

INNOVATIONS

Content available on Google Scholar

Home Page: www.journal-innovations.com

Broadcasting to Rural Audience: Assessment of Social Responsibility of Radio Nigeria, Abuja

Blessed F. Ngonso, PhD

Department of Mass Communication, Edo State University, Uzairue

Aloysius NnannaNworisa, PhD

Department of Mass communication, University of Nigeria, Nsukka

Abstract

This study examines Radio Nigeria, Abuja, assessing its social responsibility to the rural audiences. The study conceived social responsibility has programs designed and packaged to meet the needs of the rural audiences. The study adopted a descriptive survey method. The scope of this study is Edo State University, Uzairue. The University is located in the village, making it appropriate to study the staff of the University who then fit into rural audiences. However, the sample was drawn from the staff of the Faculty of Arts, Management, and Social Sciences. The Faculty has 43 members of staff and five who were randomly selected. The reason for this sample size is because a descriptive study that uses interviews as a data collection instrument does not require a large sample size if the transcription of the interview is to be done. Three research questions were formulated to guide the study. The findings showed that FRCN has a poor social responsibility towards its rural audiences. The findings also showed that problems that hinder rural audience enjoyment of FRCN programs are boring news, programs, language barrier, illiteracy, income level of the audiences, and power problem. The study recommends that FRCN should design its news frames, programs, examines its philosophy, and carefully plans for its rural audiences. Finally, FRCN should use more local languages or Pidgin English to disseminate messages as well as improve on their program contents to make it more appealing to the rural consumers.

Keywords: 1. Broadcasting 2. Rural Audience 3. Social Responsibility 4. Radio Nigeria.

Background to the Study

Broadcasting can be defined as the sending of signals from an electronic medium to an unknown audience. Radio broadcasting, therefore, means the sending of radio signals through radio waves to an unknown audience. "Broadcasting deals with the transmission of messages from a station to heterogeneous audience across a reasonable sphere coverage which the audience receives simultaneously" (Owuamalam, 2007, p.1). In Nigeria, we have two basic types of radio waves, the Frequency Modulation (FM) and Amplitude Modulation (AM) which is usually referred to in Nigeria as

the Short Waves. The journey of radio broadcasting in Nigeria dates back to 1932 when the colonial masters, the British Government set up a radio broadcasting system through a rediffusion network. This system was simply a relay system from BBC London. The Nigerian station was located in Lagos and in the late 1940s more sub-stations were created and were principally found in Lagos, Ibadan, Abeokuta, Ijebu-Ode, Enugu, Kano, Port Harcourt, Zaira, Calabar, Kaduna, Jos. Others were Warri, Katsina, Sokoto, Maiduguri, Onitsha, and Ilorin (Ndolo, 2005).

This expansion was further strengthened and improved upon through the regionalization of the broadcasting system empowered by the McPherson Constitution of 1953. By 1959 a new development in the broadcasting industry sets in, the Western Regional Government under the leadership of Chief Obafemi Awolowo established Western Nigeria Television Authority (WNTV). Chief Awolowo in 1960 precisely started radio broadcasting in Nigeria (Duyili, 2019). In the same year, 1960 the Eastern Nigerian Government contracted an Overseas Rediffusion Company to build its radio and television stations while the Northern Region built

theirs in 1962. These regional radio stations alongside the Federal radio stations continued to dominate Nigerian airwaves till 1967 when General Yakubu Gowon created the first twelve states in Nigeria (Daramola, 2014). The existing radio stations were then given to the states based on their locations. In 1978 radio stations were built in all state capitals and this marked a great turning point in radio broadcasting in Nigeria, because this development actually led to the establishment of Federal Radio Corporation of Nigeria (FRCN), FRCN's on-the-air identification name is RADIO NIGERIA with Headquarters in Garki, Abuja (Ndolo, 2005). Today, there are many radio stations in Nigeria which include campus radio, faith-based radio, community, and ultimately private radio stations. All these categories were made possible through Decree No. 35 of 1992 enacted by the then Military Head of State, General Ibrahim Babangida.

