

The moderate effect of dramatized television testimonials in the relationship between anti-migration advocacy advertisement and perception about dangerous migration among youth in Nigeria

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Abstract

Background: Combating the menace of dangerous migration is one of the social problems facing the world now. Daily, casualties of victims of dangerous migration are recorded. Young people's wrong perception about the benefits and negative. Dramatized testimonials of victims of dangerous migration have featured constantly in TV messages against dangerous migration.

Objective: The objective of this study was to determine the moderating effect of dramatized television testimonials in the relationship between anti-migration messages and perception about dangerous migration among youth in Nigeria.

Methodology: The researcher utilized descriptive survey research design. The sample size was made up of 470 youth in Nigeria. The researcher combined both descriptive and inferential statistics to analyze the results.

Results: The result of the study showed among others, that dramatized testimonies of victims of dangerous migration significantly moderate the effectiveness of media anti-immigration advocacy advertisements among youth.

We explored the theoretical, practical and scholarly contributions of this study.

Conclusion: Dramatized television testimonials are effective in changing the perception of youth regarding dangerous migration.

Unique contribution: This study has provided empirical evidence that could be beneficial for understanding how to effectively change the perception of Nigerian youth on dangerous migration.

Key recommendation: It is suggested that drama techniques should be used in addressing the growing problem of dangerous migration in Nigeria.

Keywords: anti-immigration; advocacy; drama; dangerous migration; televised; victims.

Introduction

Dangerous migration is one of the serious social problems facing the world today. It has constituted a severe problem that world leaders are trying to handle. The situation is made worse by the fact that there appears to be an obvious display of desperation on the part of those who wish to migrate to other countries. Citizens of some countries risk their lives in a bid to migrate to other countries in search of greener pastures. Dangerous migration is defined as a movement of people from one country to another in manners that expose them to dangers. It is migration efforts that do not follow the laid down procedure for migrating. According to the International Organization for Migration {IOM} (2016), within the first six months of 2016, more than 3,700 persons were missing or lost their lives in the process of migrating globally. The report adds that this figure was an increase of 28% when compared to the same period in 2015. It also represented an increase of 52% when compared to the same time period in 2014. The International Organization for Migration (2019) reveals that between 2014 to 2018, a total of 30,900 persons have lost their lives in an effort to migrate to other countries. The report adds that the Mediterranean Sea has been identified as the place with the highest number of deaths as it has claimed about 17,919 people. The reports also revealed that in 2018, 156 persons died while crossing the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden. In the same vein, a total of 42 persons from Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela lost their lives while engaging in dangerous migration. In addition, since 2014, 1,884 persons have lost their lives along the United States–Mexico border.

The International Organization for Migration has recognized the global problem that dangerous migration poses and has launched a publication titled “Fatal Journeys.” The publication which is in its 4th Volume notes that adolescents and youths from Sub-Saharan Africa are more susceptible to trafficking and exploitation than those from other regions. With respect to Nigeria, the report adds that the country has had many cases of undocumented deaths of international migrants. The federal government of Nigeria in a bid to combat instances Trafficking in Persons (TIP) as well as Smuggling of Migrants (SOM) working in synergy with the European Union Delegation on the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), the National Agency for the Prohibition of Traffic In Persons (NAPTIP) and the Nigeria Immigration Service (NIS), on 18th December, 2017, launched a nationwide "I AM PRICELESS" (United Nations Office on Dangerous Crime, 2020) The objective of campaign is to discourage Nigerians from engaging in dangerous migration. Hajiya Sadiya Farouq, the Federal Commissioner, was cited during the launch of the campaign thus:

We are standing in solidarity for our sisters and brothers who have lost their lives or have gone missing during perilous journeys through the desert or by the sea in search of a better life. “We remember many who have drowned at sea, the uncontrollable migrants sold as slaves and confined in detention centres. I would also remind those at home that are planning on doing the same that your lives are more valuable and there are better options at home.

