

# Influence of Radio in Shaping Public Perception of Lagos State's Mega City Project: A Study of Residents of Ikeja and Surulere Local Government Areas

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## Abstract

The study examined the influence of radio in shaping public perception of Lagos State's Mega City Project. The study population was drawn from the residents of Ikeja and Surulere Local Government Areas of the State. Lagos State is the most populated city in Nigeria, estimated at about 21 million people. In order to be amongst the countries of the world which are termed as mega cities, Lagos commenced her own mega city project in 1999. The Project is ongoing. The study aimed to: ascertain the level of exposure to the radio medium by residents of Ikeja and Surulere Local Government Areas; determine the frequency of exposure of the residents to reports on the Lagos Mega City Project; and ascertain the views of the residents concerning the Project. Theoretical leanings of the study centred on two theories of the mass media - Agenda Setting and Developmental Media. The research method adopted was survey, through the instrumentality of questionnaire. Purposive sampling was used to sample 100 respondents from the local government areas, which had a return rate of 99%. The data gathered and analysed showed that majority of the respondents listen to radio (76.8%) while the others (23.2%) responded otherwise. Also, a higher percentage of respondents listen to radio occasionally (32.6%) compared to other respondents. In terms of awareness of the Lagos Mega City Project, 73.7% of respondents affirmed to be aware while 25.3% were unaware. Radio was the medium through which the respondents received information concerning the Project (32.9%). Majority of the respondents (67.1%) perceived the Project as a welcome development, 8.2% do not like the Project, and 19.2% were indifferent towards it. In terms of understanding the Project, 70.3% of the respondents said they did, but 16.2% did not, while 13.5% were indifferent. Findings revealed that radio is a veritable medium of communication and that the audience is aware of the mega city project and have a good understanding of the Project by the government. The paper recommended that the government should intensify awareness using various means of communication at the grassroots, give priority to feedbacks from citizens on how the Project affects them, and to partner with foreign investors to achieve the mega city dream.

**Keywords:** Lagos, mega city, development, urban

## INTRODUCTION

Lagos is one of the largest cities in the world, with a population of about 23 million people. As the former political capital of Nigeria, it remains the largest mega city on the continent of Africa and the country's commercial and industrial nerve centre (National Bureau of Statistics, 2011). According to UNCHS (1996), a mega city is a continuous urbanisation of an area with a population of at least 10 million people. It may be a single metropolitan area or two metropolitan areas. This league of cities include: Tokyo, New York, Mexico City, Mumbai, Sao Paulo, Delhi, Shanghai, Calcutta, Dakar, Buenos Aires, Los Angeles, Karachi, and Rio de Janeiro. The largest cities are no longer in the developed world but in developing world. By the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, the world's 20 most populous cities have switched from a Euro-America (Illesanmi, 2010). Of the 27 megacities predicted for the year 2015, 18 were in Asia, 5 in Latin America, 2 in North America, and none in Europe.

Lagos State is a mega city located on the south-western part of Nigeria on a narrow coastal flood plain of the Bight of Benin. It is bounded in the North and East by Ogun State of Nigeria, in the West by the Republic of Benin, and the South by the Atlantic Ocean. It has five administrative divisions of Ikeja, Badagry, Ikorodu, Lagos Island, and Epe which were subdivided to 20 Local Government Areas (Oteri & Ayeni 2012). The state is situated within Latitude 6 degrees and 23'N and Longitude 2 degrees and 3 degrees 42'E. The more built up Mainland and Lagos Island make up the areas referred to as Metropolitan Lagos which accounts for about 80 % of the population of the state (Merem & Twumasi, 2008). Lagos with Population of 9,013,534 according to the National Population Census of 2006 is about 6.4% of the country's population. Taiwo (2005) stated that while Nigeria's population density is 100 persons per square kilometre, that of Lagos is about 2,400 persons/km<sup>2</sup> with annual population growth of 5.0 to 5.5%.

