

Journal of **Communication** (JCOMM)

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Promotion at Select Stations of North Central, Nigeria**



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Radio Broadcasting and the Adaptation of Folk Media in Cultural Promotion at Select Stations of North Central, Nigeria

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Accepted: 7th Feb 2024 Received in Revised Form: 22nd Feb 2024 Published: 5th Mar 2024

Abstract

Purpose: This study aims to explore the utilization of folk media in Nigeria for radio broadcasting and cultural advocacy, focusing on preserving and advancing cultural heritage in Northcentral Nigeria.

Methodology: Employing the Uses and Gratification Theory as a framework, the research utilized a mixed-method approach to gather data.

Findings: The findings of the study highlight the importance of enhancing strategies to capture and sustain listener interest in folk media programmes. Incorporating interactive elements, storytelling techniques, or other methods to improve audience engagement is recommended to increase audience interest.

Unique contribution to theory, policy and practice: The study suggests that with the advancement of technology and the popularity of radio broadcasting, there is a need to explore the adaptation of folk media to this medium. This adaptation could ensure the longevity of folk media and reach wider audiences. Additionally, the study underscores the significance of utilizing folk media for cultural advocacy and recommends efforts to enhance strategies for promoting and preserving cultural heritage through radio broadcasting.

Keywords: *Folk media, Cultural Value, Adaptation, Radio*

Introduction

Cultural preservation and promotion are pivotal for the identity and development of any society. Nigeria, with its diverse ethnic groups and rich cultural heritage, faces the challenge of adapting traditional folk media to contemporary platforms like radio broadcasting to reach a wider audience. Radio is seen as a powerful medium that can overcome the challenge of illiteracy and contribute to the social progress. This view is shared by various experts in mass communication. Radio delivers messages and information to the intended audience. As a form of mass media, radio is aware of its responsibility to the society, especially in terms of culture and values. Nigeria is a large African nation with a diverse population that speaks different languages, belongs to different ethnic groups, and practices different cultures. Each of these communities possesses a unique cultural legacy transmitted through the ages. Their customary modes of interaction, encompassing attire, language, salutations, agricultural practices, celebrations, dances, and more, serve as expressions of their cultural essence. Culture encompasses the entirety of arts, sciences, beliefs, behaviors, and attitudes that delineate the way of life for individuals within familial, tribal, religious, or other social affiliations they align with.

According to Lisa (2015), Communication and culture share a symbiotic relationship within any social group or community, serving as inseparable facets of human existence. Communication serves as the conduit for the transmission and expression of culture across all levels. Conversely, culture profoundly shapes interactions, behaviors, attire, language, cuisine, dance forms, architectural styles, and other activities. These cultural traditions play a vital role in passing down values and norms to future generations through conventional methods of communication and education. In Nigeria, a diverse nation, cultural preservation and dissemination traditionally rely on two primary forms of communication: verbal and nonverbal. Verbal communication encompasses town criers, reverence for elders, singing, storytelling, dancing, drumming, historical narratives, and market interactions. Nonverbal communication, often complementing verbal forms, includes demonstrative and para-visual aspects like weaving, hairstyling, monuments, crafts, architectural styles, and culinary practices.

The use of modern media, such as television, for socialization and advertising has overshadowed the rich cultural traditions that are shared during interethnic marriage and other ceremonies. These ceremonies, which were essential for our coexistence as a people, should have been integrated into the system. Just as we strive to market our material goods and governmental images, we should also brand and promote our indigenous culture to the world.

