

EDO RESIDENTS' AWARENESS AND RESPONSE TO COVID'19 MEDIA MESSAGES

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Abstract

This study was carried out to examine Edo residents' awareness and response to COVID19 media messages. The objectives of the study include: to examine the awareness level of Edo Residents to COVID'19, to determine through which medium Edo residents were exposed to COVID'19, to determine the extent to which media messages influenced Edo residents' attitude towards COVID'19 and to examine how Edo residents responded to media campaign on COVID'19. The study was anchored on the Health Believe Model while the Survey methodology was adopted. The population of this study comprises all residents of Etsako West Local Government Area of Edo State, Oredo Local Government Area of Edo State, and Esan North East Local Government Area. The projected population for Etsako West Local Government in 2018 is 260,700, Esan North East 159, 800 and Oredo Local Government 490, 600. The Taro Yamani Sample size determining formula was used to determine the Sample Size. Consequently, the purposive sampling method was used to select a sample of four hundred. This means that 400 copies of the questionnaire were administered across the three selected local government areas out of which 300 were returned and found useable. The study found out that Edo residents' awareness of COVID'19 was high. The study also revealed that Edo residents got exposed to COVID'19 messages via different Channels, further findings revealed that Edo residents responded positively to COVID'19 media messages as they worked with the information supplied by the media on COVID'19. Based on this, the study concluded that if multiple media approach is adopted in sensitizing people, the possibility of them having robust knowledge and awareness of the issue is high. Against this background, the study recommended among others that media should be continuously engaged in the quest to sensitize the people on critical issues like COVID'19.

Key Words: Media, Awareness, Messages, COVID19, Response.

Introduction

At the outbreak of Covid-19, the whole world was ravaged due to the lack of cure or known medication for the disease. Even the most technologically advanced nations of the world were the worst hit because the death rate and infection rate was

geometrically on the increase on daily basis. This became a source of concern to developing countries like Nigeria. In fact, it was recorded that Melinda Gate, the former wife of Bill Gate, said that with the ravaging effect of Covid-19 on developed nations, the less developed nations will have their streets littered with dead bodies.

With no vaccine and proven treatment available to control the spread of Covid-19, most nations of the world including Nigeria introduced certain strategies to help prevent and control the disease. According to Aeter, Uddin, Das, Akhter, Choukury and Kim (2020), asserted that to flatten the curve of the ravaging effect of covid-19, most nations including Nigeria applied strict prevention and control measures to curb the disease. These control measures include; regulation like general lockdown, obligatory home quarantine, ban on public gathering international and local flight restrictions compulsory use of face mask, use of alcohol based sanitizer, compulsory regular hand washing practice of social distance.

Despite the above measures, the spread of Covid-19 was still on the increase geometrically as the figures dished out on daily basis by the Nigerian Centre for Diseases and Control (NCDC) represents increase in infection and death. Meanwhile, there were myths in the local parlance that Covid-19 was not a Nigerian disease but a calculated attempt by the ruling class to embezzle money. Others questioned the reality of Covid-19 on the ground that disease like Covid-19 cannot survive a terrain like Nigeria.

The above shows the kind of attitude that the people had towards Corona Virus. Nigerians especially rural dwellers had a resistant attitude towards accepting the reality of Covid-19. It became necessary to mobilize them and sensitize them on the need to accept the reality of Covid-19. This is where media campaign became relevant.

Creating awareness and encouraging positive attitude which are necessary to beat the Covid-19 pandemic is an important role expected of the mass media. The campaign by media organizations which came in form of talk show, news reports, magazine programmes, features, articles among others, were meant to sensitize and educate the people on the symptoms, consequences and prevention methods since there was no known medical solution yet. The media particularly social media, radio and television were used to create this awareness.

The use of the media particularly newspaper and magazine have been argued to be exclusive to the rich and elite in the society. However, Wogu (2018) noted that during outbreaks of diseases like the Covid-19, inclusive or complementary media selection is used. This entails the exploration of all forms of media ranging from social, traditional and conventional media.

