

RADIO LISTENING BEHAVIOUR AMONG MARKET WOMEN IN ANYIGBA, KOGI STATE

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Abstract

In Anyigba community of Kogi State, Nigeria, broadcasting signals from four radio stations can be received. These include Radio Kogi, Ochaja; Grace FM, Lokoja; Confluence FM, Lokoja; and Fusion FM, Anyigba. The fact that radio is popular among people today does not mean that people listen to it in the same pattern, as it is with other media of mass communication. Audiences listen to radio for different purposes and in different ways. This study sought to ascertain the radio listening behaviour among the market women in Anyigba community. The work is anchored on uses and gratifications theory. The study adopted the survey method of research with questionnaire as the instrument for data collection. A sample of 165 was purposively derived from the population of the market women using the Taro Yamane formula. It was found that majority (58%) of the market women in Anyigba listened to radio programmes often. Their exposure to radio messages was high and their preferred radio station was Radio Kogi Ochaja, because it transmits mainly in the local dialect and provides them information, education and entertainment. It was therefore recommended that governments at all levels should consider the establishment of more rural or market-women oriented radio stations to cater for their interests. There should be more educational and informative programmes targeted at the market women in Anyigba; and they should be encouraged to obtain affordable radio sets so as to expose them to radio programmes. Radio stations were asked to produce more of rural programmes to benefit the market women since they have a positive listening habit to the radio.

Keywords: market women, Anyigba, listening behavior and radio.

Introduction

Radio is a medium of communication which enables the broadcaster to transmit spoken words, music, codes and other communication signals through the waves to any part within its transmission reach. Through radio messages, information are received by means of communication signals through the waves. The radio is an audio medium, but with visual impact. The visual nature of the impact is in picturization of the audio experience in the mental realm. It means that words used paint pictures in the receiver's mind as product of interpretations and meanings (Emman-Owums, 2007). According to Ottah (2015), Radio

is a medium of communication that appeals to the sense of sound only. Through the medium, the listening audiences hear programmes and use the “eye” of their imagination to “see” what is said, thereby bringing a sense of intimacy between the presenter and the listener.

Radio provides listeners with the instinct to know about events taking place around them and at distant lands, with its aims of having its impression on the cultural outlook of the societies. It is known as one of the most valuable channels of information as it provides opportunity to understand both the immediate and distant environment. On the importance of radio, Edegoh, Asemah & Nwammuo (2013, p. 21) argue that radio is “an indispensable medium of communication for achieving development in the rural areas, as issues of development are aired to audience in the form of various programmes and individuals are exposed to happenings in and around their society, through listening to these programmes.”

It is a known fact that since women constitute the bulk of the populace, their role in sustainable development cannot be overlooked. Their resources have been properly mobilized and channeled in order to achieve or aim at desired goals. The women are noted for being custodians of the future.

Depending on what parameters you use, there are different classes of women in Nigeria. While some belong to the working class, a substantial population belongs to the business group; while other are caged in the homes to cater for the family. The position and status of women determines how they relate to their various environments. One cannot compare the contribution of the less privileged women in society to the privileged. Today, women's aspirations and status are just as diverse as that of men, as they participate in politics, they get firsthand information from the mass media by listening to radio, watching television, reading newspapers and magazines. They give a signal to the world that women are taking important positions in contributing to the world social and economic development with the notion "What a man can do, a woman can do better." Because of the numerous potentials of radio in ensuring rural development, it is answerable to determine how people, especially women, who are the recipients of radio messages react to radio programmes, their radio listening habit and how often they expose themselves to radio programmes.

Anyigba is one of the commercial nerve centres in Dekina Local Government Area of Kogi State in Nigeria. Majority of the women in the area engage in one form of business or the other. With the establishment of Kogi State University in 1999, the community became more expanded in terms of population and attraction of government presence, hence more business opportunities for the rural market women.

Statement of the Problem

Radio broadcasting has grown tremendously in Nigeria. Currently, there is no state in Nigeria that does not have a radio station. It is also important to note that the deregulation of the broadcasting industry in 1992 through the instrument of Decree Number 38 (later amended to decree number 55 in 1999) has further increased the number of the radio stations in the country with the establishment of private radio stations.

