



EFFECTIVENESS OF ABS RADIO PROGRAMME NDLEA AND YOU IN CREATING AWARENESS ABOUT DRUG ABUSE AND DRUG-RELATED CRIMES AMONG AWKA RESIDENTS

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ABSTRACT: *Considering the prevalence and negative effects of drug abuse and drug-related crimes, this study examined the effectiveness of Abs Radio Programme NDLEA And You in Creating Awareness about Drug Abuse and Drug-Related Crimes Among Awka Residents. The study was anchored on the Agenda Setting theory and the theory of reasoned action to argue that ABS radio has the power to raise the significance of the Radio Programme NDLEA And You in the public mind, and that changes in the behavioural and normative beliefs of Awka residents after exposure to the NDLEA and YOU, will ultimately affect and could lead to possible positive behavioural change. The study employed a quantitative design being the descriptive survey. Research Questionnaire served as the instrument for data collection which was distributed to a representative sample of 383 residents in Awka community. This selection was based on the recommendations of Krejcie and Morgan (1970). Findings revealed that many Awka residents are exposed to ABS radio programme “NDLEA and YOU. It was also found that exposure to ABS radio programme “NDLEA and YOU” does not reduce the rate of drug and substance abuse among Awka residents. The study concludes that drug abuse significantly jeopardizes the overall health of the nation, with a particular adverse impact on youths and that ABS Radio, programme NDLEA and YOU as an influential source of information, bears a substantial responsibility in combating drug abuse. It was therefore recommended, among others, that media organizations should intensify their public awareness campaigns through various means such as organizing dramas, symposiums, and lectures within the community.*

KEYWORDS: Awareness, ABS Radio, Crimes, Drug abuse, Effectiveness, NDLEA.



INTRODUCTION

Drug abuse has continued to pose a several health challenge to the Nigerian society. It particularly creates a mental nuisance which afflicts drug consumers and render them disreputable before a decent society and has had a debilitating influence on world view about the country (Ude-Akpeh, 2017), among several other effects. Recently, drug regulatory body (NDLEA) has arrested 136 illicit drug consumers, confiscated about 883.34 kilograms of illegal drugs and recorded jail sentences of 79 illicit drug dealers in Anambra state (Onuegbu, 2023), despite the efforts of relevant bodies to stem its tide. United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, UNODC, (2022) reported that 143 million Nigerians are into Drugs Abuse. Despite the preponderance of Drug abuse among Nigerian youths, existing studies seem to have focused on effects of drug abuse, particularly on the academic performance of secondary school students (Edwe&Mbave, 2017) and among undergraduates of Federal Universities in Nigeria (Ofuebe, 2020, Okoye, &Nwaka, 2019). As there have been a consistent rapid rise in the number of drug abuse cases especially among young adults, often resulting in violence, mental disorders and several others (Oshikoya& Ali, 2006), none existing study had looked at the effectiveness of the ABS Programme, NDLEA and You in creating awareness about drug abuse and drug related crimes, thereby constituting a significant knowledge gap.

Meanwhile, Drug abuse is a global health and social problem which is no more within cultural groups and geographical regions but has saturated various national and international borders (Zamani, 1993, as cited in Okoye, &Nwaka, 2019). It can be seen as a universal phenomenon that extends across religious, socio-economic, cultural and ethnical boundaries, and has contributed to increase in cases of broken families, mental health disorder and several other negative conditions. This implies that Drug abuse constitute a major hazard to the survival and effectiveness in the human societies, as lives are lost daily through addiction and activities of addicts (Jatau et al, 2021). It has been gathered that the NDLEA has been proactively campaigning against substance abuse and had adapted a shift from punitive measures to a more compassionate, people-centered strategy encompasses drug confiscation, legal action against offenders, rehabilitation and reintegration, as well as comprehensive public awareness campaigns. With these multifaceted approaches, it is expected that awareness programmes on drug abuse and drug related crimes in Anambra State will have a positive and significant impact on the people.

