**A STUDY OF THE APPLICATION OF GATE-KEEPING CONCEPT IN AKWA IBOM STATE BROADCASTING CORPORATION (AKBC) NEWS BROADCAST**

**ABSTRACT**

This study was concluded to evaluate the gate-keeping process of Akwa Ibom broadcasting corporation. It become necessary since news is an effective means of communication through which individuals are informed and educated about things in their environment. In light of this, therefore, the evaluation was to discover how objective the factors used in selecting and rejecting news are, in order to achieve the goals of the organization. To achieve the objectives of this study, the survey method was adopted. Six subjects selected from the news department of AKBC radio and television services responded to a seven item interview schedule designed by the researcher. Findings showed that gate-keeping processes of AKBC, were not effective, and that the organization, especially the news department were under much pressure form management and government. The station was seen as the ‘piper’ while the government was seen as the ‘player’ of the piper who dictates the tune. Individuals are not allowed to criticize the government and above all, only those with the economic means are allowed to have access to the media. The study concluded that the station ha snot been very successful in its methods of gate-keeping but recommended that the gatekeepers should be enlightened through the organization of seminars, symposia, lectures and workshops.

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**CHAPTER ONE**

**INTRODUCTION**

* 1. **Background to the Study**

The communication process occurs instantaneously in closed, intimate settings or over great periods of time in large public forums, like the internet. Human conveys information through a variety of methods: speaking telephones, emails, blogs, TV, art, hand gestures, facials expressions, body language and even social contexts.

However, all forms of communication the same basic elements: a speaker or sender information, a message and an audience or recipient. The sender and recipient must also share a common language or means of understanding each other for communication to be successful. As such a study of communication of ten examines the development and structure of language including the mathematical languages used in computer programming.

In today’s globalized, media driven world, communication studies have become more exciting than ever. Radio and television are means of communication. They can educate, entertain or inform the public worldwide. These media send electronic transmission that manifest themselves on receiving devices as either sound or, in television, a combination of sound and images. The have the fundamentals role of informing their publics objectively about the happenings in their communities, countries, and the world. They bring development into focus and provide the means by which products are advertised. They have the duty of campaigning for desirable civic projects and eliminating undesirables conditions.

Radio and television, like communication, are an indispensable tool of development in modern society. The media helps in informing, educating, entertaining the audience of what is going on around their environments. Without communication or information, life would have been static. There would be no growth, no enlightenment and total ignorance would have enveloped man.

The Akwa Ibom broadcasting Corporation (AKBC), which is the case study is one of the broadcasting media organization situated in Uyo, Akwa Ibom State.

The study therefore, sought to examine the gate keeping processes of AKBC, to determine how effective are the criteria used in selecting and rejecting news items of the corporation

**1.2 Statement of the Problem**

Akwa Ibom Broadcasting Corporation (AKBC) was established to discharge certain functions to the state and the people of Akwa Ibom State which include the gathering, processing and dissemination of news and programme that will educate, entertain and inform the public.

For the past two decades, the AKBC has been serving the informational needs of the government and the people of the state. But this notwithstanding, one still observes that. As a government owned broadcasting station, the possibilities of the AKBC covering the many events in the state seem an uphill task. On several occasion, the citizens have had cause to complain about AKBC’s inability to satisfy its public in political, economic, social, cultural, development, developmental and technological news.

Construction realities are presented with a lot of ethnocentric prejudice coming into play and it becomes increasingly too difficult to differentiate the truth from lies and from objectivity. Some broadcast stations go into the length of keeping quiet over events that could be useful or draw public sympathy to other nations. All these are the result of someone’s action or inaction, usually referred to as gate-keeping.

Could it be that the variables used by AKBC gate keepers are fraught with biases and subjectivity?

**1.3 Objectives of the Study**

The objectives of the study were to;

1. identify who keeps the “gate” of AKBC news;
2. find out what factors influencing them in choosing certain kinds of information to the exclusion of others. Or whether the decision to select is based on personal idiosyncrasies;
3. determine the extent of government pressure on AKBC in the selection of news using the decree establishing it as a backdrop and
4. find out whether management have a specific policy governing the scope and length of news coverage?

