

Radio and Sustainable Food Production in Ghana: Citi Fm's Local Rice Campaign in Perspective

Mensah E. O., *Da-Costa C. A, Piyuori I, Arkoh M. E. A, Matey O. A, Badu E. N & Tijani S
Ghana Institute of Journalism, 32nd Gamel Abdul Nasser Road, Osu. P. O. Box 667, Accra

*Corresponding Author: cadacosta@gij.edu.gh opong@yahoo.com

Received: 17/01/2023

Revised: 10/02/2023

Accepted: 12/02/2023

Knowledge on sustainability is essential for behavioural change and sustainable lifestyle aimed at eliminating local and consequently, global challenges. The media, a major social institution charged with the responsibility of protecting public interest and fostering development, has a role through its information service function, to put accurate and relevant information on national issues out there for the consumption of their audiences. It is against this backdrop that this study examined the media as a strategic partner in promoting and sustaining food production in Ghana, using a local rice campaign by Citi FM as a case. Situated within the social responsibility and the agenda setting theories, this study was approached qualitatively, using semi-structured interviews with the Programme Director of Citi FM's local rice campaign and the Head of Communications at the Food and Agricultural Organisation (FAO) Office in Ghana. The study found among other things that, promoting agriculture was a core vision of Citi FM, and by this campaign, local rice production and consumption in Ghana was boosted per the strategies and information provided. However, this effort which aimed at improving the economic fortunes of farmers and reducing unemployment led to the FM station losing advertisement from rice importers. This paper recommends governmental support for sustainability focused media organisations, while urging others, especially local language FM stations to be sustainability oriented, and have as their vision, a commitment to promoting local initiative and fostering development to be able to contribute significantly to the global picture of promoting and attaining the SDGs by 2030.

Keywords: Citi FM, local rice campaign, radio, strategic partner, sustainable food production

INTRODUCTION

Sustainability thinking, living, decision-making and behavioural change emanate from knowledge gained through information. The United Nations (UN) through its projections of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), formally dubbed "Transforming our World - The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (United Nations [UN], 2015), anticipates that development, in all its forms, particularly poverty alleviation and economic development, should not be achieved at the detriment of the ecological environment, hence, countries must adhere to and implement the concept of sustainable development (Stafford-Smith *et al.*, 2016). Comprised of 17 goals and 169 sub-goals, the SDGs are set to guide the Sustainable Development (SD) of all regions including developed and developing countries from 2016 to 2030 (Kurian, 2018; Muff, Kapalka & Dyllick, 2017). To achieve the set goals, stakeholder participation or partnership and awareness creation or education have been identified as major principles that underpin the concept of sustainable development, as espoused in the SDG 17.

Focusing on Goals 2, 12 and 17, this study observes that with SDG 2, the UN is obligated to ending hunger, achieving food security, improving nutrition, and promoting sustainable agriculture by 2030, by committing to double agricultural productivity and the income of small-scale farmers by encouraging improved and sustainable food production systems and practices and using genetically improved seeds (UN, 2015). Nations are supposed to work towards

making sufficient food accessible to all, ending all forms of malnutrition, including achieving internationally agreed targets on stunting and wasting in children below age five by 2025, while also addressing, with urgency, the nutritional needs of adolescent girls, pregnant women, lactating women and the aged. In view of this, SDG 12 also commits the UN and governments to ensuring sustainable production and consumption patterns. By this, governments are committed to ensuring sustainable management and efficient use of natural resources, reducing food wastage by half at the retail and consumer levels and reducing post-harvest losses. It also commits governments to ensure environmentally sound management of chemicals and waste and reduce their release in the environment by encouraging prevention, reduction, recycling, and reuse of waste generated to reduce their impacts on health and environment. Additionally, Goal 12 encourages governments to engage in public education and awareness creation on sustainability (UN, 2015). It is only through education for sustainability that people can obtain sustainable behaviour aimed at conserving the planet's resources through moderating consumption (Verdugo 2012). This role which trumpets the media's responsibility to society relates to Goal 17 which enjoins for partnerships in achieving the SDGs, thus the media can partner with the government in their home countries to create awareness about the SDGs, thereby contributing to the global SDG drive.