The plan to transform Lagos State into a mega city started with the administration of Asiwaju Bola Ahmed Tinubu (1999-2007) as governor. It gained more urgency during the administration of Babatunde Fashola (2007-2015) and it has remained a front burner right into the administration of the current governor, Akinwunmi Ambode (Vanguard, 2017). However, recent developments bordering on the worsening insecurity of lives and property in the state have raised questions by observers on whether Lagos was truly on the path of becoming a

veritable mega city. The question of insecurity also extends to the demolition of slums and illegal structures on the river banks boarding Lagos by the government.

The proportion of urban dwellers living in slums, according to the United Nations (2014), decreased from 47% to 37% in developing countries between 1990 and 2005. However, due to rising population, the number of slum dwellers is on the rise. UN reports say that majority of these come from the fringes of urban margins, located in legal and illegal settlements with insufficient housing and sanitation. This has led to massive internal and transnational migrations into cities, further shooting up the urban population growth rates and spatial concentrations never seen in history. This has led to questions of whether residents in slums are paying for an ambitious urbanisation effort.

### **Statement of Problem**

Overtime, there have been cases of conflicts between government and residents of rural communities over developmental policies. Most of these conflicts arise as a result of misunderstandings of government intentions towards the policy. These misunderstandings have stalled developmental plans. It is believed that some of these misunderstandings are as a result of inadequate communication of these developmental policies to citizens. The media has an important role to play in the mix. Myriad of media reports have shown that some residents are not comfortable with the policies and the processes employed by the government to fully transform the state to a world class mega city. Most of the time, citizens refute these developments due to a wrong perception they hold of government's plan regarding their communities. This study therefore seeks to ascertain the influence of radio in shaping the public's perception of the project.

### **Objective of the Study**

Through a quantitative analysis, the research set out the following as its objective:

1. To ascertain the level of exposure to the radio medium by residents of Ikeja and Surulere Local Government Areas;
2. To determine the frequency of exposure to reports on the Lagos Mega City Project;
3. To ascertain the views of residents of Ikeja and Surulere concerning the Lagos Mega City Project.

### **Research Questions**

The research questions which were drawn directly from the research objective are:

1. What is the level of exposure to the radio medium by residents of Ikeja and Surulere?
2. What is the frequency of exposure to reports on the Lagos Mega City Project?
3. What are the views of Ikeja and Surulere residents concerning the Lagos Mega City Project?

## **LITERATURE**

### **Lagos Mega City Project**

The explosive growth of 20<sup>th</sup> Century cities are a result of industrialisation, the transportation revolution, and the parallel telecommunications revolution (Hall & Pfeiffer, 2000). This is in addition to political transformations which deal with the process of decolonisation that fostered the growth of new national capitals. Although, this had less impact compared to the trio. The transforming force of 21<sup>st</sup> Century cities is the informational revolution, which, converged previously separate technologies – computer, telecommunications, and television – into a single medium for the generation, storage and exchange of information. Unfortunately, the experiences of many developing countries seem to show the inimical rather than the benefits of these forces of urban change, resulting in dire physical problems, as well as severe social and economic challenges (Satterthwaite, 1999 cited in (Illesanmi, 2010).

The coastal city of Lagos ranks fifth as the largest city in the world (ibid, 2010). The city has attracted a flurry of interests, especially from architectural and cultural theory and critical urban studies. It has as well been the focus of some international arts exhibitions (Gandy, 2005). Lagos is one of the fastest urbanising areas in the world as well as Nigeria's most populous conurbation. Its growth has been demographically and spatially phenomenal, rising from a population of about 25,000 in 1866 to 665,000 by 1963, 10 million by 1995, and about 20 million by 2009, covering an area of 69.9 kilometres square (National Geographic 2009). It was projected to be one of the third largest mega cities in the world by 2015 (UNCHS, 1996). This adds to the argument that Lagos could be a model for the global South's urbanisation process. Lagos epitomises many cities of global South that face growing crises in terms of provision of basic amenities, housing, security, and mass transit systems (Jameson, 2003). The vast demographic expansion over the last twenty years of the city has occurred in the context of economic and social decline, hence portraying a contemporary African city that is dysfunctional and dynamic all at the same time (Gandy, 2006).

