Utilisation of Search FM for the Entertainment of Undergraduates of Federal University of Technology, Minna, Nigeria

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Abstract

The study was designed to investigate the utilisation of Campus Search FM for the entertainment of undergraduates of the Federal University of Technology, Minna. A self-developed survey instrument was administered 375 respondents. The response rate was 96%. The overall results showed that the majority 143(39.7%) of the respondents always listen to entertainment radio, while 125(34.7%) of the respondents preferred music entertainment, 117(32.5%) preferred sports entertainment programmes. The study concluded that the influence of the programmes on the students could be negative or positive depending on the individual students and the kind of programme he or she is frequently exposed/listened to and that there is a relationship between students' frequency of exposure to Search FM entertainment programmes and its influence on their social behaviour. The study recommended that programme producers for Campus Search FM Radio should develop, produce and broadcast entertainment programmes with high positive values.

Keywords: Utilisation, Search FM, Entertainment, Undergraduates, Federal University of Technology, Minna

Introduction

Radio is the most effective, popular and credible medium for reaching a large and heterogeneous audience (Nwabueze, 2007). The media is an essential part of our everyday life, as it aids in the navigation of our social reality in particular (Alasuutari, 1999). Radio is an extension of us with our external world. Radio has an invisible role as a "mind-altering device," we tune in to a station which corresponds to our current frame of mind, this enforces or stabilises our mood or we may select a station to listen which invokes and entices different emotional state (Alasuutari, 1999 cited in Mogambi, 2016). According to Oliveira, Portela & Santos (2012), it is assumed that listeners make their own interpretations of a radio programme; if the presentation includes something they recognise in something familiar.

Radio has been used extensively as an educational medium in developing countries. Published reports confirm that it has supported educational programs in a

wide range of subject areas and in many different countries (Nwaerondu & Gordon, 1987). Communication through radio has served to inform and educate the targeted audience on new developments within the society. For instance, radio can be used to create awareness on issues bordering on politics, business, current affairs, etc. Undisputedly, radio has served as an agent of social mobilisation capable of galvanising citizens to take certain actions based on their awareness of their rights and responsibility to the society (Edegoh, Asemah & Nwammuo, 2013).

Several projects and experiments in evaluation of communication programmes have consistently revealed that radio can teach; it can present new concepts and information. Therefore, it has been concluded that radio plays an important but rather effective educational role as a sole medium or in conjunction with other medium such as print and group support. For example was evident in a mathematics teaching project by radio to school children in junior grades in Nicaragua as significant high scores were recorded for students who were taught through radio lessons in the final evaluation than those taught through regular, face-to-face, classroom instruction. Rural students, tested against rural control groups, benefited more than urban students tested against urban control groups. The project evaluators hypothesised that radio lessons tended to be particularly effective in raising the level of knowledge of below average learners who were from the rural communities (Nwaerondu & Gordon, 1987).

The amount of media products consumed by young people has drastically expanded in recent years, allowing them to compose their own 'media menu' with their own preferences and likings. The youth itself is undergoing a period of rapid change, likewise the ways in which young people use the media. The advent of cable and satellite television has boosted TV viewing in recent years (Samaragdi, 1994 cited in Suleimanu & Ekeanyanwu, 2011). Thus, it becomes pertinent to ascertain the utilisation of Search FM for the entertainment of undergraduates of Federal University of Technology, Minna, Nigeria.

Statement of the Problem

There were two major reasons for the expansion of campus radio. First, the government was satisfied with the way the University of Lagos made use of its radio licence. Second, there was a pressing need to provide a communication infrastructure for the newly founded National Open University whose role is to provide university education to school-leavers who could not gain admission to limited slots in universities (Fatunde, 2009).

Despite the numerous pedagogical advantages attached to the presence of radio stations on campuses, there are doubts in some circles that this powerful communication tool may not have been effectively utilised the way it is expected. For example, doubts were expressed as to whether the so called campus radio has adequate educational and entertainment programmes in its list of broadcast contents; as per the form of entertainment programmes that students pay more attention to or listen to on campus radio. Also, concerns were expressed regarding the likely influence this campus radio

may have on students who listen to its programmes on daily basis. Therefore, against this backdrop this study delves to investigate these issues to uncover the situation and developments behind these campus radio stations, especially, Search FM at the Federal University of Technology, Mina.

Objectives of the Study

The study was designed to:

1. Find out the level of listening of FutMinna undergraduates to Search FM entertainment programme.
2. Determine the medium through which the undergraduates listen to entertainment programmes.
3. Determine the kind of entertainment programmes that FutMinna Undergraduates pay   more attention to.
4. Find out the influence of Search FM entertainment programmes on FutMinna undergraduates.

