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DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.4314/ijah.v6i3.7>**Impact of Radio Kogi's Flood Disaster Awareness Campaign  
on Residents of Ibaji Local Government Area of Kogi State,  
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**Abstract**

A major natural disaster that occurred in Nigeria in 2012 was the flooding of many places, including Ibaji Local Government Area of Kogi State. The flood ravaged the area, destroying food and property; and rendering the people homeless. Before, during and after the flood, Radio Kogi Lokoja had carried awareness and warning messages asking those residing by the River Niger bank to relocate. This study sought to ascertain the impact of the warning on the residents of Ibaji. I adopted survey design, using the questionnaire as the instrument for data collection. Pictorial description was also used to show the flooded area. A sample of 622 was derived from the population (127,572), using Cochran formula. 517 of the questionnaire were returned and used. It was found that all the people (100%) listened to radio. Majority (86.7%) listened to the flood disaster warning on Radio Kogi, but 60% of the residents did not relocate out of the flood. While some (44.7) said the impact of the message was average, others (25.7%) said it was too weak to cause an effect. Majority of the respondents (45.6%) felt that Radio Kogi should have adopted a communication strategy that would change people's behaviour and attitude. It was concluded that the people of Ibaji are well exposed to Radio Kogi, but the 2012 flood disaster awareness did not create the needed impact on them. It was therefore recommended among other things that radio content creators should consider the backgrounds of the people before adopting a communication strategy that makes impact. Government should use other means of information dissemination on issues that border on disaster and the social-cultural dispositions of the people. Instead on announcing only on radio, government could dispatch a team of experts to flood-prone communities with concrete and live evidence of the negative effects of the flood. Through behaviour change communication approach, audiences would be better informed to take better actions.

**Key words:** Awareness, flood disaster, Radio Kogi, Ibaji, warning

### Introduction

The primary roles of the mass media are to inform, educate, persuade and entertain the audience. These traditional roles have been identified with the media from inception. Communication is necessary for any meaningful development to take place. Virtually all human activities succeed only when backed up with communication. Asemah, Anum and Edegoh (2013, p.18) observed that information is central to all forms of human activity no matter the field, be it medicine, agriculture, tourism or engineering. The media that carry the information do so in form of print (newspapers and magazines) or electronic (radio and television).

Radio is a medium of mass communication that appeals to the sense of sound only. Through the medium, the listening audiences hear programmes and use the “eye” of their imagination to “see” what is said. Unlike the television, radio is everywhere—at home, in offices, in cars, at places of business, in the farms and in the fishermen’s canoes to give them company. It is for all ages, from teens to seniors (Ottah, 2015). Edegoh, Asemah and Nwamuo (2013, p. 21) restated the reach of radio as “a powerful electronic medium that is utilized in bringing political, economic and social news to any community or group of communities faster than other media.” Radio is an indispensable medium of communication for achieving development in the rural areas, as issues of development are aired to audiences in the form of various programmes and individuals are exposed to happenings in and around their society, through listening to these programmes (Asemah, Anum & Edegoh, 2013). Nwabueze, (2007, p. 65) believed that “radio is the most effective, popular and credible medium for reaching a large and heterogeneous audience.”

Radio is an agent of social mobilization capable of galvanizing citizens to take certain goals based on their awareness of their rights and responsibility to the society. Gathigi (2009) maintained that radio gives people a sense of the world they live in. They use radio to get information and news on what is happening within their locality, region, country, and in the world in general. To some listeners, radio is a companion by providing different forms of entertainment and a discursive space about different issues that affect them both as individuals and as members of a group or community.

There has been series of studies to prove that audiences derive media utility mainly from the information, education and entertainment roles the mass media perform. They are the fourth estate of the realm; thus, they assume another position in-between the various organs of government. To this effect, they play watchdog roles and ensure normalcy in a democratic setting between the leaders and the followers.

