

# **PUBLIC PERCEPTION OF NEWS PROGRAMMES IN GOVERNMENT OWNED TELEVISION STATIONS IN NIGERIA**

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## **ABSTRACT**

This study employed the survey methodology basically to examine the perception of news programmes on government owned TV stations by members of the public who formed audiences for such programmes. The study specifically focused its investigation on the Nigerian Television Authority (NTA). To accomplish the objectives of this study, three (3) research questions were formulated to guide the study. Three hundred (300) copies of the questionnaire were distributed to respondents from selected wards in Calabar Municipality and Calabar South Local Government Area based on their acceptance of exposure to NTA Calabar news programmes and two hundred and eighty (280) copies were correctly filled and returned. So the data analysis was based on two hundred and eighty (280) copies. The data were analyzed using simple percentage and tables with some explanations accompanying each table. The findings of the study showed that the NTA news programmes were timely, and precise. However, it was further revealed that NTA news programmes were lacking in the areas of news accuracy, relevance of reports to the issues of the moment, reliability and absence of bias. The study recommends among other things that the media must remember that their primary purpose is to inform the public as such, they should ensure that contents of their news are absolutely free from bias and be factual. It should also be relevant to the larger society.

**KEYWORDS:** News, Perception, Public, Television, Programmes.

## **INTRODUCTION**

There is no gainsaying the fact that the media industry has a crucial role to play in creating awareness and giving firsthand information to the populace especially in this era of digital technology and globalization of communication. News is the fastest form of information that is

presented on the radio or television. News also is basically a report of events through the mass media that is of importance to a given audience. It seeks to educate, inform and to an extent entertain.

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In their separate views of what constitutes news, Akinfeleye (1982, p.84) and Imeh (2001, p.26) defined news as an account of what the public wants to know and has a commercial proportion. Government-owned television, the Nigerian Television Authority (NTA) has been known for carrying news and information on politics and major happenings in the world. Viewers not only listen to news, they also analyze, select, make comments, give opinions and share comments on how they perceive news programmes in the media.

The ability of television to inform, educate and entertain makes it dramatic in nature and captivating. The programme content of television targeted at audience members is expected to connect with the needs and expectations of the audience, bearing in mind that the audience members are not passive receivers. This is more so owing to the constant growth in the rate of literacy among the Nigerian populace. Most television viewers understand certain issues clearly and they expect nothing short of that. There is another concern bothering on the urge to be informed about the latest happenings in politics, economy, health and sports.

This study focuses on the government owned station-NTA. There is a tendency to perceive this station as nothing more than extensions of the government. More so, the current trend of over-reliance of some broadcast station on foreign media content gives imperative for a study of this nature. It is against this background that it becomes useful to find out how residents of Calabar metropolis perceive NTA News programmes.

## **OBJECTIVES**

The following constitutes the objectives of this study:

1. To find out the public perception of news programmes in NTA Calabar.
2. To find out the impact of NTA Calabar news programmes.
3. To ascertain the credibility of news programmes to NTA Calabar audience.

## **RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

Wimmer and Dominick (2011, p.25) observes that "A research question is a formally stated question intended to provide indications about something". They further posited that research questions are appropriate when a researcher is unsure of the nature of the problem under investigation. Research question provide direction and focus to the issues under investigation.

This study focuses on finding answers to the following questions:

1. How do residents of Calabar metropolis perceive news programme in NTA Calabar?
2. What impact does NTA Calabar news programmes make on the public?
3. How credible are NTA Calabar news programmes?

With the media development, there is an urgent need to assess the public perception and attitude towards the NTA news programmes in Calabar and to devise better ways to improve the dependability and reliability of the Nigerian Television Authority's viewers on NTA news programmes in order to protect the integrity, promote unity and progress of the Nigerian nation. Thus, this study is geared towards illuminating public knowledge and perception towards NTA Network News Programmes with the view of identifying better ways to improve the level of patronage of its news programmes by the audience in order to protect the interest of the nation.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

### **THE CONCEPT OF PERCEPTION AND NEWS PROGRAMME**

One's ability to see, hear or become aware of something is sometimes referred to as perception. The word perception in our context goes beyond a mere interface with our senses. A clear picture of the word is offered in Wikipedia. According to Wikipedia, perception (from the Latin perceptio, percipio) is the organization, identification and interpretation of sensory information in order to represent and understand the environment.

