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Media influence in awareness creation for government development projects in Lagos State, Nigeria

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Abstract

This study examines media influence in awareness creation for government development projects in Lagos state, Nigeria. Agenda setting theory and Uses and gratification theory were used as the theoretical framework for the study. Using descriptive survey method, 172 respondents from four local government areas were interviewed via self-administered questionnaire. The study revealed that the media keep Nigerians averagely informed on government development projects, sways individual convictions of people in such a way that they consider projects given more coverage as truly important in comparison to their previously held beliefs. However fewer fractions of people affected by the media coverage are shown by this study as those who eventually participate in the development process by performing civic duties such as tax payment. It was therefore recommended that the media must equip the public with adequate information on basic rights and entitlements, public services, public budgets, health, housing projects, and road rehabilitation projects. Also community radio broadcasting need to be encouraged to reach more remote regions of the country; so as to truly optimize its potentials in reaching out to the populace on government development projects.

Keywords: Development projects, Media awareness, Government projects, Lagos, Nigeria

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1. Introduction

Development programs have been the hall mark of successful governments all over the world, and the concept of development permeates into every aspect of human existence and all of its application is endless; ever evolving. International development- Research Guides at Dartmouth College (unnumbered online printout) citing Mayhew (2004) described development from a geographical perspective as:

The use of resources to relieve poverty and improve the standard of living of a nation; the means by which a traditional, low-technology society is changed into a modern, high-technology society, with a corresponding increase in incomes. This may be achieved through mechanization, improvements in infrastructure and financial systems, and the intensification of agriculture.

(<http://researchguides.dartmouth.edu/content.php?pid=6047&sid=190637>)

In Nigeria, the country has evolved through a series of development efforts aimed at establishing her as a viable, independent state. The ingenuity with which government's policy makers draft development policies and guidelines for development programs has been the starting off point to indicate the purpose such government's seek to achieve. Government and development can be described as a couple responsible for making or marring of several civilizations and nations. When a government enjoys a good union with its developmental strategies, such a government more often than not, excels in elevating its society's standards. On the other hand, governments that fail to enjoy a good union with their development strategies are most likely to fail.

It is also pertinent to note that, no government can excel if the populace is not carried along in its development programs. The people need to know what the government and by extension, their leaders are up to. The people need to be informed not just passively but actively engaged by getting detailed information of their government's plans and activities. Furthermore, the populace ought to be carried along every step of the way; as a way to guarantee active participation. When the populace is carried along by its government, every member of the society invariably knows what is expected of him/her and with the right motivation, contributes their own quota to national development.

Getting members of the society to be adequately informed and carried along by any given government means closing the information gap that exists between both parties. This gap/divide is one which can be bridged by the mass media. Mass media has been a key element in development for as long as the existence of mass communication as a concept is known. The role played by the media in propagating government's development projects can also be described as development communication and in other texts, communication for development.

Development communication is defined by World Bank as the "integration of strategic communication in development projects" based on a clear understanding of indigenous realities (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Development_communication). Strategic communication is a powerful tool that can improve the chances of success of development projects. Strategic communication according to Murphy (2008 p.3) "is simply a way

to affect perceptions, attitudes and beliefs of key audiences in support of objectives. Certainly communications means are very important in ultimately achieving those desired information effects”.

It is quite observable that those in remote rural areas of the country lack essential information on basic rights and entitlements, public services, public budgets, health, education and working opportunities, agricultural prices and other market information which would enable them to take control of their lives. Poor access to information and relevant communication facilities are key factors in the exclusion of poor people from participating in governance processes. Many people living in rural and mountainous areas live outside the coverage of the country’s radio stations (national, regional, as well as local).

Urban dwellers that seem opportune to have access to various media types in view of the vibrant and commercial nature of urban life are often disconnected from information on government development projects. Most times, people simply wake up to realize that the government has embarked on one project or the other without fore-knowledge especially if such projects might affect their daily lives. Nevertheless, even though there are times the government utilizes the media to inform the public on projects such as heavy road construction where traffic has to be diverted, what happens in other scenarios considered small-scale but which still have some discomfiting impact on the public?