We have had instances of the media educating the populace on the best farming practices, health practices, safety measures, electoral processes, among others. For instance, the programme *You and the Law* on Voice of Delta, a radio station in Delta State, Nigeria, enlightens people on their rights and various positions of the law on societal issues. Similarly, *Oga Driver* is a network programme on Radio Nigeria which sensitizes Nigerian audience on best driving and safety practices, plus the regulations of the Federal Road Safety Corps on road use. The information disseminated in the stations is in anticipation of both immediate and delayed feedback in form of adopting better options suggested in the face of prevailing circumstances.

Of important note is the fact that media alert the people of a looming danger. This is usually in collaboration with authorities. For instance, during the infiltration of Ebola disease into Nigeria by Patrick Sawyer, the Nigerian broadcast media, especially the NTA, Radio Nigeria, Channels TV, AIT among others in one accord fought round the clock to ensure that everyone linked with the disease was made public and stopped from spreading it further through isolation. While there are series of studies on those areas, the issue of the flood that ravaged Ibaji Local Government Area of Kogi State especially in 2012 was not thoroughly researched. In fact, there is no available study on the impact of the radio flood disaster warnings on the residents of the area. Now, there is a justification for being specific on Ibaji out of the 21 local government areas of Kogi State. This background on the geographical location of the area would help.

Ibaji Local Government is located along the east of River Niger, directly facing Edo State on the west of the River; and shares boundaries with the eastern states of Anambra and Enugu. The area lies South of Idah in the Niger valley and bounded to the east by River Anambra and the West by River Niger. Ibaji has a land mass of about 12,800 square kilometer, and a population of 127,572 as recorded in the last 2006 national census but presently with over 200, 500 (Apeh, 2014).

The people of Ibaji are mostly Igala speaking people except for migrants from other places especially the Igbo speaking people from Anambra and Enugu who have similar culture, norms, tradition and other characteristics of the Ibaji people. Ibaji also harbours indigenes from other parts of the 36 States. The predominant occupations of the dwellers are farming, hunting, and fishing (Apeh, 2014). Ibaji, according to Ottah and Umar (2016) “are mostly Christians or traditional worshippers with a few people practising the Islamic religion. Ibaji is a rural community lacking basic amenities as electricity, modern health facilities, good roads and pipe borne water. The terrain is very difficult to ply during the rainy season.”

A paramount ruler in the area, His Royal Highness, Ajofe John Egwemi, on the occasion of his 25th anniversary as the Onu (king of) Ibaji on 25 February, 2017, publicly presented a book, *Ibaji*, in which he presents a portrait of Ibaji people as follows:

Contrary to the erroneous belief by some people outside Ibaji Local Government Area that the inhabitants of the area today are off-springs of the defeated Igala soldiers who went to the Benin war centuries back, the correct story is that Ibaji people have come from various parts of the country to settle there. It must however be stated that the majority of the early settlers were of Igala origin who moved downwards in search of better means of livelihood which Ibaji land could provide abundantly. Such means were mighty lakes for fishing from where the name “Ibaji” (meaning those living near water) was derived.

Ibaji are used to the traditional media of communication such as the town crier, the village peers and masquerades among others. Their main source of information from Kogi State media is Radio Kogi Lokoja. Reception of signals is clear in most parts of the area, but very faint in some other parts, especially the far-away Echeno, Odeke, Affa, Obale and Ekanyi. Despite the poor reception in some parts, it can still be said that Radio Kogi is the main means of information reception from the state, considering the fact that the NTA Lokoja, Confluence TV Lokoja, Grace Fm Lokoja and Prime Fm

Lokoja are all based at the State Capital and are not well received in Ibaji. Flooding of Ibaji during the rainy season is a recurrent decimal. Every year, the residents experience flood, but that of 2012 was the heaviest since 1970.

Radio Kogi 94 FM Lokoja was established in 1997. There had been the Kogi State Broadcasting Corporation, which came as the product of the amalgamated booster stations of Radio Benue and Radio Kwara before the creation of Kogi State in 1991. The station has its management complex beside Stella Obasanjo Library, Lokoja, while the transmission base is on mount Pati. It transmits news, entertainment, health programmes, sports, business, politics and some educational programmes. Since the station is owned by the state government, it plays major roles in always saying the side of government in all cases. The station transmits between the hours of 6 o'clock in the morning and 12 midnight. For some reasons however, the station is at times forced to limit its transmission duration to about 4 hour every day.