As the fourth estate of the realm, the media has some role to play in preventing and controlling drug abuse by educating the public about the risks and consequences of such. This can include highlighting successful prevention and treatment programs, presenting accurate information about the dangers of substance abuse and promoting healthy alternatives (Edwe, &Mbave, 2017). Media can be used to raise alertness about remedial measures against drug abuse and addiction like rehabilitation, centers support groups, and individual therapy. Specifically, mass media has significant roles to play in conceptualizing and disseminating programmes that can help in the prevention and control of the rate of drug abuse in the state. One of such programmes can be the current programme NDLEA and YOU by Anambra State Broadcasting Service (ABS). It is aired every Tuesday between 11 am to 12noon and anchored by Mr. David Okpokwasili. It is against this background that the study examines the effectiveness of Anambra Broadcasting Services radio programme NDLEA and You in creating consciousness about drug abuse and drug-related crimes in Awka, Anambra State.



The Problem

Drug abuse has a devastating consequence for individuals, families and society and has wrecked the fortunes of many youths who roam the streets as mental cases, abandoned to their fate by the society (Ude-Akpeh, 2017). As part of measures of addressing the devastating and precarious effects of drug abuse and drug related crimes, the National Drug Law Enforcement Agency, NDLEA, began a radio programme in Anambra State Broadcasting service (ABS) titled the NDLEA and You. This could have been necessitated by the fact that despite the massive intervention strategies by various organizations such as religious groups, non-state actors, media outlets, and other keen stakeholders to curb the issue of drug and substance abuse, the number of youths being sucked into it constantly increase. The consequences are far-reaching and encompass health, economic, social, and public safety dimensions. As the problem of drug abuse can be deemed to require a multifaceted approach involving prevention, treatment, harm reduction, and establishment of policies, there is need to establish the effectiveness of ABS Radio Programme NDLEA and You in Creating Awareness about Drug Abuse and Drug-Related Crimes. This will help determine how the ABS programme NDLEA and YOU has been able to achieve the recommended behaviour change among Awka residents.

Purpose/ Specific Objectives

The main purpose of the study is to examine the effectiveness of ABS Radio Programme NDLEA and You in Creating Awareness about Drug Abuse and Drug-Related Crimes among Awka Residents. The specific objectives are to determine:

1. The extent to which Awka residents are exposed to ABS radio programme NDLEA and You
2. How effective the Awka residents perceive the ABS radio programme NDLEA and You in creating awareness about drug abuse and drug-related crimes in Awka

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

The consumption of various brands of narcotic drugs by youths has caught the attention of the National Drug Law Enforcement Agency, (NDLEA) and they have been consistent in using various approaches to provide relevant information, showing the devastating consequence of drug abuse by the youths to combat the menace as health hazard. (Ude-Akpeh, 2017). One of such approaches is the programme NDLEA and You being aired every Tuesday at 11 am to 12noon in Anambra State Broadcasting Service (ABS) radio. The objective of the programme is to educate and sensitize Nigerians on the hazard of drug abuse. The programme also highlights NDLEA activities within Anambra State and Nigeria. It is a weekly programme sponsored by National Drug Law enforcement Agency (NDLEA) and the anchor is Mr. David Okpokwasili. The format of the programme presentation is interview' whereby guests are usually invited. The guests vary, and they are mainly the stakeholders in the campaign against substance abuse, and NDLEA staff members. The programme can be considered imperative because of the preponderance and negative effects of drug abuse in recent times.



However, drug abuse is the arbitrary over-dependence or miss-use of one particular drug with or without a prior medical diagnosis from qualified health practitioners (UNODC 2022). Drug abuse, according to Britannica (2023) is a maladaptive pattern of stuff use that causes clinically substantial deficiency along with possible withdrawal and tolerance symptoms. United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (2021), further recognized drug misuse as a widespread issue worldwide. Given that cultural values, beliefs, and attitudes toward drug use vary greatly between cultures and geographical areas, it appears that the epidemiology of drug addiction in a particular civilization is influenced by these factors.

