

# Effective Media Involvement in Flood Disaster Management in Nigeria: Pressing Problems and Recommendations

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**Abstract** - *The purpose of this paper is to identify and recommend solutions to pressing problems facing journalists and disaster managers in performing their roles in disaster risk reduction. Media and disaster management organisations play a crucial role in disaster management. Both disseminate information to the public about natural and man – made disasters. The frequency, magnitude and scale of destruction of flood in the recent time have been a source of concern to stakeholders. It was agreed that collaboration of stakeholders can reduce the risk of flood. However, research suggests that the relationship between journalists, disaster management organisations and other stakeholders need improvement. To assist in identifying the problems hindering effective collaboration, 16 informants were interviewed. The informants comprise media men from two leading national newspapers and disaster managers from four government-owned disaster management organisations in Nigeria. The interviews were analysed using NVIVO 10 software. Findings show that the duo interact less before disaster occurrence while relationship during and after disaster occurrence is largely fraught with distrust, tension, fighting, blaming and other crisis. There is inadequate coordination, collaboration and communication among journalists and disaster managers before disaster occurrence. This paper recommends that media need to be effectively cultivated as one of the critical publics of disaster management organisations. Media too should see self as stakeholder not an ordinary participant. A functional relationship with the media before flood disaster strikes would be of great benefit to stakeholders and national development.*

**Keywords:** *Disaster Management, Flood Disaster Risk Reduction, Media Relations; Media; Involvement*

## INTRODUCTION

Globally, the growing occurrences of flood disaster in the world are now a source of concern to stakeholders. The commonest disaster, flood is now a major threat to sustainable development and human existence [1]. For example, a 2015 report by the World Resource Institute (WRI) predicts that people that would be affected by flood globally would be over 54 million by 2030 from 21 million affected in 2015 [2]. Some factors such as increasing population, urbanization, changing climatic condition, human care - free attitudes, deforestation and others are responsible for the increasing menace of flood.

As a social and developmental problem, there is an urgent need for stakeholders to work together and find lasting solution to the menace. Media is one of the key stakeholders. Its participation in disaster management has been identified as crucial [3], [4]. Lately, the focus on disaster management is shifting from response to disaster to disaster prevention, reduction and preparedness. The emphasis is now on disaster risk reduction before disaster occurrence than management of disaster after occurrence.

Media has been identified as one of the critical stakeholders in disaster management. Its contents create awareness and educate people. These assist in building resilience, reducing disaster risks and vulnerability. Thus, effective participation is germane to the success of disaster risk reduction campaign. Active involvement of media is needed in the three stages of disaster management. The stages are pre, during and after disaster [5]. However, the present focus of disaster management organization and media is mainly on during and after disaster stages. This is

not in line with sustainable development plan as envisioned by international bodies against disaster [6].

Disasters attract attentions from many disciplines. Professionals from medicine, engineering, security, among others are always at hand when disasters occur. Numerous stakeholders are always involved. However, journalists and disaster management organisations play central role in disseminating information and overall management of disaster [10], [11]. In conjunction with others, both are vital elements in disaster management [12], [13].

The summary of media function is that, mass media provide information and education, personal identity, entertainment, integration, social interaction and helping with the development of the society. In national development, the media performs three key functions. They are: surveillance of the environment, educating the masses through various materials published and correlation of parts of the environment. Being the fourth estate of the realm, the media, constitutionally and professionally, also performs the watch dog function to all arms of government and the society.

In disaster management, media roles are recognized by other stakeholders. It is a medium and channel being used to communicate and disseminate information to large heterogeneous audiences. Communication, as a social interaction, is essential at all stages of human activities. Disaster is not an exception. Whenever and wherever disaster strikes, mass media (radio, television, newspapers, magazines, social media etc.) are there to perform their professional duties. Professionally, media duties are to inform, educate and entertain.

It is instructive to note that most people in the world know about and bear witnesses to disasters through the media [14]. With increasing spate of disaster occurrences, local and international media are awash with horrifying stories of tragedies from many countries almost on daily basis. The gravity of the destruction, the consequences of the incidents, its surprise elements, the scale of destruction and number of people affected (human interest), its proximity, oddities and other unique features make the media feast maximally on disaster stories [15], [16].

Furthermore, literature has underlined the importance of mass media in disaster management. [17] and [18] assert that what people expect about disaster, the ongoing disaster and what they learned from the occurrence are mainly by the courtesy of the media. The media plays critical role in early warning information dissemination and education

before disaster, report the occurrences of disaster and mobilize supports for victims and offer solutions to repeated incidences of disaster.

As one of the key stakeholders and a bridge between the disaster management organisations and other stakeholders, the media has crucial role to play. It is saddled with the task of creating public awareness and educates people about disaster. By having strong communication links between the disaster manager and the public, the media is expected to disseminate timely, accurate information and educate populace of the impending and ongoing disaster [19],[20].

