

Influence of Radio Broadcasting on Political Participation among People of South-South Nigeria

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Abstract

The impact of radio broadcasting on political participation in Nigeria's South-South Zone is investigated in this study. The importance of radio in political participation has been proven by scholars. Thus, this study builds on the success of radio in this area to ascertain if the same result can be replicated in South-South, Nigeria. The study is anchored on a cross-sectional research design and surveyed 400 respondents. Descriptive statistics such as mean and standard deviation and Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) inferential statistics were deployed to test stated hypotheses. In an $r\{376\}0.878;p=0.000$ findings, the study reaffirmed the position of scholars on the subject of investigation, indicating that South-South peoples' behaviour towards political activities is strongly affected by radio broadcast. The study recommends that more effort is needed to ensure the information on the radio is knocked together to positively influence the behaviour of people and their thought on election processes in Nigeria.

Keywords: radio broadcasting, political participation, participatory communication, political communication, democracy, election

1. Introduction

When an organization employs advocacy communication, behaviour change communication, and mass communication to drive a development project that is supposed to produce a result with the goal of improving a group's standard of living, it is engaging in development communication. Lowering child mortality, improving the quality of healthcare, tackling HIV/AIDS, and boosting people's participation in political programmes are all goals of development projects.

The use of radio for development goals has been recognized in the field of development communication for many years. This school of thought believes that an ideal radio broadcasting service catalyzes public information distribution, creates awareness, and encourages participation in the issues canvassed on it. Scholars like Chapman, Blench, Kranjac-Berisavljevic & Zakariah (2003), and Nazari & Hasbullah (2010) reaffirmed the above view by noting radio broadcasting as a viable means of disseminating information to the grass root and getting people to participate in the development process.

Radio broadcasting is fast becoming ever more interactive, unlike in the past, writes Etineagbedia (2014) and Oji (2011a). The authors note that in most parts of the world, it is thought that it serves as a means of disseminating information and as a platform for citizens to express their opinions on issues of public concern. According to Aginam (2005), in "In Media in 'Globalizing' Africa: What Prospect for Democratic Communication?" radio broadcasting is the most common means of mass communication in Sub-Saharan Africa. The author backed up his argument by asserting that the vast majority of Sub-Saharan Africans (about 80%) reside in rural settings. Aginam went on to say that Africa's low literacy rate, the prevalence of multilingual states, and the prevalence of radio broadcast media all combine to give radio a unique standing as a form of communication.

Radio is very popular in Africa. Myers (2008) claims that 80% of Africans use radio due to its low cost, portability, and general acceptability. Radio is the main media among politicians in many underdeveloped countries. (McChesney, 2015). Odunola, Babafemi, & Lois (2015) add that radio has unrestricted access because it breaks 'barriers of distance and illiteracy, and the restriction posed by electricity availability. Above all, indigenous information distribution is supplied using the radio. This unique feature expands prospects for local engagement in political activities.

Radio has the potential to support both the uneducated and the educated and has in that effort contributed a lot to the nations' political development, as seen by its extensive use in political awareness creation, enlightenment about political campaigns, as well as providing a platform for political discussion, debates, and presentations (Wilkinson, 2018; Hutchby, 1999). Many scholars such as Ngugi (2014), Akpor (2013), and Hungbo (2011) have built on the positive story of radio in political development operations.

However, Anazodo, Agbionu & Ezenwile (2013) observed that radio programmes addressing political issues are broadcast on a variety of radio stations that were founded for different goals. This means that political viewpoints on the radio are disjointed and unorganized. What this means is that the audiences of radio are not targeted with the provision of political news and developments. Thus, political information is streamed in an ad hoc and uncoordinated manner, thereby undermining the parochial political culture that exists in Nigeria. Olayiwola (1991) corroborates by stating that who owns the media in Nigeria has a strong influence on the utilization of the media for political communication.

For instance, Bolivia is one of the most effective examples of radio being utilized to assist in the development of a critical citizen movement to help dynamize the social contract and give voice to people who have no voice in political processes. (Ramos & Badillo, 2013). The example of Bolivia exemplifies the importance of radio in the development process. When the radio environment in Bolivia is compared to that in Nigeria, there is a clear difference. There are no radio stations in Nigeria's South-South zone dedicated to spreading information on political programmes or airing government policies on political development.

As a result of the foregoing submissions, this study examines the impact of radio broadcasting on democratic and political participation among people in South-South Nigeria by determining whether information about politics and other political activities disseminated to the grassroots has an impact on people registering to vote, creating awareness about electoral processes, contesting elections, civic engagement, holding a rally, and other forms of democratic and political participation.