In Anyigba, broadcast signals from four radio stations can be received. These include Radio Kogi, Ochaja; Grace FM, Lokoja; Confluence FM, Lokoja; and Fusion FM, Anyigba. The fact that radio is popular among people today does not mean that people listen to it in the same pattern, as it is with other media of mass communication. Audiences listen to radio for different purposes and in different ways. Therefore, there is always the tendency that people will prefer one station to the other or a certain radio programme to others. Invariably, there are various factors that influence how, when, and why individuals listen to radio broadcasts or attend to mass media generally. All these bother on listening behaviour and how it affects the socio-economic life of the people. There is the need to study the extent to which the radio transmissions received in Anyigba benefit the women who are business-oriented. The question here is, what is the radio listening behaviour among the market women in Anyigba community? Being a penetrative broadcast medium, there is the need to ascertain the influence radio has on the life and activities of the women. The lack of adequate studies on this subject matter is the research problem which we seek to address.

The focus of the study was to trace the pattern of radio listening and its usage among the market women in Anyigba, especially with regard to the exposure, place of access, purpose of use and perceived benefits. The study also attempted to find out the variations in the pattern of usage of radio among the market women of different demographic characteristics especially with regard to frequency and approximate time spent on radio.

Objectives of the Study

1. To determine the radio listening behaviour among market women in Anyigba.
2. To ascertain the market women's level of preference of radio to other media of mass communication.
3. To investigate their level of exposure to radio messages.
4. To ascertain the choice of radio stations and programmes by the market women.
5. To examine the impact of radio message on the market women.

Research Questions

1. What is the radio listening behaviour among market women?
2. What is the market women's level of preference of radio to other media of mass communication?
3. What is the level of market women's exposure to radio messages?
4. What is the choice of radio stations and programmes by the market women?
5. What are the impacts of radio messages on the market women?

Review of Literature

Radio is a widely used mass communication medium which has a great potentiality in dissemination of information as radio signals cover a large population. Radio being a convenient form of entertainment caters for a large audience. With the advent of transistor, this medium has reached the populace in urban and rural areas of Nigeria, though the utilization of radio is more among rural elites. It has advantages over the other mass media like television and newspapers in terms of portability, accessibility and price factor. Radio is the most portable of the broadcast media, being accessible at home, in the office, in the car, on the street, by the beach and virtually everywhere at any time. It is effective not only

in terms of information disseminated to the people but also in creating awareness regarding many social issues and need for social reformation, developing interest and initiating action.

Radio widens the horizons of people and enlightens them, thereby gradually changing their perceptions towards life. Research has shown that radio is an effective medium for education when it involves group discussion and question/answer session. For example, creating awareness regarding new policies, developmental projects, programmes and new ideas can help in creating a positive climate for growth and development.

Why are individuals so attracted to this medium? Radio stands out for several reasons. Radio is a very potent communication medium with unique attributes which make it capable of reaching a wide range of audience simultaneously availing mankind the best means of information dissemination and reception (Acholonu, 2009).

It is estimated that the average person spends more than three hours of their day tuned in to radio (National Association of Broadcasters, 1995). During the week, 197 million people will be listening to one of the 11,608 radio stations across the country (Broadcasting and Cable Yearbook, 1995). As Altheide & Snow (1986 p. 273) state, "Radio's appeal is that it serves both utilitarian or practical tasks and playful moods without immobilizing the listener." In addition, it has the ability to serve specialized audiences, one of these being the enormous groups of call-in talk radio listeners.

Why individuals are so attracted to this medium is that radio is the only mass medium that follows an exact linear progression of time, keeping pace with the listener's sense of real time throughout the day (Altheide & Snow, 1986).

There are numerous advantages of listening to radio. First, listeners can always tune in to hear the latest music, news, weather and traffic reports. Other media which include television, newspapers and magazines are not as up-to-the minute as radio. Secondly, through specialized programming, radio has specific appeals to different groups of people. Radio has developed a diverse range of radio formats to satisfy a larger percentage of its audience preferences. With so many different radio formats, listeners have the opportunity to choose and tune to those stations and programmes that reflect their individual interests. Listeners may have similar reasons for listening to different radio formats, but demographic, social, and psychological dimensions may influence an individual's decision to listen to a specific radio format.

