### PUBLIC PERCEPTION OF RADIO BROADCAST PROGRAMMES ON HEALTH MATTERS

###  (CASE STUDY OF ONITSHA RESIDENTS)

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**ABSTRACT**

The broad objective of this study is to examine public perception of radio broadcast programmes on health matters using radio listener in Onitsha in Anambra State.The study adopted the survey research design and randomly enrolled participants using the convenience sampling technique to choose 280 participant who are radio listeners as the sample size in the study. A total of 267 responses were retrieved while a total of 261 validated from the enrolled participants where all respondent are residents of Onitsha Metropolis. Self-constructed and validated questionnaire was used for data collection. The collected and validated questionnaires were analyzed using frequency tables and percentage. Findings of the study revealed that the extent at which health messages are communicated through radio broadcast is high. More so, Radio is an effective method to increase health knowledge and intentions to change health behavior. Thus The factors contributing to an individual’s preferred radio source of health information includes, time & affordability, electricity, portability and accessibility. The study therefore recommends that news and program content need to be carefully sourced and tailored to ensure that listeners in cities and at the grassroots, receive updated and accurate information about health matters.

**CHAPTER ONE**

**INTRODUCTION**

**1.1 Background of the study**

The fulfillment of specific communication demands is critical to society's continued survival. These requirements according to  Baran S. and Davis, D.  (2012) existed long before Johann Gutenberg invented the printing machine and Samuel Morse invented the electric telegraph. However, there are instances where the functions of mass communication are undesirable from the perspective of society or the individual. Surveillance, interpretation, connection, transfer of values, socialization, entertainment, and sharing of health information are all tasks that broadcast media such as radio and television provide for society.

Radio is an audio technology used to communicate with a big audience. The method of transmitting messages using electrical waves is known as radio. To put it another way, sound may be sent and received through these waves (Adelana, O.2020). The term "radio" is defined by Ajibade, O., and Alabi, S. (2017) as "the process of delivering and receiving communications via the air utilizing electromagnetic waves." It also refers to the action of broadcasting programs with the purpose of allowing people to listen to them. Radio is one of the most significant modes of communication, according to Ajibade, O. et'al (2017). People convey spoken words, music, and other communication signals to any location on the planet via radio. Music, news, conversation, interviews, sports event descriptions, and advertisements are now included in radio broadcasts. People listen to their vehicle radios on their way to work and during their free time to listen to their favorite programs on the radio. Radio broadcasts a wide range of news. Aside from broadcasting, radio is used by airline pilots, astronauts, construction workers, police officers, sailors, and others who operate in a variety of field which health communication is not overlooked.

Health communication is known as the  study and practice of transmitting promotional health information, such as through public health campaigns, health education, and between doctor and patient  (Dutta-Bergman, M. 2004). The goal of sharing health information is to improve health literacy and hence affect personal health decisions. The act of broadcasting and distributing information pertaining to health concerns to the population via radio is known as health communication. Radio broadcasting is the best and easiest means to deliver information and reach an audience, and it has a larger audience than television since radio is more cost-effective because it can reach people at home, at work, and in their automobiles. The audience can listen to the primetime hour of radio at any time since it used to transmit a variety of programs. The use of radio to convey health information is extremely beneficial since it reaches a large audience and is cost-effective.

Health practitioners have recognized the advantages of utilizing radio to broadcast health messages and have used it to educate listeners about illnesses. Because "serendipitous learning via radio can serve as a major mode of health information collecting," producing and airing this variety of programming is crucial for persons exposed to health messages (Dutta-Bergman, 2004). Because radio can quickly reach individuals, it has a significant influence on their lives. The prime time hour of radio broadcast is also convenient for listeners, therefore it may be a major success for the radio broadcast and has the potential to shape individual behavior in health-related subjects.

**1.2 Statement of the problem**

The necessity of successful health message transmission to the general public has prompted health communicators, educators, and advocates to research and use social media and other forms of mass media. Recent study has uncovered how people really interact with health information and how they like to interact with health information. This is because one of the fundamental goals of public health is to effectively communicate health information to individuals and communities. Individuals, groups, and societies may all benefit from timely and accurate communication. Individuals' awareness, knowledge, attitudes, self-efficacy, abilities, and commitment to behavior change can all be affected by effective health communication (Nguyen & Bellamy, 2006). When creating health education campaigns, health educators and professionals frequently use a diverse strategy to bridge the gap between real and desired means of vital health information acquisition. In addition to face-to-face programming, health education campaigns frequently include television advertising, Internet programs, radio broadcasts, and public service announcements.

However New technologies have evolved in the recent decade, leaving radio underused in the realm of health teaching and promotion. Though radio announcements and programs are still often used in health education campaigns, health communication practitioners and scholars are increasingly focusing on the growing availability of health information on the Internet. With the advancement of technology, little study has lately been undertaken on the usefulness of a community-based health education radio broadcast. Thus against this backdrop that this study seeks to examine public perception of radio broadcast programmes on health matters.

**1.3       OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY**

The broad objective of this study is to examine public perception of radio broadcast programmes on health matters. Specifically the study sought to:

1. Compare individuals’ actual and preferred methods of obtaining health messages;

2. Ascertain the extent at which health messages are communicated through radio broadcast.

3. Determine if the radio is an effective method to increase health knowledge and intentions to change health behavior.

4. Investigate the factors contributing to an individual’s preferred radio source of health information.

**1.4       RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

The research is guided by the following research question:

1. What are the  actual and preferred methods of obtaining health messages?
2. What is  the extent at which health messages are communicated through radio broadcast?
3. Is  radio  an effective method to increase health knowledge and intentions to change health behavior?
4. What are  the factors contributing to an individual’s preferred radio source of health information?

**1.5       SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY**

Findings from the study would have both empirical and practical significance. Practically, it will contribute to the articulation of radio broadcast usage  in sharing healthcare information and shaping health belief of community audience. Practically the study will serve as a document for government and non-governmental organizations, policy makers and healthcare professionals on  the need to regulate the credibility of health information shared on  radio presentations. Additionally, the result of the study  will serve as a data base to mass communication researchers who may be interested in learning the global healthcare infodemic. Empirically, the study will serve as reference material to both scholars and student who wishes to conduct further studies in related field.

