

Effective Communication Through Radio Streaming During And After Covid-19 Pandemic In Selected Frcn Network Centre In Nigeria

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Abstract: Digital media has always proved to be a medium that adapts easily to crisis situations, especially, at times of major natural disasters and health emergencies. However, in the current crisis caused by covid-19, Radio streaming which is a development in modern radio broadcasting and a form of digital media has again stood out as being an essential medium for the treatment of information about the pandemic. This study explores the effective communication through radio streaming during and after covid-19 pandemic in selected FRCN network centre in Nigeria. A survey research method was used in which in-depth interview method was adopted as research instruments. The population of the study are Radio presenters and journalists in Radio stations. A total number of four radio presenters from Federal Radio Cooperation of Nigeria (FRCN) Abuja, Enugu, Ibadan and Kaduna were selected using purposive sampling technique. Data was analyzed using thematic analysis. The result of the study revealed that most of the interviewees noted that radio streaming is popular in Nigeria and the use of mobile phone has made it readily available to people in the society even after Covid-19 pandemic. In addition, result showed that radio now has wider coverage as a result of streaming as people from other part of the world can access the local radio irrespective of their location, radio is now more attractive and more interesting as a result of some visual parts involved and that radio now has wider audience as compared to the past as people can listen to local radio as well as stream. The study recommends that The regulatory agencies should create a more friendly business environment for internet operators by providing regulations that are consumer friendly as well as initiate the reduction of data tariff to give more people access to the internet for their streaming services.

Keywords: Communication, Covid-19, Internet radio, Network Center, Radio streaming,

Introduction

The digital revolution has quickly introduced new meaning and prospects to the radio industry in recent years. Structured and complicated radio programming is now more accessible than ever before thanks to greater accessibility streaming, radio gardens and media technology. One such technological improvement is enhanced radio delivery capability. In comparison to previous years, niche radio content programming is far more accessible. The same technology has considerably expanded the scope of radio initiatives, making it easier to get to listeners on mobile devices. Listeners can now access radio material in a variety of ways. New and various ways to listen to streaming audio material directly from a website or favorite social network. Nevertheless, radio streaming has become an effective tool in Nigeria, alongside serving as a news and communication channel for Nigerian citizens. Access to mobile telephony, particularly among digitally adept youths, has made information transmission as simple as a tap of the finger. As the epidemic encroaches on and emasculates global activities, online streaming platforms have been used as an information conduit for citizens.

Its relevance has grown as a result of the government's implementation of a lockdown policy to combat the spread of the Covid-19 virus. As a result, it has evolved into an active tool for interaction and communication in the dissemination of reasonable as well as implausible misinformation. A considerable body of literature exists on radio live streaming. A comprehensive examination of communication and information technologies reveals both change and continuity. Radio streaming is a subset of the Internet, which, according to DiMaggio et al. (2001, p. 307), relates to the online system or networks that connect(s) people and information via computers and other digital gadgets, facilitating person-to-person communication and information access.

The Internet is a significant instrument that has evolved for the aim of disseminating information; consequently, the media serves as an information superior in terms of regulating what information is made available to individuals as well as the perceptions that people have regarding various subjects. Radio streaming is broadly defined as a collection of websites and web-based technologies that enable mass connection, conversation, and sharing among network participants (Murphy, 2013, p. 3). These many media sources and communication networks were critical in aiding upheavals like the Arab Spring (AlSayyad & Guvenc, 2015).

Statement of the Problem

The huge amount of competitive messages on various media is intended to fill the knowledge gap that is prevalent in our culture. Since the first case of coroner virus was reported in Nigeria on February 27, 2020, in which a 44-year-old Italian citizen who arrived in Nigeria on February 24th brought the virus, Nigerians both at home and abroad have become extremely concerned, relying solely on different media outlets for up-to-date information about the virus. Radio was not left behind in the spread of virus information, since critical information on virus updates was broadcast via radio. Nevertheless, the researcher is interested in examining radio streaming as a successful communication medium during and after the Covid 19 outbreak in Nigeria. It is necessary to investigate the impact of new forms of modern media on the Nigerian populace. This study aims to discover the impact of radio streaming on Nigerians' preference for modern radio streaming over traditional radio.

Research Questions

- i. Do Nigerians prefer Radio Streaming during Covid 19 than after Covid?
- ii. What are the factors responsible for the choice of radio streaming during and after Covid 19?
- iii. What are the characteristics of modern radio?

Radio Broadcasting

Radio, in its most fundamental level, is communication via radio waves. This encompasses both radio for person-to-person conversation and radio for mass communication. Both of these roles are still carried out today. Even though most people connect radio with public-access radio stations, radio wave technology is employed in everything from television to cell phones, making it a main channel for person-to-person communication. Nevertheless, the use of radio for fostering development goals was crucial. First, Nigeria, like a majority of developing nations, implemented the audiovisual mode, facing the numerous difficulties of independence (boosted literacy, modernization of the rural population, higher efficiency, and national integration) and looking for historical shortcuts to overcome the lack of development.⁹⁶⁴ (Fougeyrollas, 1967). Radio stations also had a part in raising people's consciousness, which helped to shape a new type of citizen behavior among the Nigerian electorate. As Samb points out, radio stations were able to responsibly clarify citizens' political choices via the various election-related broadcasts. (Samb 2000: 44).