2. Appraising Radio as a Tool for Raising Public Awareness

Broadcasting is critical to stakeholders in creating awareness and encouraging participation in different spheres of life. Tenin & Smith (2002) observed that Ghana's December 2000 Presidential and Parliamentary elections were successful because of the lively contributions of radio and other mass media. Similarly, Roskin, Cord, Medeiros & Jones (2003) note that the media are recognized components of politics all over the world and have been used to reach millions of voters simultaneously. Similarly, Ojebode (2003, pp.89–91) in his study of Radio Kaduna found that Radio Kaduna, through its programme Don Makiyae Ruga, successfully mobilized hitherto nomadic nomads to participate in nomadic education and that about 83% of respondents claimed that radio affects their enrolment in nomadic education classes.

Kaid (2004) claims that political communication began by evaluating the impact of media messages. Tham, Wenn, Ong, & Lim (2020) and Arriguzoh (2011) all state that radio broadcast has considerable influence on listeners during election campaigns and the delivery of candidates' manifestoes. Okinda, Nyambuga, & Ojwang (2020) and Newton (2009) agreed that radio among other mass media has an influence on government and politics but asserts that the influence is determined by some intervening factors. Durante and Gutierrez (2014) affirmed that there are intervening factors other than radio alone that can affect individuals' knowledge, awareness, and participation in political activities. Hence individuals' exposure to different sources of information about political activities, resources, perceived benefit to communities and other individual characteristics cumulate to affect citizen political mobilization.

While reviewing broadcast media in Africa, Bosch (2020) and Heywood (2020) concur that radio serves an important role as a communication tool in Africa, owing to low literacy levels. Kivikuru (2006) supports this view arguing that, comparatively, radio is one of the most effective tools of political mobilization in Africa. Statistics provided by Ephraim (2020) and Ladigbolu, Olajide, Badiru, & Yekinni, (2020) assert that Nigerians consider radio to be their main source of information. With the above analyses in mind, it is clear that radio plays a central role in many political campaigns. Radio speaks the language known by the majority of the population (Anderson, Masocha, & Sharma, 2019; Kivikuru, 2006). The obvious inference from the above is that radio is critical to political mobilization and participation on issues.

2.1 Broadcasting and Political Mobilization

The general apathy to development efforts in third world nations led world leaders to the Arusha Declaration of 1990 on popular participation, development, and transportation (UNECA, 1990). This was because third-world nations were unable to attract popular participation and support to public programmes in politics, health, economics, etc. This lack of support was attributed to authoritarian liberal democratic systems of media ownership and control which make it impossible for the media to champion the course of popular participation and publicize development programmes and activities. There was also a lack of national ideological trust that is necessary to provide the impetus for grassroots participation in development (Oji, 2018).

Against this background, the Arusha Declaration raised some key issues; first, the empowerment of the people so that they can be involved in formulating the structure and designing the policies and programmes that meet the need of all. Second, the empowerment of people to be able to contribute to the process of development and share equitably with the development benefits, and third, to accommodate freedom of thought, tolerate differences, accept consensus on issues and guarantee that people, their organizations, and associations participate effectively. These assumptions are particularly useful in Nigeria's representative democracy. Unfortunately, political apathy toward the democratic process and activities remain high, although a level of consciousness is coming gradually. Why the apathy? While mentioning M'Bayo (2006), Okoye (2008, p.267) highlights the overall level of apathy toward the political process when he claims that:

Many Nigerians strongly believe that their votes do not matter, that regardless of what they do, politicians will be politicians and the lawmakers of the land will be chosen, not based on the popular will of the people, but based on the power dynamics of the rich and famous and on the goodwill of the godfathers.

It is from the problem highlighted in Okoye's assertion above that the inclusion of participatory communication becomes useful in political communication. Ekeria (2014) cites the 1987 Mass Bureau Report, in which the author states that mobilization must be viewed as including people actively and freely participating in conversations and decisions that influence their general welfare. She goes further to say that mobilization should aim at increasing people's level of awareness or cognition of social and other issues so that they can apply their energies positively and participate actively in the social and political life of the country. Ekeira (2014, p.12) defines political mobilizations "as a process of sensitizing the citizens, increasing their cognition, political consciousness, and the latter's efficiency".

