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An Assessment of Audience's Response to Media Campaigns on Sanitation and Hygiene Practices: A Study of Nyumba Ni Choo in Radio Sibuka FM, Maswa District

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ABSTRACT: This study assessed audience response to media campaigns on sanitation and hygiene practices, with specific reference to the Nyumba ni Choo campaign broadcast by Radio Sibuka FM in Maswa District, Simiyu Region, Tanzania. A mixed-methods approach with a convergent parallel design was adopted. The study used a total of 117 respondents for quantitative data, and six key informants for qualitative data. The study found that while the campaign's reach was impressively broad, it was not uniform across all segments of the community. It also discovered that the Nyumba ni Choo campaign was widely interpreted as a practical, health-protective response to the persistent sanitation and cholera challenges facing the community. It further revealed that cholera outbreaks, which had persisted in the district for years, were successfully controlled, with no new cases reported during the study period. The study concludes that audience awareness of the Nyumba ni Choo campaign in Maswa District was very high, contributed by media reach, trust, and the use of local language. It also concludes the media campaign was positively received and interpreted by members of the community, since they found the message relevant to them, actionable and related to household health and hygiene needs. It further concludes that the campaign contributed to meaningful, measurable change in sanitation behavior in the three selected wards of Maswa District.

KEYWORDS: Audience's Response; Media Campaigns; Sanitation and Hygiene; Nyumba ni Choo

INTRODUCTION

Despite an increase in number of people accessing safely managed sanitation services between 2015 and 2024, but it continues to be an issue on great concern one of the most pressing public health challenges in sub Saharan Africa, and Tanzania continues to experience persistent deficits in sanitation coverage, behavioural adoption, and hygiene practice (WHO/UNICEF Joint Monitoring Programme [JMP], 2025; UNICEF, 2023). JMP (2025) update reports that although 1.2 billion people globally gained access to safely managed sanitation services between 2015 and 2024, raising global coverage from 48 percent to 58 percent, while others 3.4 billion people still lacked safely managed sanitation in 2024, and 354 million continued to practice open defecation, with rural populations disproportionately affected (WHO/UNICEF JMP, 2025). In Tanzania, rural communities such as those in Maswa District, Simiyu Region, remain among the areas where sanitation coverage and consistent hygiene practice pause behind national targets (National Bureau of Statistics, 2022; UNICEF, 2023).

Mass media campaigns have long been recognized as powerful vehicles for promoting health knowledge, shifting attitudes, and catalyzing behaviour change at population scale. In a landmark review, Wakefield et al. (2010) demonstrated that well designed mass media campaigns can effectively change health behaviour across domains including smoking cessation, physical activity, and vaccination uptake, provided that messages are theoretically grounded, channels are appropriately selected, and audience exposure is sufficient. More recent evidence reinforces this conclusion: mass media health communication has been shown to enhance health knowledge and literacy among exposed audiences relative to those not exposed, and to play a meaningful role in supporting the implementation of public health policy (Saei et al., 2021).

In the African context, radio remains the most effective and accessible medium for health communication in rural communities, owing to its low cost, wide reach, and capacity to broadcast in local languages (Fraser & Restrepo Estrada, 2021; Kafyulilo, 2020). Community radio stations across the continent play a vital role in disseminating public health information on sanitation and hygiene, particularly where digital connectivity remains limited (Ong'oa et al., 2022; Oluwasanu et al., 2019). In Tanzania specifically, urban populations have responded comparatively well to digital health campaigns, whereas rural audiences continue to rely predominantly on interpersonal communication and local radio for health information, reinforcing the centrality of radio-

based campaigns such as Nyumba ni Choo for rural health communication (Tanzania Economic and Social Research Foundation [ESRF], 2021).

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The general objective for this study was to assess audience response to media campaigns on sanitation and hygiene practices: Acase study of Nyumba ni Choo media campaign broadcast by Radio Sibuka FM in Maswa District on Simiyu Region of Tazania. The study was guided by the following specific objectives:

i. To identify audience awareness of the Nyumba ni Choo campaign broadcast by Radio Sibuka FM in Maswa District.
ii. To assess how audiences, receive and interpret messages of the Nyumba ni Choo campaign broadcast by Radio Sibuka FM in Maswa District.
iii. To determine the actions taken by audiences following exposure to the Nyumba ni Choo campaign broadcast by Radio Sibuka FM in Maswa District.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

A. Theoretical Review

Audience response to media messages is a complex, multidimensional process shaped by individual cognition, cultural context, social relationships, and prior experience. Hall's (1980) Encoding/Decoding theory provides a foundational framework for understanding how audiences engage with media texts. Hall (1980) proposed that media messages are encoded with a preferred or dominant meaning by producers, but that audiences decode these messages through one of three positions: the dominant hegemonic position, in which the intended meaning is accepted; the negotiated position, in which the message is partially accepted and adapted to the audience's own context; and the oppositional position, in which the intended meaning is rejected in favour of an alternative interpretation. This framework is particularly relevant to understanding how audiences in Maswa District respond to the Nyumba ni Choo campaign, where cultural taboos and social norms may lead some community members to adopt negotiated or oppositional readings of sanitation messages (Ademolu, 2023; Reid & Van Niekerk, 2016).

