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AUDIENCE PERCEPTION OF MESSAGE FORMAT AND DELIVERY OF NAFDAC TELEVISION CAMPAIGN

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Abstract

This study evaluated the effectiveness of the use of message format and style/time of presentation of televised campaign messages by, NAFDAC.

Public perception of the campaign messages was sought through a survey of 400 randomly selected audience members in Ilorin South, Kwara State. It was found that although campaign messages had high reach among the audience, access to the televised messages was restricted to only the network service of the Nigeria Television Authority and other cable stations not freely available to all residents of the area. Time of transmission and language of message dissemination, are among other issues which audience members believe should be revised to increase accessibility and effectiveness of the campaigns. The study recommends that public health communication campaign planners can make effective use of television by identifying their target publics, engaging in formative research and tailoring their messages to suit audience needs through the use of appropriate television programme formats and suitable and varied transmission times on as many television channels as possible (local, cable and network services).

Introduction

National Agency for Food and Drug Administration and Control has become a household name in many Nigerian Homes, it is observed that even the average

primary school pupil in the country is at least aware that there is something called NAFDAC or NAFDAC number (even if they do not fully understand what it is all about). The Agency, a parastatal of the Nigerian Federal Ministry of Health, came into being through the Decree No. 15 of 1993 as amended by Decree No. 19 of 1999. Its mandate is the promotion and protection of Nigerians health and well-being by regulating and controlling the importation, exportation, manufacture sale, use and advertisement of food, drugs, cosmetics, medical devices, packaged water, chemicals and detergents (Akunyili, 2006, p. 3).

The average Nigerian's seeming familiarity with the organization cannot be unconnected with the raids and other NAFDAC activities that make the news in our dailies and broadcast channels. This indicates that the agency undoubtedly recognizes the centrality of the mass media in disseminating such important information as health related issues to the populace.

However, for media campaign messages to achieve the required effects, such messages must be carefully planned and strategically delivered. Robertson and Currey (2004) state that effective health communication through the media calls for decision of the message source on particular important issues that are relevant to the target audience so that these can be presented in an interesting and understandable manner to the public. It can be inferred from this statement that through formative research on the target audience, campaign messages should be strategically designed or tailored to address specific audience needs or aspects of the campaign that such messages are meant for. According to Qkaka (2009), "A. health communication campaign should seek to: identify the channels used; establish the extent of audience exposures to the message formats; determine the impacts of the campaigns; rank the effectiveness of the channels used in the campaigns; establish community participation in the process; relevance of the channels, and the message reach among the audiences"

It is in this light that this paper focuses on perceptions of the audience on the format and delivery of televised NAFDAC campaign messages. Studies (such as La'aro, 2002; Hilary, 2004 and Oyetola, 2006) have shown that public awareness of NAFDAC is high. However, literatures whose thrusts are on the issues of message format and delivery, especially from the perspective of the audience, still appear to be on low side. This paper is an endeavour to fill this gap. Specifically, the study sought to provide answers to the following research questions:

- ◆ What is the level of respondents' exposure to NAFDAC TV campaign messages?
- ◆ What is the audience's perception of the formats of NAFDAC TV Campaign messages?
- ◆ What is the audience's perception of the delivery of NAFDAC TV campaign messages?
- ◆ To what extent do respondents adopt NAFDAC TV campaign messages?

Material and Methods

Mass Media and Public Health Communication Campaigns

Scholars are generally of the consensus that the media are particularly useful in the area of health communication. According to Sambe (2003), the media have the capacity to set agenda on health related issues in such a way that people will be stimulated "towards taking actions against all practices in the health sector that do not promote the welfare of man...". Consistent with this view, Dejong (2002) opines that since media messages can entice people to purchase products as well as influence them over their ideas, values and behavior, it should be possible to use the media to gear people into taking actions that would promote their own health and well-being. It is not surprising, therefore, that most public health communication campaigns and other development oriented schemes employ the media as vital channels of message delivery.