This Decree established the National Broadcasting Commission (NBC) and empowered it to receive and process broadcast license applications on behalf of the Federal Government. The establishment of NBC heralds private radio broadcasting in Nigeria. The history of radio broadcasting in Nigeria does not end here but we choose to draw our curtain here because the focus of this study is on Radio Nigeria. It is important to note that the philosophy behind the establishment of FRCN was to produce indigenous programs that will create a sense of common national identity and belonging. At its inception, FRCN was adjudged to have diversified cultural programs that can help appeal to Nigerian consumers. Its news programs, news talk programs, and educational broadcasting are said to be good (Sambe, 2005). However, we do not know if as of today, Radio Nigeria (FRCN) Abuja has programs designed, packaged to meet the demands of the rural target audiences because new private radio stations have emerged to compete in the media ecosystem/market. The challenge again is the new technologies following the atomization of the media and the use of citizens' journalism. This development we perceive would have had some kind of impact on the internship of Radio Nigeria. Again, Radio Nigeria has come of age, we are worried if Radio Nigeria is in touch with its rural audiences as it was in the 70, 80s, and 90s, if not what has happened? This study is therefore aimed to investigate Radio Nigeria, Abuja's social responsibility to its rural audiences.

Objectives of the study

To determine the kinds of programs Radio Nigeria Abuja has for the rural audiences

To determine whether the Radio Nigeria Abuja meets the needs of the rural audiences

To determine the challenges in radio broadcasting in rural areas

Research Questions

What kinds of programs does Radio Nigeria Abuja have for its rural audiences?

Do Radio Nigeria Abuja programs meet the demands of the rural audiences?

What are the challenges faced by Radio Nigeria Abuja in the discharge of its functions in the rural areas?

The need for Radio for Rural Nigerians in the media ecosystem.

The mass media of communication are powerful societal tools that influence human communication, thinking, belief system, behaviour, disposition to government information, health information, business information, religious/ spiritual information or messages, psychological information such as inspirational and motivation messages, and indeed all human activities. Communication experts as well as other social scientists have investigated widely the powerful effect of the mass media particularly radio. In separate studies (Pride, Ejomafuvwe and Brickkins ,2014; Okinyi, 2019;Ndolo, 2005) see the mass media as one of the institutions in the society that produces knowledge, performs correlation functions by way of explaining and interpreting events provide information for local and international consumption, transfer cultural heritage by communicating norms and values. Provide entertainment and mobilized members of the public by way of promoting national interest and certain behavior during a national crisis. The points stated above show that the media has an enormous impact on any society. Essentially, radio is known for the dissemination of information.

According to Pride, Ejomafuvwe, and Brickkins (2014,p.135) "it is acclaimed to be purveyors of information in various areas of news, entertainment, drama, soap opera, and features programmes among other offerings. The mass media serve as important tools in advancing public health goals, communicating issues pertaining to health such as malaria. For instance, malaria has been seen to be one of the major health problems confronting Nigeria particularly the rural populace due to poor environmental conditions, poverty, lack of proper medical facilities, lack of medical personnel and care. According to Semiu (2012) one of the most pronounced problems in Africa is the menace of malaria, about 3000 children die of malaria every day in Africa. In Nigeria, for example, it is believed that malaria unswervingly ranks among the five most common causes of death of children. However, efforts have been made by World Health Organization (WHO), Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, United Nations International Children Emergency Fund (UNICEF), the World Bank, and the United Nations Development Programmes (UNDP) to eradicate malaria through the sponsorship of the ROLLBACK MALARIA Campaign. Radio has been extensively used in this regard hence there is a need to ascertain if rural Nigerians are aware of this kind of this health campaign.

