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RE-ASSESSING PUBLIC PERCEPTION OF MASS MEDIA BREAST CANCER AWARENESS CAMPAIGN IN NIGERIA

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Abstract
This paper reassessed public perception of mass media breast cancer awareness campaign in Nigeria. It was anchored on the model known as Health belief model. The population of the study was drawn from six state capitals in Nigeria using survey method. From the state capitals, a sample size of 252 respondents was selected. Questionnaire was served as the instrument for data collection. From the data collected and analyzed, it was revealed that the mass media have changed women's attitude and behaviour towards breast cancer, due to the persuasive nature of its message. It was also revealed that the mass media encourages women to take preventive measure on breast cancer. The study however, recommended that to achieve better result in the campaign on breast cancer, the concentration of mass media campaign messages on modern media alone should be discouraged; rather a balanced dissemination of breast cancer messages at the grassroots level using community based organizations should be encouraged.

Key words: Perception, Mass Media, Breast Cancer, Campaign, Nigeria.

Introduction

Over the years, government and other public agencies engage in various media campaigns geared at educating, protecting and improving public health in the society. Such campaigns, due to a variety of factors, often record success or otherwise. Quality health care delivery has become an issue of priority to nations across the globe. According to Gottlieb (2001) to tackle health problems, concerned governments and organizations the world over, have often resolved to the use of media campaigns to reach out to the populace, with the aim of educating, informing and influencing them into carrying out desired healthy practices. This demonstrates the power of the media. These campaigns are carried out through several channels of communication such as traditional channels and the mass mediated channels. Abone (2008) describes the mass media as the key component of the global strategy for sustainable health development through adequate information and education on various health issues. The role played by the mass media is also a vital one such that without the media, it would be absolutely impossible for health promoters and stakeholders to disseminate information as well as monitor, coordinate and evaluate campaigns on health issues.

Across the globe, breast cancer has long been recognized as a major public health burden. Despite all efforts by government, World Health Organization, Community Based Organizations (CBOs), Churches and individuals, barriers to breast care persist. Many women do not have access to the information and

screening necessary to prolong survival, as evidenced by the high mortality incidence ratio in the world (Gottlieb, 2001). They lack the basic knowledge of breast cancer prevention.

The power of media to disseminate health news (or other matters) has, in effect, reduced the world's size (global village). The value of health news is related to what gets reported and how it gets reported. According to Moynihan (2000: 1645):

> The news media are an important source of information about health and medical therapies, and there is widespread interest in the quality of reporting. Previous studies have identified inaccurate coverage of published scientific papers, overstatement of adverse effects or risks, and evidence of sensationalism. The media can also have a positive public health role, as they did in communicating simple warning about the connection between Reye's syndrome and the use of aspirin in children.

Despite the potential of news media to perform valuable health education functions, Moynihan concluded that media stories about medications continue to be incomplete in their coverage of benefits, risks, and costs of drugs, as well as in reporting financial ties between clinical trial investigators and pharmaceutical manufactures.

Supporting the above, Coulson (2008:112) writes thus:

> The mass media are capable of facilitating short-term, intermediate-term, and long –term effects on audiences. Short-term objectives include exposing audience to health concepts, creating awareness and knowledge; altering outdated or incorrect knowledge; and enhancing audience recall of particular advertisements or Public Service Announcements (PSAs), promotions, or program names. Intermediate-term objectives include all of the above, as wells changes in attitudes, behaviours, and perception of social norms. Long-term objectives incorporate all of the aforementioned tasks, in addition to focused restructuring of perceived social norms, and maintenance of behaviours change. Evidence of achieving these three tiers of objectives is useful in evaluating the effectiveness of mass media.

In Nigeria for instance, public health campaign messages are carried out using various channels of communication. Mustapha (2008:14) noted that issues on public health have become regular features in the messages of Nigeria media. Hardly does a day pass by without at least one form of public health message or the other either on TV or radio broadcasts or on the pages of the newspapers/magazines, or through community mobilization, posters, handbills, stickers, and among others. Agencies such as the Federal and States Ministries of Health, National Agency for Food and Drug Administration and Control (NAFDAC), National Agency for the Control of AIDS, etc do carry out breast cancer awareness campaigns from time to time. Therefore, the basic tenet of this paper reassessed public perception of mass media breast cancer awareness campaign with special focus on Nigeria.