**1.6       SCOPE OF THE STUDY**

The scope of this study borders on public perception of radio broadcast programmes on health matters. The study will compare individuals’ actual and preferred methods of obtaining health messages. It will ascertain the extent at which health messages are communicated through radio broadcast. It will determine if the radio is an effective method to increase health knowledge and intentions to change health behavior. It will investigate the factors contributing to an individual’s preferred radio source of health information. The study is however delimited Onitsha Resident in Anambra State.

**1.7       LIMITATION OF THE STUDY**

This research project, like all human endeavors, had some challenges that threatened to derail the study's completion. One of the reasons is that the time allotted for this work was so limited that the researcher did not have enough time to complete the task thoroughly. During data collection, the researcher also had to put forth extra effort to understand the respondents' interview schedules, several of whom fell into the incomprehensible age group. Also, there were financial and transportation constraints to deal with. Insufficient funds tend to impede the efficiency of the researcher in sourcing the relevant materials, literature, or information and in the process of data collection (internet, questionnaire, interview).

**1.8       DEFINITION OF TERMS**

**Radio:** Radio is an audio device for passing messages to a large audience. Radio involves the process by which messages are sent through electrical waves.

**Public Health Behavior:** Health behaviors are actions individuals take that affect their health. They include actions that lead to improved health, such as eating well and being physically active, and actions that increase one's risk of disease, such as smoking, excessive alcohol intake, and risky sexual behavior.

**Health Communication:** Health communication is the study and practice of communicating promotional health information, such as in public health campaigns, health education, and between doctor and patient. The purpose of disseminating health information is to influence personal health choices by improving health literacy.

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**CHAPTER TWO**

**LITERATURE REVIEW**

**2.0 INTRODUCTION**

Our focus in this chapter is to critically examine relevant literatures that would assist in explaining the research problem and furthermore recognize the efforts of scholars who had previously contributed immensely to similar research. The chapter intends to deepen the understanding of the study and close the perceived gaps.

**2.1 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK**

**MASS MEDIA**

Mass media is a channel, medium, utility, device, or instrument used in the mass communication process. The mass media also includes, printed media, electronic media and Cyber media. Printed media such as newspapers, magazines, books, pamphlets, billboards and other technical tools that bring out the message by touching the senses of sight. Electronic media such as radio and recorded programs use the senses of hearing and television programs, motion picture and video recording covering both senses which is hearing and vision (Ray M. 2019). Meanwhile the online media (online media, cybermedia) is the internet-based mass media. Mass media is happen to be the suggestions for cultural development, not just culture in the sense of art and symbol but also in the sense of the development of settings, fashion, lifestyle and norms (Pate, U. & Abubakar, A. 2013).

Other definitions place emphasis on the importance of signs and symbols, as well as the transmission of cultural information, ideas, attitudes, or emotions from one person or a group to another. This branch of mass media involves in some ways the aspects of theater, music, dance, folklore, and other complementary traditional communication media. These definitions tend to capture the general idea of the sociological impact of the media on one hand, and the variances in individual perspectives of the media approach on the other hand. From whatever angle we look at it, these definitions may fit well into specific aspects of human development, from philosophy to psychology, from sociology to education, etc. Media in todays world has been described as a combination of content, comprising the scientific and artistic ensemble of music, film, TV, radio, publishing, advertising, and electronic games (Bazley, T. (2016).

Thus, the mass media is any medium used to transmit mass information. The categorical classifications of what could be termed as mass media forms comprise the eight industries of the mass media industries; books, newspapers, magazines, and recordings, radio, movies, television, and the Internet. Mass media has attained rapid and remarkable expansion, resulting in proliferated dynamism over its content, platforms, and devices, following technological innovations over a long period of years. These developments have provided some dimensions of influence over various industries and social institutions. One major element of the media is the nature of its audience, which refers to its relatively large audience. Mass media is any medium which is intended for a large audience (Smith., 2003). It either takes broadcast or print media form. The broadcast form of media is also referred to as electronic media and is peculiar to radio and television technology. Print media, on the other hand, operates in the form of newspapers, magazines, journals and other print media.

**ROLE OF MASS MEDIA**

The existence of society depends to a large extent on the meeting of certain communication needs. These needs existed long before Johann Gutenberg’s printing press and Samuel Morse’s electric telegraph. Cases exist, however, where mass communication’s functions are undesirable from society’s or the individual’s point of view. Called dysfunctions, these harmful effects will be treated later. For society, mass communication performs the functions of surveillance; interpretation; linkage; transmission of values; socialization and entertainment (Baran, S.J. and Davis, D.K.2012).

The surveillance function is popularly regarded as the information and news role of the media. In Nigeria, several millions expose themselves to mass-mediated news daily on local radio and television and also on the networks. Surveillance can be ‘warning or beware’ surveillance or‘mental’ surveillance. In warning surveillance, the media informs us about threats, while in mental surveillance they transmit useful and helpful information about everyday life. It is noteworthy that in the world, people rely on others for news on different matters. For this to happen, trust, otherwise called credibility, must exist for the media to be chosen as the source of believable news. Closely linked with surveillance is the interpretation function (Huwiler, E. 2015).

The mass media provide information on the meaning and significance of events. It is not possible to report everything that happens in the news or in the papers. So, whatever news that makes it into the paper or onto radio and television newscasts must have been adjudged by gatekeepers as important. Many elements of society that are not directly connected are linked by the mass media. Advertising, for instance, links buyers to sellers; legislators keep in touch with their constituents by reading local papers; and so on. Sadly, some linkage sites have been known to have harmful consequences. ‘Hate’ sites are now on the Internet. They can be used by terrorists to spread pernicious propaganda and to recruit new members. Subtle but nonetheless important, transmission of values is another function of the mass media.Mass media enhances cultural socialization. Madamombe, I. (2015) writes that it refers to "the way an individual comes to adopt the behaviour and values of a group.