Drug abuse can be defined as the use of a drug in which the user consumes the substance in amounts or with methods which are harmful to them or others as well as the harmful use of mind-altering substances. People abuse drugs to ease off stress, feel good or avoid reality altogether and when they are unable to stop; they become addicted (Kumar & Dangi, 2019). When people persists in the use of drugs despite problems related to its use, drug dependence may be diagnosed and frequent usage may lead to drug tolerance and cause symptoms of withdrawal when use is discontinued. Chemical substances make up drugs. A drug is a naturally occurring substance or a pharmaceutical preparation that is used primarily to alter an existing process or state (physiological, psychological, or biochemical). It may be observed that majority of the Nigerian youths depend on drug for their various daily activities: educational, social, political and moral. Such drugs include: Indian hemp, tobacco, cocaine, heroin, morphine, barbiturates, alcohol, amphetamines caffeine, glue, and madras. Therefore, there is need for a study on the effectiveness of ABS Radio Programme NDLEA and You in Creating Awareness about Drug Abuse and Drug-Related Crimes.

The outcome of this research will be significant and very useful for obvious reasons. The ABS radio station which conveys the NDLEA and You programme will be able to ascertain the outcome of their efforts. This will help establish the extent of progress or success recorded by the programme determining the extent to which the programme has been able to achieve the desired behaviour change among Awka residents who are believed can easily access and listen to programmes on ABS radio. This study will also provide an empirical based data on the effects of the programme NDLEA and You on Awka residents which may be useful for scholars and researchers. The result of the study can provide the basis for a further research on media programmes sponsored by the NDLEA to understand why such an important communication may either succeed or fail to achieve desired objectives

Review of Empirical Studies

Adediran (2023) assessed the Broadcast Media Campaign against Drugs Abuse in Nigeria to critically examine the use and impacts of drug abuse or addiction among youths in Nigeria and the effectiveness of broadcast media campaigns against drug abuse in Nigeria. The study employed different research methods, such as conceptual analysis, (used to delineate the meaning of major concepts like drugs, drug abuse, and media); and the critical assessment method (used to critically evaluate and assess the impacts of media in the campaign against drug abuse among youths in Nigeria). The study concluded with an affirmation that the intake of illegal drugs among youths in Nigeria is alarming and, as such, dangerous and harmful to their health. Hence, the paper recommended that the government and Non-government organizations should engage more in media campaigns against drug abuse and also be firm and unbiased in enforcing the laws against lawbreakers, especially youths who engage in the consumption of illegal drug. This study relates to the current study as both focused on the



effectiveness of broadcast media campaigns against drug abuse but whereas the study by Adediran (2023) examined the use and impacts of drug abuse or addiction among youths in Nigeria and the effectiveness of broadcast media campaigns against drug abuse in Nigeria, the present study looked at the effectiveness of the ABS programme NDLEA and You in Creating Awareness about Drug Abuse and Drug-Related Crimes among Awka Residents.

Okoye, Agbim, Ohaji, Etumnu, Okodogbe, & Odionyenma (2022) investigated the effectiveness of mass media in the fight against drug abuse among undergraduates of tertiary institutions in Imo State. The study was anchored on the theory of reasoned action and the research design adopted for the study was survey. The population consisted of 81,000 undergraduates of the selected higher institutions in Imo State. A sample size of 382 was arrived at following the application of the Wimmer and Dominick online sample size calculator. Systematic sampling technique was employed while the percentage method and charts were used for analysing the data. The findings revealed that the level of awareness among respondents towards mass media campaigns against drug abuse is moderate. Further findings showed that respondents agreed that mass media efforts have not been effective in reducing the threat of drug abuse among undergraduates in Imo State's tertiary institutions. As a result, it was concluded that mass media campaigns are ineffective in the fight against drug abuse among undergraduates of higher institutions in Imo State, because the campaigns have not succeeded in curbing the menace. The study recommended that the media should intensify their publicity and commitment to drug abuse in order to raise public awareness of the dangers of drug abuse in the society. The study also recommended that the media should be more creative in their content and in some cases, employ persuasive communication to be able to positively influence a good number of youths. The study was conducted among the undergraduates in Imo State while the current study dwelt on Awka residents in Anambra State.

