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Perception of Akwa Ibom Broadcasting Corporation Radio 90.5FM Coverage of Oil Pipeline Vandalism in Akwa Ibom State among Uyo Residents

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Abstract

This study is an assessment of Akwa Ibom Broadcasting Corporation (Radio 90.5FM) coverage of oil pipeline vandalism in Akwa Ibom State. Survey research method was adopted for the study, with questionnaire as the instrument of data collection. The population of the study is 1,264,638 which comprised residents of Uyo metropolis (world population review). The sample size of 384 was selected based on Philip Meyer's (1979) formula. Findings showed that majority of the respondents perceived AKBC radio 90.5FM programmes on oil theft and pipeline vandalisation as unsatisfactory. The researchers recommended that AKBC radio should embark on sensitisation campaign using programmes aimed at discouraging oil theft and oil pipeline vandalisation.

Keywords: Coverage, Media, Oil, Pipeline, Vandalism

Introduction

The existence and exploration of the Nigerian petroleum (oil) industry dates back to 1960s in the Niger Delta region. Oil which is a major source of Nigerian's revenue has been confronted by two major issues over the years. The issues relate to the prevalence of militancy and oil pipeline vandalism in the Niger Delta region, especially in the Ibeno and Eastern Obolo axis of Akwa Ibom State; while the former has significantly attenuated in the aftermath of the Amnesty deal in 2009 (Okoh, 2013), the later appears to have escalated in incidence and impact.

Akwa Ibom is said to produce about 504,000 barrels per day (BPD) of crude oil, accounting for 32 percent of Nigerian production output. According to the 2013 annual report of the Nigerian Extractive Industry Transparency Initiative (NEITI), Nigeria lost a total of 10.9 Billion US Dollars to oil theft between 2009 and 2011 (NEITI, 2013; Onajo, 2013). According to Ogbeni, a total of 16,083 pipeline breaks were recorded within the last 10 years adding that while 398 pipeline breaks representing 2.4 percent were due to ruptures, the activities of unpatriotic vandals accounted for 15,685 breaks which translated to about 97.5 percent of the total number of cases which electronic media in Niger Delta

failed to carry regular programmes aimed at discouraging oil pipeline vandalism. This loss shows that vandalism is a very big problem in the Nigerian oil sector. The implication of oil pipeline vandalism vis-à-vis Nigeria's security has been vividly demonstrated by its nexus with economic, environmental and humanitarian losses and consequences (Onuoha, 2009).

In a report by *The Guardian* newspaper on 19th August, 2016, police arrested 3 suspected pipeline vandals in Eket, Akwa Ibom State. Also, according to report in *Premium Times* Nigeria, 35 suspected oil pipeline vandals were arrested in Akwa Ibom State. In another report by *punchng.com* on January 14, 2022, reflecting on a recurring failure of leadership over the years, the Nigerian National Petroleum Company reported that "products theft and vandalism have continued to destroy value and put NNPC at disadvantaged competitive position." *The punch* reported that a total of 350 pipeline points were vandalised from January to July 2021, citing the latest data from NNPC. It revealed Port Harcourt area, Rivers State, as the hot bed of pipeline vandalism, followed by Misimi in Ogun State and Kaduna areas. A total of 441 points on petroleum products pipelines were damaged in 2020, compared to 1,484 points in 2019, according to NNPC.

Despite the efforts being put in place by both the federal and state government and non-governmental bodies to put a stop to the incessant vandalism of oil pipeline in the Niger Delta region especially in the Ibeno and Eastern Obolo axis of Akwa Ibom State, the ugly scenario continue to persist on daily basis. The media on her part as agent of communication and social change have done little in her programmes, communication, features and editorials, in discouraging this illegal act (Human Rights Watch, 2003).