Information dissemination is important in every development agenda (Mphaka, 2006). As indicated by United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO 2018), for sustainable development to be achieved, education needs to be enhanced and people need to be made aware and empowered on issues of environmental, social, and economic sustainability and the media has a pivotal role in this. This is even more significant in Ghana because, not many farmers, especially those in rural communities, are aware of the concept of sustainability in line with the UN's declaration. It explains why as part of ensuring sustainable production and consumption, the UN is committed to ensuring that people everywhere have the relevant information about sustainable development and are aware of their role in achieving it (UN, 2015).

Considered as the fourth pillar of democracy, the media is the main source of information for most people (Singh & Nity, 2017), projecting its importance in achieving the SDGs. UNESCO (2015) explains that the media plays a crucial role in raising awareness and providing better understanding of sustainable development. Through its agenda-setting function, the media puts issues of national relevance in the limelight, setting the right agenda, and sparking the right national discourse that foster development (McCombs & Valenzuela, 2007). Through its information service functions, it has the responsibility of putting accurate and relevant information out there for the people on important national issues. Also, as an important tool for advocacy, the media has the responsibility of advocating for the formulation and implementation of the right policies that will ensure the development of the various sectors of the economy and ensuring sustainable development (Wallack 1994). It is believed that, through its public sensitisation function, the media educates and make individuals, communities, and societies conscious of sustainable development, the need for sustainable production and consumption patterns and urge people to be more committed to change and provide a more sustainable future (Bodt, 2007). This helps to reduce the information asymmetry between government and the citizenry. UNESCO (2015) therefore describes the media as an important stakeholder, both as a contributor and a beneficiary, in achieving the SDGs, including sustainable food production.

Of all mass communication tools in Africa, and Ghana in particular, radio is the dominant, in terms of geographical reach and has the highest audiences compared to television (TV), newspapers and other forms of new media (Myers, 2008). Because radio does not necessarily require special cables, the internet and even sometimes electricity to be accessed, it remains the most accessible mass communication tool in Africa, and Myers (2008) believes it is the main source of information for most people, especially in rural communities, where a lot of food production takes place. Also, through technology, radio has

become a two-way medium in that people are able to participate effectively in discussion on such platforms, making it more participatory (Myers, 2008). Mphaka (2006) believes this participatory nature of radio distinguishes it from other mass communication media and coupled with its wide reach, makes it the best media platform for discourse on agricultural issues.

In an exemplary position, Citi FM, a private and commercial radio station based in Accra-Ghana, appears to be capitalising on the powerful influence it wields as a multi-media house to champion local rice consumption which in turn promotes local rice production in Ghana. Aside its general programming which is sustainable development centred, the campaign has been found to be in tune with the SDGs 2, 12 and 17. Using the local rice campaign as a case study, this paper examines the media's role as a strategic partner for sustainable food production in Ghana by casting a focus on the nature of the campaign, the motivation behind it, examine the impact of the campaign on local rice production and consumption in Ghana and finally, the challenges the FM station faced in trying to promote local rice production and consumption.

2.0 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The study was informed by the Social Responsibility and Agenda Setting Theories.

The Social Responsibility and Public Interest Theory

The Social responsibility theory is one of the four theories of the press propounded by Siebert et al. (1963). The others are the libertarian theory, the authoritarian theory, and the soviet communist theory of the press.

The media, based on social responsibility and public interest is charged to provide a truthful, comprehensive, and intelligent account of happenings in a context that gives meaning; serve as a platform for exchange of comment and criticisms, provide a fair representation of various groups in society, to protect, preserve and transmit the goals and values of society and keep the people informed. This simply means that the media, per this theory, performs bigger responsibilities than just informing (Bivin 2004, cited by Topić & Tench, 2018; Idemili, 2008 cited by Obagwu & Idris, 2019). Additionally, the freedom and many privileges that the media enjoy in society, especially in democratic societies demand that they reciprocate this by always working to be responsible to society (Uzuegbunam, 2013). This theory underpins this study because it is imperative that, the media should be responsible and prioritize societal interest over all other interests.