Beyond Hall's encoding/decoding framework, audience response also encompasses participatory and interactive dimensions. Within the contemporary media landscape, participatory response whereby audiences engage with media content by sharing opinions, calling in to radio programmes, or discussing messages in community settings has emerged as a significant dimension of media effect, particularly within community radio contexts (Obong & Targema, 2023; Fraser & Restrepo Estrada, 2021). Cultural competence is equally important: audiences bring varying levels of cultural understanding and prior experience to media consumption, which shapes how they interpret signs, symbols, and messages within a given cultural framework (McQuail, 2010). In rural Tanzania, where media literacy and educational attainment vary considerably, these dimensions of audience response carry particular research significance.

Prasad and Makesh (2023) confirm that media messages exert a critical influence on audience perception of public issues, while Happer and Philo (2013) demonstrate that media messages are not received uniformly, as the level of influence varies considerably according to individual background, prior knowledge, and social context. Similarly, Nkangi, Anyonje, and Kabaji (2024) found in Kenya that media messages were effective in educating audiences on health issues but fell short of fully shifting established mindsets, thereby highlighting the distinction between cognitive awareness and deeper attitudinal change. Collectively, these findings underscore the importance of moving beyond exposure measurement to examine the full chain of audience response, from awareness through to action.

Reviewing the theoretical literature on audience response thus establishes the conceptual foundation for understanding how community members in Maswa District engage with the Nyumba ni Choo campaign. It demonstrates that audience response is neither passive nor uniform but is instead shaped by cultural, social, and individual factors, all of which are highly relevant within the Sukuma community context of Maswa District.

Media campaigns are organized, strategic efforts to promote a specific message, idea, or cause through various forms of media, with the aim of influencing public knowledge, attitudes, and behaviour on issues of social significance (Bahr, 2024; Wakefield et al., 2010). Within public health, media campaigns have been employed to address a wide range of challenges, including tobacco use, HIV/AIDS prevention, vaccination, and sanitation and hygiene promotion. Noar (2006) identified several characteristics of effective health media campaigns, namely theory driven message design, channel selection appropriate to the target audience, message pre testing, and sufficient reach and frequency of exposure. Similarly, Durkin, Brennan, and Wakefield (2012) found that campaigns characterised by high reach, consistent messaging, and emotional resonance were most effective in promoting smoking cessation, with comparable principles applicable to sanitation campaigns.

The effectiveness of media campaigns in sub Saharan Africa has been documented across multiple contexts. Fraser and Restrepo Estrada (2021) demonstrated that radio based health campaigns in sub Saharan Africa achieved significant improvements in

hygiene knowledge and practice when delivered consistently in local languages through trusted community broadcasters. In Uganda, Nuwemuhwezi, Okello, and Tumusiime (2023) found that consistent radio exposure to hygiene campaigns was associated with measurable improvements in hand hygiene behaviour, particularly when combined with community outreach activities. In Nigeria, Oluwasanu, Oladunni, and Adebayo (2019) found that while radio campaigns effectively increased sanitation awareness, actual behaviour change remained limited in the absence of complementary community engagement strategies, thereby reinforcing the importance of multi-channel approaches.

The Nyumba ni Choo campaign exhibits several hallmarks of effective media campaign design, including multi-channel distribution, local language broadcasting, community level activation, and sustained messaging over multiple years (Ministry of Health Tanzania, 2022; UNICEF, 2022). As Hornik and Yanovitzky (2003) argue, the most effective public communication campaigns combine mass media exposure with interpersonal reinforcement and community engagement a principle that the Nyumba ni Choo campaign attempts to operationalise through its combination of radio broadcasting with on ground theatre and community activation activities.

Understanding the theoretical and empirical basis of media campaign effectiveness is therefore essential for situating the Nyumba ni Choo campaign within the broader landscape of health communication practice. This section equips the study with the conceptual tools needed to assess not only whether audiences were aware of the campaign, but whether its design features were adequate to drive the behaviour change it sought to achieve.

The global sanitation challenge remains one of the most pressing public health issues of the twenty first century. WHO (2024) estimates that approximately 1.4 million people die annually as a result of inadequate drinking water, sanitation, and hygiene. As of the most recent global monitoring estimates, only just over half of the global population used a safely managed sanitation service, while the substantial majority had access to at least basic sanitation services (WHO, 2024). These statistics reveal the considerable scale of the sanitation deficit and the urgency of accelerating progress toward SDG 6.2.

