

Broadcast Media in Promoting Environmental Awareness: A Study of Yobe State Broadcasting Cooperation Damaturu (YBC), Nigeria.

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Abstract. The mass media play an important role in promoting environmental awareness. In the past decades, environmental awareness have gained media attention. Due to increasing media coverage, our society is becoming more aware of the effects that our activities put on the health of the environment. In this regard the media has a big role to play in making people aware of environment issues. The term Mass Media may be defined as the means of communication that reach large number of people in a short time, such as television, radio, newspapers, magazines. Nowadays, the role of Media has leaned towards informing, educating, sensitizing, mobilizing and creating awareness about the environmental challenges in the society that we face in our day to day life. Broadcast Media are powerful tools that can portray the real picture for the audience to visualize about the various environmental issues like sanitation and hygiene practices, global warming, waste management, safe water, climate change, deforestation, air pollution, afforestation. Which are of utmost importance to our ecology. The objective of this paper is to examining the role of broadcast media in promoting environmental awareness in Yobe state, Nigeria. This research was based on agenda setting theory. Two research instruments were used to obtain data. They were interviews and questionnaire. The responses obtained from the interviews were

used as part of the discussion of findings. Purposive sampling methods were adopted for the study. These techniques enable the researcher to select the target respondents from a large group. The collected data is coded, edited and analyzed with the help of Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) software.

Keywords: Broadcasting Media, Environmental Awareness.

1. Introduction:

1.1 Background to the study:

Media are a central public arena through which we become aware of environmental issues and the way in which they are addressed, contested and perhaps resolved. Through radio, television, newspapers and magazines that people gain awareness. Communicating environmental information is very challenging due to the dynamic and complexity of natural systems. The ways in which science has conventionally related with society must be reassessed and adapted to get in touch with current environmental and social realities. It has been argued that with the help of communication professionals, proper information exchange among scientists, communities and non-governmental organizations can significantly increase public awareness of environmental

issues. This occurs best when well-designed and communication strategies are put in place.

The broadcast media, (radio and television), in all their variations, have established themselves as the most pervasive and powerful forms of media or potential source of environmental information in world today (Dobson 1997). They represent a major channel through which information on environment can be conveyed to the people (UNEP 1997). Today, more environmental activities and organizations are moving to take advantage of these powerful media for environmental action and awareness. Many use media to raise public awareness and understanding of environmental issues, some are using it to document instances of the environmental crimes and degradation; to lobby for specific policy reforms or raise funds for specific campaigns (UNEP 1997).

The concept of environmental awareness is explained as familiarity with an environmental subject with real understanding of its deeper cause and implications (UNEP 1992).

This demonstrates that environmental awareness has a great effect on environmental stewardship attitudes and it has an effect on environmentally friendly behaviours. The main advantage of widespread environmental awareness is its contributions to public support for government action in environmental policy and management. The main tool for creating such awareness at macro level is by far, the media.

The media used for the investigation of environmental awareness are newspaper, radio and television programs which are widely and frequently used modern media. According to McQuail (1994), there are a set of ideas about media tasks in society, like providing information about events and conditions in society and the world, facilitating innovation, adaptation and progress. The role of the media to raise the community concerns and commitment for social and environmental issue is a very critical one. Awareness creation for the protection of the environment and the sustainable use of finite resources are matters that directly concern each citizen. The media can be an instrument in breaking the silence that surrounds the environmental problems and in creating an

environment that encourages discussions of how the community can participate and change their behaviour. It is truly crucial to raise public awareness of environmental issues (Dobson 1997).

However, the level of involvement of the media in African countries to address environmental challenges is only event based. Environmental issues have not yet reached a stage where they are the media's prime agenda. The media fails to take a creative approach in producing stories about environmental protection and gives insufficient attention to environmental degradation and its consequences. In many countries, environmental activists and government agencies handling the subject of environment have not developed fruitful media relations and use the media only to generate publicity for events and individual actions (Dobson 1997).

Environmental journalism encounters other problems that are not easily overcome. For example, bottlenecks sometimes exist, where editors and program managers may not appreciate, and thus, pay limited attention to environmental news. Another limiting factor is legitimacy of environmental issues and where such legitimacy is derived from. For instance, sometimes major environmental stories are under reported in the country of origin until the foreign media picks it up and gives international coverage. However, in many countries, environmental activists and government agencies handling the subject of environment have not developed fruitful media relations and use the media only to generate publicity for events and individual actions (Dobson 1997).