The mass media portrays our society and what values are important". In the area of socialization, there are countless examples of values and behaviour socialized through the media. The media sometimes consciously tries to instill values and behaviour in the audience. Smoking cigarettes is an example. Fastening of seat belts is another. But it must be noted that not every attempt by the media to enforce social norms succeeds. Mass media plays the role of entertainment. Pate, U. & Abubakar, A. (2013), is another media function. Motion pictures and sound recordings, and some books, magazines, and newspapers are devoted to entertainment. In the past, troubadours, storytellers, court jesters, and magicians performed the entertainment function which has now been taken over by mass communication. Critics of the use of mass media for entertainment are disturbed that soon people will become ‘watchers’ and ‘listeners’ instead of ‘doers’. This is because, instead of playing football, they will entertain themselves by watching others play; instead of learning to play the guitar, they will simply listen to a tape of someone else playing. For the individual, Pate U et’al (2013) writes that the functions of mass communication will focus on how the individual uses mass communication, i.e., uses and gratification model. This model posits that "audience members have certain needs or drives that are satisfied by using both non-media and media sources". Uses and gratifications are classified into cognition (getting to know something); diversion (e.g. stimulation, seeking relief from boredom, relaxation, or emotional release); social utility (need to affiliate with others); and withdrawal (using mass media to create a barrier with others). It is noteworthy that audience usage is not determined by media content only. The social context also contributes to the use of the mass media by the audience. For example, those who go to movies may value socialization much more than any aspect of the film. Also, soap operas provide more opportunities for escape than anything else for many.

Wogu, J., Chukwu, C., Nwafor, K., Ugwuoke, J., & Ugwulor, O. (2020) noted that mass communication functions for the benefit of the individual as a member of society. She labeled some functions, like education and information, as "serious," while she called the entertainment function the "lighter" function. The functions are:

**Information:** This is the most fundamental function of mass communication. It means' to give knowledge to’. The information function is regarded as the most important function of mass communication.

**Entertainment:** Entertainment is a big industry worldwide, especially on television. They believe that the "entertainment function is compelling". People are glued to their television sets or to their radio sets for hours for the sake of entertainment or enjoyment. This is to escape life’s harsh realities and get some relief. They believe that the mass media are best appreciated for their entertainment functions.

**Education,** which comprises intellectual development, acquisition of skills, and the formation of character, is acquired through the mass media. Wogu P. et’al (2020) continues by saying that: skills and knowledge could be acquired from reading, watching, or listening to entertainment mass media content, even though more such skills and knowledge would be gained from watching or listening to an educational programme in the ‘Schools Broadcast’ series, for example, or from reading a textbook.

In advertising, the mass media brings together buyers and sellers of goods, services, and ideas. This has become an increasingly important function of the mass media. An advertisement, according to the Advertising Professionals Council of Nigeria (APCON) cited by Wogu P. et’al (2020), is "a communication in the media paid for by an identifiable sponsor and directed at a target audience with the aim of imparting information about a product, service idea, or cause." The mass media also serves as a forum for public debate and discussion on issues that are considered important in society. In this way, the mass media help in the formation of public opinion. Public opinion is the thinking of the majority of people in society about important issues. According to Wogu P. et’al (2020), "the mass media make it possible for people to know what others are thinking and saying about the issues that are considered important". The promotion of cultural values is another function of the mass media. The media disseminate information about the cultural and artistic heritage of the people. This led to the production of cultural artifacts. Similarly, the mass media work with other agents of socialization, such as the family, church, school, and peer groups, to produce socialization of the group or individual. Socialization enables the individual to learn and adopt the values, norms, and behaviour patterns of society. Motivation and mobilization are other functions of the mass media. This involves encouraging and motivating people to achieve society’s aims or goals. When the media promotes these goals, individual or community aspirations are stimulated, leading to higher achievement.

Ikenwa, C. (2020) submits that in every society, the disadvantaged, marginalized, and powerless groups require mobilization for action. The integration function of the mass media is considered particularly important in today’s modern world where ethnic, religious, and political differences divide people locally, nationally, and internationally. The mass media provide information that people require to understand and appreciate their neighbors. Among the social institutions that the mass media has to deal with are: educational, cultural, political, family and kinship. Looking at political institutions, the mass media’s link with this institution is most noteworthy. The media provides people with the information they require for political decisions. In addition to this, the mass media confers status and legitimacy on political leaders. The status-conferral function of the mass media makes political leaders "appear important and right. Also, the mass media sets the political agenda for society by deciding what political topics people talk about. This function of agenda setting is an important factor in the linkage between mass communication and political institutions. Another institutional linkage is that between mass communication and cultural institutions. Unarguably, the mass media are very useful in the transmission of culture. The MacBride Commission found that mass communication is a major carrier of culture. The mass media themselves are cultural instruments which shape the cultural experience of millions of people all over the world.

**Ownership and Control of broad cast Media**

Before the deregulation of 1992 by the Babangida administration, the broadcast media were solely owned and operated by federal and state governments. State governments established their stations to educate, inform and entertain their peoples, and actually did so during the Second Republic because they felt the National Television or the National Broadcasting Organisation existed to serve the interests and needs of the ruling party, by then the National Party of Nigeria (NPN) at the federal level, and in those states where the party was in control. According to Sambe (2008), other states administered by other political parties in opposition were either blacked out or given unfavorable coverage. Those who challenged this unorthodox form of democracy were told that the system of government that was being practised during this time meant “winner take all”. In order to ensure absolute control of the television, for example, the government redeployed the Director General, a seasoned broadcaster to the Ministry of Information and appointed a party ally and a historian in his place. Even now, the federal government dictates what should be broadcast and what should not. The state-owned broadcast stations are even worse in this aspect. When one tunes to any of such stations, most of news that is aired is about the governor of that state. Since the state government hires and fires employees, the station dare not broadcast any news that is anti- government. News is always about what the governor and his team of political appointees wants to hear. The Government even regulates the news contents of private broadcast stations such as the Africa Independent Television (AIT). To a certain extent, almost all if not all government-owned and - controlled broadcast media have become praise singers of government policies. At times, one listens to a one-hour broadcast news without coming up with anything that in real sense would be regarded as news.