In Etsako West, programme were run in Etsako language and Pidgin, in the media particularly radio and television. The aim of this was to bring the awareness of Covid-19 to the door-steps of the people. Town hall meeting and door-to-door campaigns were carried out within Etsako West to enlighten the people on what they need to know above Covid-19 and how they can prevent it.

Based on the above, this paper examines the awareness level of Etsako West, Oredo and Esan North East residents towards Covid-19, their attitude and perception towards covid-19 media campaign.

Statement of the Problem

The outbreak of novel Corona Virus otherwise known as Covid-19 threw the world into a state of confusion. The ravaging effect that covid-19 had on the world will last for more than a decade according to the World Health Organization (WHO).

Though, there have been outbreak of other diseases like Ebola Virus, Lassa Fever, Monkey Pox among others but the outbreak of Covid-19 ravaged the world more than any of the aforementioned diseases.

Citing African CDC, Elnadi et.al. (2021) noted that the rate of infection due to covid-19 on the African continent was on the increase on daily basis. They added that as at 29th of June, 2020, there were more than 382,600 confirmed cases, above 9700 deaths and around 47,000 recoveries due to covid-19 in Africa.

In Nigeria, the Nigerian Centre for Disease and Control (NCDC) recorded that as at 29th June, 2021, Nigeria had a total of 167,430 confirmed cases, out of which 63,931 cases were discharged and 2,119 deaths.

The above statistics was worrisome and threatening. This made the government to declare certain preventive measures such as total lock-down, social distance practice, compulsory quarantine, and compulsory use of face masks among others.

The mass media particularly social media, radio and television came up with many programmes and campaigns aimed at creating awareness among Nigerians on the cause, effect and the preventive measures of Covid-19 since these was no known medical solution or cure.

How the people received and acted towards media messages on Covid-19 is the focus of this study. Though, there are a lot of perception and attitude studies on how audiences receive media messages towards diseases. Little or nothing has been done on Edo residents' awareness and response to media campaign towards Covid-19. It is this gap that this study is out to fill.

Objectives of the Study

The objectives of this study include:

1. To examine the awareness level of Edo Residents to Covid-19
2. To determine through which medium Edo residents were exposed to Covid-19
3. To determine the extent to which media campaigns influenced Edo residents' attitude towards Covid-19
4. To examine how Edo residents responded to media campaign on Covid-19 media campaign.

Research Questions

1. What is the level of awareness of Edo residents of Covid-19?
2. Through what media were Edo residents exposed to Covid-19 messages?
3. To what extent were Edo residents' attitudes influenced by Media campaign on Covid-19?
4. How did Edo residents respond to Covid-19 messages?

Hypothesis

H1: Exposure to media messages on Covid-19 influenced Edo residents' attitude positively.

Review of Related Literature

WHO (2020) noted that Covid-19 became so precarious and was declared a public health emergency being declared across all nations of the earth. According to WHO (2021), not less than 135,057,587 people around the world have been infected, with an estimated 2,919,932 deaths as at April 11, 2021. NCDC (2021) noted that as at 29th June, 2021, Nigeria had a total of 167,130 confirmed cases, 163,937 discharged cases and 2,119 deaths.

The high infection rate of covid-19 shows that it is a contagious disease which is characterized by community spread. This no doubt has a great implication. This is in line with the position of Wuez, Nurn and Ekhadh, (2013) who noted that contagious diseases outbreak are often characterized by community spread. As stated earlier, any disease that has community spread as characteristics has grievous implication to the health of the society. Hence a mass sensitization, awareness creation and campaign become inevitable.

Creating mass awareness and enlightenment campaigns empowers the people to take charge of their health destinies. Via enlightenment, campaigns, the people will be able to properly understand the diseases, their causes, preventive measures and cure if any. Noh and Park (2017) noted in this regard that communicating health-related information to people empowers them to fully comprehend the complexity of the health issue at stake, make necessary behavioral adjustments and respond accordingly to the issue.

