



Mass Media as a Catalyst for Food Security and Agricultural Transformation

OBUN-ANDY, MARIA KISUGU¹ & AYOOLA, MORAYO²
Department of Mass Communication, Federal Polytechnic, Ilaro, Nigeria
Email: maria76kisugu@gmail.com

Introduction

Mass media plays a pivotal role in driving food security and agricultural transformation by serving as a powerful catalyst for information dissemination, education, and mobilization. In developing economies, where agriculture is a primary livelihood, mass media channels including radio, television, newspapers, and digital platforms are essential for bridging the information gap between policymakers, agricultural experts, and rural farmers. The objectives of this study are to assess the role of mass media in disseminating agricultural information to farmers, the effectiveness of different media platforms in spreading agricultural knowledge and the challenges faced by mass media in promoting food security.

Methodology

This study employed a survey research design. The population comprised media practitioners from the Lagos Chapter of the Nigeria Union of Journalists and agricultural extension officers from the Lagos State Ministry of Agriculture. The total population of media practitioners was 171, while the number of agricultural extension officers was limited to 5. A combination of systematic and purposive sampling techniques was used to select a representative sample. Using the Yamane formula with a 95% confidence level and a 5% margin of error, a sample size of 120 media practitioners was determined from the population of 171. All 5 agricultural extension officers were also purposively selected for inclusion in the study. Data collection instruments included structured questionnaires and interview guides. The quantitative data were analyzed using SPSS version 23.0, with descriptive statistics (frequency tables and percentages) used to present the findings. Qualitative data from interviews were subjected to content analysis to provide deeper insights into the experiences and perspectives of the respondents.

Results and Discussion

The result of the study revealed that mass media campaigns raise awareness about nutrition, food safety, and sustainable agricultural practices, contributing to a healthier population and environmentally responsible farming. Findings in this study also revealed that platforms like community radio stations have proven especially effective in reaching rural farmers in local dialects, fostering inclusivity and engagement. Furthermore, many farmers in rural areas have limited access to internet as a result of poor internet network. They also face challenges such as poor electricity supply, language and cultural barriers and lack of funding for media production.

Conclusions

The study concludes that mass media is effective in reaching farmers and giving them adequate information of agricultural innovation. The study recommended the need for government to develop more community-based radio and television programs in local dialects to ensure farmers fully understand agricultural innovations and best practices.

Keywords: Agricultural transformation, Food security, Innovation, Mass media, Technology