

AIT AND NTA TELEVISION CAMPAIGN AGAINST DRUG ABUSE AMONGST YOUTHS IN IKWERRE LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA OF RIVERS STATE

Ukaegbu Michael Ibe, PhD. & Bubo Stella Kalanne
Department of English and Communication Art
Ignatius Ajuru University of Education, Port Harcourt, Rivers State, Nigeria

Email: michaelibe22@gmail.com, stellabupok@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

The study examines the influence of AIT and NTA television campaign against drug abuse amongst the youths in Ikwerre local government area of Rivers State. The objectives are to examine the level awareness created by AIT and NTA television stations on drug abuse amongst the youths in Ikwerre local government area of Rivers State, to examine the perception of youths in Ikwerre local government on drug abuse campaign and to determine whether the AIT and NTA television campaign has created any positive attitudinal change amongst the youths in Ikwerre L.G.A. against drug abuse. The theory used for the study are Cognitive Dissonance, Social Learning and Development Media theories. The survey research design was employed for this study and the questionnaire was used as the instrument for data collection. The population of the study is 265,400 which comprises the youth in Ikwerre local government area, according to the 2006 National Population Commission and projected to 2023. The study had a sample size of 384. The purposive sampling technique was used. The respondents were divided into six groups or location for easy accessibility, which are: Aluu, Elele, Ubima, Igwuruta, Omagwa and Isiokpo. 384 copies of the questionnaire were administered to the respondents on quota basis, while 378 were retrieved and used to analyse the data. The data were analyzed using four-point Likert scale and were presented in tables. The findings are that the level of awareness created by AIT and NTA television stations on drug abuse is very high, AIT and NTA television programmes have enhanced drug abuse prevention in Ikwerre L.G.A. and AIT and NTA have created positive attitudinal change amongst the youths in Ikwerre L.G.A. by educating the youths towards attitudinal change against drug abuse. The study concluded that since the level of drug abuse is very high in Ikwerre local government, other broadcast media stations should also engage in the campaign against drug abuse to achieve drug abuse free society. Also, the government should sponsor and give support to the broadcast media, particularly television stations in order to sponsor the campaign against drug abuse in Ikwerre local government. Finally, AIT and NTA television should create more programmes that will enhance the campaign against drug abuse both in urban and rural areas of Ikwerre L.G.A, Rivers State.

Keywords: AIT, NTA, Television, Campaign, Drug Abuse, Youths

INTRODUCTION

Television holds substantial promise as a tool for reaching and persuading people to adopt new and healthier lifestyles. This has long been recognized by those interested in prevention of drug abuse and in other unhealthy behaviours. The use of television for campaign has reduced health problems in the society and gained momentum in the 1970s, with the purpose of improving cardiovascular health. The positive results obtained in the campaigns led to their further use in the areas such as heart disease, cancer, HIV/AIDS prevention, family planning and domestic violence. According to European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction (2013), from the 1970s on, television campaigns were increasingly used in the prevention of tobacco, alcohol and illicit drug use. Every government, no matter its policy recognizes the role of the television and other media platforms in combating drug abuse, undoubtedly, the media makes a greater contribution towards societal improvements, so with this in mind and the features and types already mentioned above, it can rightly be said that the media are the hub that holds the wheel of society together and it has a role

to play in combating the various scourge that afflicts man today and one of such problem that has threatened the existence of man is drug abuse (Atkin, 2009).

Nigeria has many serious problems, which have very serious health, social and economic implications on the society. According to Anekwe (2014, p.32), a higher percentage of our youths within the age bracket of eighteen (18) and youth between the age of twenty-five (25) and twenty-eight years (28) have tried one drug or the other. A high percentage of those admitted of mental related problem also come from the same group. Thus, the drug epidemic is gradually eroding the manpower base and the future of Nigeria.

Drug abuse is not just about taking drugs with the medical doctors' prescription but also about the students who cannot read without taking unsweetened coffee, kola-nut or pills. It is also about filter lover who turns to the use of drugs for sexual enhancing performance. The business executive who must smoke to be able to work, the retrenched worker who floods his veins with extraneous substances to forget his sorrows and adventures, who tries to get high because others are doing it. Thus, drug abuse is not just about misusing of drugs but the use of any chemical substances that has an effect on the body and they include, India hemp, cannabis and heroine, cocaine, from the hemp plant, (Anekwe, 2014). Drug abuse is a term used commonly when prescription medication with sedative, anxiolytic, analgesic, or stimulant properties are used for mood alteration or intoxication ignoring the fact that overdose of such medicines have serious adverse effects.

In the past and in the present, there have been advertisement, campaigns, announcement, and a public outcry against certain hard drugs, their effects and dangers through different broadcast media like television, radio, with such a slogan as "say no to drugs, drugs kill," a drug free child is the pride of the parents, "lend a hand in ridding Nigeria of hard drugs", will you try anything? You may never get off the hook" "avoid drug trafficking. You may end up behind bars" and so many others. The above slogans and many similar ones are some examples of the campaign against drug and drug trafficking both from government and private agencies to help agencies to preserve life rather than to destroy it (Aliu, 2014).