From the above, it is expected that the people should adequately make necessary behavioural adjustment to media campaigns on Covid-19. This is not unconnected with the fact that mass media platforms are veritable sources of correct information on diseases and other public health issues.

Role of Mass Media Campaign In Health Education

According to Soola (2003), any developmental effort that does not capture the participation of the people will not see the light of the day. This same position was

emphasized by Okunna (2002) when she posited that for anything to be called development it must:

- i Bring change:
- ii The change must be positive
- iii The change must be for the betterment of majority of the people and
- iv The process that brings change must be participatory

The above captures the important place of participation in health communication. This means when there is an outbreak of new diseases; the people must be adequately engaged in order for the communication effort to yield positive result. Generally, the mass media represents a veritable means through which the people can be communicated. According to Park and Hove (2017), the mass media via campaigns, information dissemination, and education shape perception and attitude of audience through the attention, frame valence and tone of reportage. This means that how the people receive and perceive the media messages during outbreak of diseases is a function of how the media frame and report such issues.

Citing Catalan-Matamoros (2011) and Zexin (2016) Joshua, Paul and Joel (2021) aver that during outbreak of diseases like Covid-19, the mass media help the public understand the gravity of the sickness and shape the perception and attitude of its associated risk. By implication, since the disease is relatively new, the people will develop deviant attitude towards acceptance of the precautionary measures. Here the need for attitude and perception change becomes important.

Noar(2006) notes that the mass media have long been used as a tool for promoting public health such that they are significantly used to exposé high population of large populace to messages through routine uses of existing media such as television, radio and newspapers. According to Akarika (2019) the mass media plays a fundamental role in educating people about diseases and ailments, outbreaks, prevention, control and treatment. Corroborating the above, Ogbonne (2021) noted that the mass media of communication have important roles to play in communicating health information to the general public. Through media messages, people get to know about health issues.

In times of crisis or outbreak of dreaded epidemic or pandemic as being experienced now, the media or press becomes the “*watcher*” and the “*watched*”. Nigerians expect the press especially the online newspapers to educate them on how to avoid contracting the Coronavirus ranging from proper hand washing and use of hand sanitizer, putting on face mask in public places to social distancing. Besides, the press should give Nigerians information on how to access food aid/palliatives from the governments, agencies and individuals, and as well, the number of infected persons, the dead and recoveries. As part of its social responsibilities, the media can extend its report to investigating government spending and ensure equitable distribution of palliatives to the vulnerable persons (Onwe et al, 2021).

On the other hand, Adelakun and Adnan (2016) say that the Nigeria press watches the governments and the people’s compliance to NCDC laid down rules, regulations and protocols on the containment of the virus. This is in addition to monitoring of

governments' responsiveness, actions, transparency, prudence and diligence in handling the crisis situation. All these and others are easily ascertained through systematic investigations as exemplified by this study.

Empirical Review

Elnadi et al (2021) carried out a study on knowledge, attitude and perception towards the 2019 corona virus pandemic: a bi-national survey in Africa. The survey methodology was used while the questionnaire was used as the instrument of data collection. The study found out that majority of the respondents (61.6%) have satisfactory knowledge of covid-19. It was also found out in that the attitude of most respondents (68.9%) towards instituted preventive measures was satisfactory within an average attitude score of 6.9 + 1.2.

The above finding is in line with the position of Joshua Joel and Paul (2021) that during outbreak of diseases like Covid-19, the media help to mobilize and sensitize the people on the preventive measures and the health implications. Knowledge of the preventive measure and the health implication of the disease are important factors that can shape the perception, attitude and behaviour of the people. This means that the acceptance of and practice of the measures is a function of the extent to which the people have information about Covid-19.

Wogu (2018) carried out a study on mass media awareness campaign and the prevention of the spread of lassa fever in rural communities of Ebonyi State of Nigeria. The survey methodology was adopted while 354 respondents were randomly selected from six rural communities.

The result of the study revealed that the media campaign had wide reach but little or no effect. The result also revealed that the campaign failed to create appropriate awareness of the disease, its preventive/curative health behaviour. It further revealed that there are no health behaviour modifications among the people because of the campaign.