Thirdly, radio has the ability to affect community behaviour. This is especially true when talking about the political behaviour of its audience. Radio has the ability to be an open market forum where individuals within a society can express opinions, legitimize actions, and mobilize fellow listeners (Crittenden, 1971 in Altheide & Snow, 1986).

Lastly, radio is a versatile medium: it speaks to the listeners. The reasons for people listening to this medium may be linked to accessibility as its unique attribute. Although radio is a popular mass medium, current research has proved that most part of the society has ignored other medium. The uses and gratifications perspective can provide needed information on the reasons why radio is still pervasive in our society. The theory maintains that people are active and goal-oriented when deciding on how they gratify unfilled needs (Katz, Blumler & Gurevitch, 1974). Examining different radio formats will allow

researchers to gain more insight to how powerful and fulfilling this medium is. With the amount of people using this medium and the time spent, researchers must examine the reasons and motivations behind radio use.

Mendelsohn (1964, p. 247) stated that “the importance of radio lies more in its ability to fulfill certain psychological needs than in the amount of time that is spent with the medium.” He found that radio serves several important functions for listeners. People listen to radio to make their day free of boredom or as part of their daily routine. Others listen for companionship, while they complete boring tasks or to combat loneliness. People also listen to enhance or change their moods. Radio acts as a social lubricant because it provides something for listeners to talk about with others.

Also, radio serves the function of conveying news and information to its audience. People use the radio to be informed of important events of the day as an outlet for vicarious participation in newsworthy happenings. Mendelsohn (1964) stated that individual stations can serve one of four basic functions: utilitarian information and news, active mood accompaniment, release from psychological tension and pressure, and friendly companionship. He maintained that when a person listens to a station for one of these needs it is likely that he or she will not listen to that station for the other functions. His assertion may lend support to the idea that individuals are goal-oriented in selecting specific media content to fulfill certain needs. The motivation to select particular radio content will influence the stations and program to which a person tunes.

Gathigi (2009,p. 125) seems to have captured all the highlighted functions of radio mentioned here when he maintains as follows:

Radio is also transforming the socio-cultural aspects of life by challenging some of the existing norms and compelling the society to deal with issues that they have found difficult to address before. Radio is breaking the barriers by succeeding in addressing taboo and muted discussions, slowly dissolving a wall that has existed before to allow people to discuss these issues frequently beginning at the family level. Finally, radio has become a place where people who are in need can get things done by responding to urgent calls and giving people a place where they can go for assistance. Through the on-air personalities, radio is mediating on behalf of those who do not have voices as well as addressing personal predicaments of individuals in need .

He adds that as a source of information and education, radio is the most common information and telecommunications device in developing countries. Since the cost to develop a radio broadcast is relatively inexpensive, this medium becomes widely available to people who have low income.

Market Women and Radio Listening Behaviour

Market has been explained to be a place where buying and selling activities take place. Different types of commodities are bought and sold. For example, in Anyigba, Kogi State, we have different markets like Anyigba Main Market, Garage Market, Unity Square

Market, e.t.c. At the Garage Market, some of the items sold include clothing, foodstuff, building materials, electronic materials and stationeries. Of all the items mentioned, foodstuff constitutes the bulk of what is sold at the market. This could be the reason for the larger population of women than men at the Garage Market.

In Nigeria, radio with its penetration among the market women is becoming a powerful medium for advertisers. It gets three percent of the national advertising budget. Radio is still the cheapest alternative to television and it is no longer a poor medium in advertising terms because radio listening is globally effective. It has also prospered as an advertising medium for reaching local audiences. Moreover, radio serves small highly targeted audiences, which makes it an excellent advertising medium for different kinds of specialized products and services.

As far as audience is concerned radio does not hamper people's mobility. As a vehicle of information for masses, it is still the fastest. For instance, it would take less time for a news reporter for radio to arrive on the spot with a microphone and recorder than the same for TV along with a shooting team and equipment. Kapoor, Director General of AIR (1995) said, "Radio is far more interactive and stimulating medium than TV where the viewer is spoon-fed. Radio allows you to think, to use your imagination. That is why nobody ever called it the idiot box."