Meteorological predictions for 2012 said there was going to be a more severe flooding of areas in Nigeria. Upon this prediction and subsequent government sensitization programmes on the looming flood in Kogi State, the station devised an awareness maxim in form of warning during every news programme. At the end of the news headlines, newscasters said "Do you live along the river side? You are warned to relocate to avoid being flooded." This was repeated every day, especially as the flood from the River Niger began to swell, covering farmlands and residential areas of the people.

### **Statement of the Problem**

As a medium for information dissemination and watchdog of society, Radio Kogi, Lokoja, began to alert the settlers along the river to relocate. The effort could be said to be conscious and deliberate with the intention to mitigate the danger of the flood on the victims. It was expected that as they listened to the warning, the people would relocate and look for others places to reside and probably seek means of livelihood in another land. This warning was before, during and even after the flooding of places in Kogi State in general and Ibaji Local Government in particular. The message during every news presentation was very short and clear, but the impact on the residents required investigating and rating.

Despite the warning for those in Ibaji to relocate as the flood loomed and actually swallowed the entire local government, a large number of them paid deaf ears; and those who heeded the relocation advice did not stay long at their chosen camps or temporary residents before returning to their places, especially at the instance of the recession of the flood in November, 2012. Despite recurrent yearly warnings after the 2012 flooding, Ibaji people have remained where they are and have even built many more houses to replace the fallen ones from the flooding, meaning they were not ready to relocate to any other place outside their ancestral home, no matter the devastation of the flood.

There is the need to ascertain the actual degree of the impact of the warning on the Ibaji audience at the time. It is not clear whether the radio warning was well or not well received or whether other factors contributed to their adamancy to the flood disaster warning and relocation option. Importantly, there is the necessity for the understanding of what kind of message and the packaging pattern that would create the needed

reaction from the audience. The problem of this study was the determination of the impact of the Radio Kogi warning to Ibaji people concerning relocating from Ibaji due to heavy flooding and how their reaction put the station to the test of effecting attitude change on the audience.

### Objectives of the Study

1. To determine the level of exposure of the people of Ibaji to the transmissions of Radio Kogi, Lokoja, before, during and after the 2012 flooding.
2. To determine whether they listened to the radio warning and relocation option proffered by the station on the flood of 2012.
3. To ascertain their attitude towards the radio messages on the 2012 flooding.
4. To ascertain the factors that necessitated the refusal of some residents to relocate from Ibaji despite several warnings on Radio Kogi.

### Research Questions

1. What was the level of exposure of the people of Ibaji to the transmissions of Radio Kogi, Lokoja before, during and after the 2012 flooding?
2. Did the people of Ibaji listen to the radio warning and relocation option proffered by the station on the flood of 2012?
3. What was the attitude of Ibaji audiences towards the radio messages on the 2012 flooding?
4. What factors necessitated their refusal to relocate from Ibaji despite several warnings on Radio Kogi?

### Literature Review

A number of factors put together ensure the survival and sustainability of a given society. These factors are interwoven and relate with one another for the overall growth of the people. In this regard, Bittner (1989, p.3) aptly captures the things that ensured society's survival and the central role of communication among all the elements thus:

Society's survival depended on a number of things, among them a *system of communication* through which people could exchange symbols and thus propagate learning at an accelerated rate; a *system of production* to create goods and services both for their needs and for barter and exchange; a *system of defense* to protect their domain against intruders; a method of *member replacement* sufficient to counteract disease and other elements of destruction; and a method of *social control* to maintain order in the society. In the centuries that followed, each of these functional requirements was fulfilled by ever more sophisticated and efficient systems, especially in the use of communication.

The mass media, have major roles to play in ensuring the normal functioning of all other systems that put society together. They play these roles through adequate information dissemination and surveillance of the environment. They are also expected to understand the extent to which their messages have impacted on the audience. For the mass communicator to communicate effectively however, he must put certain factors and elements into consideration. Those factors and elements, according to

Asemah (2011, p. 2), can limit one's communication of messages. They include political, socio-cultural, human, technological and economic factors.