WHO (2012) calculated that every US dollar invested in sanitation yields a return of approximately 5.50 dollars through lower health costs, increased productivity, and fewer premature deaths, underscoring the compelling economic rationale for investment in sanitation improvement. Globally, sanitation improvement generates additional benefits beyond diarrhoea reduction: it contributes to the reduction of neglected tropical diseases, including soil transmitted helminths, schistosomiasis, and trachoma; promotes the dignity and safety of women and girls; increases school attendance among girls; reduces the spread of antimicrobial resistance; and strengthens community resilience to climate shocks (WHO, 2024). The international community's recognition of safe water and sanitation as a human right, together with successive global calls to eliminate open defecation, reflects a sustained commitment to addressing this challenge at the highest levels of governance (UNICEF & WHO, 2023).

In Africa, sanitation and hygiene challenges remain particularly acute, with sub Saharan Africa carrying the highest burden of sanitation related disease globally. WHO's Sanitation and Hygiene Progress Report for Africa documents that open defecation, inadequate latrine coverage, and poor hygiene practices remain widespread across the continent, particularly in rural and peri urban areas (WHO, 2023). Media campaigns on sanitation and hygiene have been implemented across African countries with varying degrees of success. The Community Led Total Sanitation (CLTS) approach, supported by media advocacy, has been adopted in countries including Kenya, Ethiopia, Uganda, and Nigeria to eliminate open defecation and to foster community led hygiene change (UNICEF, 2022; Dreibelbis et al., 2013).

Radio remains the dominant medium for health communication in rural Africa owing to its accessibility, affordability, and capacity to broadcast in local languages, making it the most effective channel for reaching rural and less educated populations (Fraser & Restrepo Estrada, 2021). Nevertheless, research across the continent documents persistent challenges, including low media penetration in remote areas, linguistic diversity, and resistance to behavioural change driven by deeply embedded cultural norms and beliefs (Dreibelbis et al., 2013). Oluwasanu et al. (2019) found in Nigeria that while radio campaigns increased awareness of sanitation messages, actual behaviour change remained limited owing to socio cultural barriers, a pattern echoed in research from Uganda (Nuwemuhwezi et al., 2023) and Kenya (Ong'oa, Wambua, & Nyambura, 2022). These findings collectively suggest that media campaigns must be carefully designed to address the cultural dimensions of behaviour change and complemented with community engagement in order to achieve sustained impact.

In Tanzania, sanitation and hygiene remain significant public health challenges, with a substantial proportion of the population continuing to practise open defecation, concentrated predominantly in rural areas (UNICEF & WHO, 2023). The Government of Tanzania, in collaboration with UNICEF, non-governmental organizations, and community radio stations, has implemented multiple media campaigns, including the Nyumba ni Choo initiative, to promote toilet use and handwashing (Ministry of Health Tanzania, 2022). Evaluation reports indicate that the campaign has contributed to improvements in household sanitation coverage across its target regions, although disparities between urban and rural areas persist (Ministry of Health Tanzania, 2022; UNICEF & WHO, 2023).

Research specific to Tanzania reveals a complex picture of media effectiveness in rural health communication. Mushi et al. (2022) found that culturally sensitive communication is essential in public sanitation campaigns, particularly in communities where beliefs about toilet sharing, purity, and open defecation are deeply embedded. Kessy and McCourt (2021) demonstrated that while urban populations responded positively to digital and multi media campaigns, rural audiences in regions such as Simiyu and Shinyanga relied primarily on interpersonal communication and local radio for health information, thereby underscoring the critical role of community radio in rural health communication. Kafyulilo (2020) further showed that sanitation jingles broadcast via radio were recalled considerably more frequently than spoken messages, highlighting the importance of creative, engaging formats in radio based health campaigns.

Maswa District in Simiyu Region faces particularly severe sanitation challenges, with high rates of waterborne disease including recurrent cholera outbreaks prior to the Nyumba ni Choo campaign prompting targeted government and non-governmental interventions (Simiyu Regional Health Office, 2023; District Health Office Maswa, 2023). While awareness of sanitation messages in the district is relatively high owing to Radio Sibuka FM's broad reach, consistent behavioural adoption including proper handwashing and consistent toilet use has remained elusive (Simiyu Regional Health Office, 2023). This gap between awareness and practice is mediated by cultural taboos around latrine sharing within the Sukuma community (Mwakitalu et al., 2013; Mwanga & Lwambo, 2013), low household prioritization of sanitation amid subsistence economic conditions (Sara & Graham, 2014; Tumwebaze et al., 2014), and structural concerns regarding latrine quality and safety (Shayo et al., 2013; Person et al., 2016).

Despite these challenges, Radio Sibuka FM has emerged as a critical broadcaster of public health communication in the district, delivering sanitation programming in both Kiswahili and Sukuma through a combination of expert interviews, dramatized messages, and interactive call in segments. The station's programmes including Afya ni Uhai ("Health is Life") and Usafi wa Mazingira ("Environmental Cleanliness") are broadcast during peak listening hours in order to maximize audience exposure (Simiyu Regional Health Office, 2023). While this programming strategy is consistent with established principles of effective radio health communication (Fraser & Restrepo Estrada, 2021; Kafyulilo, 2020), the actual impact of these broadcasts on hygiene behaviour in Maswa District remains empirically underexplored, a gap that this study seeks to address.