Statement of Problem

Over the years, studies have shown that governments and organizations have invested so much on health related programmes like the National Malaria Control Programme, Society for Family Health, Global Fund to Fight AIDS, TB Malaria, etc. In spite of their efforts to reduce health problems, there is an increasing dissatisfaction and criticism of these programmes for having no effect on the targeted populace. That was why majority of such programme efforts has produced slight behavioural change (achieve fair success) or a complete waste of time and resources all together.

Similar effort has been expounded in creating awareness about breast cancer in recent years by government and other concerned bodies. Whether the campaign is achieving its desired objective is still in doubt. Hence, this study is geared towards examining the public perception of mass media breast cancer awareness campaign in Nigeria.

Objectives of Study

This study sets out to:

1) Find out whether the people are aware of media campaigns on breast cancer.
2) Find out the perception of the people on media campaigns on breast cancer in the country

3) Ascertain whether media campaigns on breast cancer have any significant influence on the people
4) To examine the level of influence of breast cancer media campaign on people

Research Questions

1. Are Nigerians aware of mass media breast cancer awareness campaigns?
2. What perception do people have on breast cancer campaign in Nigeria?
3. Through which medium do people get information on breast cancer?
4. What level of influence do media campaigns on breast cancer have on the people?

Literature Review

However, there has been limited research about breast cancer in Africa. In the absence of systematic Population-based cancer registration, most information has come from small clinical and pathology case series and the bias inherent in these types of studies has influenced current understanding of the pattern and characteristics of breast cancer in Africa (Farmer and Frenk, 2010). In Nigeria on the other hand, the number of women at risk of breast cancer increased steadily from approximately 24.5 million in 1990 to approximately 40 million in 2010 and is projected to rise to over 50 million by 2020 (Adebamowo and Adekunle: 1999).

Today, societies depend on mass media to deliver health information. Marshall McLuhan calls media "extensions of man." Kreps and Thornton (1992) believe media extend "people's ability to communicate, to speak to others far away, to hear messages, and to see images that would be unavailable without media" (Globalization). The employment of mass media to disseminate health news (or other matters) has, in effect, reduced the world's size. The value of health news is related to what gets reported and how it gets reported. According to Moynihan, Bero, Ross-Degnan, et al. (1999):

> The news media are an important source of information about health and medical therapies, and there is widespread interest in the quality of reporting. Previous studies have identified inaccurate coverage of published scientific papers, overstatement of adverse effects or risks, and evidence of sensationalism. The media can also have a positive public health role, as they did in communicating simple warnings about the connection between Reye's syndrome and the use of aspirin in children).

Despite the potential of news media to perform valuable health-education functions, Moynihan et al. (1999) conclude that media stories about medications continue to be incomplete in their coverage of benefits, risks, and costs of drugs, as well as in reporting financial ties between clinical trial investigators and pharmaceutical manufacturers. To avoid this, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services publication (1989) advises that health-message designers to consider a series of questions relative to choice of channels:

- Which channels are most appropriate for the health problem/issue and message?
- Which channels are most likely to be credible to and accessible by the target audience?
- Which channels fit the program purpose (e.g., inform, influence attitudes, change behavior)?
- Which and how many channels are feasible, considering your time and budget?

This shows that it is not how the message is packaged that makes it effective but the channels in which it is disseminated. Most campaigns have failed not as a result of poor planning or budget, but as a result of using inappropriate channels in message delivery. In most societies (third world countries) modernization has really affected the efficacy of media campaign messages. They depend on modern media alone forgetting that medium usage in most areas is part of their culture. That is why it is advisable to combine both the modern and traditional means (i.e intermix media) to make sure that the essence of carrying out a particular health campaign is achieved maximally.

Theoretical framework

Health Belief Model

Health belief model was propounded by Rosenstock (1966). This model tries to explain beliefs that should be targeted in communication campaigns to cause positive health behaviours. The model specifies that if individuals perceive a negative health outcome to be severe, perceive themselves to be susceptible to it, perceive the benefits to behaviors that reduce the likelihood of that outcome to be high, and perceive the barriers to adopting those behaviors to be low, then the behavior is likely for those individuals to change.