According to [21], disaster management is more than just response and relief. It is more pro-active rather than reactive approach. It is a systematic process that involves the key management principles of planning, organizing, leading, coordinating, communicating and controlling. Furthermore, it aims at reducing the adverse effects or consequences of disasters [22],[23],[24]. Its underlining philosophy is: when a disaster cannot be prevented; at least, its impacts should be minimized.

As earlier explained, media performs key roles in the three stages of disaster occurrence. But the main focus of this study is to examine the involvement of the media at the pre – disaster. Pre – disaster is a stage before disaster happened. Specifically, the problems affecting Nigerian newspapers participation before the occurrence of flood disaster is the crux of this study.

Nigeria, the 7<sup>th</sup> most populous nation in the world with population of about 180 million [7] is one of the countries affected by flood. According to Nigeria's National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA), flood is a perennial problem that affects development of the country [8].

Statistically, flood take 83.3% of all disaster that happened in Nigeria from 1990 -2014 and 84.4% of death recorded during the period is from flood. Similarly, 99.8% of economic issues from disaster are from flood [9]. These show that there is urgent need for collaboration of stakeholders to reduce flood disaster risk and save the nation. It is the problems that are affecting Nigerian newspapers involvement in disaster risk reduction that this study set out to identify and proffer solutions to.

#### **OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

This study aims to identify problems affecting Nigerian newspapers involvement in flood disaster risk reduction.

**METHODS**

This study employed a qualitative research method. In-depth interviews were conducted for with journalists and disaster managers. Analysis in qualitative research is derived from the interplay of an investigator’s investigation and the data successfully generated from the field exercise. There are scientific traditions guiding the process of how this should be done. Two procedures are involved. The first is the accounting for the event as stated by the participants/ observers. The second is the interpretation of data by the researcher. Central to these two processes is the detailed analysis of interview transcripts.

The rationale for the interview was to avail the researcher opportunity of getting a clearer picture of the involvement of the Nigerian media in flood disaster risk reduction. Questions on their understanding of disaster management and challenges affecting media participation in disaster risk reduction were asked from both informants.

The study derived its strength from the views of 16 respondents from four government-owned disaster management organisations and two major national newspapers in Nigeria. The Heads of media department and Heads, Disaster Risk Reduction department of disaster management organisations were interviewed. The organisations are – National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA), Nigerian Security and Civil Defence Corps (NSCDC), Nigerian Metrological Agency (NIMET) and Federal Fire Service (FFS).

Journalists from *Punch* and *Trust* newspapers were also interviewed. *Punch* and *Trust* newspapers were selected based on their wider circulation, accessibility and largely representation of Southern and Northern Nigeria respectively. Editors and reporters were interviewed at the organisation’s head offices in Mowe, Ogun state

and Abuja. In the analysis, Disaster Managers (DM) are identified with DM 1- 6 and Media Men (MM) are identified as MM 7-16. The interviews were recorded with tape recorder while the researcher also took note during the interview. This was to complement the recorded voice to ensure clarity and accuracy. These were subsequently transcribed. Themes, sub themes and sub -sub themes were created to facilitate easy analysis. Lastly, NVIVO 10 software was used to analyse the data collected from the informants. The analyses were presented in graphical, model forms for easy understanding.

**RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

The objective of this paper is to identify problems affecting media active involvement in disaster risk reduction. It is these factors that hinder the media participation in contributing effectively to flood risk reduction that informants lay bare during the interviews.

From the analysis of the responses of the informants with NVIVO 10 software, the model below shows factors hindering media participation in pre – disaster stage. Figure 1 shows the general theme.