All perception involves signals in the nervous system, which in turn result from physical or chemical stimulation of the sense organs. For example vision involves light striking the retina of the eye, smell is mediated by odour molecules and hearing involves pressure waves. Perception is not the passive receipt of these signals, but is shaped by learning memory, expectation and attention. For Energy (1970) perception is a hypothesis. Perception involves making inferences about what we see and trying to make a best guess. Prior knowledge and past experience, he argued are crucial in perception. Perception acts as a filter through which all communication passes as it travels from one person to the next.

The broadcast programming constitutes a powerful force in our society. Broadcast programming is instantaneous to millions of persons over wide areas, reaction to the impact of news is equally swift, riots, wars and fall of government follows in the wake of news reports at a pace of inconceivable speed than they were at earlier point in history.

News as a broadcast programming has influence the important public policy decisions in maintaining or changing the status quo of

society and in general providing outlets for all types of views enormous.

### **AUDIENCE PERCEPTION OF NEWS PROGRAMMES ON TELEVISION**

Through the advent of private owned television stations immediately of certain news and information has come to be normal and expected. However, it does not necessarily mean that we are as a result better informed than we were before this era of rapid global communication. Indeed the main impact of the modern mass media may be less in the rapid dissemination of information and more in the wider dissemination of certain ways of seeing the world.

Television has been responsible for influencing the way people react to certain issues of life, views which tends to shape their beliefs and values in life are painstakingly thought of before they are carried out. Televisions' news programmes are a source of social aspiration for the public, a strong instrument for social mobilization; it has the ability to shape and influence people's beliefs, opinions and feeling on various issues. Research have shown that audience attitude towards television viewing is dependent on the degree of media exposure. The degree of dependency is a key variable that helps to explain why audience beliefs feelings or behavior are altered about issues (McQuail, 2010 in Akpoghiran and Ohte, 2012).

Another aspect of audience perception is in the media intensification of conflict reports in news. The notion of the intensity is derived from the claim that television news tend to present only the more intense moments of social conflicts. The frequency and degree of coverage on television can heighten tension of the audience. For instance, while the late president of Nigeria Umaru Musa Yar'adua was in Saudi Arabia hospital, the electronic news media like NTA station and foreign ones like British

Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) were focusing on the intensity of the conflict was generating in the country; indeed, it generated a lot of controversies and conflict of interest.

When television news coverage on conflict attracts public comments, criticisms and observation; then tensions, anxieties fears began to increase. However, some television organizations believe in telling conflict the way it happens. For example, CNN believe in reporting from the warfront, so that they can tell it as it is. For instance, the Niger Delta crises especially the side of kidnapping and hostage taking, the bombings, killing and innocent people and attacking of churches by the Islamic section, Boko Haram were intensively carried and reported by the CNN and BBC. The news media thrive on conflict despite the negative impact it has on the society (Ohte, 2012).

In a similar vein, Wasbord (2002) in Eti (2009) argued that news media especially the television establishes "culture of fear" which they perpetuate by portraying "a vast array issues such intensified portrayal of conflict in television news, as Eti (2009) observed, present and forms negative perceptions of risk among members of the audience. This in turn creates a sense of helplessness when it does not cover aspects that communicate hope and a selection.

Wardani (2014) observed that live interview could be a means of influence audience perception of news programmes, mainly through news anchor and resource persons. The result of quantitative survey conducted shows that half of the respondents have the perception that resource persons do not represent the interest of the public and are untrustworthy.

Natalie and Stephen (2007) also notes that individual differences help to explain who finds the media more or less trustworthy and

interpersonal factors can also influence audience perception of news programmes.

The television also can influence the public in a manner of way such as priming, agenda setting, framing and cultivation. Priming is when media activates the recalling of stored idea, knowledge, attitudes and experiences relates in some way to the media message at hand. An example of priming would be when one recalls a trip to the Caribbean when the "Jamacia" is mentioned on television.

Media houses remind audience of a lot when they mention 9/11. Agenda setting is when the media influences what people think about via the choice of which topics top cover and what things to emphasize. It is the editors and the journalists that decide what to leave out or what to include in the news cast an in so doing, the champion certain things, a good example is right after September 11, CNN repeatedly ran the sairasihah documentary. "Behind the veils" against the Taliban to raise public support for the then President Bush's plan to go to war in Afghanistan (Koolbreeze, 2011).

