



Broadcast Media Coverage and Audience Members' Attitudes to Food Security Issues in Akwa Ibom State

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Abstract

This study examined how broadcast media programmes influence the attitudes of Akwa Ibom State residents toward food security. It adopted the survey research design. The population of the study was 7,738,200 people, from which the sample size of 384 was determined using the Philip Meyer sampling guide. The respondents were sampled through a multistage sampling technique, and the data for the study were collected using a structured questionnaire and interview guide. The questionnaire data were analysed with frequency counts and weighted mean analyses, while the interview data were handled using thematic analysis. The findings of this study showed that the majority (54%) of the respondents were confident about the accuracy and reliability of information broadcast on food security issues, and 73% were certain of the broadcast media's role in addressing food security issues. Also, the study showed that 57% were positive about the potential of high-quality broadcast media programmes to address food security issues. Furthermore, 95% of the respondents reported high exposure to food security issues in broadcast media programmes, particularly those related to food shortages caused by droughts, floods, conflict, political unrest, economic instability, and climate change, all of which disrupt food production, distribution, and pricing. Similarly, the majority (61%) noted that broadcast media programmes on food security were very helpful in providing an understanding of food security and its relevance to their daily lives, 57% affirmed that broadcast media programmes

were successful, to some extent, in raising awareness about food availability in Akwa Ibom State. The findings led to the conclusion that while broadcast media have made significant strides in educating the respondents about food security, certain gaps exist. Recommendations were made, among other things, that there should be a continuous and more intensive effort to enhance media credibility by ensuring that food security programmes are backed by verified data from reliable sources.

Keywords: Development Communication, Agriculture, Survey, Agenda Setting/Framing Theories, Electronic Media

Introduction

Food is a basic necessity of life, and access to sufficient, safe, and nutritious food is essential for the health and well-being of individuals and communities. This situation highlights what the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) of the United Nations described as food security during the World Food Conference in Rome, Italy, in 1974. The conference, which brought together representatives from more than 150 countries to discuss the global food crisis and how to address it, was held in response to the issue that had left millions of people facing hunger and starvation. At the conference, FAO defined food security as the capacity of all people to obtain adequate quantity and quality food for a healthy and active life. Since then, the concept of food security has evolved and been refined to include different aspects such as food access, food quality, and food consumption.

As a complex issue that affects people in many ways, food security has continued to be a critical subject of grave concern globally, encapsulating the idea that everyone should have unfailing access to sufficient, safe, and nutritious food. This has been so because beyond being considered a basic necessity, food security serves as the cornerstone for individual well-being, economic stability, and societal resilience and sustenance. In this case, ensuring that communities can consistently meet their nutritional needs fosters healthier populations and builds the foundation for social and economic prosperity over a long period.

The United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) (2021) states that food security involves not only the availability and accessibility of food but also its use and stability over time. In other words, the idea of food security focuses on four cardinal points: food availability, accessibility, use, and stability across many communities, states, and nations of the world. In Nigeria, food security is increasingly becoming an issue with stern consequences that threaten the lives of its



citizens. Currently, the prices of staple foods (Rice, Gari, Beans, Yam, Plantain, etc.) in different regions of the country are skyrocketing daily, pegging the inflation rate in Nigeria at over 27.4% in a single year (between October, 2022 and October, 2025) when compared to other nations (National Bureau of Statistics (NBS), 2025). This reality, significantly, reflects the nature of the agricultural system in Nigeria and the food production and distribution levels across the communities, regions, and states in the country.

In Akwa Ibom State, specifically, farmers generally face complex and multifaceted challenges, ranging from limited access to agricultural resources (farmlands, improved varieties of seedlings, etc.), market volatility (rising difficulties in accessing viable markets for products), climate change impact (flooding, poor soil nutrients, etc), theft from community people, to inadequate government assistance such as unavailability of loans, grants, subsidised fertilisers, insecticides, pesticides, immunisation (vaccines), and many others. Unfortunately, these challenges are worsened by a lack of adequate support and information reaching the various farming communities in the state. This ugly reality indicates a need for urgent remedial actions to avert looming chaos and crises that may further arise in Nigeria, including Akwa Ibom State (Nkeme & Nya, 2023).

In the face of these food security issues, studies (Nkeme & Nya (2023), and Hudson, Leclair, Pelletier, and Sullivan, (2017) have underscored the critical role of effective communication in addressing these complex issues and shaping agricultural practices. Communication using different mass media channels, according to these scholars, are effective tools to disseminate information about innovations in agriculture and modern farming practices that influence agricultural production positively across the world. Abari & Kenechukwu (2021) stress the imperative of agricultural communication by noting that communication breakdowns (that means lack or insufficient communication) within farming communities have a significant, negative impact on the uptake of essential agricultural knowledge and resources crucial for sustainable practices and food security.

In Akwa Ibom State, the broadcast media (radio and television) have played a crucial role in addressing food security issues by informing the public about government policies and programmes, providing educational information on food production and consumption, and promoting healthy eating habits (Effiong and Iheme, 2024). The broadcast media have played a vital role in food security by informing the public about government policies and programmes aimed at improving food security. The Nigerian government, for example, has implemented

several initiatives such as the National Food Security Plan and the Agricultural Transformation Agenda to improve food production and distribution.

Furthermore, the Akwa Ibom State government (from time to time) has, through the State Ministry of Agriculture, implemented several programmes and initiatives aimed at improving food security in the State. These include investments in agriculture, the provision of farm inputs and equipment, and the promotion of agricultural production and processing. The state government has also partnered with international organisations and development agencies to improve food security and livelihoods. These initiatives are designed to address issues such as food shortages, high food prices, and malnutrition (Ugonna, 2020).

In addition to providing information on government policies and programmes, Suemo et al. (2022) stress that the broadcast media have also played a crucial role in educating the public about food production and consumption. Through their programmes, the radio and television have provided valuable information on topics such as sustainable farming practices, food preservation, and nutrition. This knowledge is aimed at improving food production and reducing food wastage, which has led to increased food security. A radio programme called "Agric and You" (on Inspiration FM), for example, has been instrumental in educating farmers on new farming techniques and improving their access to markets.

Generally, the role of the broadcast media in food security in Akwa Ibom State has been multifaceted and significant. Through information sharing, education, and promotion of healthy eating habits, the media may have helped to reduce food insecurity and improve the health and well-being of the population. However, more work needs to be done to ensure that people in the state have access to adequate and nutritious food. The media can play an important role in advocating policy changes and raising public awareness. Beyond this, the media also, to any extent possible, are said to play a significant role in shaping audience members' attitudes towards food security matters, especially as they (the media) direct discussions on different issues related to food security, such as food availability, accessibility and stability.