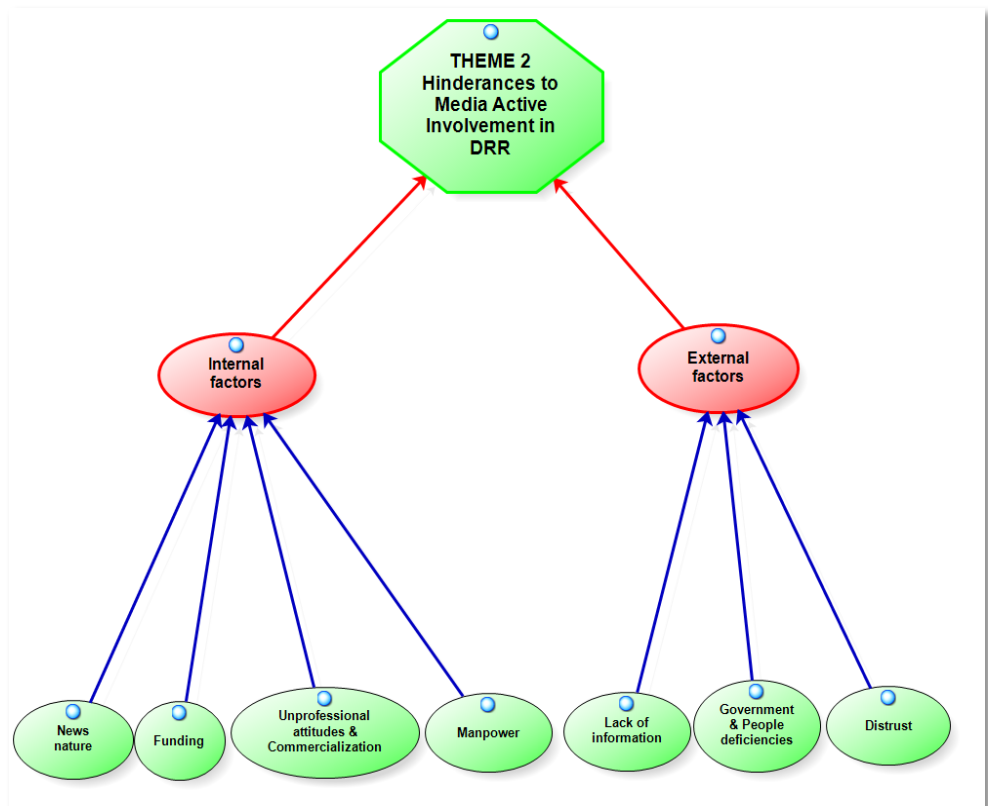


Figure 1: Factors hindering media participation in disaster risk reduction.

From the model, two sub themes emerged. The sub themes are:

*Internal Factors*

These are factors within media organisations that are affecting the media active involvement in flood risk reduction. Under internal factors, there are four sub - sub themes. They are news nature, funding, unprofessional attitude and commercialization and manpower. Figure 2 shows the factors.

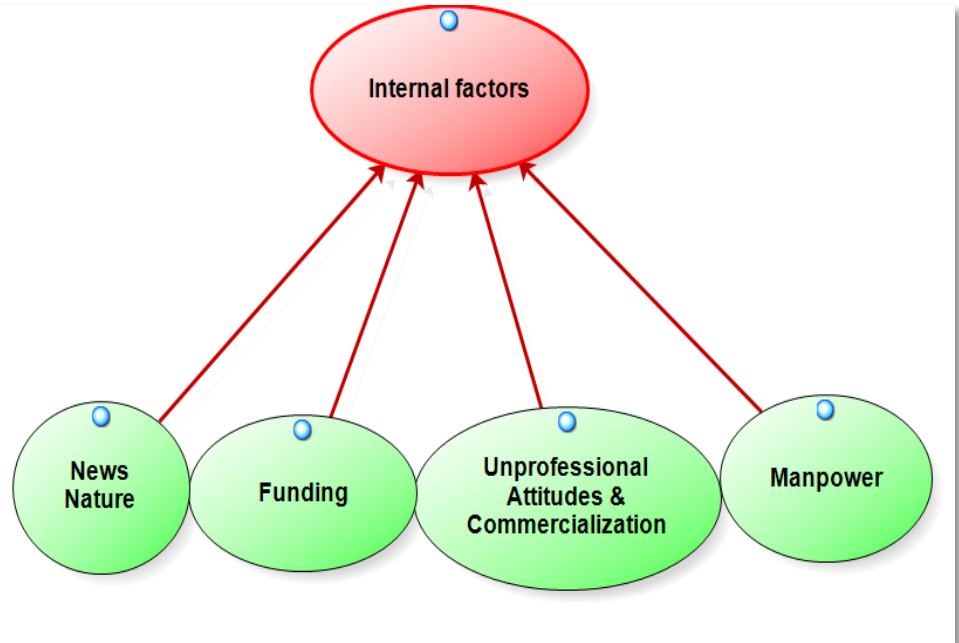


Figure 2: Internal factors affecting media participation in disaster risk reduction.

*News Nature*

News is one of the major outputs of the media. It is an essential content that attract people to newspapers, magazines, television, radio and other form of media of mass communication. News has been defined severally by scholars and professionals. Traditionally defined, news is an account of event or happening that is of interest to the readers. Flood disaster stories have most key elements of news determinants. Thus, flood, though a bad, destructive occurrence is good news for the media.

The informants gave insight into this present state by citing the nature of news which thrives on suddenness, destruction, drama, shock among others as the push factor that make coverage of disaster during its occurrence a staple food for media. These elements are lacking at pre – disaster stage.

Figure 3 below shows the responses of informants that identified news nature as problem to media active involvement in DRR.

Informants DM3, MM11, MM15,MM8, MM9 and others identified suddenness of flood and its trappings of human interest; its perennial nature that has made its coverage a routine; professional demand for stories that will make cover page and sell; readers huge appetite for happening - now stories / breaking news ; high demanding nature of journalism and other limitations that give little room for digging up yet - to - happen or investigative stories; high volume of interesting, tragic stories happening daily, among others as challenges facing media men involvement in disaster management.