The HBM specifies that individuals' perceptions of four variables can predict their behaviour. First, the model argues that people will be more motivated to act in healthy ways if they believe they are susceptible

to a particular negative health outcome. The model states that people will not act to prevent a negative health outcome that is unlikely to afflict them. For example, women are unlikely to get a mammogram if they believe they are unlikely to develop breast cancer (Hyman, Baker, Ephraim, Moadel, & Philip, 1994)
Second, the model stated that the stronger people's perception of the severity of the negative health outcome, the more they will be motivated to act to avoid that outcome (Rosenstock, 1966). The model includes a cue to action whereby the individual is spurred to adopt the preventative behaviour by some additional element. In Rosenstock's original formulation, signals to action could include external prompt like a mass media campaign or internal cues like a negative change in bodily state.
This model is relevant to this study in the sense that the level of awareness campaigns created by the media on breast cancer can go long way in changing women attitude, belief and perception about breast cancer. It will help spur them to prevent negative health outcome that lead to breast cancer.

Methodology

The research design for this study was survey method. This is because survey method allows the researcher to measure public opinions, attitude and perception, which are dominant among a large population at a particular period (Okoro, 2001). Survey method is appropriate to this study because the work itself focuses on opinion, attitudes and views of people towards awareness creation by the media on breast cancer in Nigeria.

The population of this study is women in the country. The figure of women as provided by the National Population Commission in Nigeria as at November 2011 was 91500000.To calculate the sample size of this study, the Australian calculator was used. The calculator as provided by the National Statistical Service. The sample size of this study was 258 respondents.
In this study, the cluster sampling technique was used. Nigeria was sub-divided into the six existing geopolitical zones. From each of the political zones, one state each was selected to represent the zones. In all, this gave a total of six states. The choice of these states was as a result of their strategic positions in the zones, their commercial inclinations, media concentration and social dispositions. In these states, the state capitals were purposefully selected because it is the seat of state government and high information concentration. The table below gives a picture of how the sampling was done.

Name of country	**Geo-political zones**	**States in each zones**	**Selected states**	**State capitals of selected states**
Nigeria	South-east	Enugu, Imo, Abia, Ebony, Anambra	Imo	Owerri
	South-south	Edo, Delta, Bayelsa, Akwa Ibom, Cross River, Rivers,	Delta	Asaba
	South-west	Ekiti, Osun, Oyo, Ondo, Ogun, Lagos	Lagos	Ikeja
	North-east	Kano, Kaduna, Katsina,	Kaduna	Kaduna
	North-west	Sokoto, Bornu, Gombe, Taraba, Zamfara	Bornu	Maidugiri
	North-central	Kogi, Benue, Niger, Kwara, Nassarawa,	Benue	Markudi

Quota sampling technique was employed to select state from each of the cluster giving a total of 258 involved in the study. Individual respondents were randomly selected.
The questionnaire was used as an instrument for data collection. The instrument has two sections: the demographic and psychographic sections. The demographic section was used to elicit information about the

bio-data of the respondents while the psychographic section focused on the research questions. The questionnaire was drafted in simple sentences consisting of 20 questions. It made use of close and open ended techniques in order to give the respondents enough room to field in responses to the questions.
The instrument, however, was administered with the help of six (6) trained research assistants in six (6) states of the country. A response window of one (1) month was given to the respondents to complete the questionnaire. The data collected was analysed using tables and simple percentages. The reason for the use of tables was to show the relationship between the various responses fielded for the options at the disposal of the respondents. The percentages and tables were care of used for analysis in the study.

Discussion of Findings

Research question 1: Are people aware of mass media breast cancer awareness campaign?

This research question tries to know whether people are aware of mass media breast cancer awareness campaign. This shows that 100% of the respondents are aware of breast cancer. However, table shows that 40 respondents representing 16% got their information regarding breast cancer from friends, 18 respondents representing 7% got theirs from relations, 18 respondents representing 35% got information from NGO's, while 107 respondents representing 42% got theirs from the media.

It also revealed that 252 of the respondents representing 100% agreed that the media is good in creating breast cancer awareness. Table 6 on the other hand, shows that 10 respondents representing 4% agreed that the media is effective in creating breast cancer awareness in Abuja urban, 106 respondents representing 42% said rated the media as good, 76 respondents representing 30% said average, 40 respondents representing 16% said below average, while 20 respondents representing 8% said is poor in creating breast cancer awareness in Abuja urban.