**Deregulation of Broadcast Media in Nigeria**

The deregulation of broadcast media in 1992 paved the way for private ownership of the broadcast media stations in Nigeria. According to Idebi (2008:6), the first sets of radio and television stations were issued their licences of operation soon after the decree was promulgated. There were 14 television stations and 13 private radio stations, some of which were Clapperboard TV Channel 45, Lagos; Minaj System Television; Channel 38 Kaduna; and Africa Independent Television, Alagbado, Lagos.

Owuamalam (2007) states that each station is in competition with the others in their struggle to attract and retain a sizeable audience for its programmes. The competition, therefore, directs thought, as to what approach best suits a station to adopt in a bid to accomplish its task . The competition may come in many forms, for example, programme producers who supply programmes to the station may find out that careful selection is made from the programmes and the ones that best suit the stations’ needs and objectives may be selected. This means that only programmes that satisfy the station’s audience would qualify for production by the station. If the newly established stations tend to meet the demands of the audiences, then the already existing ones may be threatened because the new ones may attempt to capture and retain the audience. The new stations are likely to come up with innovations in equipment to improve programme quality and delivery, and as such the audience may likely switch from the old to the new stations.

**RADIO**

Radio is an audio device for passing messages to a large audience. Radio involves the process by which messages are sent through electrical waves. In other words, the sound could be sent and received through these waves (Adelana, O.2020). According to Ajibade, O. & Alabi, S. (2017), the word radio is defined as the process of sending and receiving messages through the air using electromagnetic waves. It is also about the activity of broadcasting programmes for people to listen to the programmes being broadcast. According to Akingbulu, A. (2017), radio as a word has its origin in the Latin instrument through which signals are beamed out via electromagnetic process and distributed via a transmitter to a scattered audience who receive them via an antenna on a receiving set. Akingbulu, A. (2017) adds that radio involves the process by which messages are sent through electrical waves. Radio can also be seen as a medium used for sending and receiving messages through the air using electronic waves. It is also about the activity of broadcasting programmes for people to listen to the programmes being broadcast. It can also be defined as the broadcasting of programmes for the public to listen to. It is the system for sending sound over a distance by transmitting electrical signals (BBC English Dictionary, 2019).According to Ajibade, O. et’al (2017), radio is one of the most important means of communication. Through radio, people send spoken words, music, and other communication signals through the air to any part of the world. Radio broadcasts now feature music, news, discussion, interviews, descriptions of sports events and advertising. People drive to their jobs listening to their car radios and spend leisure hours hearing their favorite programs on the radio. Radio also has a wide variety of news. In addition to broadcasting, airplane pilots, astronauts, construction workers, policemen, sailors, and others who do many kinds of jobs use radio for quick communication. Scientists send radio waves into the sky to learn about weather. Telephone companies send messages by radio as well as by telephone.

**CHARACTERISTICS OF RADIO**

As a medium of mass communication, radio has the following characteristics, according to Ajibade, O. & Alabi, S. (2017).

**Portability:** A radio is a very portable device that can be carried about with ease. The portability of the radio makes it possible for people to listen to it wherever they are. With the coming of ICT, we now have radio sets that are as small as handsets.

**It is a mass medium:** Radio messages can reach people in different localities. The mass media makes it possible for the message to reach beyond the immediate proximity of the sender. Radio, as a mass medium, has the ability to send a message globally.

**Transient messages:** Radio messages are perishable. They are constantly on the move. The audience can not ask for a repeat of what was not clearly heard because the messages are on the move. That is why most people say the radio does not talk twice.

**Audio medium:** Radio is a one-sided medium that can only be heard and not be seen. This makes it a limited sensory; it only appeals to the sense of hearing. On radio, words are the only thing used to create pictures in the minds of the audience. Other things like sound can also be used to create a mental picture in the mind of the listener.

**Cheap:** Radio sets are affordable. We have radio sets that are as cheap as N 2500 naira.

**It requires talent:** Radio operation requires talent to operate. It needs the blending of different talents in order to function well. It is not one sided in operations. It requires reporters, sound engineers, etc., to operate.

**It is competitive:** With the advent of many radio stations, it could be said that radio is a highly competitive business as it requires putting up catchy programmes in order to outshine other stations.

**Concept of Health Communication**

Health communication is defined by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) as: “The study and use of communication strategies to inform and influence individual and community decisions that enhance health.” According to WHO Constitution 1948, health is defined as: “A state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity.” To improve the quality of life and standard of living of the society, it is highly needed to increase the health awareness of the public. Healthy citizens are essential for the development of the nation. Good health is the important factor of human happiness and well being in which health information is an indispensible tool for achieving the goal by empowering people with the proper information of health. In every aspect of life, information is very much needed to produce socially, economically and politically change. Information is very valuable services that can changes mind and behavior of the individuals thereby bringing change in the society. Information is delivered to public through various medium of which radio is very popular and common one. Radio particularly in remote and rural area plays a great role in communication that connects the individuals.

Effectively communicating health information to individuals and communities is a primary focus in public health (Freimuth & Quinn, 2004; Miranda, Vercellesi, Pozzi, & Bruno, 2009; Office of Disease Prevention and Human Promotion, 2000; Parrott, 2004; Rimal & Lapinski, 2009). Timely and accurate communication holds potential to positively affect individuals, communities, and societies. Effective health communication can ‘‘affect individuals’ awareness, knowledge, attitudes, self-efficacy, skills, and commitment to behavior change’’ (Nguyen & Bellamy, 2006; U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2004). For communities and societies, effective health communication serves to positively alter ‘‘norms and values, attitudes and opinions, [as well as] laws and policies’’ (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2004).