In addition, a feature of radio as a mass medium is that it caters for a large number of market women who have little or no access to television in their shops or might not have time to watch television while attending to their customers or where there is no power supply. Radio should be treated akin to newspapers in view of the fact that it is inexpensive, linked to communities, has limited band width and operates through simple technology. For these, radio listening among the market women is that of companionship, while not disrupting the on-going business transactions between the sellers and the buyers.

Related Empirical Study

Gathigi(2009) carried out a study on *Mass Communication Radio Listening Habits among Rural Audiences: An Ethnographic Study of Kieni West Division in Central Kenya*. It focused on the liberalization of the media industry in African countries such as Kenya faced with the challenge of continuing to provide much-needed information to the African population. One segment of particular interest in Kenya was the rural audience that makes up 80% of the country's population. This is a research on the role of radio in rural listeners' everyday lives within a liberalized media environment.

Using the media ethnography method, the researcher examined the radio consumption habits of rural people of the Kieni West Division, Nyeri District, Kenya. How do they choose content from the stations that are available? What type of content do they seek and how does this relate to their daily lives? Instruments of data collection were interview, focus-group discussions and observation methods. In addition, documents relating to radio broadcasting in Kenya were analyzed. The research found that radio is the most important and accessible medium in Kieni West and that vernacular radio stations are the most preferred ones. Kieni West listeners use radio to obtain information about what is happening locally and beyond.

They use radio to access information on health and agriculture. In addition, listeners rely on radio for social interactions, civic engagement, and as a platform where they can take some of their problems and seek solutions. The research concludes that media liberalization and commercialization of radio in Kenya has led to a number of outcomes to rural listeners. These include emergence of a competitive radio industry that provides multiple outlets and a wide variety of content from which people can choose. Secondly, the rise of vernacular radio stations has provided access to broadcasting in various local languages which allows for diverse content to a wide section of the population. Vernacular stations demonstrate sensitivity to the needs of rural audiences and therefore guarantee higher acceptance.

Theoretical Framework

This study is theoretically grounded in the uses and gratifications approach. Uses and gratifications theory has its roots in the 1940s when researchers became interested in why people engaged in various forms of media behaviour, such as radio listening or newspaper reading. The early studies were primarily descriptive, seeking to classify the responses of audience members into meaningful categories.

The theory according to Asemah (2011) is also known as utility theory. It seeks to find out what people do with communication content instead of what the communication content does to them. In other words the influence of media is limited to what people permit it to be. Uses and gratifications approach also pin-points that the media compete with other information sources for audience need satisfaction.

Communication theorists have used uses and gratifications theory in an attempt to explain how individuals use mass media to satisfy their needs (Infante, Rancer, & Womack, 1997 in Asemah, 2011). These needs range from relaxation to companionship to information. Uses and gratifications theory has three objectives: what people do with media, the underlying motives in using media, and consequences of that use. The theory posits that audience members actively seek out mass media to satisfy personal wants and that they make conscious decisions on what they see, hear, or read (Littlejohn, & Foss 2008)

In addition, this perspective takes the position that all channels of communication competes with one another and other sources of need fulfillment. If specific channels of communication fail to meet audience needs adequately, then viewers will actively seek alternative options.

Katz, Blumler & Gurevitch (1974) discovered thirty five needs satisfied by the media but categorized them into five:

- i. Cognitive needs: people use the media to acquire knowledge.
- ii. Affective needs: this has to do with anything related to love, beauty, fashion friendship.
- iii. Personal integration needs: people use media to belong to a particular group, belief, norms, value, race, etc.
- iv. Integrative needs: it bridges the gaps between friends through contact.
- v. Tension release needs: media are used to divert emotion away.

This perspective, as explicated by Katz, Blumler, and Gurevitch (1974), has historically taken a need-fulfillment approach. Essentially, uses and gratifications researchers believe that people have certain needs that they wish to gratify. People may fulfill these needs by the use of various communication channels, mass and interpersonal. This perspective

assumes that audience members are both active and goal-oriented when deciding on what form and type of mass media programming they will use.

Reasons have been adduced for why people subscribe to one medium of mass communication or even a segment of a medium. When studying mass media, one can examine a medium whether it is radio, television, newspaper, or magazine. Each type can be further subdivided into formats. For example, radio has different formats including news, country western, soft rock, and call-in talk radio. Within each format, one may be able to intake further distinctions within a particular genre. There are demographic, psychological, social, economic, cultural, educational reasons why people use the media. The uses and gratifications theory becomes relevant to this study as it provides a guide to us in determining from the Anyigba market women what uses and gratifications they derive from listening to radio programmes within their transmission reach.