The Agenda Setting Theory

The study is also underpinned by the Agenda-setting theory, which was formally developed by McCombs

and Shaw (1972) when they studied the US Presidential Election of 1968 (Zain, 2014). Their analysis of the news and media coverage found a strong correlation to the opinions held by the voters in Chapel Hill, North Carolina. From their research, they found out that mass media did have an influencing percentage on their frequent audience and consumers (Zain, 2014). McCombs and Shaw (1972) were the first to oppose the idea of the limited impact of mass media (Nowak-Teter, 2018). The media can influence the audience's perceptions, values, focus and priorities (Zain, 2014), by providing thought-provoking issues for consideration.

As explained by McCombs and Reynolds (2002), agenda setting describes the ability of the media to influence the importance placed on the topics of the public agenda. Thus, the theory attempts to explain how the mass media influences certain issues as a public agenda with the belief that the public or media audience react to such issues (Little & Foss, 2009; Zain, 2014). The news media can, thus, affect the citizen's opinions and how they evaluate any given issue (Nowak-Teter, 2018) by transferring salience from the media agenda to the public agenda (McCombs & Valenzuela, 2014). This is important as the public's focus is the public agenda.

In effect, as the media keeps on repeating a particular public issue in the news day after day, it begins to have a greater influence on the audience. The media, therefore, with this influencing ability, should use this to its advantage to set agenda of developmental concern and benefits that generate discourse and set up a platform for issues that serve for the greater good of the country and that which would aid and speed up the development projects of the country, especially, in developing countries like Ghana.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study used the qualitative research methodology to achieve the set objectives. This choice was influenced by the perceived need of in-depth information and detailed analysis of issues to understand the subject. Being exploratory in nature, the study sought to examine the relevance of the media as a strategic partner in food production, thus, there was a need for a research method that will help generate detailed information. Korthari (2004) argues that when a research topic is descriptive and seeks to draw relationships between variables, quantitative design should be used but when the nature of the topic and its purpose are more exploratory, then the qualitative design, which is more flexible and provides opportunity to consider various aspects of the problem, is more appropriate. Qualitative research design, according to Creswell (1998, cited by Srivastava & Thomson, 2009) allows the researcher to build a complex, holistic picture, analyse words, report detailed views of participants, and conduct the study in a natural setting. It will also allow the researchers to analyse issues from the perspective of

individual respondents. As observed by Rubin and Barbie (2016), this design peruses deeper understanding of issues. The design therefore provided the necessary in-depth and exploratory tools essential for the study and provided the opportunity for in-depth analysis and interpretation because it is grounded in the natural phenomenon.

With a population of all media practitioners, both technical and non-technical personnel in Ghana, there was need to select a sample because not all media outlets could be studied. In the process, the study employed the purposive sampling, which is a non-probability sampling method. Unlike probability sampling, this non-probability sampling method affords no basis for estimating the chance that each member of the population is selected (Korthari, 2004). Bryman (2016) explains that purposive sampling means deliberate selection of respondents based on special qualities or the researcher takes into consideration the expertise required for the topic and selects members of the population rightly placed for the study. This helps the researcher(s) get access to important information from sources that otherwise would not have been selected. The study thus purposively selected Citi FM which initiated and rolled out the local rice campaign. The media organization has a total of about 200 technical and non-technical personnel, however, for this study, the Programme Director of the campaign was the main person purposively selected and interviewed. To provide a balanced view, the Head of Communications at the Food and Agricultural Organisation (FAO) Office in Ghana was also interviewed.

The Semi-structured interview was used as the main data collection method in the study. Burns (1997: 329) defines interview as "a verbal interchange, often face to face, though the telephone may be used, in which an interviewer tries to elicit information, beliefs or opinions from another person." It often starts with a set of predetermined questions (semi-structured interview protocol) to guide the interview process (Korthari, 2004; Kumar, 2011). The questions were mainly open-ended to avoid limiting the choice of answers of respondents (Gubrium & Holstein, 2002; McCracken, 1988). It also allowed for a natural and detailed discussion of issues between the interviewee and the interviewers (Srivastava & Thomson, 2009) due to its flexibility (Kumar, 2011). This allows the interviewers to have control over the interview and elicit for detailed information in an exploratory manner, within the predetermined scope of the interview protocol. The interview sessions in the study were recorded with the permission of the interviewees.