Health professionals have recognized the benefits of using radio to broadcast health messages and have subsequently utilized radio to educate listeners about heart disease (Alcalay, Alvarado, Balcazar, Newman, & Ortiz, 1999; Long, Taubenheim, Wayman, Temple, & Ruoff, 2008; Marx et al., 2009).

Effective health communication is also a central component of health education and promotion. A core competency of Certified Health Education Specialists is the ability to analyze media and discern which form is most appropriate to disseminate health information to the intended audience (National Commission for Health Education Credentialing, 2008). The importance of effective health message transfer to the general public has contributed to the widespread study and utilization of social channels and mass media among health communicators, health educators, and health promoters.

**Importance of Health Care**

Healthcare means paying attention to health-related issues to accomplish a satisfactory general level of wellness that strengthens productive, normal life for individuals affected, for instance pregnant women and their unborn babies. The provision of healthcare in Nigeria, is on the concurrent legislative list, this means that both the federal and state governments can improve and support the well-being of citizens by making provision such as healthcare delivery infrastructure such as hospitals, medical equipment, support personnel, medical consumables necessary in proffering solution to the medical needs of citizens (Odesanya,Hassan & Olaluwoye, 2015). The American Heritage Medical Dictionary (2008) described healthcare as the avoidance, care, and treatment of illness and the control of mental and physical well-being through the services rendered by the medical and health practitioners. It can equally be described as the preservation and restitution of health through medication and prevention of disease, by skilled and certified medical practitioners (Merriam Webster’s Online Dictionary, 2014). Healthcare incorporates medication offered by skilled practitioners in the health sector. Health care is provided at three levels: primary healthcare, secondary healthcare and tertiary healthcare. Primary health care is a kind of public service to the citizens at a lower rate through the public health system; self-funded and certified private practitioners in the private health care system can equally offer it, but above what the government may levy.(odesanya et al., 2015). According to WHO (2014), primary healthcare is basically healthcare that is low-cost, easily obtainable by all in the community and fully unrestricted, and whose aim is to achieve better health for all and sundry. Primary healthcare (PHC) In Nigeria is accessible at community-based healthcare facilities, such as primary healthcare centres. Primary healthcare centres are proximate to the people, and serve as a first point of contact for medical consultation by residents in the communities they are stationed. At this stage, primary care providers (PCPs), be they doctors, nurses, qualified community/public health professionals, attend to important health needs relating to high blood pressure, vaccination, immunisation, hypertension, including maternal and child health-related services like family planning. It is part of a comprehensive healthcare support plan of governments throughout the world. The primary care givers refer patients to these care givers (Torrey, 2014). Secondary healthcare services are services offered by medical practitioners that do not have first contact with patients. It is the care offered by a certified expert who has more experience than the professionals working at the primary healthcare centre. This type of health care places emphasises on specialisation and is at the mid-level. For example, oncologists specialize on cancer treatment, cardiologists treat patients with heart problems; while gynaecologists focus on the health needs of women. Medical practitioners define the care offered at this level, general hospitals in Nigeria come under this level (Torrey, 2014). Tertiary healthcare is a higher level that offers special care. This involves the expertise of highly specialised medical equipment and help of practitioners in areas such as plastic surgeries, vaginal reconstruction, renal dialysis, surgery to separate conjoined twins, chemotherapy, and other complications related to health. Teaching hospitals in Nigeria are at this level (Torrey, 2014).

**PUBLIC PERCEPTION OF RADIO BROADCAST PROGRAMMES ON HEALTH MATTERS**

Broadcast media are transmitters which generates waves (electronic impulses) that carry voice transmissions or messages which make up radio and television programmes. These waves travel through the air, carrying the programmes to homes and other locations where they are received through radio and television sets (Okunna, 1999). In Nigeria, research evidence shows that the use of radio as a medium of information is truly widespread, even among rural populations (Okunna, 1992; Okigbo, 1995; Sobowale & Sogbanmu, 1984). It has, therefor, been identified as the best mass medium at the country’s level of development for education of rural dwellers (Moemeka, 1981:33). Okigbo (1995:57) points out some of the advantages of radio. According to him, the attraction radio has for rural dwellers are derived from its cheap price and cost of operation. Radio is easily portable and can be used by both the educated and illiterate. At the state level, some radio stations broadcast more than 80 per cent of their programmes in the vernacular.

Radio broadcasting is a central and established form of mass communication in Nigeria society. The radio serves as a low-cost, passive form of communication that holds the capability to reach listeners in different languages at home, at work, in stores, gyms, or in personal vehicles. The majority of radio listening occurs away from homes (Arbitron, 2008) thus making radio a portable and accessible media source in a variety of locations. More than 92% of individuals over age 12 listen to some form of radio programming each week (Arbitron, 2008), and approximately 12% of the population listens to public radio at one or more times each week (Arbitron, 2009b). According to Arbitron (2008), radio listening is high across all age groups and ‘‘consumers tune in to one or more radio stations more than 2.6 hours per day–18.5 hours per week.’

Health professionals have recognized the benefits of using radio to broadcast health messages and have subsequently utilized radio to educate listeners about disease (Alcalay, Alvarado, Balcazar, Newman, & Ortiz, 1999; Long, Taubenheim, Wayman, Temple, & Ruoff, 2008; Marx et al., 2009).  In the process of performing their functions as ascribed to them in relevant laws (in Nigeria, it is contained in section 22 of the 1999 constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria), the media play a role in influencing health behaviour and shaping government policies and programmes in the health sector. The media of communication such as newspaper, magazine, radio, TV and Internet-based media are important agents of any society. It is also in consideration of the important role of the media that they are regarded as the fourth estate of the realm, after the executive, judiciary and legislature. The three important issues in health communication are as follows: health behaviour, health policies and health programmes. Maryon-Davis [14] highlighted three areas that the media of communication can be useful for health promotion to include public information, social marketing and media advocacy. According to the researcher, through public information, the media educate the general public on health issues. With the use of social marketing tactics, the mass media of communication engage with the general public and trigger them to accept and apply certain health behaviour in their daily interactions. Finally, Maryon-Davis adds that with the application of media advocacy strategy, the mass media of communication can raise awareness on health policies with a view to improving the wellness of the general public. It is noteworthy that the three strategies are typically used in combination when using the media for health promotion [15].