Historical Overview of Search FM Futminna

In April 2002, the Federal government of Nigeria granted a radio licence to the University of Lagos. This opened the door for more tertiary institutions to seek radio stations and in 2007 a set of licences was approved by President Shehu Musa Yar'Adua for private, public and regional tertiary institutions. Having been impressed by the University of Lagos campus radio, the Nigerian government awarded more licences to 27 tertiary institutions to operate community radio on their campuses. The education institutions given licences are to use the radio stations for teaching, research and entertainment. Radio remains the best medium of mass communication in Africa because of the continent's long-standing oral tradition (Fatunde, 2009).

The Federal University of Technology Minna Search FM is a campus radio publicly founded to cater for information, entertainment and educational needs of students of the University. Search FM is believed to be central in the overall development in the academic environment. Search FM transmits ideas, information and entertainment to the target audience shows that Search FM is responsible for most adjustment in the behavioral patterns of students in the campus. Sometimes these activities take the targeted audience unaware, yet they themselves are trapped in the manifestation of the desired behavior (Lazarsfeld, 1955). Search FM has a special authority in creating public and official awareness of different development of issues.

Conceptual Clarification and Review of Related Literature

Entertainment is a form of activity that holds the attention and interest of an audience, or gives pleasure and delight. It can be an idea or a task, but is more likely to be one of the activities or events that have developed over thousands of years specifically for the purpose of keeping an audience's attention (Oxford English Dictionary, 1995). Although people's attention is held by different things, because

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individuals have different preferences in entertainment, most forms are recognisable and familiar. Storytelling, music, drama, dance, and different kinds of performance exist in all cultures, were supported in royal courts, developed into sophisticated forms and over time became available to all citizens. The process has been accelerated in modern times by an entertainment industry which records and sells entertainment products. Entertainment evolves and can be adapted to suit any scale, ranging from an individual who chooses a private entertainment from a now enormous array of pre-recorded products; to a banquet adapted for two; to any size or type of party, with appropriate music and dance; to performances intended for thousands; and even for a global audience (Bryant & Vorderer, 2006).

The experience of being entertained has come to be strongly associated with amusement, so that one common understanding of the idea is fun and laughter, although many entertainments have a serious purpose. This may be the case in the various forms of ceremony, celebration, religious festival, or satire for example. Hence, there is the possibility that what appears as entertainment may also be a means of achieving insight or intellectual growth.

An important aspect of entertainment is the audience, which turns a private recreation or leisure activity into entertainment. The audience may have a passive role, as in the case of persons watching a play, opera, television show, or film; or the audience role may be active, as in the case of games, where the participant/audience roles may be routinely reversed. Entertainment can be public or private, involving formal, scripted performance, as in the case of theatre or concerts; or unscripted and spontaneous, as in the case of children's games. Most forms of entertainment have persisted over many centuries, evolving due to changes in culture, technology, and fashion. Films and video games, for example, although they use newer media, continue to tell stories, present drama, and play music. Festivals devoted to music, film, or dance allow audiences to be entertained over a number of consecutive days (Sayre & King, 2010).

Several research studies have documented findings on various developments concerning radio usages and effectiveness on people. One of such studies was Stiernstedt (2014) study which seeks to add to the understanding of contemporary developments within radio, especially music radio, through focusing on the presenter from a political economy perspective. How do new business models and technologies affect the performances and forms of talk developed by presenters in contemporary radio? What new roles are assigned to presenters in commercial music radio? How are work practices and labor relations affected? The article shows how media convergence has impacted the work of radio personalities in traditional broadcasting.

Stiernstedt (2014) argues that technological changes and new competition, which drives broadcasters to develop their business models, hence also has the possibility to change the content and form of commercial music radio. The strategists and managers of commercial radio companies are increasingly questioning the status and importance of music in radio broadcasting. They will probably find support in moving in the direction

of the spoken word from DJs and program staff, who in many cases are longing for more airtime and greater opportunities to express their creativity.

Familusi & Owoeye (2014) assessed the ''use of radio and other means of information dissemination among the residents of Ado- Ekiti.'' One hundred and twenty residents of Ado-Ekiti participated in the study; questionnaire was the instrument used to illicit information from the respondents and the findings revealed that radio is the most important instrument in dissemination of information to larger percentage of the people irrespective of their location.