Statement of Problem

Radio, once primarily recognized for its roles in informing, educating, and entertaining the public, has evolved beyond its conventional functions. It now serves as a powerful tool for raising awareness and shaping public opinion, while also contributing to the promotion of our culture both domestically and internationally. Alongside other contemporary media forms, radio exerts a widespread influence on various aspects of our lives and societal progress. Consequently, it

possesses the potential to rejuvenate and promote our native culture and heritage for sustainable development. This objective can be realized through the amplification of local content within radio programming. Numerous cultural celebrations, such as the Mmanwu masquerade carnivals in Eastern Nigeria, the Argungu fishing festival in Northern Nigeria, the Calabar Cultural Carnival, the Eyo masquerade in Lagos, and others, hold significance for preservation and global recognition, serving as sources of both cultural appreciation and economic revenue. This study seeks to explore the integration of traditional media practices into radio broadcasting and its impact on cultural advocacy in Nigeria.

Objectives of the Study

The broad objective of this study is to ascertain the Adaptation of folk media for radio broadcasting and cultural promotion in Nigeria. More specifically, the study is guided by the following objectives::

- i. to find out ways the folk media can be adapted for radio broadcasting
- ii. to ascertain the benefits of adapting folk media to radio broadcasting
- iii. to determine the challenges of adapting folk media to radio broadcasting

Review of Concepts

Folk Media

Folk media, such as folk songs, folk music, traditional drama, and theatre arts, encapsulate the cultural identity of a people (Iyyanar and Jebakumar, 2020). They embody the folk dance, rural drama, and musical diversity of villagers, along with their art and crafts works (Iyyanar and Jebakumar, 2020). These forms of media are not external to the people like mass media; rather, they are integral to their culture (Nwabueze, 2007). Various forms of Oramedia, including the town crier, church gatherings, village square events, market transactions, traditional council meetings, dances, music performances, divination practices, native languages, proverbs, and folklore, constitute essential components of folk media (Ugboajah, 1985).

Despite misconceptions, rural populations heavily rely on traditional communication channels for information dissemination. Contrary to popular belief, traditional and modern cultural expressions can coexist harmoniously, representing an ongoing and adapted cultural continuum rather than conflicting entities (Chukwu, 2016).. Traditional communication systems, collectively owned by societies, have withstood assimilation attempts by Western media. Scholars have recognized their diverse applications for development, emphasizing the importance of understanding these systems' structures, patterns, and uses (Gusfied, 2017).

The role of the "town crier" is significant in traditional communication, employing various forms such as idiophones, membranophones, and symbolography. Signals, signs, and symbolic displays facilitate communication between individuals and communities, conveying messages with cultural significance. Radio stations like FRCN and Ashi Waves actively promote Nigerian

culture through programs, carnivals, and interactive discussions. They serve as platforms for preserving and disseminating cultural heritage, adapting oral traditions for contemporary audiences. Traditional organizations and clubs also contribute to communication dynamics, disseminating information and influencing opinion within communities. These entities play crucial roles in preserving cultural traditions and fostering community engagement.

Imoh (2017) categorized folk media into eleven distinct groups: idiophones, membranophones, aerophones, symbolography, signals, signs, objectifications, color schemes, music, extra-mundane communication, and symbolic displays.

Idiophones, such as gongs and wooden drums, generate sound independently through materials manipulation, while membranophones, like the Yoruba talking drum, produce sound by vibrating membranes. Aerophones, including flutes and horns, create sound by vibrating air columns. Symbolography involves symbolic writing or representation, with examples like manipulated palm fronds conveying different meanings among the Tiv people. Signals, like drum alerts, are tangible forms of conveying messages, and radio stations like FRCN actively promote Nigerian culture through programs and carnivals. Ashi Waves F.M Radio in Benue state showcases Tiv culture through various programs, preserving oral traditions and broadening their audience.

Signs are meaningful representations facilitating communication, while objectifies, like the kola nut, hold significance for specific societies. Colour schemes convey meanings through color combinations, with colors like red and green carrying cultural connotations. Music, performed by roving troupes, serves as a source of information and gossip. Extra-mundane communication involves practices connecting the living with supernatural entities, while symbolic displays, like facial expressions, convey emotions universally. Traditional institutions and clubs serve as conduits for disseminating information, with some, like international organizations, operating newspapers and engaging in communication interactions. These organizations play influential roles in social, religious, and political spheres, with members receiving advance information on policy matters. Evaluating their activities is crucial within the broader context of national security and development, ensuring they do not jeopardize the welfare of society.