From the foregoing, it means that tailored communication strategies are pivotal to bridging the gap between available resources and the farmers' needs. The study by Kantar et al. (2023) emphasises the necessity of context-specific, participatory and intentional agricultural science communication approaches that engage farmers directly in dialogue, especially among presenters. However, in Akwa Ibom State, the absence of such strategic agricultural communication may have resulted in a significant disconnect between stakeholders and the farming populace, impeding progress towards sustainable agricultural practices. Therefore, the uptake

of food security issues within Akwa Ibom State, one can say, is reasonably dependent on the effectiveness of communication channels and strategies employed. Going by the above, there appears to be a connection involving intentional, strategic communication, positive attitudes and taking action(s) about food security issues within Akwa Ibom State by various stakeholders. This has made this study important, as it examines the influence of broadcast media programmes on the attitudes of audience members towards food security in Akwa Ibom State.

Statement of the Problem

The performance of the mass media in Nigeria (whether broadcast, print or social media) is one of the key concerns in the sphere of public and academic discourses. The broadcast media, for instance, have (through their programmes) provided viable platforms for discussions on issues of public interest such as those related to food security. Observation shows that Comfort FM, Planet FM, Inspiration FM, Spectrum TV, ABN, and Akwa Ibom State Broadcasting Corporation (AKBC) TV in Akwa Ibom State have provided the opportunity for the stakeholders such as farmers, agriculture experts, and others to pilot discussions that focus on food sufficiency (availability, accessibility, challenges faced by farmers, communication gaps between farmers (especially those in rural communities and stakeholders, etc.) in Akwa Ibom State. The government of Akwa Ibom State has taken some remedial steps towards food sufficiency in the state, such as the establishment of the Akwa Hatchery and Rice Mill and the provision of improved seedlings, to mention but a few in 2020. Whether there is any connection between media messages on food security issues and residents' attitudes (including those in government) towards food insecurity issues in the State is uncertain. The urge to generate empirical data to fill this research gap motivated this study and constituted the main problems of this study. Doing this led to the question: to what extent do the selected broadcast media programmes influence Akwa Ibom State residents' attitudes towards food security issues?

Objectives of the Study

The objectives of this study were to:

- i. find out the attitudes of Akwa Ibom State residents towards broadcast media programmes on food security issues in the State;
- ii. highlight the prevailing food security issues in selected broadcast media that residents in Akwa Ibom State are exposed to;

- iii. ascertain how the selected broadcast media programmes on food security influence awareness of food availability among residents in Akwa Ibom State;
- iv. examine how the selected broadcast media programmes on food security influence the knowledge of food accessibility among residents in Akwa Ibom State;
- v. determine how the selected broadcast media programmes on food security influence the perception of food stability among residents in Akwa Ibom State; and
- vi. highlight the challenges faced by the state farmers in ensuring food security as conveyed in the selected broadcast media programmes.

Literature Review

Audience Attitude

Audience attitude, generally, refers to the predispositions and evaluative judgements that people (individuals or groups) hold towards particular subjects, objects, or messages within a communication context. In media discourse, attitudes significantly influence how messages are received, interpreted, and responded to by the audience. Therefore, a clear understanding of audience attitudes is crucial for effective communication, as it allows for the tailoring of messages to align with the audience's beliefs, feelings, and behavioural intentions. Arising from this, scholars have offered different definitions to enable people to understand the concept. At the basic level, attitudes are often conceptualised as comprising cognitive, affective, and behavioural components. Kaiser and Wilson (2019) state that attitudes encompass beliefs (cognitive), feelings (affective), and intentions (behavioural), which suggests a multifaceted structure. This tripartite model implies that an individual's attitude towards a subject is shaped by their thoughts about it, their emotional responses, and their readiness to act in a certain way.

Scholars have expanded the concept of attitude and explored the stability and accessibility of attitudes in predicting future behaviour. A meta-analysis by Kaiser et al. (2019) shows that attitudes are more likely to predict future behaviour when they are easily recalled and stable over time. The scholars underscore the importance

of attitude strength in behavioural prediction, indicating that deeply ingrained attitudes are more influential in guiding actions. Beyond these definitions, the relationship between attitudes and behaviour has been a focal point in social psychology. While traditional models suggest that changing attitudes can lead to behavioural change, recent studies indicate that this approach may overlook the role of habits. A review by Wood and R  nger (2018) highlights that habits can serve as boundary conditions for attitude-directed interventions, suggesting that merely altering attitudes may be insufficient for sustained behavioural change.

In media and communication, audience attitudes are essential for effective message design and delivery. Welbers et al. (2024), in examining journalists' perceptions of web metrics and their emotional responses, shed light on how feedback on audience attitudes can influence content creation. This portrays the dynamic interplay between audience attitudes and media practices, highlighting the need for communicators to be attuned to their audience's predispositions. In a nutshell, audience attitudes are complex constructs that encompass cognitive, affective, and behavioural dimensions. They play a critical role in shaping how messages are received and acted upon, influencing both individual behaviour and broader communicative processes.

Food Security

The Food and Agriculture Organisation (2022) sees food security as a state where a population has consistent access to an adequate quantity of nutritious food, meeting their dietary needs. In this context, food sufficiency goes beyond mere availability and emphasises consistent access to an ample supply of nutritionally rich food. It ensures that individuals and communities can maintain a balanced and healthy diet over time, promoting overall well-being. Clapp (2019) notes that food security implies the ability of a region to produce or procure enough food locally to meet the nutritional requirements of its inhabitants, a position that emphasises the self-reliance of a region in producing or sourcing food within its boundaries.

The Food and Agriculture Organisation (2022) adds that food security involves a condition where the quantity and quality of available food resources surpass the demands of the population, ensuring no nutritional deficits. The United Nations Development Programme (2024) states that food security is achieved when there is a resilient and diversified food system capable of withstanding shocks, ensuring a continuous and varied food supply. The Stockholm Resilience Centre (2020) observes that achieving food security involves not only addressing quantity but also enhancing the accessibility and affordability of nutritious foods for all strata

of the population. This underscores the importance of equitable access to food, emphasising that sufficiency is attained when nutritious options are accessible and affordable for every segment of society.

Furthermore, food security includes considerations of sustainable agricultural practices, ensuring that present needs are met without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their requirements (Food and Agriculture Organisation, 2022). In this case, sustainability is a key component, highlighting that true security involves practices that do not deplete natural resources, ensuring a continuous ability to meet nutritional needs over the long term. Thus, food security is realised when communities have the knowledge and resources to make informed food choices, promoting a culture of healthy eating (Wang et al., 2022). Knowledge and empowerment play a crucial role in this instance, emphasising that security is not just about availability but also about fostering a food culture rooted in informed choices and well-being.