The deterioration in the state of the city's post-independence era through to the 1990s up to the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, gave Lagos a reputation of being one of the worst cities in the world. Its history in the last few decades (George,

2010) has been marked by a decline in the quality of life, gross poverty, proliferation of slums, environmental degradation, dilapidated transport system, massive flooding, disrupted sewerage network, and increasing crime rates. It has also expanded beyond its original lagoon boundaries, thus engulfing vast areas covering several many slums. The vitality of Lagos' economy and its significance to Nigeria's transport networks and economy explain its growth despite its failing infrastructure, and the attendant implications on residents and businesses (Abiodun, 1997).

The idea for Lagos Mega City Project was birthed out of two factors: the projection that Lagos could become the third largest mega city in the world by 2015 with an explosive population; and that the city had suffered severe infrastructure neglect for many years. The urbanisation of the city happened so rapidly and in the face of dearth of effective and efficient institutions, infrastructure, and proactive planning to guide the growth (FRN, 2006). As a result, the Project was conceived to redevelop Lagos to fit its new urban status.

The government of Lagos State is involved in a passionate drive to attract foreign investors to participate in the Project, stressing on vast opportunities, opened for prospective development in transportation, roads, waste management, water provision, power, tourism, property development, and establish of auto assembly plants. Illesanmi (2010:248) paints a vivid picture of the features of the Project:

Beautification and landscaping projects across the state: loops, medians along highways, setbacks and development or recreational parks in identified locations....Construction of new roads and light rail road system....Water routes in the state to be fully developed to facilitate marine transportation....Constriction of a fourth mainland bridge....Construction of 10,000 housing units in Lekki Peninsula....Reconstruction and expansion of the Lagos-Badagry Expressway into an eight-lane conduit with a light rail, a trans-regional route to link Nigeria and neighbouring nations....A proposed ring road to link all the 28 activity centres in the state....Construction of a water-way and the proposed Eco Atlantic City on the Badagry water front.

In addition, the Eco Atlantic City is to be a planned district constructed on reclaimed lands, targeting 250,000 residents and 200,000 commuters flowing daily to the island, and electrified by an off-grid 130 megawatts electric plant (Lagos Energy City, 2007).

### **Theoretical Leanings:**

#### ***Development Media Theory***

This normative theory of the press was propounded by Dennis McQuail in 1987 after the earlier normative theories - Authoritarian, Soviet-Communist, Libertarian and Social Responsibility. Development Media Theory or Development Communication, advocates media support for any existing political regime and also its effort to bring about national economic development (Baran & Davis, 2009). It is a theory that: "refers to the spectrum of communication processes, strategies, and principles within the field of international development, aimed at improving the conditions and quality of life of people struggling with underdevelopment and marginalisation" (Hasan, 2013:171). This asserts that until a country is developed economically and structurally, the media should perform the function of supporting the government and not just basically tearing regime apart. Development communication is characterised by conceptual flexibility and diversity in the application techniques used to address the problems of development (McQuail, 2006). Some of the approaches it adopts include: information dissemination and education, behaviour change, social marketing, social mobilisation, media advocacy, communication for social change, and participatory communication (Hasan, 2013), aimed at the betterment of society.

One of the assumptions of the theory is that the media should assist the government in implementing policies with little or no criticisms which will work like a partnership to bring about beneficial development of the country. Anaeto et al (2012) outlined other assumptions:

- a. The media must accept and carry out positive development tasks in line with national established policy;
- b. Freedom of the media should be open economic priorities and development needs of the society;
- c. The media should give priority in their content to national culture and languages;
- d. Journalists and other media workers have responsibilities as well as freedom in their information gathering and dissemination tasks.

This theory is believed by this paper to be relevant to the established research problem, where there seem to be a missing link between Lagos citizens and the government's intentions as a result of faulty communication by the latter.