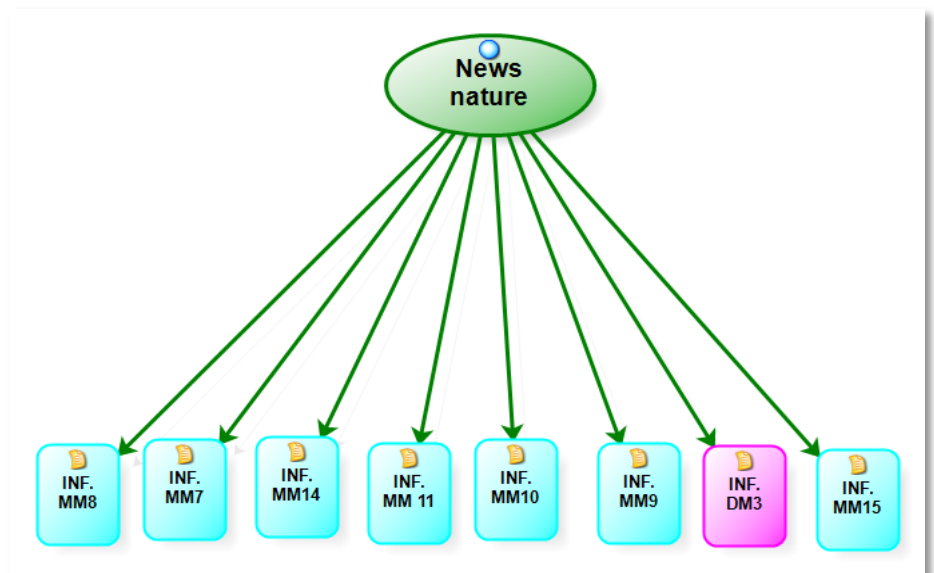


Figure 3: News nature as source of hindrance to media involvement in disaster risk reduction

Explaining further, Informant MM10 said:

*The simple reason for this (media least activeness in DRR) is that the media and by extension, people are most interested in events that are happening now. I remember writing a story I titled “Disaster waiting to happen”. My editor didn’t use it. . I don’t know why it wasn’t used. And when you do stories and they are not used, nobody will tell you before you know that you’re wasting your time. The general notion in the newsroom is that yet - to - happen stories need not to be written until it happens. And when you do stories and they are not used, nobody will tell you before you know that you’re wasting your time. Many editors don’t appreciate stories that are yet to break. Also, people don’t appreciate such stories. For example, few people pay attention to the issue of global warming, but all will pay attention to tsunami and flood.*

Some Informants also shared their personal experience and frustration concerning writing pre – disaster stories:

*Human angle stories when a disaster has happened are attractive to readers than preventive stories. Twice, I wrote a pre - disaster story, but they are not used. To me, editors are not really interested in such stories. (Informant MM14).*

*It’s a “touch and go” approach we’ve to many issues. This limits our involvement and participation in disaster risk reduction. Two, when events happen frequently, no matter how important it is to the public, it becomes routine. Journalists, even our audiences, don’t like routine stories. (Informant MM15).*

The informants, summarily, blamed the media for putting temporary, narrow interest under the guise of ‘nature of news’ above their contribution to sustainable development that disaster risk reduction presents; disaster managers for not supplying DRR materials to the media; the society people for being overtly interested in tragic and happening now stories; government for seemingly not taking determined steps to prevent flood and stop it from being a perennial problem and its reportage routine stories for the media.

### Funding

Like all other human activities, news gathering cost money. But informants noted that it cost more to

produce disaster risk reduction stories than cover response disaster stage stories. While response stage stories are mostly visible and ready - made stories, DRR stories involve investigation and follow ups. It costs money and other resources. Below is the model representing the views of informants on funding being a hindrance to media participation in DRR.

For Informant MM8:

*Being involved in pre- disaster stage reportage costs money. It’s an investigative work and you need to dig deep to get interesting and attention grabbing stories. As a company, we’re not buoyant enough to do this. Once in a while we ask our journalists to do pre and post disaster stories.*

Informant MM10 also disclosed that:

*Also, time, money and other resources are not there for many journalists to do in depth, investigative report on activities that can make people prone to flood disaster. I am a news person and I don’t have the luxury of time, space and resources to be looking for preventive, yet to happen stories. Moreso, there are abundant happening now, big stories. For my organisation, funding is not an issue as the management pays you money spent on good stories. But you have to present receipts of money spent. Here is the problem. You’ll not get receipt for most activities you’ll spend money on while gathering information on pre disaster stage.*

Informant MM14 and MM15 also corroborated this assertion.