The other way in which media such as television, news is vial the concept of framing-frames are the particular treatment are organization gives to a text. Unlike agenda-setting which is about choosing what to tell the audience, framing is about how to tell that which has been chosen. Frames may promote a particular problem definition, casual interpretation, moral evaluation and treatment recommendation.

Earlier research claims that the news media does have the ability to shape public opinion despite people's own perception of bias. The effects of bias news on individuals attitudes are real as psychologists argued in their study. They call the homogenous opinions, in which the media often attempts to present information that emphasizes what they believe their audience wants to hear. Homogenous opinions

illustrate the consequences that fragmented media environment and biased news can have on individuals attitudes they believed that rather than reporting how the general public feels about certain issues, the media often considers reporting opinions along group lines, it was found that such exposure can exacerbate the tendency of taking side with the in-group perhaps by minimizing the motivation to carefully consider the information at had (Anastasia *et al.*,1999 in Haley, 2013).

### **BRIEF HISTORY OF NTA NEWS PROGRAMMES**

The Nigeria Television Authority came into being in May 1977 through decree 24 of 1977 which had retroactive effect from April 1976. By the decree, all existing 12 regional television stations established in the country between October 1959 and 1974 came under the umbrella of NTA which became the only body empowered to take TV broadcasting in Nigeria.

In 1976, television and indeed Plateau State TV metamorphosed from black to white colour, funding of the stations became a responsibility of the federal government and networking of news commenced via domestic satellite from April 1976. NTA has maintained a systematic growth through the years from 12 stations at inception in 1977 NTA as of today boast of about 100 stations, with presence in every state capital and all senatorial districts in which NTA Calabar channel 6 and 9 is among.

### **NTA CALABAR COVERAGE OF NEWS PROGRAMMES IN CROSS RIVER STATE**

According to NTA website, NTA in the recent time has covered various news on business and economy, national tags, politics, crimes and many other newsworthy events. A look into some stories found and broadcasted by Nigerian Television Authority (NTA) Calabar.

1. 2014 APC presidential rally in Calabar Cross River: The All Progressive Congress APC Governorship candidate, Mr. Odey Ochicha, being formally presented as the party's standard bearer in the forth-coming general elections in the state.
2. Not less than 7 dead in Calabar Autocrash: it was gathered July 29, 2015, that the accident occurred at New-Netim community near Odukpani Local Government Area.
3. Police arrest of 14 cultists in Calabar: The Cross River State police command arrested 14 people suspected to be members of a fraternity.

### **CHALLENGES OF NEWS PROGRAMME IN NTA CALABAR**

- i. **Equipment:** It requires equipment to package news programmes and even to put them on air. Where there are enough good and serviceable equipment, programming is bound to be drastically affected. The broadcast media are technology intensive and for a developing nation, they are expensive to install, operate and maintain. In Nigeria, virtually are broadcast equipment is imported. The sorry state of inadequate facility can be seen in many NTA State television stations where there are poor quality programming and poor signals. Only the network service appears to be approaching the modern technology in their transmission. The private broadcast stations are much better because they are relatively new and have invested in better and modern equipment than the government owned stations.
- ii. **Personnel:** Effective news programming requires well trained and talented staff with the right orientation and sounds judgment in the intricacies of broadcast production programming requires putting the right peg

in the hole. Therefore, the personnel requires for the news programming affects it to a large extent. It requires creative mind to put towards effective programming. This will help avoid poor presentation of programmes, inconsistencies in programmes schedule, lack of good scripts and uncoordinated camera works.

**iii. Funding:** This is a big problem in Nigeria broadcasting stations. Government own many broadcast station and in this era of economic strangulation, government has not been forthcoming in appropriate and adequate funding of its broadcast stations. The situation in privates broadcast station is not any different as the condition of poor funding continued to plague its programme production.

## **THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

Theory according to McQuail (1987, p.4) is a set of ideas of varying status and origin which may explain or interpret some phenomenon. This study is anchored on the "psychological theory of perception".

