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Newspapers and Disaster Risk Reduction in Nigeria: A Review

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1.1 Abstract

The main purpose of the paper is to discuss the media role in disaster risk reduction. The role of mass media in the society cannot be overstated. It has been identified as a key stakeholder as it informs, educates, mobilizes, and entertains among other roles. As an agent of development, media is identified as a crucial factor in disaster management. The paper examines the role being played by Nigerian newspapers in curbing flood devastation. With the growing frequency and devastation of flood disaster globally and in Nigeria in particular, the need for all stakeholders to collaborate is more urgent. In Nigeria, flood is the commonest disaster and a perennial problem. However, as crucial as finding solutions to this problem is, few researches have been conducted on the role of media in disaster risk reduction. The review reveals that Nigerian media is not proactive but reactive in its involvement. Findings show that media largely get involved during and after disaster occurrences, reporting human misery, tragedy loss of lives and property. Also, it is confirmed that rather than seeing self as a vital stakeholder, media still considers self as observer or passive participant. The study concludes by calling on the media to collaborate more with other stakeholders, disseminate early warning information, educate populace ahead of flood incidents and play other vital roles to complement other stakeholders efforts in reducing disaster risks.

Keywords: Disaster Risk Reduction; Nigerian newspapers; Flood; Media roles

1.2 Introduction

Globally, the media is a powerful actor in the societies (Daramola, 2008; Akinfeleye, 2003; 2008; Rahim, 1998). Though, the role of the media, especially the newspaper, has always been a source of discourse, it is widely acknowledged that it is one of the veritable agents of change and development in all spheres of life. It educates, informs, persuades, mobilizes, interprets and entertains the public about events. Through its reportage of issues, people are aware of incidents and events within and outside their domains. The reports enable people to adjust their lives to the events in their society.

In the recent time, flood has become a source of concern and source of media reports. While heavy rainfall, ocean surge, overflow of river banks could be termed as natural occurrences that may lead to flood, several human actions and inactions aggravate these natural occurrences. Thus, flood has been identified as one of man – made disaster. Its scale, frequency and destruction are becoming alarming and threatening developmental strides recorded by nations. According to Killenberg (2008), and Miller & Rivera (2011), flood is a commonest disaster in the world and urgent solutions need to be proffer to curb its menace. A World Resource Institute (WRI) Report in 2015 predicts that over 54 million people would be affected by flood by 2030 from 21 million affected in 2015 (Statistic View, 2015).

Expectedly, the media has been focusing attention on its occurrences in Nigeria and other countries. Through its contents, media brings the reality of calamities being wrecked by flood to the doorsteps of its large, heterogeneous audience at different stages of occurrence. As a social and developmental problem, stakeholders resolved to work together and find lasting solutions to flooding. Media is recognized as one of key stakeholders.

Its participation in disaster management especially risk reduction is crucial (Faulkner, 2001). It is saddled with responsibility of disseminating early warning information and educates people on disaster risk reduction and prevention. Thus, it serves as a management tool for disaster management (Lindsay, 2011) and its effective use may lessen the effects of a disaster (Rodríguez et al., 2007) Also, it reports flood occurrences, mobilizes resources for victims, offers its platform for stakeholders to interact and proffer solutions among other roles.

Akinfeleye (2010), Folarin (1998) and Toennesen et. al. (2013) asserted that the media should play the role of facilitators of positive change through provision of adequate information that could reduce the degree of uncertainty and insecurity in the society. Thus, if the press has such an 'awesome' and tremendous power, then such power should be effectively and responsibly used to assist in disaster management through information dissemination and making key

government agents in the sector and other stakeholders responsible and responsive before disaster strikes.

1.3 Contextualizing Disaster Management and Disaster Risk Reduction

Disaster is a global phenomenon. It is a destructive event that can be man-made (human -initiated) or natural. It can be predictable or unpredictable, long term or immediate. It causes serious loss, destruction, hardship, unhappiness and death. It can be a sudden and short - lived occurrence such as flood, windstorm, earthquake, fire, factory accidents, etc. or happen over a long period of time like famine, drought, deforestation, etc. (Hodgkinson and Stewart, 1991; Meier, 2009; NEMA, 2013; Quarantelli, 1991; Shaba, 2009). Also, Wisner, Blaikie, Cannon & Davis (2003) define disasters as complex mix of natural hazards and human action.

