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INFLUENCE OF OZISA FM'S '*ARENA SHOW*' RADIO PROGRAMME ON THE EDUCATIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF YOUTHS IN NGOR-OKPALA LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA OF IMO STATE

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ABSTRACT

Radio has long served as a powerful tool for mass education in Nigeria, particularly since the advent of formal schooling. This study examines the influence of radio programming on the educational development of youths in Ngor-Okpala Local Government Area of Imo State, using the 'Arena Show' on Ozisa 96.1 FM as the focal programme. The research adopted the survey design, administering questionnaires to 300 youths to determine their level of awareness, the educational value of the programme, and its overall impact on their development. Anchored on the hypodermic needle theory, the study assumes that radio messages have a strong persuasive influence capable of shaping the attitudes and knowledge of listeners. Findings revealed that the Arena Show enjoys high popularity among youths, with a significant percentage of respondents indicating regular listenership. Furthermore, results showed that the programme offers diverse educational content, including political, skill-based, formal and informal education. Political education emerged as the most impactful content for the youths. Overall, the study concludes that the Arena Show contributes meaningfully to youth development in the area. It recommends that radio stations continue to prioritize well-structured educational programming to enhance knowledge acquisition and support community development.

Keywords: Ozisa 96.1 FM, FM Radio, Youth, Educational Development.

1. INTRODUCTION

Education as it is today known is a triune concept with at least three connotations. It is a process, a product, and a discipline. But this is only lexically so, for the three concepts are in turn interlaced. Thus, we can say that education is a means through which an individual "develops his abilities skills, capabilities and all forms of behavioral patterns that are of positive value in the society he lives in" (Good 1945).

Formal education has been of priority in Nigeria, especially since independence in 1960, prior to that time, the only known educational institution, was established in Badagry. At that time there was no attempt to broaden the curriculum or evolve it to adapt to the African or Nigerian

environment. It had a syllabus of basic subjects like, English, Geography and history. This was because the main purpose of colonial education was to prepare students for the United Kingdom and to produce administrators for good governance as stressed by missionaries. The above condition left Nigerians in that period with no choice but to accept the colonial education provided for them, despite its narrowness and undertones of oppression.

However, shortly after independence things began to change in the formal education sector of the country. Nigerians introduced the 6-3-3-4 system, because of its purpose to achieve 21st century educational needs. Such an education system, with good implementation and actual classrooms, was supposed to sustain quality education. With all this it was clear that the desire to develop the citizens of the country (post colonialism), especially the youth via education, was never in doubt.

This need to accentuate the educational foundations, and de-monopolize the subject structure of formal learning, led subsequent government administrations to experiment with a wide range of tools in learning one of such tools is radio learning. One of such steps was the act of parliament in 1957 to reorganize the British owned Radio Diffusion Service (RDS) into Nigerian Broadcasting Corporation (NBC), which championed the Federal Radio Corporation of Nigeria (FRCN).

Nigerian youths, have always been excited with new media, the advent of the radio in the early 80's was no exception. We need only to compare the frenzy, caused by the internet and social media to know exactly how much interest radio must have garnered upon its introduction.

Many mass media tools have their disadvantages and advantages, but the peculiarity of radio is that its advantages far outweigh its disadvantages. Radio has been identified as an essential mass medium that is utilized by a majority of individuals in an existing society. EFA Global Monitoring Report, (2012) identified radio as a common asset in at least 75% of households in developing countries. Therefore, the need to understand the influence of educational radio programmes on youth development in Ngor, Okpala Local Government Area of Imo State. Among the numerous radio programmes on OZISA 96.1 FM, the "Arena show" programme was selected purposively for this study

1.2 The problem

The 'Arena show' is a very popular radio programme that targets young people providing them with educational development. However, issues of relevance, audience engagement, audience knowledge retention and impact on the academic performance arise. By addressing these key issues, the researcher seeks to provide insights into the effectiveness and impact of the Arena show on the educational development of youths in Ngor-Okpala LGA, Imo state.