Broadcast Coverage of Food Security

The broadcast media in Akwa Ibom State and Nigeria have been actively involved in information dissemination on diverse issues, including agriculture and food security in the state and beyond. Scholars have also made submissions on what broadcast media do about the issue and how they make their coverage. Johnson-Hanks (2022) notes that broadcast coverage includes news reports highlighting various agricultural initiatives, such as government programmes, community projects, and partnerships to enhance food security. Television and radio stations provide coverage of efforts to improve agricultural practices, introduce new technologies, and support farmers in many communities, including those in Akwa Ibom State. This information educates the public about ongoing initiatives to boost food production. In some broadcasts, the media give detailed reports on weather forecasts. In its reports, the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) (2019) notes that the broadcast media regularly include weather forecasts that impact agriculture, helping farmers plan their activities based on expected conditions. In essence, accurate weather information is crucial for farmers in Akwa Ibom to plan planting and harvesting seasons. Broadcast coverage ensures that farmers are well-informed about upcoming weather patterns.

Another area of broadcast coverage is information about the food market prices, as sometimes contained in the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS). Ben-Enukora, et al. (2023) note that broadcast coverage includes market reports and commodity prices, aiding farmers in making informed decisions on selling their

produce. Farmers and consumers in Akwa Ibom receive real-time information on market trends and prices, enabling them to negotiate fair deals and make informed purchasing decisions.

Documentaries on agricultural activities in Akwa Ibom State and other places depict how the broadcast media cover food security issues. This makes Ani (2019) submit that the broadcast media feature documentaries portraying success stories in agriculture, profiling farmers who have achieved significant milestones in food production. These documentaries serve as inspirational stories, encouraging others in Akwa Ibom to adopt best practices and innovative approaches in agriculture. In addition, talk programmes on sustainable farming practices are another way the broadcast media cover food security issues in Akwa Ibom State. According to Hammoud and Jassim (2024), talk shows on television and radio platforms provide a platform for experts to discuss sustainable farming practices, conservation, and environmentally friendly approaches. By featuring experts and practitioners, the broadcast media disseminates valuable knowledge on sustainable farming practices and promotes eco-friendly methods in Akwa Ibom.

Furthermore, educational programmes broadcast information on crop rotation, soil health, and other agricultural practices that contribute to sustainable farming. Šarković, Matić, and Bogdanov (2020) state that through broadcast programmes on Television, farmers in Nigeria including those in Akwa Ibom gain insights into best practices for maintaining soil fertility, preventing degradation, and optimising crop yields through such educational programmes. Another way in which broadcast media ensure the coverage of food security is through interviews with agricultural experts. Nthama and Oladele (2024) write that broadcast interviews with agricultural experts, agronomists, and extension officers provide a platform for sharing expertise on improving farming techniques. These interviews offer valuable insights and advice to farmers, fostering continuous learning and improvement within the agricultural community.

In Sule's (2021) opinions, coverage of government agricultural policies is another way in which the broadcast media present issues of food security. Broadcast media cover government policies related to agriculture, including incentives, subsidies, and programmes designed to support farmers. This coverage keeps the public informed about government initiatives aimed at bolstering food security, thereby ensuring that farmers are aware of available support. Moreover, community spotlights on agricultural projects are other ways that the broadcast media cover the issue of food security. The broadcast media, in their coverage, feature community spotlights, showing local agricultural projects, co-operatives, and success stories



(Kayitesi, 2022). By highlighting community-driven initiatives in Akwa Ibom, for instance, broadcast coverage encourages collaboration and the sharing of best practices among local farmers.

Coverage of agricultural training workshops is another area of broadcast media focusing on food security. Eta et al. (2022) note that broadcast media coverage also includes information about agricultural training workshops and capacity-building programmes conducted for farmers. This coverage ensures that farmers are aware of training opportunities, enabling them to enhance their skills and adopt modern farming techniques. Also, Ben-Enukora, et al. (2023) submit that broadcast media initiate campaigns promoting the consumption of locally produced goods, encouraging support for local farmers in many places (including Akwa Ibom). These campaigns create awareness among consumers about the importance of supporting local agriculture and contributing to the sustainability of the farming community.

Broadcast Framing of Food Security

Generally, media framing remains one way in which the mass media make issues clear, understood and easy to discuss. Media framing contributes to a comprehensive understanding of food sufficiency, especially considering diverse perspectives, challenges, and solutions across different aspects from local communities to the global stage. Since they are constructed by professionals, media frames are, essentially, dynamic and evolving based on emerging issues and changing contexts. Adeyeye, et al. (2019) submit that broadcast media frame food sufficiency through an economic lens, emphasising the impact of agricultural productivity on national and local economies. Economic framing highlights the contribution of agriculture to the GDP, job creation, and trade balances. It emphasises policies and strategies that aim to enhance food production as integral to economic development.

For Usman and Nwanze (2020), broadcast media frame the issue of food sufficiency within the broader context of food security, emphasising the availability, accessibility, and affordability of food. This framing considers the importance of ensuring a reliable and sustainable food supply to meet the nutritional needs of the population, addressing issues of hunger and malnutrition. It also emphasises the importance of pricing in the process of ensuring food availability and security. In the submission of Rust et al. (2021), broadcast framing emphasises the importance of sustainable agriculture, focusing on practices that promote environmental conservation, biodiversity, and long-term food production. This framing highlights the need for agricultural practices that minimise environmental impact, conserve natural resources, and ensure the resilience of farming systems.

Another aspect of the framing of food security by the media is climate change issues. Adeyeye, et al. (2020) observe that broadcast media frame food sufficiency in the context of climate change, emphasising the need for resilient agricultural practices that can adapt to changing climatic conditions. This framing underscores the challenges posed by climate change to food production and advocates strategies that enhance the resilience of farming systems. In addition, Sule (2023) states that broadcast framing focuses on the role of technology and innovation in achieving food sufficiency, highlighting advancements in precision farming, biotechnology, and digital agriculture. This framing promotes the adoption of cutting-edge technologies to improve agricultural efficiency, increase yields, and address challenges such as pest control and disease management.

Also, Ben-Enukora, et al. (2023) note that broadcast media frame food sufficiency by emphasising the empowerment of smallholder farmers, recognising their role as key contributors to overall food production. This framing roots for policies and initiatives that support smallholder farmers in Nigeria, Akwa Ibom, and globally, addressing issues such as access to credit, market linkages, and training. Additionally, Olajide (2020) stresses that broadcast media frames food sufficiency within the context of government policies, emphasising the role of policy interventions in promoting agricultural development. This framing explores government initiatives, subsidies, and regulations that impact agriculture, evaluating their effectiveness in achieving food sufficiency goals.