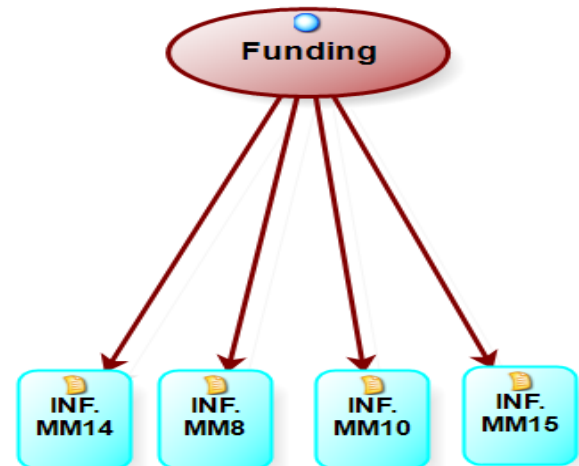


Figure 4: Funding as an hindrance to media participation in disaster risk reduction



**Manpower**

Manpower refers to the number of skilled workers available for a task. Media organisations employ professionals to gather, process and disseminate news and other editorial materials to mass audience through their medium. However, the parlous economic situation, selfish interest and owner’s desire to maximize profit and other interests have been affecting quality and quantity of journalists available to cover events.

The model representing the views of informants on the negative impact of manpower on media participation in flood risk reduction is presented below.

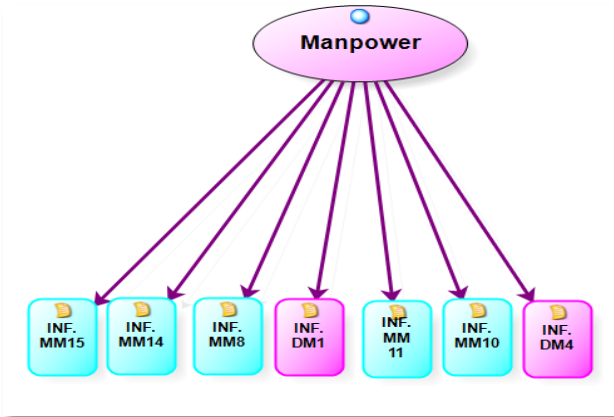


Figure 5: Man power as a factor hindering media participation in disaster risk reduction.

Speaking on this problem, Informant MM10 noted that:

*Manpower in media organisations is never enough. It’s a usual practice for one reporter to cover more than three beats. Hardly will you see a newspaper having two state correspondents covering activities outside its headquarters. It’s a capitalist mentality and economic situation in Nigeria allows it.*

Also, MM8 said:

*Manpower is also one of the factors. Though, this is not a problem in my organization as we’ve correspondents all over the country. The task of covering a state by one correspondent is, however, challenging. It leaves room for superficial coverage and high concentration on ‘happening now’ stories.*

Furthermore, Informant MM11, MM10, MM14 and MM15 pointed out that media job is highly demanding and those involved are always under intense pressure. Thus, there is need for disaster

managers to make good disaster risk reduction materials readily available and regularly.

Apart from shortage of manpower, Informant DM1 and DM4 lamented the regular transfer of journalists covering disaster beat affects disaster management. To them, “It does not allow proper understanding of disaster management” and “it takes time before the new person will understand the beat”.

*Unprofessional Attitudes and Commercialization*

All professions have ethics and rules guiding the professional relationship. Ethics guides best professional practices and enhances quality service delivery. However, informants interviewed in this study identified unprofessional attitudes and commercialization as one of the hindrances to media involvement in disaster risk reduction. But it is instructive to note that both disaster managers and media men traded accusations while identifying these hindrances.

The informants’ views are presented in the model below.

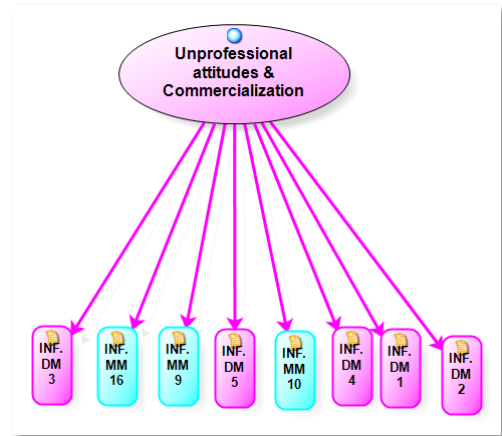


Figure 6: Unprofessional Attitudes and Commercialization as factors hindering media participation in disaster risk reduction

Let take the accusations of disaster managers against media men first. Informant DM1, DM2, DM3, DM4 and DM5 complained that journalists don’t cover their activities regularly and effectively, impatient, very busy, few have interest in disaster management,

They elaborated on some of the allegations:

*I should confess to you that most of our interactions cost money and at times it is difficult for us to satisfy journalists. We are not generating money. We are humanitarian service organisation. Some journalists do not*

*see it from this point. Since, the media are yet to see itself as a key participant in disaster reduction; many are interested in financial gains from their participation. Having and sustaining good relationship with them is competitive. Relating to them is demanding and you have to package yourself well to get good publicity. Packaging means money! (Informant DM1)*

Informant DM2 said:

*The main challenge is that most journalists are impatient. Some of them are overzealous in doing their job. They reveal information that ought not to be revealed. By doing so, they put many things at risk. They sensationalize stories to make money. Some don't confirm their stories. Some of their reports make people panic and are counterproductive. Also, they don't investigate their stories or do follow up. Disaster prevention, stories are majorly investigative work. They don't have patience or interest or expertise to do a thorough investigation and report situation accurately.*

Meanwhile, Informant DM2 blamed some media owners for not paying their staff, thus allowing them to behave unethically.