It is on this note that this study examined residents assessment of the role AKBC radio (90.5FM) played using their programmes to discourage oil pipeline theft and vandalism and if they do, how often are these programmes aimed at discouraging oil pipeline vandalism and how has these programmes helped to reduce oil theft and vandalism in Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria.

Brief History of Akwa Ibom Broadcasting Corporation AKBC

The Corporation, popularly known by the acronym AKBC was established by Edict No. 4 of April 1988. It comprises the Radio and Television services with the Director General as the Chief Executive Officer supervising and coordinating the activities of the two organs. The mandate of the Corporation as spelt out by the Edict establishing it is to, among other things, promote independent and impartial television and radio broadcasting services in the State and other States of the Federation. The temporary headquarters of the Corporation is at No. 3 Udo Udoma Avenue, Uyo while the transmitting station is at Ntak Inyang, Itam, along Itam/Itu-Calabar Highway.

Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the study were to:

1. Determine the extent to which Uyo residents are exposed to programmes aimed at discouraging oil theft and oil pipeline vandalisation on AKBC radio 90.5FM.

2. Examine the perception on the level of effectiveness of the programmes aimed at discouraging of theft and vandalism on AKBC radio 90.5FM by Uyo residents.
3. Find out the level of satisfaction with the programmes aimed at discouraging oil theft and oil pipeline vandalism on AKBC radio 90.5FM.
4. Determine the influence of the programmes on Uyo residents.

Review of Related Literature

The discovery of crude oil in commercial quantity in Oloibiri in 1956 marked the beginning of the petroleum industry in Nigeria. To facilitate the distribution of crude oil product from the oil rich Niger Delta to other parts of the country, a network of oil pipelines was constructed to inter-link some states at strategic locations (Onuoha, 2016). The multi-product pipelines are used to transport products from the refineries/import receiving jetties to the 22 petroleum storage depots at various places in the country. The storage infrastructure consisting of 22 loading depots linked by pipeline of various diameters has aggregate installed, capacities of 1,266,890 (PMS), 676,400 (DPK), 100,790 (AGO) and 74,000 (ATK) m³tonnes Special Committee on the Review of Petroleum Products Supply Distribution – (SCRPPSD, 2015, p.10).

Oil pipelines are the **medium through which crude oil, natural gas and industrial chemicals** are transported (Chibuzor, Chukwujekwu & Ekene, 2015). Oil pipeline are sensitive facilities that when **destroyed or tampered with by vandals or saboteurs** can lead to catastrophic consequences. Umar & Othmen (2017) describe vandalism as a thoughtful antagonistic behaviour of unsatisfied and corrupt individuals aimed directly to an environmental object with a destructive motive of damaging properties and causing harm. The authorised act of destruction of pipeline to disrupt the supply of petroleum product for self-purpose and or specific group intent for black-market sales in any dimension are prohibited under the Nigerian law.

Oil pipeline vandalism is principally propelled by the criminal intent of the vandals who tampers with oil pipelines in order to drill products for the purpose of making money. Other factors that make people to indulge in pipeline vandalism are widespread poverty, dearth of petroleum products, poor protection of pipelines by security agents and ignorance by vandals on the negative effect of their act. Vidal (2015) further identified the following as causative and predisposing factors of pipeline vandalism in Nigeria. The factors are inordinate ambition to a mass wealth, culture of criminal impunity and corruption, poor policing/protection of pipelines, political sabotage, wide spread poverty, scarcity of petroleum products and flourishing of the oil black market among others.

Pipeline vandalism has resulted in untold hardship which threatens public safety, socio-economic activities, national sustainability and national security of the country, Nigeria. The major effects of pipeline vandalism are as follows:

- a. **Economic Losses:** According to a report issued by NEITI in July 2015. Nigeria lost a whopping sum of 10.9 billion US Dollars to oil theft and vandalism between 2009 to 2011. These huge lost has far reaching implication for economic growth and national security.