1.3 Research objectives

1. To ascertain the awareness level of youths to "Arena Show" program
2. To ascertain the educational contents of *Ozisa 96.1FM* "Arena show"
3. To ascertain the effects of the program on the educational development of youths in Ngor-Okpala L.G.A

1.4 Research Questions

1. What is the awareness level of youths to "Arena Show" program?
2. What are the educational contents of *Ozisa 96.1FM* "Arena show"?
3. What are the effects of the program on the educational development of youths in Ngor-Okpala L.G.A?

1.5 Significance of the study

The findings of this study will aid stakeholders make informed decisions regarding the content of 'Arena Show', its engagement strategies and potential improvement to better serve the educational needs of the target audience.

1.6 Scope of the study

This study concentrated on one of the educational programme from *Ozisa 96.1FM* Owerri with its reach transcending local governments in Imo state including Ngor Okpala and the youths in Ngor Okpala who were the study population.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Radio as a tool for educational development

According to McAnany (1973) radio is the most universal mass communication medium capable of supporting effective local development programs at a minimal cost. It plays an extremely vital role in the information & communication process that is prerequisite for development. He also held that telecommunication would act as a catalyst for a surge in economic and social development during a period in which television also pervaded the houses of citizens in high income countries. However, he noted that, on a worldwide scale it is the medium of radio that has remained the most potent communication innovation since the development of writing. The large-scale manufacturing of cheap, battery operated transistor radios has been the breakthrough responsible for pulling most of the world's people into an international communication network (McAnany, 1978).

Scholarly work on the importance of radio as a means of education abound, one in particular is the work of Philip J. Grise. Jr. Kenneth I. Epstein and Teri G. Lukin , and their work in 1974 on *Educational Radio*, in which they posited that; Radio has been used for educational purposes since its beginning in the early 1920's. The application of radio to the educational problems of developing nations is not a new concept by any means. Most developing nations have broadcast capabilities to cover their geographic region Grise et al (1974). The main technical problem is the absence of receivers for all people. Some countries have governmental problems in allowing the import of transistors or radios for use by the populace. Additionally, radio broadcast technicians and educational radio format designers are very scarce in developing countries and academic programs need to be created on a large scale.

Another notable contribution is; The Research Project in School Broadcasting being carried out by the University of Wisconsin that was to determine, through demonstration and evaluation, the place of radio in the classroom and to devise methods for its most effective use. During the seven years of experimentation in school broadcasting, the Wisconsin School of the Air has had a steadily increasing audience. The purpose of school broadcasts was to supplement and enrich rather than to give curricular instruction.

2.2 The Role of the Radio

Radio's unique pervasive and penetrative characteristics make it stand out amongst other media channels. Myers (2008) is of the opinion that radio content of a development nature works better on radio than on television simply because radio is a better medium for communicating complex ideas and has added a lot of value to listeners' imaginations. Broadcasting has been identified as the medium with the highest potential for effectiveness in the developing countries. Soola (2003)

Fisk and Lazarfeld (1945) introduced the work of the Office of Radio Research, a division of the Bureau of Applied Social Research in Columbia University. They also illustrated the interrelationship of radio and other fields of communications research. The Office conducted research on the roles of radio from the standpoint of the educator, psychologist, and sociologist. Special attention was directed to the techniques of radio research, including surveys of listening habits and more specialized research pertaining to the effectiveness of one section or element of a program.

The School of Public and International Affairs at Princeton University established an Office of Radio Research in September, 1937. At that time a Rockefeller grant was secured to finance a radio research project to be carried out by this office. A series of publications about the project were planned and, as the work of the project proceeded, a number of basic principles of procedure were formulated.

2.3 The diversity of Radio

One of radio's greatest strengths is the diversity of programming possible. In addition to direct instruction, in and out of the classroom, radio has been used to provide supplementary material, aid in motivating students, and increase community awareness and involvement.