The first disaster is dated back to the ancient period when the first flood happened. It was during Prophet Noah / Nuh. God unleashed fury on mankind by flooding the earth because of man's iniquities. Only few who entered Noah's ark were saved. This is the first record of nature's anger against man and first disaster. **In this narrative, Noah acted like a journalist by disseminating warning information and educating people about the impending disaster.** After this, man's numerous actions and inactions have attracted disasters and its attendant challenges. Some factors, mainly natural and man- made have escalated the spate of disaster in the recent time (Perez-Lugo, 2001).

Conscious of its devastation effects, stakeholders at local and international communities are teaming up to manage disaster. The emphasis is now on disaster management with focus on disaster risk reduction. This is a shift from hitherto response and rehabilitation. Stakeholders comprising professionals from different fields like academic, security, health, environment, housing, media, law, government agencies, policy makers, community and others are involved. Stakeholders are constantly brainstorming on effective way to prevent, mitigate and manage disaster better.

Recently, international and national interests in effective disaster management have increased. Different stakeholders' roles are being critically evaluated and re-defined by local and international bodies. Also, researchers, policy makers and professionals from different disciplines and countries have been devising creative, innovative, participatory, cost effective, holistic, preventive ways of managing disaster (Fatti, 2014; Tariq, Khan, & Rahman, 2013; Shapiro, 2011; Ugokwe, 2005).

The new disaster risk reduction way of managing disaster becomes necessary because many disasters are man – made or aggravated by man's actions or

inactions. In this light, Vinod (2006) notes that the potential for disaster and its risk elements are now predictable through technology or past experience. For example, flooding is a commonest and most devastating disaster in Nigeria like every other part of the world. While flooding can be categorized as a natural disaster, man's practices of building houses on water ways, poor drainage system among others aggravate its impacts (NEMA, 2010; Odufunwa et al, 2012; Ojo, 2005). These are human factors that aggravate heavy rainfall hazard and turn it to flood, a disaster.

Globally, the focus is now on pre-disaster stage or disaster risk reduction. It consists of efforts geared towards prevention, mitigation and preparedness for disaster. Experiences have shown that embarking on risk reduction exercises and prevention is better, cheaper, less tragic than response and recovery/rehabilitation (McConnell and Drennan 2006; NEMA, 2013).

Emphasis is now on early warning and education as well as cooperation and collaboration of all stakeholders in the society (Carignan, 2014). This paradigm is emphasized and propagated by series of international disaster reduction frameworks agreed on by countries. Hyogo Framework (2005 – 2015), Sendai Framework (2015 -2025) and other resolutions of world conferences on disaster management underscored the importance and urgency the world leaders attached to disaster risk reduction. It shows the need for stakeholders to team up in reducing risks attributed to disaster while apportioning specific responsibilities to all stakeholders. Disaster risk reduction is a concept and practice of reducing disaster risks (vulnerability) through systematic efforts to analyse and reduce the causal factors of disasters. It entails reducing exposure to hazards, lessening vulnerability of people and property, wise management of environment, and improving preparedness and early warning dissemination. In summary, actions or activities that would reduce vulnerability and boost resilience to disasters are called disaster risk reduction (Luna, 2001).

There are three stages of disaster ((Palatala, Boano, Lund & Vos, 2012) and each stage has to be managed effectively. The stages are:

- (1). Pre – disaster (prevention, mitigation and preparedness). It is also called disaster risk reduction.
- (2). During - disaster (response). It is also called reactionary stage.
- (3). Post disaster (rehabilitation and reconstruction).

The pre - disaster phase is concerned with prevention and preparation. The response phase is when the management must actually respond to the disaster. The post – disaster looks for ways to prepare better for the next crisis and fulfills

commitment made during the disaster phase including follow – up information.

1.4 Floods in Nigeria

Like other parts of the world, flood is the commonest and most recurring disaster in Nigeria. Nigeria is a rapidly developing country with over 178.5 million populations (World Population Review, 2014). Its developmental plans and determination to become a developed nation are being threatened by disasters. NEMA (2010) disclosed that, at least 20% of Nigerian’s population is at risk of flood and heavy rainstorm annually. Also, Director - General, Nigeria Hydrological Service Agency corroborates this (Olaosebikan (2014).

Table 1 shows the of severe floods disaster in Nigeria.