Ever since the campaign was launched over two years ago, different messages have appeared in the media, discouraging Nigerians from engaging in dangerous immigration. The perception that Nigerians have such messages is important because it will largely determine their attitudes towards dangerous migrations.

Perception describes the way a person view an issue. It defines the angles or perspectives that a person sees an issue. McDonald (2012) avers that perception is used in reference to a person's opinion that guides their decision. McDonald adds that perception plays a critical role in influencing a person's actions and inactions. According to Noë and Thompson (2002), philosophers have examined perception for many centuries. Accordingly, within the context of philosophy of perception, the mind and the way its functions is examined with close evaluation of questions related to the definition of perception, consciousness in perception as well as the manner a person can fit an account of perceptual experience. In the view of BonJour (2007), philosophers like Descartes and Locke made efforts to provide answers to question of the origin of people's awareness related to perceptual experiences. Considering the important role of perception in human actions, it means that the perception which Nigerians have concerning dangerous migration is worth investigation; hence the need for the current study.

Objectives of the Study and Significance

The general objective of this study was to determine the moderating effect of dramatized television testimonials in the relationship between anti-migration messages and perception about dangerous migration among youth in Nigeria. A study of this nature is important because it will provide information that will be beneficial on how to address the problem of dangerous migration. As noted earlier in the background, youth engage in migration more than any other age grade. Therefore, there is need to come up with relevant information that will be useful on how to combat this menace among young people.

Literature Review

Tackling dangerous migration through anti-immigration advocacy advertisements has been identified as one of the effecting ways of addressing the challenges that irregular migration poses. It is perhaps with this in mind that the mass media have been deployed to educate the general public about the consequences of dangerous migration and encourage them to engage in immigration in safe manners, where a person decides to migrate. Despite the role of the media in shaping public views about migration by preventing dangerous migration or reducing its increase, previous studies (Boomgaarden & Vliegenthart, 2009; Bleiker *et al.*, 2013; Boomgaarden, 2007; Berg & Spehar, 2013; Bauder, 2008) that interrogate the association between the media and migration paid more attention to how the media represents immigrants. While such information is important, literature has largely ignored the role that the media will play in addressing the raging problem of dangerous migration. Additionally, such studies are conducted from the perspective of destination countries of migrants, thus leaving a gap in literature from the perspective of countries of origin of immigrants. Besides, the impact of efforts of governments and other authorities aimed at discouraging dangerous migration has remained largely under explored. The current study filled these gaps.

a. Anti-Immigration advocacy advertisements

Anti-immigration advocacy advertisements are parts of efforts by governments of countries and non-governmental organizations to shape the views of the general public about issues related to immigration. As a concept, immigration describes the movement of people from one country to another. It focuses on the movement of persons to countries where they do not hold citizenship. See Cisneros (2008); Charteris-Black (2006). Edo *et al.*, (2018) aver that more than 243 million people are resident in a country different from where they gave birth to them. They add that immigrants constitute 3.3% of the global population. Edo *et al.*, (2018) in a study reported that 11.5% of people in France, 13% of persons in Germany and the United States, and 20% of persons in Canada are foreign-born. This situation paints a picture of the growing immigration globally. There are generally desperations on the part of immigrants as they are typically willing to take-up any job. This assumption is confirmed by the study of Dustmann *et al.*, (2012). The impacts of immigration on destination countries have been variously examined in literature (Huber & Oberdabernig, 2016; Docquier, *et al.*, 2014; D'Amuri *et al.*, 2010; Dustmann, *et al.*, 2017); however, the effect of media anti-immigration advocacy advertisements has received little attention.