Erubami, Bebenimibo and Ugwuotre (2021) carried out a study on social media use and Covid-19 perception among Nigerians: The roles of affect, gender and information sources. The study used online survey and investigated the influence of social media exposure for Covid-19 risk information on risk perception and effective responses towards the outbreak of Covid-19. Three hundred and ninety one respondents participated in the survey.

The study found out that majority of the respondents 40% were very often exposed to Covid-19 related information on social media. The study also revealed that the respondent' level of risk perception increases by 636, on average for every unit increase in their exposure to online media for Covid-19 risk information. From the empirical review carried out so far, a lot has been done on media campaign and Covid-19. There is little or nothing on the attitude of audience members to Covid-19 media messages.

Ogbonne (2021) carried out a study to determine how newspapers in Nigeria report the impact of Covid-19 on Nigerian economy. A total of four national daily

newspapers were randomly selected for the study. These are *Leadership*, *Guardian*, *Nation and Punch* newspapers. The study was anchored on agenda setting theory. The quantitative research design was used for the study. The duration of the study was February 27, 2020 to October 30, 2020. The code sheet served as the instrument for data collection while descriptive and inferential statistics were used to analyze the results of the study. It was found that newspapers mainly utilized official sources. Additionally, straight news format was used to report the impact of Covid-19 on Nigerian economy. It was also found that newspapers in Nigeria neither made suggestions on how to manage the economy in times of the pandemic nor post pandemic. The researcher examined the implications of these results on health communication.

Ogbodo, Nwakpu and Ikwo (2020) carried out a study to evaluate how Nigerian media depict the Coronavirus pandemic and how the depictions shape people's perception and response to the pandemic. The major objective of the study was to examine how the Nigerian media report Coronavirus. Another objective of the study was to examine how audience responded to such reports. The study employed a quantitative design (newspaper content analysis and questionnaire). The content analysis examines the nature of media coverage of Corona virus in Nigeria and China using four major national newspapers (*The Sun*, *The Vanguard*, *The Guardian* and *The Punch*). The period of study ranged from January 2020 to March 2020. A total of 1070 newspaper items on Coronavirus outbreak were identified across the four newspapers and content-analyzed.

The finding shows that the coverage of the pandemic was dominated by straight news reports accounting for 763 or (71.3%) of all analyzed items. This was followed by opinions 169 (15.8%), features 120 (11.2%) and editorials 18 (1.7%) respectively. *The Punch* 309 (28.9%) reported the outbreak more frequently than *The Sun* 266 (24.9%), *The Guardian* 258 (24.1%) and *Vanguard* 237 (22.1%). Finding further suggests that the framing pattern adopted by the newspapers helped Nigerians to take precautionary measures. Continuous reportage of Covid-19 has proved effective in creating awareness about safety and preventive measures thereby helping to 'flatten the curve' and contain the spread of the virus. However, the newspapers should avoid creating fear/panic in reporting the pandemic.

Onwe et al (2020) carried out a study to examine the manner in which online newspapers frame issues of public importance. The objective of the study was to determine the level of knowledge of online news consumers and their perception of the issues. This study investigates how three online newspapers framed the outbreak of Covid-19 pandemic in Nigeria. Anchored on Frame Analysis Theory, the study also employs Relational Content Analysis as its design. Finding shows that fear and death, government and/political influence, and palliative frames emerged as the dominant frames across the three online newspapers – *Sahara Reporters*, *Premium Times* and *Daily Post* studied for three months. The implication of this finding is that online newspapers reported Covid-19 outbreak in ways that made the audience jittery before the eventual outbreak of the pandemic. The study recommends that

online newspapers should harp more on palliative as against fear and death frames in reporting any health emergency in the future.

From the analysis above, continuous reportage of Covid-19 and adequate attention to the disease in the media will create attention and awareness among the people. This means when the mass media through agenda setting give prominence to issues relating to diseases outbreak, such issues become part of the people. The people's attitude can be shaped to embrace the recommended precautionary measures.