B. Theoretical Framework

Uses and Gratifications Theory (UGT) developed by Katz, Blumler, and Gurevitch (1973) was used to guide this study. The moves beyond earlier media effects models, which tended to portray audiences as passive recipients of media stimuli. UGT instead proposes that audiences are active agents who purposively select media content in order to satisfy specific psychological and social needs. These needs are broadly categorized as cognitive (information seeking and knowledge acquisition), affective (emotional experience and engagement), personal integrative (the enhancement of credibility, status, and self-esteem), social integrative (community belonging and the strengthening of social ties), and escapist (entertainment and relaxation) (Katz et al., 1973; Ruggiero, 2000).

C. Empirical Literature Review

Wakefield et al. (2010) found that the effectiveness of mass media campaigns is strongly mediated by the level and consistency of audience exposure: campaigns characterized by high reach, sustained frequency, and emotionally engaging messages achieved the most significant behavioural outcomes. For the Nyumba ni Choo campaign in Maswa District, the very high listenership of Radio Sibuka FM reported by respondents in this study provides a strong foundation for campaign effectiveness, provided that messages are appropriately designed, culturally relevant, and consistently repeated. Wakefield and Saei et al. (2021) further found that mass media health communication significantly enhances health literacy and knowledge among exposed audiences relative to unexposed populations, reinforcing the foundational importance of exposure in achieving campaign goals.

The reception of media campaign messages is shaped by a complex interplay of individual cognitive capacity, prior belief, emotional response, and social context. Nkangi, Anyonje, and Kabaji (2024), in a study of media influence on patient rights awareness in Kenya, found that while media was effective in educating audiences on health topics, it had not fully shifted established mindsets, thereby highlighting the distinction between knowledge acquisition and deeper attitudinal change.

Liao (2023), studied mass media usage and altruistic behaviour in Taiwan, found that media exposure, credibility, and social influence were the most significant factors shaping individual perceptions of media messages, with media credibility playing a particularly important role in determining whether audiences accepted or dismissed campaign content. Happer and Philo (2013) further demonstrated that media messages are not received uniformly by all audiences, and that the level of influence varies considerably according to prior knowledge, social context, and the credibility of the source.

Prasad and Makesh (2023) found that media messages exert a critical influence on audience perception of public issues, with qualitative approaches proving particularly effective in capturing the nuanced ways in which audiences receive and interpret campaign content. Ademolu (2023), in a study of audience reception and interpretation of development communications, found

that individuals' interpretations of media messages differ significantly according to their knowledge, emotions, values, and past experiences, findings that underscore the need to design campaign messages that are sensitive to the diverse interpretive frameworks of their target audiences. Reid and Van Niekerk (2016), in a study of cybersecurity awareness campaigns, documented a mismatch between intended campaign messages and audience received messages, noting that such divergences arise from audiences applying their own experiential frameworks to decode media content, a phenomenon particularly relevant within cross cultural health communication settings.

Within the sanitation communication context, cultural interpretation is of paramount importance. Mushi et al. (2022) demonstrated in rural Tanzania that sanitation messages were often interpreted through the lens of existing cultural norms and beliefs that including taboos around latrine sharing, which shaped how audiences evaluated the relevance and acceptability of campaign guidance. Coffey et al. (2017) documented in India that deeply embedded cultural beliefs about purity, pollution, and caste significantly influenced how sanitation messages were interpreted and acted upon, demonstrating that cognitive understanding of campaign messages does not guarantee culturally appropriate interpretation. These findings reinforce Hall's (1980) encoding/decoding framework, which predicts that audiences whose cultural position diverges from that of campaign producers will be more likely to adopt negotiated or oppositional readings of health messages.

The translation of message reception and interpretation into concrete behaviour change represents the ultimate goal of public health communication campaigns, but it is also the most challenging phase of the audience response chain. Obong and Targema (2023) demonstrated that media audiences actively decide what content to consume, when, and how and, by extension, how to respond behaviorally to media influence. Happer and Philo (2013) found that media campaigns set agendas and focus public attention on specific issues, but that the translation of heightened attention into sustained behavioral action depends on a range of mediating factors, including social norms, economic constraints, and perceived behavioral control. Within the Maswa context, economic barriers to toilet construction (Sara & Graham, 2014; Tumwebaze et al., 2014) and cultural taboos surrounding latrine sharing (Mwakitalu et al., 2013) are likely to inhibit behavioral action even among audience members who have positively received and interpreted campaign messages.