Anti-immigration advocacy advertisements are non-commercial messages aimed at discouraging the general public from engaging in immigration, especially that which is unsafe and exposes them to danger. Sethi (1977) is one of the earliest scholars to conceptualize advocacy advertising. According to him, Advocacy advertising describes attempts to alter or sustain public views and social policy concerning a specific short-term as well as on long-term critical values which are essential to institutions. Madrigal *et al.*, (2009) say that advocacy advertisements are normally required to be most effective on the condition that the contents have the capacity to ignite emotional reactions of the target receivers. Within the context of the argument of Madrigal *et al.*, advocacy advertisements related to anti-immigration can only be effective if they are able to trigger the emotions of the receiving public. Kelly (2017) avers that the objective of advocacy advertisement is to create awareness concerning the issue at hand and subsequently persuade them to take actions in a particular way. Cho (2015) carried out a study in which he compared the effectiveness of advertisements tone based on either advocacy tone or attack tone. The researcher was interested in determining how different advertisements tone influence voters in an election. He utilized survey and combined it with advertisement tracking data. The result of the study showed that attack advertising attracted negative emotions concerning the candidate the voter did not support and this eventually enhanced political discourse. Nonetheless, the same thing was not applicable to advocacy advertising. Comparatively, attack advertisements did better than advocacy. It is important to note here that the issue investigated may have played a role. Perhaps, it is with this in mind that the Nigerian government uses mainly advocacy tone, not attack in discouraging Nigerians from engaging in dangerous migration. Pfau *et al.*, (2002) carried out a study wherein they examined the effectiveness of advocacy advertising on voter preferences. The study was conducted in the United States of America and the result showed that advocacy advertisements influenced only voters that had no political party affiliation, but not on voters with party bias. An *et al.*, (2006) investigated the effectiveness of advocacy advertisements and reported that it is effective in improving voter turnout during election as well as educating them about political candidates.

Overall, literature on the effectiveness of advocacy advertisements focused more on political issues, thus, creating a gap on the impact of anti-immigration advocacy advertisements on perception about dangerous migration. Browne (2015) corroborates that there is extremely little evidence on the impact of anti-immigration campaign. The current study also filled a gap in this area. In doing so, the researcher considers exposure, recall and message elements as important variables that could determine the effectiveness of advocacy advertisements. Gever and Olijó (2017) hold the view that exposure is needed before message can be effective. In their view, if people are not exposed to messages, it will be difficult for such message to influence them. Previous studies (Lin & Lagoe, 2013; Oh, *et al.*, 2015; Wei, *et al.*, 2008) support this assumption as a significant relationship was reported between exposure and media effect. Carpenter and Boster (2013) found that message exposure plays an essential role in persuasion. Laninhun and Essien (2015) reported that message recall plays fundamental role in advertisement effectiveness. Smith and Shaffer (2000) hold the view that message elements play essential role in determining the effectiveness of such messages. In this study, therefore, message exposure, message recall and message elements were regarded as important variables in studying the effectiveness of media anti-immigration advocacy advertisements. Consequently, it is the researcher hypothesized:

H1: Exposure to media anti-immigration advocacy advertisements will significantly predict youth perception of dangerous migration.

H2: Message attractiveness, length and tone of message will significantly predict youth message recall.

H3: Message recall dimensions will significantly predict youth perception about the negative consequences of dangerous migration.

b. Perception and Immigration

Perception is a very important aspect when examining dangerous migration in particular and immigration generally. This is because people are mostly compelled to migrate because of the perceived advantages that come with such cross border movements. Browne (2015) makes a case for the importance of perception when discussing immigration by noting that perception is at the heart of immigration. When people take decisions to migrate, they do so not because of logic and sound reasoning, nor based on an assessment of the advantages and disadvantages, they do so mostly based on personal conviction, assumptions, beliefs, wishful thoughts and hearsay. Hagen-Zanker and Mallett (2016) affirm that the perception people have concerning destination countries plays a strong role in their migration behaviour. See also Carling and Hernandez Carretero (2012). Although it can be argued that migration is driven by economic variables, Castles *et al.*, (2014) submit that migration is not only driven by macroeconomic differences between places, but equally on personal and social process, propelled and hinged on feelings, perceptions, relationships and networks. Massey *et al.*, (2008) corroborate that migration is not usually determined by a person's individual rationalism, rather, exposure to only selected sources of information and the rejection of

some information by people involved all fuel migration. Heller (2014, p. 312) in a study examined the impact of perception on dangerous migration and found thus:

People believe it is easy to come to Europe, to gain direct access to a job, a beautiful car, a big garden, and being able to return money easily every month and entertain the entire family. And those people can then pay quite a lot of money to those smugglers, those networks, to get on boats, or to get on buses to cross the desert or the sea.