The thematic analysis technique was used in analysing the data collected. Braun and Clarke (2012:2) define thematic analysis as "a method for systematically identifying, organizing, and offering insight into patterns of meaning across a set of data". It is simply

a method used to identify, analyse, and report patterns with the data (Salleha *et al.*, 2017). The audio recorded data was transcribed and engaged inductively by first familiarising with the data. Initial codes were assigned to important words and phrases. Ideas having similar codes were grouped and merged, where necessary. Themes were then identified from the various codes. A theme captures important information from the various data that appears to be in a pattern (Braun & Clarke, 2012). The various themes were then reviewed and defined. The thematic analysis technique was preferred for the study because the researchers could analyse and understand the data from the perspectives and experiences of the respondent.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Motivation for Citi FM Local Rice Campaign

Findings of the study reveal that, Citi FM's local rice campaign was motivated by both internal and external factors. Internally, the organisation's vision and commitment to promote agriculture was a key motivating factor, while the plights and challenges of local rice farmers served as the main external factors.

Organisational vision and commitment

From the study, the major motivating factor of the Citi FM local rice campaign was the organisation's vision and commitment to developing agriculture. It was found out that there was an organisational vision and commitment from the ownership through top management and trickling down to the staff to promote Ghana's agricultural sector and maximise its contribution to the economy. It is, therefore, almost a habit that Citi FM dedicates unpaid airtime to giving voice to farmers and researchers, educating people on the opportunities in the sector, promoting local processing, among others. The programme Director of the campaign noted that;

The main motivation behind the campaign is that Citi FM has a position to promote made-in-Ghana businesses and made-in-Ghana production so we do five things; we are promoting local production, local agricultural research, we are promoting job creation, local manufacturing and we are promoting local innovation.

Challenges of the rice industry in Ghana

Another motivation for the campaign was that, it was a response to the many challenges that had bedevilled the local rice industry in Ghana.

Notwithstanding having the capacity, resources and land to produce enough rice than needed, Ghana continues to import high volumes of rice annually, which was estimated at 950 thousand tonnes in 2020 (knoema.com 2021). As a booster to local rice production effort, Citi FM's local rice campaign was also embarked on to highlight these challenges and

advocate for government interventions in terms of policy formulation to improve the fortunes of local rice farmers in Ghana. This is demonstrated in the interview extract below:

We realized that we are importing a lot of rice, yet we have the capacity to produce more than we eat and to also export. So, the Managing Director went to the valley area of northern Ghana. He saw a lot of land and rice farms and the farmers told him their problems. He then decided to help build their industry, so he appointed himself as a made-in-Ghana Rice-Ambassador and that's it. We interviewed him. We also gave reasons why people should support the made in Ghana rice campaign and that is how it started. Leadership is everything. If you have the right leader, it is everything. So, in a lot of spaces, development and change starts with leadership because once the leaders align and also want to do it, the whole team does it and they also lend their image and support to it. It encourages the people doing it to actually do it more. So that is the role he played. [Programme Director, Citi FM]

The challenges identified leading to the low local rice production and the essence of this campaign were multi-faceted, relating partly to regulative and production challenges.

Production challenges

The study found out that some production related challenges to the sustainable production of local rice in Ghana include production waste which is wastage along the agricultural value chain which threatens Ghana's food security. Within the production waste there is input waste which shows a high level of wastage at the input level including land, labour, water, and fertilisers. The produce from farms in Ghana do not, therefore, correlate the level of energy, time and resources invested.

...if you look at the agric sector, there is a lot of waste in the sector, there is a lot of input waste when it comes to say, fertilizer, even water. Places that have irrigation sometimes overuse water because we do not target the use of water very well. [Programmes Director, Citi FM]

Another source of waste identified was the output waste especially at the farm gate, which were largely post-harvest losses which means that a lot of farm produce go waste at the various stages of the food supply chain in Ghana. The study shows that this is due mostly to poor road network, lack of readily available market because Ghanaians have taste for foreign and imported rice, and lack of food processing

at the local level. The interview extracts below demonstrate this:

Now beyond input waste, there is also output waste, and the post-harvest losses. We have a lot of post-harvest losses, the country across board. Aflatoxins are destroying grains, vegetables are getting rotten, tubers also sometimes do not get to the market on time so there is a lot of post-harvest losses... [Programmes Director, Citi FM]

...if you talk about local rice, they will be like oh naa we need the Jasmine's, and we need the, we call it whatever name they want. Once the thing is coming from Abrokyire [abroad], that is the correct one. Meanwhile we have the right, the best one in our country [Head of Communications, FAO]