Coffman (2002) defines Public communication campaigns as attempts geared towards shaping public behaviour towards certain desirable outcomes through the use of the media messaging and other communication activities over a given period. Health media campaigns on their own part are usually an element of an overall or broader health promotion programme (Health Development Agency Briefing, 2004). Such health interventions often rely on the electronic media in dissemination of various media campaign messages. Television in particular, due to its audio-visual nature has remained popular in virtually every society. Akinfeleye (2008) identifies television as the most potent of all the various media of disseminating health messages. This, according to him is because of the medium's audio-visual power which he describes as having an overriding impact on the behavior of its target audience. Abone (2008) equally sees television's power of imprinting messages on the mind as making it to be capable of dealing with social change especially attitudinal change that could bring about healthy living.

The NAFDAC Television Campaign and Public Health

Campaigns by NAFDAC generally set out to achieve behavioral change. The agency's campaign activities involve dialogue, education and persuasion through the mass media as well as various opinion leaders such as traditional and religious leaders, manufacturers, patent medicine dealers, transporters and consumers. Campaign activities are also carried out at the grass roots level (www.nafdacnigeria.org).

With regards to its televised campaigns (which is the focus of this study), the agency, aside from participating in programmes designed by television stations, equally transmits its campaign messages through the use of jingles/advertisements, television documentaries and special reports. The agency airs versions of its advertisements/jingles on the Nigeria Television Authority, Channels Television, Silver Bird Television, Africa Independent Television, Federal Radio Corporation of Nigeria and Aso Radio. (Abubakar, 2009). These campaigns, according to Abubakar are usually aired during the prime time and network belt of the stations while they are also upgraded after every six months.

Specifically, campaign messages referred to in this study are mostly in form of jingles and advertisements as well as news and special reports. The jingles/ advertisements were in different versions. However, they were mostly aimed at awareness and behavioral change towards the sale/consumption of fake and unwholesome drugs and foods. Some of the video clips contained messages discouraging the sale/manufacture of fake and adulterated drugs and other products. There was another encouraging consumers to "shine their-eyes" by being on the lookout for certain features when purchasing products like table salt. This is to ensure that they purchase the ones enriched with vitamin A. There was equally another meant to create awareness on how consumers can certify whether products (especially .drugs) purchased are NAFDAC certified or not. This particular one featured two prominent Nollywood artists. Yet another jingle which was on air during the period of this research was the one where opinion leaders testified to the efficient performance of NAFDAC and the need for the public to adopt the recommendations of NAFDAC. The news and special reports on the other hand, featured activities of NAFDAC such as inspection visits, closures of factories/destruction of unwholesome products, announcements about unwholesome products or those banned by NAFDAC as well as other in-house programmes of the agency like awards and other special events. It is evident that these messages carry information that either promote or protect public health. This is because the jingles and reports either have contents that either directly or indirectly inform, educate, sensitize or persuade the public/audience on issues regarding safe health practices as recommended or required by NAFDAC.

Review of Related Studies

In a comparative study of exposure of rural and urban dwellers of Kwara State to NAFDAC Campaign on Fake Drugs, La'aro (2002), found that 62% of the rural dwellers and 68% of urban dwellers who participated in the study demonstrated compliance to campaign messages. This study concluded that the media serve as potent means of communicating public health messages to both the urban and rural populace. Findings of the study provide empirical evidence that the NAFDAC campaign has indeed proved effective both in creating public awareness and message adoption even in the remote or rural area.

White appraising integrated marketing communication in the NAFDAC campaign against fake drugs in Asaba metropolis, Hilary (2004), found that the populace was to an extent aware of NAFDAC. The study equally found that the respondents were aware of the means of detecting fake drugs. According to findings of this study, 158 of a total of 398 respondents were aware of the meaning of NAFDAC while 276 were not. Among other important findings of this study is that the agency employs message consistency in sustaining the campaign's persuasive spirit but however, the Asaba populace still remain susceptible to consumption of fake and substandard drugs. This study concluded that the agency's communication campaign strategy in Asaba, Delta State is a combination of various promotional tools such as advertising, public relations, publicity; personal selling and sales promotion.