Methodology

The study adopted a descriptive survey design. Although the population of this research was the market women in Anyigba, Kogi State, there was no standardized data to determine the actual number of women in the population. To arrive at a projected population size, I conducted an interview with the Head of the Anyigba Market Women Association popularly known as *Iye Aja* (which literally translates to ‘mother of the market’). She disclosed the total number of the registered members of Anyigba Market Women Association was one thousand, five hundred (1,500). Out of this population, a sample of 180 respondents was purposively drawn using the Taro Yamane statistical formula for determination of sample size as exemplified below:

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + ne^2}$$

Where;

n = Sample Size required

N = Total Population size

e = Margin error which the research was ready to allow (0.07).

$n = 1,500$

$e = (0.07)$

By substituting this value into the formula we obtained the following:

$$N = \frac{n}{1 + n(e^2)}$$

$$1 + n(e^2)$$

Where $n = 1,500$

$e = (0.07^2) = 0.0049$

$n = \frac{1,500}{1 + 1500(0.07)^2}$

$n = \frac{1,500}{1 + 1500(0.0049)}$

$n = \frac{1,500}{1 + 1500(0.0049)}$

$n = 179.64$

$n = 179.64$

$n = 180$

Therefore the sample size is 180

Purposive sampling technique under the non-random sampling was adopted to select respondents. Only the market women who were members of the Market Association were considered for the study since they were residents who had spent a considerable duration on their businesses in Anyigba.

The instrument was manually administered and retrieved. Where respondents could not complete the questionnaire either for illiteracy or unwillingness, I adopted oral interview, using the questions in the questionnaire. Out of 180 respondents, 165, representing 90.5% of the total, were recovered and were all usable.

Data Presentation

Table 1: Respondents with radio sets in their shops and (or) at home

O p t i o n	F r e q u e n c y	P e r c e n t a g e
Yes	50	30 %
No	115	70 %
T o t a l	165	100 %

Table 2: Whether respondents listen to radio programmes in the market or at home?

Yes	165	100 %
No	0	0 %
T o t a l	165	100 %

Table 3: Whether respondents’ prefer radio to other media of mass communication

Yes	100	60.6%
No	65	39.4%
Total	165	100%

Table 4:Frequency with which respondents listen to radio

Option	Frequency	Percentage
Not at all	21	13%
Sometimes	48	29%
Often	96	58%
Total	165	100%

Table 5: Radio stations respondents listen to regularly?

Option	Frequency	Percentage
Confluence FM	18	10.5 %
Grace FM	28	17 %
Radio Kogi Ochaja	115	69%
Fusion FM	4	3 %
Total	165	100 %

Table 6: Whether respondents’ favourite radio station broadcasts in their local language

Options	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	140	84 %
No	15	6 %
Total	165	100 %

Table7: How listening to radio programmes affects respondents?

Option	Frequency	Percentage
It keeps me relaxed	99	59.5 %
It fills the silence when customers a r r e n o t a r o u n d	61	36.5 %
It distracts me	5	4 %
Total	165	100 %

Table 8:Genre of radio programme that is respondents' favourite?

Option	Frequency	Percentage
News	45	27 %
Entertainment	98	59 %
Interviews	22	12 %
Total	165	100 %

Table 8 above reveals how regularly respondents listen to the radio as follows: the majority, 96 (58%), listens to radio programmes often, 48 (29%) dosometimes and 21 (13%)rarely do.

Table 9:How radio programmes affect respondents' lives outside business

Option	Frequency	Percentage
I use radio to survey my environment I learn about hygiene through the r a d i o The radio keeps me informed about l o c a l / n a t i o n a l p o l i t i c s All the above	165	100 %
Total	165	100 %

Table 9 shows that all 165 (100%) of the respondents answered 'all of the above' to the question of how radio affect their life outside business.