Theoretical Framework

This study is anchored on the Health Belief Model. The Health Belief Model is used in health promotion to design intervention and prevention programmes. The theory was developed by Hochbaum, Rosenstock in 1950. The theory explains why people fail to participate in public health programmes and campaign despite being free. The model further received through the works of researchers who concluded that six main constructs influence people's decision about whether to take action to prevent, screen for and control illness. The six constructs include: perceived susceptibility, perceived severity, perceived benefit, perceived barriers, cue to action and self efficiency.

The thrust of this theory is that health behaviour is determined by personal beliefs or perception about a disease and the strategies available to decrease its occurrence. It is assumed that people's beliefs influence their behaviour during outbreak of diseases. In view of the above, the use of Health belief model for this work helps to test how the beliefs of citizens influenced their awareness and response to Covid-19 media messages. The theory therefore is relevant to this study because it explains that people will develop positive attitude to maintaining good hygiene and observing the preventive measures if they are adequately informed and educated. This is premised on the ground that the campaigns in the media portrays Covid-19 as a threat to human's health and the magnitude of the threat is perceived as having serious consequences. The protective actions advocated in the media campaign have benefits outweighing the cost of the action. It is the above singular reason that the nations of the world had to defy all economic consequences of shutting down their economics and declare a total lockdown of the world.

Methodology

This study utilized the survey research method survey. According to Asemah et al (2017) is a form of research design that is aimed at collecting large and small samples from a population, in order to examine the distribution, incidence, interaction of educational activities like sociological and psychological variables. Survey is mainly used because it is considered the most suitable method for data collection in the behavioural sciences.

The population of this study comprises of all residents of Etsako West Local Government Area of Edo State, Oredo Local Government Area of Edo State, and Esan North East local Government Area. The projected population for Etsako West

Local Government in 2018 is 260,700, Esan North East 159, 800 and Oredo Local Government 490, 600. The breakdown is represented on the table below:

LOCAL GOVT	POPULATION
ETSAKO WEST	260,700
ESAN NORTH EAST	159,800
OREDO LOCAL GOVERNMENT	490,600
TOTAL	911,100

From this population, the researcher used the Taro Yamani sample size to determine the sample size.

The sample size was derived following the process:

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + Ne^2}$$

Where

n = sample size

N = population

e = 0.05

$$n = \frac{911100}{1 + 911,100(0.05)^2}$$

$$n = \frac{911,100}{1 + 2,277.75}$$

$$n = \frac{911,100}{2,278.75}$$

$$n = 400$$

The multi stage sampling technique was adopted in selecting the sample for this study. This technique is necessary when a researcher discovers that the complexity of a population might make getting a representative sample difficult. The researcher divided Edo state into three senatorial districts after which he randomly selected three local government areas based on population and commercial nature. The local governments randomly selected are Etsako West, Esan North East and Oredo Local Government areas. In Etsako West, two villages were randomly selected, in Esan North East, two villages were also randomly selected while four villages were randomly selected from Oredo local Government Area. Four villages were selected from Oredo because the population of Oredo is larger than that of Etsako West and Esan North East. Fifty copies of questionnaire were purposively administered in each of the selected town/villages as represented in the table below through research assistant.

TOWN/VILLAGES	NUMBER OF ADMINISTERED QUESTIONNAIRES
AUCHI	50
UZAIRUE	50
EGUARE-UROMI	50
EGBELE	50
EKHUAN	50
ABIALA	50
OKPAKO	50
ABIALA	50
TOTAL	400

The questionnaire was used as instrument of data collection. The questionnaire was designed in two sections. The first section contained bio-data of respondents while the second section contains the psychographic data of respondents. The data collected was analyzed using the simple percentage method.

Data Presentation/Analysis

Out of the 400 copies of questionnaire administered, 300 or 75% were retrieved and found useable, thereby giving the study a mortality rate of 25%.