Radio Broadcasting

Radio broadcasting involves transmitting audio and sometimes accompanying metadata via radio waves to public radio receivers (Guarnieri, 2012). These waves are emitted by either a terrestrial radio station or a satellite orbiting the Earth, depending on the broadcasting method. To access the content, listeners require a broadcast radio receiver. Often, stations are part of a radio network, offering content through shared formats, syndication, simulcast, or a combination of these. Various modulation techniques are used for transmission: AM stations utilize amplitude modulation, FM stations use frequency modulation, both being older analog standards, while newer digital stations employ standards like DAB, HD radio, or DRM. Television broadcasting, a separate service, also utilizes radio frequencies to transmit television signals.

Donna L. H. (2021) argues that radio broadcasting is an intriguing and intricate domain that has undergone substantial evolution since its inception. It encompasses the dissemination of audio content, occasionally accompanied by relevant metadata, through radio waves to receivers accessible to the general public.

Terrestrial Radio Broadcasting

In terrestrial radio broadcasting, land-based radio stations broadcast the radio waves. These stations are often affiliated with a radio network, which provides content in a common radio format. This content can be in the form of broadcast syndication, simulcast, or both.

Satellite Radio Broadcasting

On the other hand, satellite radio involves broadcasting radio waves from a satellite in Earth's orbit. This method allows for broader coverage and can reach areas where terrestrial radio signals may be weak or non-existent.

Modulation Types

Radio stations use a variety of modulations when broadcasting. The more traditional analog audio formats are FM (frequency modulation) and AM (amplitude modulation). Radio stations that broadcast in AM and FM transmit at different frequencies.

Digital Transmission of Radio

Newer digital radio stations broadcast in many digital audio standards thanks to the development of digital technology. DRM (Digital Radio Mondiale), HD Radio, and DAB (Digital Audio Broadcasting) are a few of these. Benefits of digital broadcasting include higher channel capacity and better sound quality.

Broadcasting on Television

A different service called television broadcasting uses radio frequencies to transmit television (visual) signals. It has had a significant influence on society and transformed the way we consume visual information.

Thus, technological developments, such the growing ubiquity of streaming services and smart speakers, will probably have an impact on radio transmission in the future. Even if it might encounter difficulties, traditional terrestrial radio is probably going to endure and develop alongside the expansion of internet- and online-based radio services.

Review of Literature

Folk Media and Radio Broadcasting

Folk media and radio broadcasting have an interesting relationship. Folk media refers to the traditional forms of communication and entertainment that have been passed down through generations within a particular community or culture. This can include folk songs, storytelling,

dances, and other forms of artistic expression (Chukwu, 2016). On the other hand, radio broadcasting is a modern means of communication that involves the transmission of audio content to a wide audience. It allows for the dissemination of information, entertainment, and cultural content to reach a larger and more diverse audience.

According to Enighe (2016), radio broadcasting can play a significant role in preserving and promoting folk media. It provides a platform for folk artists and performers to showcase their talents and share their cultural heritage with a broader audience. By featuring folk songs, traditional tales, and other forms of folk media on the radio, these art forms can be preserved and kept alive for future generations.

Additionally, radio broadcasting can also contribute to the evolution and adaptation of folk media. It allows for the fusion of traditional and contemporary elements, creating new and innovative forms of expression. Through radio programs and shows that incorporate folk elements, there is an opportunity to revitalize and modernize folk media, making it more accessible and appealing to a wider audience. In summary, radio broadcasting can serve as a bridge between folk media and the modern world. It helps preserve traditional art forms while also providing a platform for their evolution and adaptation.