According to her, political mobilization could be taken to mean the determining process of emotionally bringing people together and making them internalize the commonality of social values, attitudes, and orientation in achieving particularly specified objectives. Oji (2009) sees participatory communication essentially as a means toward a new development approach that emphasizes man's freedom from all forms of marginality and exploitation. He goes further to say that it encourages more deliberate public debate and governmental inquiry about what kind of information the nation and its citizens need to decide their social, political, and economic course on development. He also notes that participatory communication allows people to identify or decide what their needs are, plan how to achieve their set goals, obtain whatever assistance or resource that may come from the government, and implement their plans on their own with the development communicator leading from behind.

The beauty of participatory communication, Christopher (2007) notes, extends to the process of selecting representatives in the political parties. Even when such candidates get elected, the process leading to his emergence which was faulty in the first instance creates a sense of apathy toward his activities. Participatory communication also suggests that the top-down approach to communication must give way to a bottom-up approach; where the representatives will take time to listen to the problems of the people and will in turn develop strategies to handle such problems. This approach boosts their political morale and energizes their commitment to politics and its various assemblages. The bottom line here is that participatory political communication must involve the media that are peculiar to the daily experiences of the rural people. A sense of communitarianism emerges from such media (McQuail, 2005).

Ndolo (2004, p.53) captures the value of broadcast media in political mobilization and participation when he contends that when properly equipped and utilized, they can facilitate the flow of all kinds of information which would enable the people to form intelligent opinions about national issues of concern and to participate meaningfully in making decisions about them; provide the forum for expressing diverse needs, aspirations and a broad range of views; and as a corollary, help to provide a basis for a better Nigeria. The importance of these scholars' submissions lies in the fact that well-articulated programmes on the radio can stimulate community-based debate on issues and propel them into taking action or participating in courses that will benefit them.

2.1.1 Empirical Review of Related Studies

Etinagbedia (2014) did an appraisal of the role of radio in participatory development with a focus on 'community square', on *vibes Fm*, Benin City, she anchored her study on the participatory theory of development and based on the survey method of research, a sample of 100 respondents was drawn from Isihor community. She used the instrument of the questionnaire to generate data from the respondents. She discovered from her findings that radio is an agent of development through programs like the community square which bring about development as the audience participates in giving their opinions on socio-economic, political, and cultural issues in the society, she noted that the program has enhanced the culture of audience participation on the radio. Although her study focused on a community in Benin City in Edo State, Nigeria, none has focused on the influence of radio on political activities in South-South, Nigeria.

Edegoh, Ezech, and Anunike (2015) sought respondents' opinions on the role of the radio in disseminating political campaign information to them through the medium radio in Idemili North and South Local Government Area of

Anambra State. They found from their findings that radio had been very effective in mobilizing rural residents in the Idemili North and South Council areas for political participation, and that radio was used to disseminate political information such as politicians' campaign programs, voter education and election dates. He concluded that radio is the most effective mass media available to mobilize rural residents for political participation and maybe so for a long time to come.

In a similar study by Larkin & Ware (2013) on how political debate programmes affect political participation, with a focus on Nepal, their review showed that there is some mixed evidence that exposure to dialogue forms in political participation may be affected. He notes that the relationship between exposure to programming and the manifest form of participation cannot be studied in isolation from other important outcomes such as knowledge, efficacy, and, in particular, interpersonal discussion. They observed that exposure to dialogue formats can increase both the effectiveness and intensity of interpersonal discussion, which in turn is found to be correlated with more goal-oriented forms of participation, such as the intention to vote and participate in a public forum.

Mohammed (2018) made a case for community radio in the development of the Waghimara community in Ethiopia. They found that the absence of community radio in the context of their study would be a major impediment to the development of the Waghimra community. In a similar study by Akosa (2012) on the role of radio in the development of Onitsha North local government, using a survey research design with questionnaires, he sought people's views on radio's contribution to development. city. He found that rural areas have achieved some level of development as a result of radio.

Although his study focused on the contribution of radio to the development of the city in the context of a modernist perspective, the study draws attention to the participatory approach that is important for real development. These empirical studies imply that when properly harnessed and use, broadcasting has the potential to stimulate critical thinking necessary for audience participation in development policies and programmes, especially in the rural areas where the gap between the rich and the poor continues to widen as a result of the information gap.

3. Theoretical Framework.

3.1 Growth Media Theory

Dennis McQuail propounded the development media theory to fill a gap in the development process of developing countries. This principle, in its core postulate, holds that media operations should be colourful to meet the developmental needs of the states concerned, notwithstanding the campaign for media autonomy. The underlying philosophy of development theory, according to McQuail (2005, p.490) is that the media should accept and carry out positive development work in line with nationally established policy.