Table1. Severe Floods Disaster in Nigeria

No	Year	People affected
1.	1988	300,000
2.	1994	580,000
3.	1998	100,000
4.	1999	90,000
5.	2001	84,065
6.	2003	210,000
7.	2007	50,000
8.	2009	150,000
9.	2010	1,500,200
10.	2012	3,891,314

Source: EMT-DAT in FGN (2013).

In 2012, Nigeria, the 7th most populous nation in the world, witnessed its worst flood disaster in over 40 years. Heavy rains which started in July and

ended in October led to flood. Major dams like Kainji, Shiroro, Jebba, Kiri, Lagdo and others overflowed their banks and wrecked unprecedented havocs (NEMA 2012). The then Nigerian President, Dr. Goodluck Jonathan, in a broadcast, lamented that 25% of Nigerian population was displaced in 32 out of its 36 states (Sharareporters, 2012; FGN, 2013). Also, National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) Director - General, described the flood as the worst in the country’s history (Agbaje, 2013).

In the incident, 363 people died, 5,851 injured, 3, 891, 314 affected and N2.6 trillion (US\$ 16.9billion) lost were recorded while 24 out of 32 flooded states were severely affected (FGN, 2013; NEMA, 2013; OCHA, 2012). On its impact on development, a Post - Disaster Needs Assessment report by the Federal Government of Nigeria (FGN, 2013), indicates that it would take the country nearly three years to achieve full reconstruction of flood destroyed assets. According to the report, this is only realizable if most developmental activities were stopped and the country’s capacity was to be solely concentrated on reconstruction. This is not possible. Hence, it would take several years for the reconstruction to be effected.

NEMA’s Director - General described the occurrence as a “litmus test” for the country’s preparedness for disaster, urging stakeholders to prevent reoccurrence. He identifies natural and human activities such as local settlement patterns, environmental degradation, blocked, narrow drainages, and other harmful practices as factors making communities vulnerable to flood disaster.

Figure 2.1 shows the Nigeria’s map with flooded states.



Figure 1. Map of Nigeria showing flooded states in 2012 (NEMA, 2013)

Statistically, Nigeria is 10th on the list of the World's countries with the most of its people exposed to river floods (WRI, 2013).

Based on climate, Nigeria is broadly divided into two: southern part and northern part with dry and rain seasons (Map of World, 2014). The southern part is relatively moister than the northern part. In the south, rain season begins in April and ends in October while in the north, it is between May - September. It rains in the remaining months. As part of its mandate, the Nigeria Metrological Agency (NIMET) every year conduct research on the annual rainfall pattern and make the result public at a press conference. All related agencies and experts are invited to the briefing.

In March 2012, NIMET released its Annual Rainfall Prediction, warning of likely heavy rainfall. Ordinarily, the prediction ought to be taken serious by the stakeholders because flood ravaged some states in Nigeria in 2010 and 2011. But as reflected by the devastation of the 2012 flood, scanty attention was paid to the prediction before the flood started in July. It is when the disaster started that all stakeholders at national and international levels started reacting. The nature's fury lasted till October after wrecking temporary and permanent havocs in 32 states, displaced millions of people and destroyed trillions naira worth of properties.

With a benefit of hindsight, possibly, with effective and adequate dissemination of the early warning from disaster organisations, sustained education on the impending danger, active collaboration among stakeholders would have reduced the severity, impact and consequences of the 2012 disaster. "Prevention is better than cure" and "a stich in time saves nine" are popular adages. These adages aptly capture the need to be pro – active in reducing disaster occurrences. And going by the increasing human activities that make the earth prone to disaster, the stakeholders need to always be prepared for disaster. A report on Nigeria Post – disaster Needs Assessment (FGN, 2013:5) has predicted that Nigeria is likely to suffer repeat of the 2012 soon and all stakeholders should be prepared.

1.5 The Role of Media in Disaster Risk Reduction

To underscore importance placed on disaster management, world leaders in Japan in 2005 and Sendai in 2015 fashioned out frameworks on disaster risk reduction. In the two international Action Plans against disaster, like all developmental plans, the media is considered as one of the key stakeholders. Mass communication media consist of traditional media and new media. In the action plans, the media and other stakeholders are enjoined to campaign against actions or inactions that could increase

vulnerability (prone to disaster) of the world to disaster. Conversely, the media is urged to campaign for actions that would increase and sustain resilience building (resistance capacity).

