

[Table of Contents](#)

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Effective Use of Information Sources for Breast Cancer Care: Interplay of Mass Media and Interpersonal Channels

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Abstract

In health communication researches, there have been various qualitative and quantitative studies on breast cancer. However, there is paucity of research investigations on the influence of information sources used in media awareness campaigns on breast cancer care among women in Nigeria. This study, therefore, investigated the influence of media awareness campaigns on breast cancer care among women in South-West Nigeria. This study was anchored on two theories: agenda setting theory and diffusion of innovation theory. It employed survey design, which made use of the questionnaire to achieve the objectives of the study. The total number of subjects examined in this study was 600 questionnaire respondents. The multi-stage sampling and simple random sampling techniques were used to select the questionnaire respondents in Lagos, Oyo and Ekiti States. Three hypotheses were tested using cross tabulation and correlation analysis to determine the strength, nature and direction between variables. The findings revealed that majority of the respondents (98.8%) were aware of breast cancer but many of these respondents were not sufficiently knowledgeable of the disease. It also reveals that information sources such as mass media and interpersonal channels are crucial health communication carriers for breast cancer interventions. It was suggested that mass media messages be included as key components of comprehensive approaches to improving breast cancer care among women. This is essential because mass media messages can directly and indirectly produce positive changes or prevent negative changes in health-related behaviours of women in South-West Nigeria. It was also recommended that the government should design programmes that offer free or subsidised health services and facilities for women to undertake mammogram screening and clinical breast examinations in primary health centres, general hospitals, university teaching hospitals and Federal Medical Centres.

Keyword: information sources, breast cancer, women, mass media, interpersonal channels and Nigeria