According to Dobson (1997) environmental communicators have recognized the value and power of using folklore and traditional media, such as songs, dance, drama, puppetry and mining, to take environment and development messages to the public. Historically, traditional media have often played a role in the communication and promotion of new ideas, apart from its traditional role of preserving and teaching established values.

Though such new concepts as greenhouse effects, global warming and depletion of ozone layers have been popularized by the media, yet the concepts seem to paint a picture that only

industrialization causes environmental degradation. On the contrary every individual in one way or the other contributes to environmental problems. Which have become of global concern. The concepts of environmental awareness in the world drew credence from the UN Conference on Human Development in Stockholm in 1972. The meeting discussed the state of the global environment which was attended by the representatives of 119 countries and more than 400 inter-governmental and non-governmental organizations. Annan (2001) observes that the Stockholm Conference is widely recognized as the beginning of modern political and public awareness of global environmental problems.

According to Article 19 of the declaration of Stockholm Conference education in environmental matters for the younger generation as well as adults, giving due consideration to the under privileged is essential in order to broaden the basis for an enlightened opinion and responsible conduct by individuals, enterprises and communities in protecting and improving the environment in its full human dimension. It is essential that mass media of communication avoid contributing to the deterioration of the environment, but disseminate information of an educational nature on the need to project and improve the environment.

All the UN conferences on environment and development have identified the role of media to create awareness as part of the initiatives for sustainable development. Dixit (2001) observes that it is now generally belief among development communication scholars that the broadcast media could be most effective for transferring information on various social change programmes from the government and other institutions to the masses living in the developing countries of the world.

1.2 Theoretical Perspective:

The research study was based on the agenda setting theory formulated by Maxwell McCombs and Maxwell (2005). McCombs explain that Agenda setting theory is the ability of the news media to influence the salience of topics on the public agenda. That is, if a news item is covered frequently and prominently, the audience

regarded the issue as more important (Anaeto 2008). The researcher intended to use the theory because every mass media has a certain capability to influence its readers or audience on the matters which is being published or broadcasted regularly. Radio which disseminate news and information on sanitation practices have tremendous impact on audience and influence them to take action which has been suggested accelerating the process of change.

McQuail (2010) says that these ideas of salience provide through which the degree of issues can be examined and explained. In this regard, the concept of agenda setting theory can be said to be a component of environmental communication theory, particularly in the study of environmental coverage. Agenda setting can be described as a process through which certain issues are more significant than others.

McQuail (2010) Further explains that the media provide relevant attention to issues in news coverage by influencing the rank order of public awareness of issues and attribution of significance, which in effect could influence public policy making. This means the examination of agenda-setting can offer an explanation of why information about certain issues are addressed frequently while other issues are event based to the public, as well as how public opinion is shaped. Agenda setting theory also provides an explanation about the critical role the media can play in influencing human perception of issues and events. The relevant of this theory for this study is that, media are not only pervasive in their presence but also persuasive in their ability to focus public attention on specific issues.

1.3 Statement of the Problem:

Both developing and developed countries are facing environmental problems. While some of the problems might be due to their global nature other are specifically local ones. Rapid population growth and development have impacted heavily on natural resources and environment. Major environmental problems are deforestation, desertification, top soil loss, depletion of ozone layers, accumulation of the greenhouse gases, over-crowding in urban areas, pollution, poor drainages etc. have tuned the

issues of environment into an emergency global crisis which demands global action and responsibility.

Environmental problems are not always unusual occurrences as may be commonly perceived. They are with us all the time and if neglected may portend negative consequences to human survival. They are not confined to one setting as they exist in all societies and in different dimensions. The activities of industrialized nations in producing goods and products have certain effects on the environment. The cutting of trees for fire wood in developing countries has also contributed to the deterioration of environment.

People interact with the environment on a daily basis and as a result litter their environment without the knowledge of the consequence of what they do. Environmentally minded scholars Buafu (2000) have associated environmental pollution with human activities. These physical interactions make people to exploit the environment without any knowledge that the exploitation causes serious environmental hazards and health diseases. This lack of knowledge about the danger of to the environment caused by human activities demands prompt creation of awareness so that people can behave in an environmentally friendly way.