The question then comes to mind, what is the ‘ever-vibrant’ media doing to ensure that people are not caught unawares when for instance, a road user gets to a part of town to realize that traffic had been diverted due to one construction or the other? How effective are local radio stations in keeping people informed on these seemingly ‘little-discomforts’? In view of the fact that knowledge and information are essential for people to successfully respond to the opportunities and challenges of social, economic and technological changes, there is a need to assess the extent to which the Nigerian media has bridged the information gap that exists between government and the populace.

Therefore the study examined the media influence in awareness creation for government development projects in Lagos State, Nigeria; with a view to establish the current level of media involvement in propagating government development projects, identify areas of lapses, and subsequently provide recommendations which would to a considerable extent provide a platform for enhanced government-public relations.

The objectives of the study include: determination of the extent to which the Nigerian media has created awareness for government’s development projects; assessing how informed people are on government development projects and assessing whether or not media attention given to some development projects has any bearing on how important they are considered by the public or whether people still attach importance to developmental issues based on their needs and personal convictions; not by media portrayal.

2. Brief literature review

Kutufam (2011) describes development communication as a special area within the field of mass communication, focusing on the use of mass communication tools for socio-economic development in

developing countries. In order to understand the role of development communication in the development process, there is the need for a systematic understanding of development and communication as two processes that are inseparable by their nature when defined in relationship to their environment and others within the environment.

Development programs focus attention on the socio-economic development of the recipient community, and so most literature on development communication has focused on the socio-economic impact of these programs on the recipients. Development communication serves as a common platform between funding agencies or implementers of development programs and program recipients, by creating an avenue for dialogue and the exchange of ideas. In the participatory model of development communication, the transmission of information is not a vertical process of information flow from the knowledgeable to the less knowledgeable; instead, it is a horizontal process of information exchange and interaction (Morris, 2003).

This model posits that, the purpose of development is to empower people so they have greater control and power over decisions that affect them. Thus, empowerment is achieved through information exchange and interaction between development agencies and recipients of development programs (Morris, 2003). In every social interaction, the forces of power come into play and the direction or the use of power determines the success of such an interaction. Development communication is culturally contextual, people oriented, empowering, and egalitarian.

In a similar manner, for awareness on government development projects to reach as much of the populace as possible, there is a need to recognize the fact that initial awareness messages need to be re-transmitted, discussed, and re-discussed among audience members in order for it to have a lasting effect. Awareness does not stop at only that which comes from the media but instead, how it is turned into a subject-matter for public discourse for it to have a resonant and lasting effect.

Opara (2007), citing Daramola (2003) observes that the media have an intricate relationship with the economy. Without the media, which maintain a constant flow of information, vital for economic progress, economic and social life of the people as well national development will suffer. Through TV programming, the government is informed about the level of acceptance or otherwise of its policies and programmes by the populace.

Onabajo (2000) observes that *searchlight* on African Independent Television (AIT) was conceptualized as a programme that enlightens and entertains the audience. The programme shares human interest problems and also balances them by bringing serious societal problems. Also, government default is criticized in a humorous way. The philosophy of the programme is to provide a form of heart-to-heart forum of presentation that will inform, educate, and enlighten its audience. Also, the programme draws attention to serious operational lapses of corporate and public organizations, government agencies and parastatals.

Writing on the role of television programming in national development; a case study of news line, NTA network service, Opara (2007) opines that TV programming plays significant roles in accelerating comprehensive national development. Findings of the study revealed that; television remains the most versatile and most effective media of communication and it exerts enormous influence on the people. Also, majority of the respondents hold the view that TV programmes, particularly News line, have been

contributing to the cultural and socio-economic development of the country. The study further revealed that government functionaries and agencies hold News line in very high esteem, as a programme that binds the people and the government together in mutual interest of responsible citizenship and good governance.

Using the diffusion model, Servaes and Malikhao (2004, p.7), writing a background paper on Communication and Sustainable Development, they note that:

Although development strategies in developing countries diverge widely, the usual pattern for broadcasting and the press has been predominantly the same: Informing the population about projects, illustrating the advantages of these projects, and recommending that they be supported. A typical example of such a strategy is situated in the area of family planning, where communication means like posters, pamphlets, radio, and television attempt to persuade the public to accept birth control methods. Similar strategies are used on campaigns regarding health and nutrition, agricultural projects, education, and so on.