Dreyfus (1966) suggested uses and gave examples of educational radio and television in direct instruction, where the materials are an integral part of the teaching-learning process, as supplementary materials, prepared for use within the context of a course or curriculum, and as enrichment materials not specifically related to the instruction. Hilliard (1968) in an address to the annual college conference of the International Radio and Television Society pointed out the potential for radio and television in urban ghettos using innovative techniques. He also emphasized the importance of radio for international communications.

Burrow, et al, (1969) reported on the use of radio in conjunction with an already existing booklet and a tutor system to train factory shop stewards in human relations. A report by the Corporation for Public Broadcasting (1970) describes phase one activities of the Public Broadcasting Environment Center. The Center is engaged in efforts to apply the capabilities of public broadcasting to environmental education.

In an effort to increase possible applications, radio has attempted to make use of innovative technology. Cosford (1969) described "radiovision," a coordinated radio broadcast-color filmstrip medium. The emphasis in his article is on "radiovision's" applications to the learning process. Jamison (1968) described the economic and technical attractiveness of satellite-based radio instructional systems.

2.4 Theoretical Framework

The hypodermic needle theory

The "bullet theory" or "hypodermic needle theory" implied mass media had a direct, immediate and powerful effect on its audiences. The theory suggests that the mass media could influence a very large group of people directly and uniformly by "shooting" or "injecting" them with appropriate messages designed to trigger a desired response. However, several scholars led by Lazersfeld countered this theory as having a wrong impression of media effect on the audience. New assessments that the Magic Bullet Theory was not accurate came out of election studies in "The People's Choice," (Lazarsfeld, Berelson and Gaudet, 1944/1968). The opposing scholars opined that the media do not have an all-powerful effect on the audience but that the audience had the power to make decisions on how to utilize media content (Griffin, 2000; McQuail, 2005).

The hypodermic syringe model is in the same group as the linear model with the suggestion that the mass media has the power to influence a large group of people through messages that is successful in producing the desired responses from the passive receivers, We find this theory most succinct as it depicts how people are readily influenced and their actions affected through exposure to media contents.

3. METHODOLOGY

Research design: The survey research design was chosen as the most suitable approach for examining the orientations, opinions and attitude of a significant population.

Research Population: The sample area for this study is Ngor-Okpala LGA of Imo State. Ngor-Okpala LGA has an area of 561km^2, it has a population of 159,932 according to the 2006 census retrieved from (*Ngor-Okpala; Wikipedia.com 2021*). It has a teeming youth population, which forms about 60% of its total population. This is the reason why it has been chosen as the sample area of the research.

Sample size and procedure: Due to the wide nature of the study area and limited resources and time, the researcher surveyed data from the 300 respondents from Ngor, Okpala (L.G.A) through simple random samples, while for the contents analysis the researcher proposed purposive sampling technique

Data Collection tool: For survey, the researcher developed questionnaire comprising 6 queries as tool for data collection. Data was collected by inter-personal communication system to avoid any sort of error, mistake or confusion.

4. DATA ANALYSIS

The Researcher used **IBM SPSS** (Statistical Package for Social Sciences version-20) for quantitative classification of Data. All the questionnaires were fed in **SPSS**. Responses of respondents acquired from the questionnaire and interviews are analyzed in the light of the content of Arena Show on *Ozisa FM 96.1* to draw a conclusion from different types of contents. The contents were grouped into the following: Skill Development, Formal Education, Informal Education, Political education and religious education.

DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

Table 1. Chi-square Test for Association: Educational Content learned from "Arena show" on Ozisa 96.1 FM radio station

Test statistics					
Educational contents	Variables	Chi-square	Degree of freedom	p-value	Conclusion
	Skill Development	163.899	4	.000	Significant
	Formal Education	72.412	4	.000	Significant
	Informal Education	55.486	4	.000	Significant
	Political education	121.061	4	.000	Significant
	Religious education	25.453	4	.000	Significant
	Total respondents	300	-	-	-

Table 2. Group Data of the Educational Contents

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total
Skill Development	34	145	55	38	23	295
Formal Education	46	102	80	50	17	295
Informal Education	69	94	67	47	18	295
Political Education	71	124	46	42	12	295
Religious Education	63	74	76	55	28	295
	283	541	324	233	98	1475