The study equally noted that advertising through the media was fully utilized by the agency. However, it was equally concluded in the study that the agency has not fully utilized direct marketing in its campaign. This, according to Hilary remains one of the greatest links between NAFDAC and its target consumers.

In another study on the impact of broadcast health media campaign messages on the audience, - Ufuophu-Biri (2008); who examined the impact of broadcast HIV/AIDS campaigns on sexual lifestyle among students in Delta State concluded that in spite of the respondents high exposure to HIV/AIDS broadcast message campaigns, there was no significant change in behavior as they still maintained a lifestyle of loose sex with lack of precautionary measures to prevent HIV/AIDS. This was premised among other findings, on the fact that after being exposed to the messages, a total of 92 students out of the 398 surveyed still had up to three sex partners while 212 had up to three sex partners and above, before full exposure, to the broadcast messages; however, 171 students had up to three sex partners while 122 had three sex partners and above. This study recommended that message designers carry out more research geared towards production of effective campaign messages while messages should equally be tailored to suit the target audience, both in terms of content and appropriate time of broadcast/transmission.

Another study by Palmgreen, Donohew, Lorch, Hoyle & Stephenson (2001) evaluated the effectiveness of targeted public service television announcements aimed at reducing marijuana use among high-sensation-seeking adolescents in Lexington and Knoxville (USA). After conducting three televised anti-marijuana campaigns and personal interviews with 100 randomly selected respondents in the study areas, the study, based on research findings, concluded that 'televised campaigns through the use of public service announcements, with high levels of reach and frequency, specifically designed for the target audience through social scientific theory and formative research, can play an important role in drug abuse and prevention efforts.

It is evident from the fore-going that while the media (used alone or in conjunction with other channels) can generate the desired effects on health related issues, their effectiveness is subject to clear identification of campaign objectives, identification of the target audience, formative research, strategic message design and appropriate selection of message dissemination format/style as well as transmission time.

Theoretical Framework

The democratic-participant media theory and the cognitive balance theory form the basis of this research work. The democratic-participant media theory, propounded by Denis McQuail in 1987 stipulates that the media be decentralized and democratized such that audience members can easily access communication channels and enjoy active participation in the media (Anaeto and Anateto, 2010). McQuail's Democratic-Participant Media theory identifies the audience as important stakeholders .in the communication and development 'processes and empahsises the audiences' rights to relevant to information as well as" the right to answer back, the right to use the means of communication in small-scale settings of community, interest group, sub-culture (McQuail as cited in Anaeto and Anaeto, 2010, p.19). This theory is considered relevant to the study because it situates all receivers of media

messages in a position where they are opportune to have a say about what is being transmitted or what is to be transmitted to them. In other words, the theory is relevant in the sense that it provides a basis for the study's exploration of the audiences' perceptions of NAFDAC television campaigns.

On its part, 'the Cognitive Balance Theory, developed by Sandra' Ball-Rokeach in 1968 submits that people tend to judge or evaluate persuasive messages based on how these messages fit or fail to fit into their individual cognitive patterns. (Anaeto, Onabajo and Osifeso, 2008). As explained by these writers, when a messages fits in'td the receiver's cognitive balance, this ensures a state of internal balance and but when the message does not fit, it results into a state of internal inconsistency which may prevent such a person from having the required change in attitude. In other words, when people are already familiar with a concept or ideas in a persuasive message, they are likely -to adopt the recommendations of such message as opposed to a situation where in the ideas or content of the message are alien or novel to them. The cognitive balance theory is therefore considered relevant to this study as the focus here is to find out the perceptions of the audience about televised campaigns by NAFDAC. According to Anaeto and Anaeto (2010), the development communicator should find out what the target group already knows and build on this before carrying out any programme. Hence, in designing public health campaign messages such as NAFDAC's the audience' knowledge, opinion and level of understanding about the given issue(s) must **be** sought so that appropriate messages can- be tailored to achieve the required effect/attitude change on the audience.

