

Mass Media Messages and the Prevention of Malaria Fever in Sumaila Local Government Area of Kano State

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The study examine the role mass media play in preventing malaria endemic among the pregnant women in Sumaila General Hospital, one of the 44 local governments in Kano State Nigeria. Malaria is among the deadly disease threatening the lives of more than one third of the world's population (WHO, 2001). Quantitative (survey) methodology was considered and development media theory was adopted. Findings revealed that majority of respondents were highly influenced by the messages the received on how to prevent themselves from malaria via mass media. According to the findings mass media play pivotal role in health communication and a lot of people received the messages on health prevention from mass media. The study therefore recommends that frequent messages via mass media should be used to remind people on how to prevent themselves from the disease. These include behavior change communication.

Keywords:

Mass media,
Malaria, Health
communication,
Behavior change
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Background to the Study

Communication is referred to the means in which information is transferred from one person to another (Folarin 2005), communication can be termed as a process that involves all aspects of act of transmitting messaging from channels that link people. In his own words, mass media is the means through which information is passed from the receiver to the sender. The mass media is a tool of mass communication that is used in disseminating information to large number of people. It has indeed the tool used in disseminating information to larger number of populace. (Dominick 2009: 435 - 436) observed that "every part of the world depends on the media for cultural, social, economic, political and educational growth and all other aspect of life."

Media which refer to the many forms of communication that facilitate the transmission of information to large heterogeneous group of people have developed through history that started with evolution of newspapers at the early beginning of the 17th Century through film in the late 1800 and radio in 1922, television in 1929, then new media in 20th Century. The media can therefore metamorphose from the print media era newspaper, magazines, and books to the conventional electronic media (radio and television) and then emerging the new media era which largely depends on internet (Baran, 2002; Dominick 2009).

According to the National Institution of Allergies and Infectious Diseases (NIAID) (2001) define malaria as "disease that caused by parasite that lives most of its life in human and part in mosquitoes." Malaria caused by a plasmodium parasite that can be transmitted by the bite of infected mosquitoes. Studies indicated that over 219 million cases of malaria was discovered in 87 countries by the year 2017, Nigeria inclusive. The estimated death of malaria cases was figure at 435000 in the year 2008.

Infants, children under 5 years old age; pregnant women, non-immune migrants and HIV/AIDS patients are at higher risk of contracting malaria. According to the World Health Organization, malaria is among the deadly disease threatening the lives of more than one third of the world's population (World Health Organization Report 2001). Mass media campaign can help to reduce the spread of malaria and can disseminate more information especially to the rural inhabitant to fight against the disease. These can be associated by the use of insecticide net, and maintaining healthy environment (Hartman 2010).

Statement of the Problems

Many people are dying every day due to malaria fever. All the deaths are associated with lack of proper information on how to prevent themselves from mosquito bites. Dirty water and lack of drainage system are also the main causes of malaria in most developing countries. Information via mass media is needed to reduce the number of death caused by malaria.

Objectives of Study

1. To know the role mass media, play in protecting malaria fever among residents of Sumaila Local Government.

2. To know if residents of Sumaila Local Government receive proper messages via mass media on how to prevent themselves from malaria fever.
3. To know the most suitable medium use by these people in addressing malaria endemic.

Research Questions

1. What role does mass media play in preventing malaria among the residents of Sumaila Local Government?
2. Do people of Sumaila Local Government receive messages on how to deal with malaria fever?
3. Which medium do they prefer most in addressing malaria endemic?

Scope of the Study

Study is limited to Sumaila Local Government with specific reference to Sumaila General Hospital only pregnant women attending the hospital were sampled for the study.

Literature Review

Malaria fever is among the deadly diseases that is transmitted through the bites of anopheles' mosquitoes. And the intensity of transmission depends on some related factors which are often depend on the parasite, the vector, the human host and the environment. The transmission differ sometimes depends on climatic conditions that may affect the number and survival of mosquitoes such as rainfall, temperature and humidity.

