Viewers Assessment of the Performance of Broadcast Media in Reporting Flooding Issues in South-South Nigeria

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ABSTRACT
Background: The broadcast media, such as television stations, perform diverse roles within society. The fulfilment of such is embedded in the normative function linked to public services, such as informing, educating, and entertaining society to address issues that affect them.
Objectives: The study sought to ascertain viewers' assessment of the performance of NTA and AIT television stations on the quality of news reportage of the 2022 flooding in South-South Nigeria.

Methodology: The survey research design was adopted for this study. The population of the study was 2,751,455, of which a sample size of 384 was drawn using a multi-stage sampling technique while a structured questionnaire was used as the instrument for data collection. The results were

analysed using descriptive statistics and presented in tables. Simple percentages and mean scores were used to analyse and present the data obtained for this study.

Results: Findings showed that most respondents were often exposed to stories about flooding on NTA and AIT. Data also revealed that viewers of both NTA and AIT TV stations were exposed to the same content categories: compensation of flood victims, destruction of property, protests by flood victims, visits by government officials, and warnings about flooding. Results also showed that viewers have a negative assessment of the performance of NTA but a positive assessment of AIT regarding news reports on flooding in the South-South states.

Conclusion: Viewers in the South-South geopolitical zone of Nigeria were frequently exposed to both NTA and AIT. Viewers have a negative perception of the performance of NTA but a positive perception of the performance of AIT.

Unique contribution: The study showed that viewers of television programmes in the South-South states of Nigeria are active interpreters of media text messages, and they look out for messages that explain the flooding situation to them.

Key Recommendations: Since the South-South region of Nigeria is flood-prone, television stations should report various flood stories, including reporting more from the perspectives of flood victims. This is necessary because floods affect different victims in different ways. This can help them to plan well on how to handle flood issues.

Keywords: broadcast media, flood; viewers, media performance,   South-south, viewers

Introduction

Media performance is a concept used to refer to the assessment and evaluation of media content, often in relation to social responsibility, public interest or professionalism. Scholars such as McQuail 2016; Magin and Stark 2020; and Hasebrink and Holig 2020 have provided views on the meaning of media performance. Media performance, according to McQuail (2016), is a methodical, systematic approach to critically analysing the activities and content of mass media as they work towards their stated goals. The objectives of this media analysis might be tied to the general public interest or matters of professional quality. McQuail further notes that the main elements for analysing media performance are the selection and definition of evaluative concepts, and this is done using empirical data, mainly from practitioners, actual content, or audiences. The views of McQuail was corroborated by other scholars (Magin & Stark, 2020; Momoh, 2022; Suleiman & Ojomo, 2019).

According to Magin and Stark (2020), the indicator used in evaluating media performance is crucial because even if professionals deem the content to be of excellent quality, the audience may not find it appealing. This means that understanding media performance takes a multidimensional approach by applying various indicators.

News content is a major index for assessing the quality of media houses; hence, the broadcast media, in this instance, television stations that produce and disseminate messages in a given society, strive to ensure quality in programmes, especially due to the positive effects this has on the industry and society by way of helping to preserve societal norms, values, including promotion of professionalism. Based on this perception, one can conclude that high-quality television programmes result in a positive effect on the media and the entire society, while poor quality will directly lead to low audience patronage of media stations or loss of interest and trust.

Broadcast media, such as television stations, perform diverse roles within society. The fulfilment of such a role is embedded in the normative function, which is linked to public services, such as informing, educating, and entertaining society with the view of addressing issues that affect the social, political, and economic well-being of their audience.

The issue of flooding, which affected many parts of South-South states, was covered in the media, but what television viewers in the affected states think about the coverage of the incident by television stations is pertinent in evaluating media performance on flooding.

Nigerians describe the flooding of 2012 as the worst until 2022 experience. In 2022, Nigeria experienced one of the worst incidents of flooding in history, orchestrated by the release of water from the Lagdo dam in Cameroon coupled with heavy rainfall, which caused severe flooding that affected many states across the nation, especially southern and central States, including Abuja which is the nation's capital. The incidents, which commenced in the first half of August 2022, resulted in episodes of injuries and extensive damages (OCHA, 2022). States like Delta, Cross River, Rivers and Bayelsa in the south-south zone of Nigeria are among the worst hit by the floods.

According to media reports, as of 18 October 2022, there were over 2,400 injuries, 603 fatalities, around 1,303,000 displaced persons and over 2,504,000 impacted individuals nationwide. Further reports showed that Bayelsa State was the worst affected in South-South Nigeria, with almost 700,000 people affected or displaced. Of them, about 203,400 homes were damaged, with about 82,000 completely demolished (OCHA, 2022).

