

INFLUENCE OF TELEVISION PROGRAMMES ON INFORMATION UTILIZATION IN OIL PRODUCING COMMUNITIES IN SOUTH-SOUTH ZONE, NIGERIA

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Abstract

This study was designed to determine the influence of television programmes on information utilization in oil producing communities of Akwa Ibom State and Rivers State. The study adopted a survey research design 1540 respondents selected from the eight-core oil producing communities of Akwa Ibom and Rivers States. Two research developed instruments, Information Strategies and Utilization Questionnaire (ISUQ) and Information Strategies and Utilization Interview Schedule (ISUIS), with reliability coefficients, 0.86 and 0.82 respectively, were used in collecting data. The results of data analysis simple using percentages and chi-square statistics showed that television programmes on information strategies were statistically significant at $p < .05$ level. Consequent upon the findings, it was concluded television is one of most effective strategies for disseminating information in oil producing communities. It was therefore recommended that television programme should effectively employed in disseminating information to the people of oil producing communities

Introduction:

Literature in different disciplines shows that in various degrees, the study of information dissemination strategies and utilization is gaining an unprecedented attention. International and national organizations, states, educational institutions, libraries and information centres, government agencies, industrial establishments and NGOs, have become concerned with research in information dissemination strategies and its utilization as agent of changes of one kind or the other. Usually, the purpose of such changes is for the improvement of the total wellbeing of the citizenry.

In Nigeria, the last three decades have witnessed series of attempts aimed at ensuring environmental sustainability. Most of these attempts have been in the area of improvement of rural areas in general and the oil producing areas in particular.

Consequently, the Nigerian Government has at various times, set up agencies like the Nigerian Institute of social and Economic Research (NISER), Federal Environmental Protection Agency (FEPA), the Nigerian Environmental Study Action Team (NEST). The Nigerian Environmental Society (NES) the Federal Ministry of Information, Mass

Mobilization on Social Justice and Economic Recovery (MAMSER) and Directorate for Food and Rural Infrastructure (DEFRI), Oil Mineral Producing and Development Commission (OMPADEC) and Niger Delta Development Commission (NDDC) to handle environmental problems especially in oil producing communities. Nigeria is also a member of global environmental organizations like the United Nations Environmental Programme (UNEP), and United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). All these reflect government's interest in environmental development and management.

The entry of crude oil into the Nigerian economy brought with it, its attendant environmental problems. The people in the oil producing areas are constantly exposed to the damaging effects of pollution, contamination and other hazards from oil exploration, production and distribution processes (Akpan-Atata, 2007).

The social, economic, cultural and even political lives of the people have undergone serious changes, and today, the people of the oil producing communities experience an environment different from what their fore father handed over to them. People here now find that available and accumulated knowledge or information about the environment and economic activities is no longer satisfactory (Ugboma, 2002). Even the custodians of the social, cultural and historical facts in these communities

have gradually found themselves at a loss and have therefore become irrelevant in the provision of information to their people. There is therefore a need for a credible dynamic information system for a better and proper understanding of the situation to provide appropriate management system (Hassan, 1992). Most of the companies involved in the exploration and production of crude oil within the Niger-Delta are multi-nationals whose concern is to do business and present good profit returns to their investors.

Thus as the administrative, political, social, cultural and other structures and institutions bequeathed to us by the colonial masters begin to crumble, or fail to yield the intended results. Questions are being asked the workability or relevance of this structure in Nigerian context vis-a-vis the oil producing communities. This trend is also true of our different information dissemination strategies, which seems not to have succeeded in eliminating or reducing, at an appreciable level the information gap at the grassroots. (Ochai, 1995, Akpan Atata, 1999 and Etim, 1999a). It is assumed, that oil producing communities in developing countries like Nigerian need information to enhance development. This school of thought sees the existence of two worlds. The developed urban and less developed oil producing communities characterized by abundant information on the one hand and its absence or less of it on the other. The information rich, urban centres have utilized its different advanced information dissemination strategies while the information poor oil producing communities are yet to find their feet. The often prescribed panacea for this advancement is through the process of “catching up” by the provision of development information, particularly at the grassroots of oil producing communities for rural level transformation.

Information is seen by librarians and information scientists as the pivot which development revolves and different dissemination strategies as its vehicle. The development model employed is that if appropriate information is disseminated to the oil producing communities’ farmers, traders, fishermen etc of the oil producing

Areas will respond positively and the supposition is that development will take place in the areas.