Udoakah (1990) in a more practical approach provides a detailed insight into the relevance of the theory to the topic of interest in this study. According to the author, the media are deployed to propagate the efforts of communities in building health centres, feeder roads, civic centres, and similar self-help projects. They are used to focus the efforts of governments on the development of rural areas through the provision of electricity, piped water, small-scale industries, and roads to stem the flow of young school dropouts into urban areas.

Tucker (2013, p. 392), in discussing community radio, political theory, and development, furthered the radio/media drama in development when he stated that "in political theory, community radio is an alternative concept of democratic participation and deliberation." which significantly provides a tool to enhance public consultation and communication". Thus, radio as an agent of development is expected to broadcast such programs which can contribute to the development of the society. In addition, it will encourage genuine participation of people in publicized development programmes. Asemah et al (2017, p. 58) add colour to the discussion that:

Those in less developed societies who receive the content produced and distributed by those global systems are exposed to what many in the audience perceive as attractive alternatives to materials, cultures, values, and traditional ways of life. Such audiences are led to opt for or want the goods, services, values, and lifestyles portrayed in the western media, which creates both political unrest and markets for goods that can be exploited.

In relation to this study, when broadcast stations emphasize development-oriented programmes, especially in terms of government efforts at addressing the people's needs, it could stimulate interest in listenership and participation. Again, programmes that hype the failure of leadership can be the critical insight needed by the people to democratically effect changes in leadership to bring about their own development. What this presupposes is that when radio stations design programmes to meet audiences' needs, this could result in actions that bring about the people's development.

3.2 Media Dependency Theory

Sandra Ball-Rokeach and Melvin DeFleur 1976 propounded the Media Dependency Theory which sees the media audiences as active partners in the communication process. The theory integrates psychological ingredients from social categories theory, elements from causal inference approaches perspectives from the uses and gratification theory and traditional concerns about the contents of media messages. This explains why Syallow (2015) believes that the focus of the theory lies in the fact that media and their audiences should be studied in the context of larger social systems. When people need more information, they turn to the media; People have different goals they want to satisfy and the media always has a solution for them (Oji, 2011b).

According to Asema, Nwammuo & Nkwam-Uwaoma (2017, pages 84–85), "the main idea behind this theory is that audiences depend on media information to satisfy their needs and goals and that, social institutions and media systems interact with audiences to create needs, interests, and motives in individuals". The authors further note that the degree of dependence is influenced by gaps filled by the number of information functions used for social instability. According to him "the basis of the influence of the media lies in the relationship between larger social systems, the role of the media in that system and the audience's relationship with the media".

Hmielowski (2014) claim that the degree of our dependence on media and their content is a key variable in understanding when and why media messages change the beliefs or behaviour of the audience. Syallow (2015) observed that the extent of media dependence is directly proportional to the ability of a medium to meet an individual's needs as closely as possible, social stability, as an active component of the communication process and the psychological characteristics of 'Can You Individual'. In other words, the individual will depend on a particular medium for information if it fulfils the need for personal information. This is why Littlejohn (2002) claimed that people will become more dependent on media that meet many of their needs than media that provide only a few.

Although this theory appears simple, communication critics find it very difficult to verify experimentally. Nevertheless, it provides a simple understanding of why people depend on the media for information in certain periods of their social lives. The relevance of this theory to the study lies in the following assumption: individuals with a keen interest in development or political processes require media information for active participation in the process; where the level of audience exposure to such media content becomes high, it will result in a higher level of political awareness and participation based on the creation of media messages.

4. Research Questions

Scholars in the fields of broadcasting and political communication have studied how broadcasting/radio has influenced the development of political processes in various countries over the years (Maractho, 2018; Perloff, 2013; Olayiwola, 2011; Gurevitch, Coleman, & Blumler, 2009). The results from these scientific publications suggest that broadcasting news, especially through radio, allows the public to be entertained, informed, and educated, and that broadcasting information is one of the most pervasive and thus potent tools for changing people's thinking and behaviour patterns, as well as for creating an understanding of political communication effects.

However, according to Ragasa, Mzungu, Kalagho, & Kazembe (2021), radio programming has a largely beneficial influence on raising awareness but a limited impact on the actual adoption of the practices advocated. Similarly, Oji (2011b) discovered that radio broadcasting houses in South-South Nigeria are operated by state governments, that use them to satisfy egocentric political aspirations and powerful propaganda campaigns to hide their inabilities to perform and the plundering of state wealth, much like previous literature has shown that political information is aired in an ad hoc and disorganized way, undermining Nigeria's parochial political discuss. The gap is that no research has been done in South-South Nigeria to examine how disorganized radio broadcasts affect people's lives. The purpose of this research is to address this gap by investigating the impact of radio broadcasting on political involvement among individuals in South-South Nigeria.