**1.4 Research Questions**

The following research questions were posed to guide the study to its conclusions.

1. Who keeps the “gate” of AKBC News?
2. What are the factors influencing them in choosing certain kinds of information to the exclusion of others?
3. What is the extent of government pressure on AKBC in the selection of news items using the decree establishing it?
4. Does management have a specific policy governing the scope and length of news coverage

**1.5 Significance of the Study**

This study, it is hoped, should ascertain if the influence of ownership and control of affects it in the coverage of social, economic, political, development, technological and cultural news of Akwa Ibom State.

Judging from the setting of this research, it is likely that it will touch on professionalism and hopeful it will affect the trend of professional practice in future.

Therefore, this study would provide good working documents for professionals like journalist, journalism/communication students, media product consumers, critics, etc. in the past, studies on gate keeping have always ended with diverse results. it is hoped that this particular research work will serve as reference material and stimulate communication students, and experts into more studies.

**1.6 Scope of the Study**

This study is limited to the gate-keeping practices of AKBC in covering its news events. The research is based on AKBC news from May, 2015-April 2016.

**1.7 Limitation of the Study**

This study would have been made to include other programmes of AKBC, but due to time constraint and other resources that would have been needed for such, it was limited to the gate keeping practices of AKBC news alone.

**1.8 Background Information on Akwa Ibom Broadcasting Corporation (AKBC) Uyo**

Akwa Ibom Broadcasting Corporation was established in 1988 by Edict No. 4 under the leadership of Colonel Jonathan Tunde Ogbeha who was then the military administrator of the state.

The corporation consists of the radio and television services combine to form the Akwa Ibom broadcasting corporation (AKBC). It has its corporate headquarter at No. 2 Udo Udoma Avenue, Uyo. Its transmission station for both the radio and television which was commissioned by group caption Idongesit Nkanga, the then military governor of the state on July 27th, 1991 and it located at Ntak Inyang , along Calabar-Itu Road, Uyo, Akwa Ibom State.

The late Mary Essein and eddy Ekpeneyong were the fist two presenters that did test-run transmission on the commissioning day. The managers of the corporation were Dr. Mbuk Mobho, Mr. Ini Usen, Mercy Otu and the current one now is Pastor Praise Okon.

The AKBC was established for the purpose of performing certain functions. The most important objective being that information dissemination. This means that it collect, stores and processes information which is then disseminated to the audiences. it also entertains members of the public. This means that it selects and provides the audience members with programmes or contents that can cause them to relax and enjoy their special moments without necessarily getting tensed up with too many topical issues.

Besides, the corporation educate members of the public by providing a less painful and cumbersome way of acquiring knowledge than one would possibly have through the more format school setting. Apart from that, the corporation acts as an agent of motivation or mobilization for development.

It confers status on individuals, socializes people, changes, attitudes and beliefs, focuses attention of member of the public on a particular issue, integrate and creates ties of union and a lot of other objectives. These, they do through their various programmes.

However, the corporation receives subvention from the state government for its daily operations and maintenance. But very often the monthly subventions are not sufficient for its smooth operation. This brought about the policy of commercialization of most of its programmes put on air which helps to generate income for the upkeep of the corporation.

**1.8 Definition of Terms**

As used in this study, the following terms are considered in the following light.

**Ownership**: It is currently wholly owned by the government, it refers to government possession and control through financing, appointments and dismissal of personnel.

**Gate-keeping**: The process whereby materials for broadcast in the mass media are subjected to china’s of selection and screening process.

**Gatekeepers:** These are the people who decide, select and other materials that should be transmitted.

**Audiences**: These are the different categories of individuals who expose themselves to broadcast programmes.

**Objectivity**: This involves the ability of the broadcast media to free itself from personal prejudices, partiality and bias