The study has 200 or 57.1% as male while 150 or 42.9% are female. In terms of education, 180 or 51.4% of the respondents have BSc/HND as their highest qualification, 80 of the mc or 22.9% of the respondents have ND or NCE as their highest education qualification. Ninety of the respondents or 25.7% either have S.S.C.E or first school leaving certificates as their highest educational qualifications.

Table1: Gender

Variable	Frequency	Percent
Male	200	66.7
Female	100	33.3
Total	350	100.0

From the result of the analysis, it is shown based on the distribution by gender that 66.7% who accounted for 200 respondents are male while the remaining 33.3% who accounted for `100 respondents are females

Table2: Educational Qualification

Variable	Frequency	Percent
SSCE	90	30
ND/NCE	70	23.3
HND/BSc	140	46.7
Total	300	100.0

The distribution by educational qualification, shows that 70 respondents had ND/ NCE which accounted for 23.3%, those with SSCE recorded 90 or 30% while 46.7% of the respondents had their HND/ BSc accounting for the highest number.

Table 3: Extent of Awareness of Covid-19

Variable	Frequency	Percent
Valid Little extent	80	26.6
Indifferent	20	6.7
Great extent	200	66.7
Total	300	100.0

Table three shows that 200 of the respondents or 66.7% are great knowledge of Covid-19 pandemic. This means that the awareness level of the respondents on Covid-19 is high.

Table4: The channels through which the respondents got Information on Covid-19

Variable	Frequency	Percent
Television	10	3.3
Radio	40	13.3
Newspaper	10	3.3
Social Media	20	6.7
All of the above	170	56.7
Undecided	50	16
Total	300	100.0

Table four shows that 170 of the respondents or 56.7% got awareness on Covid-19 through radio, television, newspapers, and magazine. This means that all the media of mass communication effectively reported the people on Covid-19 outbreak.

Table 5: Information gotten through media were helpful in sensitizing me against Covid-19

Variable	Frequency	Percent
Strongly Disagreed	30	10
Disagreed	10	3.3
Undecided	50	16.7
Agreed	10	3.3
Strongly Agreed	200	66.7
Total	300	100.0

Table five shows that 200 of the respondents or 66.7% strongly agreed that information gotten from the media were helpful in getting them educated on Covid-19. This means that via the mass media, the respondents were educated and sensitized on what Covid-19 is all about.

Table 6: Covid-19 Media Messages Had Positive Influence on respondents' perception of Covid-19

Variable	Frequency	Percent
Strongly Disagreed	30	10
Disagreed	10	3.3
Undecided	50	16.7
Agreed	10	3.3
Strongly Agreed	200	66.7
Total	300	100.0

Table six shows that 200 of the respondents or 66.6% strongly agreed that Covid-19 media messages had positive influence on their attitudes. This means that media messages were able to get audience members to observe all necessary precautions against Covid-19.

Table 7: To what extent did media messages make you observe social distance, hand washing, wearing of facemask and other Covid-19 protocols?

Variable	Frequency	Percent
Little extent	80	26.6
No extent	0	0
Indifferent	20	6.7
To great extent	200	66.7
Total	300	100.0

Table 7 show that 200 Of the respondents or 66.7% agreed that to a great extent the messages from the media made them to observe Covid-19 protocols such as maintaining social distance, regular washing of hands, wearing of facemasks among others. The implication of this is that media messages were effective in sensitizing the people towards adhering to Covid-19 messages. It also implies that the people responded positively to media messages on Covid-19.

Test of Hypothesis

H1: Exposure to media messages on Covid-19 influenced Edo residents' attitude positively.

Ho: Exposure to media messages on Covid-19 has no positive influence on Edo residents' attitudes.