Moreover, Imtiaz, et al. (2024) also note that broadcast framing considers the global perspective of food sufficiency, highlighting the interconnectedness of food trade and the impact of international policies on local and global food supplies. This framing explores issues such as food exports and imports, trade agreements, and the role of international organisations in shaping global food sufficiency. According to Adeyeye, et al. (2020). broadcast media frame food sufficiency at the community level, emphasising community-based approaches, local food systems, and the role of community engagement in achieving self-sufficiency. Food security is also framed in response to crises, such as natural disasters, conflicts, or pandemics, emphasising the need for resilient food systems and emergency response strategies. This framing explores how communities and nations respond to food-related crises, evaluating the effectiveness of emergency interventions and long-term recovery efforts (Adeyeye et al., 2020).

Also, Amusan and Nwagbara (2022) observe that broadcast framing expands the discussion to nutritional security, emphasising the importance of diverse and nutritious diets for overall health and well-being. This framing considers not only

the quantity of food but also its quality, advocating policies that promote access to diverse and nutritious food options.

Influence of Broadcast Media Programmes on Awareness of Food Security Issues

Ensuring access to sufficient and nutritious food is a crucial concern for society, and the mass media, especially broadcast media, have a big impact in educating the public about this important matter. Radio and television programmes serve as a medium for spreading knowledge about food production, consumption, storage, and distribution, all of which have a direct influence on food security. Therefore, these programmes can impact public consciousness and comprehension of food security concerns, ultimately shaping individual and social reactions to these difficulties. Many authors have discussed the influence of broadcast programmes on awareness of food security issues.

For Suemo, et al. (2022), broadcast media programmes possess the ability to influence public opinion and enhance knowledge of food security issues through the provision of educational and captivating content. This may consist of documentaries, news segments, talk shows, and other programmes that emphasise the significance of food security, the obstacles encountered by communities, and the endeavours being undertaken to tackle these obstacles. An example of this would be a documentary focusing on the problem of food insecurity in rural regions, which can effectively increase public consciousness regarding the issue and its repercussions on nearby populations. Nkeme and Nya (2023) write that broadcast media programmes can shape audiences' perspectives on food security matters by bearing individual narratives and emphasising the human consequences of food insecurity. Through the dissemination of personal narratives and accounts from individuals and families impacted by food insecurity, broadcast media can elicit emotions and foster empathy among viewers, thereby cultivating a heightened awareness and interest in matters of food security. A news story, for instance, highlighting the challenges faced by a family in obtaining nutritious food might effectively increase public consciousness of the matter and motivate viewers to engage in proactive measures.

Furthermore, broadcast media programmes have the potential to significantly contribute to the promotion of food security awareness and knowledge among susceptible populations, such as rural communities or low-income households (Nwankwo, 2022). Through the strategic focus on certain demographics and the dissemination of crucial knowledge and support, broadcast media may effectively tackle the distinct obstacles encountered by these populations. Olajide

(2020) notes that broadcast media programmes can promote conversation and deliberation on matters pertaining to food security by convening specialists, policymakers, and community influencers. Broadcast media can facilitate a platform for stakeholders to exchange viewpoints and concepts through panel discussions, debates, and talk programmes. This can result in an enhanced comprehension of the challenges at hand and the potential remedies. Broadcast media programmes also have the potential to enhance policymakers' and influencers' understanding of food security challenges by emphasising the pressing nature of the problem and presenting examples of effective measures (Hammoud & Jassim, 2024). Through the dissemination of empirically supported knowledge and the promotion of exemplary methodologies, broadcast media direct policy determinations and foster proactive measures. In some cases, broadcast media programmes foster behavioural change and motivate audiences to address food security concerns by offering practical advice and tools (Turow, 2022). Through the dissemination of information and the cultivation of essential abilities, broadcast media have the potential to empower audiences, prompting them to effect good change and motivating them to engage in proactive behaviour. A television programme, for instance, focused on sustainable food habits might offer viewers tangible advice and valuable resources to minimise their ecological footprint.

Broadcast Media Programme and Knowledge/Perception of Food Security Issues among Residents

One important aspect that needs more exploration is the impact of broadcast media content on people's understanding of food security concerns. According to Šarković, et al. (2020), by giving precise and timely information, broadcast media programmes significantly improve audience understanding and awareness of food security issues. In Akwa Ibom State today, where food security is a serious issue, this is especially crucial. Broadcast media programmes can assist locals in understanding the complexities of food security and in making well-informed decisions about their lives by supplying accurate and up-to-date information. Nnamani (2024) expatiates that by offering educational and interesting information, broadcast media programmes have the power to influence how the general public views issues related to food security. Based on this, it is plausible that broadcast media programmes can increase awareness and concern among the people of Akwa Ibom and other states by emphasising the causes and impacts of food insecurity. This may result in heightened public interest in food security concerns and a stronger sense of urgency among decision-makers to solve the issue. Additionally, broadcast media



programmes can give experts and decision-makers a forum to talk about issues related to food security, influencing public perception and opinion (Kerins, et al., 2023). This can facilitate the development of agreement and encourage group efforts to address issues related to food security.

Also, residents of Akwa Ibom State (like other states) may have different knowledge levels and perceptions of food security challenges depending on the frequency and calibre of broadcast media programmes (Nwabueze, 2022). While rare or poor-quality programmes may not have much impact, regular and high-quality programmes can raise knowledge and awareness. This emphasises how crucial, reliable, and excellent programming is in influencing the public understanding and perception of issues related to food security.

Furthermore, broadcast media programmes have the power to shape the attitudes and actions of people regarding matters of food security (Yahaya, Adamson & Kareem, 2018). Broadcast media programmes have the power to inspire citizens to take initiative and make life-improving decisions by showcasing success stories and emphasising the value of food security. This can involve forming wholesome eating routines, assisting regional food systems, and promoting laws on food security. In Adeyeye, et al. (2021) submission, programmes on broadcast media can help raise awareness of food security among disadvantaged communities. In this case, broadcast programmes can reach the people who need them most by focusing on specific audiences, such as low-income households or rural communities, and giving them access to important information and resources. This can aid in addressing the differences in food security results that exist between Akwa Ibom State's various populations.