Taking on the socio-cultural factor for instance, communication is an activity that takes place within a social context. On this, Asemah (2011, p. 3) noted that the socio-cultural settings of those involved in the exchange of ideas are very vital to what becomes of the communication interchange. In Africa for instance, most people are rural dwellers and are very familiar with their cultures which they guard jealously. So, if the cultural context of the communication is not put into consideration in any communication situation, it may not be effective after all. To this end, Yaroson and Asemah (2008, p.17) refer to Moemeka who notes that there are five principles that govern all spheres of life, including communication, in the African Society. These are supremacy of the community, the utility of the individual, the sanctity of the authority- the kings, respect for old age and religion as a way of life (Asemah, 2011). In Ibaji Local Government, the people who are predominantly farmers have rich cultures which they would only be comfortable practising in their own domain. It might well be that practising their agriculture, business, religion and local politics in their own land would surpass any form of meteorological or natural challenge such as the flooding of their area.

Technology is key to modern day development. This accounts for everything now going digital in the 21st century. Asemah (2011, p. 4) asserted that:

Modern mass communication technologies have become useful tools for political enlightenment, social mobilization, educational instruction and community participation in national life. More importantly, access to these technologies provides relative advantage to those who possess them in the area of political and business competition. Modern mass communication technologies have a big role to play in the efforts by the third world countries to overcome the high rate of illiteracy, disease, ignorance and malnutrition.

On economic and technological factors, Ibaji still appears to be at the receiving end as there are no basic infrastructures and modern equipment to enhance economic boost. Apart from the farm produce obtained mainly from subsistence agricultural practices, there are no firms or industries to boost commercial activities. There are no good roads; and medical facilities are far from the reach of a vast majority of the population. Under such conditions, one would assume purchasing mass communication receiving gadgets such as radio and television sets is a difficult task.

### **Role of Radio in Creating Awareness**

Radio is a medium of mass communication that appeals only to the sense of sound. When announcers present programmes, they make the listeners to use the eyes of their imagination to see reality in audio-enhanced terms. This makes radio a very powerful medium of communication. Baran (2004, p. 205) averred that "Radio has more than survived; it has prospered by changing the nature of its relationship with its audiences." In addition, radio is local, fragmented, specialized, personal and mobile (Baran, 2004). It is audience-friendly in providing accompaniment while the listener does his business. Edegoh, Asemah and Nwamuo (2013) posited that issues on politics, business, current affairs, etc., are aired to create awareness.

The farmer hangs his radio set on a tree branch while on the farm work; the driver tunes in his car radio kits to a choice station while on the move as he/she and the passengers

listen; the fisherman provides a “sleeping space” for the radio set in the canoe while he goes fishing; the market woman has a set of radio somewhere playing while she busily sells her items; the mechanic or car repairer does his work without forgetting to turn his radio on. The bread and tea vendor, the seller of roasted beef and chicken along the streets would not enjoy the business without the radio. Radio is, of all the mass media, about the cheapest and most easily accessible. This has endeared it to many people, especially the rural populace (Hendy, 2000).

Through adequate and accurate information, education and entertainment, radio triggering actions and reactions towards positive developments. To this end, Okorie (2006, p. 67) pointed out that “the major aim of such communication is to make better the lives of people in a given society economically by encouraging them to understand the development agent, accept to participate by developing their capacity and skill that will enable them change from unprogressive and under developmental conditions of the past to a better condition.” Also, Suraj (2012, p. 225) submitted that “radio awareness programme could significantly change people’s perception of an idea or issue (a practice that brings on board the agenda-setting idea). To change people’s attitude or behaviour towards certain issues that are critical to human existence such as health, environment and agriculture among others, it may involve using the voice recordings of such characters as movie stars, football and other sporting heroes and heroines, business moguls, politicians and music icons. Star actors like Pete Edochie, Kanayo Kanayo, Bob Manuel and Nkem Owo to mention a few have at one time or the other featured on radio to endorse one information or the other. Because of their popularity, the listeners are tempted not only to listen to them but also believe the credibility of the information passed.