Apart from malaria scourge, there are many other kinds of diseases that plague rural Nigeria which the radio must be used to assist rural Nigerians on how to prevent it or access treatment, one of which is cancer. The predominant cancer scourge in Nigeria is breast, cervical, and lungs cancer. Ezugwu and Nzekwe (2015) citing Cancer Statistics Worldwide (2012) states that Cancer accounts for 13% of all deaths registered globally and 70% of that figure occur in middle and low-income countries of which

Nigeria is on the top list. WHO records of 2014 in Ndolo, Eze and Ndolo (2015) assert that 528,000 new cases of cervical cancer were diagnosed worldwide; out of these numbers, about 85 percent occurred in less developed regions of Africa and Asia. In Nigeria specifically, these researchers claimed that cervical cancer affects about one woman every hour in Nigeria (about 9,000 every year). They also said that rural Nigerian women are worst off because of the absence of adequate medical facilities for screening, diagnosis, and follow-up services.

Health-related matters are indeed serious matters in Nigeria, besides malaria and cancer, there are other communicable and non-communicable diseases that have been dealt with Nigeria and is still dealing with Nigeria. These include HAPITATIS B, Tuberculosis (TB), Yellow Fever, HIV/AIDS, SARS, COVID-19, Anthrax, Cholera, Bubonic plague, Influenza, Chickenpox, smallpox, Sickle cell disease, Hypertension, and Stroke,(Ugwonno&Ngonso, 2013)Information about all of these diseases, their preventive measures as well as cure needs to be disseminated on the radio to rural Nigerians.

Another area that rural Nigerians need radio information is agriculture. Despite the growing impact of crude oil on the nation's economy, agriculture has been the mainstay of Nigeria's economy. An estimated 70% of Nigerians are rural dwellers and are in full-time agro-business. Umolu and Egwa (2012) capture it succinctly thus:

To say that agriculture has a lot of bearing on the national economy of any country is stating the obvious. This statement is even more correct when it is borne in mind that 80% of the people of this country(Nigeria) are rural dwellers. Most of whom engage in one form of farming activity or the other. In the light of the foregoing, agriculture therefore provides employment for a large percentage of the country's population and thus contributes to the Gross Domestic Product(pp.172-173).

Despite this large number of Nigerians in agricultural business, Nigeria in recent time is rated as one of the poorest nations in the world, according to (Nwabueze, Ugwonno, and Ngonso, 2012). Rural Nigeria is usually believed to be the food basket of the country. Rural Nigeria provides food crops such as rice, beans, cassava, yam, millet, and tomato. Rural people in Nigeria are farmers either crop farmers, fish farmers, or husbandry but basically, they are small-scale farmers and usually termed poor by the international index. Issues of agricultural innovation in terms of seedlings, fertilizer application, handling and maintenance of farm tools, assessment of loans, food security, storage and preservation, transportation, market accessibility, and farmers' health needs to be championed by Radio. Improvement in any of these areas will also impact greatly on the productivity of the rural farmers leading to food sufficiency as well as food security.

Why do rural Nigerians need the radio? In rural Nigeria, most of the businesses aside from agro-business are small-scale businesses mostly as retailers' shops. In some cases, the peasant farmers use small buying and selling the shop to support their farming business. Some of these shops are owned by retirees of civil service and retired company workers. Small-scale rural businesses also include artisans. Artisans are skilled craft persons such as painters, carpenters, barbers, shoemakers, tailors, and welders. They can be found in all parts of Nigeria (rural and urban). Their economy is usually

dependent on the patronage of their customers and little support from Government and Non-Governmental Organizations that may render financial help to support their businesses. Their capital base is usually small and most times they do not stay long in business due to inadequate delivery of their services, poor job quality, and low patronage occasioned by the inability to attract large customers. Anthony (2016, p.10) in his study of social media communication in the artisan economy writes thus:

The artisan economy consists of craftspeople, art makers, farmers, and food producers. Sectors in the artisan economy range from independent bookstores, microbreweries, custom bicycle frame builders, cheese makers, indie musicians, to small goat farmers. Artisan owners in different sectors face their own unique challenges, but the artisan economy as a whole share many similarities. Many of these artisan business owners work by themselves as freelancers, or are operating as microenterprises with fewer than five employees. One similarity artisan owners share is being flexible and resourceful when it comes to employment opportunities. Many artisan owners and craftspeople only receive payments when the commission work is completed, which can take from 1 to 3 months. Some makers produce in batches and sell throughout the year. These makers do not receive payments until customers buy the goods. Even though artisan products are more expensive than mass-produced goods and customers are willing to pay premium prices for them, owners face financial challenges. Artisan owners do not have regular income like office workers and other corporate employees. Many artisan owners and craftspeople maintain part-time jobs or teach others their skills to supplement income. Craftspeople are knowledgeable with material selection, product design, and production methods, and many craftspeople conduct classes to teach (Fuller et al., 2013; Holmes et al., 2012). Even though artisan owners work in different fields, they share similar features such as being resourceful.

Politics is another issue that has gained wide attention and popularity in Nigeria. Certainly, politics is about the people. In any true democracy, the people matter. From our previous discussion under agriculture, it is a well-established fact that majority of Nigerians live in rural communities. This also implies that the majority of the Nigerian electorate lives in rural communities. It, therefore, becomes pertinent that Radio Nigeria or radio broadcasting pay attention to the political interest of Rural Nigerians. Radio broadcasting is a powerful tool for political participation as it can be channeled towards voters' enlightenment, voters' rights, polling units' rules, party registration, election result transmission, parliamentary business, and winners' declaration as well as political advertising. Radio as a matter of necessity has the role to play in the political education of rural Nigerians, given the fact that the majority of rural Nigerians are illiterate people.

Ogbiti&Onosu(2012) posit that, unless citizens have adequate and accurate information on all issues and problems confronting them, they will be unable to make informed decisions on them. This presupposes that mass communication creates awareness on issues and shape public opinion towards the issues Mcquail, 2005, pp. 523-4) underpinned thus:

There has always been an intimate connection between mass communication and the conduct of politics, in whatever kind of regime. In totalitarian or authoritarian societies, ruling elites use their control of the media to ensure conformity and compliance and stifle dissent by one means or another. In democracies, the media have a complex relationship with sources of power and political system. On the other hand, they usually find their raise de tre in their services to the audiences, to whom they provide information and views according to judgments of interest and need. In order to perform this service, they need to be independent of the set and powerful interest. On the other hand they also provide channels through which the state and powerful interests address the people, as well as platforms for the views of political parties and other interest groups. They also promote the circulation of news and opinion within politically interest groups.

Suraj (2011) asserts that the mass media in the form of radio are effective ways to persuade the target audiences to adopt a new behavior or to remind them of critical information, besides informing the public about new diseases and where to seek help, they could keep the public updated on any critical or innovative development that affects their wellbeing.

Radio has been seen as a powerful means of disseminating information on all subject matters to the mass media audience. The powerful influence of the radio over the years has been attributed to the ability of radio waves to traverse national, international, and regional boundaries. Other factors that give radio an advantage over other forms of the media include its portability, ability to translate messages in local languages and dialects, affordability, and alternative use of power. These attributes are parts of the reason why media scholars see radio as effective in mobilizing people particularly the rural people towards action. Biagi (2003, p.7) in his examination of the characteristic features of radio states that “today our memory of events that happened in the first half of the 20th Century is directly tied to the radio. Radio gives its listeners an immediate record at the time when the world events demanded attention”. Research works have also shown that radio has been utilized to create awareness on several issues and changed citizens’ perception, and also mobilized them to support social change. Okinyi (2019) writing about the powerful influence of radio on social mobilization of rural Kenyans stated that Pamoja FM station played a crucial role in the post-election violence. He also attributed the success of radio for social mobilization to its ability to create a diversity of opinions and voices on air through openness to participation from all sectors on all topics.