According to the study of Mukherjee (2007) communication is viewed as a participatory process, for achieving development for the people and by the people themselves. In this context, participation is understood as developing the human, organizational and management capacities of the people to address the issues, as they arise, in order to sustain the process of change and development. The study revealed that development communication is more often a linear process in both government and non government organizations. It is more pronounced in the government programmes because of the attitude of the people working and their pattern of working. Voluntary organisations working in the area though have better mechanisms for promoting two way communication but in actual field situation despite their best efforts, it sometimes becomes a one way process.

The mass media appear to be more effective in disseminating new information than in (directly) changing behaviour or attitudes. They appear to have little persuasive effect without reinforcement by interpersonal communication in an informal group context. While the mass media may not directly 'cause' social change, the ideas presented through mass communication often become both normalised and become the topics and ideas discussed inter-personally (Leal and Borner, 2005).

Writing on Radio and the Internet: Mixing media to bridge the Divide, Girard (2003, p.7), writes that:

Low production and distribution costs have made it possible for radio to interpret the world from local perspectives, and to respond to local needs for information. More than any other mass communication medium, radio speaks in the language and with the accent of its community. Its programming reflects local interests and it can make important contributions to both the heritage and the development of the cultures, economies and communities that surround it.

3. Theoretical framework

According to Hanson (2009 p.92), the agenda-setting theory of media stated that:

Mass media determine the issues that concern the public rather than the public's views. Under this theory, the issues that receive the most attention from media become the issues that the public discusses, debates, and demands action on. This means that the media are determining what issues and stories the public thinks about. Therefore, when the media fail to address a particular issue, it becomes marginalized in the minds of the public.

This study intends to investigate the influence media has in creating awareness for government development projects; consequently, the agenda-setting function of the press is a subject of discourse in this study, hence, the choice of agenda-setting theory. Investigating the level of influence the media has in creating awareness on government development projects will entail the level of public discourse that has been set by the media; in essence giving the populace what to talk and think about.

Diffusion of innovations is founded on two main concepts—diffusion and innovation. Social change is a three step process—invention of a new idea, diffusion of this idea among the members of a social system, and consequences that consist of acceptance or rejection of the new idea (Rogers, 1995).

The theory, being one which discusses the process of putting an innovation or idea forward for adoption is synonymous with the process of inaugurating government development projects and getting people to embrace changes that would come with such projects. Often time, people under-utilize opportunities inherent in government projects due to several reasons ranging from; outright ignorance, scepticism, or lack of adequate information on how to maximize the benefits of any given government project.

This study intends to investigate the influence media has in creating awareness for government development projects; consequently, the agenda-setting function of the press is a subject of discourse in this study, hence, the choice of agenda-setting theory. Investigating the level of influence the media has in creating awareness on government development projects will entail the level of public discourse that has been set by the media; in essence giving the populace what to talk and think about.

4. Methodology

For this study, the survey method was adopted as the research design in order to gather comprehensive feedback from members of the public in identifying and determining the influence Nigerian media has in creating awareness for government development projects.

Primary data were collected through the use of questionnaire in line with the objectives of the study and administered to 200 residents working and/or studying in four selected Local Government Areas in Lagos State who have access to one or more forms of media and utilize the media for various purposes. The four local government areas selected using hat and draw technique are; Yaba, Surulere, Mushin, and Isolo. A convenience sampling technique was used to elicit information from the 200 respondents selected across the four local governments. 172 copies of questionnaire were correctly filled and returned out of the 200 copies of administered questionnaire. The collected data were analyzed using descriptive statistical techniques.

5. Results and discussion

The study found out that television has created more awareness for government development projects in comparison to radio, Newspapers, and Internet. The study also found out that majority of respondents attach as much importance to development projects as attached to such projects by the media – through coverage and reporting. Amongst other findings, it is revealed in this study that many people have been motivated to perform civic duties such as tax payment due to awareness created on government development projects although most people still pay tax out of individual sense of responsibility and not due to media influence.