Methodology

Survey research method was used to conduct the study. Residents of Ilorin south local government in Kwara State formed the population of the study. This Local Government comprises a total of 209,251 residents out of which 103,606 are male and 105,645 are female (Federal Republic of Nigeria Official Gazette, 2009). A total of 400 respondents drawn through a combination of purposive and convenience sampling participated in the study. For equal representation, the sample was drawn from the various wards in the Local Government. These wards are Akanbi **I, II, III, IV and V**, Okaka **I and II**, Oke-Ogun and Balogun Fulani **I, II and 111. 36** respondents were drawn from each of the wards except Okaka **I and II** where **38** respondents each were drawn to make a total of 400. The respondents were also purposively selected to ensure that only those who had access to television and were likely to be exposed to televised messages by NAFDAC were selected.

Questionnaire served as the instrument of data collection from the sample. Therefore, a total of 400 copies of the questionnaire, which contained both closed and open ended questions, were administered on the respondents. However, 342 copies of the questionnaires were found usable- upon completion by the respondents. Data, analysis for therefore based on the 342 copies. Data was analysed and presented using simple descriptive statistics and percentages.

Results

The first set of results indicates the demographic characteristics of the respondents. According to findings, majority of the respondents (30%) are within the age range of 21 to 30. This is followed by 26% who fall between ages 31 and 40, while **18%** are between the ages of 15 to 20 and the remaining 17% are aged 40 and above. With respect to gender; 47% of the respondents are males while 53% are females. Regarding educational status, 14% of the respondents have Senior School Certificates as their highest qualifications. 26% are National Diploma holders, 40% have HND/ First Degree and 13% Post Graduate Degrees. The remaining 7% have other qualifications like NABTEB and NCE.

On exposure to NAFDAC television campaigns, while majority of the respondents (92%) are exposed to the campaigns findings reveal that 54% came across the campaign messages on NTA network. 4% on NTA Ilorin and 11% on Kwara State Television Authority. 24% stated that they are exposed to the messages in all three channels while 1% specified other channels such as Channels Television and Africa Independent Television (AIT). 5% did not state their channels of exposure to the campaigns.

Also, 47% of the respondents are exposed to the messages every day, 11% receive the messages about 3 .times in a week and 9% twice in a week. 27% of the respondents receive the messages once a week while the remaining 6% did not specify their level of exposure to the messages. While these show that there may still be room for improvement in reaching out to the public, it indicates that there is a considerable level of exposure to the campaign messages among the respondents

Providing suggestions on how NAFDAC can improve its television campaigns, 30% of the respondents are of the view that NAFDAC TV campaigns can be more effective if the campaigns are aired in at least the three major local languages of the country. 22% believe that when designed/produced in form of television drama, the campaign messages will be more effective. 24% suggest the use of advertisement (which according to findings of this study is already popular) while 5% suggest the use of constant public service announcements and 18% are of the opinion that the televised campaign messages should also be designed to accommodate residents'/viewers in the rural areas.

Table 1: Perceptions on Formats/Language of NAFDAC TV Campaign

Issues on Message Format	SA	A	U	P	SD	NS	(N=342) TOTAL
campaigns are currently aired in a variety of formats	18	37	30	5	2	8	100%
varieties of message formats should be used	46	38	9	1	2	4	100%
Messages are aired only English/ Pigeon English	44	34	11	7	Q		100%

Messages should also be aired in indigenous languages	53	32	12	0	0	2	100%
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In Table 1, the degree to which respondents agree/disagree with the statements on the first column in the table is indicated in subsequent columns by SA which stands for strongly agree, A for Agree, U for Undecided and D for Disagree while SD stands for Strongly Disagree. Some respondents did not respond to these questions. Such respondents are captured as NS, which stands for Not specified.