Statement of Problem:

Generally, researchers like Soola, (1988) Mboho (1994) tell us that effective utilization will usually conform to the existing needs and value system of its target audience. Therefore the different dissemination strategies could only be utilized if they were able to conform to the existing needs and value system of the oil producing communities. Information that contradict existing attitudes, opinions, beliefs, prejudices are likely to be evaded, ignored and unutilized. The questions that readily come to mind are: Is the information derived from the different strategies by the people of oil producing communities at variance with what the disseminators have in mind? Does the package difference among the disseminators pose a problem in the utilization of information? It may be the package of information is not suitable for the target audience. While some members of the target audience may be civil servants, others may be professionals, such as traders, farmers, businessmen, and technicians who may not be able to afford or have access to the different dissemination strategies. Some may select the sources and programmes they listen to depending on their level of education, nature of work, motivation and conviction. All these questions, observations and perhaps many more may have necessitated the general question of how do television programmes as a dissemination strategy influence utilization of information in the oil producing communities? This question constitutes the reason for this study, as this research is aimed at plausible answers to these questions.

Objective of the Study:

To examine the influence of Television programmes on information utilization in oil producing communities of Akwa Ibom and Rivers States of Nigeria

Research Question:

How do television programmes influence information utilization in oil producing communities of Akwa Ibom State and Rivers State of Nigeria.

Research Hypotheses:

There is no significant influence of television programmes on information utilization in oil producing communities of Akwa Ibom State and Rivers State of Nigeria

Significance of the Study: This Study

- (a). Provides an update information and an index on information dissemination and utilization in oil producing communities.
- (b). Provide empirical evidence necessary for appropriate policy improvement on information dissemination strategies at the local state, national and international levels.
- (c). This study will also be beneficial to the policy makers in the oil companies, youth organizations and other stakeholders in oil producing communities in the studied areas.

Review of Literature:

This Review of Literature is anchored on the following theories:

(a) Environmental Imagery and Strategy Action Theory (EISA)

Gronhang and Haukedia (1988) are among the major proponents of EISA. Their critical position is that:

Organizations belonging to the same industry and embedded in similar environments may not necessarily perceive opportunities and threats the same way. The future may be envisaged differently because of differences in the schemata applied resulting strategies and strategic outcomes will then be-different as well.

Bernatowicz (1987) views information users' behaviour from three perspectives: Social, Cultural and Personal contexts.

These perspectives can be categorized into three broad systems.

- (i) The system based on the value of social relations or subsystem-economic, legal, political and on formal organization and social groups.
- (ii) The system mainly based on social values and norms.
The system for which each individual is a separate psychological user, Here the behaviour is being influenced by.
 - a) The value and norms that are characteristic of his society;
 - b) The types of social relations that predominate in a given society will have direct implication for the types of relations that result from the use of information; and
 - c) The personality structure of a particular information user would determine his behaviour resulting from information use.

From this particular theory, we can gain better understanding of how the social system affects the information behaviour of oil producing communities or how the personality profile of the Farmer can affect his on her use of information from the research system and how the apparently superior academic qualifications of the Civil Servant will affect his use of information from fellow Civil Servants, and Television programmes systems.

(b) Information Perception Constraint Theory (IPCT)

Like the EISA, IPCT tries to establish a linkage between the right perceptual exposition to information and such antecedents as education, nature of experience, dogmatism and cosmopolitanisms,

- a. A positive functional perception of relevant information for decision analysis appears to be associated positively with variables such as socio-economic status, functional literacy, urbanization, occupation, knowledge and innovativeness. (Knott 1980).
- b. Certain variables may be concerned and found to be antecedent and consequently have positive functional perception of relevant information for decision analysis and colonial experience in one instance may be regarded as an intervener.

(c) Two Communities Theory (TCT)

The TCT delineates the information environment into two communities. In any organization, for instance the information managers and decision makers constitute two distinct communities. Okwilagwe (1993) advise that:

It is desirable that there should be a convergence between the information manager's perceptions of management information needs of these organizations. Thus, a management information system should lay emphasis on the uses to which the information generated is to be put so as to avoid undue concern with data storage or transmission at the expense of the decision-makers' information needs. The two communities Theory aids our understanding of the relationship that should exist between information manufacturers, generators, or providers on the one hand and the consumers, users or receivers on the other hand. Where information is encoded in the language of the providers and not properly decoded by the users, the transfer or flow process suffers a setback. This is particularly true of dissemination and utilization across cultural, social and system contexts. For example, information flow from research community through the extension to farming communities is predicated on consistency of meaning achieved across the transfer chain, Griffith, (1982; Etim 2001).