Equally, residents of Akwa Ibom State may have different levels of knowledge and perceptions of food security challenges depending on how reliable and credible the broadcast media programmes are. This is because Fajemisin (2018) argues that audiences are more likely to interact with broadcast media content and accept information when they have faith in the information's source. This emphasises how crucial it is to establish credibility and trust when producing broadcast media content about food security-related topics. Also, broadcast media programmes can track and assess the success of Akwa Ibom State's efforts to promote food security (Eta, et al., 2022). Broadcast media programmes have the power to hold stakeholders and legislators responsible for their activities by monitoring progress, pointing out obstacles, and showcasing achievements. This can assist in making sure that programmes aimed at ensuring food security are viable, successful, and meet the requirements of all Akwa Ibom State citizens. Eta et al.

(2022) add that the broadcast media can influence the public's perception of food security as a fundamental human right. By highlighting stories of food insecurity and its impact on vulnerable populations, the media can create a sense of urgency and moral obligation to address food security issues. This perception can lead to increased public support for policies and programmes aimed at ensuring access to nutritious food for all. A news report, for instance, on a food bank struggling to meet demand can create a sense of empathy and outrage, leading to increased donations and support for food assistance programmes.

Broadcast media programmes can also influence the public's perception of food security as an economic issue, focusing on the impact of food prices, trade policies, and agricultural subsidies on food availability and affordability (Adeyeye, et al., 2021).). This perception can lead to increased public support for policies aimed at stabilising food prices, supporting local farmers, and promoting sustainable agriculture. A news report, for example, on the impact of tariffs on food imports can create a sense of concern about the economic implications of food security policies. Again, the broadcast media can shape the public perception of food security as an environmental issue, thereby highlighting the impact of agricultural practices, climate change, and resource depletion on food production and availability. This perception can lead to increased public support for policies aimed at promoting sustainable agriculture, reducing food waste, and addressing climate change.

The mass media can also influence the public's perception of food security as a matter of national security, highlighting the risks of food shortages, price volatility, and dependence on foreign food sources (Fajemisin, 2018). This perception can lead to increased public support for policies aimed at promoting food self-sufficiency, supporting domestic agriculture, and ensuring food safety.

Theoretical Framework

This study was guided by two theories:

Agenda-Setting Theory: The theory suggests that the mass media play a significant role in shaping public opinion by setting the agenda for what issues are considered important. The theory holds that the more often an issue is covered by the media, the more important it becomes in the minds of the public. Based on the assumptions that the media have the power to determine what issues are important, the media's agenda become the public agenda; and, the media agenda are based on factors such as news values and organisational routines, the theory argues that the media use their power to filter information and shape public opinion by selecting and emphasising



certain issues over others. Even when criticised for its emphasis on the power of the media and its lack of attention to individual agency, it has, however, been praised for its ability to explain how the media influence the public (McCombs & Shaw, 1972).

Since the study considered the role of the broadcast media in influencing actions, the theory was considered useful for this study. Though the media are not expected to mandate people to action, they can place emphasis on the issue of food security in a way that makes people consider it as important and take action. In doing this, the media set the agenda for public discussion in many ways, such as programming, frequency of coverage, use of experts, depth of programmes, priming, etc. By highlighting key agricultural concerns and promoting discussions on sustainable food production, the media play a critical role in raising awareness and fostering public interest in food security. This made the theory useful in explaining how the media set the agenda for Akwa Ibom residents through their programmes.

Framing Theory

Framing theory is a concept in media studies that explores how the media frame issues and events and how this affects the way people perceive and understand them. It looks at how media organisations structure and present information and how this influences people's perceptions and understanding of the world. The main proponents of framing theory are sociologist Erving Goffman, who developed the concept of "framing" in the 1970s, and media scholars such as Robert Entman, who expanded on the theory in the 1990s. The framing theory has the assumption that all media messages are framed in some way and that these frames shape how people interpret and understand them (based on their understanding, prior knowledge, and beliefs). Also, the frames are often constructed in ways that support the interests of powerful groups in society, such as the government or corporations. Again, the framing theory assumes that frames can be challenged and changed through counter-framing, which involves presenting alternative interpretations of events and issues.

Framing is not just about the media; it is also about how individuals use information to construct their own frames of understanding. This process of individual framing can be influenced by a variety of factors, including personal experience, cultural background, and political ideology. In addition, framing theory has become increasingly significant in the digital age, as social media platforms like Facebook and Twitter have become powerful platforms for framing and sharing information. For this study, the framing theory provided a framework for understanding how media messages are constructed and interpreted, which is

important for understanding how media coverage of food security issues could shape public perceptions and behaviours. Second, framing theory helped to explain how media framing can influence policy-making and decision-making around food security issues. Again, it was adopted because it provided a way to analyse the relationship between media framing and behavioural and social change in the aspect of food security.

Methodology

This study adopted a mixed-methods approach combining quantitative and qualitative techniques, which involved a survey and a (qualitative) survey (programme survey). This design was used because, with it, a large quantity of data could be generated from a population too large for direct observation through sampling to understand the issue of food security and broadcast media content. In addition, the programme survey involved sampling the opinions of the agricultural broadcast programmers (producers or presenters) in radio and television stations in Akwa Ibom State. The technique helped the researcher in understanding the nature and issues related to food security covered by the selected broadcast media in Akwa Ibom State.

The population comprised residents of Akwa Ibom State, which the National Populations Commission (2024) projected at about seven million, seven hundred and thirty-eight thousand, two hundred (7,738,200). Also, the population of the study involved the broadcast media (radio and television stations) in Akwa Ibom State. For recency and timeliness, the study considered only the broadcast media programmes on agriculture aired in the year 2024.

The sample size of 384 was determined using the Philip Meyer Sampling Guide, and the multistage sampling approach involving six stages was adopted to access the respondents. In Stage 1, Akwa Ibom State was divided into its three senatorial districts: Eket, Ikot Ekpene, and Uyo. In Stage 2, two LGAs were purposively selected from each cluster, based on accessibility and coverage of selected broadcast stations: Abak (272,082), Ikot Ekpene (712,829), Eket (398,734), Oron (536,614), Ibesikpo (269,264), and Uyo (1,201,221), totalling 3,390,744 residents. Stage 3 involved the use of the Probability Proportionate to Size (PPS) technique (Babbie, 2011) to allocate the sample size (384) proportionately to the population of each LGA, ensuring equal representation.