Table 1 shows the opinions of the respondents on some issues bordering on the formats of broadcasts of NAFDAC TV campaign messages. On the type of TV programme format used by NAFDAC, 18% of the 342 respondents strongly agree to the statement that, the Agency currently makes use of variety of programme formats to air its messages. 37% equally agree to this statement. 3073 are however undecided on the issue while 5% disagree, 2% strongly disagree and 533 did not specify their opinion on the issue. This analysis indicates that over 5033 of the respondents are of the view that the agency makes use of different TV programme formats to disseminate its campaign messages. With regards to whether the agency should make use of different programme formats to reach out to the audience," 46% and 38% strongly agree and agree respectively, that this should be done while in the minority, 9% still remain undecided, 1% disagree, 2% strongly disagree and 4% did not specify. Judging from the views of the majority, it would not be wrong therefore to infer from these findings that the audience would prefer that the agency airs it campaign messages through various programme formats. On the language of broadcast, 44% and 34% of the audience strongly agree and agree respectively that NAFDAC TV campaign messages are aired only in English/Pigeon English. 11% are undecided on this issue. 7% disagree while none strongly disagree but 4% did not specify. Going by the percentage of respondents (7853) who agree that the agency broadcasts its messages only English/Pigeon English and the equally high percentage who call for the use of indigenous languages, it can be deduced that the agency does not really accommodate the illiterates in its TV campaigns messages. Secondly, it can be inferred that the audience also prefer to be exposed to these messages in indigenous languages

Table 2: Perceptions on Message Delivery

Issues in message delivery	Percentage %						(N=342) TOTAL
	SA	A	U	D	SD	NS	
Current frequency of message transmission is sufficient	22	43	9	20	3	3	100%
Frequency of message transmission should be increased.	43	40	8	5	0	4	100%

Access to messages can be improved by varying the transmission times / increasing transmission channels	55	38	4	1	0	2	100%
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In Table 2, the degree to which respondents agree/disagree with the statements on the first column in the table is indicated in subsequent columns by SA which stands for strongly agree, A for Agree, U for Undecided and D for Disagree while SD stands for Strongly Disagree. Some respondents did not respond to these questions. Such respondents are captured as NS, which stands for Not specified.

Table 2 indicates that 22% of the 342 respondents strongly agree that presently, the number of times NAFDAC broadcasts its campaign messages on television is sufficient. 43% of the respondents also agree on this issue. 8% are however undecided, while 20% disagree, 3% strongly disagree and 3 % did not specify. On the statement, "The frequency of transmission of NAFDAC TV campaign messages should be increased", 43% and 40% of the respondents strongly agreed and agreed respectively. However, 8% were undecided while 5% disagreed. Nobody strongly disagreed but the remaining 4% did not specify. Majority of the respondents -however were of the opinion that access to the campaign messages can be improved by airing the messages on more television stations (especially the local ones) as well as varying the times that these messages are aired on these different channels. Specifically, 55% of the audience strongly agreed to this view while 38% also agreed. 4% were not decided though while only 1% disagreed, none strongly disagreed and 2% did not specify. In all, however, this table indicates that generally respondents' views are skewed towards an increment in the broadcast transmission hours of televised campaign messages on NAFDAC. The same goes for the channels/stations that the agency employs in broadcasting its messages. All these are with a view to increasing audience reach/ exposure and subsequently, optimized attainment of campaign objectives.

Table 3: When do respondents check products for safety?

RESPONSE	PERCENTAGE %
Before/During product purchase	91
During product consumption/use	6
After product consumption/use	2
Total	100% (N=312)

N=312 in table 3, as opposed to 342 like other tables because only 312 respondents indicated that they take to the recommendations of NAFDAC.

Out of all the 342 respondents, only 312 which represent about 91% of the total respondents indicated that they adopt the recommendations of the televised NAFDAC campaign messages they have been exposed to. Table '3 shows that out of these 312 respondents, 91% actually check products for

safety indicators such as NAFDAC number, best before and expiry dates _during/before they purchase such products. 6% remember to check for these safety indicators after they might have purchased the products but before the actual use or consumption of the products. The remaining 2% said they only remember to check after they might have used the product.