Okoye and Nwaka (2019) examined drug abuse and criminal behaviour among undergraduates of Ambrose Alli University Ekpoma, Edo State. The researchers adopted survey research method and found that factors such as peer group influence, curiosity and desire tension, for relaxation etc. are the factors that influences student to use and abuse drugs. The researchers recommended that while the administration of Ambrose Alli University should formulate policies to prevent drug abuse among its students, seminars and symposiums should be organized for parents and families to alert them early to the symptoms of drug abuse in their children. The study was centered on drug abuse and criminal behaviour while the current study is centered on the effectiveness of the ABS programme NDLEA and You in Creating Awareness about Drug Abuse and Drug-Related Crimes among Awka Residents.

Ude-Akpeh (2017) did a study to evaluate the NDLEA Radio Campaign Influence on Drug Abuse among Youths in Onitsha Metropolis, to ascertain if the radio campaign has led to the reduction of drug abuse among youths in Onitsha. The survey research method was used to obtain and analyze data from youths residing in Onitsha metropolis, as potential and real uses of banned drugs. Purposive sampling method was used to deal with issues related to sample size and its allocation to study units within the area of study. The study concludes that Radio campaign messages create awareness on a specific subject, like drug abuse by persons in the society and they provide knowledge which enables listeners to understand the implications of drug abuse. The study also concludes that it is the failure of the campaign in reducing incidents of drug abuse among youths that questions the effectiveness of the NDLEAs radio



campaign against drug use and abuse, meaning that the campaign should attract more attention and make the listeners eager to obtain vital knowledge from the in-coming information from the NDLEA. The study further recommended that investigation should be conducted to determine whether redundancy and programme presentational style have any influence on how effective a radio campaign on drug abuse can be. This study is an Evaluation of NDLEA Radio Campaign Influence on Drug Abuse among Youths in Onitsha Metropolis while the present study focused on the Effectiveness of ABS Radio Programme NDLEA and You in Creating Awareness about Drug Abuse and Drug-Related Crimes among Awka Residents.

The above literature shows that there are media campaigns and messages on drug abuse but they have not led to the expected behaviour change among people. However, information on the effectiveness of the programme NDLEA and You is not known. Therefore, this work examined the effectiveness of Anambra Broadcasting Services radio programme NDLEA and You in creating awareness about drug abuse and drug-related crimes among Awka residents in Anambra State, Nigeria.

Theoretical Framework

The discussion is anchored on two theories and they are: the Agenda-Setting theory and Theory of Reasoned Action.

Agenda Setting Theory

The Agenda setting theory of the media, explains the power of the mass media to raise the significance of an event or issue in the public's mind, through editorial emphasis and sustained coverage of such an event. This means that when the mass media, in their daily reportage, give priority to an issue, they cause such an issue to assume some level of significance and receive continued attention from the mass media audience. In summary, the theory describes how the mass media shape information output in such a manner that certain issues are raised in significance to the public at the expense of some other events; and influence the public to be aware of the issues, and eventually form an opinion on them (Watson 2003, Lasorsa 2008,).

The mass media, whether print or electronic, set agenda for the public to follow. Thus, the media raise relevant issues in our society and citizens normally think along the line. This means that if the media (in this case Anambra Broadcasting Services Radio) chose to give the most time and space in creating awareness about drug abuse and drug-related crimes among Awka residents through the Radio Programme NDLEA and You this issue may become the most important item on the audience's minds. The foregoing implies that the media can play drums on any issue which can make the receivers of the drums dance to the tune of the music. It is, therefore, on this basis that the theory is relevant to this study.