How two popular mainstream television stations, Nigerian Television Authority (NTA) and Africa Independent Television (AIT), reported the flooding incidents in the South-South, provides a good pedestal for analysing audience members' perception of news content of these two popular stations in the country.

The Nigerian Television Authority (NTA) is a Federal government-owned media institution, and the Africa Independent Television (AIT) is a subsidiary of DAAR Communications. It is a private television station. It was established on August 31, 1998, and owned by the late Raymond Lawrence-Dokpesi. NTA and AIT television stations have branches in many state capitals in Nigeria, including South-South Nigeria. NTA and AIT are also available on most of the cable networks, such as GOTV and DSTV; programs are also available on most cable networks, such as GOTV, DSTV, and Real Summit, among others. This means that NTA and AIT content could be available to residents of South-South Nigeria from far and near.

Objectives of the Study

The general purpose of this study was to ascertain viewers' assessment of the performance of broadcast media on the quality of news reportage of 2022 flooding in South-South Nigeria. Specifically, the study seeks to:

1. Ascertain viewers' frequency of exposure to news reports on flooding on NTA and AIT in the South-South states of Nigeria.
2. Identify the type of reports on flooding viewers of South-South Nigeria were exposed to on NTA and AIT.
3. Examine viewers' assessment of the performance of NTA and AIT regarding news reports on flooding in the South-South States.

Literature review

Audience Assessment of News Media Performance

Certain factors influence people's satisfaction with media performance. According to Ball-Rokeach and DeFleur (1976), the Media Dependency Theory established that people's political attitudes and their perceptions of media in general, including their loyalty to it, are strongly influenced by the media sources they are exposed to and pay attention to. (Gil de Zúñiga & Hinsley, 2013, Towner & Lego Munoz, 2016). Some facts play an intervening role in audience assessment of media performance, and the two major ones are characteristics of different media types and attitude-congruent news-use patterns (Steppat et al., 2020). These factors further throw more light on how individuals' media use shapes how they evaluate news media performance.

Use of Different Media Types: Previous studies like (McDowell, 2011; Urban & Schweiger, 2014) revealed the significance of conventional, well-known media brands in shaping the public's perception of media quality. Neuberger (2014) noted that when it comes to impartiality, independence, and audience orientation, news media viewers considerably rank conventional news sources higher. This was demonstrated through a comparison of several traditional and online news forms. However, media consumers do not consider social media or other online news sources that depend on user-generated material to be engaging in "good journalism" (Gil de Zúñiga & Hinsley, 2013). Above all, they reinforced the notion that utilising more established and expert media sources genuinely raises public perception of the media and fosters a more positive attitude towards it by strengthening the conviction that news reports meet the standards of quality journalism (Gil et al., 2013; Newman et al., 2019).

It has been proposed that media consumers often evaluate media performance based on how well they perceive the media kinds they use, according to the arguments of the media dependence theory (Steppat et al, 2020). According to Gil deZúñiga and Hinsley (2013), media consumers who depend on high-performing media products, such as the more well-known news mainstream brands, apply the higher quality assessment outlined above in their overall assessments of the media.

Use of Attitude-Congruent Contents: It is anticipated that the public would have more positive opinions of the news media's performance when they utilise it in an attitude-congruent manner, which is defined as using information that supports one's own opinions (Steppat et al., 2020). For one simple reason, the degree to which news media performance satisfies viewers is always correlated with the degree to which the public perceives the media to be impartial and objective (Towner & Lego Munoz, 2016). When information does not support one's stance, people are prone to see it as biased; conversely, when information supports one's position, people are inclined to perceive it as balanced (Gunther et al., 2012). Additionally, prior research has demonstrated that people who utilise attitude-congruent information also see it as being of higher quality (Greitemeyer & Schulz-Hardt, 2003) and attribute more "news-ness" to sympathetic sources as opposed to uncongenial ones (Edgerly & Vraga, 2020).