(d) Selective Influence Theory

According to Lowery and Defleur (1983). Selective influence theory provides that;

- a) The media present messages to the members of mass society but those messages are received and interpreted selectively.
- b) The basis of this selectivity lies in variations in habits of perception among members of the society.
- c) Variations in habits of perception occur because each individual has a unique personal organization of beliefs, attitudes, values, needs and modes of experiencing gratification that has been acquired through learning.
- d) Because perception is selected, interpretation, retention and response to media messages are also selective.
- e) Thus, the effects of the media are neither uniform, powerful, nor direct. The influences are selective and limited by individual psychological differences. The process involves ideas flowing from Radio, Television and print to the opinion leaders and from them to the less active sections of the population.

(e) Two Step Flow Theories

According to McQuail and Windahl (1993), the model of the two-step flow involves the following assumptions:

- a) That individuals are not social isolates, but members of social groups interacting with other people.
- b) That response and reaction to a media message will not be direct and immediate, but mediated through, and influenced by, these social relationships.
- c) That two processes are involved, one of reception and attention and the other of response in the form of acceptance or rejection of the influence or information attempt. Reception does not equal response, nor does non-reception equal non-response (because of secondary acceptance from personal contacts).
- d) That individuals are not all equal in the face of media campaigns, but have different roles in the communication process and, in particular, can be divided
 - a. into those who are active in receiving and passing on ideas from the media and those who mainly rely on other personal contacts as their guides.
- e) That the occupants of the more active role (opinion leaders) are characterized by more use of the media, higher levels of gregariousness, a self-perception as influential on others and as having an attributed role as source and guide.

The authors conclude that the mass media do not operate in a social vacuum but have an input into a very complex web of social relationships and compete with other sources of ideas, knowledge and power, (Etim and Edukere, 1998).

Information Dissemination Strategies

Interest on how information is disseminated and meanings conveyed has occupied man since time immemorial. Thus the general concept and operations of information dissemination is mass-oriented, public enlightenment using much time tested dissemination strategies as newspapers, television, radios, magazines, outdoor media and oral media. The dilemma of dissemination is therefore not solved by only providing access to the information and knowledge but to increase contact with data. The answer therefore lies in creating conditions and strategies that enable what is “Information or knowledge for one person to be converted into information or knowledge for another” (Knott and Wildarsky, 1980). In less developed countries, information dissemination is seen as a path towards future prosperity through an accelerated economic growth. This growth according to Moore (1997) is also seen as key to solving long term socio-economic problems: the problems of rural stagnation, disparities in incomes, poor education and dwindling public services.

Isotitides (1997) observed that when it comes to information dissemination however, the concern is not only over the impact of concentration on economic aspect but there is also the question of social performance that is pluralism in diversity. For things are never the same as they were, everything moves on yet there are some changes which whether or not they are recognized in the time, radically changed or alter our experiences, Alfield, (1994). As noted by MaQuail, (2005), digitisation serves as a basis for convergence of media and best known in reference to the replacement of analogue by digital transmission of television signals leading to a large increase in potential channel capacity and scope for interactivity.

According to Fisk (1994), the multiplications of communications and information technologies and dissemination strategies have extended the terrains of struggle, modifies the form struggle may take, and makes it even more imperative that people grasp the opportunities for struggling the multiplication of technologies offer. It is not just discursive struggles that he is referring to but rather concrete economic cases. In support Mattlelavy and Mattlelavy (1992) observed that if there is a shadowing zone in critical knowledge, it is definitely that of procedures of dissemination, consumption and reception of information.

Abayode (1983) confirmed that information is an important component in any development effort. He postulated further that this has been asserted in many instances especially where those who are responsible for originating, organizing or directing various developmental programmes are concerned. Idabacha (1983) in support pointed out that where properly informed, non-literate farmers had successfully utilizes the necessary inputs to improve agricultural productivity in rural areas of Nigeria

For Robertson (1993) information represents an invisible goldmine from a commercial point of view. Or can be represented as a fixed asset or current asset (on balance sheet terms) when it can be seen to have value, which is dissipated or even gathered over time. Moore (1996) in support observed that information is being embedded in our culture shaping the way in which we work, play and enrich ourselves” though it is only through our (clientele) satisfaction that success or effectiveness can be truly measured. For Petroda (1997) politically, economically, socially and logistically, information lies at the heart of the people. In conclusion therefore, one is faced with the task of defining the strategies and processes through which monitoring can continually create the desired impact and a mechanism by which people are not the only object of change but the very precursors of the same (Gupta, 1979).