Other production challenges included bad farming practises such as the use of chemicals that affect the nutrients in the soil and pollute water bodies. It also includes farm practises like slash and burn, overgrazing, etc., that deplete the fertility of the land. Illegal mining, popularly known as 'galamsey' was also identified as a major threat to food security in Ghana. This is shown in the interview extract below:

Some of the very practical way that people will do that is using chemicals and destroying the land. I mean heavy chemicals to destroy the land. Like this galamsey thing that is going on now, the mercury will destroy the land, it will destroy the aquaculture, it would destroy every microorganism that is needed within the soil to help with cultivation and that is why we are saying it needs to be stopped [Head of Communications, FAO]

Unfair Supply chain which negatively affected both farmers and consumers, but favours middlemen was also identified, making the cost of food very high in Ghana. Others, as demonstrated in the interview extract below include unmechanised, subsistent, seasonal and unindustrialised farming

Supply chain is also not fair to farmers largely and consumers. So we have a supply chain where farmers who do a lot of the work earn very little and consumers at the end of the chain pay so much more for the food and the middlemen within the system make all the money from agric but it should be such that farmers earn fair prices for the work they do, consumers also don't have to break their backs to afford food and middlemen also earn fair prices for the work they do in the

supply chain and the value chain [Programme Director, Citi FM]

so much tomatoes, food prices drop, tomato prices drop but we will go into the new season and there is no tomatoes and we all struggle meanwhile we could just encourage some processing of tomato at the local level for us to have voltage industries where we process some tomatoes [Programme Director, Citi FM]

We need to reorient that understanding and focus so that we move away from just the hoe and cutlass. We need to look at it also with the perspective of machinery. We need to look at agriculture mechanisms, and agricultural mechanizations. [Head of Communications, FAO]

Bear in mind that I stated early on that most of the farming that we do here are subsistent okay, they are just planting to feed themselves and that is it [[Head of Communications, FAO]

Regulative challenges

The study identifies a gap in Ghana's food production system in terms of long-term sustainable policies that promote and sustain food production. Most agricultural policies, including the planting for food and jobs (PFJ), one village one dam (1V1D) and the one district one factory (1D1F), the youth in agriculture initiatives, and the fertiliser subsidy program are mostly political and partisan, short term, and unsustainable policies and programs. The country's agricultural policy deficit was also observed in the unregularized land development policies and lack of policies that support local processing as indicated below:

I would say that we are losing by and by, we are losing agriculture purposes and if we go back into history, if you ask the historians, in Accra, there were parts that were earmarked for agricultural purposes solely but if you look at what is happening now, buildings have just sprung up all over... [Head of Communications, FAO]

Low income of rice farmers

The study revealed that Citi FM was also motivated by the low income of rice producers in Ghana, relative to the work they do on the farm. It was realised that because of low patronage of local rice, farmers do not get fair prices for the produce and as such do not earn enough. Additionally, the benchmark value discount policy which makes imported rice 25% cheaper than local rice was also observed to impact negatively on

the income of local rice farmers. This is corroborated by the interview extract below:

Local rice farmers are not making enough money from rice, they are actually not also able to produce enough for the market.

Nutritional value of local rice

From the interviews, it was evident that another factor that triggered the local rice campaign was the high nutritional benefits of locally produced rice. Through their research, management of Citi FM became convinced that locally produced rice was more nutritious than imported rice. This is because it is less processed, maintaining the natural nutrients in their raw form. With this conviction, the station was motivated to promote local rice by sensitising people on the need to patronise and consume local rice. They were convinced that by embarking on the campaign, they were not only creating market for local rice producers but also improving the health of Ghanaians. This is indicated in the interview extract below:

And we said why not, let's highlight the challenges of the rice industry, but more importantly, the nutritional benefits of so that Ghanaians will know that our local rice is more nutritious. They should also know that the industry needs support, that's why we went into that campaign.