Perception or what other scholars refers to as social perception, according to Nelson and Quick (1997, p. 83) in Unemer (2009, p.18) is the process of interpreting information about another person. What this definition means is that the outlook one forms about people depends on the amount of information available and the extent to which one is able to correctly decode the information that was acquired. The process of media audience perception involves four stages of selective exposure, selective attention, selective perception and selective retention.

**Selective exposure** is when a person exposes himself or herself to communications that are in agreement with his existing attitudes while ignoring that which is not in accordance with

his attitudes.

**Selective attention** has to do with information that one pays to avoid confusion.

**Selective perception** explains that the interpretation of any message depends on the receiver.

While the **selective retention** is the ability of the public to recall information in relation to his wants, needs, attitudes etc.

This theory comes in handy when doing a study of this nature. First of all, to be considered an audience, the members of the public should have been exposed to the news programme content of the NTA. After exposure of the news, the audience selectively pays attention or concentrate on certain aspects of the news programme depending on the audience's needs and expectation. This selective attention transits to the next level of perception, where it is believed that the audience would form an opinion based on understanding of the content. Selective retention naturally comes to play as the last stage. The importance of this theory with regards to the study gives an understanding of individual differences as a factor to be considered when doing an investigation of this nature.

## **RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY**

This section presents a description of the methodology of the study. It states in details the population from which the study sample was drawn; the sampling technique as well as the research design is also the focus. Furthermore, the procedure and technique used to collect and analyze relevant data from the study are shown.

## **RESEARCH DESIGN**

Research design is the framework or plan for a study that is used in collecting and analyzing a

set of data (Campbell 1998). Babbie (1986) cited in Tejumaye (2003) said thus, "Ultimately scientific inquiry comes down to making observations and interpreting what you have observed. Before you can observe and analyze, you need a plan. You need to determine what you are going to observe and analyze: why and how. That's what research design is all about"

This study basically was concerned with public perception of news programmes in NTA Calabar. Consequently, the survey research method was employed, involving a range of research techniques that use structured forms of data collection through a questionnaire.

Okoro (2001, p. 37) states that surveys are useful in the measurement of public opinions, attitudes and orientations which are dominant among a large populations at a particular periods. He further explained that the relevance of survey comes clear in its definition as a process of gathering data from a target population through questionnaire or interview and subjecting such data to statistical analysis for the purpose of reaching conclusion on the subject matter of study and providing solution to identified research problems.

Ohaja (2003) supports the above statement when she asserts that topic concerning public perception of our response to issues requires survey. Indeed, survey is a reliable method that affords respondents an opportunity to bare their mind on a particular subject.

### **AREA OF STUDY**

This research work concerns public perception of news programmes in NTA Calabar. The areas of this study are Calabar Municipality and Calabar South Local Government Area. Calabar Municipality is one of the 18 Local government areas in Cross River State. Calabar municipality lies between latitude  $04^{\circ} 15'$  and longitude  $8^{\circ} 25'$  E in the North. The municipality is bounded

by Odukpani Local Government Area in Cross River State, in the North East by the great Kwa River. Calabar Municipality plays a dual role. Apart from being the capital city of Cross River State, also plays its role as headquarters of the southern senatorial district. There are ten wards in the local government.

Calabar South is also one of the 18 Local Government Areas in Cross River State, south-south Nigeria. It was created out of former Calabar Municipality and together they constitute the state's capital city. Calabar South covers an area of  $26\text{km}^2$ . The headquarter is located at Anantigha. Calabar South has eleven wards in its local government area.

### **POPULATION OF THE STUDY**

According to Babble (2008) a study of population is the aggregation of elements from which the sample is actually selected. Wimmer and Dominick (2008) also posited that a research has to specify the boundaries of the body of the content to be considered.

The population of Calabar Municipality is about 391, 638 and for Calabar South is about 291,438 according to the 2006 population census. The respondents were selected from these two local governments and it was aimed at ensuring that the areas of public perception of news programmes in NTA Calabar are effectively studied.

### **SAMPLING DESIGN AND PROCEDURE**

Wimmer and Dominick (2011) defined a sample as a subset of the population that is representative of the entire population. Therefore, whenever a sample is drawn from a population, researchers need a way to estimate the degree to which the sample differs from the entire population.