#### ***Agenda Setting Theory***

The hypothesis of agenda setting theory is that the mass media by paying more attention to some issues and overlooking others will affect public opinion, people will tend to know about those things dealt with by the media, and adopt the order of priority set by them. The theory was propounded by Maxwell McCombs and Donald Shaw in 1972. Agenda setting opines that the media tells the audience what to think about but not what

to think. They further argued that audiences do not only learn about public issues and other matters through the media, they also learn how much importance to attach to an issue or topic from the emphasis the mass media place upon it (Hasan, 2013).

According to Baran and Davis (2009) the mass media determine what constitute important issues. Hence, the media prioritises content in terms of headlines, and placement of stories. People as well pay greater attention to stories of personal interest to them and their groups. The media therefore, more often than not, *reflect* rather than *set* agenda (Hasan, 2013).

There is connection between the media reports and how individuals rank public issues. There is the presence of direct influence from the media to the audience. Griffin (2012) points out the agenda setting role of the media allow her to transfer salience of her news agenda to public agenda.

The theory goes a step further to galvanise into Priming and Framing theories. The latter involves how the media place media messages so the audience decide which media messages to give credence to amidst the avalanche of information they are exposed to. Framing on the other hand is referred to as the second tier of agenda setting where the media tells the audience how to think about media agenda through frames set by them in order to see issues from their perspective.

Rubin and Haridakis (2001) posited that the media is a strong influence of telling the audience which object attributes is important and which is not. The import of this is that institutions, groups, individuals, political parties, and governments all have their own agenda, and they lobby hard to set the media's attention through press conferences, press releases, press visits, sponsorships, advertisements, gifts, and other means. The major sources of news for the media are influential people/elites in the society. And they usually set agenda for the media highlights and underplays (Hasan, 2013).

Anaeto et al (2012:89) alluded that the facts which people know about public issues tend to be those which the media presents to them. Thus the theory assumes that:

The mass media, such as the press, do not reflect social reality because news is filtered, chosen, and shaped by newsroom staff or broadcasters. People get their news from limited sources because people do not pay attention to all outlets, thus they rest on the mass media. Few media agenda, which were chosen by professional gatekeepers, lead people to perceive given issues as important.

In this paper, agenda setting aligns with the question of how much attention, frequency, tilt and themes given to the coverage of Lagos State Mega City Project in media reportage.

## **METHODOLOGY**

This study is designed to find out the influence of radio in shaping public perception of Lagos State's Mega City Project. It is a study of residents of Ikeja and Surulere Local Government Areas of the State. The success of this however, necessitates an orderly, imaginative, logical, and accurate assemblage of data. Hence, this chapter is associated with the research method to be used in carrying out the work.

### **Research Method**

It is an acceptable fact that research design is the basic plan that guide data collection and the analysis phase of any research work. The design of a research can be regarded as the frame-work which specifies the type of information to be gathered including the source of data and the procedure used in collecting them (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2011).

Therefore, on the basis of this study, the research method to be used for collecting the required information is the quantitative research method survey analysis on the basis of self-administrated questionnaire. The analysis of the data collected is based on descriptive and inferential statistical tools of measuring data (Osuala, 2005).

Surveys attempt to describe and explain why situations exist (Wimmer & Dominick, 2006; and Wimmer & Dominick, 2011). This design concerns itself with the characteristics of a whole population through chosen samples. Two or more variables are usually examined to investigate research questions or test hypotheses. The results generated allow researchers to examine the interrelationships between variables and to develop explanatory inferences.

### **Area of the Study**

The geographical locations of this research work are Ikeja and Surulere Local Government Areas of Lagos State. Based on this study, 100 respondents were selected for this study across the two axes.

### **Population of the Study**

In this research, the population used comprised of people who reside in Ikeja and Surulere axis of Lagos.

### Sampling Technique

Sampling is the act, process, or technique of selecting a suitable sample; while a sample is a subject of the population that is taken to be representative of the entire population (Tejumaiye, 2003). It also said that sampling is done in order that the researcher may take some elements, subjects or respondents in the population to represent that population. In the light of these, the sampling technique that will be used to draw up a suitable sample is the non-probabilistic sampling technique. Furthermore, the subjects will be selected from the population using the available sampling method where subjects are collected based on their accessibility.