Environmental awareness arises primarily to enable the individuals understand how to relate and apply the knowledge of environment to their actions and to the world around them. Therefore public awareness and understanding about environmental conservation are crucial in which the media has a role to play. The media in the western world have focused attention on this and have generated publicity on dangers that human activities in particular pose to the environment. This success is manifested in the growth of various environmental groups such as Green Peace and Friends of the Earth, the Evaluation of Green Parties and Green Consumerism among others. This growth is partly due to the growing attention the western media give to environmental issues.

Environmental abuse is a common day occurrence which is perpetrated by individuals in society. It is common to see people littering the streets with wrapping papers, polythene bags, cigarette packs, maize cobs, defecating in

open places and disposing domestic waste improperly to mention a few of the commonest abuses. Other forms of abuse are the driving of vehicles that belch out smoke because of lack of maintenance, burning of used tyres, indiscriminate cutting of trees for fuel, citing of air polluting industries close to within urban areas and many others. All these contribute to environmental abuse which people engage in sometimes unconsciously.

These above mentioned environmental problems have necessitated the media to give prompt attention to environmental reporting. Radio is seen in this study as a medium which is more ubiquitous and accessible to the people and usually broadcast such environmental awareness programmes. Therefore based on above mentioned problems, the study seeks to establish the extent to which radio stations have successfully promoted environmental awareness and change the current community practices towards proper environmental management. The study also wants to assess the environmental programmes aired in Yobe state broadcasting cooperation Damaturu and at the same time finds out from the listeners to examine whether there is a correlation between what the programme seeks to achieve and how the audiences perceive the content of the messages.

Though such new concepts as greenhouse effects, global warming and depletion of ozone layers have been popularized by the media, yet the concepts seem to paint a picture that only industrialization causes environmental degradation. On the contrary every individual in one way or the other contributes to environmental problems. Which have become of global concern. The concepts of environmental awareness in the world drew credence from the UN Conference on Human Development in Stockholm in 1972. The meeting discussed the state of the global environment which was attended by the representatives of 119 countries and more than 400 inter-governmental and non-governmental organizations. Annan (2001) observes that the Stockholm Conference is widely recognized as the beginning of modern political and public awareness of global environmental problems.

1.4 Purpose of the Study:

The purpose of this study was to examine the role of radio station in promoting environmental awareness in Yobe state.

1.5 Objectives of the study:

To determine the level of influence radio campaigns have had on promoting environmental awareness in Yobe state.

1.6 Research Question:

To what extent has radio programmes promote environmental awareness in Yobe state?

2. Literature Review

According to Article 19 of the declaration of Stockholm Conference education in environmental matters for the younger generation as well as adults, giving due consideration to the under privileged is essential in order to broaden the basis for an enlightened opinion and responsible conduct by individuals, enterprises and communities in protecting and improving the environment in its full human dimension. It is essential that mass media of communication avoid contributing to the deterioration of the environment, but disseminate information of an educational nature on the need to project and improve the environment.

All the UN conferences on environment and development have identified the role of media to create awareness as part of the initiatives for sustainable development. Dixit (2001) observes that it is now generally belief among development communication scholars that the broadcast media could be most effective for transferring information on various social change programmes from the government and other institutions to the masses living in the developing countries of the world.

Media's efforts to sensitize the public about environment issues and its continuing central role in the struggle against the cause of environmental problems are indispensable. However, the level of involvement of the media in the state to address environmental challenges is only event based. Environmental issues have not yet reached a stage where they are the media's prime agenda. The media fails to take a creative approach in producing stories about environmental protection and gives insufficient

attention to environmental degradation and its consequences. The media does not seem to be in a position to create environmental awareness to the public in a given geographical area. The major media focus even now is on issues that take place around the big cities, there is no diversified community media at grass root level. Furthermore, the media does not give fair and optimal space and time to environmental issues. In Nigeria environmental awareness became public interest in 1988 when a German ship, the line dumped toxic wastes at KOKO Port in Delta state before it was removed back to Europe in the same ship. Before the ship was moved back, series of deaths had been recorded and which were traced back to the containers bearing the toxic wastes. Consequent upon the KOKO toxic waste episode was the promulgation of the Harmful Waste Decree 42 of 1988, which facilitated the establishment of the Federal Environmental Protection Agency (FEPA) through decree 58 of 1988 and 59 amended of 1992. FEPA was charged with the overall responsibility for environmental management and protection.