Furthermore, 27 of the respondents representing 11% said that the media present programmes on breast cancer very often, 100 representing 37% said often, 103 respondents representing 41% said not often while 27 respondents representing 11% were indifferent.

Research question 2: What perception do people have on media breast cancer campaign?

This question tries to know how people perceive media breast cancer campaign.
The study shows that 40 of the respondents representing 16% said that the media do not involve the people in their campaign, 90 of the respondents representing 36% said negligence of the grass root, 92 representing 37% indicated lack of accurate report, while 30 of the respondents representing 11% said all of the above. 45 of the respondents representing 18% are very impressed with the performance of the media campaign on breast cancer. 85 respondents representing 34% are impressed, 122 representing 48% are not impressed with the performances of the media campaign on breast cancer so far. While 106 of the respondents representing 42% agreed that media campaign on breast cancer is informative in arresting attention, 50 of the respondents representing 20% said it is educative, 64 of the respondent representing 25% said it is entertaining while 32 representing 13% agreed that it is all of the above.

Research question 3: Through which medium do people get information on breast cancer?

This research question tries to know which particular medium people get information on breast cancer. This study shows that 6% of the respondents said that newspaper frequently carry breast cancer messages; 2% said magazine; 4% said billboard; 26% said television; 55% said radio, while 7% indicated others. Also 14 respondents representing 5% like seeing media campaign message on breast cancer in newspaper, 12 respondent representing 4% said magazine, 124 respondents representing 49% said television, while 106 respondents representing 42% said others. On the other hand, 5% of the respondents said newspaper is more effective on breast cancer campaign; 3% said magazine; 6% indicated billboard; 24% said television; 48% indicated radio, while 14% said others, while 54 of the respondents representing 22% said that they very often listen, view or read breast cancer message on their choice of medium. 100 representing 37% said often, while 103 respondents representing 41% said not often.

Research question 4: What level of influence do media campaigns on breast cancer have on the people?

This research question tries to know the level of influence media campaigns on breast cancer have on the people. It was revealed that 227 respondents representing 90% are motivated by the media to go for breast cancer screening while 25 of the respondents representing 10% are not motivated by the media. Also 222 of the respondents representing 88% agreed that the media has changed people's attitude and behaviour towards

breast cancer, 10 of the respondents representing 4% disagreed, while 20 of the respondent representing 8% are not aware. The media encourage people to take preventive measure on breast cancer .This was established by 252 respondents representing 100%, while 101 of the respondent representing 40% agreed that media messages are very persuasive in encouraging people to take preventive measures, while 142 of the respondents representing 60% said slightly persuasive.

Summary

The main thrust of this study was to find public perception of mass media breast cancer awareness campaign in Nigeria. In doing this, six states in Nigeria were used as a study. Using four research questions that bordered on public perception of mass media breast cancer awareness campaign in Nigeria, looking at the level of awareness, people's perception, medium of information and the level of influence mass media breast cancer awareness campaign has on the people. It was revealed that the media has created awareness on breast cancer to an extent, but there are areas that the media need to address to achieve desired results in their campaign on breast cancer.

Conclusion

The mass media have really changed women's perception, attitude and behaviour towards breast cancer. The level of mass media awareness campaigns encouraged women to take preventive measures. There are areas the media need to address to achieve desired results on breast cancer. These areas includes; involving traditional media in their campaigns strategy, thereby reaching women at the grassroots and avoid centralizing media awareness campaigns at the urban areas.

Recommendations

The following recommendations were made in the light of the major findings.

Media messages on breast cancer should be simple, straightforward, and realistic, but should be articulated on a similar emotional level as the diagnosis or health problem is being understood and digested by women.

Much work needs to be done in order to better understand breast cancer and effective strategies or measures of preventing it.

The concentration of media campaign messages on modern media alone should be discouraged. There is need to combine traditional and modern media in carrying out media campaign on breast cancer.

Media campaign messages should not be centralized at the centre alone. There should be balance dissemination of breast cancer message at grass root level and the centre for desired result.

The availability and richness of a medium should be considered on any media campaign programme.

Government, Non-governmental Organizations and individuals are expected to support media campaign on breast cancer for an effective result of the campaign.

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