The Nature of the Campaign

Sustainable development campaign and promotion, especially on food production, has always been part of the programming of Citi FM, but the local rice campaign started in late October 2019 and lasted about five months, ending in February 2020 on Citi FM. The impact, however, was sustained months after the campaign. It was strategically timed around the Christmas festive season when rice consumption was expected to soar. Though the campaign started on radio, multimedia channels including television (Citi TV), online (Citinewsroom), social media, especially Twitter and outdoor events were exploited to push the local rice agenda to reach a greater audience. Among others, agricultural researchers and extension officers were engaged in discussions on radio to provide expert information on the right local rice seeds, which soil types were best for each, best rice farming practices, rice processing, marketing, health benefits of consuming local rice. Some local rice farmers and dealers were invited for interaction as well. The peak of the campaign was a major local rice bazaar, which span about a month, where local rice farmers and processors showcased their products in packaged bags of all the rice sizes available on the Ghanaian market. Patrons of the event then had the opportunity to be educated on the benefits of consuming local rice, as well as to purchase the local rice at reasonably subsidized prices. This served as a comprehensive

forum, providing in-depth knowledge and information on local rice to Ghanaians, as well as sustainable rice production strategies and competitive strategizing for farmers and dealers. The Programmes Director of the campaign noted thus:

So, you do research, you find opportunities and things you can do, our researchers are leading the way in finding the right seed, the right processes for planting, the right processes for doing this, in the agric sector.

That explains why a lot of times, you hear us talking to researchers about the research they've done and the breakthroughs they have...

... that explains why a lot of times, you hear us talking to SMEs, okay, Ghanaian start-ups and giving them free airtime to talk about the work they do.

.....and we also organized Ghana rice events so that people could come and buy local rice. So, it's a series of say, outdoor events, radio and TV push, social media push....

Impact of the Local Rice Campaign

Undoubtedly, by embarking on the local rice campaign, Citi FM showed commitment in line with the United Nations (UN) to achieve SDG 2, which seeks to ensure access to sufficient food for all, as well as ending malnutrition by increasing agricultural productivity, increasing income of small-scale farmers, encouraging the use of genetically improved seeds, and improving farming methods. This paper finds it evidential that Citi FM's local rice campaign contributed significantly and positively to the elements in this goal, especially in increasing local production of rice and the income of small-scale farmers. It is interesting to note that Ghana now exports rice to some neighbouring countries including Benin, Togo, Gambia, Niger and even Australia. In 2020 when the local rice campaign ended, Ghana exported two hundred and twenty thousand United States Dollars' worth of rice (US\$ 220,000) (Observatory of Economic Complexity (OEC) 2020). Additionally, it now policy for public service institutions in Ghana to give only local rice to their employees as part of end of year packages for the festive season (Business and Financial Times, 2021). By promoting local rice, the campaign resulted in significant increase in the patronage and consumption of local rice, hence creating domestic market for local farmers, which in turn led to high demand and potentially, an increase in the income of farmers as well as motivation for rice farmers to increase production to meet the increasing demand for local rice.

Challenges of the Campaign

It was not all rosy for Citi FM in trying to promote the production and consumption of local rice, despite being convinced that the local rice campaign was towards a worthy course. The study revealed that, while the local rice campaign was generally successful, the campaign, and subsequently, the FM station faced some challenges and antagonism. These include inadequate local rice to meet the increasing demand, lack of support and loss of advertisement.

Inadequate local rice to meet the increasing demand

The study found out that as Citi FM's local rice campaign progressed, demand for local rice increased, giving it a positive impact and outlook. Generally and as observed by the Head of Communications at the Food and Agricultural Organisation (FAO), Ghanaians generally have a high desire and taste for foreign and imported rice, however, as the Programmes Director for the campaign noted, the demand for local rice was so high that there was a shortage in supply. There was not enough local rice to meet the increasing demand for it. People were willing to buy local rice because the campaign caused demand to increase but there was not adequate supply since farmer had not prepared for the boom. This is evident in the extract below:

The main challenge we saw was that the demand for made-in-Ghana rice increased but then there was not enough supply on the market. People still wanted to buy the made-in-Ghana rice but were unable to get some to buy. Production and the availability was inadequate so essentially, it's a lesson for the state that once you've created demand for the product, we must also invest as a state to ensure production and availability of the product because now there is demand.

Lack of support

The study also found out that there was minimal direct support or sponsorship from other organisation, public or private, though the FM station had reached out to some of them to partner in the campaign.