In India, Mahatma Gandhi in 1948 utilized the radio for their freedom struggle, Raja Ram Mohun Roy, Iswar Chandra Vidyasagar and BalGangadharTilak also used the media to disseminate their socially relevant messages. According to him, in 1946 United Nations Organization (UNO) also established the

United Nations Radio intending to promote peace and security (Bora, 2012). Uganda (2007) also examines the place of radio in awareness creation and behavior change. He concluded that radio has the power to create awareness amongst the public.

News Framing: Broadcasting to Rural Audiences- Radio Nigeria, Abuja.

Broadcasting is an important aspect of conveying issues, information, discussion, and events to consumers. These issues include; political, social, economic, environmental, health, education, population, insecurity, etc. Media organizations or journalists report these issues based on certain conditions, which may be influenced by both internal and external forces. How a journalist or media agency handles, manages, treats, prepares, and reports issues and stories for public consumption constitutes news framing effects and frames building.

News framing effects is one of the most prominent theories in media and communication science. Framing theory describes the ability of news media to influence people's attitudes and behaviors by subtle changes to show how they report on an issue. News framings are the outcomes of what happens when citizens consume news. In other words, news framings are the outcome of a process of frame information processing. The actual effects depend on the type of news frame and the news story as well as the type of individual. Some of the most important features of determining news framing is, current developments in the media landscape- in the landscape of platforms and social media, and the methodological toolkit influence framing theory and framing effects research in the media ecology.

Framing does not have a single definition that is agreed upon and used by most scholars (Scheufele, 2008). This lack of consensus has led some scholars to refer to framing as a "fractured paradigm" or as a "bridging concept" which has helped immensely in mass communication fields and other related fields.

Conceptually, the news frame is a central organizing idea or storyline that provides meaning to an unfolding strip of events, weaving a connection among them. In short, a news frame can affect an individual by stressing certain aspects of reality and pushing others into background, hence the news frame has a selective function. Also, the news frame has equivalency frames as well as emphasis frames. Equivalency frames refer to logically similar content that is presented or phrased differently, while emphasis frames are closer to real journalistic news coverage and present qualitatively different yet potentially relevant considerations. Some scholars have argued that for news framing to be effective and operational, the news framing must meet four criteria: First, a news frame must have identifiable conceptual and linguistic characteristics, secondly, it should be commonly observed in journalistic practice, thirdly, it must be possible to reliably distinguish the frame from other frames, fourthly, a frame must have representational validity (i.e. be recognized by others).

Frames in the news can be examined and identified by the presence or absence of certain keywords, stock phrases, stereotyped images, sources of information, and sentences that provide thematically reinforcing clusters of facts or judgments, other framing devices are metaphors, exemplars, catch-phrases, depictions, and visual images, etc. However, the workings of journalism create several frames that can be dubbed journalistic news frames; that is, they are largely crafted by the journalistic agency. These frames are typically generic in nature, in the sense that they apply to different issues and are not bound to any specific issues. Framing is a concept that is widely used in the social and behavioral sciences. In communication science, framing is prominent in health communication, news

and journalism research, and, in particular, political communication research. As a result, news framing has become ubiquitous in communication science research, with several hundreds of publications devoted to, or making use of, the concept. Journalistic news frames play a transformative role vis-à-vis other frames that are sponsored by various stakeholders, such as political elites. Journalistic news frames take a starting point in journalists' discretion and autonomy; these frames help journalists and news media organizations shape their selected topics in their own particular manner and style, and journalistic news frames are used in the adaptation and modification of frames from elites. For example, in a policy discussion on a welfare issue where two political actors offer a different framing of the topic, a journalist or news organization may transform this event into a story that focuses on a human example of the implementation of a new policy. Or the policy discussion can become subsidiary to a story focusing on the political conflict and disagreement between the political actors while also juxtaposing their two frames. Each case is an example of a journalistic news frame offering a template to understand an issue or event.