Suraj (2012, p. 219) observed that the mass media in form of the radio are an effective way to persuade target audience to adopt new behaviours, or to remind them of critical information. Dhanajaran (2002) held that “Radio is a century old technology that reaches all corners of the world. It is still the leader in mass communication, even with the emergence of the internet in the late 1960’s.” Majority studies claim that there are more radio sets than television sets especially in the developing world of Asia and Africa. Therefore, in terms of ability to create awareness, radio stands a better chance than other media.

### **The 2012 Flood in Ibaji; a Descriptive Approach**

The year 2012 would remain ever fresh in the memories of the people of Ibaji. Growing up as a child in the area affords me the nostalgic ethnographic design to do objective comparative descriptions of the floods in preceding years and that of the year 2012. Being an adventurous photographer equally equips me with a good number of pictures I took during an assessment tour of the area at the peak of the flood on 30 September, 2012. Ibaji, being a river side, usually witnesses the flooding of the farmlands every year between the months of September and November. What the farmers do is to plant crops that would mature for harvest before the arrival of the flowing waters. But the flood of 2012 came much earlier. As early as August, the flood had covered the crops which were yet to yield. In a publication in *the Graphic* (2012) I wrote:

This year, the visitor came as early as August when the Ibaji people were yet to sharpen their knives for harvest. The crops had not matured. Apart from coming too early, the flood... came with a speed that no one had ever

imagined. So, in a twinkle of an eye, the rice, yam, maize, cassava and all other crops of the people got swallowed up... it began to encroach into their settlements until there was no spot left. The people became completely helpless.

In another publication (2013) in which I pictured the aftermath of the flood, I attempted a description of the resilience of Ibaji people against the ravaging flood:

I must say that despite the swelling flood and its ravaging impact, a large number of people refused to move. They chose to remain in the flood round the clock always hoping that it would recede. We saw people on tree tops, we met children at the age brackets of 8 and 12 years swimming at the very spot where they should have been playing football on a normal day. We saw old women inside canoes with some of their domestic animals like goats, fowls and sheep. They were all there and never wanted to leave Ibaji.

Those who could not bear the hardship, especially with the falling of their houses and washing away of their food items, began to take refuge in nearby local government areas, particularly Idah, where they took over all primary school buildings and church premises. As a matter of fact, the primary school authorities had to stop pupils from coming to school within the period in solidarity for the Ibaji flood refugees. But a larger number ignored the threat and the suffering. They ignored the radio warning and refused to relocate. The following pictures were taken on 30 September 2012 in the course of my assessment tour.



**An old man with his family in Iyano village posing for my shot in front of their flooded house**



**Flooded houses**



**Flooded primary school building**



**A woman and her children in a flooded community**



### **Residents on tree branches, A device for safety and survival**

While this situation lasted, Radio Kogi had on its news programme flashed “Do you live along the River Niger? You are warned to relocate.” This awareness was meant for the Ibaji residents to move from their flood-prone zone to safety. Why did a substantial proportion of their population pay deaf ears to the warning? A number of factors were projected and subjected to the test in this study. It could be the people had no access to radio or they had but still preferred the suffering in the flood. It could also be they were hopeful the flood might not go beyond where it was; perhaps it would recede soon. After all, preceding floods came close and receded before they became dangerous. Another conjecture was that the suffering might not be less even if they moved out without food and other effects. Finally, a possible reason was that the people had lost confidence in government, the sponsor of the warning on radio.

### **Theoretical Underpinning**

Two theories have been considered for this study. First is the **Development Media Theory**. Dennis McQuail who propounded the development media theory in 1987 observed that the four normative theories did not consider the development interest of the third world countries, hence the need to come up with additional normative theories that would champion the cause of development, especially in African countries. Okunna (1999) said the theory emerged in the 1980s to fill the void which became increasingly noticeable as the gap between the developed and developing countries, widened. As the gap widened, it became apparent that none of the classical theories of the press was strictly applicable to developing countries, even though the mass media in these countries were operating according to some of the principles of the classical theories.

Development media theory emphasizes the acceptance of economic development and nation building as over-riding objectives and so expects that certain freedoms of the media would be subordinated to these goals. Emphasis is also on collective ends rather than individual ends. The “right to communicate” is also in the foreground of this theory.