Thus, the research will be used to answer the following research questions/hypothesis.

- I. What is the degree of radio set ownership among people in the South-South Zone of Nigeria, depending on the determinants of radio set ownership?
- II. What percentage of people in Nigeria's South-South Zone listen to radio programmes?
- III. To what extent do persons in the South-South Zone of Nigeria who listen to radio programmes also listen to political activities broadcast on the radio?
- IV. What is the level of political activity information knowledge among the inhabitants of Nigeria's South-South Zone?

In line with the above, the following research hypothesis was formulated:

H₀: There is no significant relationship between radio broadcasting of political issues and public interest to participate in political activities in the South-South Zone, Nigeria.

5. Methodology

The cross-sectional survey research design was adopted for the study through the use of responses from respondents with help of a structured questionnaire. The population of the study constitute of residents in Delta and Akwa-Ibom states. The National Population Commission (NPC, 2009) showed the combined population of Delta (4,698,391) and Akwa-Ibom (3,920,208) to be 8,618,599. This was further projected to 2019 which gives a population of 5,823,550 for Delta State and 5,570,363 for Akwa-Ibom State resulting in 11,393,913 (Wold Population Review (WPR), 2022)

The sample size of 400 respondents for the study was based on the Yamane (1964) sample size determination formula adopted to calculate the actual sample size at 0.05 accepted errors. The sample return rate was 95% which is 378 respondents.

The open-ended questionnaire was created in Nigeria's official language, English, and has thirty (30) questions to measure the various variables listed in Section 5.1's variable measurement section. Individuals with a minimum educational qualification to be able to respond to the questions were chosen as respondents. The sampling procedure for the study ensures respondents of age 18 and above from the two selected states are randomly picked from the senatorial districts, local governments and rural/urban communities in the selected states through a multi-stage sampling approach (see Table 1 for sample distribution).

Table 1. Sample Distribution to States, Senatorial Districts, LGAs and Communities

States	Senatorial Districts	Selected LGAs from Senatorial Districts	Selected U/R localities from Selected LGAs
Delta (200)	Delta North (50)	Port Harcourt (25)	Port Harcourt(U) (25)
		Obia-Akpo (25)	Woji(R) (25)
	Delta Central (50)	Ahoda (25)	Ahoda (U) (25)
		Oba-Ebima-Ndoni (25)	Omonku (R) (25)
Akwa-Ibom (200)	Akwa-Ibom North East	Southern Ijaw (30)	Opurama(U) (30)
		Kolokuma/Opurama(30)	Gbaran-Ekpetiama (R)(30)
	Akwa-Ibom North West	Ekeremor (30)	Agbeidiama (U) (30)
		Sagbama (30)	Sagbama (R) (30)

Source: Fieldwork, 2022

5.1 Variables Measurement

- **Ownership of radio sets:** this was measured by asking respondents if radio sets are affordable to them, the purpose for ownership of radio sets whether to listen to public or government-oriented programmes, to ascertain whether the ownership of radio sets is induced by the drive to participate in community discussion as radio serves as a major means of achieving that purpose and to ascertain from the respondents whether they know the nature of the ownership of the radio station they listen to.
- **Radio programme listenership** was measured by asking the respondents whether they receive broadcast radio signals, whether community participation in such programmes motivates them to listen, or being part of a discussion forum for them to listen. The variable was also measured by asking the respondents if feedback from the audience to radio programmes inspires them and whether broadcasting local content that gives them a voice is a part of what encourages them to listen to radio programmes.
- **Listenership to political programmes broadcast on the radio** was measured by asking the respondents if they are moved with personality interviews, discussion segments on topical political issues or questions and answers featuring political candidates and if they gain information from such programmes. The respondents were also required to provide answers if public service announcements on civic duties (voter registration and election dates), airing of political advertisements and viewing of documentaries on political issues and parties encourage them to listen to political programmes.
- **Knowledge of political activities broadcast on the radio** was measured by determining if the respondents pay attention to information about politics and public affairs, actively seek information concerning politics and public affairs, share political news, video clips, or others' blog posts, participate in face to face discussions on

politics or public Affairs, exchange opinions on political or public issues via email, social networking Web sites, microblogging or instant messenger, willing to execute their civic responsibility as it relates to voters' registering and determining if they are interested politics and ready to seek elective positions.