The overall implication here is that perception is a critical variable to consider in migration studies. Despite this, there is lack of literature examining the impact of anti-immigration advocacy advertisements, especially from developing countries, on public perception. This study examined this gap.

c. **Effect of dramatized Television testimonies**

One of the strategies that have been used in anti-immigration advocacy advertisement is the utilization of dramatized television testimonies. Usually, victims are brought to provide a dramatized account of their experience during dangerous migration efforts. The victims, whose faces are normally hidden, narrate how they went through terrible experiences in the process of migrating based on promises of a better life. Some also narrate how they have spent their life savings all in an effort to migrate out of Nigeria; only to realize that it is not worth it. They end their testimonies by advising other Nigerians not to engage in dangerous migration. The testimonies are expressed in both informal and formal languages. Examples include: “*Thank God sey we don come back ooo. Dey lock us up for three days, no food, no water....e beta make you stay for your country.... Nigeria na beta place,*” “*I have wasted my time,*” “*I spent all my savings... I nearly died.*”

Governments of developed countries have also engaged in efforts to encourage immigrants to stay in their countries or in the alternative, avoid dangerous migration. Kosnick (2014) says that governments and other agencies in United States of America and Europe have come up with new approaches to avoid potential migrants from attempting to depart their places. The approach is captioned “*hearts and minds.*” Nieuwenhuys and Pécoud (2007) in a study reported that the International Organization for Migration (IOM) has made use of a variety of testimonials in its messages to discourage immigration. For example, in a TV campaign which the Spanish government launched, it revealed gory pictures of washed-up male corpses at the Spanish beaches as well as pictures of African parents in tears mourning the death of their sons, and regretting for not dissuading them from engaging in dangerous migration. Despite these testimonials, migration studies have not significantly examined how they moderate the effectiveness of anti-immigration messages. In addition, even though the effectiveness of testimonials have been examined in consumer behaviour (Akpan *et al.*, 2015; Martin & Vincent, 2014; Spillinger & Parush, 2012; Shimp *et al.*, 2007), the same cannot be said in migration studies.

H4: Dramatized television testimonies of victims of dangerous migration will significantly moderate youth perception of the negative consequences of dangerous migration.

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework that was used in this study was Cognitive Dissonance Theory (CDT). Leon Festinger suggested the theory in 1957. CDT has three basic components that are combined to explain human thoughts and perceptions. In the first tenets, the theory assumes that human beings are very sensitive to disagreement between actions and beliefs. It holds that people normally take note when they are acting in a manner which is contrary to their beliefs, attitudes or opinions. This means that there is an alarm in human beings that reminds them of an inconsistency (Festinger, 1957). Therefore, people who hold the view that dangerous migration has benefits will be reminded of an inconsistency when they are exposed to advocacy advertisements dissuading them from it.

In the second assumption, the theory holds that taking note of such an internal disagreement will result to dissonance, and will propel a person to address the dissonance. The degree of dissonance differs according to the value a person places on belief, attitude or principle as well as the extent of inconsistency between a person's behaviour and this belief. Within the context of the current study, a person who believes that migration was needed and beneficial to him or her and as such, risking it through dangerous routes thinking it would be worth it may face a dissonance situation and take steps to resolve it when he or she is exposed to anti-immigration advocacy advertisements. The third and last assumption of the theory holds that a person will resolve dissonance using three strategies. The first one is *change in beliefs*; the second is *change in action* and third is *change in perception of action* (Festinger & Carlsmith, 1959). These three strategies are very important to the current study. For example, change in beliefs occurs when a person resolves the dissonance by changing beliefs. Here, a person may change from believing in the benefits of dangerous migration to believing that it is not beneficial. Change in action may take place if a person takes steps to ensure that he or she does not engage in dangerous migration. Change in perception of action may take place when a person views or remembers or perceives his actions related to immigration according to the message content of anti-immigration advocacy advertisements.