The theory holds that the media have a role to play in facilitating the process of development in the developing countries. Media can do this by functioning as

government and private instrument for achieving economic, social, cultural and national growth. Development messages come from the media in the form of news, features, commentaries, editorials, educational programmes and advertising. It also means that radio stations such as Radio Kogi Lokoja should be development-oriented in packaging their messages so that the listeners would derive the benefit of adequate and accurate information. Development communication, an off-shoot of the development media theory could have some gratifications for the audience, and that takes us to the next theory, the uses and gratifications theory.

**Uses and Gratifications Theory** is the second theory adopted for the study. The theory was propounded by Kantz, Blumler & Gurevitch (1974) during the era of the limited effects of the mass media. It called attention to the need for a functional uses and gratifications approach to understanding media effects. The theory stresses that people use the media because of the gratifications they derive from doing so. According to Ojobor (2002), used and gratifications is concerned with the social and psychological theories of needs, which generate expectations of the mass media or other source which leads to differential patterns of media exposure. Since this theory emphasizes the media consumers' perspective, it means in reaching the people, the radio should package its messages in such a manner as to meet the needs of the people. Considering the case at hand, it means Radio Kogi should disseminate the awareness on flood disaster in a way to cater for key information needs of the people such as the dangers of staying in the area in more concrete descriptions.

### Methodology

Survey design was primarily adopted for the study. Observation and questionnaire were adopted as instruments at various stages of the study. I undertook an assessment tour of the area during the flood and was privileged to observe physically the level of destruction caused by the flood. The pictures used in the study were taken during the assessment. Questionnaire was administered on the residents to seek answers to the questions posed.

The population of the area is the people of Ibaji Local Government Area of Kogi State, which is 127,572 as stated in the 2006 census. To obtain the sample for the study, the formula proposed by Cochran (1977) was used. One would arrive at an acceptable sample with a margin error between 1 to 5% and confidence level of 95 to 99%. With a confidence level of 96% and a margin error of 4%, the sample of this study was 622, as calculated below:

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e^2)}$$

Where n = desired sample size

N = Total population

e = Accepted error limit (0.04) on the basis of 96% confidence level.

$$n = \frac{127572}{1+127572(0.04^2)}$$

$$\begin{aligned}
 n &= \frac{127572}{1+127572(0.0016)} \\
 &= \frac{127572}{205.12} \\
 &= 621.93 \\
 &= \mathbf{622 \text{ sample}}
 \end{aligned}$$

Purposive and geographical sampling methods were used to pick the respondents. The basic assumption behind purposive sampling was that with good judgment and appropriate strategy, one could hand-pick the cases to be included in the sample and this developed a sample that was satisfactory in relation to the needs. Geographical sampling was used to ensure an even spread of the samples within the area. There are ten wards in Ibaji Local Government. One community was picked from each of the wards and at least 62 respondents were considered for the administration of the instrument in each community. The breakdown is as follows:

**Table 1: Number of Respondents in Wards and Communities**

Ward	Community	Respondents
Akpanyo	Ayeke	62
Analo	Obale	62
Ayah	Iteh	62
Ejule	Ejule Onu	62
Iyano	Iyano	62
Ujeh	Ujeh	62
Odeke	Odeke	63
Ojila	Echeno	62
Onyedega	Itoduma	62
Unale	Unale	63

The instrument was administered directly and retrieved the same way. Out of 622 copies of the questionnaire administered, 517 copies representing 83% were found usable. Tables were used for data presentation and analyses were in percentages.

**Data Presentation and Analyses**

**Table 2: Demographics of Respondents**

	Options	Frequency	Percentage	Total
<b>Age</b>	18-27	103	20	517 100%
	28-37	150	29	
	38 and above	264	51	
<b>Sex</b>	Male	284	54.9	517 100%
	Female	233	45.1	
<b>Education</b>	No education	77	14.9	517 100%
	Primary/SSCE	284	54.8	

	BA, Bsc, NCE, ND, HND, MA, MSc, PhD	156	30.2	
<b>Occupation</b>	Student	77	14.9	516 100%
	Civil servant	129	24	
	Farming	181	34.8	
	Business	78	15	
	Others	52	10.1	
<b>Marriage</b>	Married	234	45.3	517 100
	Single	182	35.2	
	Widowed	101	19.5	
	Divorced	00	00	

Table 2 above shows the demographic status of respondents in which majority are within the age range of 38 years and above. Most of the respondents are not educated beyond primary and secondary schools and up to 14% of the respondents are not educated at all. The lack of education manifests in the number of civil servants in the area. While 34.8% of the respondents are farmers, only 24% are civil servants.