These media are employed at all levels of public health in the hope that three effects might occur: the learning of correct health information and knowledge, the changing of health attitudes and values and the establishment of new health behavior.

**2.2 THEORETICAL FRAME WORK**

For the purpose of this study, the researchers used Social Responsibility Theory and the Agenda Theory for the study.

**The Agenda Setting Theory**

 The theory originated from a 1922 book written by Walter Lippmann [21] with the title *Public Opinion.* This is a theory that stipulates that the media has the ability to advise or tell audiences what issues are major and relevant, thus setting the "agenda". They can achieve this by choosing what stories to consider newsworthy and how much prominence and space they give them (Folarin, 1998). Agenda Setting describes the "ability of the mass media to influence the salience of topics on the public agenda". That is, if a news item is covered frequently and prominently, the audience will regard the issues as more important. This is what really happened in the Nigerian situation, where messages about the Corona Virus Disease were often and widely spread in almost all the media systems in the country. There are those who believe that when there is sufficient individual exposure to persuasive messages, mass media channels are effective in promoting individual health behaviour. Baran, S. & Davis, D. (2012). has also noted that mass media channels play the role of a catalyst for bringing change in the development process, and they have become one of the key social and cultural institutions in society. The influence of the mass media cuts across social and geographical barriers in society as they disseminate information to a target audience in society. This extends to almost every segment of society that is exposed to their programmes.

Agenda-setting theory describes the "ability [of the news media] to influence the importance placed on the topics of the public agenda" With agenda setting being a social science theory, it also attempts to make predictions. That is, if a news item is covered frequently and prominently, the audience will regard the issue as more important. Agendasetting theory was formally developed by Max McCombs and Donald Shaw in a study on the 1968 American presidential election. (McCombs & Reynolds, 2002).

Theory of Planned Behaviour

The Theory of Planned Behaviour an extension of Fishbein and Ajzen’s Theory of Reasoned Action (Fishbien & Ajzen, 1975) has been the predominant theoretical method to guide works on health-related attitudes for three decades. The theory is known to research scholars, students, practitioners and policy-makers ( Ajzen, 1985). The theory posits that behaviour is determined by behavioural intention, which is in turn predicted by Attitude to the behaviour, Subjective Norms and Perceived Behavioural control (PBC) (Ajzen, 1988). Attitude is predicted by instrumental beliefs about the consequences of performing the behaviour (e.g. ‘it will save time), weighted by outcome evaluations of the desirability of those consequences (e.g. ‘saving time would be a good/bad thing’). A more recent development to the TPB is the idea that attitude consists of two components; affective attitude reflecting enjoyment or pleasure associated with performance of the behaviour, and cognitive attitude reflecting perceived benefit (e.g. whether the behaviour is judged to be good, beneficial and wise). There is confirmation that affective attitude is the better predictor of intention to perform a health behaviour (Payne, Jones & Harris, 2004), although, Paisley and Sparks (1998) found both types of attitude to be equally predictive of expectations to reduce fat intake. Subjective Norms are predicted by normative beliefs about whether significant ‘referents’ (e.g. mother, partner) would approve of one performing the behaviour in question, weighted by one’s motivation to comply to behave in a manner which would meet each referent’ approval. PBC is thought to influence behaviour both directly and through behavioural intentions. PBC can be defined simply as perceived ease of performing or refraining from a particular behaviour, or as the product of two sets of factors, control beliefs about one’s ability to perform or refrain from the behaviour in various circumstances and control frequency: how often one is in those circumstances (Stead, Mackintosh, Tagg & Eadie, 2002). To put simply, the theory of planned behaviour predicts that human activities are regulated by three forms: readily accessible beliefs about the possible outcomes of the behaviour and the evaluations of these outcomes (behavioural beliefs), readily available beliefs about the normative expectations and actions of important referents and motivation to comply with these referents (normative beliefs), and readily available beliefs about the existence of certain parameters that may help or obstruct the execution of the perceived power and behaviour of these parameters (control beliefs).

The theory of planned behaviour can be used to design interventions that target healthenhancing individual behaviour that may be socially unacceptable such as condom use, smoking cessation, self-check-ups, voluntary testing, medication adherence and other behaviours that warrant individual decisions but have a varying level of social acceptability (WHO, 2008).

2.3 EMPIRICAL STUDIES

 Yahaya, Fadairo and Ogundele (2009) studied Attitude and the Effect of Health-Based Entertainment-Education Strategies on the Knowledge and Behaviour of women in Lagos State they discovered that information, entertainment and education are very significant to women. Hence, health presenters on broadcast media should always add elements of information, education and entertainment in their health and developmental messages targeted at women to attract their attention and change their attitude. They found and concluded from their study in Lagos that women had a significant improvement in awareness and a positive change in their health behaviour as a result programmes on family planning on radio and television.

Atakiti and Ojomo (2015) on the influence of television programme on maternal health in Nigeria inter-land found that while TV health programmes had a moderate effect on women in the two local government areas in Lagos state, their level of exposure is equally low. The study came to a conclusion that women health programmes should be a blend of not just educational but also entertainment (edutaiment).

According to a study conducted by Asp et al., (2014) on the relationship between exposure to mass media and birth preparedness among women living in Mbarara District, southwest of Uganda showed that high media exposure had no significant relationship with birth preparedness of the female respondents interviewed in the study (Asp et al, 2014). As a result of the findings of the studies, they recommended that, mass media must double their efforts in the coverage of maternal and child health; because mass media have the capacity to shape opinions and mold behaviour (Asp et al, 2014).