### Sample Size

The sample size of 100 was drawn from the population using the sampling method proposed for this study.

### Instrument of Data Collection

The instruments used to elicit demographic data for specific questions for the study is the questionnaire. Griffin (2012:29) described survey as: “A research method that uses questionnaires and structured interviews to collect self-reported data that reflect what respondents think, feel, or intend to do.”

### Method of Data Collection

The data of this research work was collected through the administration of questionnaires. To ensure accurate data collection, the questionnaires were distributed directly by the researchers to the respondents in Ikeja and Surulere.

### DATA ANALYSIS

The aim of this study is to find out the influence of Radio in shaping public perception of the Lagos State Mega City Project and in fulfilling this, a sample size of 100 was drawn and questionnaires administered to them. Of the sent questionnaires, 99 were returned and good to use which represented a return rate of 99%. This segment therefore analyses, interprets, and discusses the result of the data gathered.

There are three sections here: Section A presented the demographic characteristics of the respondents; Section B presented an analysis of respondents’ answers to questions relevant to the influence of Radio in shaping public perception of the Lagos State Mega City Project; while Section C discussed the findings of the survey. Both sections A and B used frequency distribution tables and percentages generated via the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS).

### SECTION A:

#### DEMOGRAPHIC ANALYSIS

**Table 1: Distribution of Respondents by Gender**

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	56	56.6
Female	43	43.4
<b>Total</b>	<b>99</b>	<b>100</b>

The table above shows that majority of the respondents are males (56.6%) while the others are females (43.4%).

**Table 2: Distribution of Respondents by Age**

Age	Frequency	Percentage
18-28	44	44.4
29-39	46	46.5
40-50	7	7.1
51 Above	2	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>99</b>	<b>100</b>

From the above, majority of our respondents are between ages 29-39 years (46.5%), 18-28 years (44.4%), while the others are between ages 40-50 years (7.1%), and 51 and above (2%).

**Table 3: Distribution of Respondents by Marital Status**

Marital Status	Frequency	Percentage
Single	69	69.7
Married	28	28.3
Divorced	2	2.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>99</b>	<b>100</b>

From the above, majority of our respondents are Single (69.7%), while 28.3% and 2% are Married and Divorced respectively.

**Table 4: Distribution of Respondents by Education**

Education	Frequency	Percentage
SSCE	11	11.1
NCE/OND	16	16.2
HND/BSc	53	53.5
MSc/MA	18	18.2
MPhil/PhD	1	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>99</b>	<b>100</b>

The table above shows that 53.5% of respondents have a HND/BSc certification, followed by 18% who have an MSc/MA, and 16% who have NCE/OND. 11% and 1% have an SSCE and MPhil/PhD certifications respectively.

**Table 5: Distribution of Respondents by Employment Status**

Employment Status	Frequency	Percentage
Unemployed	11	11.1
Self-employed	30	30.3
Paid employment	58	58.6
<b>Total</b>	<b>99</b>	<b>100</b>

The table above shows that majority of our respondents are gainfully employed either through sole proprietorship or paid employment while 11.1% are unemployed.

**Table 6: Distribution of Respondents by Ethnicity**

Ethnicity	Frequency	Percentage
Yoruba	54	54.5
Hausa	2	2
Igbo	28	28.3
Others	15	15.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>99</b>	<b>100</b>

The table above shows that 54.5% of our respondents are Yoruba which forms majority, while 28% and 2% are Igbos and Hausas respectively. The remaining 15% of respondents are ethnic groups like Efik, Ibibio, and Calabar

**Table 7: Distribution of Respondents by Religion**

Religion	Frequency	Percentage
Christianity	81	81.8
Islam	18	18.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>99</b>	<b>100</b>

The table above shows that majority of our respondents are Christians (81.8%) while 18.2% are Muslims.

## SECTION B

**RQ 1: What is the level of exposure to the radio medium by residents of Ikeja and Surulere?**

**Table 8: Distribution of Respondents that Listen to Radio**

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	76	76.8
No	23	23.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>99</b>	<b>100</b>

From the table above, majority of the respondents (76.8%) listen to Radio while 23.2% do not listen to Radio.