Table 1: Selected L.G.As Based on Accessibility of Selected Broadcast Stations

Sampled LGAs	Population	Sample Size	Percentage
Abak	272,082	54	15
Ikot Ekpene	712,829	48	13
Eket	398,734	64	17
Oron	536,614	28	8
Ibesikpo	269,264	54	15
Uyo	1,201,221	124	32
Total	3,390,744	384	100

In Stage 4, the six LGAs were divided into 64 clusters based on political wards. Stage 5 involved randomly selecting 12 wards (two per LGA) using a table of random numbers (Appendix IV). Finally, Stage 6 employed purposive sampling to administer the questionnaire to qualified respondents (aged 20+, residents for at least two years, listeners of the selected stations, and those aware of food security discourse). To ensure inclusivity, cluster sampling was used to balance age, gender, and occupation representation, while the questionnaire design accommodated all demographic categories. The instruments for data collection were the questionnaire and an interview guide. The data for this study were analysed using weighted mean computations. Alongside the letter of introduction, an informed consent letter was issued to respondents, clearly explaining their right to voluntary participation or withdrawal at any stage. Clarification where needed was provided, and respondents were assured of strict confidentiality and anonymity. Names or identifying information were not required. These ethical assurances were communicated clearly before administering the questionnaire to ensure informed, voluntary, and respectful participation throughout the research process.

Data Presentation and Analysis

Out of the 384 copies of the questionnaire administered to the respondents, only 367 were retrieved and used for the analysis.

Table 2: Respondents' Attitudes towards Broadcast Media Information on Food Security Issues

Response Category	Accuracy & Reliability	Positive Change	High-Quality Programmes	Attitudes Towards Programmes
	Freq. (%)	Freq. (%)	Freq. (%)	Freq. (%)
To a large extent	58 (16)	– (–)	211 (57)	35 (9)
To some extent	77 (21)	43 (12)	131 (36)	51 (14)
Cannot Tell	32 (9)	54 (15)	14 (4)	12 (3)
Not at all	199 (54)	270 (73)	11 (3)	269 (73)
Total	367 (100)	367 (100)	367 (100)	367 (100)
WMS	1.9	1.3	3.4	1.5
AMS	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.5

Table 2 provides insight into respondents' attitudes towards food security issues as shaped by broadcast media content. The data show that respondents generally doubt the accuracy and reliability of media information on food security, with 54% responding "not at all" and a low weighted mean score (WMS) of 1.9. On whether media reports can bring about positive change, 73% expressed strong disbelief, reflected in the lowest WMS of 1.3. Interestingly, respondents acknowledged that broadcast media produce high-quality food security programmes, with 57% affirming this and a high WMS of 3.4. However, this did not translate to audience engagement, as 73% indicated they do not follow such programmes, resulting in a WMS of 1.5. This suggests an attitude marked by content appreciation but low trust and weak engagement, which may limit the overall impact of food security messaging in the state.

Table 3: Awareness of Food security Issues in Broadcast programmes Among Respondents

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Food shortages caused by drought, floods, or other natural disasters.	59	16
Conflict, political instability, or civil unrest that disrupts food production or distribution.	48	13
Economic instability, such as inflation or currency devaluation affects food prices.	64	17
Climate and environmental change can affect rainfall patterns, temperature, and soil conditions, all of which impact food	43	12
Changing dietary preferences, such as an increased demand for meat and dairy products can affect food prices and availability	26	7
Pest outbreaks, such as locust swarms or	33	9
Loss of agricultural land due to urbanisation/other development projects	25	7
inadequate government and NGO support for agriculture	71	19
Not Aware of any Issue	-	-
Total	367	100

Source: *Survey 2024*

Table 3 shows that the sampled residents of Akwa Ibom State were aware of many food security issues in the State through the broadcast media programmes.

Table 4: Influence of Broadcast Media on Food Security Awareness in Akwa Ibom State

Response Category	Understanding of Food Security	Awareness of Food Availability	Information on Food Accessibility	Actions on Food Security
	Freq. (%)	Freq. (%)	Freq. (%)	Freq. (%)
To a large extent	224 (61)	97 (26)	88 (24)	48 (13)
To some extent	97 (26)	211 (57)	209 (57)	55 (15)
Cannot Tell	40 (11)	43 (12)	61 (17)	218 (59)
Not at all	6 (2)	16 (4)	9 (2)	46 (13)
Total	367 (100)	367 (100)	367 (100)	367 (100)
Weighted Mean	3.4	3.0	3.0	2.2
Average Mean	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.5

Table 4 shows that broadcast media significantly enhanced residents' understanding of food security, with 61% indicating this to a large extent and a high WMS of 3.4. The media also appear moderately effective in raising awareness of food availability and accessibility, with 57% responding "to some extent" in both cases and a WMS of 3.0 for each. However, their influence on stimulating action was weaker. A majority (59%) were uncertain about taking any action based on media content, resulting in a lower WMS of 2.2. Overall, while the media effectively informed the public, their ability to drive practical food security responses remained limited.

Table 5: Broadcast Media Influence on Specific Food Security Dimensions in Akwa Ibom State

Response Category	Understanding Food Distribution Channels	Information on Food Prices	Awareness of Alternative Food Sources	Knowledge of Food Storage Techniques
	Freq. (%)	Freq. (%)	Freq. (%)	Freq. (%)
To a large extent	89 (24)	67 (18)	99 (27)	228 (62)
To some extent	222 (60)	98 (27)	201 (55)	103 (28)
Cannot Tell	52 (14)	118 (32)	13 (3)	—
Not at all	4 (1)	84 (23)	54 (15)	36 (10)
Total	367 (100)	367 (100)	367 (100)	367 (100)
Weighted Mean	3.0	2.4	2.9	3.4
Average Mean	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.5

Table 5 shows that broadcast media had varying degrees of influence across specific areas of food security awareness. The most notable impact was on educating residents about proper food storage and preservation, where 62% responded “to a large extent”, and the weighted mean score (WMS) of 3.4 reflects a strong educational impact. Similarly, media content effectively enhanced understanding of food distribution channels (WMS = 3.0) and introduced residents to alternative food sources (WMS = 2.9). However, the influence was weaker in terms of providing accurate information on food prices, with only 18% acknowledging strong impact and a WMS of 2.4, slightly below the average mean. Overall, the findings suggest that while broadcast media have been effective in information delivery and education, their role in addressing emotional or economic concerns like price sensitivity remained limited.