The study further revealed that the cost of accessing information on radio, television and use of mobile phone is not expensive while that of internet access and paying subscription to DSTV and other cable television is expensive. On the most accessible, affordable and usable in providing access to information among the residents of Ado-Ekiti revealed radio is the most accessible and usable in accessing information by the residents of Ado-Ekiti followed by mobile phone, television, newspaper, social network, DST and other cable television and internet. Also, it further showed that poor television signals, high cost of purchase, installation and monthly subscription of satellite television and many cannot afford the cost of internet connectivity and many were being faced with inability to afford internet enabled mobile phones and therefore cannot access internet and poor radio. Finally, the study concluded that more need to be done to improve access of the residence of Ado- Ekiti to information most especially the internet and cable television (Familusi & Owoeye, 2014).

Edegoh *et al* (2013) investigated ''radio listening habit of rural women in Anambra State.'' The study focuses mainly on radio listening habit of rural women in Idemili South Local Government Area of Anambra State, Nigeria. Also the study main aims include finding out whether rural women listen to radio programmes, how often they do so, the radio programme that interest them most and the gratifications they derive from listening to radio programmes. Based on the findings of the study, the study concludes that rural women in Anambra State do not only listen to radio but they do so on a regular basis. It is also safe to state that radio listening habit of rural women in Anambra State is both positive and encouraging.

The findings show that rural women in Anambra State listen to radio programmes. This is attested to by an overwhelming majority of those sampled (86%, n=608). Findings of the study also show that a good number of the respondents listen to radio programmes regularly. Data analysis has shown that out of the 608 respondents that listen to radio programmes, 408 representing 57% listen to radio programmes on regular basis. On the type of programmes that interest rural women, findings reveal that health related programmes come first, followed by agricultural programmes and religious programmes. Health, they say, is wealth and so, this finding is not surprising. Another finding made in this study is that rural women derive a lot of gratifications from listening to radio programmes (Edegoh *et al* 2013).

Greervan & Nicola (2014) studied ''youth development and HIV prevention through campus Radio and Social Media.'' They found out that radio and social media

play an important role for youth consumption of information. Thir findings further showed that university campus radio played an essential and critical role in creating a social space for HIV/AIDS communication.

Mogambi (2016) conducted a research aimed at understanding media preferences and choices of university students in a large public university-University of Nairobi. Survey research method was used through questionnaire to find the listening habits and their favourite radio stations and programmes. From the research work, it was found that students have an easy access to radio in the campus through their mobile phones, in the vehicles they travel to and from campus, at home and in their neighborhoods. The programming pattern adopted by radio stations, timing of programmes, topics of discussion, the radio host, type of music played and language of broadcast influence radio listening habits of university students in Kenya. The overall findings of the study showed that students of the University of Nairobi listen to radio. Most of them listen to radio in the morning and late evenings. Although most of them have mobile phones that have fm radio stations, a big percentage listens to radio from a radio set. It is no doubt that most of them are seeking entertainment from radio while another significant percentage seeks information and uses radio as a means of research for their education as well as on issues affecting them.

The researcher concluded that generally, most of the youths who listen to radio seek entertainment rather than education. Also that most of these students listen to radio for entertainment and thus making music playing radio stations more popular than those that are flooded with information. Finally, the study has shown that students of the University of Nairobi listen to radio. Most of them listen to radio in the morning and late evenings. Although, most of them have mobile phones that have fm radio stations, a big percentage listens to radio from a radio set. It is no doubt that most of them are seeking entertainment from radio while another significant percentage seeks information and uses radio as a means of research for their education as well as on issues affecting them (Mogambi, 2016).

Moreover, the study of Arulchelvan & Viswanathan (2008) was scoped on the expansion and providing a greater utilisation of existing radio, television and internet facilities and utilisation to provide further opportunities towards sustaining education among students who are educationally and technologically disadvantaged in many parts of India, and in many countries all over the world. Findings from the study revealed that a vast majority (90.24%) of the respondents possessed radio sets. Data showed a divergence among respondents, with listening time ranging from zero to two hours a week, which means that there is a considerable scope for increase in the usage of this media particularly with respect to education. A majority (87.35%) of the respondents listened to radio programmes at home. Entertainment programmes on the radio were most popular at 84.30%, followed by educational programmes 37.06%, and then science programmes 29.07%. So, there is still vast scope for using radio effectively for educational purpose (Arulchelvan & Viswanathan, 2008).