The mobile phone is a tool that improves efficiency and performance for radio journalists. Mobile telephone altered the way radio operated. The device's small size is an additional benefit that it offers.

Radio Streaming

Radio live streaming refers to online streaming media simultaneously recorded and broadcast in real time. It is often referred to simply as streaming, however this abbreviated term is ambiguous due to the fact that "streaming" may refer to any media delivered and played back simultaneously without requiring a completely downloaded. Streaming is a technology used to deliver content to computers and mobile devices over the internet. Streaming transmits data usually audio and video, but increasingly other kinds as well as a continuous flow, which allows the recipients to begin to watch or listen almost immediately.

Streaming is the quickest way to access internet-based content, but it is not the only way. Progressive download is another option that was used for years before streaming was possible.

Internet radio (also web radio, net radio, streaming radio, e-radio, IP radio, and online radio) is a digital audio service transmitted via the Internet. Broadcasting on the Internet is usually referred to as webcasting since it is not transmitted broadly through wireless means.

While most stations with Internet access are connected out of a desire to increase contact with the world at large and out of a concern for improving visibility, the fact is that the Internet presence of many radio stations has been facilitated by the relative simplicity of the technology and the many advantages it offers. Among these are the economy of making large investments for acquiring and maintaining short wave transmitters, better commercial visibility for local products being launched in the advertising market, and increasing the radio audience. (Ouattara, 1997: 8).

Characteristic Of Radio Streaming

- Broadcast live radio programming
- Embed on a website
- Stream playlists of music and podcasts
- Create a backlog of on-demand radio programs on the same platform
- Manage several radio stations through the same account with multi-channel support
- Extend your reach beyond local markets to other audiences without geographic limitations
- Host radio shows directly from your Facebook or Twitter page
- Receive detailed analytics to understand audience size and demographics

Theoretical Review

Media Morphosis

Roger Fidler originated the concept in 1997. Media morphosis, according to Fidler (1997), is the alteration of communication media, typically resulting from the complex interaction of real or imagined requirements, political and economic constraints, and social and technological advancements. The notion that the media are sophisticated adaptive systems is at the heart of media morphosis. In other words, the media, like other systems, spontaneously reorganize themselves in response to external stimuli. According to Fidler, new media develop progressively from the transformation of existing media rather than emerging suddenly and spontaneously. The "media" that are used to convey information have a big influence on the messages they send out, as well as the meanings and other views of those messages. In basic terms, the term suggests that the mode of communication—book, podcast, social media post, etc.—will somehow influence how the information is seen (even, maybe, if the same content is delivered across many media).

Empirical Review

Radio audience measurement is an area that has attracted a lot of interest from academics and businesses alike as the outcomes from such studies have played important roles in helping radio houses to be customer-focused. Advertisers have also relied on the outcomes of such studies when taking media-purchase decisions. In Nigeria for example studies on the subject matter have been undertaken by El-Moghazi (2017), Ajeagbu et al (2015), Chioma et al (2015), Ray-Udejah (2014). El-Moghazi (2017) focused attention on future of International Radio Regulations: Transformation Towards Sharing. A study carried out on the subject, by Ajeagbu et al (2015) arrived at the conclusion that programming pattern was the most critical factor affecting audience satisfaction. It was also their opinion that radio plays a very significant role in the lives of young people (undergraduates) as it informs, educates and entertains them and that information gotten from the radio can be essential in decision making. Chioma et al (2015) in their own study arrived at the conclusion that the presentation style of the on-air-personalities (OAPs), the "house style" of the radio house as well as the quality of programme content are the factors that give a radio house the winning edge. Nwoka, et al (2009) in their own study arrived at the conclusion that preference exist between radio stations amongst listeners in Port Harcourt with programme content being the most important determinant of audience share.

Research Methodology

In this study, the descriptive survey research method was used in this study in the form of in-depth interview. A descriptive survey research is a type of research method used to describe a population's characteristics. The population of this study are Radio presenters and journalists in Radio stations. A total number of four radio presenters from Federal Radio Cooperation of Nigeria (FRCN) Abuja, Enugu, Ibadan and Kaduna were selected using purposive sampling technique. The scope of this study is limited to (4) FRCN) stations namely , Ibadan, Kaduna ,Enugu and Abuja national Stations. The method of data collection for this study is Qualitative. Data was collected in both oral and written form. Furthermore the study utilizes both primary and secondary sources of data collection. Primary sources involved field work and secondary sources involved Journal records, official gazette and other documented records. The purposive sampling technique was used because it focuses on selecting participants possessing characteristics associated with the research study. Thematic analysis was used for the data analysis.

Data Analysis

A total number of Four (4) respondents were interviewed in this study. The respondents are radio presenters from 4 selected FRCN stations.

Research Question One:

Do Nigerians prefer Radio Streaming during Covid 19 than after Covid?

Respondent One

Most Nigerians especially the older generation still prefer the conventional radio, however radio streaming is common among the younger generation.