Poor access to information and relevant communication facilities are key factors in the exclusion of poor people from participating in governance processes. Many people living in rural and mountainous areas live outside the coverage of the country's radio stations (national, regional, as well as local. It is therefore disappointing to realise that radio which is supposed to have wider reach, coverage, and accessibility to the populace ranks third among the four selected media types. Radio has not used its coverage and accessibility advantage to optimally propagate information on government development projects. For this and more reasons, the media needs to do better than averagely inform the populace; in this instance, rural dwellers.

5.1. Different media types used by respondents

5.1.1. TV

From the data illustrated in Table 1, the usage of TV attributes 46.37% of total response to Information, 32.66% to Entertainment, 20.16% to Education, and Other uses; specified by respondents as Sports and Documentary get 0.81%. Consequently, it is established by this finding that respondents primarily utilize TV to get information having nearly half of the response attributed to it.

5.1.2. Radio

From the data presented in Table 1, 40.25% of respondents use radio for entertainment, 14.83% use radio for educational purpose, 44.50% use radio to get information, and a minute 0.42% uses the radio for other purposes; specifically identified as sports. It is inferable from the above that while majority of respondents use radio for the purpose of getting information, it is a rather slim majority as the difference between those who use radio for information and those who use it for entertainment is a close gap of 4.25%. Almost as many people that use radio for information also use it for entertainment.

5.1.3. Newspaper

Table 1 presents data on why respondents read newspapers. 20.10% respond to read newspapers for entertainment, 20.51% respond to read newspapers for education, 57.26% for information, and 2.13% for other purposes which respondents specified as; sports, source, cartoon, fashion, and adverts. Obviously, more than half of all responses indicate that information is the most attributed reason/purpose for newspaper readership.

5.1.4. Internet

Table 1 presents data to answer the question of why respondents use the internet. 26.21% respond to use the internet for entertainment, 34.37% use it for education, 36.70% use the internet to get information, and 2.82% respond to use the internet for other reasons other those provided in options, they specified these other uses as; adverts, games, browsing, face book, check email, keep in touch with friends, connect.

Table 1. Respondents' Usage of Different Media Types

	Television		Radio		Newspaper		Internet	
	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percentage (%)</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percentage (%)</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percentage (%)</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percentage (%)</i>
Entertainment	81	32.66	95	40.25	47	20.10	65	26.21
Education	50	20.16	35	14.83	48	20.51	85	34.27
Information	115	46.37	105	44.50	134	57.26	91	36.70
Others	2	0.81	1	0.42	5	2.13	7	2.82
Total	248	100	236	100	234	100	248	100

5.2. Frequency rate respondents come across information on government development projects through the selected media types.

5.2.1. TV

Table 2 show that an overwhelming portion of the respondents submit to have come across information on government development projects while watching TV.

5.2.2. Radio

The data contained in Table 2 shows that 73.84% of respondents have come across information on government development projects while listening to radio. 26.16% on the other hand, which represent one-quarter of total respondents, submit not to have ever come across information on government development projects while listening to radio.

5.2.3. Newspaper

Table 2 shows that 86.05% of respondents have come across information related to government development projects in the newspaper while 13.95% respond to the contrary.

5.2.4. Internet

In Table 2, 36.63% of respondents submit to have come across information on government development projects while surfing the Internet, the remaining 63.37% of respondents submit not to have ever come across information on government development projects while surfing the internet.

Table 2. Respondents' response to whether or not they have come across information on government development projects through the selected media types

	Television		Radio		Newspaper		Internet	
	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percentage (%)</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percentage (%)</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percentage (%)</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percentage (%)</i>
Yes	155	90.12	127	73.84	148	86.05	63	36.63
No	17	9.88	45	26.16	24	13.95	109	63.37
Total	172	100	172	100	172	100	172	100

5.3. Frequency of coming across information on government development projects in the selected media types

5.3.1. TV

Table 3 shows that 12.90% of the respondents come across such information "Very Often". Another 44.52% only come across government development information "Often", suggesting they do not come across such information on a regular basis but rather, seldom. 42.58% of respondents do not come across government development information often, and this can be likened to once in a very long while.