Indicators for Audience Assessment of Media Performance

Audience members' views on news media performance play an ever-increasing role in media research. A theory that is internally coherent and in line with people's lived experiences is expected in an audience-centred, or at the very least audience-inclusive, view of the functions of journalism, according to Peters and Witschge (2015). Research has been done on how the public perceives

journalism as a career (van der Wurff & Schoenbach, 2014), and studies carried out by (Arlt, 2019; Jackob et al., 2019), examined how the news ecosystem is seen in a particular nation. A concept that has become commonly researched has emerged as a well-studied indication of how the public evaluates news media performance (Engelke et al., 2019; Jackob et al., 2019; Hasebrink & Hölig, 2020). Where the audience has a high level of trust in the news, this becomes an indicator of media performance. Apart from trust, audiences' perceptions of how the news media are performing could be based on specific functions.

Five roles are represented by metrics from the Reuters Institute Digital News Survey, which align with the conclusions of academic debates (Newman et al., 2019; Hasebrink & Hölig, 2020): The term a) Watchdog: describes how much the news media monitors and examines powerful individuals and companies; b) relevant topics: describes how relevant the topics the media chooses to cover to their audience; c) tone: describes how the media strikes a balance between positivity and negativity when reporting on events; d) immediacy: describes how the media informs its audience about events in the community; and e) depth: describes how the media helps users make sense of the news.

According to Steppat et al. (2020), audience members' evaluations of news media performance may be assessed along four dimensions: diversity, representation, objectivity, and journalistic independence. This is from an audience-driven perspective. The three lines of literature that inform this approach are (a) institutionalist perspectives and media policy that emphasise the democratic functions of the media (McQuail, 1992; Tuchman, 1980); (b) empirical studies that use surveys and experimental research to extend their theoretical framework by utilising audience perceptions of news media (Heider et al., 2005; Neuberger, 2014; Urban & Schweiger, 2014); and (c) surveys that are derived from journalists who document their professional norms and dictates while covering news (Hanitzsch & Berganza, 2012).

In addition, Steppat et al. (2020) contend that public attitudes towards mass media are influenced by the structure of the media environment as well as the motives and actions of media users. The subjective quality evaluation theory (Wolling, 2009) was employed to arrive at this conclusion. This study examines viewers' evaluation of television performance and focuses on individuals' exposure to news content of select stations and their influence on how the news media are evaluated.

Flooding: Overview
Flooding, a global phenomenon, is one of the natural catastrophes that bring about widespread destruction to human lives, properties and the environment every year, and they could be as a result of natural phenomena or human actions and inactions (Jerome-Glago, 2021). Climate-related variables contribute to flooding, and environmental estimates indicate that urban flooding will worsen as Nigeria's climate exhibits increasing variations in temperature, precipitation, storm activity, and sea level during the twenty-first century (Abiodun et al., 2011). Urban and rural floods cause fatalities, property destruction, and damage to vital infrastructure. They also interrupt socioeconomic activity and may result in local populations' temporary or permanent displacement.

Evidence shows that the resultant effects of flooding strongly impact lives, affect the cost of business activities in a city and bring about a less egalitarian society (Adeyemi et al., 2015).

Whether natural or man-made, floods occur as a result of diverse factors. Studies by (Zhang et al., 2018, and Jerome-Glago, 2021) identified causes of flooding in cities to include urbanisation, dilapidated state of infrastructure, inadequate drainage systems, lack of proper management of the drainage systems, heavy rainfall as major causes of flood.

The aftereffect of such flooding experiences in the past is that residents hardly recovered entirely from the crisis before another incident took place. A number of times, socio-economic efforts set in motion by the government to ameliorate the impacts of such flooding disasters might take years to be realised (Adekola & Lamond, 2018). This is a disturbing development which presents itself in many Nigerian cities. This explains the need for sustainable management of floods in Nigerian states in view of the challenging problems and the need for media to provide information that will empower other institutions with data capable of combating the inundated impact of the flood.

Discussions on floods have frequently been marked by intense debate often laced in clashes (Hutter et al., 2014). What often forms the basics of these debates are questions over whether anthropogenic or climate-related causes are the primary cause of floods (Texier, 2008; Adekola & Lamond, 2018), illustrating the potentially complicated relationships that exist between humans and the environment. Flooding is frequently caused by interactions between meteorological and sociopolitical variables, including infrastructure and management (Adekola & Lamond, 2018). Analysts may thus argue that, regardless of the amount of rainfall, a flooding tragedy would still occur if certain human elements were at fault. It is thought that an actor's perception of the underlying cause of flooding would influence how the problem is presented and the remedies put forth, even if this is not the place to analyse the validity of these statements (van Eeten, 1997; Entman, 1993). Media framing of an issue plays a crucial role in determining the reflection of public perception on that issue (Maddison, 2007), To put it another way, audience members' interpretations and framing of a problem—in this case, flooding disasters—are greatly influenced by perception.