But in some instance human immunity is another factor. The parasites grow and multiply in the red blood cells. And then the infected blood cells burst releasing more parasite into the blood. The infected blood cells usually burst at every 48 – 72 hours, and each time they burst the infected person will have a fever, chills and other related symptoms. The most common symptoms of malaria are fever, headache, chills, nausea and vomiting, fatigue and sweating. Most countries in the world including South Africa are on the verge of eliminating malaria, but Nigeria are still struggling to fight the disease by procuring drugs for treatment (WHO, 2010; Ibidapo, 2005; Panter Clarke, Lamos, Lindsay 2006; Sani Olaleken, Ghose, 2018).

In its effort to reduce morbidity and mortality burden of malaria in the country, Cameroon and its health partners embark on a National Communication Campaign in July 2011 to ensure that the nets provided were delivered and would be used consistently to close a net use gap. After the campaign the result shows high success in the use of net (Hannah, 2013).

In another study by Ankomoh, Adebayo, Arogundade, Anyani Nwokolo, Inyang, Oladipupo, Ipadeola and Meremiku (2014) on the effect of mass media campaign on the use of insecticide treated bed nets among pregnant women in Nigeria. The result discovered that, pregnant women who listened to mass media campaign were more

likely to adopt strategies to protect themselves from malaria. They finally suggest on behavior change communication messages in promoting net use among pregnant women.

The World Health Organization (WHO) provided several measures and tools which include the use of Insecticide Treated Net (ITNs) and the provision of anti-malaria drugs. In Africa, the efficacy and the overall success of these programme will largely depend on the awareness campaign (Samadoulougou, Percy, Yey Kirakoya (2017). The print and broadcast media contributed immensely in behavior change communication in many developing countries (Ankoma, Adebayo, AMgundade, Anyanti, Aiwokolo in Yang, Meremiki, Ipadeola, 2014).

Mass media contributed immensely for transmission of health knowledge and have been the subject of behavior change (Mozumbden, Marathe 2017). In a study conducted by Sani, Olaleken, and Ghose (2018) on mass media exposure and its impact on malaria prevention among adult women in sub-Saharan Africa found that the younger generation are more expose to mass media and even health related information. These worlds help them to become more aware of their health needs and even their environment then findings also discovered that those with low education were found to be less adherent to malaria prevention. Several literatures indicated the correlation of mass media campaign and malaria prevention which was found to be very scarce in the developing countries.

Aniebona (2000), posit that broadcast media is powerful tool and effective instrument in addressing the problems related to malaria.

Radio and television are important instrument in educating people especially in health communication (Gambo, 2008). He further posit that broadcast media are effective way to persuade people to adopt new behavior change and even remind them on critical information. Beside highlighting and disseminating information about malaria and its symptoms, treatment and prevention. Mass media can disseminate more information especially to the rural inhabitant to high against major causes of malaria endemic especially in the use of insecticide net and maintaining a clean and health environment (Mozumder and Marathe 2007).

Most malaria endemic country in the Western Pacific region have been very successful at reducing malaria cases and death over the past decades (WHO 2010). Studies in Cameroon, Gambia, Ghana, Malawi and Nigeria expressed the gigantic role of media information on health especially through traditional mass media (WHO 2010, Bowen, 2013, Ghana, Demographic Health Survey, 2009). Gambia put more emphasis on songs to capture the attention of the youth and it was found to be more effective in encouraging community members to own their mosquito nets (Paneter, Brick, Clarke, Lomos, Pinder, Lindsay 2005).

Theoretical Framework

The study used development media theory which was formulated by McQuail in 1989. The theory seeks to explain the normative behavior of the press in developing countries thus development media theory conceptualize the relationship between the mass media and political system in developing countries thus the theory was basically propounded to reflect developing nations' Asamah (2011) simplified the theory thus it is all about positive engagement and usage of the media in national development. According to the theory the media should accept and carryout positive development tasks in line with national established policy. The media must carry health development messages for sustainable health development in countries like Nigeria malaria endemic inclusive due to its.