- b. **Environmental Degradation:** The 2015 Draft Annual Statistical Bulletin of NNPC shows that oil spills are on the increase in Nigeria, which has a devastated effect on environmental degradation which jeopardises vegetation, land and habitation of the areas affected.
- c. **Loss of Lives and Displacement of Population:** According to Ugwuanyi (2016), over 2,500 lives have been lost to explosion from vandalised pipeline in the past 15 years. Sometimes, the exact figures of the casualties were not got in the event of fire outbreaks, while some incidents were not reported (p.8).
- d. **Pipeline Explosion/Fire Disasters:** Oil pipeline explosion and fire disasters have resulted in loss of livelihood sources, population displacement and destruction of family assets and environmental degradation (Okoli, 2015; Onuoha, 2016).

The surveillance and correlation functions of the mass media are core of the mobilisation against acts of vandalism. The surveillance role is of the opinion that the media provide information to the society which is used in opinion moulding and attitude formation. Also, the correlation role says that the media relate news and happenings in the society.

Radio, plays an integral role in providing its listener with news, music and other programme, while also acting as a voice that represents them as well as the society at large. According to Asekun-Olarinmoye (2013), radio is a single most important media equipment, because it reaches larger audiences anywhere in the world. This is because it is fast, as events occur they are related to the potential audience. Programme of interest therefore have a strong hold on the listener if there is power failure or unavailability of batteries, the listener's day seems incomplete (Kuewumi, 2009).

Alexander (2021) studied audience assessment of radio rivers 99.1FM coverage of oil pipeline vandalism in Rivers State. The study revealed that 86.1% of respondents said they listen to radio Rivers 99.1FM frequently. Also, the findings showed that oil pipeline vandalism programmes were often reported on radio and that the programmes aimed at discouraging oil pipeline vandalism. Another research by Amakiri (2017) studied the impact of media reportage oil pipeline vandalism in Rivers State. The study investigated the positive influence of media reportage in discouraging illegal oil vandalism in Bele community, in Rivers State, Using Wazobia FM 94.1 and Cool FM 95.1. The findings showed that 70% of respondents affirmed that the reduction of illegal oil vandalism in their environment was due to frequent coverage the media. The study further showed that media contents such as documentaries and commentaries help greatly to curtail the vices. These reviewed studies are directly related to the present study in that both studies investigated radio coverage of oil pipeline vandalism in Rivers States, but the point of departure in the present study is on oil producing countries in the Niger Delta region of Akwa Ibom State (Ibena and Eastern Obolo).

Theoretical Framework

This study is anchored on Queer ladder and agenda setting theory.

Queer ladder theory (QLT): A number of theories have been developed by scholars in an attempt to come to terms with the phenomenon of organised crime. These theories include the ethnic succession theory, social control theory, alien conspiracy theory and queer ladder theory (Lyman, 2007); Mallory, 2007). For the purpose of this study, the Queer Ladder theory (QLT) has been adopted. The principal assumptions of QLT can be summarised as follows:

- a. Organised crime is an instrumental behaviour/practice; it is a means to an end.
- b. It is an instrument of social climbing and socio-economic advancement.
- c. It is a means to accumulate wealth and build power (Mallory, 2007).

Applied to this study, QLT enables us to situate the prevalence of organised crime and other acts of criminality in Nigeria. In this regard, the incidence of oil pipeline vandalism in Nigeria has been driven by 'get rich syndrome.' Therefore, this theory is significant to this current research study because the theory tends to expose and to discourage organised crime such as oil pipeline vandalism which is highly prevalent in Akwa Ibom State, especially in Ibeno and Eastern Obolo.