Matthew et’al (2011) carried out a study on the radio as a source of health information and identifies contributing factors to listeners’ intentions to change health-related behavior. After listening to a 1-hour health-talk radio program, 99 participants completed an Internet-based survey instrument. Results indicate 27.3% of participants regularly obtained health information from the radio and 68.7% from the Internet; 92.9% of participants reported an increase in knowledge and 65.7% reported intentions to change health behaviors. Participants were more likely to report behavior change intentions if they obtained health information from multiple sources (OR D 1.47). Implications of this study emphasize making radio content available via the Internet.

**CHAPTER THREE**

**RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

**3.1 INTRODUCTION**

 In this chapter, we described the research procedure for this study. A research methodology is a research process adopted or employed to systematically and scientifically present the results of a study to the research audience viz. a vis, the study beneficiaries.

**3.2 RESEARCH DESIGN**

Research designs are perceived to be an overall strategy adopted by the researcher whereby different components of the study are integrated in a logical manner to effectively address a research problem. In this study, the researcher employed the survey research design. This is due to the nature of the study whereby the opinion and views of people are sampled. According to Singleton & Straits, (2009), Survey research can use quantitative research strategies (e.g., using questionnaires with numerically rated items), qualitative research strategies (e.g., using open-ended questions), or both strategies (i.e., mixed methods). As it is often used to describe and explore human behaviour, surveys are therefore frequently used in social and psychological research.

**3.3 POPULATION OF THE STUDY**

 According to Udoyen (2019), a study population is a group of elements or individuals as the case may be, who share similar characteristics. These similar features can include location, gender, age, sex or specific interest. The emphasis on study population is that it constitute of individuals or elements that are homogeneous in description.

### The broad objective of this study is to examine public perception of radio broadcast programmes on health matters using Onitsha in Anambra state as case study. Selected radio listeners and presenters who are resident in Onitsha form the population of the study.

**3.4 SAMPLE SIZE DETERMINATION**

A study sample is simply a systematic selected part of a population that infers its result on the population. In essence, it is that part of a whole that represents the whole and its members share characteristics in like similitude (Udoyen, 2019). In this study, the researcher adopted the convenient sampling method to determine the sample size.

**3.5 SAMPLE SIZE SELECTION TECHNIQUE AND PROCEDURE**

According to Nwana (2005), sampling techniques are procedures adopted to systematically select the chosen sample in a specified away under controls. This research work adopted the convenience sampling technique in selecting the respondents from the total population.

In this study, the researcher adopted the convenient sampling method to determine the sample size. According to Torty (2021), a sample of convenience is the terminology used to describe a sample in which elements have been selected from the target population on the basis of their accessibility or convenience to the re. Out of the entire population of residents of Onitsha Metropolis, the researcher conveniently selected 280 participant including resident and radio presenter as the sample size for this study.

**3.6 RESEARCH INSTRUMENT AND ADMINISTRATION**

The research instrument used in this study is the questionnaire. A survey containing series of questions were administered to the enrolled participants. The questionnaire was divided into two sections, the first section inquired about the responses demographic or personal data while the second sections were in line with the study objectives, aimed at providing answers to the research questions. Participants were required to respond by placing a tick at the appropriate column. The questionnaire was personally administered by the researcher.

**3.7 METHOD OF DATA COLLECTION**

Two methods of data collection which are primary source and secondary source were used to collect data. The primary sources was the use of questionnaires, while the secondary sources include textbooks, internet, journals, published and unpublished articles and government publications.

**3.8 METHOD OF DATA ANALYSIS**

The responses were analyzed using detailed in frequency tables and percentage, which provided answers to the research questions and it was used to analyse the data.

**3.9 VALIDITY OF THE STUDY**

Validity referred here is the degree or extent to which an instrument actually measures what is intended to measure. An instrument is valid to the extent that is tailored to achieve the research objectives. The researcher constructed the questionnaire for the study and submitted to the project supervisor who used his intellectual knowledge to critically, analytically and logically examine the instruments relevance of the contents and statements and then made the instrument valid for the study.

**3.10 RELIABILITY OF THE STUDY**

The reliability of the research instrument was determined. The Pearson Correlation Coefficient was used to determine the reliability of the instrument. A co-efficient value of 0.68 indicated that the research instrument was relatively reliable. According to (Taber, 2017) the range of a reasonable reliability is between 0.67 and 0.87.

**3.11 ETHICAL CONSIDERATION**

The study was approved by the Project Committee of the Department. Informed consent was obtained from all study participants before they were enrolled in the study. Permission was sought from the relevant authorities to carry out the study. Date to visit the place of study for questionnaire distribution was put in place in advance.

**CHAPTER FOUR**

**DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS**

**4.1 INTRODUCTION**

This chapter presents the analysis of data derived through the questionnaire and key informant interview administered on the respondents in the study area. The analysis and interpretation were derived from the findings of the study. The data analysis depicts the simple frequency and percentage of the respondents as well as interpretation of the information gathered.

**4.2 PRESENTATION OF DATA**

The table below shows the summary of the survey. A sample of 280 was calculated for this study. A total of 267 responses were received, while a total of 261 were validated. This was due to irregular, incomplete and inappropriate responses to some questionnaire. For this study a total of 261 was validated for the analysis.

**Table 4.1: Distribution of Questionnaire**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Questionnaire**  | **Frequency** | **Percentage**  |
| Sample size | 280 | 100 |
| Received  | 267 | 95.36 |
| Validated | 261 | 93.21 |

 **Field Survey, 2021**

**4.2.1 Demographic Profile of the Respondents**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Demographic information** | **Frequency** | **percent** |
| **Gender**Male |  |  |
| 176 | 67.4% |
| Female | 85 | 32.6% |
| **Age** |  |  |
| 20-25 | 52 | 19.9% |
| 26-30 | 92 | 35.2% |
| 31-35 | 75 | 28.7% |
| 36+ | 42 | 16.1% |

**Field Survey, 2022**

**4.3DESCRIPTIVE ANALYSIS**

Question 1: What are the  actual and preferred methods of obtaining health messages?