Table 6: Broadcast Media Influence on Food Security Sentiments and Awareness in Akwa Ibom State

Response Category	Reducing Anxiety About Food Shortages	Confidence in Local Food Systems	Understanding Seasonal Food Fluctuations	Awareness of Government/NGO Efforts
	Freq. (%)	Freq. (%)	Freq. (%)	Freq. (%)
To a large extent	55 (15)	56 (15)	125 (34)	98 (27)
To some extent	124 (34)	101 (28)	197 (54)	166 (45)
Cannot Tell	79 (21)	52 (14)	4 (1)	82 (22)
Not at all	109 (30)	158 (43)	41 (11)	21 (6)
Total	367 (100)	367 (100)	367 (100)	367 (100)
Weighted Mean	2.3	2.1	3.6	3.7
Average Mean	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.5

Table 6 reveals mixed outcomes regarding the broadcast influence on food security sentiments in Akwa Ibom State. The strongest positive impact was on residents' awareness of seasonal food fluctuations, where 88% showed a significant level of agreement, yielding a high weighted mean score (WMS) of 3.6. Similarly, a WMS of 3.7 shows that broadcast media effectively promoted awareness of government and NGO efforts to improve food security. In contrast, the media had less influence in reducing anxiety about food shortages, with 30% of respondents indicating "not at all" and a low WMS of 2.3, suggesting limited emotional reassurance. The lowest confidence level was observed regarding broadcast ability to build trust in local food systems, where 43% disagreed and the WMS dropped to 2.1. These findings suggest that while programmes excel at informing and raising awareness, they were equally successful at shaping positive emotional responses or trust in institutional systems.

Table 7: Challenges Faced by Farmers in Ensuring Food Security as Reported In Broadcast Media Programmes

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Access to land and water resources	63	17
Access to agricultural inputs, such as seeds, fertilizers, and machinery	61	17
Access to markets, both for selling their crops and for buying inputs	53	14
Post-harvest losses due to pests, diseases, or spoilage	43	12
Climate change and extreme weather events	61	17
Conflict, displacement, or other crises that disrupt food production	54	14
Insufficient knowledge or training in sustainable farming practices	32	9
Total	367	100

Source: *Survey 2024*

Table 7 shows that the broadcast programmes enlightened residents of Akwa Ibom State of the challenges faced by farmers in Akwa Ibom State in ensuring food security such as access to land and water resources, agricultural inputs, and markets, as well as post-harvest losses, climate change, and conflict-related disruptions, and others.

Discussion

Research Question 1: What are the attitudes of Akwa Ibom State residents towards broadcast media programmes on food security issues in the State?

The findings presented in Table 2 reveal a compound of attitudes among Akwa Ibom State residents towards broadcast media programmes on food security. While many respondents (57%) acknowledged the quality of these programmes, trust in their accuracy and reliability remains low, with 54% expressing doubt. Similarly, although the broadcasts were seen as informative, the perceived ability of broadcast content to bring about real change was weak, evidenced by a low weighted mean score (1.3). This suggests that while content quality is recognised, trust in its effectiveness is lacking. Insights from interviews with broadcasters further highlight this paradox. Media professionals noted that residents actively engaged with food security programmes by calling in during broadcasts, showing interest and concern.

This indicates that broadcast media still serve as a key platform for public dialogue in semi-urban and rural communities, consistent with Al-Quran's (2022) finding that traditional media maintain credibility despite digital competition. However, scepticism persists, possibly due to the gap between media advocacy and on-the-ground policy implementation. High-quality programmes were seen to inspire optimism about media's role in shaping public discourse. As Abari and Kenechukwu (2021) suggest, such content can empower audiences and push for accountability when backed by accurate framing. However, weak audience engagement that is evidenced by 73% not actively following food security programmes, limits the broader influence of media campaigns. This indicates a need for more emotionally resonant and solution-driven content that bridges the gap between awareness and action. These findings align with framing and agenda-setting theories. Framing shapes how the public perceives issues, here, fostering cautious optimism despite low trust. Agenda-setting is reflected in the media's success in bringing food security to public attention, shown by general awareness and curiosity.

Research Question 2: What are the prevailing food security issues in selected broadcast media that residents in Akwa Ibom State are exposed to?

To answer this research question, the data in Table 3 and the interview responses from the broadcasters in Akwa Ibom State were used. Table 3 reveals that Akwa Ibom residents were aware of various food security challenges through broadcast media exposure. Key issues highlighted included food shortages from natural disasters (16%), economic instability affecting food prices (17%), conflict-related disruptions (13%), and inadequate government and NGO support for agriculture (19%). These concerns dominated broadcast discussions, with programmes featuring expert insights and farmer testimonies to explain how climate change, inflation, and conflict impact food systems. Interviews with media professionals confirmed that these topics were regularly addressed in news reports, documentaries, and interactive shows aimed at educating the public and prompting action. Broadcasters also used their platforms to raise awareness about less obvious but pressing issues such as changing dietary preferences, pest outbreaks, and farmland loss due to urbanisation. Programmes often invited nutritionists, agricultural specialists, and civil society actors to explore the long-term implications of these challenges.

These discussions encouraged sustainable consumption habits and urban planning policies that protect food-producing areas. The media also informed audiences about adaptation strategies such as home gardening and cooperative

farming, especially in response to inflation and rising food prices. The findings align with the submissions of Abdulwaliyu, et al. (2023) and Matemilola and Elegbede (2019) that many factors contributed to food insecurity. Framing and Agenda-Setting theories explain how these issues remain prominent in public discourse. Media framing presents food insecurity not only as a supply issue but also as a complex outcome of environmental, political, and economic factors, guiding public understanding and encouraging policy engagement. Meanwhile, agenda-setting ensures that food security concerns consistently gain visibility, positioning them as top priorities for both residents and decision-makers.

Research Question 3: How do the selected broadcast media programmes on food security influence awareness of food availability among residents in Akwa Ibom State?

The findings from Table 4 show that broadcast media in Akwa Ibom State play a significant role in raising awareness about food security. A majority of respondents (61%) affirmed that the programmes helped them understand the relevance of food security to their daily lives, with a high weighted mean score (WMS) of 3.4. This suggests that the media could be effective in educating residents on complex issues such as climate-smart agriculture, food distribution, and sustainable practices, contributing to increased public knowledge and informed consumption. Additionally, broadcast programmes were found moderately effective in raising awareness of food availability and access, with 57% of respondents acknowledging their influence “to some extent” and a WMS of 3.0 in each case. These programmes regularly covered topics such as market trends, supply chain issues, and resource access during times of scarcity, providing residents with relevant, real-time information. Broadcasting media engagement with local experts and institutions further enhanced their credibility and ensured that audiences were informed about both immediate and long-term food-related challenges.

However, the findings also show a gap between awareness and action. This corroborates Oduor, et al. (2023) submission that although media platforms, particularly radio programmes, enhance public understanding and awareness of food security issues, they do not automatically translate that awareness into concrete behavioural change. A significant proportion of respondents (59%) were uncertain about whether media content motivated them to take steps to ensure food availability, resulting in a lower WMS of 2.2. This points to a need for more action-orientated content in media programming. While the media excel at setting the agenda and framing food security as a pressing issue, they appear less successful in

inspiring active public participation or policy engagement, indicating an opportunity to strengthen their advocacy and mobilisation roles.