*It is sad that some organisations just employ journalists without paying their salaries. It is what they make from the assignments that they live on. This turns journalism into beggar profession. It is full of unethical people. But they have to survive thus; they see news sources as their meal tickets. Professionalism is adversely affected as unethical behaviors reign.*

Similarly, Informant DM4 raised the issue of fake journalists:

*There are people who have no business in the media parading themselves as journalists. Media has remained an 'all comer's profession' and this is affecting professionalism. Fake journalists operate and tarnish the image of the media. Media owners and associations should urgently address this. Ethical code should be enforced and all journalists should have a license to operate.*

In another breath, the media men also identified problems relating to unprofessional attitudes emanating from disaster managers and themselves. The problems, according to them, affect their relationship and hindering active participation in disaster risk reductions.

Hear them:

*Another factor is that some in the public relations department of disaster agencies are not well trained to relate with the media and produce disaster risk reduction materials. Many lack commitment and passion for the job, have no media experience and could not understand the operation of the media. Writing good press releases, opinions and features are not easy for some of them. Also, corruption, selfish interest and material gains that they make from distributing relief materials, motivate their interest on during and post disaster. (Informant MM9)*

*Another challenge is from disaster managers. Some of them are good and responsive, but some are not. Getting information from them takes time. Their response time to disaster is slow. Many are not pro- active in nature. (Informant MM10).*

*Journalists poor remuneration and non - payment of salary also affect media involvement. Thus, many journalists have to collect money before reporting stories. Many lack passion for the work. (Informant MM16).*

#### External Factors

These factors are hindrances emanating from outside media organizations. These include lack of information, government and people deficiencies and distrust. Figure below shows the hindrances.

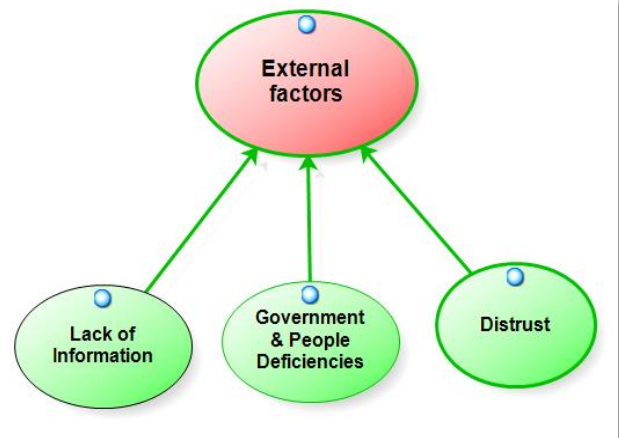


Figure 7: External factors militating against media involvement in disaster risk reduction

### Lack of Information

Media thrives on the availability and quality of information at its disposal. The information can be generated through self and other sources. The hindrance posed by lack of information, according to the informants, is largely blamed on disaster managers. The informants responses are represented by the model below.

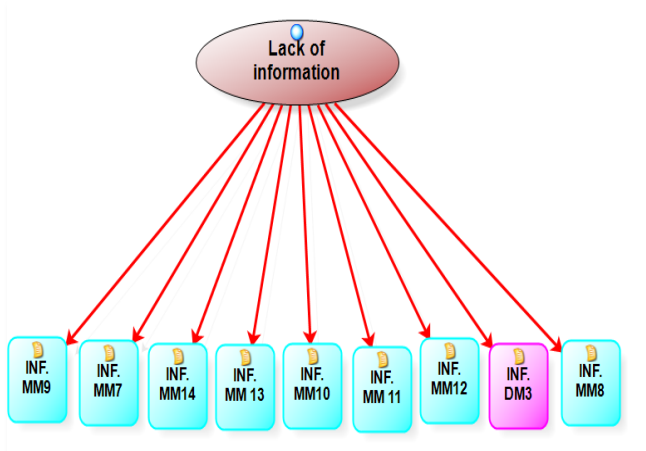


Figure 8: Lack of Information as an hindrance to media involvement in disaster risk reduction

Eight out of 10 media men interviewed identified lack of information as one of the major impediments to media participation in flood risk reduction in Nigeria. Some informants put it in these ways:

*I'll give Nigerian media 15% participation in flood risk reduction. Most of the time, we were taken unawares and we just follow the events. This is largely so because agents that are saddled with the responsibility of preventing disaster are also active when disasters have occurred. So the media are not alerted ahead of disaster. NIMET and NEMA are agents primarily saddled with this responsibility. NIMET predicts, forecasts weather while NEMA and its sister organisations, prepare people for the impending dangers. It's the information we get from these agencies that we report. Weather forecast in Nigeria is not effective and NEMA does reactionary communication with the media. They are interested in what government is doing to reduce the suffering of people affected by disaster not mainly what are being done to reduce the risk. They send us stories on the Vice President, NEMA Director General distributing "400 bags of rice to flood victims" and all that.*