Loss of advertisement

Another challenge Citi FM faced from the campaign to promote local rice was the threat and actual withdrawal of advertisements from the station by some rice importers, as they felt the campaign was a threat to their businesses. Citi FM therefore lost revenue due to the campaign. The interview extract below demonstrates this:

There were some rice importers who were not happy, who said they will boycott our platform because we are saying people should not buy imported rice but should buy only local rice. There were some of them who

were not happy at all, so they withdrew their advertisement with us.

CONCLUSION

The study has spotlighted on the motivation, impact and challenges of a commercial local FM station in Ghana, Citi FM in their quest to promote sustainable production, especially local rice. The study has proven that media organisations need to have the vision and the right leadership to embark on such campaigns to ensure success and sustenance. Citi FM's local rice campaign was not just motivated by the organisational vision and commitment but was initiated by the owner and top management of the organisation. The owner provided leadership, served as an Ambassador, showed commitment to the campaign, and urged the staff along. Though, a local campaign, it was observed to portray a global phenomenon such as helping to achieve the UN's SDG 2 and 12. This is because, the UN in SDG 2 seeks to end hunger and Goal 12 commits to increasing investment into agricultural infrastructure, research, technology, and extension services, especially in developing countries. These were the exact issues the study identified as the challenges of the rice industry which triggered Citi FM's local rice campaign.

By seeking to find solutions to these challenges, Citi FM advocated for increased and proper government support and investment in infrastructure like warehouses, good road network to rice producing communities, formulation and implementation of sustainable agricultural policies, regulate land use, among others. They also promoted sustainable rice farming by engaging researchers on the right seeds, right soil, and conditions for rice farming as well as good farming practices, while also advocating for government investment into agricultural research. Citi FM, through this campaign, did not only increase rice production, promote its consumption, and promote the wellbeing of local rice farmers, but in line with Giovannucci *et al.*'s (2012) assertion, it advocated for the need for farmers to be conscious of the ecosystem while producing.

This paper recommends governmental support for media organisations that commit unpaid airtime to sustainability development issues, especially that of the SDGs. Further, it is recommended that FM stations which operate in the local languages, especially community radios should take up the challenge and reorient their programming to include agricultural and sustainability friendly programmes. This is because most local farmers are located in the rural areas and are more conversant with the local languages. They will thus be better informed in the local languages. Finally, the paper recommends that the campaign should be replicated in the rural areas to target the right audiences for the sustainability message.