**Table 4.2:** Responses to actual and preferred methods of obtaining health message

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Options** | **Frequency** | **Percentage** |
| Broadcast Media like Radio & Television | 93 | 35.7 |
| Print media (newspapers, newsletters, fryers, Magazine)  | 77 | 29.5 |
| Social media (Twitter, Facebook Instagram etc) | 91 | 34.8 |
| **Total** | **261** | **100** |

**Field Survey 2022**

From the responses obtained as expressed in the table above, 35.7% of the respondent said broadcast media like Radio & Television. 29.5% of the respondent said print media (newspapers, newsletters, fryers, Magazine). 34.8% of the respondent ticked social media (Twitter, Facebook Instagram etc).

**Question 2:** What is  the extent at which health messages are communicated through radio broadcast?

**Table 4.6:** Respondent to the extent at which health messages are communicated through radio broadcast

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Options** | **Frequency** | **Percentage** |
| High extent | 100 | 38.3 |
| Average | 89 | 34.1 |
| Low extent | 72 | 27.6 |
| **Total** | **261** | **100** |

**Field Survey, 2021**

From the responses obtained as expressed in the table above, 38.3% of the respondent said high extent. 34.1% of the respondent said average. 27.6% of the respondent said low extent.

**Question 3:** Is  radio an effective method to increase health knowledge and intentions to change health behavior?

**Table 4.4** Respondent on if radio is an effective method to increase health knowledge and intentions to change health behavior

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Options** | **Frequency** | **Percentage** |
| Yes | 169 | 64.7 |
| No | 87 | 33.3 |
| Undecided | 05 | 02 |
| **Total** | **261** | **100** |

**Field Survey, 2021**

From the responses obtained as expressed in the table above, 64.7% of the respondent said yes. 33.3% of the respondent said No. 21% of the respondent were uncertain.

 **Question 4:** What are  the factors contributing to an individual’s preferred radio source of health information?

**Table 4.6:**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Options** | **Yes** | **No** | **Uncertain** | **Total %** |
| Time & Cost  | 261100% | 00% | 00% | 261100% |
| Electricity | 77100% | 00% | 00% | 77100% |
| Portability | 77100% | 00% | 00% | 77100% |
| Accessibility | 77100% | 00% | 00% | 77100% |

**Field Survey 2022**

From the responses derived in the above table, 100% of the respondent said yes, there was no record for no and undecided.

**CHAPTER FIVE**

**SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION**

**5.1 SUMMARY**

The broad objective of this study is to examine public perception of radio broadcast programmes on health matters using radio listener in Onitsha in Anambra State. The study compared individuals’ actual and preferred methods of obtaining health messages. The study ascertained the extent at which health messages are communicated through radio broadcast. The study determined if the radio is an effective method to increase health knowledge and intentions to change health behavior. The study investigated the factors contributing to an individual’s preferred radio source of health information.

The study adopted the survey research design and randomly enrolled participants using the convenience sampling technique to choose the sample size in the study. A total of 261 responses were validated from the enrolled participants where all respondent are residents of Onitsha Metropolis. Self-constructed and validated questionnaire was used for data collection. The collected and validated questionnaires were analyzed using frequency tables and percentage.

**5.2 CONCLUSION**

Radio has strong potentials to reach ordinary citizens including people at the grass roots in Nigeria and across Africa. Radio remains a strong source for public information in times of health crisis.

* Findings of the study reveal that the  actual and preferred methods of obtaining health messages were broadcast Media like Radio & Television, Print media (newspapers, newsletters, fryers, Magazine) and Social media (Twitter, Facebook Instagram etc).
* The extent at which health messages are communicated through radio broadcast is high.
* Radio an effective method to increase health knowledge and intentions to change health behavior
* The factors contributing to an individual’s preferred radio source of health information includes, Time & Cost , Electricity, Portability and Accessibility

**5.3 RECOMMENDATION**

From the findings of the study, the following recommendations are made:

1. Radio stations need to recognize that they have an important role to play in the fight to minimize misinformation in Nigeria and across Africa thus this should enhance their effectiveness in performing their social responsibility of sensitizing the masses on health matters.
2. News and program content need to be carefully sourced and tailored to ensure that listeners in cities and at the grassroots, receive updated and accurate information about health matters.
3. Government and private sector support are also necessary for radio to function effectively in Africa. Sadly, many radio stations are underfunded.
4. Policymakers and Government should ensure they build the confidence and trust of the masses toward accepting health communication messages via radio and as well ensure that government provides it in large quantity to reach the rural dweller.
5. Civic societies should endeavor to collaborate with knowledgeable healthcare workers to go on outreach and enlighten the masses on the need to take the health communication messages shared on radio.

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**APPENDIXE**

**QUESTIONNAIRE**

**PLEASE TICK [√] YOUR MOST PREFERRED CHOICE(s) ON A QUESTION OF YOUR CHOICE**

**SECTION A**

**PERSONAL INFORMATION**

**1. Gender**

Male [ ]

Female [ ]

**2. Age**

20-25 [ ]

26-30 [ ]

31-35 [ ]

36+ [ ]

**SECTION B**

Question 1: What are the  actual and preferred methods of obtaining health messages?

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Options** | **Please Tick** |
| Broadcast Media like Radio & Television |  |
| Print media (newspapers, newsletters, fryers, Magazine)  |  |
| Social media (Twitter, Facebook Instagram etc) |  |

**Question 2:** What is  the extent at which health messages are communicated through radio broadcast?

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Options** | **Please Tick** |
| High extent |  |
| Average |  |
| Low extent |  |

**Question 3:** Is  radio an effective method to increase health knowledge and intentions to change health behavior?

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Options** | **Please Tick** |
| Yes |  |
| No |  |
| Undecided |  |

 **Question 4:** What are  the factors contributing to an individual’s preferred radio source of health information?

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Options** | **Yes** | **No** | **Uncertain** |
| Time & Cost  |  |  |  |
| Electricity |  |  |  |
| Portability |  |  |  |
| Accessibility |  |  |  |