6. Results

6.1 Questionnaire Return Rate

A total of 400 question papers were given to the respondents. Out of 400 questionnaires given to the respondents, only 378 questionnaires were filled out completely and correctly while the other 22 questionnaires, although returned, were not filled out correctly, making for a 95 percent return rate.

6.2 Socio-Demographic Variables Distribution Outlook

Table 2. Distribution of Respondents on Socio-Demographic Variables

Group	Categories	Frequency	Percentage
Sex	Male	136	36.0
	Female	242	64.0
	Total	378	100.0
Age	18-37	173	45.8
	38-57	132	34.9
	58-above	73	19.3
	Total	378	100.0
Income (Naira)	0-30	95	25.1
	31-61	55	14.6
	62-92	138	36.5
	93-123	47	12.4
	123-above	43	11.4
	Total	378	100.0
Educational Qualification	Primary school leaving certificate	20	5.3
	Bachelor's degree	87	23.0
	Ordinary National Diploma (OND)	53	14.0
	Higher National Diploma (HND)	65	17.2
	Secondary School Certificate (SSCE)	146	38.6
	Postgraduate degree	7	1.9
	Total	378	100.0

Source: Fieldwork, 2022

The manifest data from the above table indicates that there were 136 male respondents (36%) and 242 female respondents (64%). This means more female respondents participated in the study than males. This study recognized the fact that most political parties have begun to do their underground work of campaigns using women as their focal point, hence, the import of the data is that women's involvement in political activities has more embracing participation than their male counterparts. The age interval of respondents indicates that the largest group of respondents was those who fell between the age interval of 18-37 years which account for 45.8 % of the total respondents and the least group of respondents were those who fell within the interval of above 58 years which accounted for 19.3% of the total respondents. This suggests that the respondents belong to those in the most active age. It also indicates the growing interest of young people in political activities.

The socio-demographics further show that 38.6% of respondents have an SSCE, closely followed by 23% who were Bachelor's degree holders. Just as 17.2% indicated that they have a Higher National Diploma. Other respondents have varying degrees such as primary school certification (5.3%), OND (14%), and postgraduate degrees (1.9%). The implication is that majority of the respondents have basic educational knowledge to answer the questions raised. It also suggests that there are a number of educated young men and women who have a strong interest in political activities. The data also show that majority of the respondents are not high-income earners.

6.3 Analysis of Research Questions

Research Question One: What is the level of ownership of radio sets based on the determinants of ownership of radio sets among people of South-South Zone, Nigeria?

Table 3. Mean and Standard deviation scores on the level of ownership of radio sets based on the determinants of ownership of radio sets among people of South-South Zone, Nigeria

Response	Mean	S.D	Remark
Ownership of radio sets based on affordability	3.33	.75	+
Ownership of radio to participate as the only means of communication in my locality	2.73	.48	-
Ownership of radio to listen to public-oriented programmes	2.98	.78	-
Ownership of radio to listen to government-oriented programmes	2.58	.68	-
I don't really know who owns the radio stations I listen to	3.17	.34	+

Source: Fieldwork, 2022

Criterion Mean = 3.00

Results in Table 3 show that respondents collectively express that they own radio sets and their ownership of radio sets is influenced by their ability to afford to buy such radio sets ($3.33 \pm .75$). The respondents disagreed that their ownership of a radio set is because the radio serves as the only means of communication in their locality ($2.73 \pm .48$). The respondents had no knowledge ($3.17 \pm .34$) that the radio stations broadcasting within their locality were either solely owned by private ($2.98 \pm .78$) or the government ($2.58 \pm .68$). However, the respondents asserted that their ownership of radio sets is a result of their desire to listen to both public and government-oriented programmes.

Research Question Two: What is the level of radio programmes' listenership among people of South-South Zone, Nigeria?

Table 4. Mean and Standard deviation scores on respondent's level of radio programmes listenership among people of South-South zone, Nigeria

Response	Mean	S.D	Remark
I listen to Radio Stations in my Community	3.37	.58	+
I receive different radio stations from outside my community	3.42	.49	+
I listen mainly to radio broadcasts that are active on community participation	3.27	.78	+
Discussion Forum	3.37	.58	+
Feedback from Audience	3.25	.72	+
Local Content / Issues	3.42	.49	+
Voicing the Voiceless	2.89	.59	-

Source: Fieldwork, 2022

Criterion Mean = 3.00

As shown in Table 4, the respondents listen to radio programmes ($3.37 \pm .58$) and also receive active signals from outside their communities ($3.42 \pm .49$). The majority of the respondents agree they listen to the radio broadcast that is active in community participation ($3.27 \pm .78$), discussion forums ($3.37 \pm .58$), programmes that have feedback from the audience ($3.25 \pm .72$), and programmes with local content ($3.42 \pm .49$). In essence, the people of the South-South Zone, Nigeria are active in listening to a wide range of programmes as broadcasted from the radio stations but based on the interest or need that they want to satisfy.