Akingbade (2012) explain that prior to koko incident, individual reporters covered droughts, desertification, or flooding, but there was no coherent, consisted and systematic reporting of environmental issues as environmental themes were occasionally covered by reporters from other beats. In his argument Akingbade believes that the Guardian Newspapers created in the mid-1980s by Alexander Uruemu Ibru, was the first newspaper to include the environment as one of its official specialized beats. Yet what prepared Nigerian readers for this new type of environmental reporting was the dumping waste incident that occurred in koko Delta state.

Environmental Sanitation Taskforces have been set up by various state governments to ensure a clean environment. When it was introduced in 1984, coercion was a marked feature of the sanitation exercise. From 1985 persuasion becomes the main strategy. The federal government has set aside the last Saturday of the second week of every month and has backed such action with environment sanitation edicts. This can be used by the media to bring in other issues affecting the safety of the environment for people to be aware of them.

2.1 Environmental awareness:

The concept of environmental awareness is explained as familiarity with an environmental subject with real understanding of its deeper cause and implications (UNEP 1992). This demonstrates that environmental awareness has a great effect on environmental stewardship attitudes and it has an effect on environmentally friendly behaviours. The main advantage of widespread environmental awareness is its contributions to public support for government action in environmental policy and management. The main tool for creating such awareness at macro level is by far, the media.

Environment awareness is to understand the fragility of our environment and the importance of its protection. In creating environmental awareness, it must be realized that environmental issues are invariably development issues. The environment like development is very vast and can be viewed from different perspectives and is thus important for development. The role of media becomes very important and worthwhile because it plays the role of facilitator of development, disseminator of information and serves as an agent of change. Thus environmental awareness is one of the important issues which media presents effectively.

Environmental awareness has shown multiplicity of results in different issues of livelihood rights, displacement and rehabilitation, sustainability, pollution-led damages and its control. Environmental awareness denotes an individual's set of abilities to find, understand, assess and act on information about the issues of environment.

The media used for the investigation of environmental awareness are newspaper, radio and television programs which are widely and frequently used modern media. According to McQuail (2010) there are a set of ideas about media tasks in society, like providing information about events and conditions in society and the world, facilitating innovation, adaptation and progress.

According to EPA (2003) awareness creation activities carried out by the media and the various anti-environmental degradation clubs and organizations that deal with environmental protection have been unsuccessful. It is noted

that both urban and rural people were not well informed about the mode of destruction and protection of the environment. One of the causes of the deep rooted environmental problems in a country is lack of awareness which is at the very heart of the inappropriate management and utilization of environmental resources.

The role of the media to raise the community concerns and commitment for social and environmental issue is a very critical one. Awareness creation for the protection of the environment and the sustainable use of finite resources are matters that directly concern each citizen. The media can be an instrument in breaking the silence that surrounds the environmental problems and in creating an environment that encourages discussions of how the community can participate and change their behaviour. It is truly crucial to raise public awareness of environmental issues.

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Environmental awareness has been seen as a combination of motivation, knowledge and skills. This knowledge has to be supported by will, information and abilities to behave in an environmentally friendly way. When the environmental awareness of an individual is combined with external stimulating physical and practical conditions, the result can be a desire and will to make environmental friendly choices. Environmental awareness starts to develop when people notice that unfavorable or threatening changes in the surroundings emerge, and the effect of which cannot be corrected easily. The realization that environmental damages need a long time to recover stimulates the arising environmental awareness further. Olgyaiová et al. (2008) believed that motivation

is necessary to increase the level of knowledge and skills in health matters. Even though people and organizations think that the state of the environment should be improved, they do not see themselves as active actors in this process. They consider that somebody else, for instance scientists, environmental non-governmental organizations or international organizations should focus on, or solve environmental problems. Motivation as Olgyaiová et al. (2008) defined it is the driving force that causes an individual to act in order to achieve a specific goal. Motivation is usually perceived as a positive force, the desire to achieve a goal. The driving force of the society changes from the growing production and economy towards a steady sustainable welfare. Raising environmental awareness supports the development towards sustainability. Media enlightenment on waste management can motivate the public to achieve a common goal of environmental friendliness.