Methodology

The researchers made use of the survey research design to implement the study. We decided that the survey research design was most suitable for the study because it enabled us to examine the impact of anti-immigration advocacy advertisements on the general public. To ensure that the sample size was adequate, we utilized a priori power analysis with the G*power programme (Faul *et al.*, 2007). We set our baselines with power ($1 - \beta$) at 0.90, 0.30 effect size f , and $\alpha = .05$. The result of the analysis showed that a total sample size of 470 youth was needed to ascertain statistical differences at .05 level of significance. The study was carried out in Enugu State, Nigeria. The state has a population of 4,411,119 as at 2016 (NBS, 2016).

Recruitment of Participants

We sampled a total of 235 male and 235 female respondents. Our sample had an equal representation of both male and female so that the result could be generalized to both

genders. The youth were from ages 18 years to 35. The sampling techniques that were used in this study were a combination of stratify, quota and sample random sampling techniques. Therefore, we first stratified the respondents into male and female. We then allocated a quota of 235 samples to each stratum. Thirdly, we made use of simple random sampling to select the participants. By using simple random sampling technique, we will be able generalize the outcome of the study on our universe. To qualify for inclusion, respondents must be from Nigeria, from Enugu State, with ability to read and understand the questionnaire contents. The sample was selected from Enugu metropolis.

Measures

We made use of the content-based media exposure scale of den Hamer *et al.*, (2017) to measure exposure to media messages. The scale has 17 items aimed at assessing exposure to media contents. We carried out a pilot study to validate the scale on a Nigerian population and the outcome showed an overall Cronbach figure .89, showing that the scale was valid.

We measured message recall, message elements and the moderating role of televised testimonials using a self-developed question. The questionnaire had five items each for recall, message elements and the moderating role of televised testimonials. Overall, there were 15 items on the questionnaire that were measured using a four-point likert scale. The reliability of the instrument was determined through a pilot study, involving 30 persons who were not part of the final study, and this yielded Cronbach figures .89 for recall, .88 for message elements and .77 for televised testimonials. This shows that the instrument was reliable.

We made use of three theatre arts experts to validate the instrument. We asked them to examine the appropriateness of the instrument to see if they could be used to achieve the study goal. We utilized their comments to produce a final version of the instrument. We analyzed the data for the study using both descriptive and inferential statistics. Among the descriptive statistics, we used simple percentages and mean. Among the inferential statistics, we deployed multiple regression and hierarchical multiple regression and tested our assumptions at .05 level of significance. We presented our results in tables.

Results

We administered 470 copies of the questionnaire to the sample. We recorded a return rate of 91%. This means that 428 copies of the questionnaire were returned and found useful. Most of the respondents (94%) had tertiary education. In addition, 65% had jobs while 35% were unemployed.

Table 1: Regression analysis of exposure to anti-immigration media messages as predictors of youth perceptions about dangerous migration

| Exposure | Constant | β value | R square | F. value | P. value |
|-------------------|----------|---------------|----------|----------|----------|
| Low exposure | 3.051 | .102 | .481 | 12.442 | .143 |
| Moderate exposure | | 282 | | | .002 |

| | | |
|---------------|------|------|
| High exposure | .601 | .001 |
|---------------|------|------|

The aim of computing Table 1 above was to determine how exposure dimensions predict perceptions about dangerous migration among youths. The result of the analysis showed an overall p-value of 0.001 with R. Square value of .481. What this means is that our model explains 48.1% variance in perception of dangerous migration among youth as a result of exposure to anti-immigration advocacy advertisements. It is essential to add here that our result showed that low degree of exposure did not make significant contribution, but moderate and high degree of exposure did. The result of the Beta value showed that higher degree of exposure contributes more ($\beta=.601$) in predicting perception about dangerous migration. The result of Table 1 above supports our first assumption and we conclude with 95% confidence that exposure to anti-immigration media messages significantly predicts perception about dangerous migration.