Radio and Cultural Promotion

The relationship between radio and cultural promotion is well-established and widely recognized. Numerous studies and examples highlight the significant role that radio plays in promoting and preserving cultural heritage. It is emphasized that the important role of radio in promoting cultural diversity, linguistic plurality, and intercultural dialogue UNESCO (2009). It highlights how radio can contribute to the safeguarding of cultural heritage and the promotion of cultural expressions.

Furthermore, through programs like World Radio Day, the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) highlights the importance of radio in promoting culture. Every year on February 13th, World Radio Day is observed with the goal of increasing public awareness of the value of radio in advancing cultural variety, offering a forum for the exercise of free speech, and promoting mutual understanding.

Various radio programmes and initiatives around the world also demonstrate the relationship between radio and cultural promotion. For example, community radio stations often focus on promoting local culture, traditions, and artists by broadcasting music, interviews, and documentaries related to cultural heritage. Moreover, the popularity of radio programmes dedicated to traditional and folk music, storytelling, and cultural events further highlights the role of radio in promoting cultural expressions and preserving cultural heritage.

It is widely acknowledged that radio plays a crucial role in cultural promotion, as emphasized by organizations like UNESCO and through the existence of initiatives such as World

Radio Day. The actual practices and initiatives by radio stations worldwide also testify to the relationship between radio and cultural promotion.

Theoretical Framework

The study adopts the Uses and Gratification Theory as its theoretical framework, which elucidates the purposes and uses of mass media, including social media, by individuals, communities, and society at large (Chen, Gina Masullo, 2011). Originating in 1974 by Elihu Katz, Jay Blumler, and Michael Gurevitch, this theory posits that media consumption is driven by the pursuit of enjoyment, where individuals select media that align with their beliefs and needs (LittleJohn, 2002, as cited in Okinda, 2007). It underscores audience initiative in media usage, emphasizing individual preferences over media influence, and recognizes the competition between media and other demand-satisfying options, such as face-to-face communication (West & Turner, 2004, p. 21).

Adapting folk media to radio broadcasting entails understanding audience needs and motivations to provide meaningful gratifications. By fostering community engagement, sharing stories, and educating listeners about cultural significance, radio programs can enhance audience connection and appreciation for folk media. The Uses and Gratifications Theory offers a framework for this adaptation, emphasizing audience-centric approaches that fulfill audience needs and motivations (West & Turner, 2004, p. 21). Through this lens, folk media can be tailored to radio broadcasting, catering to audience preferences and enriching cultural discourse.

Methodology

This study employs a mixed-approach to gather empirical data. Initially, qualitative interviews were conducted with folk media practitioners, radio broadcasters, cultural experts, and community members to obtain insights into their perceptions of traditional folk media and its adaptation to radio broadcasting. Additionally, content analysis of radio programmes featuring adapted folklore was conducted to assess the extent to which traditional content is preserved and the impact it has on cultural promotion.

Data Presentation and Analysis

Research Objective One: to find out ways the folk media can be adapted for radio broadcasting

Table 1: Ways The Folk Media is Adapted For Radio Broadcasting

Option	Frequency	Percentage
translating traditional folk tales	8	67
songs, proverbs	2	17
cultural rituals	1	8
Very Low Acceptance	1	8
Total	12	100

Field Source: Survey, 2023

Table 1 outlines the ways in which folk media is adapted for radio broadcasting, providing frequencies and percentages for each option. The table reveals that (67% from the table analyzed indicates a predominant focus on translating traditional folk tales for radio broadcasting. This approach likely leverages the narrative richness and cultural significance embedded in folk tales to captivate the audience through radio, (17%) affirms from the result analyzed from the table suggests a recognition of the value of musical elements and concise cultural expressions in radio broadcasts, contributing to the diversity of the content (8%) of the result reveals that adapting cultural rituals for radio broadcasting is less frequent compared to folk tales and songs/proverbs. The lower percentage indicates that there might be challenges in translating or conveying ritualistic elements effectively through an audio medium like radio while (8%) of the remaining suggest that there is acknowledgment of certain adaptations facing resistance or challenges in gaining acceptance. Further investigation into the reasons behind this low acceptance could provide insights for refining future strategies.