Discussion

Public health remains a major concern all over the world and access to vital information is a fundamental aspect of tackling such health issues. In Nigeria, the National Agency for Food and Drug Administration and Control (NAFDAC) is one of such agencies saddled with the protection of the health of the populace. This agency, in addition to other strategies has employed the mass media in its campaign towards "safeguarding the health of the nation".

While this study corroborates findings of previous literatures on NAFDAC campaigns in terms of respondents' high awareness and exposure to campaign messages, it reveals that campaign message designs/formats, as well as mode and channel of delivery need to be upgraded.

With respect to the formats of broadcasts, one key finding of this study is that audiences are mostly exposed to NAFDAC TV campaign messages in the form of advertisements/jingles (although, other programme formats such as drama, news, magazine, discussions/interviews and documentary were also identified as having content related to NAFDAC). Majority of the respondents are also exposed to the campaign messages only in English/Pigeon English language. This clearly places illiterate audiences at a disadvantage. Results show that audiences in the study area prefer to receive the campaign messages in a variety of programme formats. They also prefer that the messages be designed in different Nigerian languages in order to accommodate or capture more audience. As such, it can be inferred that the televised campaign messages create a knowledge gap in this respect. There is a need to accommodate every member of the society while designing and implementing important public health campaign messages such as NAFDAC's.

Another interesting finding of the study is that only 1% of the respondents indicated that they view the agency's campaign messages on channels other the network service of the NTA and the local stations in the study area. Specifically, these respondents stated that they come across the messages on Channels Television and AIT, which are both cable stations. However, an interview with, NAFDAC Chief Public Relations Officer, affirms that the agency airs its televised campaigns on the network service of the NTA, Channels Television, Silver Bird Television and Africa Independent Television. This implies that the respondents, who said they saw the messages on the local stations, were actually exposed to the campaigns on the network service of the NTA when these stations joined the network. This brings to fore the fact that access to NAFDAC television campaigns in the study area is somewhat restricted to only residents who tune to network programmes and those who subscribe to cable services. This particular finding also suggests that subscription to cable services among residents of Ilorin South is either

relatively low or that audience in the study area generally have preference for the local stations earlier mentioned. Therefore, in terms of delivery, the agency still has some work to do regarding transmission channels and time of the televised campaign messages. Also on message delivery, findings equally revealed that respondents are of the view that the frequency at which campaign messages are aired be increased.

The use of drama, advertisements, and constant public service announcements were equally suggested by respondents as means of impacting on the audience more effectively. Never the less, the agency still appears to be achieving its campaign objectives to an extent as findings indicate that a good number of respondents (91%), adopt the recommendations of the messages they have been exposed to. This is indicated in table 3 which indicates when the respondents check products for safety measures, based on the recommendations of NAFDAC. The fact that message adoption on the part of the respondents is not 100% however shows that there is still room for improvement.

Conclusions/Recommendations

Based on available data, this study concludes that NAFDAC television campaign messages have high reach among television audience in Ilorin South but the audience are still somewhat limited in access to the campaigns in terms of television channels and they are of the view that, to be more effective, the televised messages must be revised and upgraded with respect to transmission time, format of broadcasts, language of presentation and availability/accessibility on local television stations.

It is recommended that for public health communication campaigns like that by the National Agency for Food and Drug Administration and Control (NAFDAC) to record maximum effectiveness, through the use of television, campaign planners should firstly identify their various publics and engage in formative/audience research in order to understand the audience better as well as identify their needs and preferences and how best to appeal to them. Thereafter, campaign messages should be designed or customized to suit different local dialects or categories of audience members through appropriate programme formats and transmitted at suitable and various times of the day on as many television channels as possible (local, cable and network services). Campaign messages should equally be upgraded as situations demand.

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