Table 2: Regression analysis of message elements on media anti-immigration messages as predictors of youth message recall

| Message elements | Constant | β value | R square | F. value | P. value |
|------------------------|----------|---------------|----------|----------|----------|
| Message attractiveness | 3.078 | .402 | .493 | 12.109 | .003 |
| Length of message | | .482 | | | .002 |
| Tone of message | | .704 | | | .001 |

In the Table 1 above, the researchers examined predictors of message recall among youth. The analysis showed that message attractiveness, length of message and the tone of message significantly predict message recall. The result of the analysis revealed an R. Square value of .493. What this means is that our model explains 49.3% variance in message recall as a result of message elements on anti-immigration advocacy advertisements. The result of the Beta value showed that message tone contributes more ($\beta=.704$) in predicting message recall. The result supported our second assumption.

Table 3: Regression analysis of message recall dimensions as predictors of perceptions about the negative consequences of dangerous migration among youth

| Recall dimensions | Constant | β value | R square | F. value | P. value |
|-------------------|----------|---------------|----------|----------|----------|
| High Recall | 3.081 | .709 | .423 | 11.301 | .003 |
| Moderate recall | | .220 | | | .002 |

| | | |
|------------|------|------|
| Low recall | .182 | .017 |
|------------|------|------|

The objective of Table 3 above was to determine how recall dimensions predict perception about the negative consequences of dangerous migration. The result of the study showed that recall dimensions significantly predict perception about the negative consequences of dangerous migration. The result of the analysis revealed an R. Square value of .423. What this means is that our model explains 42.3% variance in perception about the negative consequences of dangerous migration as a result of message recall. The result of the Beta value showed that higher message recall contributes more ($\beta=.709$) in predicting perception about the negative consequences of dangerous migration. Therefore, the result of the study supports the third assumption. It should be noted that low recall did not significantly predict perception about the negative consequences of dangerous migration.

Table 4: Hierarchical Regression analysis of the moderating effect of victim dramatized testimonials on the influence of media anti-immigration advocacy advertisements on perception about dangerous migration

| Exposure | R Square | R Square change | F. | F change | P. value |
|----------|----------|-----------------|-------|----------|----------|
| Model 1 | .030 | .030 | 2,362 | 2,362 | .001 |
| Model 2 | .673 | .613 | 8,301 | 12,676 | .001 |

In Table 4 above, the researchers conducted a hierarchical multiple regression model to assess the moderating role of dramatized victim testimonials on the influence of media anti-immigration messages on youth perceptions about dangerous migration. At the first step, we entered exposure and recall and this accounted for 30% of the variance in perception about the negative consequences of dangerous migration among youth. After adding victims’ dramatized testimonials at step 2, the total variance explained by the model as a whole was 61.3%. $F(2,362)=12,676, p<0.001$. Therefore, we conclude that victims’ dramatized testimonials significantly moderate the influence of media anti-immigration messages on perception about the negative consequences of dangerous migration.

Discussion of Findings

The objective of this study was to determine the effect of media anti-immigration messages among youth. In doing so, we tested four. The result of the study revealed that exposure to media anti-immigration messages significantly predicts youth perception of dangerous migration. This result extends literature of studies (Lin & Lagoe, 2013; Oh, *et al.*, 2015; Wei, *et al.*, 2008) that have examined the association between exposure to media contents and the behaviour of mass media audience. Therefore, the current study has shown that exposure dimensions to advocacy advertisements aimed at discouraging dangerous migration is an important requirement for such messages to achieve their goal. The result makes a strong case for the need to utilize different media platforms and

placement strategies of advocacy advertisements with a view to ensuring that there is high exposure to such messages among members of the general public.