The selection of the actual sample for this study relied on a number of sampling techniques.

Consequently, selecting respondents for the questionnaire was done using a stratified sampling technique where the metropolis was stratified into two: Calabar South and Calabar Municipality. The next stage employed the purposive sampling technique where the researcher selected actual participants or respondents based on their acceptance of exposure to news programmes on NTA. Finally, the researcher administered 400 copies of the questionnaire to respondents from the selected wards based on their acceptance of exposure to NTA Calabar news programmes.

### **SAMPLE SIZE**

A total of 280 respondents constituted the sample of the study. This was in line with the position of Babbie (2008) that sometimes, it is appropriate to select a sample on the basis of knowledge of a population, its elements and the purpose of the study. This purposive or judgmental sampling technique helped in ensuring that only those who had been exposed to NTA Calabar news programmes were selected from the two local government area which is Calabar Municipality and Calabar South Local Government Area.

### **DATA COLLECTION INSTRUMENT**

A structured questionnaire was adopted in this study as the instrument for data collection. The instrument was created through reviewing various academic articles on public perception of news programmes on television, especially NTA Calabar. The questionnaire was structured to obtain the following information from the civil servants, private office workers, businessmen, traders and students in Calabar metropolis.

Section "A" will find out background information of the respondent

Section "B" will find out perceptions of

audience on news programmes on NTA Calabar.

Section "C" will find out the impacts of NTA's news programmes

Section "D" will find out the public view/assessment of credibility of news programmes on NTA Calabar.

### **VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY OF RESEARCH INSTRUMENT**

The research instrument was subjected to face validation by the research supervisor. He ensured that the measuring instrument used for data collection was structured in the appropriate format for investigating the subject of enquiry. This also ensured that no necessary part of the instrument was omitted which may affect the objectivity of the study. He read through the questionnaire items and effected useful corrections and suggestions. As for reliability of the study, 280 copies of the questionnaire were administered to the public who watch NTA and the results shows that the instrument of the study is reliable.

### **ADMINISTRATION OF INSTRUMENT**

A structured questionnaire was used to gather data and to provide answers to the research questions. This questionnaire was constituted in simple English and contained open and closed-ended questions that were used to both subjective and objective responses from respondents.

The questionnaire was distributed by the researcher and a research assistant through face to face distribution of the questionnaire.

### **METHOD OF DATA ANALYSIS**

The data collected was analyzed using simple percentages and was presented on tables and explanations were made.



**ANALYSIS, DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS**

The aim of this study was to investigate public perception of news programme in NTA Calabar. This section presents the analysis, interpretation and discussion of findings collected through questionnaire. Section 1

focused on the presentation of data, section 2 focused on data analysis, while section 3 focused on discussion of findings. Collected data were analyzed and presented using tables, frequencies, percentages.

**Table 1. Frequency distribution showing the age of respondents**

Age bracket	Frequency	Percentage
16 -20	28	10.0 %
21-25	42	15.0
26-30	56	20.0
31-45	70	25.0
46 and above	84	30.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>280</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Field work 2018

From table 1 above, out of 280 respondents 28 (10.0%) respondents fell under the age bracket of 16-20 years, 42 (15.0%) respondents fell under the age bracket of 21-25 years, 56 (20.0%) respondents fell under the age bracket of 26-30

years, 70 (25.0%) respondents fell under the age bracket of 31-45 years while 84 (30.0%) respondents fell under the age bracket of 46 and above.

**Table 2. Frequency distribution showing gender distribution of respondents**

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	190	67.2
Female	90	32.8
<b>Total</b>	<b>280</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: field work 2018

From the table above, 190 (67.2%) respondents out of 280 respondents were male while 90

(32.8) respondents out of 280 were female.

**Table 3. Frequency distribution showing the qualification of respondents**

Qualification	Frequency	Percentage
FSLC	95	33.3
O' Level	83	29.6
Undergraduate	43	15.3
NCE/HND	-	-
HND/B.A./B.Sc	26	9.3
PGD and others	21	7.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>280</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Field work 2018

From table above, out of 280 respondents 95 (33.9%) respondents had first school leaving certificate (FSLC), 83 (29.6%) respondents had O'level (WASE, SSCE, GCE), 43 (15.3%) respondents were undergraduates, 0 (0.0%)

respondents had NCE/ HND, 26 (9.3%) respondents had HND/ B.A/ B.Sc, while the remaining 21 (7.5%) respondents had PGD and others.