Respondent Two

The use of GSM and mobile phones has made radio streaming to be popular and easy among Nigerians. Even phones that are not smart phones do have radio facilities. So radio streaming has become a common way of listening to news among Nigerians even after the Covid 19.

Respondent Three

Radio streaming is a common way of accessing information and listening to news, sports program and various forms of entertainments. Mobile phones and internet has enabled more access to radio streaming in our society even after the Covid-19 pandemic.

Respondent Four

Well, radio streaming is not a new thing in Nigeria especially in this era of mobile phones. Most phones have radio streaming gadgets, so it makes it so easy to connect to a radio station live on your mobile phone. Well, so many people made use of radio streaming during the Covid-19 period because mobile phone is a handing device that you can always carry about and after Covid-19, many people as still making use of it.

From, the responses of the interviewees on research question one, it can be deduced that radio streaming is popular in Nigeria and the use of mobile phone has made it readily available to people in the society even after Covid-19 pandemic. With the information gotten from data base of Nigeria Broadcasting Commission, there were 85.49 million internet users in Nigeria in January 2020, the number of internet users increased by 2.2 million (+2.6 %) between 2019 and 2020. This shows that many Nigerians have a lot to do with radio streaming during Covid 19 than after Covid.

Research Question Two:

What are the factors responsible for the choice of radio streaming during and after covid 19?

Respondent One

The use of mobile phones is one of the major factors responsible for the choice of radio streaming.

Respondent Two

Radio is easily accessible even without internet on some mobile phones, so it is one of the factors that contributes to its use among people.

Respondent Three

Internet and social media have made radio streaming easily accessible. With the help of social media platforms like Facebook, an individual can easily connect to a live radio program and also watch it live on Facebook, Youtube or Twitter.

Respondent Four

Internet has given radio a wider coverage. With internet, people can connect from any where in the world to a radio program and watch live radio programs. Once a phone is charged, people can have access to radio streaming. Other devices such as bluetooth gadgets can also allow people to stream live programs on radio.

From the responses, most of the respondents were of the opinion that the use of mobile phones and internet has made radio streaming more accessible. The study finds out that radio now has wider coverage as a result of streaming as people from other part of the world can access the local radio irrespective of their location, radio is now more attractive and more interesting as a result of some visual parts involved and that radio now has wider audience as compared to the past as people can listen to local radio as well as stream.

Research Question Three:

What are Characteristics of modern radio streaming?

Respondent One

One of the main characteristics of radio streaming is the ability for viewers to watch live radio programs on social media platforms. Radio now has wider audience as compared to the past as people can listen to local radio as well as stream. Thus wider audience is involved.

Respondent Two

Due to the advent of technology, audience can now have access to information on a radio program at their leisure time because of the streaming technology.

Respondent Three

Radio streaming offers quality production and better sound quality. Radio is now more attractive and more interesting as a result of some visual parts involved

Respondent Four

It has a wider coverage within and outside the country. People outside the country can also listen to programs and call in to participate in discussion. It can easily used on mobile phones which is easy and handy to carry about

From the responses of the respondents, viewers can watch live radio programs on social media platforms, quality production and better sound quality and has a wider coverage within and outside the country. Some of the characteristics of radio streaming as finds out by the study is that, radio has now been upgraded to a two sense or two dimensional communication medium as some visual part is involved as a result of streaming. The number of people calling in through phone in program is appreciating by the day this shows more people now have something to do with the radio broadcasting .Radio messages or information are no more one time opportunity due to streaming, as people can have access to the information at their leisure time.

Conclusion

This study examines effective communication through radio streaming during and after covid-19 pandemic in selected FRCN network centre in Nigeria. Information obtained from the respondents revealed that there were improvements recorded as a result of streaming in radio broadcasting. Radio now has wider coverage as a result of streaming as people from other part of the world can access the local radio irrespective of their location. Radio is now more attractive and more interesting as a result of some visual parts involved. The result of the first research question revealed that most of the interviewees noted that radio streaming is popular in Nigeria and the use of mobile phone has made it readily available to people in the society even after Covid-19 pandemic. Radio is now been upgraded to a two sense or two dimensional communication medium as some visual part is involved as a result of streaming. The result of the second research question showed that radio now has wider coverage as a result of streaming as people from other part of the world can access the local radio irrespective of their location, radio is now more attractive and more interesting as a result of some visual parts involved and that radio now has wider audience as compared to the past as people can listen to local radio as well as stream. Radio messages or information are no more immediate due to streaming as people can have access to the information at their leisure time. This finding supports the study of Chioma et al (2015) who reported in their own study that the

presentation style of the on-air-personalities (OAPs), the “house style” of the radio house as well as the quality of programme content are the factors that give a radio house the winning edge.

Recommendations

1. The regulatory agencies should create a more friendly business environment for internet operators by providing regulations that are consumer friendly as well as initiate the reduction of data tariff to give more people access to the internet for their streaming services.
2. From the conclusion above it can be recommended that all local radio stations should stream ALL their programs since it give wider coverage and audience so as to improve the rate at which their stations are been explored and improve access to radio broadcasting.

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