Theory of Reasoned Action

This study will also be anchored on the theory of reasoned action (TRA), developed by Ajzen&Fishbein (1980), which argues that a person's intention remains the best indicator that the desired behaviour will occur (Nwankwo, Uzoechina&Oguegbu, 2016). This theory provides a construct that links individual beliefs, attitudes, intentions and behaviours based on the premise that human beings are rational and that the behaviours being explored are under volitional control (Nwankwo, Uzoechina&Oguegbu, 2016). Essentially, the behavioural and normative beliefs -- referred to as cognitive structures -- influence individual attitudes and subjective norms, respectively. In turn, attitudes and norms shape a person's intention to perform a behaviour. Overall, the TRA model supports a linear process in which changes in an individual's (Awka residents) behavioural and normative beliefs as a result of exposure to the ABS radio programme NDLEA and YOU will ultimately affect their actual behaviour (possible positive behaviour change). In other words, the theory of reasoned action supports a linear process in which changes in the behavioural and normative beliefs of Awka residents after exposure to the NDLEA and YOU, will ultimately affect and could lead to possible positive behavioural change.

METHODOLOGY

This study adopted survey research method. A survey focuses on a representative sample derived from the entire population of a study. The study population is the residents of Awka comprised of a total of 465,758 persons, being a projection from the 301,657, population figure as at the 2006 Nigerian population census. Nwodu (2006, p. 49) aptly defined population as the total number of elements within a given environment which a researcher sets out to study; a group of people, objects, or events which a researcher deliberately decide to study, primarily to obtain necessary data needed to solve a given problem. Since the NPC 2006 population figure of 301,657 is now old, the United Nations Population Funds annual growth rate projection of 3.2% was adopted in order to ascertain the current population of the residents. The projection formulae provides that $P_p = G_p \times P_i \times T$.

Where P_p = to the projected population

G_p = Given population (as at the time of the last census)

P_i = Population increase index

T = Period between the given population and the year of study

Thus, $P_p = 301,657 \times P_i = 3.2\% (0.032) \times 17 (2023-2006 = 17)$

$P_p = 301,657 \times 0.032 \times 17 = 164,101$

This means that the population of Awka residents grew by 164,101.

To get the projected population of Awka residents therefore, $301,657 + 164,101 = 465,758$. Therefore, 2023 projected population of Awka residents is a total of 465,758 persons.



The sample size for the survey is decided by referring to the sample sizes for various population ranges as worked out by Krejcie and Morgan (1970). The sample sizes are as seen in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Populations and Sample Sizes At 5% Error Margin, 95% Confidence Level

Population Size	Sample
100	80
500	217
1, 000	278
10, 000	370
100, 000	383
500, 000	384
1 million and above	384

Therefore, since the study population is 465,758 persons, the study settled for 383 as the sample size. Thus, the sample size of 383 is adopted at 5% error margin and 95% percent confidence level. The table shows that a sample size of 383 respondents is justified for this study with population of 465,758 persons. However, Awka is the capital of Anambra State and residents of the town are made up of people from different ethnic groups. The multi-stage sampling technique was adopted for the work. In the first stage, 10 villages were chosen from 33 villages that make up Awka through a simple random procedure. The second stage involved the random selection of 19 households from each of the 10 villages while the third stage involved the accident selection of at least 2 adult respondents met from all the households selected.

Table 2: Sample of the Villages

Name of the Villages randomly selected	Selection of Households	Total of Respondents from each of the Villages
Amikwo	A random selection of 19 households	Accidental sample of at least 2 Adults from each of the selected households, making a total of 38 Adults
Umubele	A random selection of 19 households	Accidental sample of at least 2 Adults from each of the selected households, making a total of 38 Adults
Umukwa	A random selection of 19 households	Accidental sample of at least 2 Adults from each of the selected households, making a total of 38 Adults
Ifite	A random selection of 19 households	Accidental sample of at least 2 Adults from each of the selected households, making a total of 38 Adults
Amudo	A random selection of 19 households	Accidental sample of at least 2 Adults from each of the selected households, making a total of 38 Adults
Umuonaga	A random selection of 19 households	Accidental sample of at least 2 Adults from