Research Question Three: To what extent do the people of South-South Zone, Nigeria who listen to radio programmes also listen to the radio broadcast of political activities?

Table 5. Mean and Standard deviation scores on the extent people who listen to radio programmes also listen to the radio broadcast of political activities

Response	Mean	S.D	Remark
Personality interviews with political candidates	3.20	.70	+
Discussion segments on topical political issues	2.85	.75	+
Questions and answers featuring politicians	2.67	.73	-
Documentary on political issues and parties	3.16	.58	+
Public service announcements on civic duties (Voter registration and election dates)	3.32	.73	+
Announcing political campaign dates and venues	3.30	.67	+
Airing Political advertisement	3.16	.67	+

Source: Fieldwork, 2022

Criterion Mean = 3.00

In Table 5, it was shown that most of the respondents claimed that they listen to radio broadcasting on some selected political activities and programmes. Some argued in favour of listening to programmes based on personality interviews with politicians (3.20±.70), discussion segments on topical political issues (3.36±.75) documentaries on political issues and parties (3.16±.58), public service announcements on civic duties (Voter registration and election dates) ((3.32±.73), announcing political campaign dates and venues (3.30±.67) and airing of political advertisements (3.16±.67). Respondents argued against listening to programmes where political players are asked questions and are expected to provide answers to trending political issues (2.67±.73). Therefore, one would conclude that despite a wide range of respondents listening to the broadcast of political activities, respondents still are not ready to listen to politicians' responses to political issues. This is a serious problem rooted in Nigerians' belief that politicians hardly tell the truth and thus embittered with politicians and the entire political system (Falade, 2015)

Research Question Four: What is the level of knowledge of political activities information among people of South-South Zone, Nigeria

Table 6. Mean and Standard deviation scores on respondent's knowledge level of political activities information among people of South-South Zone, Nigeria

Response	Mean	S.D	Remark
I am interested in politics and willing to seek an elective position	2.80	.60	-
I pay attention to information about politics and public affairs	3.41	.67	+
I actively seek information concerning politics and public affairs	3.10	.54	+
I share political news, video clips, or others' blog posts	3.67	.47	+
I participate in face to face discussions on politics or public Affairs	3.45	.50	+
I exchange opinions on political or public issues via email, social networking Web sites, microblogging or Instant Messenger	3.78	.41	+
I am willing to perform my civic responsibilities	3.36	.49	+

Source: Fieldwork, 2022

Criterion Mean = 3.00

As shown in Table 6, the majority of the respondents who develop an interest in listening to political activities and programmes on the radio seem to be well informed about the politics of their locality. Surprisingly, they lack interest in politics (2.80±.60) despite the enormous attention they give to political action and activities (3.41±.67), seeking to know about politics (3.10±.54), sharing political information (3.67±.47), participating in political discussions (3.45±.50), exchanging political views and knowledge (3.78±.41) and willing to perform their civic responsibilities. In essence, we can infer that although listening to political activities broadcast on radio enhances one's knowledge of politics, other factors may be responsible for one's active interest in politics to fully participate.

6.3.1 Test of Hypothesis

H₀₁: There is no significant relationship between radio broadcasting of political issues and public interest in participating in political activities in the South-South Zone, Nigeria.

Table 7. Test of the relationship between radio broadcasting of political issues and public interest in participating in political activities in South-South Zone, Nigeria

N=378		public interest on participating in political activities
Radio broadcasting of political issues	Pearson <i>r</i>	0.447
	<i>r</i> Squared	0.40
	fisher r-to-t test	9.69
	<i>p</i> -value	<0.05
	DF	376

Source: Field Work, 2022; Significant Level ($p < 0.05$)

Table 7 shows the test of a significant relationship between radio broadcasting of political issues and public interest in participating in political activities in the South-South Zone, Nigeria. From the result, we can observe that $r = 0.447$ indicates a 45% relationship between radio broadcasting of political issues and public interest in participating in political activities in the South-South Zone, Nigeria. However, the strength of this relationship was measured using the coefficient of determination (*r*-squared) value = 0.40 which implies that 40% of the variance in the changing public interest in citizen participation in political activities is explained by their listening to radio broadcasting of political issues. To determine whether this relationship is significant, the fisher r-to-t test formula was used to test for the significance with a 5% level of significance.