According to Romer (2004, p.1073) the broadcast media communication campaigns to alter risky behaviour are seen increasingly as a critical adjunct to school-based programmess and community-wide interventions". To what extent is this widespread faith in the power of the media justified? Although the early history of broadcast-media campaigns, particularly those involving health, was largely a failure, the promise of reaching large audiences has led to continued efforts, a sharpening of design methodologies, and more realistic campaign expectations. These more sophisticated efforts, combined with more powerful evaluation methodologies, provide evidence that media health campaigns can be effective in changing beliefs, attitudes, intentions, and even behaviours, when properly designed (Rogers, 2007). More rigorous techniques of formative, process, and summative evaluation, coupled with more powerful statistical tools, have detected a variety of campaign effects. Such research generally shows that coupling media with other kinds of interventions is more successful than either media or non media efforts alone. There is growing evidence, however, that, when used correctly, broadcast media alone can have significant positive impacts on health-related attitudes, beliefs, and behaviours (Flora, 2009). Thus, this study investigates the influence of AIT and NTA television campaign against drug abuse amongst youths in Ikwerre local government area of Rivers State.

Statement of the Problem

The danger of drug abuse has been defined as a state of periodic or chronic intoxication, detrimental to the individual and society. The major indication of drug addition is the irresistible desire to take drugs by any means. Physical dependence manifests itself when drug intake is decreased or stopped resulting in withdrawal syndrome, which leads to a very distressing experience. Psychological dependence is experienced when an abuser relies on a drug to produced feeling of well being. It has become unprecedented problem in Ikwerre local government, that the number of people incarcerated in various prisons across the country has increase dramatically over the last few

decades. As a matter of fact, some of these youths in Ikwerre local government have been arrested for drug offences, and/or have a drug abuse problem.

The continuous abuse of these drugs has led to a situation of drug addiction and the addict developing a bondage to the drug. The effects of drug abuse are detrimental not only to the individual but to the society as a whole. Yet this problem seems to be on the increase especially amongst the youths. Which is a serious threat to the sanctity of the residents of Ikwerre local government.

How well can television as a vehicle for information dissemination be relied upon to perform its role in the society, to join hand in the battle against drug abuse? How can the power of the broadcast media (television) be used effectively to reduce high-risk of drug abuse amongst the youths. To explore that question, this research begins by reviewing television as one the types of broadcast media campaigns focusing on drug and alcohol information, social norms marketing, and advocacy. The problem necessitating this study is the influence of AIT and NTA television campaign against drug abuse amongst the youths in Ikwerre local government area of Rivers State.

Aim and of the Study Objectives

The aim of this study is to examine the influence of AIT and NTA television campaign against drug abuse among the youths in Ikwerre local government area of Rivers State, while the objectives are to:

1. examine the level awareness created by AIT and NTA television stations on drug abuse amongst youths in Ikwerre local government area of Rivers State.
2. examine the AIT and NTA television perception of youths in Ikwerre local government on drug abuse campaign.
3. determine whether AIT and NTA television campaign has created any positive attitudinal change amongst youths in Ikwerre L.G.A. against drug abuse.
- 4.

Research Questions

The following research questions guide the study:

1. What is the level of awareness created by AIT and NTA television stations on drug abuse amongst the youths in Ikwerre local government area of Rivers State?
2. What is the AIT and NTA television perception of youths in Ikwerre local government on drug abuse campaign?
3. Has the television campaign of AIT and NTA created any positive attitudinal change amongst the youths in Ikwerre L.G.A. against drug abuse?

Review of Related Literature

Television Commercial

Television is often called “King” of the advertising media, since majority of people spend more hours watching television per day in comparison to any other medium. Television uses the combination of sight, colour, sound and motion to create an effect. It makes its appeal through both the eye and the ear.

Television advertisements hold a great impact and effect on the viewers. Most of the advertisements usually convey their messages effectively in just a few seconds that the audience have unknowingly captured the idea and internalized it buying the newest product advertised. The effects of television advertising are impressive, affecting everyone children, teenagers, and adults that self-worth and self-appreciation are slowly diminishing (Okoro, 2019). Hence advertisers should concentrate more on informative product advertisement and increase the impact on the consumers.

Drug Abuse

Drug abuse is defined as the deliberate use of chemical substances for reasons other than intended medical purposes that results in physical, mental, emotional, or social impairment in the user. In another way, drug abuse, according to Zinberg, et al. (1978, p.16), summarizes the definition of drug abuse as presented by the American Psychiatric Association and the National Association for Mental Health as the illegal non-medical use of a limited number of substances. Most of the drugs, which have properties of altering the mental state in ways that are considered by social norms and defined by statute to be inappropriate, undesirable, harmful, threatening, or, at minimum, culturally alien. The definition above clearly defines abuse as the illegal or misuse of drugs without a medical practitioner's prescription. This aligns with the definition of drug abuse stated by the American Medical Association (AMA), which refers to drug abuse as the self-administration of drugs without medical supervision (Zinberg et al., 1978, p.16). Put differently, drug abuse could also be defined as the use of a drug to the extent that it interferes with the health, physiological, psychological, and social functions of an individual.