Overall Implications:

The dominance of translating traditional folk tales highlights a preference for narrative storytelling, showcasing the cultural richness and diversity inherent in folk tales. Thus, the inclusion of songs and proverbs acknowledges the importance of music and concise cultural expressions in radio broadcasting, adding variety to the content.

In summary, the table suggests a varied landscape of adaptations for folk media in radio broadcasting, with a strong emphasis on traditional folk tales. It also hints at the need for a nuanced understanding of audience preferences and potential challenges in adapting certain cultural elements for radio.

Table 2: The Benefits of Adapting Folk Media to Radio Broadcasting

Options	Frequency	Percentage
preservation of cultural heritage	7	58
increased audience reach	3	25
promotion of multiculturalism	1	8
entertainment	1	8
educational value		
Total	12	100

Field Source: Survey, 2023

This table outlines the benefits of adaptation of folk media to radio broadcasting. From the analysis, (58%) of the respondents indicates a strong recognition of radio broadcasting as a medium for safeguarding and transmitting cultural traditions, stories, and values. Adapting folk media for this purpose ensures the continuity of cultural heritage, making it accessible to a wider audience, (25%) of the results analyzed indicates that adapting folk media for radio helps in expanding the reach of cultural content beyond local or traditional boundaries. This aligns with the democratizing nature of radio, allowing diverse audiences to access and appreciate various cultural elements, (8%) shows of respondents affirms that the promotion of multiculturalism represents an acknowledgment that radio, as a medium, can contribute to fostering an appreciation for diverse cultures. While not as dominant as the preservation of cultural heritage, this benefit signifies the role of radio in creating a multicultural and inclusive space by featuring content from different cultural backgrounds, (8%) affirms that adapting folk media for radio broadcasting serves an entertainment purpose, potentially attracting a broader audience. The inclusion of entertaining elements can make cultural content more engaging and appealing to listeners.

The dominant emphasis on the preservation of cultural heritage reflects a strong commitment to using radio as a tool for cultural conservation and transmission. The findings underscore the diverse roles radio can play in promoting and sharing cultural heritage on a broader scale.

Table 3: The Challenges of Adapting Folk Media to Radio Broadcasting

Options	Frequency	Percentage
Understanding and respecting the cultural context	6	50
Production costs	3	25
Audience engagement	2	17
Total	12	100

Field Source: Survey, 2023

The table outlines the challenges associated with adapting folk media to radio broadcasting, providing frequencies and percentages for each option. According to the table (50%) of the sample respondents indicate that understanding and respecting the cultural context pose a significant challenge in adapting folk media for radio broadcasting. It emphasizes the importance of maintaining cultural authenticity and sensitivity in the adaptation process to avoid misinterpretations or misrepresentations, (25%) indicate that financial considerations are a notable challenge. Thus, adapting folk media for radio may require investments in quality production, including recording, sound engineering, and potentially the involvement of skilled professionals. Limited resources could hinder the adaptation process, while (17%) affirms that maintaining listener interest and involvement with folk media content on radio poses difficulties. Strategies to enhance engagement, such as storytelling techniques or interactive elements, may need attention.

Results and Discussion

The findings of the study align with previous literature on the adaptation of folk media to radio broadcasting, particularly in the context of preserving cultural heritage and reaching a wider audience. Various scholars have emphasized the importance of adapting traditional cultural forms, including folk tales, songs, and rituals, to contemporary mediums like radio to ensure their preservation and transmission to future generations (Gubrium & Holstein, 2008; Agyekum, 2013). This adaptation process is seen as crucial for maintaining cultural continuity and identity in rapidly changing societies (Kaur, 2015). Similarly, the study's identification of benefits such as increased audience reach, promotion of multiculturalism, entertainment, and educational value is consistent with existing literature on the role of radio in cultural dissemination and community engagement (Lilleker & Koc-Michalska, 2015; Baran, 2017).