**Table 4. Frequency distribution showing gender distribution of respondents**

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Single	90	32.1
Married	187	66.8
Divorced	3	1.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>280</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Field work 2018

From table 4 above, out of 280 respondents, 90 respondents were married while three (1.1%) (32.1%) respondents were single, 187 (66.8%) respondents were divorced.

**Table 5. Frequency distribution indicating what media produces quality news programmes**

Media	Frequency	Percentage
Television	99	33.9
Radio	55	19.7
Newspapers	41	14.6
Magazines	50	17.9
Bill boards	39	13.9
<b>Total</b>	<b>280</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Field work 2018

From table 5 above, out of 280 respondents 95 (33.9%) agreed television brings out quality news programmes, 55 (19.7%) respondents said radio brings out quality news programmes, 41 (14.6%) respondents preferred newspapers, 50 (17.9%) respondents preferred magazines while 39 (13.9%) respondents preferred bill boards.

**Table 6. Frequency distribution showing how NTA Calabar news programmes influence viewers' reaction to issues**

Option	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	191	68.2
No	79	28.2
Undecided	10	3.6
<b>Total</b>	<b>280</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Field work 2018

From table 6 above, out of 280 respondents 191 (68.2%) respondents agreed that NTA Calabar news programmes has been responsible for influencing the way people react to certain issues of life, 79(28.2%) respondents disagreed, while 10 (3.6%) respondents were undecided.

**Table 7. Frequency distribution showing how NTA Calabar news coverage provokes public minds in their reporting news especially when offensive and provocative comments are covered**

Options	Frequency	Percentage
True	175	62.5
False	91	32.5
Don't know	14	5.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>280</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Field work 2018

From table 7 above, out of 280 respondents 175 (62.5%) respondents pronounced that it is true

that NTA Calabar news coverage is capable of provoking public minds in the manner they report news especially when offensive and provocative comments are covered, 91 (32.5%) respondents said that it is false, while 14 (5.0%)

respondents said they do not know whether NTA Calabar news coverage provides public minds in their reporting news especially when offensive and provocative comments are covered.

**Table 8. Frequency distribution showing those who agree that NTA Calabar news programmes keeps the citizenry abreast of current situation**

Options	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	141	50.4
Agree	106	37.7
Strongly disagree	9	3.2
Disagree	13	4.6
Undecided	11	3.9
<b>Total</b>	<b>280</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Field work 2018

From table 8 above, out of 280 respondents 141 (50.9%) respondents strongly agree that NTA Calabar news programmes keeps the citizenry abreast of current situation, 106 (37.9%)

respondents agreed, 9 (3.2%) strongly disagreed, 13(4.6%) respondents disagreed, while 11 (3.9%) respondents were undecided.

**Table 9. Frequency distribution indicating how NTA Calabar news coverage is of good quality, timely, precise and detailed**

Options	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agreed	140	50.
Agreed	107	38.2
Strongly disagreed	11	3.9
Disagreed	16	5.7
Undecided	6	2.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>280</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Field work 2018

From table 9 above, out of 280 respondents 140 (50%) respondents strongly agree that NTA Calabar news coverage is of good quality, timely, precise and detailed, 107 (38.2%) respondents

agreed, 11 (3.9%) strongly disagreed, 16 (5.7%) respondents disagreed, while 6 (2.2%) respondents were undecided.

**Table 10. Frequency distribution indicating how NTA Calabar news coverage is accurate, factual and relevant**

Options	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	231	82.5
No	49	17.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>280</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Field work 2018

From table 10 above, out of 280 respondents 231 (82.5%) respondents agreed that NTA Calabar news coverage is accurate, factual and

relevant, while 49 (17.5%) respondents disagreed that NTA Calabar news coverage is accurate, factual and relevant.