From Table 7, the observed t-value = 9.69 with a probability value of 0.05; indicates that the null hypothesis is rejected and the alternate hypothesis is accepted. Thus, there is a positive and significant relationship between radio broadcasting of political issues and public interest in participating in political activities in the South-South Zone, Nigeria. However, the coefficient of the determinant of 40% shows that radio broadcasts on political activities rarely create political participation among the people, but do help in their active knowledge and information on current political activities in the South-South Zone of Nigeria.

7. Discussion and Conclusion

The data presented indicate that the people of South-South Nigeria’s ownership of radio sets are influenced by their ability to afford such listening devices just as enunciated (Okoth, 2015). While this study found that respondents’ interest to listen to both government and public-oriented programmes influenced their ownership of radio sets, Mwantimwa (2018) opined the above-mentioned finding is profoundly hinged on the affordability of the cheap nature of radio sets. The argument by the respondents that their ownership of radio sets is not based on radio existing as the only source of communication in their community was clarified and given meaning in Oji (2011) where the author infers that while interpersonal communication is viewed as one of the most common forms of communication applied by humans in their daily interactions and used to generate social change, mediated communication as could be found in radio broadcast only come about when the communicator is desirous of reaching a large and heterogeneous audience with an intended message.

The South-South people of Nigeria based on the findings listen to radio broadcasts based on the amount of interest the programme generates in them, the possible information they are likely going to get from such broadcasts and the probable needs for listening to radio broadcasts would satisfy. This explains why Ekeria (2016) and Ekhareafu (2014) submit that radio serves as an important means of galvanizing political mobilization and good governance. The people of South-South Nigeria affirmed through the findings that they listen to radio broadcasts of politically oriented programmes. However, the high listenership to political programmes failed to influence their attention on questions and answers segments where politicians are expected to respond to their years of stewardship in office. This finding corroborates Falade’s (2015) affirmation that a serious problem rooted in Nigerians’ belief that politicians hardly tell the truth and thus embittered with politicians and the entire political system that exists in Nigeria. Nevertheless, since the documentation of political issues for better governance is of vital importance as enunciated in Grabber (2005), the story of listenership to politically oriented programmes is still satisfactory.

The findings reveal that the broadcast of political activity on radio increased the South-South people of Nigeria’s knowledge of political electoral processes. The knowledge gained however has failed to translate into the people’s innate interest to participate in electoral processes to extent of wanting to seek elective positions. Thus, other factors outside of good knowledge of political electoral processes such as Nigerian embitterment with politicians and the entire political system that exists in Nigeria culminate to create a level of disenchantment with the people. The findings reveal that through the different political activities and programmes broadcasted on radio, the people have developed a strong interest

in politics and they stay regularly informed about public affairs by paying attention to information that comes to their domain. Apart from seeking active information covering politics in their locality, they also contribute to political discussions and programmes tailored towards the enlightenment of the populace.

Furthermore, the study reveals that apart from political programmes that give room for questioning and answering which the people have less interest in, other political programmes motivate them to participate in political discussions. These programmes include watching political candidate interviews, discussion segments on politics, political documentaries, sensitization on voting and registration, and other political advertisements. Empirical studies supporting these findings are Ibagere, (2009), Ikpe (2010), and Halloran (2006)

The study reveals that people's behaviour towards communicating and sensitizing others about politics is strongly affected by the different political activities and programmes on radio. Measuring how they talk to others about politics, the study reveals that people frequently discuss political issues at the workplace and with neighbours and friends. They post and share political issues in different formats and mediums such as video clips, Whatsapp, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, etc and they participate in face to face discussions with political aspirants in their locality, which make them be heard and exchange useful ideas (Oji and Bebenimibo, 2021; Oji and Erubami, 2020;). In essence, the presence of radio broadcasts on political issues is related to the modification of citizens' behaviour towards politics. Corroborating this study, findings from Akosa, (2012), Aririguzoh, (2011), and Ayedun-Aluma, (2008) were affirmative.

The study finds that radio makes people get an appropriate understanding of politics and public affairs by attending political meetings, rallies, protests, and marches, where they learn that people are urged to register with political parties and developed awareness. The created awareness through the media informs the people of becoming strong political party members and wearing the t-shirts, using the stickers and signs for campaign and election purposes. Despite the fact that the study shows a positive and significant relationship between radio broadcasting and political knowledge, the people of South-South Nigeria's political knowledge has not translated into a desire for them to run for elective office, which is a major flaw in Nigeria's democratic development.

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