**Table 9: Frequency of Respondents that Listen to Radio**

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Very Often	21	24.4
Often	19	22.1
Occasionally	28	32.6
Rarely	18	20.9
<b>Total</b>	<b>86</b>	<b>100</b>

From the table above, majority of the respondents (32.6%), listen to the Radio occasionally while 24.4%, 22.1% and 20.9% listen to the Radio, very often, often and rarely respectively.

**Table 10: Frequency of Respondents that Do Not Listen to Radio**

Response	Frequency	Percentage
I don't have time	12	40
I don't have access to Radio	4	13.3
I'm not interested in listening to radio	11	36.7
Others	3	10
<b>Total</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>100</b>

From the above, 40% of the reason why respondents do not listen to radio is because they do not have time, while the next reason is lack of interest in the medium (36.7%). Another 13.3% do not have access to radios, while 10% do not listen because of other reasons like access to similar information from the Internet.

**RQ 2: What is the frequency of exposure to reports on the Lagos Mega City Project?**

**Table 11: Are Respondents Aware of the Lagos State Mega City Project?**

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	73	73.7
No	25	25.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>99</b>	<b>100</b>

The table above shows that majority of the respondents (73.7%) are aware of the Lagos State Mega City Project while 25.3% are unaware of the Project.

**Table 12: Medium Through Which They Saw the Information**

Medium	Frequency	Percentage
Radio	24	32.9
Television	20	27.4
Print	4	5.5
Internet	4	5.5
Billboard	10	13.7
Family and friend	2	2.7
Others	9	12.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>100</b>

From the table above, 32.9% got their information about the Project from Radio, closely followed by Television (27.4%). While 13.7%, 5.5%, 5.5%, and 2.7% got their information from Billboard, Print, the Internet and Families respectively. Another 12.3% got their information from other sources like personal observation and conversations with people.

**Table 13: How Often They Saw the Information**

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Daily	7	9.5
Once in a while	37	50
Rarely	29	39.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>100</b>

The table above shows that 50% of respondents saw the information once in a while followed by 39.2% who saw it rarely, and 9.5% who saw it daily.

**Table 14: Last Time They Saw the Information**

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Everyday including today	4	5.4
Yesterday	6	8.1
About a week ago	14	18.9
Almost a month now	20	27
It has been long, I can't remember	22	29.7
I don't know	8	10.8
<b>Total</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>100</b>

The table above shows that majority of the respondents (29.7%), saw the information a long time ago and cannot remember the period. This is closely followed by 27% who claimed it has been almost a month they saw it now. 18.9% saw it about a week ago, while 8.1% and 5.4%, saw it yesterday, and everyday including today respectively. While 10.8% do not know.

**RQ 3: What are the Views of Ikeja and Surulere Residents Concerning the Lagos Mega City Project?**

**Table 15: Respondents' Views about the Project**

Response	Frequency	Percentage
It is a good development	49	67.1
It is not a welcome development	6	8.2
I am indifferent about it	14	19.2
Others	4	5.4
<b>Total</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>100</b>

The table above shows that majority of respondents view the Lagos State Mega City Project as a good development (67.1%) while 19.2% are indifferent about it. Also, 8.2% of the respondents do not view it as a welcome development.

**Table 16: Respondents Understanding of the Project**

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	52	70.3
No	12	16.2
I don't know	10	13.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>100</b>

From the above, 70.3% of the respondents say they understand the Project while 16.2% do not understand it. The rest (13.5%) are indifferent.

**Table 17: Do Respondents Think the Project Can Be Achieved**

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	55	74.3
No	7	9.5
I don't know	11	15.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>100</b>

From the table above, majority of the respondents (74.3%) are in the affirmative that the projects can be achieved while 15.3% do not know, 9.5% are sceptical.

**Table 18: Are the Lagos State Mega Projects Good for the People Even Though It Involves Demolishing Houses?**

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	44	60.3
No	29	39.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>100</b>

From the above, 60.3% of respondents believe that the Lagos State Mega City Project is good for the people even though it involves demolishing of houses, while 39.7% hold a contrary opinion.