	households		each of the selected households, making a total of 38 Adults
Nkwelle	A random selection of 19 households	19	Accidental sample of at least 2 Adults from each of the selected households, making a total of 38 Adults
Umudioka	A random selection of 19 households	19	Accidental sample of at least 2 Adults from each of the selected households, making a total of 38 Adults
AyomnaOkpala	A random selection of 19 households	19	Accidental sample of at least 2 Adults from each of the selected households, making a total of 38 Adults
Umuoramma	A random selection of 19 households	19	Accidental sample of at least 2 Adults from each of the selected households, making a total of 38 Adults
Total			An equal distribution of 38 copies of the questionnaire to each of the villages and 3 extra copies distributed among the villages with greater human traffic

RESULTS

Out of 383 copies of the questionnaire administered to Awka residents, 250 (65%) copies were returned and found useable, thus giving the questionnaire a mortality rate of 134 (35%). Therefore, only 250 copies of the questionnaire were used for data analysis.

Table 3: Extent of exposure to ABS programme NDLEA and YOU

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Very High	72	29
High	101	40
Cant Tell	19	8
Very Low	23	9
Low	34	14
Total	250	100

Table 3 above reveals that the majority 40% of the respondents were highly exposed, 29% has a very high exposure, 14% have a low exposure, 9% have a very low exposure and 8% cant tell the extent of their exposure to ABS radio programme NDLEA and YOU to create awareness about drug abuse and drug-related crimes in Awka. The deduction here based on the above data is that the extent of Awka people exposure to the Radio Programme NDLEA and You is high

**Table 4: Respondents perception of ABS radio programme NDLEA and YOU**

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Very Effective	84	34
Effective	106	42
Cant tell	14	6
Less Effective	20	87
Not Effective	26	10
Total	250	100

The data in table 4 above indicated that 42% of the respondents said that the Radio programme NDLEA and You is effective, 34% of them hold the view that the programme is very effective, 10% said that the programme is not effective while 6% could not say anything. This finding implies that radio is perceived to be effective in creating awareness about drug abuse and drug related crimes.

DISCUSSION

The data in table 3 showed that 72 (29%) of the respondents are exposed to Anambra Broadcasting Services radio programme 'NDLEA and YOU which creates awareness about drug abuse and drug-related crimes in Awka. 101 respondents (40%) are highly exposed to the programme. This implied that most of Awka residents are exposed to Anambra Broadcasting Services radio programme 'NDLEA and You'. This finding corroborates with the findings of Adediran (2023) in his study An Assessment of the Broadcast Media Campaign against Drugs Abuse in Nigeria.

It was found that 84 (34%) respondents found ABS radio programme 'NDLEA and YOU to be very effective, 106 respondents (42%) consider the programme effective, 10% said that the programme is not effective while 6% could not say anything. This means that the majority of the respondents perceived the ABS radio programme NDLEA and YOU to be effective. Lawhon& Herrick (2013) note that radio is an effective medium used to create awareness to people about drug abuse, crime, and environmental awareness among others. This further corroborates the observations of Ojebuyi and Salawu (2015) that the nations media should be involved in fighting the use and trafficking of illicit drugs in the country and that media campaigns should be effectively complemented with communication approaches.

CONCLUSION

The study concludes there is a wide exposure to Anambra Broadcasting Services radio programme NDLEA and You among Awka residents and that the ABS radio programme is mainly perceived to be effective in creating awareness about drug abuse and drug-related crimes among Awka residents. This study further concludes that radio plays an important role in combating and eliminating the use of harmful drugs, especially among Awka Residents.



RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings, the study therefore, recommends that:

1. Anambra Broadcasting Services (ABS) and other media organizations may expand on the programme NDLEA and You. With the aim of increasing the public awareness of the dangers of drug/substance abuse and drug related crimes.
2. The media should also inspire a positive action by the government towards the establishment of more rehabilitation centers for drug addicts.
3. Apart from the media, the NDLEA, Non government organizations (NGOS) and the government may also engage in public sensitization programmes and workshops in secondary schools and tertiary institutions, targeting youths who may not have obtained the messages from the media

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