However, our concern in this paper is not to delve into a linguistic argument between use and abuse. For there is an argument that rather than use the term drug abuse, it is unequivocally satisfactory to use the term drug use. They posit that dropping the term "drug abuse" is one step toward enabling both users and society as a whole to understand when people use drugs, how they use them, and above all, to find out whether they can use them successfully. By speaking of use instead of abuse, we can carry out research in a precise and non-condemnatory way. Some descriptions of use will obviously show that the use is excessive, but other descriptions will reveal the same complexity that has characterized our cases in the drug abuse study (Balogun, 2006).

For the purpose of this paper, the definition of drug abuse adopted for use aligns with NAFDAC's (2000) conceptions of drug abuse, which state that "it is the excessive and persistent self-administration of a drug without regard to the medically or culturally accepted patterns.

Drug Abuse in Nigeria

The abuse of drugs and other substances among youths, particularly undergraduate students in Nigeria, is prevalent and, as such, constitutes a great health and social problem. According to John et al. (2022), the current prevalence of drug and substance abuse has plagued society, caused its members to lose self-consciousness, and led many to mental disorders, addiction, hardship, and other health challenges like damaged kidneys, livers, and so on.

According to the World Health Organization (WHO), about 486 million people (or about 7.5% of the global population aged 15-64) used psychoactive drugs in 2021-2024 and more than 55 million people are estimated to be affected by drug use disorders (harmful patterns of drug use or drug dependence). In another statistic, about 2.5 million deaths annually are attributable to drug use, with about 567,000 male and 250,000 female deaths. World Health Organization (WHO) estimated that 2.7% of the global burden of disease in 2023 was due to cocaine and opioid use, with the social cost of illicit substance use being in the region of 3% of GDP in those countries that have measured it. In Nigeria, a population of 50 to 55 million spends approximately USD \$15,000 and USD \$30,000 annually on psychotropic drugs and alcoholic beverages, respectively. According to a report from the United Nations Office on Drug and Crime (UNODC) in Nigeria shows that 17.5% (14.3 million) of people aged between 15 and 64 years abuse drugs, of which close to 5 million suffered from a drug use disorder (UNODC, 2023).

Health Campaigns

Health campaigns attempts to promote public health by making health interventions available. Health campaigns offer great potential to raise awareness and understanding about health issues and mobilize support for action from the local community to the national stage. The concern about alcohol marketing and under age drinking has been heightened by the fact that alcohol advertising exposure influences a young person's beliefs about alcohol and his/her intention to drink. The World

Health Organization has specified that the advertising and promotion of alcohol needs to be controlled (Novello, 2007).

The alcohol industry has a public responsibility relating to the marketing of its products. That responsibility can be fulfilled through product and advertising design and placement that meet these criteria; first, the message adolescents receive through so much money spent on industry and responsibility campaigns does not portray alcohol as an appropriate rite of passage from childhood to adulthood or an essential element in achieving popularity, social success, or fulfilling life.

Second, the placement of alcohol advertising, promotions and other means of marketing do not disproportionately expose youth to messages about alcohol. Third, no alcohol product is designed or advertised to disproportionately appeal to youth or to influence youth by sending the message that its consumption is an appropriate way for minors to learn to drink or that any form of alcohol is acceptable below the legal age. Finally, the content and design of industry websites and internet alcohol advertising do not especially attract or appeal to adolescents or others under the legal drinking age (Novello, 2007).

The entertainment and media industries because of their reach and potential impact have a responsibility to the public in the way they choose to depict alcohol use, especially by those below the legal drinking age, in motion pictures, television programming, music, and video games. That responsibility can be fulfilled by creating and distributing entertainment that; first, it does not glamorize under age alcohol use. Second, it does not present any form of under age drinking in a favourable light, especially when entertainments products are targeted towards under age audience or likely to be viewed or heard by them.

Alcohol Advertisements

The power of advertising to influence children and adolescent is incontrovertible. Advertising works, otherwise, companies would not spend so much money on it. Many ads use celebrity endorsers, humour rock music, or attractive young models, all of which have been shown to be effective with children and adolescents. Advertising makes drinking seem like normative activities and may function as 'superpeer' in subtly pressuring teenagers to experiment. Research has revealed that advertising may be responsible for up to 30 % adolescent alcohol use. Beer commercials are virtually custom-made to appeal to children and adolescents, using images of fun-loving, sexy, successful young people having the time of their lives. Many studies have revealed that exposure to alcohol advertising results in more positive beliefs about drinking during early adolescence and young adulthood (Pediatrics, 2010).

Evidence from experimental, economic, survey, longitudinal and systematic review studies demonstrate that the degree of youth alcohol advertising exposure is strongly and directly associated with intentions to drink, age of drinking onset, prevalence of drinking, and the amount consumed. A study conducted by Moses (2011), showed that one standard deviation increase in viewing television programmes containing alcohol commercials in seventh grade was associated with excess risk of beer use by 44 %, wine use by 34 %, and 3-drink episodes by 26 % in eighth grade. In other longitudinal study 15 to 26 years of age found a direct correctional between the amount of exposure to alcohol advertising on billboards, radio, television, and newspapers with higher levels of drinking a steeper increase in drinking over time. Statistical and economic analyses also support the relationship between alcohol advertising and consumption. In Sweden, a ban on alcohol advertising resulted in a 20 % decrease in the consumption of alcohol. The study also revealed that in-store beer displays and advertising seemed to have more attraction to youth who had never used alcohol while young drinkers were more influenced by magazine and entertainment venue advertising and promotion (Wyllie, et al. 1998).