Rovins (2011) and Ogwezzy (2010) emphasize the need for collaboration among scholars, government agencies, community leaders and the media. The collaboration may be in area of public education, early warning, policy changes, and economic development, improved construction of facilities and stability, enforcement of rules and social development among others. The ultimate aim is to prevent and mitigate disasters.

Importantly, as a "watch dog of the society", "a purveyor of information", "the glue that binds societies" and "an agent of mass mobilization and social change", the media is expected to join other stakeholders and participate actively in the prevention of disaster through early notification, education and warning of impending calamities (Hodginson & Stewart, 1991; Lowrey, Evans, Gower, Robinson, Ginter, McCormick & Abdolrasulnia, 2007; Scanlon, 2007; Stanoevska-Slabeva, Zotto & Giardina, 2012; Walker, 2012).

Professionally, journalists, along with emergency professionals, are often among the "first responders" when disasters occur (Ogwezzy (2010). During disasters, media have an important role to play in providing clear and accurate information to the public. The United Nations Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Disaster Risk Reduction, Margareta Wahlstrom (UNISDR, 2013) underscores the role of the press in disaster management, noting that access to information is key to successful disaster management.

Stressing the importance of the media in disaster management, Redner in Shapiro (2011) and Quarantelli and Wenger (1990) note that in addition to official emergency channels of communication, media relay account of what happen, where it happened, who or what was affected, what is being done, where it is safe and unsafe to go, where can people get help among other vital information at the critical times.

Meanwhile, scholars like Fearn-Banks (2010); Haddow and Haddow (2008) and Rivera and Miller (2011) identify effective communication, collaboration and cooperation among stakeholders as crucial in disaster management. These assist in creating public awareness and entrenching sustained behavioral change and enduring partnership. Public awareness raises levels of consciousness with regards to likely risks. It makes people know actions to take to help reduce the occurrence and impact of disaster e.g. flood. This can be achieved when timely, adequate and accurate communication links are developed and sustained when a disaster is expected or ongoing.

It is the media's role to create public awareness by forging strong communication links between the disaster management organisations and the public. CDEMA (2010) affirms that public awareness activities assist in changing behavior, thus engender a culture of risk reduction. Through educating people by using communication outlets such as newspapers, magazines, radio, television, social media etc., people will be less prone to disasters.

However, the present scenario is that the press feasts maximally on coverage of disasters during and after the havocs have been done (Barnes et al., 2008; Kakonge, 2012; Manyena, 2013). Efforts being made by key disaster managers and government to increase awareness through education and early warning still receive inadequate media attention. The early warning and education are aimed at developing human capacities to effectively cope when disasters occur.

Unfortunately, the surveillance role of the press is largely dormant before disasters occur (Barnes, et al. 2008). Accusations of selective reporting that manifest in focusing on drama, human tragedy, blame - game, conflicts of interest among the relief agents, victims and community affected are played up by the press during and after disaster occurrences (Ride & Bretherton, 2011). Also, Quarantelli and Wenger (1990) observe that the media organizations always see themselves as observers/reporters of disaster events rather than as possible victims or part of responding community actors. In the same vein, Quarantelli (2006) discloses that scholars have discovered that vigilance and participation among media organizations is very limited and poor. Furthermore, the relationship between the media men and disaster management, based on the past disasters, has been described as unsatisfactory (Palttala et al, 2012).

However, Cutter (2006) and Duhe (2008) note that whether a hazard becomes a disaster or not depends ultimately on people's vulnerability and preparation. All stakeholders, including media have role to play in making people resilient to disaster. The need for media to be actively involved in pre - disaster management is underscored in the report of Emergency Management Accreditation Program (EMAP, 2006). The report notes that an unambiguous and reliable message on likely disaster is very important to protect public safety and welfare.

Haigh (2014) observes that apart from investment in technology – based warning system, countries need functional, practical disaster risk reduction strategies, well- defined institutional responsibilities, public education programmes, and capabilities at all levels for effective dissemination and collaboration'. DRR is a product of many years of work by social scientists and other stakeholders. It emphasizes that the causes of disasters lie

majorly with people's vulnerability and not with the hazard agents.