Environmental awareness is affected by external stimulus (motivation, knowledge and skill). The right motivation, for example, brings about the desire and will to make environmental friendly choices when given opportunities to act. Improved state of the environment is based on environmental friendly actions and choices taken. Environmental worldview represents basic and general form of environmentalism of the respondents. This form of environmentalism indicates respondents' general perceptions about the environment, relationships between the environment, economic growth, industrialization and effects of science and technology on the environment.

3. Study Design

This study used a mixed methods research design. A mixed methods research design is a collection of both quantitative and qualitative data in a single study to understand a research problem being studied. As a result, questionnaires constructed with close-ended questions were administered to peoples under study while qualitative data or information from the key informants were collected using interviews with open-ended questions to complement the information generated through survey. The study used survey design because

the data was collected from a large sample size which is more than one hundred. The target population of this study were all members of the community residing in Yobe state and the program managers of Yobe state broadcasting cooperation Damaturu (YBC). Purposive sampling methods was used. The main goal of purposive sampling is to focus on particular characteristics of a population that are of interest, which will best enable you to answer your research questions. By keeping in mind the researcher has taken 400 peoples as the sample who are listening environmental programmes on Yobe state broadcasting cooperation Damaturu for at least past two years.

3.1 Response Rate

The researcher distributed 400 questionnaires but was able to retrieve 371 questionnaires that were correctly filled and answered. This gave a retrieval rate of 92.75%, according to Amin (2005), if the response rate is more than 70%, this is enough to carry on and continue with data analysis.

3.2 Data Collection Method

The study used questionnaires and interviews as main instruments for data collection. The questionnaire was divided into two sections; 1) Profile of respondents; 2) Radio programs on Environmental awareness with closed ended questions. And face to face interviews were used to collect data from radio stations program managers about time allocation, challenges and impact of the environmental related programmes to the residents and also local council officials were interviewed with regard to environmental programmes by Yobe broadcasting cooperation (YBC) and community attitude on environmental issues.

3.3 Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents

This section determines the demographic characteristics of the respondents. To achieve it, questionnaires were distributed to capture these responses. Frequencies and percentage distribution tables were employed to summarize the demographic characteristics of the respondents in terms of gender, age, education level, and work experience. The following tables give the summary of the findings.

Table 1.1: Gender of the Respondents

Gender	Frequency	Percent (%)
Male	267	71.97
Female	104	28.0
Total	371	100.0

Source: primary data, 2017

Table 1.1 revealed that majority, 71.97% of the respondents were male while 28.0% were female. The dominance of the male respondents was attributed to the fact that the male are more participate in promoting environmental issues.

Table 2.1: Age of the Respondents

Age	Frequency	Percent (%)
21-30	98	26.4
31-40	105	28.3
41-50	97	26.4
50 and Above	77	20.7
Total	371	100.0

Source: primary data, 2017

Table 2.1 revealed that majority, 28.3% of the respondents were within the age group of 31-40 years, followed by those within the age group of 21-30 (26.4%) while those within the age group of 41-50 and above were represented by 26.1% and 20.7% respectively. The dominance of the age group within 31-40 years could imply that they are mature enough to actively listen to environmental programmes in radio station.

Table 3.1: Radio Programmes on environmental Issues (YBC).

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	Interpretation
Frequent campaign on environmental programs by radio(YBC) enable me to positives attitude change	371	1.00	5.00	3.6334	.90067	Satisfactory
Radio programs on environments enable me to avoid indiscriminate dumping of waste	371	1.00	5.00	3.6873	.97777	Satisfactory
Radio programs on environments enhances my awareness on how to relate with the environment	371	1.00	5.00	3.8113	.88652	Satisfactory
Radio programs on environment enable me to improved my attitude on personal hygiene	371	1.00	5.00	3.8544	.82877	Satisfactory
Radio programs on environment promote my awareness on sanitation practices (used safe water, children hygiene, waste management).	371	1.00	5.00	3.8329	.89690	Satisfactory
Radio programs on environment increase my interest on environmental issues.	371	1.00	5.00	3.8787	.86609	Satisfactory
Average mean	371	-	-	3.783	0.89279	Satisfactory

Source field survey, 2017

The result presented in table 3.1 revealed that community attitude on environmental programmes by radio station was assessed by respondents as satisfactory. Because of the average mean 3.783 and standard deviation. The

finding revealed that majority of respondents were strongly agreed that environmental programmes by radio stations assist them toward positive attitude change, avoid indiscriminate dumping of waste and improved

their attitude on personal hygiene. The respondents admitted that information provided by the media is the main source for awareness on environmental problems and they keep their house and surroundings clean to be environment friendly.