Alcohol Abuse

The use and abuse of alcohol by teenagers creates serious health and social problems. When they drink, they are highly likely to engage in episodic heavy alcohol drinking. Alcohol use is a principal

risk factor in the three leading causes of death among adolescents. Alcohol abuse results to unintentional injuries (including motor vehicle crashes), suicides, and homicides. Adolescent drinking also is associated with violent gang activities, poor school performance, intimate partner violence, risky sexual behaviours (unprotected sex), sexual transmitted diseases and sexual assault (American Journal of Health Education, 2005).

A growing body of research suggests that alcohol advertising plays a major role in the development of normative beliefs, positive outcome expectancies, and drinking intentions for both children and adolescents. One concern is the fact that alcohol advertisements often use tactics that include humour, youth oriented themes, and young adult actors or models, all of which increase their appeal to under-age audiences. While the alcohol industry may argue that its advertisements are intended only to strengthen brand loyalty or encourage brand switching among adult drinkers, the message also may be affecting children and teenagers. Several studies have found that children and adolescents who are exposed to greater amount of alcohol advertising are more likely to use or intend to use, such products (American Journal of Health Education, 2005).

Causes and Effects of Drug Abuse among Users in Nigeria

The effects of an occurrence are preceded by its cause. As such, there is a necessary connection between cause and effect, just as it is impossible to separate a fire from smoke. Before delving into the effects of drug abuse among users in Nigeria, it is unavoidable to explore the causes of drug abuse. Haladu (2003), as cited by James (2014, p.536), has identified causes of drug abuse that include experimental curiosity, peer group influence, a lack of parental supervision, personality problems due to socio-economic conditions, the need for energy for long hours, the availability of the drugs, and the need to prevent the occurrence of withdrawal syndrome. Experimental curiosity is the eagerness to experiment with unknown facts about drugs, which thus motivates youths into drug use. The first experience of drug abuse, subsequently, produces a state of arousal as well as happiness and pleasure, which in turn motivates them to continue in the act. Another cause of drug abuse in Nigeria, particularly among youths, is peer group influence. Peer pressure plays a significant role in socializing and influencing the behaviours and attitudes of youth in society. As a matter of fact, belonging to a bad peer group will highly influence one to act in a way that is contrary to the societal norms and values upheld in society. Some youths are into drug abuse as a result of peer group influence. Youths are easily influenced to follow suit out of fear of isolation and denigration. Lack of parental supervision is another cause of drug abuse. Many parents failed in their responsibilities to see to the welfare and affairs of their children, thus neglecting them to act and make decisions on their own. Some parents have little or no interaction with their children, while others put pressure on their children to pass exams or perform better than others in their studies to the detriment of the child's welfare. Consequently, some children are addicted to taking drugs and substances to stimulate and boost their hormones so they can stay up longer at night to read and study.

Poverty is another cause of drug abuse in Nigeria. Poverty has caused some people to suffer from personality disorders as a result of incessant drug abuse. Also, the need for energy to work for long hours has contributed to the prevalence of drug abuse in Nigeria. Lastly, the need to prevent the occurrence of withdrawal symptoms has contributed to the availability of drugs in society. If a drug is stopped, the user experiences what is termed "withdrawal symptoms". Pain, anxiety, excessive sweating, and shaking characterize such symptoms. The inability of the drug user to tolerate the symptoms motivates him to continue.

The abuse and misuse of drugs are characterized by different effects ranging from physical signs (fatigue, lasting cough, red and glazed eyes, repeated health complaints, and weak stamina); emotional signs (personality change, sudden mood changes, irresponsible behaviour, poor judgment, irritability); school behaviours (truancy, indiscipline in school, low academic performance, and negative attitude); social problems (causing chaos in society, picking fights unnecessarily, and negative attitude); and family dynamics (starting arguments, negative attitude, breaking rules,

secretiveness, and withdrawal from families). The implications of drug abuse for individuals are that it results in the danger of death and injury by overdose. Other health damages caused by drug abuse include, but are not limited to, brain damage, liver or kidney failure, and mental disorders. The use of drugs also results in legal consequences such as the risk of imprisonment (for armed robbery, rape, and cultism), fines, and a criminal record.

Broadcast Media Campaign against Drug Abuse in Nigeria

The broadcast media – radio and television have been effective in the campaign against drug abuse. Different programmes on the radio and television are dedicated to discussing the risks and health challenges associated with drug abuse among youths and adolescents. No doubt, the significance of broadcast media is to inform, educate, and entertain the general public. On African Independent Television (AIT) programmes, the commander of the Ekiti State command of the National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA) has been invited to sensitize youths against the dangers of substance abuse. At the programme, the commander appealed to the public to partner with the agency by providing relevant information that could help curb the menace of drug abuse among young.