**Table 3: Respondents Ownership of Radio Sets**

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	349	67.5
No	168	32.5
Total	517	100

Table 3 above reveals that majority of the respondents own radio sets. It became necessary to ascertain their listening habits and sources of accessibility to radio.

**Table 4: Whether Respondents Listen to Radio**

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	517	100
No	00	00
Total	517	100

From Table 4, we realize all the respondents admitted listening to radio at one time or the other. This reaction prompted the next question, which was on their sources of accessibility to radio.

**Table 5: Respondents' Sources of Access to Radio**

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Personal or family radio	289	55.9
Neighbours' sets	102	19.6
Others sources	126	24.4
Total	517	100

From Table 5, majority of the respondents said they had their own sets. Other sources, as used in the table, refers to other possible sources of radio transmission such as cell phones, car radio kits and online sources.

**Table 6: Whether Respondents Listen to Radio Kogi Lokoja**

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	467	90.3
No	50	9.7
Total	517	100

Nearly all the respondents admitted listening to Radio Kogi Lokoja. The frequency with which they listened was the next question.

**Table 7: Frequency of Respondents' Listenership to Radio Kogi Lokoja**

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Every morning and evening	134	26
Morning only	128	24.7
Evening only	112	21.7
Throughout the day	01	0.01
No defined frequency	142	27.5
Total	517	100

Table 7 above shows that the respondents listened to Radio Kogi Lokoja mostly every morning and evening; every morning only and every evening only. This means there is a positive attitude towards listening to Radio Kogi by the respondents.

**Table 8: Whether Respondents Listened to the flood disaster warning on Radio Kogi**

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	448	86.7
No	69	13.3
Total	517	100

Table 8 above reveals that close to all the respondents listened to the flood disaster and relocation warning on Radio Kogi in 2012.

**Table 9: Whether Respondents Relocated from Ibaji as Warned by the Radio**

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	180	34.8
No	310	60
Partially	27	5.2
Total	517	100

From Table 9 above, it was found that most of the respondents defied the relocation advice and remained in the flood. In the next table, possible reasons for their refusal to heed the advice were provided and the response is as follows:

**Table 10: Possible Reasons Why Respondents did not Relocate from Ibaji**

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Residents hoped the flood would soon recede	206	39.8
they chose to stay despite the hardship	128	24.6
they had no confidence in the government that sponsored the announcement	67	13
the message had no behaviour change communication content	52	10.1
They were afraid of theft of their property	64	12.4

**Table 11: Rating of the message on Radio Kogi in terms of impact on the Audience**

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Strong	76	14.7
Average	231	44.7
Weak	133	25.7
No impact	77	14.9
Total	517	100

**Table 12: Suggestions on ways to create Impact through Awareness**

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Adopting Behaviour Change Communication	235	45.6
Organizing periodic seminars in villages	78	15.1
Giving more elaborate explanation on radio	99	19.1
Early notification of residents	71	13.7
Total	517	100

### Discussion

Research Questions 1 and 2 were framed to ascertain the level of exposure of the people of Ibaji Local Government Area of Kogi State to radio transmissions generally and Radio Kogi Lokoja in particular before, during and after the flood of 2012. The questions were also meant to ascertain the listening habit in terms of regularity and consistence; and whether they actually listened to the warning on Radio Kogi in which residents along the river side were asked to vacate their homes. Results show that their exposure to radio programmes was high. This became clear from the ownership of radio and accessibility to programmes. Three hundred and forty-nine respondents (67.5%) had radio sets; and all the respondents (100%) listened to radio, though at different times and intervals ranging from only morning (24.7%); only evening (21.4%); both morning and evening (26%); or without a defined frequency (27.5%). This finding affirms the importance of radio to the rural dwellers. Earlier studies (Kathigi, 2009; Ottah, 2016 and Asemah, Anum and Edegoh, 2013) uphold the role of radio to rural dwellers.