This has supported the responses of the program managers as stated below.

On a face to face interview with program Managers of Yobe state broadcasting cooperation (YBC). The researcher asked the managers' sir, do you have any program broadcast on environment? They answered yes. The researcher asked them the second question. Sir what is the name of the program and how many minutes have you allocated to it? The managers disclosed that, the program called environmental protection (keeping the world clean) and 30 minutes was allocated to it and the program was running on the station for many years. The researcher asked the managers third questions. What is the impacts of the program to the residents of Yobe state and what are the challenges facing your station with regard to environmental programmes? They disclosed that, there are some positive changes being observed in term of good sanitation practices like poor wastes disposal on the roads site, into drainage and household compound have being improved through waste management practices as a result of regular dissemination of environmental related programmes by YBC. However, the manager stressed that the station is being faced by several challenges including funds, transport, and other logistics.

The researcher asked the key informants of what they said about radio station(YBC) programme on environmental related issues and the interview disclosed that, community leaders urged the radio station (YBC) to double its efforts in their sanitation and other environmental related programmes.

Furthermore, the researcher asked the community leaders what can you tells to residents about sanitation practices and they disclosed that, the issues of sanitation is not for the radio stations only but the residents should actively participate in monthly sanitation practices, take care of their unwanted materials, to avoid indiscriminate dumping of wastes, but properly manage their waste by putting it in

provided places where it can collected by the trucks.

The researcher asked the key informants of what they say about environmental programmes on radio stations and their responses revealed that, they were satisfied at the extent that radio stations have carried out enlightenment campaigns on promoting environmental awareness in the state. Their responses showed that radio station (YBC) have contributed towards environmental related programmes through enlightenment campaigns.

To determine the level of influence radio campaigns have on the attitudes of the community of Yobe state. The researcher summed up his interview by asking the radio stations programme managers the influence radio campaign on environmental awareness had on the attitude of community and majority of them response that, radio station(YBC) is playing a fundamental role in influencing people's behavior and attitudes towards environmental awareness the extent that indiscriminate disposal of waste by the populace has reduced as compared to some years back. And many incidence of diseases resulted from poor sanitation such as typhoid, skin infection, cholera and diarrhea especially among the young children are no longer frequent in the state.

Conclusion:

Majority of respondents contacted in the survey are environmentally friendly by keep their houses and surroundings clean. Majority of them were satisfied with the presentation and content of environmental programmes aired by Yobe state broadcasting cooperation (YBC). A good population of the respondents know about on which date World Environment Day is celebrated. The good thing that can be studied is that majority of the respondents remember the environmental awareness message of YBC and most of them wish to do something towards protecting and promoting their environment after listen to the programmes. (The radio campaign was aimed at creating awareness on promoting environmental issues by involving the people of the state to participate actively. A majority of the respondents admitted that information provided by the media is the main source for awareness on environmental problems.

Recommendations:

The findings of this study suggest that the environmental programmes by Yobe state broadcasting cooperation need to involve the voices of the people, volunteers and producers at grassroots level who have direct attachments with environmental issues. This has many advantages, since it provides a good chance for the community to air its environmental concern, it gives an opportunity for talented people to exercise the profession of journalism; and it is one means of running environmental media programs with a minimum cost.

Media should also use diversified sources so that stories are more reliable and balanced. The environmental producers and reporters should liaise with the followings environmental agencies; Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), State Ministry of Environment, Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) for more updates on environmental information. The media should also create information exchange channels with one another for example between print, broadcast, as well as with government and non-government media. Since this is a new area of research in which media and environmental awareness are combined, there is a need for comprehensive research to investigate environmental problems and inform the public on how to relate with the environment.

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