Broadcast stations in Nigeria, both government and privately owned television stations, have featured many programmes, seminars, and conferences kicking against the abuse and trafficking of drugs in Nigeria. An illustration is seen on the occasion of the 2022 United Nations International Day against Drug Abuse and Illicit Drug Trafficking, which has as its theme "Addressing Drug Challenges in Health and Humanitarian Crises." This event was broadcast by different Television stations, including Arise TV. At the event, the former vice president of Nigeria, Prof. Yemi Osinbajo, said, "We are winning this war. The days of the scourge of drug abuse and dependency are clearly numbered, but it will involve even greater investment in focus and determination for the long haul." Broadcast media have kept people abreast of crucial information that is related to the abuse and trafficking of drugs. In April 2023, there was a broadcast on Arise TV stating that the National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA) and Nigerian Customs Service (NCS) had signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) aimed at working jointly to tackle the menace of drug trafficking in the country. This is a significant step to stop the distribution and availability of illicit drugs among youths and adolescents.

Radio programmes as a form of broadcast media are very significant in the campaign against drug abuse in Nigeria. Radio programmes, like television programmes, educate, inform, and influence the perception of listeners on issues related to drug abuse and trafficking. Radio programmes are significant and a very effective tool in the campaign against drug abuse because radio is relatively affordable in every home, particularly in rural communities. As a result, radio has a widespread audience because of its accessibility and availability. In fact, technology has helped spread radio because mobile phones come with radio applications. Radio stations, both government-owned and privately owned, consistently exposed the public to the dangers and health challenges that surround the abuse and trafficking of drugs. However, there is a need for the broadcast media to intensify its efforts in campaigning against drug abuse by consistently informing and educating the public on the need to stay away from the abuse of drugs. Television stations can sponsor movie industries to produce movies that will not only entertain but also educate people with visual images and the life experiences of drug abuse users (Nnamani, 2017).

Theoretical Framework

The study anchored on Cognitive Dissonance, Social Learning and Development Media theories

Cognitive Dissonance Theory

Cognitive dissonance theory was propounded by Leon Festinger's in 1957. Theory of cognitive dissonance focuses on how humans strive for internal consistency. When inconsistency (dissonance) is experienced, individuals largely become psychological distressed. His basic hypothesis is that:

i) The existence of dissonance, being psychological uncomfortable, will motivate the person to try to reduce the dissonance and achieve consonance.

ii) When dissonance is present, in addition to trying to reduce it, the person will actively avoid situations and information which would likely increase the dissonance. Alcohol adverts have health warnings that 'excessive alcohol drinking can be harmful to your health'. This theory fits well in this study by explaining how youth works out to achieve consonance. To achieve consonance youth who drinks or takes drugs can either quit drinking, reduce the importance of his/her health by convincing himself/herself that he/she is not at risk because he/she is not drinking excessively or evaluate the reward of his/her drinking to be worth the cost of his/her health.

Social Learning Theory

Albert Bandura who is the proponent of social learning theory in 1977, believed that direct reinforcement could not account for all types of learning. His theory added a social element, arguing that people can learn new information and behaviours by watching other people known as observational learning (or modeling). This learning can be used to explain a wide variety of behaviours. Bandura identified three basic models of observational learning; first, a live model, which involves an actual individual demonstrating or acting out a behaviour. Second, a verbal instructional model, which involves descriptions and explanations of a behaviour. Finally, a symbol model, which involves real or fictional characters displaying behaviour in books, films, television programmes, or online media.

Drug expectancies are the beliefs that an individual has concerning the effects of drug and the desirability of those effects. These beliefs are acquired through observation, vicarious learning, and assimilation of cultural stereotypes. Drug expectancies are learned before drinking begins and are thought to influence both the initiation and maintenance of drinking behaviour. Social learning theorist posits that the expectation contributes to drug abuse.

The main goal of drug abuse campaign is to reach out to the public or create awareness. It also influences consumers of drug. Social learning theory suggests that advertising influences people via modeling. Modeled behaviour is most likely to be adopted when there is attractive model whose behaviour is rewarded. Advertising creates a positive image of drug consumption and thus increases the demand for drug. Social learning theory argues that advertising contributes to the perception of drinking as a legitimate and normal activity in society. In this context, advertising reinforces favourable views of drug intake by providing positive role models (athletes), lifestyle images and themes (wealth, social approval, and friendship), pleasure (relaxation, humour).

Given the repetitive nature of advertising, 'the daily flow of images and messages cultivates stable patterns of thinking and action. Further, alcohol advertisements and other media images of alcohol are rarely negative, which may lead to the expectation that excessive drinking has few adverse consequences. The expectation contributes to alcohol abuse. The relevant of this theory to the study is that it will enable youths in Ikwerre local government to see drug abuse advertisements as a means of.

Development Media Theory

This theory was propounded by Dennis McQuail in 1987. Development media theory according to Okunna (1999, p.136) emerged in the 1980s to fill the void, which became increasingly noticeable as the gap between developed and developing countries widened. For Nwodu &Ukozor (2003, p.51-52), the development media theory is therefore premised on the belief that the mass media and the government should work closely to ensure that the media assist in the overall development of the country. The development media theory, according to Okoro &Olley (2019), identified four focal normative theories of the press. These are:

1. That the media must accept and carry out positive development tasks in line with national policy.
2. Freedom of the media should be open to economic priorities and the development needs of society.