5.3.2. Radio

From Table 3 respondents demonstrate the consistency of getting information on government development projects while listening to radio. 18.90% respond to get the information "Very Often", 41.73% respond to only get the information "Often", and 39.37% respond not to get the information often; "Not So Often". The population of those who respond to only get information on government development projects "Often" and those who do not get the information often; "Not so often", 41.73% and 39.37% is almost at par. This suggests that there is no overwhelming evidence in terms of population to establish that radio indeed effectively provides information on government development projects. The 18.90% that respond to get the information "Very Often" merely indicates that radio provides some measure of information after all, but not at an overwhelming rate.

5.3.3. Newspaper

In Table 3, 28.38% respond to get the information "Very Often", 44.60% respond to get the information "Often", and 27.02% respond "Not So Often" from newspaper

5.3.4. Internet

Table 3. How often respondents come across information on government development projects in the selected media types

	TELEVISION		RADIO		NEWSPAPER		INTERNET	
	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percentage (%)</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percentage (%)</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percentage (%)</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percentage (%)</i>
Very Often	20	12.90	24	18.90	42	28.38	14	22.22
Often	69	44.52	53	41.73	66	44.60	25	39.68
Not So Often	66	42.58	50	39.37	40	27.02	24	38.10
Total	155	100	127	100	148	100	63	100

5.4. How Informed Respondents Are On Government Development Projects

Table 4 shows that 11.05% of respondents are “Well Informed” on government development projects, 79.65% are “Averagely Informed”, and 9.3% claim they are “Not Informed” on government development projects

Table 4. How Informed Respondents Are On Government Development Projects

Option	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Well Informed	19	11.05
Averagely Informed	137	79.65
Not Informed	16	9.30
Total	172	100

5.5. Media awareness created by Nigeria media outlets

To ascertain that Nigerian media have created awareness for government development projects, Table 5 shows the opinion of respondents. 25% “Strongly Agree”, 55.23% “Agree”, 18.02% are “Neutral”, 1.74% “Disagree” but no respondent Strongly Disagrees

Table 5. Nigerian media (TV, Radio, Newspapers, and Internet) have created awareness for government development projects

Option	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Strongly Agree	43	25
Agree	95	55.23
Neutral	31	18.02
Disagree	3	1.74
Strongly Disagree	0	0
Total	172	100

5.6. Media type that has created more awareness for government development projects

Table 6 shows response on which media type has created more awareness for government development projects. 59.30% of respondents are of the opinion that TV has created more awareness, 16.86% select Radio, 21.51% select Newspaper, and 2.33% select Internet. Majority respond that TV has created more awareness on government development projects while Internet gets the least response.

Table 6. Media type that has created more awareness for government development projects

Option	Frequency	Percentage (%)
TV	102	59.30
Radio	29	16.86
Newspaper	37	21.51
Internet	4	2.33
Total	172	100

5.7. Respondents rating of the media type they believe has created more awareness on government development projects

Table 7 shows the opinion of respondents on the level of awareness created by the media type which each respondent had earlier chosen as the one which creates more awareness for government development projects; consequently, attempting to determine the level of awareness created by each respondent's chosen media type.

5.7.1. TV

Out of the 102 respondents that believe Television has created more awareness on government development projects, 27.45% (28 respondents) are shown to rate the level of awareness to be "Very High", 64.71% (66 respondents) rate the level of awareness "High", 6.86% "Low", and 0.98% "Very Low".

5.7.2. Radio

As shown by Table 7, a total of 29 respondents are of the opinion Radio has created more awareness on government development projects, 7 of those respondents rate the level of awareness to be "Very High", 16 rate it "High", 6 rate it "Low", but no respondent rates it "Very Low".

5.7.3. Newspaper

Table 7 show that 37 respondents consider Newspapers to have created more awareness on government development projects. 12 rate the level of awareness created as “Very High”, 18 rate it simply “High”, and 7 respondents rate it “Low”. No respondent rates it “Very Low”.