Wakefield et al. (2010) found that mass media campaigns achieved the greatest behavioural impact when combined with complementary community outreach, policy support, and environmental change that reduced structural barriers to the desired behaviour. This finding carries direct implications for the Nyumba ni Choo campaign, which combines radio broadcasting with on ground community activation, a multi-channel strategy that research evidence suggests is more likely to achieve sustained behaviour change than single channel approaches alone (Hornik & Yanovitzky, 2003; Noar, 2006).

III. METHODOLOGY

A. Research Approach and Design

The study applied a mixed research approach, that combine both qualitative and quantitative methods. The mixed approach was adopted to enhance the researcher to capture both the extent and detailed explanation of the phenomenon under the study (Creswell & Creswell, 2023; Mertens, 2023). It also used a convergent parallel mixed methods design, to enable the researcher to gather data simultaneously and independently during the same phase of the research, analyzed separately, and subsequently integrated at the interpretation stage (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2023).

B. Population, Sample Size, Data Collection Tools, and Data Analysis Methods

The target population for this study comprised two groups. The primary target population consisted of household members aged 18 years and above residing in the Shanwa, Sangamwalugesha, and Malampaka wards of Maswa District, The secondary target population consisted of health experts and government officials directly involved in planning, executing, monitoring, and evaluating sanitation and hygiene campaigns within Maswa District. A multistage sampling strategy was employed, combining different sampling techniques for the quantitative and qualitative strands of the research.

Quantitative data were gathered through 121 questionnaires administered household respondents by research assistants across Shanwa, Sangamwalugesha, and Malampaka wards of Maswa District. The study also involved twelve Focus Group Discussions, four of eight participants per each ward making a total of 96 respondents. Semi structured interviews were conducted with 13 key informants, including district health officers, community health workers, and village executive officers. It further employed structured observation as a supplementary data gathering tool to gain direct empirical evidence of sanitation situations and hygiene practices at both household and community level.

Quantitative findings gathered through surveys were analyzed by using descriptive statistical means, including percentages and frequencies to enable summarization of patterns of respondent’s level of awareness, how they received the campaign message and their reaction toward the Nyumba ni Choo media campaign. The data analysis method was appropriate for this research since its primary target was to document and describe patterns of audience response across the study population (Holcomb, 2022). Data from Focus Group Discussion and semi structured interview were analyzed using thematic analysis, following the six phase

process established by Braun and Clarke (2021): familiarization, generation of initial codes, searching for themes, reviewing and refining themes, defining and naming themes as well as producing the final analytical report.

IV. FINDINGS

A. Quantitative Findings

Objective one: To identify audience awareness of the Nyumba ni Choo campaign broadcast by Radio Sibuka FM in Maswa District.

The first objective for this study identify audience awareness of the Nyumba ni Choo campaign broadcast by Radio Sibuka FM in Maswa District.

Table 1.1 Awareness of Nyumba ni Choo Campaign (n=117)

Indicator	Frequency	Percentage
Regularly listening to Radio Sibuka FM	113	96.6
Heard Nyumba ni Choo campaign	109	93.2
Did not hear campaign	8	6.8

Source: Field Data 2026

The study found that awareness was remarkably high at 93.2%. Radio Sibuka FM functioned successfully as the primary dissemination channel across Shanwa, Sangamwalugesha, and Malampaka.

The study discovered that youth aged 18-35 years old indicated significant awareness rate at 97.3% (36 of 37), while elders aged 56 and above had a lowest awareness 75.0% (equal to 9 out of 12 respondents), while the remaining three elders 25.0% (equal to 3 out of 12 respondents) revealed that they had no awareness. Findings indicated that educated respondents (reached secondary education and above) recorded the highest awareness 97.6% (41 of 42), relating with 90.7% for low- educated respondents (68 out of 75).

Data from interview with key informants strengthened these patterns. A district health officer revealed that elders in the community tended to be less frequent radio listeners and often did not tune in to the specific programmes during which the Nyumba ni Choo campaign was broadcast. Correspondingly, a Village Executive Officer said that the young generation (youth) were more likely to listen across various time periods, while elders tended to listen mostly in the time, possibly missing daytime radio broadcasts.

Objective Two: How Audiences Receive and Interpret Messages of the Nyumba ni Choo Campaign

The second objective for this study examined actions taken by respondents after listening to Nyumba ni Choo campaign of Radio Sibuka FM

Table 1.2 Reception of Campaign Messages (n=117)

Indicator	Frequency	Percentage
Found campaign useful and influenced behaviour	105	89.7
Expressed readiness to build and use toilets	102	87.2

Source: Field Data 2026

Generally, reception of Nyumba ni Choo media campaign was significantly encouraging at 89.7%. The sanitation and hygiene practice was widely interpreted as a practical, health friendly response to cholera and sanitation challenges persisted in the community.

The media campaign reception among demographic varied significantly among social groups. Findings indicated that youth respondents had the highest positive reception 94.6% equal to (35 out of 37 youth respondents), while elders recorded the lowest positive reception 58 percent equal to (7 out of 12 respondents) and the highest cultural opposition 83% equal to (10 out of 12 respondents). This indicated cultural taboos like the taboo against toilet sharing remained the most prominent cultural barrier especially for elders in Sukuma community of Maswa District.