The journalistic news frame stresses some aspects of the case and pushes others to the background, and the frame highlights the active role of journalists in constructing news stories, a process that is at the core of mediatization. Mediatization is a term that has been used with different meanings by many scholars. According to Mazzoleni and Schulz (1999, p.250), it is a process in which politics has lost its autonomy, has become dependent in its central functions on mass media, and is continuously shaped by interactions with mass media. News frames can have all kinds of effects. Framing effects in a narrow sense refer to the process in which news frames affect frames in people's minds, that is, people's interpretations and how they see the specific issue. Furthermore, frame building (an aspect of the news framing effect) concerns the interaction between different actors over how to frame an issue and, ultimately, how it is framed in the news. Most issues are open to multiple interpretations and framing strategies. Journalists are in a position to choose or modify frames that are offered by stakeholders and bring in their own angles and frames (which is at the core of the notion of journalistic news frames).

Journalists are active actors that define the coverage with a considerable amount of autonomy and discretion. Frame building thus refers to the process of competition, selection, and modification of frames from elites or strategic communicators by the media. This process is influenced by forces that are internal to the newsroom and news organization, as well as by external forces such as political elites, social movements, and interest groups.

The journalistic news framing is an example of how the media and journalism show agency when covering political, economic, and social issues. This agency is consequential in terms of effects and is the result of a news framing process. Journalistic news frames are frames where journalistic conventions provide a share of the template for the story. The sizeable input implies that in the framing process, journalism dominates in the highlighting of particular aspects of reality over others.

Social responsibility is a concept that deals with an organization taking into consideration the interest of its external public. In mass communication discipline, "social responsibility holds its origin to American initiative-the 1947 Hutchins Commission on the Freedom of the press. The idea arose from fears that the free market place of ideas was being threatened by ownership restrictions to rich individuals or large operations"(Ndolo, 2005, p.35). W. F Hutchins' Commission of Freedom of the Press and Practitioners' gave birth to what is today known as the Social Responsibility Theory of the

Press. This normative theory of the press according to Sambe, 2005 “demands that the media should act responsibly by realizing that they have certain obligations to the public. That is to say, the media should reflect all shades of opinions to enable the public reach a decision (p.264)”. Ngwu, Onyike and Ahaotu (2015, p.15) citing Frederick (1960) see social responsibility as the final analysis that implies a public posture towards society’s economic and human resources and a willingness to see that those resources are used for broad social ends and not simply for narrowly circumscribed interests of private persons and firms. Holme and Watts (2002) assert that corporate social responsibility is a capacity-building mechanism for sustainable livelihoods. It is also seen as an aspect of stakeholder management in a proactive conflict management situation. Dabor and Dabor (2015) asserts that the corporate social responsibility of a firm improves trust and relationships with investors which ultimately increases the performance of a firm.

Radio Nigeria is a public corporation and should discharge its social responsibility to every Nigerian including those in the rural communities. As a media outlet, Radio Nigeria is expected to provide entertainment to rural Nigerians. Radio Nigeria can actually achieve this through the promotion of local music, songs, drama, tales by moonlight, and other entertainment programs and by this transmit the rich cultural values and heritage of the country. On the other hand, Radio Nigeria should also in its programme philosophy factor in the rural Nigerians’ interest by making news information available through news in local languages and Pidgin English. Radio Nigeria can as well disseminate information that will foster unity, peace, and oneness amongst all ethnic groups. Through well-thought-out programmes Radio Nigeria can explain government policy to the rural Nigerians and educate them as well; including political mobilization and engagement.

Methodology/Data Presentation and Discussion of Findings

This study adopts a descriptive survey. The scope of this study is Radio Nigeria, Abuja, and its social responsibility to rural audiences. For this reason, the researchers decided to study Edo State University, Uzairue. The University is located in the village, making it appropriate to study the staff of the University who then fit into rural audiences. However, the sample was drawn from the staff of the Faculty of Arts, Management, and Social Sciences. The Faculty has 43 staff and five of whom were randomly selected. The reason for this sample size is because the descriptive study that borders on interview and which requires transcription does not need a large sample size.