Agenda Setting Theory: The agenda setting theory was propounded by Maxwell McCombs and Donald Shaw in the 1972 (Anaeto, Osifeso & Onabajo, 2008; Asemah, Nwammuo & Nkwam-Uwaoma, 2017). The theory explains the ways the media prioritise issues or set agenda for the public. Media and other institutions prime and frame issues and events for the audience and, therefore, influence and shape public opinion, either intentionally or unintentionally. The questions that task users of the agenda setting theory are: Who sets the media's agenda? How many are the agendas? Do the media also tell us what to think about? These questions bring about the saliency of the media in shaping opinions. Hence, the relevance of this theory to the work includes helping to understand how residents of Uyo shaped their opinions.

Methodology

The researchers adopted the survey method. According to Ben (2008), survey is a research design employed to carefully obtain information from the target population of the study through the aid of questionnaire. The population of the study comprises residents of Uyo metropolis which according to World Population Review is 1,264,638. The sample size for this study was (384) determined based on Philip Meyer's 1979 formula. The cluster sampling technique was used to divide Uyo into various clusters. The clusters are Oron road, Ikot Ekpene road, Abak road, Nwaniba road, and Aka road. Availability sampling was finally used to administer questionnaire on respondents while random sampling technique was used to select respondents for the purpose of administering 384 copies of the questionnaire.

Table 1: Table for determining Sample Size from a given Population

Population	Sample size
1,000,000 - above	384
500,000	381

100,000	383
50,000	381
10,000	370
5,000	357
3,000	341
2,000	322
1,000	278

Source: Krejcie and Morgan (1970): Educational and Psychological Measurement. Out of the 384 copies of questionnaire administered, 365 copies were found useable for the analysis.

Data Presentation and Analysis

Table 2: Exposed to AKBC Radio 90.5FM Programme aimed at discouraging Oil Theft Vandalisation

Frame of Freedom	No. of Respondents	Percentage
we want from Nigeria, just so happy today	265	73
No	100	27
Total	365	100

Table 2 clearly shows that majority of the respondents (73%) agreed they were exposed to AKBC radio 90.5FM programme aimed at discouraging oil theft and vandalism. Thus, subsequent tables will be based on those that answered "yes."

Table 3: Frequency of Exposure to AKBC radio 90.5FM Programme aimed at discouraging Oil Theft and Vandalisation

Option	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Frequently	165	62
Occasionally	100	38
Not at all	0	0
Total	265	100

Table 3 reveals that majority of the (62%) frequently listen to AKBC radio 90.5 FM programme aimed at discouraging oil theft and vandalism.

Table 4: Extent of Exposure to AKBC Radio 90.5FM Programmes aimed at discouraging Oil Theft and Pipeline Vandalisation

Option	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Very great	35	13.2
Great	165	62.2
Undecided	0	0
Little	33	12.5
Very little	32	12.1
Total	265	100

Data gathered and presented in table 4 show that majority of the respondents (62.2%) agreed to a great extent that AKBC radio 90.5FM carry out programmes at discouraging pipeline vandalism. This implies that AKBC radio 90.5FM gives enough airtime on the issue.

Table 5: Level of Effectiveness of the Programme

Option	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Very effective	40	15
Effective	30	11
Undecided	0	0
Less effective	105	40
Not effective	90	34
Total	265	100

Table 5 reveals that majority of the respondents perceived the level of effectiveness of AKBC radio 90.5FM programmes aimed at discouraging oil theft and pipeline vandalism. This implies that the programme is not effective.

Table 6: Level of Satisfaction with the Programme

Option	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Very satisfied	39	15
Satisfied	31	12
Undecided	0	0
Less satisfied	108	41
Not satisfied	87	32
Total	265	100

Data gathered and presented in table 5 show that majority of the respondents were not satisfied with the programmes of AKBC radio 90.5FM aimed at discouraging oil theft and pipeline vandalism.

Table 7: Programmes used by AKBC Radio 90.5FM in discouraging oil Theft and Pipeline Vandalisation

Option	No. of Respondents	Percentage
News programme	135	51
Commentaries	80	30
Documentaries	10	4
Educational programme	20	7.5
All of the above	20	7.5
Total	265	100

Data gathered and presented in table 7 show that majority of the respondents agreed that programme used by AKBC in discouraging all theft and oil pipeline vandalism were news and commentaries.