Qualitative data gathered from key informants suggest that repeated exposure to Nyumba ni Choo media campaign enabled Despite this, qualitative evidence suggests that repeated exposure facilitated continuing behavioural change, even among elders seemed to be resistant to these cultural taboos, supporting the Elaboration Likelihood Model (Petty & Cacioppo, 1986) and Hall's (1980) Encoding/Decoding theory.

Interesting findings concerned uneducated women respondents, who registered a significant positive reception rate of about 74.1% (equal to 20 out of 27 respondents), noticeably larger than the entire reception of low-educated respondents of 53.3%. Findings

from interviews discovered that uneducated women expressed specific, needs grounded motives for supporting toilet construction, centred on hygiene, privacy, and personal safety, motivations that were different from those expressed by male or educated participants.

During an interview with a Community Health Worker noted that women in the community wanted toilets not just because of the Nyumba ni Choo campaign, but since they required a private place for menstrual hygiene, desired to escape from being seen using open spaces, and observed that going to bush at night time puts the at danger. The results from the interview are consistent with findings by Ong'oa et al. (2022), who discovered that women in rural Kenyan communities prioritized construction of modern toilets for privacy and protection from gender based violence.

Findings from an interview with Village Executive Officers (VEO) at Shanwa Ward the study found cultural taboo of not sharing toilets among social groups. The study discovered that toilet sharing among in laws is considered a taboo within the Sukuma cultural system. The key informant noted that toilet sharing between a father-in law with a daughter in law is seems like equivalent to having sexual relationship between the two.

Objective Two: Actions Taken Following Nyumba ni Choo Campaign

The second objective for this study examined actions taken by respondents after listening to Nyumba ni Choo campaign of Radio Sibuka FM.

Table 4.5 Actions Taken (n=117)

Indicator	Frequency	Percentage
Have a toilet in household	69	59.0
Ready to build and use toilet	102	87.2
Cannot afford toilet construction	21	17.9
Cannot afford clean water	44	37.6
Cannot consistently afford soap	38	32.5
Youth desiring modern toilets but lacking funds	29	78.4

Source: Field Data 2026

Findings indicated that number of households with toilets at a district level increased from 94.0% in December 2024 to 96.8% in December 2025. The results also showed that households with no toilets decreased from 6 to 3.5% within the same period of time. While handwashing facilities access increased from 71 percent by December 2024 to 80 percent December 2025. Findings indicates that actions taken led to full control of Cholera outbreaks which had recurred annually.

However, despite these success, economic constraints emerged as a significant obstacle hindering some people to build modern toilets. Poverty restricted interested participants, especially youth from implementing positive attitudes into action.

B. Qualitative Results

i. Focus Group Discussion

This study also conducted focus group discussions, observation and semi-structured interviews to get lived experience, views and attitudes of respondents to the campaign as follows.

Findings for Focus Group Discussions

Findings for this study discovered differences in how both youth, elders and women in the three wards of Shanwa, Sangamwalugesha and Malampaka in Maswa District engaged with the Nyumba ni Choo campaign aired by Radio Sibuka FM, with each group interpreted the campaign differently but possessing a shared view of the campaign key message. For instance, women responded to the Nyumba ni Choo campaign with striking emotional energy, repetitively recurring to a phrase that had openly remained with them "Choo ni Afya, Si Aibu" (A Toilet is Health, Not Shame). Respondents expressed that the phrase had reframed how respondents discussed concerning sanitation within their own households.

On the subject of menstrual hygiene and privacy, one participant drew a vivid comparison to the campaign's own storyline:

Mnamkumbuka Mzee Sefu kwenye kile kipindi? Yule baba mkwe aliyekataa choo kimoja na mkwewe? Sasa, sisi wanawake tunapokuwa katika hedhi, tunaishi kama Neema, tukijificha, tukiogopa, bila faragha. Kampeni hii imetuonyesha kuwa hatuna budi kudai choo bora chenye faragha, kama haki yetu, si kama tunaomba.

Traslation “Do you remember Sefu’s drama? The father who denied to share a toilet with his daughter-in-law? When we women are menstruating, we live like Neema in the story hiding, afraiding, without privacy. This campaign has showen us that we must demand a decent toilet with privacy as our right, not as a favour.”

Findings on the toilet sharing among in laws taboo, one women respondent declared that;

Mnaona, hii imani ya zamani, kwamba baba mkwe akishiriki choo na mkwewe ni kama wanafanya mapenzi, hii ni 'dhana potofu' kama kampeni inavyosema! Tuko karne ya ishirini na moja, si karne ya ishirini! Imani hizi za kale zinatufanya tuendelee kutembea vichakani, watoto wetu wakiendelea kufa kwa kuhara, halafu tunaita hilo 'heshima'? Heshima ya nani?