*They rarely send us pre- disaster materials. (Informant MM9).*

*Lack of information from relevant bodies is a major factor. In the absence of such information, we do dig for it at times. For example, two weeks ago, we published a feature story on areas that are flood prone in Lagos. We visited the affected areas and talked to relevant people. This is part of our contributions to disaster prevention. It's to sensitize people and government authorities. It's now left to the government organisations and other concerned bodies to act on our warning. They hardly do. (Informant MM11)*

*Disaster managers don't carry media along. They want media to report only positive side of their activities. No transparency and accountability on their side. They are more of relief distribution, disaster response agents than pro - active. (Informant MM13).*

*Another challenge is from disaster managers. Some of them are good and responsive, but some are not. Getting information from them takes time. Their response time to disaster is slow. Many are not pro- active in nature. Let them sponsor features, opinion, letter to the editor, etc. Let them motivate experts and their staff to write for them. (Informant MM10).*

Similarly, the only disaster manager, Informant DM3, in the model also agreed that poor exchange of information between disaster management organization and the media is an obstacle to disaster risk reduction reporting.

*However, both media and disaster managers need to do more in pre - disaster stage by warning people about the impending dangers and get them prepared for the looming disasters. Disaster management organisations need to also generate more materials on disasters prevention and make them available to the media. (Informant DM3).*

Meanwhile, the media men also identified incompetency, lack of commitment, inexperience, little or no previous media job training, lack of regular trainings and effective relationship with the media, selfish interest, lack of motivation and mobilization of other stakeholders to publicize their opinions and activities on DRR in the media and other negative attitudes as part of the problem.



### Government and People's Deficiencies

Apart from disaster management agencies and media organisations, there are other stakeholders whose actions and inactions could promote or hinder disaster risk reduction campaign. Government, people in the disaster prone areas and non - disaster prone areas, experts, scholars, civil societies, non - governmental organisations and others are crucial to DRR.

The informants in this study, however, identified the failure of other stakeholders to act proactively, implement policies that will reduce flood, desist from attitudes that trigger flood among others as a major impediment. The model of the informants' views is represented by the model below.

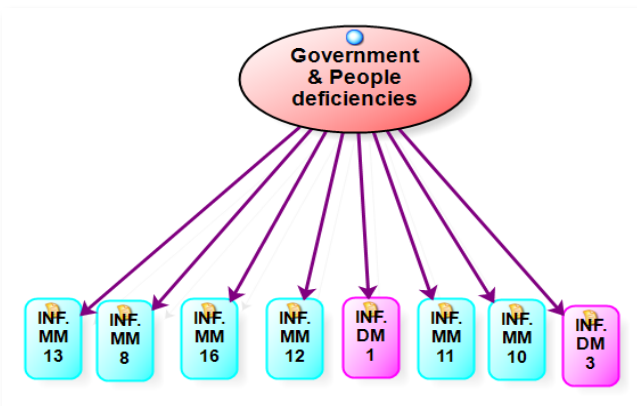


Figure 9: Government and people deficiencies as hindrances to media involvement in disaster risk reduction

Informants identified some shortcomings of government and people that make media active participation in disaster risk reduction seemly a waste of resources and ordinary routine effort. The deficiencies include, government failure to enforce building and environmental laws, inadequate equipment and personnel, failure of government and people to act on media disaster warnings, delayed response to disaster outbreak or warning, people lack of interest in disaster risk reduction stories, practicing bad habits that make people vulnerable among others. Some Informants expatiated more:

*There are many habits of our people that need to be discouraged. Some of them are; building houses close to rivers or on river channels, dumping refuses on drainages, etc. Disaster managers should mount campaigns and enlighten people of the consequences of their actions. The government and its agencies also*

*need to be more proactive and enforce laws. Government should also implement legislations on disaster prevention. Journalists are not happy that nothing seems to change year in year out after writing stories on flood occurrences. It's frustrating and disheartening. It reduces humanitarian and developmental issues to routine stories. (Informant MM8).*

*After 2012, the media started writing to warn people, but people hardly listen to the warning. Governments also don't enforce compliance. So the focus is still more on when disaster strikes. Their (disaster managers) response time is long and they lack basic equipment to carry out emergency operation. (Informant MM13).*

*The attitude of our people and government concerning the environment and danger is another factor. People don't take warning and sensitization serious. They do things that cause flooding. Until it happens and cause trouble for them, only a few take the media report seriously. Governments don't implement laws and respond to media warnings. (Informant MM8).*

### Distrust

Trust is one of the ingredients of good relationship. Partnership requires honesty, trust, team work, mutual understanding and other positive attitudes. Informants in this study alleged others of distrust, dishonesty, dubious character, corruption, conflict of interest and operation among other constraints to effective relationship.