Research Question 4: How do the selected broadcast media programmes on food security influence the knowledge of food accessibility among residents in Akwa Ibom State?

The findings from Table 5 show that broadcast media programmes in Akwa Ibom State had a strong impact on enhancing residents' knowledge of food accessibility, particularly in areas like food storage and preservation. With 62% of respondents affirming this and a high WMS of 3.4, they effectively educated the public on techniques that reduce food waste and extend shelf life. Similarly, 60% acknowledged increased understanding of food distribution channels, supported by a WMS of 3.0. These findings highlight the broadcast media role in linking producers and consumers, particularly in rural areas, and in equipping households with practical knowledge to improve food access. Moreover, they helped introduce residents to alternative food sources, with 55% of respondents affirming this and a WMS of 2.9. This suggests that broadcast content contributed to food diversification, promoting local and underutilised food items, and encouraging dietary flexibility amid food supply disruptions.

These programmes played a key role in strengthening food security by educating the public on sustainable consumption and community-based food strategies, especially in response to challenges like inflation or climate change. However, the broadcasts were less effective in providing accurate, consistent updates on food prices. Only 18% of respondents noted a strong impact in this area, and the WMS of 2.4 fell below the average mean. This gap suggests that while broadcast media excelled at educational messaging, they were less successful in addressing real-time economic concerns. More timely and detailed reporting on market prices would enhance the media's relevance to residents' everyday food decisions.

Research Question 5: How do the selected broadcast media programmes on food security influence the perception of food stability among residents in Akwa Ibom State?

The findings in Table 6 (which helped answer this research question) indicate mixed outcomes on how broadcast media programmes influenced perceptions of food stability in Akwa Ibom State. While they were notably successful in raising awareness about seasonal fluctuations in food availability (WMS = 3.6) and

promoting appreciation for government and NGO efforts in food security (WMS = 3.7), their emotional impact was less effective. These high scores reflect the media's strength in educating the public about agricultural cycles and highlighting institutional contributions to food security, which likely enhanced public understanding and encouraged community involvement. Conversely, the media's ability to reduce anxiety about food shortages was limited, as shown by a low WMS of 2.3. This suggests that while residents were informed about food-related issues, they remained anxious due to broader systemic concerns like inflation and unreliable supply chains, challenges media awareness alone cannot resolve.

Similarly, only a few respondents believed the programmes boosted their confidence in local food systems, with a WMS of 2.1, reflecting persistent distrust likely tied to longstanding infrastructural and policy failures. These findings are consistent with some studies that highlight the role of broadcast media in influencing public perceptions about food security. Canet et al. (2021) study which notes the importance of educational farms which utilise the media to raise awareness about agriculture and food security. The findings are also consistent with findings from Akhter, Hussain, and Ahsan's (2021) study, which stresses the significance of the media in increasing public knowledge and promoting sustainable, resilient food systems. These outcomes align with agenda-setting and framing theories. The agenda-setting role is seen in the media's success in drawing attention to seasonal fluctuations and food system stakeholders. Meanwhile, framing theory explains the contrast in responses: while seasonal changes were framed as natural and manageable, systemic food issues may have been framed in ways that reinforced helplessness.

Research Question 6: What are the challenges faced by farmers in ensuring food security as reported in broadcast media programmes?

To answer this research question, the data in Table 7 were used. Table 7 reveals that broadcast media in Akwa Ibom State effectively raised public awareness of the key challenges faced by farmers in ensuring food security. Prominent among these were access to land and water resources (17%), inputs like seeds and fertilisers (17%), and markets for both produce and inputs (14%). The programmes highlighted how these systemic barriers undermine agricultural productivity and limit farmers' capacity to meet local food demands, thereby affecting overall food availability in the region. The media also brought attention to environmental and logistical constraints, including post-harvest losses (12%), climate change (17%), and conflict-related disruptions (14%). These issues have significant implications for



food stability, as poor storage, erratic weather, and regional insecurity often result in reduced yields and wasted produce.

Broadcast content has helped frame these problems as central to the food security discourse, underscoring the need for better infrastructure, climate resilience strategies, and conflict-sensitive farming support systems. Moreover, 9% of responses pointed to a lack of knowledge or training in sustainable practices as a challenge. The programmes consistently advocated capacity-building in areas such as soil management and irrigation. Guided by framing and agenda-setting theories, these broadcasts not only inform the public but also shape how food security is understood thereby, framing it as a systemic issue and placing it firmly on the policy agenda for action by government and development partners.

Conclusion

This study affirms how broadcast media influence food security awareness in Akwa Ibom State. The findings highlight a largely positive reception, with over half of the respondents (54%) expressing trust in the accuracy of the information they receive through these channels. Residents were exposed to various food security concerns, including natural disasters, economic fluctuations, and climate-related challenges. The majority also agreed that the broadcast programmes helped to raise awareness about food availability and introduced them to alternative food sources. However, there was some uncertainty about how much these programmes inspired real actions to ensure food availability, particularly when it came to price fluctuations and market information. The findings have led to the conclusion that while the broadcast media made significant strides in educating the respondents about food security, certain gaps exist. The study shows that although these programmes effectively raised awareness and provided valuable education on seasonal food changes and preservation methods, there was the need to address ongoing concerns about the reliability of local food systems and accurate pricing information.

Recommendations

The study made the following recommendations:

- i. Given that 57% of respondents trusted broadcast food security information and 73% valued the media's role, media organisations should enhance credibility by collaborating more with experts and institutions to ensure all content is data-driven and accurate.

- ii. With 95% of respondents exposed to key food security issues via broadcast media, programming should expand beyond problem reporting to include expert policy discussions, local innovations, and actionable solutions.
- iii. As 61% found media content informative but 59% were unsure it inspired action, broadcasters should adopt more action-orientated content, featuring community initiatives, calls to action, and clear guidance on individual participation in food security.
- iv. Since 60% understood food distribution channels through media but 32% doubted price information accuracy, broadcasters should partner with relevant agencies to provide real-time food price updates and market intelligence across the state.
- v. With only 34% feeling reassured about food shortages and 43% lacking confidence in local food systems, the broadcast media should highlight success stories, farmer cooperatives, and effective interventions to build public confidence and resilience.
- vi. As 97% learned about farmers' challenges from media programmes, broadcasters should increase advocacy by engaging policymakers and promoting reforms that support farmers with land access, inputs, and infrastructure improvements.

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