Table 3. Distribution of Survey response on listenership

regularly	206	69.8
sometimes	66	22.4
I don't listen	23	7.8
Total	295	100.0

Table 4. Distribution of response on awareness level of "arena show"

YES	272	92.2
NO	23	7.8
TOTAL	295	100.0

Table 5. Distribution of response on quality of "Arena Show"

very good	102	34.6
Good	125	42.4
Fair	40	13.6
bad	22	7.5
very bad	6	2
Total	295	100.0

Validity and reliability test

During the process of conducting the survey, 5 questionnaires were rendered invalid due to the validity test questions**.**

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

Research question one

- What is the awareness level of youths to "Arena Show" program?

To determine the awareness level of youths to arena show, correspondents were required to answer "YES" or "NO", to the following questions.

- Have you heard of the program "Arena show" OZISA FM?

The distribution in table 4, is the response that was generated, we can observe that the show is quite popular amongst the young population in Ngor-Okpala community.92.2% of the population answered "YES" to the question. We can therefore say that there is a HIGH level of awareness of Arena Show in Ngor-Okpala community.

Research question two

- Which educational content on "Arena show" is most beneficial to the development of youths in Ngor-Okpala L.G.A?

Data analysis as shown in **Table 1**, reveals that the political content of the arena show is more engaging, 71 respondents strongly agreed, and 124 respondents agreed that the political content of the show is engaging which means that they derive more education from the political educational content.

Research question three

- What is the effect of the program on the educational development of youths?

An assessment of the results of **Table 1** shows us that the Arena show has an impact on the educational development of the youths. The following question asked the respondents:

1. What educational content do you enjoy most on the Arena show?

Respondents, of different interest, expressed different levels of satisfaction with the different forms of education derived from the Arena Show. The test statistics showed us that all the various forms of education derived from the show, all had a significant degree of association, meaning therefore that there is significant level of satisfaction of the educational demand of the Youths in Ngor-Okpala L.G.A.

Table 2, also shows us that respondents strongly agree and agree, cumulatively amount to 824, which is a large figure when compared with 98 from strongly disagreeing respondents.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The hypodermic needle theory comes to the fore in our discussion of the results from the research, be it the nature of radio media, or the inquisitiveness of the human nature, what is certain is that radio has a tangible relationship and meaningful influence on listeners. Indeed the best way to describe this impact is a *needle* effect. The development media theory, also postulates that media (Radio), as a tool of the press can be used to achieve positive development in any society. What therefore are the indirect and direct consequences on the sample area of concern in our research?

Eradication of illiteracy

Ngor-Okpala Local Government area, mostly rural community, one major attribute of rural area is a high level of illiteracy. An effective educational program like Arena show could be very beneficial in the long run eradication of illiteracy in the community. Although the arena show is an English program, it however has a traditional theme, which makes the listener pay keen attention, an attention that is a basic requirement in any form of learning process.

Promotion of political participation

From our research we deduced that political education ranks the highest among the various content gotten from the show. Political education is vital to the development of the individual and society. It is the recommended treatment for a bad case of societal political apathy. When youths are more learned about the political processes of their communities, they tend to be more civic, and actively partake in the political processes of the community. One factor that might be responsible for the popularity of political education among listeners is the interactive manner with which it's rendered. Listeners can call in and say their opinions in deliberations on a range of political topics.

Development of skills

Skill development is key to personal development. An educational process, where no skill is learned is incomplete and lopsided, with little or no impact in the society. Skills are instrumental to the improvement of the economy, via the establishment of small and medium scale businesses (SMEs). A rural community like Ngor-Okpala Local Government Area is rich in skill-oriented activities; this could be the reason for the massive interest by the youths in the community to the show.

In conclusion; it is obvious radio is very powerful in the dissemination of information, as listeners receive information, without any inhibition.

The recommendation therefore is that proper checks and thought be accorded to the process of information sourcing for radio houses. Secondly, the media must not be sentimental or politicized in the delivery of programs.

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