Information and Oil Producing Communities

The Oil industry is generally taken to include an upstream sector (exploration, exploitation and extraction of crude oil and a downstream sector (processing, refining, transportation of both crude and finished products, blending, distribution, storage and marketing). The issues concerning oil in Nigeria are at times sensitive, but it is essential that the issues as it affects Nigeria production of oil, its environmental consequences and the host communities be deconstructed information wise to enhance a proper understanding of the issues at stake and seek appropriate policy responses to them (Roberts 1999). Locally, and especially in the international community, there is the enduring perception, rightly or wrongly, that the Governments in Nigeria and the

major oil producing companies are at best, indifferent to their host communities socio economic development, the environment and at worst anti-environmental (Robert, 1999, Ugboma, 2002, Ulayi, 2004). Akpan-Atata, Akwang and Akai (2011).

In fact, the exploration and production of oil has direct, often negative consequences on the people of the host communities and the environment. Industry sources acknowledge that, by nature of the process this is inevitable. (Anderson, 1996). Often the negative impact is such that, when not appropriately and timely attended to, it results in lethal results for both human, terrestrial and aquatic eco-system – with the resultant effect of destroying the very meaning of human existence. Until recently little official recognition was given to the problem encountered by the oil producing communities’ in spite of frequent outcry by the people. As a result neither the government nor the oil companies did much to contain the adverse consequences of oil exploration and exploitation; thus uncanny description of Nigeria as the oil man’s dream (Hudtchful, 1985). However, the growth of the profile of the petroleum industry over the years has been accompanied by a parallel growth in awareness discontent in oil producing communities, which according to Roberts (1999) is fostered by perceptions to manifest inequality in the distribution of petroleum – generated wealth, social amenities and opportunities. In particular, the juxtaposition of deprivation, social communities with islands of privilege sustained by this wealth-creating industry has continued to sustain deepening community resentment and constitutes a veritable recipe for instability. (Onosode, 1996). The unveiling of political consequences and its attendant informational components in the oil producing areas over the last two decades has led to an increasing demands on the government and the oil companies to redress the situation. Dissatisfied with official response to these demands has resulted in increasing “Contestations” by these communities (Roberts 1994) Such contestation have taken various forms from sabotage of oil installations which sometimes unwittingly aggravates the environmental damage, through hostage taking of oil company workers, to ethnic and group conflicts. The negative externalities associated with oil exploitation thus put the oil producing communities against the government, and the multinational oil companies. Oil remains, and will continue so in the nearest future, the main stay of the Nigerian economy. Any disruption to its production and exports introduces instability in government revenue and its fiscal operations. Over the years the government, in cognizance of this reality, has predictably acted against threats to the flow of oil. Such actions have recently included the mobilization of the citizenry through information empowerment and setting up re-organization of governmental, and quasi-government agencies like National Orientation Agencies, Federal Ministry of Information, Federal Radio Corporation and Nigerian Television Authorities. Not satisfied, agencies like OMPADEC and recently NDDC and the ministry of Niger Delta Affairs have been established with powers to bring immediate and sustainable development to the oil producing communities. The oil company is impacting on the people through their community liaison officers and development project to appease their host communities. The use of information to checkmate the negative effects of oil exploitation on the socio economic lives of the people and on the environment in the oil producing areas in Nigeria, therefore, is only as aspect of a complex problem which also includes dissatisfaction with the pattern and direction of the use of resources derived from oil, perceptions of social injustice and marginalization of the communities which produce the oil in the scheme of National development, the tendency for the perception to result in political, contestation and actual use of force. (Roberts, 1999).

Oil Producing Communities and their Information Needs

Locally and internationally, the issue of information, and the environment and the oil producing communities is growing in profile. There has been calculated searches for the solutions to the problems that at the forefront of government, industry and host communities concern (Onosode, 1996). By analyzing the possible misperceptions of opinions or actions amongst the contending parties, information dissemination can contribute to the breaking the cycle of toleration among the conflicting parties (Olokeusi, 1996). Akpan-Atata (2011).