**Table 11. Frequency distribution showing NTA Calabar news coverage as trustworthy, reliable, free from bias and reported by well-trained reporters**

<b>Options</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Very sure	102	36.4
Sure	156	55.7
Not sure	22	7.9
<b>Total</b>	<b>280</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Field work 2018

From table 11 above, out of 280 respondents 102 (36.4%) respondents indicated that they are very sure that NTA Calabar news coverage is trustworthy, reliable, free from bias and reported by well-trained reporters, 156 (55.7%) respondents indicated that they are sure, while 22 (7.9%) respondents were not sure that NTA Calabar news coverage is trustworthy, reliable, free from bias and reported by well-trained reporters.

## **DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS**

Research is meant to proffer solutions to real life problems and this study was not an exception. The study aimed at achieving the objectives that were stated in chapter one of this study. Therefore, the success of this study hinges on the provision of adequate solutions to those objectives as represented by the research questions. This section therefore discussed the findings springing from the analyzed news programmes in NTA Calabar.

The survey ascertained that 280 respondents participated in the study. Out of which 190 (67.8%) were male and 90 (32.1%) were female. The result also indicated that 28 (10.0%) of the respondent that participated in the survey were within the age bracket of 16-20 years 42(15.0%) of the respondents where within the age bracket of 21- 25 years, 56 (20.0%) of the respondents were within the age bracket of 26-30 years, 70 (25.0%) of the respondents were within the age bracket of 31-45 years, while 84 (30.0%) of the respondents were

within the age bracket of 46 years and above. From the age distribution above, it could be deduced that adults (26-30, 31 -45 and 46 years and above) listen more to NTA Calabar news programmes than the youth (16-20, 21-25 years).

Of the categories of respondents by qualification covered as (33.9%) respondents have First School Leaving Certificate, 83 (29.6) respondents have O' Level 43 (15.3%) are undergraduates, 0 (0.0%) respondents have NCE/ HND, 26 (9.3%) respondents have HND/ BA/ B.Sc while the remaining 21 (7.5%) respondents have PGD and others.

## **ANSWERS TO RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

### **RESEARCH QUESTION 1: WHAT ARE THE PERCEPTIONS OF AUDIENCE ON NTA CALABAR NEWS COVERAGE?**

The aim of this question was to find out audience perception, opinion and impressions they infer from listening to NTA Calabar news. The findings from the analyzed data are shown in the tables 4.5, 4.6 and 4.7.

The data on table 4.5 showed that 95 (33.9%) respondents agreed that television brings out quality news programmes to the public, 55 (19.7%) agreed that radio brings the best quality, 41 (14.65%) respondents agreed on newspapers, 50 (17.9%) respondents have agreed on magazines while 39 (13.9%) respondents agreed on billboard bringing out quality news programmes to the public.

The data on table 4.6 indicated that 191 (68.2%) respondents agreed that NTA Calabar news programmes has been responsible for influencing the way people react to certain issues of life, 79 (28.2%) respondents disagreed, while 10 (3.5%) respondents were undecided. Table 4.7 showed that 175 (62.5%) respondents opined that NTA Calabar news coverage is capable of provoking public minds in the manner they report news especially when offensive and provocative comments are covered, 91 (32.5%) respondents said it is false while 14 (5.0%) respondents don't know if NTA Calabar news coverage is capable of provoking public minds on the manner they report news especially when offensive and provocative comments are covered.

#### **RESEARCH QUESTION 2: WHAT ARE THE IMPACTS OF NTA CALABAR NEWS PROGRAMMES TO THE PUBLIC?**

The aim of this question is to find out how NTA Calabar news programme has influenced the public. The findings from the analyzed data as shown in table 4.8 and 4.9 are discussed below: the data from table 4.8 showed that 141 (50.4%) respondents strongly agreed that NTA Calabar news programmes keeps the citizenry abreast of current events, 106 (37.9%) respondents agreed, 9 (3.2%) respondents strongly disagreed, 13 (4.6%) respondents disagreed, while 11 (3.9%) respondents undecided if NTA Calabar news programme keeps the citizenry abreast of current situation and event. Table 4.9 showed that 140 (50%) respondents strongly agreed that NTA Calabar coverage is of good quality, timely, precise and detailed news coverage, 107 (38.2%) agreed, 11 (3.9%) respondents strongly disagreed, 16 (5.7%) respondents disagreed while 6 (2.2%) respondents were undecided.

From the findings, it was established that NTA news programme has a lot of impact and have positively influenced the citizens by:

- a. Keeping the citizenry abreast of current events and situation
- b. Revealing that NTA new programme is of good quality, timely, precise and detailed news coverage.