Informant DM1 said:

*At times, journalists misquote us. Many of them don't trust us and have little or no interest in disaster management. They also see us as being economical with facts and figures. They see us as liars. We are not, but we've a procedure to follow before announcing any figure or policy.*

To informant MM8:

*The private media are critical and some of these agents are not favorably disposed to criticism. Some are not friendly, doubt the sincerity of journalists when they are approached for information, shield their bosses and lie on facts and figure. Part of our challenge is the media relations/ spokespersons*

*of the government agencies. They don't want us to relate directly with the head of their organisation. They are not sincere in our relationship and they are not comfortable that the media go for whatever and whoever they want. There is mutual suspicion. They want positive stories only. They are of opinion that we magnify their failure and play down their achievements.*

Figure below represent the model.

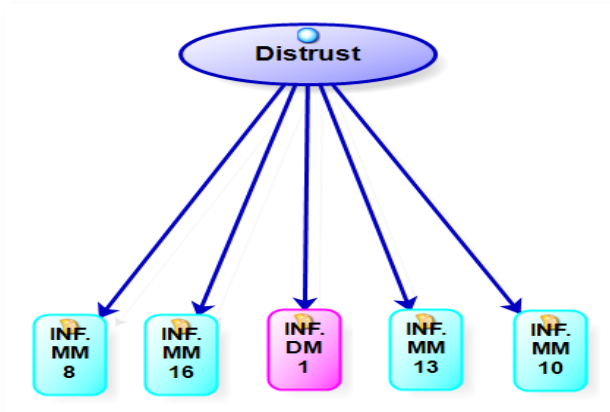


Figure10: *Distrust as an hindrance to media involvement in disaster risk reduction*

**CONCLUSION**

This study examined pressing problems affecting media participation in disaster risk reduction in Nigeria. Also, it proffers solutions. Some of the problems identified and solutions proffered are within media organization while some lie with disaster management organisations and other stakeholders. The recommendations should be worked on to reduce the problem and enhance media participation in national development. By creating disaster risk awareness through disseminating information on the likely disaster and educate people on how to be adequately prepared and avoid activities that would make them vulnerable, media will be playing its role. It should de-emphasis reporting numbers of people that died, property destroyed, human misery, tragedies and other attendant challenges brought by flood. It is time for media and other stakeholders to be conscious of how many lives and property could be saved through effective reportage and involvement in disaster risk reduction. Journalists need to see themselves as critical stakeholder in disaster risk reduction and collaborate with other stakeholders actively.

**RECOMMENDATION**

As observed by [25], twenty first century is the era of communications and collaboration. No organization or individual can afford not to partner with others to achieve goals.

There is need for media organisations to be more pro – active in their reportage of flood disaster in Nigeria. The framing of stories should be largely on disaster risk reduction. Through publication of reports that warn people of consequences of activities that make community flood – prone, dissemination of early warning and education on disaster risks, this would be achieved. Photographs of disaster waiting to happen, editorial, features and other formats of reportage need to be employed more in disaster reportage.

Considering the increasing spate of disaster, environmental, safety and other developmental challenges, media men should the adequately trained formally (in schools) and informally (on the job and self-education) the fundamentals and practices of development communication and pro – active journalism. At present, media reportage of these issues is being criticized as lacking development – orientation.

Media organizations survive mainly on adverts and circulation/ readership and disaster management organisations are not profit making organization. There is still need for the latter and other stakeholders to support the former to survive and participate in achieving disaster risk reduction objectives. To this end, working out special advert rate, sponsorship of pages and special editions, and other ethical financial assistances would motivate media to participate more effectively. This will reduce the challenges of funding, manpower and inadequate cooperation.

Conscious efforts should be made to staff public relations/ affairs department of disaster management organisations with people who have basic training in journalism and public relations. People who have worked as journalists before are highly recommended for this office to enhance and sustained good relationship with media. Professionals engaged would use their past experience, exposure, connections and training to effectively mainstream media in the activities of the organizations and disaster risk reduction.

In addition, it is important that the management of the organisations should recognize the recommendations of the in - house media professionals, consultants and fund media and public relations department activities adequately. Public

relation is a management function and should be accorded due respect.

Also, materials being distributed to the media should be framed towards disaster risk reduction and not dominated by massaging of ego of the top government officers, relief materials distribution and other after disaster events as it obtains now. Providing issues - based media materials and pre disaster activities would get media more actively involved than the present predominantly personality based materials and activities being provided as information subsidies.

One of the limitations of this study is the usage of only one research methods, namely an in - depth interview. Future studies on media involvement in flood disaster risk reduction by using other research methods or combination of qualitative and quantitative methods are suggested. Also, another limitation is the small number of media men and disaster managers interviewed. However, this limitations is marginal as the informants are key representatives of disaster management organisations and leading media organisations in Nigeria.

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