**SECTION C:**

**Discussion of Findings**

From the data collected and subsequently analysed, it is safe to infer that Radio played a key role in positively shaping and influencing perceptions of citizens of Lagos State about the Mega City Project. It also confirmed that, although, the majority of the populace might be aware of the project, there still seems to be a gap in using the media, particularly radio, to reinforce and influence audience perception positively.

When trying to determine the level of exposure of respondents to the medium Radio, it was discovered that 76.8% of respondents listen to Radio while a cumulative audience of 46.5% listen to radio *often*. That is good and it also contradicts some schools of thought that hold that the proliferation of information technology and the Internet have led to the demise of previously existing media like the Radio. Also, it was discovered that the main reason why the rest of the audience do not listen to Radio is because they do not have time while some have lost interest in the medium.

In relation to the frequency of audience exposure to reports, news and messages as regards the Lagos State Mega City Project, it was discovered that 73.7% of respondents are aware of the project and their main source for such information is the Radio (32.9%). This is followed by television (27.4%). Worthy of note is the fact that the Internet as a medium scored low as a source of information (5.5%). This could be as result of one of two factors; either the Lagos State Government is not actively pushing information through that medium, or second could be that the Internet penetration in the State is low, as such access to the Internet is also relatively low.

The study also revealed that the Lagos State Government seems to be relaxing in its effort to educate and inform the people about its vision for the state to become a Mega City. While 50% of respondents said they saw the information 'once in a while' a huge 39% said they rarely saw messages about it even though they were aware of the Project. In fact, a cumulative of 56.7% affirmed that they last saw any information about the



message a month ago.

While testing for the views, understanding and perception of inhabitants in Ikeja and Surulere Local Government Areas about the Lagos State Mega City Project, it was known that, majority of the respondents (67.1%), view the projects as a welcome development while a large number of respondents said they understood the project (70.3%). Majority of the respondents (74.3%) also believe that the vision of Lagos State towards urbanising the state can be achieved. Although, majority of respondents were of the opinion that the Lagos State Mega City Project was good for the people, even though it involved the demolishing of buildings, 39.7% of the respondents still believe it was not good for the people. This might not be up to half of the respondents but they are also worth considering by the government in its developmental strategies.

### Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the following are recommended:

- i. Although, the relevance the Radio as a medium of communication cannot be over-emphasised, it is however advised that the government should use various modes of communication to disseminate information to people.
- ii. From the data gathered in this research, residents can be said to be appreciative of the Lagos Mega City Project but the mechanism with which it is being carried out seems not to be favourably perceived by ordinary Lagosians, most especially the housing policy of the government. Hence, the government should engage consistently with the people especially at the grass root.
- iii. Feedback from the people should be valued and not ignored. The government should encourage and entrench an inclusive planning process. It must aim to win the support of the citizenry to actualise its ambitions. This is where community participation and stakeholders' collaboration in planning is imperative.
- iv. There are areas of competing interests which deserve government attention but resources are limited and overstretched. As a result, the government should seek partnership with willing investors in the urban development sector in order to provide basic social amenities and meet the needs of its citizens.
- v. It has been observed that the Lagos State Government seeks to woo foreign investors by promoting its media messages on international media while on the local media, there is little or no enlightenment about the Mega City Project. This research found out that 73.7% of respondents are aware of the Project and their main source for such information is the Radio (32.9%). This thus emphasises the need to intimate and educate the residents on the government's dream to transform Lagos.

### Conclusion

Apparently, the Lagos Mega City Project is a laudable one which would not take a few years to complete. The government however needs to carry majority of the citizens of Lagos State along through effective and efficient communication. Citizens need to understand and appreciate government's ambition and to cooperate with it to succeed in the Project. It is the position of this paper that the Lagos State Government should mount and equip a media centre dedicated to enlightening citizens and the world about the Project. This is to prevent misconception of government's plans and to avoid conflicts between it and citizens.

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