Theoretical Framework

The study is anchored on uses and gratifications theory. Uses and gratifications theory of mass communication is the theoretical framework of this study. Blumler & Kharz (1974) uses and gratifications theory suggest that media users play an active role in choosing and using the media. Users take an active part in communication process and are goal oriented in their media use. The theorists say that the media user seeks out a media source that best fulfils the needs of the user. The uses and gratification theory of mass communication assumes that the user has alternate choices to satisfy their needs. Uses and gratifications theory takes a very humanistic approach to looking at media use. Blumler & Kharz believe that there is not merely one way people use the media. They also pointed out that there are many ways people use media and this is guided by different reasons. According to the theorist, media users have the free will to decide how they will use the media and how it will affect them. Blumler & Khatz's values are clearly seen in the fact that media consumers have the right to make choices or chose from a variety of media options or alternatives merely as a means to an end. The theory takes out that there are possibilities that the media can have an unconscious affect on our lives and how we view the world. The idea that we simply use the media to satisfy a given need does not seem to fully recognise the power of the media in today's information and communication society.

The uses and gratifications theory originated in the 1970s as a reaction to traditional mass communication research with emphasis on the sender and the message sent. It looks at psychological orientations, focusing more on needs, motives and gratifications of users. Also, it provides a better understanding of how the media is being used by its users for their needs and gratifications. In other words it can be said that rather than theory enunciating what media does to people, it enunciates the things people do with media. The uses and gratifications theory can be said to have a user/audience-centered approach (Blumler & Kharz, 1974).

Thus, this study finds anchor on the uses and gratification theory of the media. The uses and gratifications theory of the media is one of the theories of mass communication that call attention to what people do with the media rather than what the media do to people. According to Edegoh, Nwanolue & Eze (2013), the uses and gratifications theory was propounded by Elihu Katz, Jay Blumler & Michael Gurevitch in 1974. The theory holds that people influence the effects that mass media have on them (Anaeto, Onabajo & Osifeso, 2008, p. 71). The assumption of the theory is that people are not just passive receivers of media messages but actively influence the message effects. This is because people selectively choose, attend to perceive and retain mass media messages on the basis of their needs, beliefs, etc. Thus, Anaeto *et al* (2008, p.71) rightly observe that there are as many reasons for using the media as there are media users. Uses and gratifications theory has a lot of relevance to the present work because it perceives recipients of media offerings as actively influencing the effect process, since they selectively choose, attend to, perceive and retain media messages. The uses and gratifications theory has implication for the study in the sense that media

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users have personal preferences and choices when it comes to selection and usage of media for gratifications of needs.

Method of Study

Survey research design was adopted for the study. The population of the study is the undergraduate of the Federal University of Technology, Minna, Niger State. The institution has about (14,772) fourteen thousand seven hundred and seventy two students both G.K campus and Bosso campus. Krejcie & Morgan's (1970) table for determining sample size was consulted to arrive at the appropriate sample size for the study. This table establishes sample sizes against corresponding population at 95% confidence and 5% sampling error. A stratified random sample of 375 samples of undergraduates were drawn from the population and they were administered the questionnaire of the study. Below is the table for calculation of available academic staff based on their respective schools / faculties.

Table 1: Stratification of the Respondents according to School / Faculty

Options	Respondents	%
SNAS	55	15.3
SICT	78	21.7
SEMT	72	20
SAAT	46	12.8
SET	33	9.2
SEET	40	11.1
STE	30	8.3
Total	**360**	**100**

Validity of the instrument was done by the researchers by carrying out a preliminary test involving ten (10) expert lecturers in the area. The observations and comments of these experts in the area gave useful hints for amendments of the questionnaire before the final administering of the questionnaire to the respondents. The split-half reliability was employed to establish the reliability of the instrument. The Spearman Brown reliability (r_{SB}) value of 0.78 was arrived at showing that the instrument had good reliability. And the data collected from the sample ware analysed through Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) and presented in tabular form.

Data Presentation/ Analysis

Table 2: Distribution of Respondents according to Sex

Options	Respondents	%
Male	200	55.6
Female	160	44.4
Total	**360**	**100**

Table 2 (above) shows the distribution of students in the University according to their gender and percentage of their availability in the population. The data in the table show that male (55.6%) respondents were more than the female respondents.

Table 3: Respondents' Age Bracket

Options	Respondents	%
14-22	123	33.3
23-27	150	41.7
28-32	60	16.7
33 and above	30	8.3
Total	**360**	**100**

Table 3 displays the respondents' age bracket. The data show that those between 23 and 27 years responded more.

Question 4: Distribution of the Respondents' Level

Options	Respondents	%
100	91	25.3
200	83	23.5
300	77	21.4
500	109	30.3
Total	**360**	**100**

Table 4 displays the respondents' level of academic studies. According to the table, the majority 109 (30. 3%) of the respondents were 500 level students. The implication of the data is that 500 level students responded more.