It is widely recognized that the environment is becoming a crucial factor in cultural, economic and industrial developments, and several authors are pointing out that advanced western economies are making transitions from industrial to environmental modernization (Mol 1996, Weale, 1992, Janike and Weidener, 1995). This aims at harnessing the power of human ingenuity for the purposes of harmonizing economic advancement with environmental improvement (Cohen, 1997). Major thesis is that economic growth and resolution of environmental problems can, in principle be reconciled with adequate knowledge sharing (Hager 1996, Arabome 2003). So that instead of seeing environmental management in the oil producing communities and other as a burden on the economy and the government, information practitioners see it as a potential sources of stability and future

growth. Hence having the capacity to produce and operate on a low-degrading or pollution free environment with less disputes is seen as giving conducive advantage to other national economy (Midtum and Kanford 1999, Kersen, 2003). This implies taking all practicable and reasonable measures to minimize generation of conflicts and then managing and disposing of waste in a statutory and environmentally responsible manner. By a carefully thought out and manageable process a scenario can be created where government and organization do not only operate in an environmentally friendly manner but also makes money and fulfil other statutory demands. Following the long-standing dominance of economic rationality under industrial catapulations, environmental modernization implies that ecological rationality should catch up and gain an equal status as a driving perspective on societal and industrial development in the oil producing communities. One of the issues in focus under the environmental modernization debate is the functioning and organization of the information sub-sector for long term and sustainable development. Even if often critical to traditional bureaucratic intervention, and advocating development away from dirigisme towards contextual steering, Janike (1993), has for instance emphasized that environmental modernization must imply strengthening the state capacity for reforms. State capacity and modernization include such tasks as better information policy co-ordination mechanisms, institution for anticipatory planning (Andrews 1993), and long term strategic orientation (Janike and Wedner, 1995). Information dissemination is therefore seen as an indispensable precondition for environmental reforms in the oil producing communities. However, the step from frustrates specification of the need for state capacity of the actual institutional shaping of a state apparatus ideally suited to environmental modernization vis-a-vis development, is disputed. As argued by Weal et al (1996), there are ambiguous theoretical expectations as to whether efficient environmental improvement is best served by a building of a given uniform information structure in all situations or whether variations in national policy making styles imply that environmentally modernization is best served by information policy and administrative diversities. This is more so as oil production generates oil residues, tank, pollute the environment if not properly disposed of this is made worse by the oil companies habit of dredging creeks which introduces salt water from sea into the fresh water system of the local communities. Environmental degradation caused by oil or its derivatives begins at the exploration stage when the explosive or drilling method is employed, it continues through the production stage, when the unused derivatives such as gas may be flared, and the transportation stage, when crude or refined oil is pumped through pipe lines that are often faulty and prone to unexpected leaks. Finally in the refining stage, wastes and afferents are discharged into streams, rivers and holes in the ground because either the Federal Government or the oil companies do not care about the long term consequences to the environment. The cumulative effect of all this pollution poses a grave danger to the flora and fauna of the oil producing communities, as well as the means of livelihood. The Federal Government has itself introduced a range of laws both civil and criminal to regulate the industry but they are rarely applied. Approximately 2,300 cubic meters of oil are spilled in 300 separate incidents annually (CLO 2002, NNPC, 2002). There are over 100 flow stations in the Niger Delta, from which about 75% of Nigeria national gas is flared. These activities degrade the ecology of the area and hinder the communities in the practice of their customary economic activities of fishing and farming. Consequently, the peoples of the area are left with an increasing sense of pauperization in the midst of the abundant oil wealth generated from their land. (CLO, 2003). For the people of oil producing community the provision of environmental and developmental information is of utmost importance. Every group, the men, women, youths, students, workers and NGOs and International agencies and the general public must be involved, and adequately provided for. In this all important task of provision of information, the need for viable, efficient and relevant information system came to the fore. Surveys have revealed that communication systems of visits and discussions and well produced Television programmes are important (Odyran, 1989, Ugboma, 2003).

Research Methodology

The Research Design

A survey research design was used for this study. This design was considered most appropriate since the events-both the independent and dependent had already occurred and the researcher only had to go for the facts already on ground. Besides, the events were not manipulated by the researcher.