Steppat et al. (2020) conducted a study, "News Media Performance Evaluated by National Audiences: How Media Environments and User Preferences Matter." The study confirmed that individual media use habits influenced the type of performance users receive but that the surrounding news environment should be considered while examining media influence. The researchers selected Denmark, Italy, Poland, Switzerland, and the USA for their comparative study. Findings revealed that consumers from less fragmented-polarized media environments and those of mainstream media were more satisfied with the performance of the media than audience members from more fragmented-polarized media environments, including those of alternative media.

Fawzi and Mothes (2020) studied "Perceptions of Media Performance: Expectation–Evaluation Discrepancies and Their Relationship with Media-Related and Populist Attitudes." The study investigates insight into the relationship that exists between media trust and the performance of the media, which users expect, including users' evaluations of the performance they received from the media. The researchers did a rerun survey from Germany, establishing a close link between performance and trust. The results revealed that the media regularly fails to live up to people's high, making users have lower media trust. This study was on the media in Germany, while the current study is on media in Nigeria.

Nwala and Daniel (2018). In their study "Press coverage of 2012 flooding in Nigeria; An assessment of some select Newspaper in Nigeria". Investigate the extent to which the press covered the 2012 flood disaster in Nigeria. The content analysis retrieved data from three national newspapers: the *Guardian*, the *Nation* and *Punch*. Interestingly, findings reveal that the press gave maximal coverage to the 2012 flooding. Much attention was given to major issues like death, damages and displacement occasioned by the flood.

In a similar study, Ajaero et al. (2012) "Perception of and Attitude towards mass media reportage of the 2012 flood in rural Nigeria". They gathered information from 300 households in rural communities in the Nigerian states of Delta and Anambra using a survey with a structured questionnaire. The outcome showed that the flood disaster's mass media coverage was ineffective in changing the public's perception.

Theoretical framework

The Reception Theory—also referred to as the Audience Theory or the Readers' Reception Theory—lays the foundation for this investigation. Stuart Hall propounded the theory in the year 1973 in his essay, "Encoding and Decoding." The basic tenet of the theory stipulates that media audiences individually interpret the media texts (print, electronic, Internet) they are exposed to in different ways. The dominant-hegemonic code, the preferred meaning negotiated or positioned code, and the oppositional code. It argues that meaning at the encoding and decoding end are not identical because the codes of encoding and decoding may not be completely symmetrical. In other words, there exists no necessary correspondence between encoding and decoding.
This study conceives viewers of television programmes in the South-South states of Nigeria as active interpreters of media text messages. The concept of active audiences comes as both a critique of the notion of an all-powerful media and a show of faith in the intelligence and autonomy of audience members. The audience's interpretive activity is essential because it is in audience reception that media texts acquire their full meaning (Idakwo & Oloruntola, 2020; Aminudin, 2018; Griffin, 2012). This makes this theory apt for this study, which is based on how viewers react to, understand, and judge the quality of television news on floods in Nigeria's South-South states.

Methodology

The survey research design was adopted for this study. The survey is adopted for this study to elicit data from television viewers in the South-South geopolitical zone on their assessment of NTA and AIT performance with respect to news reportage on flooding. This study is population comprises all television viewers in the capital cities of the three states selected for this study: Bayelsa, Delta, and Rivers. These cities are Yenagoa, Asaba and Port Harcourt. Since there was no statistical record of media audience in Nigeria, the researchers used a total number of residents of the cities selected for the study. Using the 2006 population census, the population figure reads Yenagoa: 352,285, Asaba: 149,603 and Port Harcourt: 1,481,000, giving a total of 1,982,888. Hence, the population of this study therefore is the sum total of all figures of the various state capitals as follows 352: 285 +149,603 +1,481,000= 1,982,888

The sample size for the study was 384. This was determined using Cozby's (2004) table of sample size determination, which states that at +/-.05 error margin, a population of over 100,000 will have a sample of 384. Therefore, 384 respondents make up the study's sample size. In the investigation, the multi-stage sampling technique was adopted for the study. First, the cluster sampling technique was used to delineate the South-South region into three states that were studied. Then, the survey method's respondents were chosen within the chosen cities using the

purposive sample technique. Data on viewers' assessment of the television stations' performance in the selected cities was retrieved using a structured questionnaire.