Respondents’ views on the three research questions stated to guide the study

First Respondent

I do not listen to radio at all. I am so sorry.

This is the summary of the responses of this respondent

Second Respondent

Yes, I listen to FRCN but rarely. FRCN and NTA are quite boring stations. I do not pay attention to their programmes because they do not meet my desire. I prefer to listen to other radio stations because of their musical programmes. I can only listen to FRCN if my radio could not receive other radio signals likewise watching NTA. I watch NTA only when my subscription expires. I always know that NTA 24 is free on Cable.

This is the summary of the responses of the second respondent

Third Respondent

I listen to FRCN very well but that was a few years ago before I came over here (Iyamho). In my thinking, I feel FRCN has done quite a lot in disseminating information to the people including the rural Nigerians. My conviction stems from the fact that there are many FRCN stations across Nigeria. A lot of improvements were made during Obasanjo civilian regime. More FRCN stations were established across Nigeria. I think with this proliferation of FRCN stations, the rural populace would have been reached with radio signals as well as messages in real-time. Well! As per whether the programs meet the need of the people? I cannot say because I have no statistics on the impact of FRCN programs on the rural people but I must say FRCN has rich programmes including their news network. This is the summary of the responses of the third respondent

Fourth Respondent

Yes, I listen to FRCN programmes but when it comes to the issue of whether the programmes have a successful impact on the rural listeners many issues need to be examined. The issue of illiteracy and language problems. Many rural people are illiterate and FRCN programmes are aired in the English Language. These are some of the challenges confronting the examination of the impact of FRCN messages on rural Nigerians. In Nigeria, we have too many local languages, are you sure FRCN uses all these languages to disseminate information to the rural populace. I do not all dismiss the fact that the rural audience of FRCN has been impacted by FRCN messages. To a reasonable extent, I will say that FRCN messages meet the needs of the rural audience. Take for instance, N - Power programs. How do the rural people get to know? It is through FRCN information dissemination.

This is the summary of the responses of the fourth respondent

Fifth Respondent

I want to assume that the rural people may not really be impacted by the FRCN messages because as it is now, we need to factor in income and power problems in accessing FRCN messages. Income determines whether or not they can afford transistor radio or buy a battery to power the radio. Whether the messages meet their needs is a question of their exposure to the media messages which income and power is a key factor.

This is the summary of the responses of the fifth respondent

Discussion of findings

The finding of this study is discussed in line with the three research question raised to guide the study, and they are:

1. What kinds of programmes does Radio Nigeria have for its rural audiences?
The findings showed that news and other events are predominantly mentioned. This implies that those who listen to FRCN probably listen to news programs and events.
2. Do Radio Nigeria programmes meet the needs of the rural audiences?

The research findings showed that out of five respondents only one (20%) confidently believed that FRCN programs or messages meet the need of the rural populace. The respondent went further to give an example with the N-Power program. However, 20% is quite insignificant. It can therefore be deduced that FRCN programs do not meet the needs of the rural dwellers hence FRCN has not been socially responsible to its rural audience engagements.

3. What are the challenges faced by Radio Nigeria Abuja in the discharge of its functions at the rural areas?

The findings of this study were heavily rested on this variable. Three out of five (60%) respondents expressed their views in terms of problems militating against the social responsibility of FRCN towards the rural audience and audience reception of the social responsibility which in the context of this study are programs designed to meet the needs of the rural Nigerians. The findings showed that, FRCN programs are boring and language which is primarily English is identified also as a problem. On the part of the listeners (rural audiences) illiteracy factors, language problems, income, and power were identified as problems.