Table 8: Extent of Influence of the Programme on Uyo Residents

Option	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Very large	50	19
Large	30	11
Undecided/neutral	0	0
Little	110	42
Very little	75	28
Total	265	100

Table 8 shows that majority of the respondents were of the opinion that the extent of influence of the programme by AKBC radio 90.5FM aimed at discouraging oil theft and oil pipeline vandalisation was low. This is based on the fact that majority of the respondents answered to that effect.

Discussion of Findings

Data gathered and presented in table 1 clearly showed that majority of the respondents (73%) agreed they were exposed to AKBC radio 90.5FM programmes aimed at discouraging oil theft and pipeline vandalisation. The findings of this study gives credence to the assertion that radio plays an integral role in providing its listener with news, music and other programmes while acting as a voice that represents them as well as the society at large. The finding of the study also strengthens Olarinmoye's (2013) observation that radio is a single most important media equipment because it reaches larger audiences anywhere in the world. This is because it is fast and as events occur they are related to the potential audience. Also, the finding corroborates the study by Alexander (2021) whose study revealed that so many people listen to Radio Rivers 99.1FM.

On the extent of exposure by Uyo residents to AKBC radio 90.5FM programmes aimed at discouraging oil theft and oil pipeline vandalisation, table 3 shows that majority of the respondents (62.2%) agreed the extent of exposure to AKBC radio was great. Table 2 reveals that majority of the respondents (52%) were frequently exposed to AKBC radio 90.5FM programmes aimed at discouraging oil theft and pipeline vandalisation. The findings of this study corroborates the study by Alexander (2021) whose study revealed that majority of respondents (77.8%) agreed they listen to Radio Rivers 99.1FM frequently. Programme of interest, therefore, has a strong hold on the listener, especially if there is power failure (Kuewumi, 2009).

The findings showed that majority of the respondents (74%) agreed that they perceive the oil theft and oil pipeline vandalisation programmes on AKBC radio 90.5FM as less effective and not effective, respectively. The finding of this study proves wrong the assertion that media programme, commentaries, features and editorials both in private and government-owned media outlets have been tailored towards discouraging the raging and incessant nature of oil pipeline vandalism (Gaba, 2017 p. 45). The findings of this study proves right the claim by Human Rights Watch (2003) that the media have done little in her programmes, commentaries, features and editorials in discouraging this illegal act.

The data showed that majority of the respondents (73%) said that the level of satisfaction to AKBC radio programmes on oil pipeline theft and vandalism was less effective. The findings of this study gives credence to Gaba (2017) who noted that media programmes commentaries, features and editorials have been tailored in discouraging the raging and the incessant nature of oil pipeline vandalism. The findings also showed that AKBC radio 90.5FM programmes aimed at discouraging oil theft and oil pipeline vandalism did not influence Uyo residents. The finding of this study proves the assumption of the Queer Ladder theory that organised crime thrives in contexts where government capacity to dictate and sanction crime is poor, where public corruption is endemic and where legitimate livelihood opportunities are slim (Nwoye, 2000; Lyman, 2007).

Conclusion

The researchers conclude that AKBC radio 90.5FM has not done enough through various programmes to contribute immensely to the eradication of oil pipeline vandalism in Akwa Ibom State and by extension, Nigeria. Thus, the following recommendations are hereby given:

1. AKBC radio 90.5FM should embark on sensitisation campaign using various programme aimed at discouraging oil theft and oil pipeline vandalism so as to enlighten members of the public on the dangers posed by oil pipeline vandalism.
2. Radio station programme planners as a matter of urgency should development persuasive programmes that will effectively communicate messages aimed at discourage oil theft/pipeline vandalism in order to eliminate the menace posed by oil theft/pipeline vandalism.

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