Discussion

In order to determine the radio listening habit or behaviour of respondents, it became necessary to ascertain the number of respondents with radio sets at home and (or) in their

shops, whether they actually listen to the sets and the frequency with which they do so. Data gathered provides insight into the fact that majority (70%) of the market women in Anyigba community do not have radio sets. Thirty percent (30%) of the respondents have radio sets. Despite the low figure of the respondents with radio sets, all of them (100%) say they listen to radio programmes. From their response to the follow-up question, we understand that those who do not have radio sets listen to the ones of neighbours and co-marketers. From this, the market women in Anyigba community have a positive attitude towards listening to radio programmes transmitted within their reception range. This result does not differ from similar results on the general attitude of women to radio. The study of Kathigi (2009) affirms that radio is the most important medium of communication to the rural dwellers. Also, among the numerous benefits that make people endeared to radio, Hassan (2013, p. 377) points out that it does not require power line, hence once a transistor radio is purchased, messages flow constantly at no cost. In addition, radio makes it possible for a market woman to be conducting her business while listening. To properly ascertain from respondents whether their positive attitude to radio listening affects their preference to it over other media of mass communication, we provided options for them subsequently.

One hundred respondents (60.6%) said they preferred radio to other media of mass communication, while 65 of them (39.4%) said they did not. This justifies the conclusion that radio is about the most preferred medium, especially by rural dwellers and business women.

On the level of exposure of the market women to radio messages, we sought to know the frequency with which they listened to radio generally as it would also mean high or low level of exposure. Majority of the respondents (58%) listened to radio messages regularly, while a considerable figure (29%) listened to radio sometimes. The remaining respondents (13%) said they did not listen to radio at all. This means that the regularity of radio listening (an equivalent of exposure to radio) by the Anyigba market women is high.

In order to ascertain the radio stations and programmes the market women liked to listen to, they were provided options to pick from among the radio stations which they received their transmissions. Nearly all the respondents (84%) chose Radio Kogi Ochaja. Other radio stations did not have as much patronage. On the main reason for making Radio Kogi Ochaja a choice, the market women were unanimous that it was because most of the station's programmes were broadcast in the local dialect. Other reasons were that the station provided entertainment, information and education in the local dialect and provided accompaniment to them in their markets. Some of the programmes were interactive, hence the involvement of some of the women in the programmes through phone-in and other interactive formats. This result upholds the theory adopted for this study. It means the market women had preference for the radio station that met their media needs. Data gathered revealed that the market women in Anyigba preferred entertainment programmes to others because it provided them escape from boredom as well as improve their mental psychological state.

On the impact of radio on the women, I provided options on possible areas radio would impact on a typical audience, from which they were to choose one or more. From their unanimous position:

- i. Radio keeps market women in Anyigba informed about their business and private lives.
- ii. It is a source of entertainment to them as it helps them fight boredom and improve their psychology.
- iii. The radio is an important part of the business and daily lives of market women in Anyigba community.
- iv. Market women in Anyigba prefer entertaining programmers on radio
- v. Radio is an important part of the business and private lives of market women in Anyigba.

This means that the impact of radio on the market women is positive, hence a highly encouraging radio listening habit among the Anyigba market women.

Summary of Findings

While the majority of market women in Anyigba do not own a radio set, they are however, exposed to radio programmes through radio receiving sets owned by their neighbours in the market or at home. Their exposure to radio programmes is so high that they have preferred radio stations and genre of programmes. From a unanimous agreement, radio plays an important role in the lives of market women in Anyigba. It is their source of business and non-business information. They use it to survey the environment, interpret news from other alien radio stations or news sources. For all these benefits, radio listening habit is high among the market women in Anyigba.

Recommendations

1. Governments at all levels should consider the establishment of more rural or market-women-oriented radio stations to cater for their interests as they (the market women) constitute a considerable proportion of rural population.
2. Given the high exposure of Anyigba market women to the radio, governments should initiate a stable educational broadcasting programme to educate the market women better marketing strategies, personal hygiene, health matters, family management among others.
3. Radio stations should air more educational and informative programmes targeted at the market women and packaged in an entertaining manner, given their preference for entertaining programmes.
4. Programmes targeted at the market women should be packaged in the local language of the women and should contain generous use of local expressions in form of proverbs or idioms to enhance comprehension and enjoyment of the programmes.
5. The market women should be encouraged to obtain affordable radio sets so as to expose them even more to positive radio programmes.

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