3. The media should give priority in news and information to linking with other developing countries that are close geographically, culturally, or politically.
4. Journalists and other media workers have responsibilities as well as freedom in their information gathering and dissemination tasks.

The development media theory is significant, and its relevance to this research is hinged on the fact that this study sets out to identify the role of television in disseminating relevant information and campaigning against drug abuse

Empirical Review

Some of the studies earlier conducted in relation to the researched concept are reviewed in this section of the work.

Okoye, Agbim, Ohaji, Etumnu, Okodogbe & Chimeremeze (2022) carried out a study on the 'Effectiveness of the Mass Media in the Fight Against Drug Abuse Amongst Undergraduates of Tertiary Institutions in Imo State'. The study was hinged on the Theory of Reasoned Action and the survey method was the research design adopted for this study. The population size was 81,000 undergraduates of the select higher institutions in Imo State, with a sample size of 382 derived from the application of the Wimmer and Dominick (2000) online sample size calculator.

The sampling technique used for the study was the systematic technique. In the analysis of the data, the percentage method and bar chart were used. Findings showed that the level of awareness amongst respondents towards mass media campaigns against drug abuse is moderate. Findings also revealed the agreement that mass media efforts have not been effective in reducing the threat of drug abuse amongst undergraduates in Imo State's tertiary institutions. The study concluded that mass media campaigns are ineffective in the fight against drug abuse amongst undergraduates of higher institutions in Imo State, as students continue to abuse substances and the campaigns have not succeeded in curbing the menace which could be linked to lack of awareness amongst the undergraduates. The study therefore recommended that the media should as a matter of urgency increase the broadcast of programmes on drug abuse in order to raise public awareness about the dangers of abusing substances. The study also recommended that the mass media should be more creative in their content production as well as employing persuasive communication in order to influence a good number of youths positively so they could shun drug abuse. However, the relationship between this finding and the work under study is that they emphasize on media campaign on drug abuse among the youth.

Eke & Adeyemi (2023) carried out a study on "Breaking the Silence: Broadcast Media Messages against Youth Drug Abuse amongst in Port Harcourt Metropolis." The study adopted the Agenda setting theory and two objectives which are: to find out the level of exposure of youths in Port Harcourt to broadcast media messages against drug misuse and abuse, and find out if the broadcast stations have played any role to reduce the rate of drug misuses and abuses in Port Harcourt Metropolis. The research design adopted for the work was the survey design. A total of 324,000 Port Harcourt youths stood as the population for the study with a sample size of 400 drawn from the studied population and derived by using the Taro Yamane (1967) mathematical formula. Multi-stage sampling technique was used to select the youths in Port Harcourt. The instrument for data collection was the questionnaire. Findings showed that the level of exposure to broadcast media messages against youth drug abuse in Port Harcourt Metropolis was inadequate. Another finding, with regards to reducing drug abuse, revealed that broadcast media messages played an average role as media messages lacked depth since they did not convey the complete information aimed at enlightening the public. Conclusion from the study showed that the media notably abandoned a traditional network of functions that was enriched with knowledge and instruction as the televised message on the topic was superficial. The study's important conclusions provided insight into how well media outlets may be used to address this urgent problem in the city. The study also concluded that the media play a vital part in influencing public perceptions and policy discourse as well as in building a knowledge-rich and helpful society. The study also made clear the necessity of a

multipronged strategy that includes educational messaging, firsthand accounts, professional analysis, and a comprehensive plan in order to successfully reach young people, their family members, and society as a whole and promote knowledge, comprehension, and measures against substance abuse. The study showed how important it is for broadcasters to start talks and spread knowledge about drug misuse amongst young people which is related to the work understudy. The previous study is related to this present study because the two are on campaign against drug abuse.

METHODOLOGY

The survey research design was employed for this study and questionnaire was the instrument for data collection. The population of the study is 265,400 which comprises the youth in Ikwerre local government, according to the 2006 National Population Commission and projected by 2.5% annual population growth rate to 2023. Their ages ranged from 19 to 31 years with a mean age of 20.50 and standard deviation of 1.10. The respondents were presented with "The Influence of AIT and NTA Television Campaign against Drug Abuse Index" developed by the researchers to access the drug abuse in Ikwerre local government area. The research sample size is 384 determined by the Meyer's sample size determination formula. The purposive sampling technique was used. The respondents were divided into six groups or location for easy accessibility, which are: Aluu, Elele, Ubima, Igwuruta, Omagwa and Isiokpo. 384 copies of the questionnaire were administered to the respondents on quota basis, while 378 were retrieved and used to analyse data. The data were analyzed using four-point Likert scale such as strongly agree, agree, disagree and strongly disagree and were presented in tables. Mean below 2.5 was rejected while mean above 2.5 was accepted.

Data Analysis

Research Question One: What is the level of awareness created by AIT and NTA television stations on drug abuse among the youths in Ikwerre local government area of Rivers State?