In disaster management, there are four channels of information flow as highlighted by Sagun, Bouchlaghem and Anumba, 2006. The channels are:

- Within each participating organization: This is an intra- organization communication.
- Between organisations: This is an inter – organization communication
- From people to organizations or organizations to the media: people in the communities initiate this communication. The message on ongoing or impending disaster is sent to the disaster management organization (s). Alternatively, such message can also be sent to the media for action of relevant authorities by the organization or people. Media relations strategies come into play at this point.
- From organisations to people or media to people: Disaster management organisations sending messages to the communities or media reporting the likelihood of disaster occurrence or ongoing disaster based on the media's findings and reports.

From the foregoing and as a bridge between other stakeholders, the media has significance role to play in preventing disaster through early warning dissemination, education and campaign against activities that could increase vulnerability. Gow (2003) and Smith (2001) note that the concept of vulnerability is an important factor that all stakeholders should work actively together to reduce. Resilience build should be the focus of all involved in disaster management. Here, mass media play an important role in aiding information dissemination, coordination and enhancing disaster management plans.

To buttress the role of media at pre – disaster stage (disaster risk reduction), Newsome (2012) enumerates the followings:

1. Analysis of risk sources and patterns – factors increasing vulnerability of communities.
2. Public information – potential dangers and risk
3. Early warning- providing proper information on early warning systems
4. Advocate for risk reduction.
5. Encourage people's participation.

During a disaster, the following roles are suggested (Newsome 2012):

1. Inform the public with timely and factual information.
2. Advise the public about actions to be taken e.g. evacuation, safety techniques.

3. Inform of actions being taken by authorities and aid groups.
4. Disseminate messages on the welfare of disadvantaged groups.
5. Facilitate communication among affected people.
6. Highlight the needs of survivors.
7. Communicate potential secondary risks to minimize further disasters or damages.

However, it is important to distinguish between warning and coverage. "Warning" in this context is alerting information provided by official sources (government, scientists, planners, etc.) to the community during the early pre-disaster stage (Perez – Lugo, 1999). This includes presentation of data about the possibility of events that can be dangerous and harmful.

Also, it presents information about preparedness and adequate behavior to avert human, materials and economic losses. Conversely, "coverage" is mainly the description of a disaster situation which has occurred at the local or the international level. It presents the facts associated with the classical media reportage formula of 5W's and H (when, where, what, who, why and how). The impact, the magnitude of the damage, human misery, economic woes and other aspects of the sad occurrence are reported sensationally or soberly.

The aim of the "coverage" is mainly to describe the facts. It forms part of the daily stories presentation and economic growth or profit making of the newspaper organization. Using these definitions, we can classify the literature in risk communication into the two categories. One is the studies that use the "warnings" to measure the role of the media in risk reduction and disaster awareness. Two are the studies that consider the "coverage". From the foregoing, it is clear that coverage usually happens mainly during or after disaster has occurred.

This paper focuses on warning and education role of the media in disaster management. This is because disseminating information about impending disaster or campaigning against activities that could make people vulnerable is a vital way of reducing disaster frequency, impact and loss. Warning messages are gathered from official sources such as government agencies (at local, national and international level), planners, policy makers, activists, experts etc. Therefore, the word "reportage" which encompasses all form of media presentation of information at all stages would be used in this study.

Many disasters happen without warning. But some such as flood give warnings and their risks can be reduced. The impacts of such disaster can be minimized with adequate preparation and preventive measures through multi- dimensional and multi – sectorial approaches (Ahmed, 2013).

Also, advancement in technology has made it easy to predict with a high measure of accuracy the occurrence and intensity of disasters even months before the tragedy (Enten, 2013; Ration 1990). The daily weather forecast in some countries is a part of pre – disaster warning strategy. It assists in getting people prepared for the challenges of changes in weather condition.

1.6 The Media Contents and Disaster Risk Reduction

Newspaper consists of different sections which cover wide range of human activities. Like other media of mass communication; newspaper informs, educates and entertains readers. Media managers and media men can make use of all components of newspaper to create disaster awareness, disseminate information on prevention and educate people.

The followings are the media contents available for disaster management:

1. News

This is the primary product of newspapers. People buy newspapers mainly because of news. News is defined as an account of events that are of interest to the public. It is reportage of the activities of governmental and non- governmental organisations and individuals and happenings in the society. News should be new, objective, appealing and relevant to the audiences. It's one of the best ways to make members of the public know about the existence and operation of an organization. News on organization can be positive or negative. Positive news is favourable and projects the image of the organization. Negative news, no matter how factual it is, is unfavourable. Organisations strive for good news as it assists them in fulfilling their objectives.