Chi square calculated table for hypothesis 1

O	E	O – E	(O – E) ²	$\frac{(O - E)^2}{E}$
30	60	-30	900	30
10	60	-50	2500	250
50	60	-10	100	2
10	60	-50	2500	250
200	60	140	19600	98
300				$\sum_{i=1}^n \frac{(O_i - E_i)^2}{E_i} = 630$

The expected value (E) is the mean of all categories and was obtained from the formula

$$\bar{X} = \frac{1}{n} \sum_{i=1}^5 X_i$$

Where X_i are the categories

To get the chi-square (χ^2) calculated apply the formula

$$\chi^2_{\text{calculated}} = \sum_{i=1}^n \frac{(O_i - E_i)^2}{E_i}$$

$$\chi^2_{\text{calculated}} = 630$$

$$\chi^2_{\text{tabulated}} = \chi^2_{(n-1),0.05}$$

$$\chi^2_{4,0.05} = 9.488$$

Decision Rule:

If $\chi^2_{\text{calculated}} < \chi^2_{\text{tabulated}}$ Accept H_0

If $\chi^2_{\text{calculated}} > \chi^2_{\text{tabulated}}$ Accept H_1

From the above test, it is observed that $\chi^2_{\text{calculated}} > \chi^2_{\text{tabulated}}$ that is $630 > 9.488$.

Hence, since the calculated value is greater than the tabulated value, the null hypothesis (H_0) is rejected while the alternative (H_1) will be accepted. It is concluded that media messages have positive influence on the residents of Edo state which implies that media messages have had influence on the people and residents of Edo state.

Discussion of Findings

Research Question One: What is the level of awareness of Edo residents of Covid-19?

From the findings, it is clear that Edo residents high level of awareness of Covid-19. This is evident on Table three which shows that 200 of the respondents or 66.7% have great knowledge of Covid-19 pandemic. This means that the awareness level of the respondents on Covid-19 is high. This is in line with the study of Erubami, Bebenimibo and Ugwuotre (2021) which found out that majority of the respondents

accounting for 40% were very often exposed to Covid-19 related information on social media.

What the above means is that Covid-19 was not strange to the people and as such they were very much aware of it. This shows that awareness is a necessity when the issue of making impact is on the fore.

Research Question Two: Through what media were Edo residents exposed to Covid-19 messages?

The findings show that the respondents were exposed to Covid-19 messages via various media. This is evident on Table 4 which shows that 170 of the respondents or 56.7% got awareness on Covid-19 through radio, television, newspapers, and magazine. This means that all the media of mass communication effectively reported the people on Covid-19 outbreak.

What the above means is that various mass media were vigorously engaged to enlighten the people on Covid-19. This might not be far from why the awareness level as stated earlier was high. That over 50 percent of the respondents held to the fact that they were exposed to media messages through the various media of mass communication is a testament to the fact that if the right media are engaged in sending out information, awareness becomes easy.

Research Question three: To what extent were Edo residents' attitudes influenced by Media campaign on Covid-19?

Findings have it that Edo residents have positive attitude towards Covid-19 media messages. This is evident on Table 6 which shows that 200 of the respondents or 66.6% strongly agreed that Covid-19 media messages had positive influence on their attitudes. This means that media messages were able to get audience members to observe all necessary precautions against Covid-19.

Research Question four: How did Edo residents respond to Covid-19 messages?

Table seven show that 200 of the respondents or 66.7% agreed that to a great extent the messages from the media made them to observe Covid-19 protocols such as maintaining social distance, regular washing of hands, wearing of facemasks among other. The implication of this is that media messages were effective in sensitizing the people towards adhering to Covid-19 messages. It also implies that the people responded positively to media messages on Covid-19.

Conclusion

From the findings of this study, it is concluded that Edo residents have a positive attitude towards media messages on Covid-19. It can also be inferred that Edo residents responded positively to media messages on Covid-19. This is not unconnected with the fact that the study revealed that respondents' observation of Covid-19 prevention measures such as wearing of facemasks, regular washing of hands; constant use of alcohol based hand sanitizers among others were all responses to media campaign.

Recommendations

Following the findings of this study, the following recommendations are made:

1. Media should be continuously engaged in the quest to sensitize the people on critical issues like Covid-19.
2. Also, integrated media approach where several channels of mass communication are engaged is recommended when it comes to educating people and creating awareness. This is not unconnected with the fact that high level of awareness recorded in this study is a product of the engagement of several media of mass communication.

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