Lecturers, one expert is from the University of Nigeria, Nsukka, Enugu, Nigeria, and two others are from the University of Africa, Toru-Orua, Bayelsa State validated the research instrument. They assessed the survey questionnaire items on the basis of content, comprehensiveness, relevance and adequacy. Their comments were used for the instrument final draft. A pilot study was carried out on a single test basis with respondents to determine the reliability of the research instrument in Uyo, Akwa Ibom State. In the pilot research, a total of twenty copies of the questionnaire were distributed. A total of 20 copies of the questionnaire were administered in the pilot study. A Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient was generated for the pilot study. The reliability coefficient is 0.708 or 71%. This result indicates a high reliability of the instrument and was adjudged high enough. Therefore, the instrument was used for the study based on its result, which was considered positively reliable. Mean scores, basic percentages, and frequency tables were used to present and interpret the field data. Tables were created solely for comprehension and clarity.

Result

Out of 384 copies of the questionnaire that were administered to respondents, 339 were found usable for the study. The demographic data showed that 204 (60%) of the respondents were male, while 135 (40%) were female. This implied that the majority of the respondents under study were male. The majority (37%) of the respondents in this study were within the age bracket of 26-35 years. For marital status, 182 (54%) of the respondents were married, while 157 (46%) were single. This implies that the majority of the respondent's understudy were married. Finally, the majority of the respondents had a tertiary education. In response to the thematic questions, the result is as shown below.

Data Presentation
Investigating viewers' frequency of exposure to news reports about flooding in the South-South states on NTA and AIT Tables 1 and 2 provide answers to this question.

Table 1: Viewers' frequency of exposure to news reports about flooding in the South-South states on NTA and AIT

Rows	Items	Very often	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Mean	S. D.
Row 1	I am exposed to stories about flooding on NTA	159	156	24	-	3.4	0.61
Row 2	I am exposed to stories about flooding on AIT	218	117	4	-	3.6	0.50

Criterion mean = (2.5)
The data from Table 1 revealed that most respondents saw stories about flooding on both NTA and AIT very often. This implies that both television stations are credible sources of information in South-South Nigeria.

Table 3: *Types of reports on flooding that residents of South-South Nigeria were exposed to on NTA and AIT*

S/N	items	NTA						AIT					
		SA	A	D	SD	Mean	S.D.	SA	A	D	SD	Mean	S.D
1	Compensation for flood victims	209	126	-	4	3.6	0.56	147	173	16	3	3.4	0.61
2	Destruction of property	164	165	10	-	3.5	0.55	140	189	5	5	3.4	0.59
3	Protest by flood victims	205	117	13	4	3.5	0.62	138	188	13	-	3.4	0.55
4	Visit to flood areas by government officials	168	149	18	4	3.4	0.65	107	199	24	7	3.3	2.37
5	Warning about flooding	136	171	25	7	3.2	0.69	109	192	38	-	3.2	0.62
	Grand Mean					**3.4**	**0.61**					**3.3**	**0.94**

Criterion mean = (2.5)

Table 2 showed the type of reports on flooding that residents of south-south Nigeria were exposed to on NTA and AIT. For NTA, the data showed that the grand mean (3.4) is greater than the criterion mean (2.5), while for AIT, the grand mean (3.2) is greater than the criterion mean (2.5). This showed that items 1-5 were the type of reports on flooding residents of south-south Nigeria were exposed to on NTA and AIT.

Table 3: Viewers' assessments of the performance of NTA regarding news reports on flooding in the South-South states.

S/N	How would you rate the stories on flooding reported on NTA?	NTA						AIT					
		SA	A	D	SD	Mean	S.D.	SA	A	D	SD	Mean	S.D

1.	The stories gave details of destructions by the flooding	-	159	173	6	2.4	0.53	218	117	4	-	3.6	0.50
2.	The stories were not biased	-	127	162	50	2.2	0.68	80	198	61	-	3.0	0.64
3.	Victims of flooding were represented in the stories	42	7	203	87	2.0	0.88	165	155	19	-	3.4	0.59
4.	The stories were not from the government angle	-	76	214	49	2.0	0.60	74	204	61	-	3.0	0.63
5.	The stories were objective	-	41	213	85	1.9	0.59	104	127	99	9	2.9	0.84
	Grand Mean					**2.1**	**0.65**					**3.2**	**0.64**

Criterion mean = (2.5).

Table 3 revealed the viewers' assessment of the performance of NTA and AIT regarding news reports on flooding in the south-south states. From Items 1-5, data under NTA showed the grand mean (2.1) is lower than the criterion mean (2.5). Therefore, the implication showed that the viewers' have a negative assessment of the performance of NTA regarding news reports on flooding in the south-south states. In the other section, the reading of the data under AIT showed that the grand mean (3.2) is above the criterion mean (2.5); this implies that the viewers' have a positive assessment of the performance of AIT regarding news reports on flooding in the south-south states.