5.7.4. Internet

The data in Table 7 show that only 4 respondents believe the Internet has created more awareness on government development projects in comparison with other media types. 1 respondent rates the level of awareness to be “Very High”, 2 persons rate it “High” and the remaining 1 respondent rates it “Low”

Table 7. How respondents rate the media type they believe has created more awareness on government development projects

	Television		Radio		Newspaper		Internet	
	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percentage (%)</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percentage (%)</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percentage (%)</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percentage (%)</i>
Very high	28	27.45	7	24.13	12	32.43	1	25
High	66	64.71	16	55.17	18	48.65	2	50
Neutral	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Low	7	6.86	6	20.70	7	18.92	1	25
Very low	1	0.98	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	102	100	29	100	37	100	4	100

5.8. Media attention to some development projects

To assess how balanced the dissemination of information on various development projects has been, Table 8 shows data in response to whether or not the media has given more attention to some development projects more than others. 48.84% (nearly half) of respondents are of the opinion that “Yes”, the media has given more attention to some development projects more than others. 23.25% respond that NO, it has not; suggesting these 23.25% believe coverage has been balance and unbiased. However, 27.91% are undecided, selecting the option of “Neutral”.

Generally, a large majority as represented by 48.84% selecting the option of “Yes” shows that the media has been largely unbalanced in giving attention to development projects.

Table 8. Media has given more attention to some development projects more than others

Option	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Yes	84	48.84
No	40	23.25
Neutral	48	27.91
Total	172	100

5.9. Development projects given more attention

Table 8 presents data which reveals that 29.49% of total response attributes the attention given by media to Education, 20.51% attribute it to Health, Agriculture gets 8.97%, Power 16.03%, Housing 3.20%, while Roads & Drainage Systems get 21.80% of total response.

Table 9. Development Projects That Have Been Given More Attention

Option	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Education	46	29.49
Health	32	20.51
Agriculture	14	8.97
Power	25	16.03
Housing	5	3.20
Roads & Drainage Systems	34	21.80
Others	0	0
Total	156	100

5.10. Respondents attached more importance to projects given more attention in the media

Table 10 show that 37.8% of respondents have attached more importance to projects given more attention in the media and considered them to be more necessary than others (with less attention). 39.53% of respondents have not attached more importance based on media coverage nor considered some projects to be more important than others based on media coverage. However, 22.67% are "Indifferent" on whether or not media gives some projects more attention or not and do not necessarily attach importance solely on media coverage. Summarily, more respondents (even though a slim majority) have submitted that they do not attach importance to some projects more than others simply because of excess media coverage on certain projects.

Table 10. Respondents have attached more importance to projects given more attention in the media and considered them to be more necessary than others

Option	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Yes	65	37.80
No	68	39.53
Indifferent	39	22.67
Total	172	100

5.11. Respondents attitude influenced by attention given to some projects

Table 11 shows that the attention given to some development projects (by the media) has influenced the attitude (and perception) of 44.77% of respondents. 32.56% respond that their attitude (and perception) has not been influenced in anyway, while 22.67% of respondents are indifferent; perhaps suggesting they do not take time to process media coverage on development projects to such an extent that their attitude (and perception) will be influenced.

Table 11. Attention given to some development projects has influenced attitude of respondents

Option	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Yes	77	44.77
No	56	32.56
Indifferent	39	22.67
Total	172	100

5.12. Ways attention given to some development projects influenced the attitude of respondents

Table 12 show that 33.77% of the respondents believe media attention which is given to some development projects has shown them to be important to the society's need. 42.86% (which is the majority of respondents in this instance) are of the opinion that; it has only shown the development projects as where the government is concentrating more of its efforts. 22.07% of the respondents think the media attention given to some development projects has merely kept them informed on those areas given more attention.

Table 12. Ways attention given to some development projects influenced the attitude of respondents

Option	Frequency	Percentage (%)
It has shown them to be more important to the society's needs	26	33.77
It has only shown where the government is concentrating more of its efforts	33	42.86
It has merely kept me more informed on areas given more attention	17	22.07
Others (Mostly kept me abreast on on-going projects)	1	1.30
Total	77	100

5.13. The media swayed individual conviction of respondents on areas they believe the government should give more attention as a result of coverage

Table 13 present data to illustrate; if as a result of information/coverage on different development projects, individual convictions of respondents have been swayed by the media on areas they believe the government should give more attention. 73.36% respond "Yes", that their individual convictions have been swayed in line with what the media projects, while 26.74% respond "No". In essence, majority of respondents attach as much importance to development projects as attached to such projects by the media – through coverage and reporting.