References

- Ali, E., Agyekum E., & Adadi, P. (2021). Agriculture for sustainable development: A SWOT-AHP assessment of Ghana's planting for food and jobs initiative. *Sustainability* 13, 628.
- Bodt, T. (2007). *Role of the media in achieving a sustainable society*. Kang Lung: Royal University of Bhutan.
- Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2012). Thematic analysis. In H. Cooper, P.M. Camic, D.L. Long, A.T. Panter, D. Rindskopf & K.J. Sher (Eds), *APA handbook of research methods in psychology, Vol. 2. Research designs: Quantitative, qualitative, neuropsychological, and biological*. American Psychological Association. <https://doi.org/10.1037/13620-000>.
- Bryman, A. (2016). *Social Research Methods* (5th Edition). Oxford University Press.
- Burns, R. (1997). *Introduction to Research Methods* (3rd Edition). Addison Wesley Longman. Australia: South Melbourne.
- Business & Financial Times Online. (2022). *Rice millers push for policy to encourage local rice consumption*. 2 December 2021 issue.
- Giovannucci, D., Scherr, S., Nierenberg, D., Hebebrand, C., Shapiro, J., Milder, J., & Wheeler, K. (2012). *Food and Agriculture: the future of Sustainability: A strategic input to the sustainable development in the 21st Century (SD21) project*. New York: United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Division for Sustainable Development.
- Gubrium, J., & Holstein, J.A. (2002). *Handbook of interview research: context & method*. Thousand Oaks, Calif.: Sage Publications.
- Knoema. (2021) Ghana rice imports quantity, 1960 – 2020 Retrieved from: <https://knoema.com/atlas/Ghana/topics/Agriculture/Trade-Import-Quantity/Rice-imports-quantity>
- Kothari, C.R. (2004). *Research methodology: methods and techniques*. New Delhi: New Age International (P) Ltd., Publishers.
- Kumar, R. (2011). *Research methodology: A step-by-step guide for beginners*. London: Sage.
- Kurian, M. (2018). The water-energy-food nexus and agriculture research for development: the case for integrative modeling via place-based observatories. In *Background Paper, Consultative Group on International Agriculture Research (CGIAR) Science Forum* (Stellenbosch).
- McCombs, M. & Valenzuela, S. (2007). The Agenda-setting theory. *Cuadernos de Información*. ISSN 0717- 8697. DOI: 10.7764/cdi.20.111
- McCombs, M. & Reynolds, A. (2002). News influence on our pictures of the world. In J. Bryant & D. Zillmann (Eds.), *Media effects: Advances in theory and research* (pp. 1–18). Lawrence Erlbaum Associates Publishers.
- McCracken, G.D. (1988). *The long interview*. Newbury Park, California Sage Publications.
- Mphaka, P. (2006). *The impact of community radio on sustainable rural development: a case of Dzimwe and Nkhotokota community radio stations*. DOI-10.13140/RG.2.2.34306.6.
- Muff, K., Kapalka, A., & Dyllick, T. (2017). The gap frame-translating the SDGs into relevant national grand challenges for strategic business opportunities. *International Journal of Management Education* 15, 363–383.
- Myers, M. 2008. *Radio and development in Africa: a concept paper*. Research Centre (IDRC) of Canada. Retrieved A Concept Paper Prepared for the International Development Research Centre (IDRC) of Canada.
- Nowak-Teter, E. (2018). *Agenda-setting theory and the new media*. Maria Curie- Sklodowska University: Lublin.
- Obagwu, U.P. & Idris, M.K. (2019). Social responsibility theory of the press: a critique of its application and constraints. *International Journal of Innovative Research & Development: Nigeria*.
- Observatory of Economic Complexity (OEC). 2020. *Rice in Ghana*. Institutional online publication.
- Oteng-Ababio, M. (2016). The oil is drilled in Takoradi, but the money is counted in Accra': the paradox of plenty in the oil city, Ghana. *Journal of Asian and African Studies* 53(2), 268–284. DOI: 10.1177/0021909616677371
- Salleha, S.I., Alia, N.S.M., Mohd-Yusof, K., & Jamaluddin, H. (2017). Analysing qualitative data systematically using thematic analysis for deodoriser troubleshooting in palm oil refining.
- Singh, G. & Nity. (2017). Role and impact of media on society: A sociological approach with respect to demonetization.
- Rubin, A. & Babbie, E.R. (2016). *Essential research methods for social work*. Boston, MA: Cengage Learning.
- Siebert F, Theodore BP, Theodore P & Wilbur, S (1963). *Four theories of the press: the authoritarian, libertarian, social responsibility, and soviet communist concepts of what the press should be and do*. Chicago: University of Illinois Press.
- Steiner-Asiedu, M, Dittoh S, Newton K.S. & Akotia C. (2017). *Ghana zero hunger strategic review*. Accra; Government of Ghana.
- Srivastava, A. & Thomson, S.B. (2009). Framework analysis: A qualitative methodology for applied policy research. *4 Journal of Administration and Governance* 4(2):72-79.
- Topić, M. & Tench, R. (2018). Evolving responsibility or revolving bias? The role of the media in the anti-sugar debate in the UK press.

- Social Sciences, MDPI, Open Access Journal* 7(10).
- UNESCO. (2018). *Education for sustainable development and the SDGs: Learning to act, learning to achieve*. Paris: UNESCO.
- UNESCO. (2015). *Media in support of sustainable development and a culture of peace*. Jakarta: UNESCO.
- United Nations. (2015). *Transforming our world: the 2030 agenda for sustainable development*. United States. United Nations publications.
- Uzuegbunam, C. (2013). The social responsibility theory of the press: a contemporary review. *A postgraduate seminar paper presented to the Department of Mass Communication*. Faculty of Social Sciences, Nnamdi Azikiwe University Nigeria.
- Verdugo, CV. (2012). The positive psychology of sustainability. *Eviron. Dev. Sustain.* 14(5), 651-666. Doi:10.1007/s10668-012-9346-8.
- Wallack, L. (1994). Media advocacy: a strategy for empowering people and communities. *Journal of Public Health Policy*, 15, 4, 420-436.
- Zain, NRM. (2014) *Agenda setting theory*. International Islamic University of Malaysia: Malaysia.