Discussion of findings

The first research objective aimed to ascertain viewers' frequency of exposure to news reports about flooding in the South-South states on NTA and AIT. Data showed that the majority of the respondents saw stories about flooding on NTA and AIT very often. This confirms that these two television stations are popular among residents of the South-South geo-political zone of Nigeria and are very apt for this study.

Tsfati (2010) posit that there is a strong association between trust and exposure to a medium, including a strong relationship between the consumption of non-mainstream news and scepticism. The trust audiences have on mainstream media over social media and such other

Internet-based news platforms could explain the reliance on AIT and NTA for news on flooding in the South-South. Furthermore, exposure to more traditional and professionalised media sources is positively related to higher media trust, with a positive outlook from audiences toward the media (Gil et al., 2013; Idakwo & Oloruntola, 2020).

The attitude-congruent approach could also explain the frequency of exposure and dependence on NTA and AIT for stories on flooding by viewers in the South-South. Individuals are likely to perceive information as being biased when it does not support their position and as balanced when the information they are exposed to aligns with their views (Gunther et al., 2012). Dependence on mainstream media, such as NTA and AIT, for information on flooding, supports the argument above.

The second research objective aimed at investigating the type of reports on flooding that residents of South-South Nigeria were exposed to. Data shows that for both NTA and AIT, respondents were exposed to the same content categories: compensation of flood victims, destruction of property, protest by flood victims, visits by government officials, and warnings about flooding. These content categories dominated media content during the period of flooding. The major issues reported in the media during the period of flooding are the destruction of properties, the extent of damage done, a visit by government officials, and compensation of flood victims (Nwabueze, 2021; Shittu, 2021). These are also among the basic information needs people seek to gratify during the period of flooding.

The Audience Reception theory receives support from this finding. Just like the reception theory suggests, viewers of television programmes in the South-South states of Nigeria are active interpreters of media text messages, and they look out for messages that explain the flooding situation to them. The audience's interpretive activity is essential because it is in the process of audience reception that media texts acquire their full meaning (Idakwo & Oloruntola, 2020; Aminudin, 2018; Griffin, 2012).

The third research objective examined viewers' assessment of the performance of NTA and AIT regarding news reports on flooding in the South-South states. This was measured by asking the respondents to assess the performance of selected media stations based on items on a Likert scale. Data showed that viewers have a negative assessment of the performance of NTA but a positive assessment of AIT regarding news reports on flooding in the south-south states. The positive relationship implied that increased exposure to NTA and AIT contents influenced viewers' perceptions and evaluations of the quality and effectiveness of the television programming in the study. The way the reports were presented influenced the perception of content quality.

Steppat et al. (2020) observe that from an audience-driven perspective, audience members' assessment of news media performance could be measured across four dimensions - diversity, representation, objectivity, and journalistic independence. Pepple and Onah (2022), after a study, revealed that poor aesthetics of programmes and technical issues could lead to viewer apathy, affecting the overall quality of programmes. According to the studies, other challenges that could influence the poor quality of the programme are funding issues, access to equipment, power supply, government regulations, and the need to attain digitalisation completely (Fawzi & Mothes, 2020; Ewazomia, 2021). Government-owned media houses such as NTA face such challenges, which may have influenced the programme's content.

Conclusion and Recommendation
The study concludes that viewers in the South-South geopolitical zone of Nigeria are frequently exposed to NTA and AIT television stations and were exposed to news about flooding aired on the

stations. This indicates the view that NTA and AIT remain dominant media stations and reliable sources of news in the south-south region. While assessing the media performance of NTA and AIT, viewers have a negative assessment of the performance of NTA but a positive assessment of AIT regarding news reports on flooding in the South-South States. Based on the findings of this study, the researchers recommend the following;

1. Since the South-South region of Nigeria is flood-prone, television stations should produce quality content that captures flooding-associated issues. This will attract viewers' continued exposure to news reports on flooding, which can help them plan well to handle flood issues.
2. Television stations should report various flood stories, including reporting more from the perspectives of flood victims. This is necessary because floods affect different victims in different ways.
3. The television stations should balance their reports from both government and flood victims' angles, provide more analysis of flooding incidents, and report more from the scene of the flooding. This will help to increase the performance rating of the TV stations by the viewers.

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