However, the study also highlights challenges encountered during the adaptation process, such as the potential loss of authenticity, linguistic barriers, and the difficulty in translating visual elements to an audio format. These challenges resonate with previous research that has acknowledged the complexities of adapting traditional performance practices to radio or other non-

visual mediums (Herzog, 2003; Kaur, 2015). Additionally, the study's mention of production costs and audience engagement issues reflects broader concerns within the field of radio production and programming, where resource constraints and audience preferences often shape content decisions (Dwyer, 2013; Hendy, 2013). This study unequivocally demonstrates the importance of integrating folk media in order to reach the uneducated. Traditional media includes village music, folk dancing, and rural theater. These performing arts are alive with energy and change gradually over time. The results of this investigation are corroborated by a study conducted in 2020 by Iyyanar and Jebakumar, which discovered that folk performance is a composite art in India. It is a complete work of art that combines aspects of pantomime, music, dance, religion, verifications, recitation of epic ballads, and festival peasants. Ceremonies, rituals, beliefs, and societal structures are all absorbed by it.

These media encourage people to lead falsely enlightened lives by failing to educate them about the differences between their real and original worlds, as well as the numerous positive events that occur and meet the basic requirements of specific groups of people. To transform these ignorant individuals into knowledgeable ones, it is imperative to implement efficient community-based communication tactics.

In this sense, there are creative individuals with additional knowledge and those with specialized training in vocal and instrumental music who can make a difference in the lives of those who are ignorant of various social ills and who can also inspire others to recognize their own abilities. In addition to the numerous radio stations, there are additional rurally focused media outlets that can serve as a highly powerful means of communication for enacting social change in underserved or undiscovered communities.

In tandem with the foregoing, Iyyanar and Jebakumar (2020) also discovered that, despite the fact that most people live in rural areas and are frequently unaware of any developments, there is a need for mass media and folk media integration in order to save and develop an ignorant society and its vulnerable members, including peasants, agricultural laborers, bonded laborers, women, children, and other oppressed groups. They also discovered that folk and traditional performing arts can be powerful tools in the fight for better laws, better health, better living and working conditions, and human rights.

Thus, developing and third-world nations have recognized the value of using folk media as a communication tool. In addition, it is imperative that mass media and folk media be integrated in order for them to gain popularity among one another by utilizing their own distinctive qualities.

Conclusion

This empirical paper contributes to the understanding of the adaptation of folk media to radio broadcasting and its role in cultural promotion in Nigeria. It highlights the significance of preserving traditional cultural practices through innovative means to ensure their sustainability and increased audience engagement. This research has provided insights for policymakers,

broadcasters, and cultural stakeholders to develop effective strategies for the adaptation and promotion of folk media within radio broadcasting, fostering cultural preservation in Nigeria.

Recommendations

Based on the results and discussion of the study, the study made the following recommendations:

- To preserve the authenticity and cultural meaning of folk media, radio broadcasters should consult with the original performers and experts of the folk media forms and ensure that they are involved in the adaptation process. They should also acknowledge the sources and origins of the folk media content and give credit to the creators and performers.
- To overcome the language barrier and reach a wider audience, radio broadcasters should use a mix of local and common languages and provide subtitles or translations when necessary. They should also use simple and clear language that can easily be understood by listeners. They should also avoid using jargon or technical terms that may confuse the audience.
- To compensate for the lack of visual elements and create a compelling audio experience, radio broadcasters should use sound effects, music, narration, and dialogue to convey the mood, tone, and atmosphere of the folk media content. They should also use descriptive language and imagery to help the listeners visualize the scenes and characters. They should also vary the pace, volume, and pitch of the audio to create contrast and interest.
- To create a sense of interactivity and engagement, radio broadcasters should invite feedback and participation from the listeners. They should also use social media platforms and mobile applications to connect with the audience and share additional information and resources. They should also create opportunities for the listeners to interact with the performers and experts of the folk media forms and learn more about their culture and traditions.

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