In the second place, the result of the current study showed that message attractiveness, length and tone of message significantly predict message recall vis-à-vis media anti-immigration advocacy advertisements among youth. The result of the current study has extended previous studies (Boomgaarden & Vliegenthart, 2009; Bleiker *et al.*, 2013; Boomgaarden, 2007; Berg & Spehar, 2013) that examined the nexus between the media and immigration issues. Most of these studies focused mostly on how the media construct issues related to immigrants without paying attention to media messages that target prevention of dangerous migration.

In addition, the result of the study revealed that message recall dimensions significantly predict youth perception about the negative consequences of dangerous migration. This aspect of the result is also an extension of previous studies (Carpenter & Boster, 2013; Gevers & Olijó, 2017) that have examined the role of message recall in the effectiveness of media messages. Most of these studies paid attention to commercial advertisements without focusing on advocacy advertisements. Therefore, this addition has provided fresh perspectives concerning the important role of message recall in behaviour change messages related to migration studies. Also, most studies (An *et al.*, 2006; Cho, 2015; Pfau *et al.*, 2002) that have used advocacy advertisements did so with particular attention to political behaviour and political opinion. However, in the current study, the researchers have examined how anti-immigration advertisements shape public perception about dangerous migration.

Finally, the result of this study showed that dramatized television testimonies of victims of dangerous migration significantly moderate youth perception of the negative consequences of dangerous migration. This is an aspect that has rarely been examined by previous researchers (Akpan, *et al.*, 2015; Martin & Vincent, 2014; Spillinger & Parush, 2012; Shimp, *et al.*, 2007) that investigated the effect of testimonials. These studies focused mainly on commercial advertisements without paying attention to advocacy advertisements. Based on this result, we argue that testimonies of victims of dangerous migration are required to assist in changing youth perception regarding international migration. This is essential because perception plays a fundamental role in propelling international migration. When people are making decision regarding immigration, they hardly consider what they have to offer in their destination countries, instead, they think mainly of what they can get from such countries. On the other hand, no country is looking for liabilities, countries will typically require skilled manpower and such persons will be expected to migrate through a well documented procedure. All these hardly come to mind when people are making decisions to migrate. They only dream of a beautiful future, visualized images of them on beaches, in clubs, on vacations, shopping as well as sending money home to end poverty in their lineage. Therefore, testimonials are needed to counter these wrong perceptions.

Unique Contribution

The current study has made unique contributions in the area of theory, scholarship and practice. In the first instance, this study makes a theoretical contribution by showing how theory of cognitive dissonance can be applied to investigate the impact of media anti-immigration advocacy advertisements. It is hoped that other researchers who may want to

apply the same theory to study the nexus between media and immigration will take queue from the current study. In the second place, the current study has contributed in scholarship by extending literature on migration studies in three ways. First, the current study has examined the impact of media advocacy advertisements on perception regarding immigration. This is an aspect that has rarely been examined by previous studies. Second, the study was conducted from the perspective of countries of origin, unlike previous attempts that focused mainly on the destination countries. Third, we paid attention on critical variables like message elements, message recall and exposure, these aspects have also not been significantly examined in migration studies, especially from African scholars. Finally, the result of the current study makes contribution to media studies by showing how the media can make messages on immigration effective with a view to discouraging dangerous migration.

Conclusion

Based on the result of this study, the researcher concludes that media anti-immigration messages in Nigeria are effective for changing youth perception regarding dangerous migration. However, more efforts are needed to ensure that more and more people get exposed to such messages as exposure is an important requirement for changing such perception. It is also the conclusion of the current study that message elements play critical roles in recall and as such, journalists need to pay close attention to the elements that manifest in messages aimed at dissuading people from engaging in dangerous migration. Finally, we conclude that testimonies of victims of dangerous migration play critical roles in shaping perception; therefore, their usage in media anti-immigration advocacy advertisements is encouraged. Further researchers are recommended to: (1) examine how exposure to social media posts of immigrants fuel immigration from their network, (2) investigate the moderating role of demographics on the effectiveness of media anti-immigration advocacy advertisements (3) Determine the moderating role of parental expectations on the effectiveness of anti-migration campaigns.

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