Area of the Study

The study was conducted in the core oil producing communities of Akwa Ibom State and Rivers State of Nigeria. These include Eket, Onna, Eastern Obolo and Ibeno Local Government Areas of Akwa Ibom State, and Obio Akpor, Eleme, Emuoha and Khana Local Government Areas of Rivers State. Both Akwa Ibom and Rivers States situate in the Niger Delta region of Nigeria. Akwa Ibom is bounded in the north by Abia State, in the east by Cross River State, in the south by the Atlantic Ocean and in the west by Rivers State. Its capital is Uyo. There are 31 Local Government Areas in Akwa Ibom State. Rivers State is bounded in the north by Abia and Imo States, in the east by Akwa Ibom State, in the south by the Atlantic Ocean, and in the west by Bayelsa State. Its headquarter is Port Harcourt. There are 23 Local Government Areas in Rivers State.

The choice of the oil producing communities of these two states was informed by the negative impact of oil exploration and production activities on the total environment of these communities since 1938.

Population of the Study

The population of the study comprised all the inhabitants of the eight core oil producing communities of Akwa Ibom and Rivers States numbering about 5 million. The communities are Eket, Onna, Ibeno and Eastern Obolo Local Government Areas of Akwa Ibom State, and Obio Akpor, Eleme, Emuoha and Khana Local Government Areas of Rivers State.

Sample and Sampling Technique

The study sample consisted of 1540 inhabitants of the eight oil producing communities of the two states drawn using cluster sampling technique. This sampling technique was considered most appropriate since the researcher was interested in obtaining information from members of the following cluster units – literate, non-literate, youths, older population, male, female, civil servants and the self-employed – in the oil producing communities. The technique involved identifying the cluster units and sampling of respondents in the cluster using simple random sampling technique.

Instrumentation

Two instruments namely:

Information strategies and utilization Questionnaire (ISUQ)

Information strategies and utilization Interview Schedule (ISUIS)

Were used in collecting data for the study;

Information Strategies and Utilization Questionnaire (ISUQ)

ISUQ was a 3-part questionnaire designed for use in collecting information from the literate population. Part A solicited for the respondents' demographic data-sex, age place of origin, literacy status, and work status, part B consisted of ten items, out of which seven were Likert-scale. These items were designed to elicit responses from the respondents on information dissemination strategies and issues related to oil exploration and sustainability of the oil communities. Part C required for free suggestions on how information utilization could be improved in oil producing communities.

Information Strategies and Utilization Interview Schedule (ISUIS)

ISUIS was an interview schedule designed for collecting information from the less or non educated population. It was an adapted form of ISUQ. Part C. Requested for suggestions on how information dissemination and utilization could be enhanced in oil producing communities.

Reliability of the Instruments

In order to determine the reliability of the instruments, both the ISUQ and ISUIS were trial-tested on a randomly selected sample of 50 respondents each in the study area who were not considered for the main study. The data generated were analyzed using Cronbach's reliability test. The result showed that ISUQ has a reliability index of 0.86, while that of ISUIS is 0.82. With these observations, that two instruments were considered highly reliable.

Results and Discussions

The Distribution of Subjects

A total of 200 copies of questionnaires were distributed, out of which only 1540 were returned with valid responses, 300 were not returned at all and 160 returned were invalid. The distribution of the respondents with valid responses is as shown in Table 1.

Table 1: the frequency and percentage responses of respondents classified by state, sex, age, Literacy status, educational and work status.

Variable/Category		Frequency	Percentage (%)
State:	Akwa Ibom	772	50.1
	Rivers	768	49.9
Sex:	Male	797	51.8
	Female	743	48.2
Age:	Youths	776	50.4
	Older People	764	49.6
Literacy Status:	Literate	1276	82.9
	Illiterate	264	17.1
Education Status:	High	842	54.7
	Low	698	45.3
Work Status	Salary/Wage	660	42.9
Self Employed		555	36.0
Unemployed/Students		325	21.1

Table 1 shows that 50.1% (772) of the respondents were from Akwa Ibom State oil producing communities while 49.9% were from River state. Out of these, 51.8% (797) were male and 48.2% (743) were female; 50.4 (776) were youth and 49.6% (764) were older people; 82.9% (1276) were literate and 17.1% (264) were illiterate; 54.7% (842) were of high educational status and 45.3% (698) were of low educational status; and 42.8% (660) were salary/wage workers, 36.0% (555) were self-employed and 21.1% (325) were unemployed or students. The summary, as presented, indicate a fair representation of the selected cluster units.