Translation "This old and outdated belief that a father in-law sharing a toilet with his daughter in law seems as the involved in sexual act is obvious outdated as the campaign shows! As we are in the twentieth century these ancient beliefs cause us to keep walking to bushes yet we still call that respect? Respect for whom?

In ending the segment, the group collectively recited one of the campaign jingles as a kind of reciting one of the campaign jingles as a kind of uniting cry, laughing, but clearly making a point; "Choo kimoja, afya ya wote - bila aibu, bila imani potofu!".

During FGD elders referred to one of the campaigns' message that them from abandoning customary beliefs that could have led them to death. For example, Mr Masanja (one of the group members) said that "Mlisikia lile bango? 'Imani ya zamani inakuua, bali choo bora kinakuokoa!' hi kauli ni kali, lakini ni kweli. Kwa miaka mingi tulijisaidia vichakani kwa sababu ya hofu ya mila na hatimaye nani aliyepata hasara? Sisi wenyewe!"

Translation "Did you hear that advert? 'Old beliefs are killing you, a good toilet saves you!' this statement is harsh, but it is true. For years, we have been going to the bush, due to fear rooted in tradition and in the end, who suffered the loss? We did!"

The discussion went far by discussing the financial burden the community incurs for transport while they are taking their kids to hospital after they suffer from cholera and other diarrhea diseases. While leading the group discussion Mr Masanja listed costs they suffer for what he mentioned as their own negligence.

Tukumbuke! Matibabu ya kuhara ni gharama. Mazishi ya mtoto, gharama. Safari za hospitali mara kwa mara, gharama. Sasa tulinganishe na gharama ya kujenga choo bora mara moja! Mzee Masanja anauliza ni nani mwenye akili angechagua njia ya gharama kubwa kuliko ile ya gharama ndogo?

Translation "Let us remember! Treatment for diarrhoea, costs. A child's burial also cost. Repeated trips to hospital costs. Now let us compare that with the onetime cost of building a modern toilet! Mr Masanja asks who would choose the more expensive path over the cheaper one?"

Group discussions involving youth combined both female and male. Focus group discussion this category of age. Findings indicated that youth discussions were straight forward looking for solution and trying to distance themselves from unprofitable beliefs by their elders for generations, while revealing that there is still a gap that needs to be fully addressed.

One lady who led the group discussion opened the discussion with a strong and conclusive statement that was largely agreed by other members of the group: "Sisi vijana, hatuna mjadala kuhusu choo. Tunataka nyumba za kisasa, choo bora ndani au karibu na nyumba, faragha na usafi. Hatutaki kurudi kwenye mila za kale zinazotufanya tuogope kushiriki vyoo na ndugu zetu. Hiyo mjadala umepita!"

Translation "For us youth, we have no debate about toilets. We want modern houses, with good toilets inside or near the house, privacy and cleanliness. We do not want to return to old customs that make us afraid to share toilets with our relatives. That debate is over!"

The youth discussion moved to critical discussion revealing the blind spot of the Nyumba ni Choo campaign, by framing it almost as direct feedback to campaign producers:

"Kwa sasa tatizo siyo vyoo tena! Kampeni imefanikiwa kutufundisha hilo. Tatizo ni sabuni na maji ya kunawa! Unaweza kuwa na choo bora kabisa, lakini ukikosa maji au sabuni, bado unahatarisha afya yako. Kampeni inapaswa kuongelea umuhimu wa upatikanaji wa maji na sabuni pia, si choo tu!"

Translation "Currently the problem is no longer the toilets! The Nyumba ni Choo campaign has managed to teach us concerning toilets. The problem now is the availability of clean water and soap for washing hands! Since you can have modern toilet, but if don't have water and soap, your health will be at risk. This campaign should also focus on accessibility of water and soap for hand washing, not only focusing on toilets"

These results situate the Nyumba ni Choo media campaign by Radio Sibuka FM as a tool for enhancing attitude change among members of the community, while showing other areas that need more communication intervention to end communicable diseases particularly cholera.

ii. Findings from Observation

They study also employed observation as an additional data collection tool to prove if behavioural change was real within the area of the study as people's response to the Nyumba ni Choo campaign, by visiting the three wards accompanied by the health officer. Findings gathered through observation found that majority of households adopted latrines. The study discovered even families with low income built pits toilets and covered them with grass fence, while others built mud floor in their toilets. Majority of homes visited were found having a hand wasting water vessel together with handwashing basin placed beside the toilet to enable members of the family to washi their hands after defecation. In some cases, these water cases were found with no water. Moderately very limited households had both water and handwashing soap.

These results from observation established that members of household no longer felt ashamed to use latrines, and in some heads of families had started sharing toilets with in laws confirming that behavioural changes was taking place among members of the community.

iii. Findings from Key Informant Interviews

Findings from interviews with key informants discovered that the Nyumba ni Choo campaign had a substantial achievement comparing to other campaigns conducted before. Over the study period, the study found that there was a significant number of households built improved toilets, while other households adopted impermanent toilets to meet basic principles for hygiene so that to prevent transmitted diseases.

