact the programmes on coronavirus were both jingles and talk programmes looking at the second research question, 180 (60%) respondents as the highest in the responses consented that programme presented on NTA on coronavirus awareness were very effective. While the research question three responses came up with 230 (83.3%) as the highest responses accepted that NTA programme of coronavirus has impact on them.

Another research conducted by Akinyemi, et al (2020), Intrigues and Challenges Associated with COVID-19 Pandemic in Nigeria. The study found that a total of 2828 male subjects were infected representing 68% and 1323 female subjects representing 32%. The researchers also found that the age group 31 - 40 years is mostly affected accounting for 24%. The number of people with travel history is 210 (5%), 947 (23%) contacts, 2618 (63%) without epidemiological link and 376 (9%) with an incomplete information. They also found that Nigeria is witnessing community transmission of COVID-19. The research also found some factors responsible for community transmission of COVID-19 in Nigeria are; distrust of some Nigeria citizens towards government on COVID-19 management, poverty, religious beliefs, ignorance on face mask sharing, low level of informed populace, misconceptions, stigmatization of infected individuals, poor health facilities, inadequate testing Centre, shortage of health workers, poor treatment among others.

In a study by Al-Shattarat and Amuda (2021), the authors investigated Comparative report of compliance to precautionary measures against COVID-19 in Nigeria and Jordan, the study compared the strategies for implementation of safety measures against the transmission of Covid-19 in Nigeria which is seen as the heart of Africa and Jordan as the nexus of Arab world. The study used systematic literature review (SLR) and content analysis of reports of the secondary data on COVID-19 which was obtained from Nigerian Centre for Disease Control (NCDC) and Presidential Task Force in Nigeria and Jordanian National Committee for Epidemic. The study showed that there was compliance to precautionary measures against the spread of COVID-19 in both countries. There was also total lockdown in major cities of Nigeria e.g Lagos & Abuja and in Jordan, Irbid was also partaking in the total lockdown, but other parts of the countries witnessed a partial lockdown in other parts of the countries. Both countries also tried to comply with the safety measures provided by World Health Organization (WHO) against COVID-19. The study also found that there are political sentiments attached to COVID-19 cases in Nigeria where lack of sincerity by the government in handing the cases in Nigeria.

The researchers made use of Health Belief Model which is seen as appropriate for media and health communication studies. HBM focuses on the media and message effect, audience responses to stimuli and compliance to message or information, and message diffusion (Becker, 1974; Ezeoke, Ezeaka & Nwodu 2020) etc. Health Belief Model (HBM) was developed in 1950s by social psychologists Hochbaum, Rosenstock and Kegels while in the U.S Public Health Services. Then, the model was used to fathom why a free tuberculosis (TB) health screening program failed. Later, the model was extended to people's responses to symptoms (Kirscht 1974) and their behaviors in response to diagnoses illness particularly adherence to medical regimens (Becker 1974). The model postulates that health seeking behavior is influenced by a person's perception of a threat posed by a health problem and the value associated with actions aimed at reducing the threat. By implication, a person will adhere or practice a health behavior only when there is a health problem or perceived health problem (in this case COVID-19) that is when people seek and adhere to the information on how to prevent themselves.

The model therefore provides theoretical underpinning for understanding and explaining health behaviors with particular reference to lifestyles that promotes or hampers healthy living.

METHODOLOGY

The study adopted descriptive survey design comprising a mixed-method. The researchers used survey, it is considered the most appropriate research method for this study; in view of experts' submission that survey enables researchers to systematically gather information from the respondents primarily to understand and predict some aspects of behavior of population of interest (Osuala, 1991, Owuamalam, 2013 & Nwodu, 2017) etc. The area of study is Anambra state, in the South-East Nigeria. The population of the study is the entire population of Anambra state residents which was projected using the UNDP formula for population projection is **5,932,516** and 408 as sample size using Taro Yamane. The researchers purposively selected two LGAs each from the three senatorial districts in the state making it a total of six local government areas.

FINDINGS

Anambra State residents' level of awareness to the COVID-19 Radio campaign messages

The study found that out of 388 copies of the questionnaire that were retrieved and found useful, 76% of them were aware of the radio campaigns messages of COVID-19 and are also knowledgeable about COVID-19. This finding is in agreement with the study by Orji & Okolie (2021) Perception of the effectiveness of social media in creating awareness on government COVID-19 preventive measures among residents of Imo state. The study found that the respondents are highly aware of the government efforts to curtail the spread of COVID-19 in the state. This shows that the respondent are aware of the existence of the virus. Also the finding here is in agreement with Uzochukwu, Nwosu & Okeke (2022) the study recorded a significant number

of the respondents (92.2%) that were exposed to media messages on COVID-19 pandemic, while only about 3.8% of them said that they have not been exposed to such messages.

Radio campaigns influence and Anambra State residents' compliance with use of face mask

The study found that a good number of the respondents 68% revealed that they were influenced by the radio campaign messages and it had positive effect on their complying with the guideline to use face mask. This finding therefore imply that the radio campaigns messages to a large extent significantly influenced Anambra State residents' compliance with the guideline to use face mask during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The finding in this study that the respondents were highly influenced by the radio campaign messages to comply with the face mask wearing protocol agrees with that of the study by Al-Shattarat and Amuda (2021) who investigated comparative report of compliance to precautionary measures against COVID-19 in Nigeria and Jordan and reported that there were compliance to precautionary measures against the spread of COVID-19 in both countries. The study also found that there is political sentiments attached to COVID-19 cases in Nigeria where there is perceived lack of sincerity by the government in handing the situation in Nigeria.

Radio campaign messages and Anambra State residents' compliance with hand-washing etiquette

The study found that the radio campaigns messages of COVID-19 had significant influence on Anambra State residents' compliance to observe frequent hand-washing exercise with soap and under running water. This form of physical hygiene was particularly emphasized to reduce the risk of contracting the COVID-19 virus. 78% of the respondents agreed that Radio jingles and public service announcements on COVID-19 motivated them to comply the hand washing etiquettes.

This finding is in agreement that of Anietie, Ime, Akpan, Mfreke, Edidiong, Omotayo, Abraham, Micheal & Emmanuel (2020) assessed Nigeria Television Authority (NTA) programme awareness campaigns on coronavirus in Nigeria by looking at the forms, effectiveness, and impact of the ongoing campaign on coronavirus in Nigeria. The researchers found out that 70% of the respondents consented to the fact the programmes presented on NTA on coronavirus included jingles and talk shows, 60% that they were very effective, while 83.3% accepted that the NTA coronavirus campaigns had impact on them to comply to the guidelines.

The above findings are in contrast with the outcome of the study by Wogu (2018). The study investigated the impact of media campaign on the prevention and spread of Lassa fever in Ebonyi State with the result that the media campaign had considerable rural reach but with little or no impact. The study also revealed that the campaign failed because it did not create appropriate awareness of the disease, and it did not inculcate preventive/curative health behaviour modifications among the people either.

CONCLUSION

This study investigated Anambra state residents' attitude towards radio campaigns messages on compliance to covid-19 protocols. The study looked at the audience's attitude towards two out of many NCDC 2020 and WHO 2020 laydown protocols/guideline for curtailing the spread of COVID-19. The study explored the above based on several forms of radio broadcast messages like Radio jingles, radio dramas, public service announcements, and sponsored health talks, Based on the findings of the study, this study concludes that there is high level of awareness among the residents, radio campaign messages serves as an effective tool and instrumental in getting people to comply with health safety protocols.

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