The Research Question

How do television programmes influence information utilization in oil producing communities. The result in Table 2 below was used in answering this question.

Table 2: The frequency and percentage responses of the subjects on the influence of television programmes on information utilization in oil producing communities

Opinion Category	Frequency	Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Strongly Disagree	31	2.0	2.0
Disagree	131	8.5	10.5
Undecided	148	9.6	20.1
Agree	782	50.8	70.9
Strongly Agree	448	29.1	100.0
Total	1540	100.0	

In Table 2, the result show that 31 (2.0%), 131 (8.5%), 148 (9.6%), 782 (50.8%) and 448 (29.1%) of the respondents strongly disagreed, disagreed, were undecided, agreed, and strongly agreed, respectively, that television programmes influence information utilization in oil producing communities in Akwa Ibom and Rivers States. **Hypothesis**

The hypothesis states that there is no significant influence of television programmes on information utilization in oil producing communities.

This hypothesis was tested using the result in table 3 below

Table 3: Chi-square tests results of the subjects' responses on television programmes and information utilization

Opinion Category	Frequency Observed	Expected	Chi-square ($x^2 - cal$)	Df	Calc. Level of Significance	Decision at $P < .05$ alpha
Strongly Disagree	31	308.0				
Disagree	131	308.0				
Undecided	148	308.0	1227.06	4	.00	Significant
Agree	782	308.0				
Strongly Agree	448	308.0				
Total	1540	1540				

In Table 3, the calculated Chi-square value, $x^2 - cal$, is 1227.06; the degree of freedom, df, is 4; and the calculated level of significant is .00. The observed calculated level of significance (.00) is less than .05 in which the decision is based. This implies that television programmes exert significant influence on information utilization in oil producing communities. The result in Table 3 indicated that the significance is in the positive direction and high with 79.9% of the respondents affirming the positive influence of television programmes on information utilization in these communities. With these observations, the null hypothesis was rejected.

Discussion of Findings

Television Programmes and Information Utilization

From the result in table 2 and 3 it was observed that television programmes exert significant influence on information utilization in oil producing communities with 79.9% of the 1540 respondents affirming its positive influence. Like radio, television is a broadcasting medium, the observed significant influence of television programmes, is explained in terms of wide coverage, accessibility and audio-visual effect (Ibe-Bassey, 1986; Shodeide, 2001). This is line with Folkerts & Lacy (2004) findings that individual television stations do produce local programmes, sell local advertising and rebroadcast the programmes to viewers in a geographical area. Bielak (1995) opined that television is an entertainer, a journalist, a teacher and a self person. This finding is also in support of Kenechukwu (2014) observation that television programmes provides functions that are of informational, entertainment, educational, advertising and propaganda values, thus, a forceful means of information utilization. The result of this finding therefore confirms the impact of both sound and vision in creating a lasting impression on the mind of the viewers. As observe by Arens, (2008), Television Programmes has its high intimacy and reaches highest number of people at a shortest minimum time, no other medium today has the unique creative abilities of televisions programmes due to the combination of sight, sound and motion. The opportunity to demonstrate the product, the potential to use special effects, the empathy of the viewer and the believability of seeing it happen right before one's eyes could be responsible for it effective use in the oil producing communities of Akwa Ibom and Rivers State south-south Nigeria.

Conclusion

Consequent upon the findings of this study, it is hereby concluded that the broadcasting media of the television is most effective in disseminating information to Nigerians especially those in rural communities of the South-South region. The implication is that wide reach and real time services of this media underscore its relative importance. It should be noted that information obtained from broadcasting from media are not stored for referral used hence are not easily retrievable as information from print media and libraries. This implies that even with the above finding adequate attention should be focused on how to improve the reading culture among Nigerians.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations are made:

- (1) In view of the high influence of television programmes, this media should be effectively employed in disseminating information to the people of oil producing communities.
- (2) Television programmes should be effectively packaged and repackaged having the target audience in mind that is the literate and non-literate inhabitants of the oil producing communities. This will help in creating the desired impact.
- (3) The multinational cooperation, the government and oil prospecting organizations should key into effective information provision through television programmes to ensure effective information utilization.
- (4) Television viewing centres should be provided in all villages of the oil producing communities to enhance the information utilization.

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