Table 1: the level of awareness created by AIT and NTA television stations on drug abuse

S/N	Item Statements	SA ₄	A ₃	D ₂	SD ₁	Total	$\frac{\sum Fx}{Fx}$	Remark
1.	Very high	167 668	146 438	42 82	23 23	378 1,211	3.2	Agreed
2.	High	163 652	158 474	36 72	21 21	378 1,219	3.2	Agreed
3.	Low	47 188	54 162	147 294	130 130	378 774	2.0	Disagreed
4.	Very low	43 172	51 153	153 306	131 131	378 762	2.0	Disagreed

Grand mean total=2.6

Source: Research Field Work, (2023)

The data indicates that the level of the level of awareness created by AIT and NTA television stations on drug abuse is very high.

Research Question Two: What is AIT and NTA television perception of youths in Ikwerre local government on drug abuse campaign?

Table 2: the AIT and NTA television perception of youths in Ikwerre local government on drug abuse campaign

S/N	Item Statements	SA ₄	A ₃	D ₂	SD ₁	Total	$\frac{\sum Fx}{Fx}$	Remark
-----	-----------------	-----------------	----------------	----------------	-----------------	-------	----------------------	--------

1.	AIT and NTA television programmes instruct the youth on drug abuse	164 648	148 444	48 96	18 18	378 1,206	3.2	Agreed
2.	AIT and NTA television programmes enhances drug abuse prevention	159 636	142 426	46 92	31 62	378 1,216	3.2	Agreed
3.	AIT and NTA television programmes draws people's attention on drug abuse prevention	201 804	142 426	24 48	11 11	378 1,289	3.4	Agreed
4.	AIT and NTA television programmes enlightens the youths on danger in drug abuse	181 724	141 423	31 62	25 25	387 1,234	3.3	Agreed

Grand mean total=3.3

Source: Research Field Work, (2023)

Based on the result of data, it shows that the perception of youths in Ikwerre local government on drug abuse campaign is that AIT and NTA television programmes draws people's attention on drug abuse prevention

Research question three: Has the television campaign of AIT and NTA created any positive attitudinal change amongst the youths in Ikwerre L.G.A. against drug abuse?

Table 3: the television campaign of AIT and NTA created any positive attitudinal change among the youths in Ikwerre L.G.A. against drug abuse

S/N	Item Statements	SA ₄	A ₃	D ₂	SD ₁	Total	$\frac{\sum Fx}{Fx}$	Remark
1.	AIT and NTA television programmes against drug abuse have changed the attitude of youths in Ikwerre local government areas	157 652	141 423	52 104	28 28	378 1,183	3.13	Agreed
2.	AIT and NTA television programmes educate the youths towards attitudinal change against drug abuse	163 652	129 387	48 96	38 38	378 1,173	3.10	Agreed
3.	The effort of AIT and NTA television programmes has changed the youths towards drug abuse prevention	173 692	132 396	47 94	26 26	378 1,208	3.2	Agreed
4.	Due to the campaign against drug abuse programmes on AIT and NTA television informs the youths on the danger in abusing drugs	160 652 648	147 387 441	51 102	20 20	378 1,231	3.3	Agreed
5.	campaign against drug abuse on AIT and NTA television programmes have minimized the rate of drug abuse	153 612	149 447	47 94	29 29	378 1,122	3.0	Agreed

Grand mean total=3.1

Source: Research Field Work, (2023)

Based on the data presented in table 3 above, television campaign of AIT and NTA have created positive attitudinal change amongst the youths by educating the youths towards attitudinal change against drug abuse.

Discussion of Findings

Research Question One: What is the level of awareness created by AIT and NTA television stations on drug abuse amongst the youths in Ikwerre local government area of Rivers State?

The first research question sought to find out the level of awareness created by AIT and NTA television stations on drug abuse amongst the youths in Ikwerre local government area of Rivers State. It was found that the level of awareness created by AIT and NTA television stations on drug abuse is very high. This finding supports the finding of Michael (2016), who found in his study that the level of awareness created by television and radio programmes are very high. It is also one of the most important inventions that has affected changes in social life. He further found that 'NDLEA Radio Campaign on Drug Abuse amongst Youths in Onitsha Metropolis', had a positive influence on their attitude.

Research Question Two: What is AIT and NTA television perception of youths in Ikwerre local government on drug abuse campaign?

The second research question sought to find out the perception of youths in Ikwerre local government on drug abuse campaign. It was revealed that the perception of youths in Ikwerre local government on drug abuse campaign are; AIT and NTA television programmes instruct the youth on drug abuse, AIT and NTA television programmes enhances drug abuse prevention, AIT and NTA television programmes draws people's attention on drug abuse prevention and that AIT and NTA television programmes enlightens youths on danger in drug abuse. However, Moses (2011), study collaborate with the finding of this study. According to him, another analysis of alcohol consumption amongst high school students was carried out in 28 schools within Nairobi and Kiambu districts. 1,470 Students, aged between 14-18 years participated in the survey. An analysis of the data collected revealed the following, first, majority 26.5% of the current alcohol users had their first alcoholic drink between the ages of 14-16 years while 23.2% of current users took their first drink aged below 12 years. Second, the key influencing factors of alcohol abuse are peer pressure, family problems, availability and ease of access, challenges associated with the transition to manhood or womanhood, enabling social environment, and a general culture of acceptance of alcohol as portrayed in the media, especially advertisements.