Nearly all the respondents (86.7%) admitted listening to the warning and awareness on radio concerning the flood. Despite the awareness created, 60% of the sample said they

did not relocate from Ibaji; 34.8% relocated while 5.2% said they “partially” relocated. The partial movers were those who transported their valuables out of the flood but did not relocate. There were also “partially displaced” who returned as soon as the flood receded.

Why would people not relocate despite radio warning and eventual flooding of the area? The possible reasons ranged from those who felt that the flood might soon recede (39.8%); those who preferred to stay in the flood despite the suffering (24.6%); those who had no confidence in the government which sponsored the announcement (13%); to those who said the message lacked the power to change their behaviour and attitude (10%).

On the rating of the message on the residents, majority (44.7%) gave an average rating to the radio station; 25% said the message was weak, while 14.9% said it had no impact at all. On better ways to create radio disaster awareness content with impact, most of the respondents (45.6%) said messages that could cause residents to relocate from their fatherland and dwell in another land should be packaged in a manner as to cause behaviour or attitude change. Other suggestions also point to this. For instance, 15% of the respondents advised media experts and the governments sponsoring messages of disaster awareness to organize seminars in would-be affected villages where more concrete facts and figures of the flood disaster would be laid bare to the people. Another group (19.1%) emphasized a more elaborate message on radio than merely asking people to relocate; while other respondents (13.7%) suggested early notification on radio. Association for Educational Communication (2001) emphasizes attitude change communication strategy in these lines:

In the Yale model of attitude change, emphasis is placed on attention, comprehension and acceptance. An individual must attend to and comprehend the communication before acceptance can occur. It is during the attending and comprehending phases that the individual has the opportunity to practice the recommended new opinion. Practice alone does not lead to acceptance, but when combined with incentives and recommendations; embedded in the communication, attitude change is likely.

From the findings, awareness on the flood and the relocation suggestion had no persuasion on the residents of Ibaji. For any media message to be persuasive enough to cause attitude change the communicator must have credibility based on his or her perceived knowledge of the topic; and also, be considered trustworthy. The greater the perceived similarity between the communicator and the audience, the greater the communicator’s effectiveness ([www.psychology.jrank.org](http://www.psychology.jrank.org)).

The message on Radio Kogi on flood disaster in 2012 did not provide options on alternative residences for the people; neither did government promise provision of amenities and safety for relocating residences. For a people to leave their age-long home, additional information on the danger of staying in the flood-prone area ought to have been concretely provided.

### **Conclusion and Recommendations**

From the findings, the people of Ibaji Local Government Area of Kogi State in Nigeria were well exposed to the Radio Kogi warning on the flood that ravaged the area in 2012, but they did not relocate because of the lack of persuasive power in the content.

The station failed to achieve its objectives through the announcements. On the strength of these findings, the following recommendations have been made:

1. Radio content creators should consider the audiences and understand their social, cultural, religious, economic and other backgrounds before adopting a communication strategy that makes impact.
2. Government should encourage the use of other means of information dissemination on issues that border on disaster and the socio-cultural dispositions of the people. Instead on announcing only on radio, government could dispatch a team of experts to flood-prone communities with concrete and live evidence of the negative effects of the flood. Through interactive sessions, questions and answers sessions and demonstrations, maybe in pictorial forms, at town hall and village square or palace meetings, audiences would be better informed to take better actions.
3. Where it becomes impossible to go round all the affected areas, the radio message should be well packaged in such a manner as to warrant persuasion. This could be through corresponding sound tracks, voicing by celebrities in the movies, television shows, politics and heads of corporate organizations; use of local dialects; use of sound effects and repetition for emphasis and agenda setting.
4. Radio Kogi Lokoja and other radio stations should consider adopting the Behaviour Change Communication approach in warning those along the river bank to relocate or adopt other safety measures in flood situations since flooding in the state has become a recurrent phenomenon in the state and Nigeria.

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