These findings indicated that due to construction of toilets among households improved sanitation and hygiene and led to reduction of cholera and other communicable diseases that persisted in the area for years.

In an interview with one of VEO reported a significant increase in building latrines since the introduction of the Nyumba ni Choo campaign and majority built them voluntary and some of households decided to construct latrines to accommodate basic needs including menstrual services for women. Where one of VEOs explained that success as social competition:

"Awali watu walijenga choo kwa kulazimishwa, kwa sababu ya vikao vya kijiji au woga wa faini. Lakini sasa hali imebadilika kabisa. Watu wanajenga vyoo kwa hiari yao wenyewe, na zaidi ya hapo, kuna ushindani, kila kaya inataka choo chake kiwe bora kuliko cha jirani. Tumeona watu wakichangishana fedha kwa ajili ya kujenga choo cha kisasa, jambo ambalo halikuwepo kabla ya kampeni hii."

Translation "Previously, people built toilets because they were forced to, due to village meetings or fear of fines. But now the situation has completely changed. People are building toilets voluntarily, and beyond that, there is competition, every household wants its toilet to be better than its neighbor's. We have seen people pooling money together to build a modern toilet, something that did not happen before this campaign." (Key informant II)

These findings show that Nyumba ni Choo Campaign achieved more than compliance. But it brought a significant shift in social norms by changing how community perceived sanitations issues and led toilet construction from being forced obligation into status and pride among households. These findings patterns match the Uses and Gratification Theory by (Katz, 1973) which shows that audiences not just use media massages to acquire information, but also to negotiate their status standing within particular community.

Results from an interview with one of Community Health Workers (CHWs), who work closely with the community on a daily basis, provided a complementary view on the current shift in sanitation and hygiene practice and the general surrounding. The community health expert noted that community members are now adhering basic sanitation and hygiene guidelines what helped to improve cleanliness among households and led to reduction of communicable diseases particularly cholera which persisted for years. CHW explained the observed changes as follows:

Tofauti ni kubwa sana. Ukienda nyumba kwa nyumba siku hizi, hutaona kinyesi cha watoto kikiwa kimetapakaa ovyo kama ilivyokuwa zamani. Wazazi wanajua sasa kuwa kinyesi cha mtoto ni hatari sawa na cha mtu mzima, kwa hiyo wanakitupa chooni. Pia, hata watu wazima, ambao ndio walikuwa wagumu zaidi kubadilika sasa wameacha kabisa tabia ya kujisaidia vichakani. Tunafurahi, kwa sababu hii ni jambo ambalo tulikuwa tunalisukuma kwa miaka mingi bila mafanikio makubwa.

Translation "there is a significant difference. If you go house to house these days, you will not see children's faeces scattered as it was the case before. Parents now understand that a child's faeces is just as dangerous as an adult's, so they dispose it in toilets. Also, even adults who were the most resistant to change have completely abandoned the practice of relieving themselves in the bush. We are pleased because this is something we had been pushing for years without much success."

The CHWs testimony was particularly significant, since waste management particularly children's feaces has traditionally abandoned among households even in environments where toilets use was not a problem among adults. (Dreibelbis et al., 2013). These findings reveal that the Nyumba ni Choo campaign was achieved especially in converting individual's behavior.

V. DISCUSSION

From findings the study discovered that Nyumba ni Choo campaign reception rate (89) showing that the campaign provided useful and persuasive message to majority of respondents across the three selected wards of Maswa District. This study's findings confirm the results by Noar's (2006) who found that media campaign message received significant acceptance rate due to message relevance to the community. The use of local language in delivering campaign message, the use of drama and relating the content to the local community enabled clarity of the media campaign message as well as emotional resonance (Singhal and Rogers, 1999).

Differences observed on how respondents received the media campaign based on education level among participants with educated participants The differential reception observed by education level with educated respondents who got 95.8 percent relating to respondents with low level of education who scored 72.0 indicates the importance of healthy awareness as a significant

tool for social change. A study by Glanz et al. (2015) discovered that healthy literacy among community members stands as key factors of how audiences receive healthy communication message and take action upon it.

The findings by uneducated women indicated 74.1 percent. This group insisted on the needs centered communication by focusing on privacy and safety especially during menstrual. These findings are in line with the study by Dreibelbis et al. (2013) which discovered that sanitation and hygiene become more effective when the media campaign meets social needs rather than just focusing on diseases prevention.

Findings indicated complex relationship between three key factors (campaign effectiveness, audience motivation and structural restriction. Willingness to adopt and use latrines but facing financial difficult to take action, align with Dreibelbis et al. (2013) who found respondent's acceptance of the message of the media campaign and readiness to take action, but they failed to translate their motivation into actions due to both structural and economic obstacles.

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