#### **RESEARCH QUESTION 3: HOW CREDIBLE DO AUDIENCE PERCEIVE NTA CALABAR NEWS PROGRAMME COVERAGE?**

The aim of this question is to find out the credibility of NTA Calabar news coverage. The findings from the analyzed data as shown in tables 4.10 and 4.11 are discussed below:

The data from table 4.10 showed that 231 (82.5%) respondents agreed that NTA Calabar news coverage is accurate, factual and relevant, while 49 (17.5%) respondents disagreed that NTA Calabar News coverage is accurate, factual and relevant. Table 4.11 showed that 102 (36.4%) respondents indicated that they are very sure that NTA Calabar news coverage is trustworthy, reliable, free from bias and reported by well-trained reporters, 156 (55.7%) respondents indicated that they are sure, while 22 (7.9%) respondents were not sure that NTA Calabar news coverage is trustworthy, reliable, free from bias and reported by well trained reporters.

The findings revealed that NTA Calabar news coverage is accurate, factual and relevant. The study also revealed that NTA Calabar news coverage is trustworthy, reliable, free from bias and reported by well-trained reporters. These findings corroborate McQuail (1992) in his study on "media performance". Mass communication and public interest, London, United Kingdom. He identified factualness, accuracy and completeness as key defining features of truthfulness of news coverage. Elareshirie and Gunter (2012) in their study on "credibility of televised news", they affirmed that steady research evidence has shown that television is the most trusted source of news

out of all the major news media. In the same study, Gunter stated that objectivity of news means that it should be free from bias and it should be factual.

The overall objective of this study was to investigate public perception of NTA Calabar news programme. Attention was paid to understanding audience perception of NTA Calabar news programme coverage, impact of NTA Calabar coverage as it influences news programme and also the ascertain the credibility of news coverage on NTA Calabar. This survey adopted questionnaire as a data collection instrument towards providing answers to the set research question. Based on the data collection, analyzed and discussed, this chapter will focus on the summary of findings, conclusion and recommendations.

## **CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

The findings among others revealed that the public attach importance to the status and pedigree of NTA Calabar hence influences their perception and beliefs the way they react to certain issues of life. Though the study affirmed that frequency and degree of coverage given to news are capable of heightening tensions and provoking public minds especially when offensive and provocative comments are covered.

The study also revealed that NTA Calabar news programme keeps the citizen abreast of current event and situation.

Finally, the survey revealed that NTA Calabar news coverage is of good quality, timely, precise and detailed news programme. News programmes on NTA Calabar is also found to be accurate/ factual, relevant, trustworthy, reliable and free from bias.

This study provides meaningful information relating to perception, impact and credibility of

news coverage on NTA Calabar. it illustrates that audience perception of news coverage depends on the media station or organization. The research echoed that contents of news coverage has a great influence in the way and manner individuals or group of people react to certain issues of life; more significantly NTA Calabar news coverage keeps the citizens abreast of current event and situation. Finally, the researcher concludes that NTA Calabar news programme is timely, precise, detailed and free from bias.

Based on the findings and conclusion of the study, the following recommendations were made:

- a. Media organization and press bodies should organize seminars and workshops to sensitize and educate journalists on the significance and effects of news contents, especially in order to improve their skills and professionalism.
- b. If the primary purpose of the media is to inform the public then the media houses should ensure that contents of their news are absolutely free from bias and be factual and relevant to the larger society. This could be achieved by conducting opinion polls to test the validity of the news contents before such news are made public.
- c. Feedback and evaluation of mass media: the mechanism to evaluate the performance of the media stations towards the desired objectives of national cohesion and integration especially in this era of democracy should be encouraged. the incentives to media (cash and medals) on account of objectives analysis of national issues and allocations of reasonable time for coverage of national harmony issues may be considered.
- d. The media should avoid sensations and scandalous coverage; develop a

harmonious society, bridge gap between reality and distortions. The media should projects objective analysis of events by avoiding biases, prejudices and negative perceptions of various groups in the society.

- e. Media and good governance for fair and transparent accountability. The media should also indicate areas that will bring transparency in government actions. The media through awareness campaign should help in building public consensus to condemn corruption and to promote culture of good governance.

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