Table 5: Respondents' Source of Listening to Search FM Radio Entertainment

Options	Respondents	%
Radio	136	37.8
Handset	115	31.9
Internet	109	30.3
Total	**360**	**100**

The question in table 5 was designed to find out the respondents' source of listening to Search FM radio entertainment. According to the table, the majority (37.8%) of the respondents listen to Search FM, using radio as a medium

Table 6: Frequency of Respondents' Exposure to Search FM Radio Entertainment Programme

Options	Respondents	%
Hardly ever	32	8.9
Occasionally	7	1.9
Frequently	135	37.5
Sometimes	43	11.9
Almost always	143	39.7
Total	**360**	**100**

Table 6 above displays the respondents' frequency of exposure to Search FM radio entertainment programmes. According to the table, the majority (39.7%) of the respondents always listen to Search FM radio.

Table 7: Respondents' Favourite Type of Entertainment Programme

Respondents	Respondents	%
Music	125	34.7
Debate	32	8.9
Talk show	33	9.2
Comedy	53	14.7
Sports	117	32.5
Total	**360**	**100**

The question in table 7 was designed to ascertain the respondents' favourite type of entertainment programmes. According to the table, the majority (34.7%) claimed that

their favourite entertainment programme is music, while 117(32.5%) claimed that their favorite entertainment programme is sports

Discussion of Findings

In view of the current research study, it is evident that the majority of the undergraduates at the Federal University of Technology, Minna listen to Search FM, using radio set as a medium, while considerable percentage of them listen to Search FM radio entertainment using their handsets, whereas substantial numbers of them listen to Search FM radio using the internet. These findings have been corroborated by the reports of Mogambi (2016) that most students have mobile phones that have FM radio stations, a big percentage listens to radio from a radio set.

Yet another corroborating finding was Arulchelvan & Viswanathan (2008) report that a vast majority of the student respondents possessed radio sets, listened to radio every day, but there is a divergence among respondents, with listening time ranging from zero to two hours a week, which means that there is a considerable scope for increase in the usage of this media particularly with respect to education. So, there is still vast scope for using radio effectively for educational purpose (Arulchelvan & Viswanathan, 2008).

Furthermore, this current research work revealed that majority of FutMinna undergraduates always listen to the Search FM radio, while a considerable number of them frequently listen; whereas a handful of them claimed that they listen sometimes and meager number claimed that they listen occasionally. These findings were in congruent with the claim of Mogambi (2016) that most students listen to radio in the morning and late evenings. Also, findings in the current study supported what Mogambi (2016) reported that students have an easy access to radio in the campus through their mobile phones, in the vehicles they travel to and from campus, at home and in their neighborhoods. Gender apart, the study of Edegoh *et al* (2013) has strengthened further the fact that radio listening is a highly preferred activity by various category of audiences when they concluded in their study that rural women in Anambra State do not only listen to radio but they do so on a regular basis.

Finally, findings showed that the majority of the undergraduates of FutMinna claimed that their favourite entertainment programme is music, while considerable amount of them claimed that their favorite entertainment programme is sports, whereas meager number of them claimed that comedy is their favorite entertainment programme. From the figures and percentage representation above, it is evident that students have preference in listening to Music, follow by Sport than any other entertainment programmes. This finding has been supported by the report of Mogambi (2016) that most students are seeking entertainment from radio, while others seek information and uses radio as a means of research for their education as well as on issues affecting them.

Conclusion

In conclusion, radio is a medium and a means of conveying certain kinds of information. It can be a powerful tool in assisting in the development process of countries, but its effectiveness depends not only on its intrinsic qualities but more importantly on how it is used and for what purposes it is used. Behind each use to which radio has been put are certain assumptions about radio's effects, about the structure of reception and about learning and social change. There are a number of strategies, all of them effective in certain circumstances. The success of radio as a medium will depend upon trying to clarify these assumptions of the various utilisation strategies so that a country's needs are fitted to appropriate uses of radio. The role of Search FM campus radio in the Federal University of Technology, Minna cannot be ignored in the effective entertainment, edutainment and information of students' affairs. Search FM assists and entertains undergraduates at all levels to relax and unwind after their day-to-day academic activities. Search FM may shape how students think about the entertainment of the day.

Recommendations

This study recommends that:

1. Entertainment programmes with high positive social values should be emphasised, while the negative social values should be de-emphasises.
2. Students should cautiously select the kind of programmes they expose themselves to which would inform the level of attention they will pay to it.
3. Parents and guardians should devote adequate time to educate their wards on what they listen to radio stations.
4. The entertainment radio stations should not sacrifice morality on the altar of profit making.

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