Summary

This study examines Radio Nigeria, Abuja, assessing its social responsibility to the rural audiences. The study conceived social responsibility has programs designed and packaged to meet the needs of the rural audiences. The study adopted a descriptive survey method. The scope of this study is Edo State University, Uzairue. The University is in the village, making it appropriate to study the staff of the University who then fit into rural audiences. However, the sample was drawn from the staff of the Faculty of Arts, Management, and Social Sciences. The Faculty has 43 members of staff and five of whom were randomly selected. The reason for this sample size is because the descriptive study that uses interviews as data collection techniques, does not require a large sample size if the transcription of the interview is to be done. Three research questions were formulated to guide the study. The findings of the study showed FRCN has a poor social responsibility towards its rural audiences. The findings further showed that FRCN programs are hindered by language barrier, poor disposal income of the rural audiences, and power problem problems.

Conclusion

The study concludes that FRCN has no social responsibility for its rural audiences. Nigerian rural audiences do not have good access to radio broadcasting as a result of illiteracy, the language barrier, and power problems.

Recommendations

The study recommends that FRCN should take a re-appraisal of its program philosophies and carefully plan for effective rural audience participation, engagement to promote economic and social development. Government should improve social amenities such as electricity in the rural communities. FRCN should adopt more local languages or Pidgin English to disseminate messages as well as improve the quality of their programs, making them more appealing to rural consumers.

References

1. Afolayan, S., Abuya, J., Kumuyi, O., & Adedowole F. (2011). *The Role of the Media in the Implementation of the Health Components of the Millennium Development Goals: The Nigeria Experience*. *Mediacom Journal*, (14), 32.
2. Anthony, P. (2016). *Social Media Communication in the Artisan Economy*. *International Journal of Mobile Computing and Multimedia Communication*, Vol. 7 (3).
3. Bora, A. (2012). *Media as a Catalyst for Higher Education*. *New Media and Mass Communication Journal*.
4. Daramola, I. (2014). *Community Media and Rural Journalism in Africa*. Akure: Adulawo Publishers.
5. *Choices: An Analysis of How Nigerians Consume Television Programmes During the pandemic*. Unpublished.
6. Ezugwu, M. & Nzekwe, N. (2015). *Influence of Breast Cancer Broadcast Media Campaigns on the Health Behavior of Women in South-East Nigeria*. *ESUT Journal of Media Studies*, Vol. 9 (No 1), 190-201.
7. Ndolo, I., Eze, V., & Nwodo, J. (2015). *Influence of Cervical Cancer Media Campaigns on the Knowledge: Attitude and Behavior of Women in South-East Nigeria*. *ESUT Journal of Media Studies*, Vol. 9 (No 1), 166-180.
8. McQuail, D. (2005). *McQuail's Mass Communication Theory*. 5th edition London: Sage publication.
9. Okinyi, N. (2019). *Communities' Participation in Kenya through Community Radio Broadcasting Stations in Kenya on Development: A Critical Review*. *Global Media Journal*, Vol. 17(32), 10-13.
10. Sambe, J. (2005). *Introduction to Mass Communication Practice in Nigeria*. Ibadan; Spectrum Books.
11. Scheufele, D. A. (2008a). *Framing effects*. In W. Donsbach (Ed), *the International Encyclopedia of Communication* (pp. 1863-1868), Oxford: Black well.
12. Scheufele, D. A. (1999b). *Framing as a Theory of media effects*. *Journal of Communication*, 49(1), 103-122.
13. Semiu, B. (2012). *Communicating Anti-Malaria Information Through Radio*. *Journal Media and Aesthetics*. Special Issue.
14. Sophie, L. & Class, H. de V. (2019). *News framing effects*. Routledge: 2 Park Square, Milton Park, Abingdon.
15. Ogbiti C. & Onosu, J. (2012). *The Mass Media and Promotion of Gender Equality in African Politics*. *Journal of Media and Aesthetics*, pp. 138.
16. Ugande, G. B. (2007). *Communication for Development: An Introductory Text*. Markurdi, Benue Culture Media Nig.
17. Ugwonno, C. and Ngonso, B. (2013). *Media Coverage and Audience Awareness of Infectious Diseases*. *Mediacom Journal*, No. 17.