Methodology

The study uses survey research as its methodology. According Babbie (2001), survey is the most commonly used research technique in behavioural social science for collecting and analyzing social data via highly structured questionnaires in order to obtain information from large members of respondents presumed to be representative of a specific population. The population for the study is made up of the entire people of Sumaila General Hospital. Among the various methods of gathering survey data this study used questionnaire as an instrument of collecting data. Purposive sampling techniques was used in selecting the respondent's pregnant women were sampled as respondents for the study. Three hundred respondents were sampled but only 244 respondents were used for the study based on the returned questionnaires.

Data presentation

Table 1: Gender of respondents

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	103	42.2%
Female	141	57.8%
Total	244	100%

Source: Field Survey 2022

The table above shows the gender of respondents with 103 respondents representing 42.2% as male and 141 representing 57.8% as female. These shows that female respondents have the highest percentage.

Table 2: Age of respondents

Age range	Frequency	Percentage
20 - 25	42	17.2%
25 - 30	70	28.7%
31 - 35	95	38.9%
36 - above	37	15.2%
Total	244	100%

Source: Field Survey 2022

Table two shows the age bracket of respondents 26 – 30 have the highest percentage of 38.9%.

Table 3: Do you use mass media?

	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	239	97.95%
No	5	2.05%
Total	244	100%

Source: Field Survey 2022

Table 3 shows that 239 respondents representing 97.95% are using mass media only respondents 5 representing 2.05% said no.

Table 4: How often do you use mass media?

	Frequency	Percentage
All of the time	191	78.28%
Some of the time	39	15.98%
Rarely	14	5.74%
Total	244	100%

Source: Field Survey 2022

Table 4 show that 191 respondents representing 78.28% use mass media all the time, 39 representing 16.98% use it some of the time, while 14 representing 5.74% on rare occasion.

Table 5: Do you use mosquito net after mass media messages?

	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	244	100%
No	0	0%
Total	244	100%

Source: Field Survey 2022

Table 6: Do the message on mass media affected you on how to manage malaria

	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	239	97.95%
No	05	2.05%
Total	244	100%

Source: Field Survey 2022

Table 6 shows that majority of the respondents with 97.97% were highly influenced with the messages they come across on malaria via mass media.

Table 7: Which mass media do you always prefer?

	Frequency	Percentage
Radio	104	42.62%
Television	53	21.72%
Print media	8	3.28%
Social media	42	17.21%
Others	37	15.16%
Total	244	100%

Source: Field Survey 2022

Table seven shows that 104 representing 42.62% prefer radio while 53 representing 21.72% prefer television, 8 respondents representing 3.28% prefer print media, 42 representing 17.21% prefer social media and 37 representing 15.16% are with others.

Table 8: Do the information on how to prevent yourself from malaria impact positively negatively?

	Frequency	Percentage
Positively	244	100%
Negatively	-	-
Total	244	100%

Source: Field Survey 2022

Table 8 shows that all the respondents representing 91.6% confirmed that the information they received on mass media regarding malaria prevention were positive impactful.

Findings

The above finding shows that majority of respondents were influenced with mass media messages on how to prevent themselves from malaria endemic. Findings also shows that majority of respondents prefer radio messages than any other medium due to its accessibility and affordability. The messages they received were highly impacted on their lives because majority of respondents says they strictly use mosquito nets as a result of the messages they received from mass media to always use mosquito to nets in order to prevent themselves from malaria fever we can deduce that mass media play pivotal role in health communication, a lot of people received the messages on health prevention from mass media. Mass media remain a key component and veritable tool in the campaign toward sustainable health development in Nigeria.

1. The findings are related to the theory adopted because media should give priority in news and information that are in line with national established policy especially for sustainable health development in developing countries.
2. The study recommended that frequent message via mass media should be use to remind people about the danger of the disease and how to prevent themselves. Mass media should produce programmes that are more interactive or audience participatory that are live and give opportunity for people to call and ask questions.

3. Government and NGOs should help the media organization to produce and air programmes on health prevention.

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