For disaster management organizations, getting good news materials before disaster happens, need more conscious, deliberate, sustained and planned efforts. The organizations are always in the news when disaster strikes and after the occurrence. Disaster, though a bad occurrence, is good news for the media. It consists of most ingredients of news. However, with good media relations, activities of the organization can also be in the news before the crisis period.

Thus, the organizations need to cultivate the media at pre –disaster stage. At this stage, seeking for cooperation and understanding are very important. Organizing series of media relations activities assist in building good relationship with the media. Such activities include issuing press releases, granting interviews, press conferences, workshops, seminars, facilities tour or simulation exercises, writing opinions, expert ideas, identifying with the media organization among others.

2. Features

A feature is more extensive and detailed than news. It consists of views of more than one source on topical issues. Unlike news which mostly takes few columns, a feature can be more than a page, a page, half a page and others. Photographs are often used to illustrate the features. Disaster managers can generate feature materials and place it in the media. They can encourage the media to write feature on the need for active involvement of all stakeholders in disaster prevention. Alerting media men to special events such as World Disaster Reduction day, October 13, visitation to disaster-prone areas, simulation exercises to show organisation's preparedness for emergency etc. are good sources of feature materials generation.

3. Interviews

Interview is one of the content of newspaper. It is question and answer interaction between the news source and journalist(s). It may be face to face or telephone or mail interview. It may be short or long. The chief executive officer or others in disaster management organisations can be interviewed on issues related to their activities.

4. Editorial

This is the opinion of the newspaper's organization. It is a write up on a particular topic the media house considers of great importance to the public. It is written by the medium's members of the editorial board. As the board consists of people who have accomplished in their endeavors, the editorial is taking serious especially by the policy makers.

With good relationship, disaster management issue could be brought to a front burner by the media's editorial board. Agenda on prevention and mitigation can be set. As the board is powerful within and outside the media organization, cultivating members could assist in media focusing more on pre-disaster stage.

5. Photographs

A photograph tells stories more than one thousand words is a common saying in the media. People are first visually literate before being text literate. Photographs are used to illustrate stories or they can be used alone without being accompanied by stories. Good photography means photographs that are usable by the media and which reflect the intended message that the organization wants to disseminate. Disaster managers could send photographs to the media to create awareness and educate people of incoming, ongoing and past disasters. This assists in sensitise people and build resilience.

6. Opinion / Column and Letter to the Editor

These emanate from the readers. It is a feedback mechanism as well as a channel for readers to express their views on the happenings in the society. The views expressed may be reactions to the published materials or issues not reported by the media. It may be for an issue or against it. However, while columnists are largely engaged by the media houses and write regularly (once in a week in the newspaper or every edition of magazine), opinion and letter to the editor are not engaged by the organization nor write regularly. These individuals can contribute to disaster awareness by writing on impending or already happened disaster in the country. Disaster managers and media can also engage the services of some columnists and opinion writers to write on disaster prevention issues. Members of the community can also be encouraged to raise alarm through mailing short notes and pictures of disaster waiting to happen to the media for publication.

7. Advertisement

Advertisement is another veritable way of disseminating information and educating the public. It is a paid for media content and advertiser (s) are clearly identified. The advertisers may be individual, groups, public and private organisations. However, the message may also be sponsored (supported with a space) by the media. As part of social responsibility and identifying with good course, media can donate space to good courses aimed at solving social problem, like disaster prevention, through public enlightenment and media campaign.

1.7 Conclusion

Consequently, it appears that media needs to evaluate its participation in disaster management in line with the new trend of disaster risk reduction. The study reveals that though media is one of the stakeholders in the society, a development agent, it is yet to key into disaster risk reduction agenda adequately. Critical roles the media is expected to play in flood risk reduction include dissemination of early warning; educate people on activities that may make the society - disaster prone, mobilizing stakeholders to key in disaster risk reduction agenda among others. Akinfeleye (2010), Anaeto et al (2008), Folarin (1998) and Toennesen et. al. (2013) charge media to be agent of development. The study exposes the present role being played by the media – being most active during and after disaster occurrences. It calls for more pro - active involvement through setting developmental agenda on disaster and active collaboration with other stakeholders before disaster occurrence.

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