Research Question Three: Has the television campaign of AIT and NTA created any positive attitudinal change amongst the youths in Ikwerre L.G.A. against drug abuse?

The third research question sought to find out the television campaign of AIT and NTA created any positive attitudinal change amongst the youths in Ikwerre L.G.A. against drug abuse. It was found that television campaign of AIT and NTA have created positive attitudinal change amongst the youths by educating the youths towards attitudinal change against drug abuse, campaign against drug abuse programmes on AIT and NTA television informs the youths on the danger in abusing drugs, campaign against drug abuse on AIT and NTA television programmes have minimized the rate of drug abuse. Also, the effort of AIT and NTA television campaign has changed the youths towards drug abuse prevention and the attitude of youths in Ikwerre local government areas against drug abuse. However, Ismail and Ahmad (2022) finding collaborate with the finding of this study. According to them, in this modern era of globalisation, the media play a crucial role in the society. It becomes a public dissemination mechanism that makes it easier for people to get information from both within and outside the world. The influence of the mass media is not only about disseminating knowledge but also about shaping society's ways of thinking, perceptions, societal expectations and behaviour. They also found that the mass media is not only important as a means

of disseminating information, but it also plays an important role in the implementation of campaigns in a country.

CONCLUSION

There is no doubt that television plays a very significant role in the lives of people as it informs, educates and entertains its audience. Drug abuse information derived from television programmes influences youths in Ikwerre local government. It is used for decision making, logical argument, and many more. Furthermore, television broadcast is regarded as credible source of knowledge dispenser and should endeavour to always give information on their programmes based on facts, so that their audience can get necessary information needed to change their behaviour. Also, television stations such AIT and NTA should continue to perform their functions, especially by carrying out their programmes effectively which is to create awareness on issues that affect the society.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings, the following are recommended:

1. Since the level of drug abuse is very high in Ikwerre local government, other broadcasting media should also campaign against drug abuse to achieve drug abuse free society.
2. The government should sponsor and give support to the broadcast media, particularly television stations (government and privately owned), in order to sponsor the campaign against drug abuse in Ikwerre local government.
3. AIT and NTA television should create more programmes that will enhance the campaign against drug abuse both in urban and rural areas.

REFERENCES

- Altstiel & Grow, (2006). *Advertising Strategy: Creative tactics from the outside*. Sage Publications.
- Atkin, C.K. & Wallack, L. (Eds). (1990). *Mass communication and public health: Complexities and conflicts*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.
- Balogun, S. K. (2006). Chronic intake of separate and combined alcohol and nicotine on body maintenance among albino rats. *Journal of Human Ecology*, vol. 19 (1), 21-24.
- Bandura, A. (1986). *Social foundations of thought and Action*, Englewood Cliffs, Prentice Hall.
- Bandura, A. (1977). *Social learning theory*, Englewood Cliffs, Prentice Hall.
- Haladu, A. A. (2003) *Outreach strategies for curbing drug abuse among out-of-school youth in Jacob's classic publishers limited*.
- John, A. O., Aliu, K. & Afeez, O.(2022). An assessment of drug and substance abuse prevalence: A cross-sectional study among undergraduates in selected southwestern universities in Nigeria. *Journal of International Medical Research*, vol. 50(10).
- Jacob's Classic Publishers Limited.
- Monica, A., Chris, B. & Powers, J. (2013). *Alcohol exposure, alcohol marketing, and their associations with problem drinking and drunkenness among youth living in the slums of Kampala, Uganda*. Retrieved November 21, 2024.

- Moses, P. (2011). *Situational analysis of alcohol consumption among high school students report, a baseline survey report*. Retrieved November 23, 2024.
- Nnamani, F. U. (2017). A Comparative Assessment of Broadcast Media and Social Media as Tools for National Development in Nigeria. *IMT International Journal of the Arts and Sciences (IJOTAS)*, vol. 3 (5), 63-75.
- Nwodu, L. C. & Ukozor, N.F. (2003). *Communication imperatives for development*. John
- Odivwri, J. E. (2014). Substances Abuse among Commercial Tricycle Riders in Kano Metropolis, Nigeria. *International Journal of Education and Research*, vol. 2(6), 535-544.
- Okoro, F. E. & Olley, O. W. (2019). The Role of the Broadcasting Media in the Integration of Nigeria's Diverse Ethnic Nationalities. *An Interdisciplinary Journal of Communication Studies*.
- Okoye, R. O. (2003). *The Nigerian adolescents in perspective*. Nigerian Society for Education.
- Okunna, C. S. (1999). Mobilizing Host- Communities for Development Communications projects. *In African Journal of Development Studies*. Vol. I No.1.
- Park, B. & Breland, W. (2013). Alcohol and Cigarette use Among adolescents and Young Adult males. *American Journal of Men's Health*, vol.1, No. 4, December 2007, 339-346. Retrieved November 1, 2024.