Table 13. As a result of information/coverage on different development projects, the media has swayed individual conviction of respondents on areas they believe the government should give more attention

Option	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Yes	126	73.26
No	46	26.74
Total	172	100

Content analysis was used to analyze the responses of those that picked 'No' as shown from Table 12. 26.74% of respondents opined that media coverage has not swayed their individual convictions on areas they believe the government should give more attention giving the following reasons;

"I still hold my belief whether the media projects it or not" ; "I feel every other development project should be given attention" ; "We are always told what they (the media) want us to know" ; "They (the media) believe in their own area of interest" ; "Everyone has his or her own area he wants the government to concentrate" ; "They (the media) are only projecting their own self-interest" ; "There should be shared and balanced attention on projects" ; "They (the media) are usually asked to withhold some(information)" ; "Government focus their attention on one thing alone" ; "The government is not stable and not reliable" ; "The media has not really given education enough hype; instead, they concentrate on power. I think it is bad because none of the projects are superior to the other".

5.14. Respondents motivation to perform civic duties such as tax payment due to awareness on government development projects

Table 14 show data in response to whether or not respondents have been motivated to perform civic duties such as tax payment due to awareness on government development project. 56.40% of respondents select the option of "Yes", indicating that awareness created on government development projects has motivated them to perform their civic duties in the society; in contribution to sustaining the development process. 20.35% respond "No"; that the awareness created has not motivated them and is of no consequence to them (perhaps suggesting they will perform their civic duties irrespective of how aware they are of ongoing development efforts in their society), while 23.25% are "Indifferent".

Table 14. Respondents have been motivated to perform civic duties such as tax payment due to awareness on government development projects

Option	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Yes	97	56.40
No	35	20.35
Neutral	40	23.25
Total	172	100

6. Conclusion and recommendations

The awareness created for government development projects has been shown to be grossly inadequate, else, an overwhelming majority (more than half) ought not to be merely averagely informed much less having people who respond not to be informed at all. Rather, majority ought to be well informed considering the enormous number of media establishments in the country. From the positive angle; the media has averagely kept Nigerians informed on government development projects but on the negative angle; it has failed to effectively influence Nigerians to participate in the development process itself.

Conclusively, the media keeps Nigerians averagely informed on government development projects, sways individual convictions of people in such a way that they consider projects given more coverage as truly important in comparison to their previously held beliefs. However, it has not been able to get majority to attach importance to projects given more media attention. Also, a fewer fraction of people affected by the media coverage are shown by this study as those who eventually participate in the development process by performing civic duties such as tax payment.

6.1. Recommendations

Radio with a reputation of being the closest medium to the rural community must harness its potentials optimally in ensuring that those in remote rural areas of the country do not lack essential information on basic rights and entitlements, public services, public budgets, health, education and working opportunities, agricultural prices and other market information which would enable them to take control of their lives.

Rural and community radio broadcasting need to be encouraged to reach more remote regions of the country so that this unique medium can truly optimise its potentials in reaching out to the populace on government development projects. This way, people in rural communities will not be left behind with respect to benefits which may accrue to them from government development projects.

In the urban setting where this study was mainly conducted, it is shocking to discover that Radio ranks third after TV and Newspaper as media which creates more awareness on government development projects. The scores of radio stations in Lagos state (where respondents were drawn), including private, public, and university owned stations would have suggested that radio will have far-reaching influence in the society and create more awareness, this is also coupled with the fact that many mobile phones have radio besides actual radio sets. Therefore, radio stations in Lagos state need to do better in keeping the public up to date on government development projects.

The media must equip the public with not just average information, but adequate information on basic rights and entitlements, public services, public budgets, health, housing projects, road rehabilitation projects; especially those that could bring discomfort to road users so alternative routes could be plied if possible, education and working opportunities, agricultural prices and other market information which would enable them to efficiently utilise provision of diverse development projects, consequently, developing the right stimulation to participate in the development process.

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