

## University Students' Listening Behaviour of FM Radio Programmes in Nigeria: An Exploratory Approach

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### Abstract

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This study explores university students listening behaviour of FM radio programmes, with DELSU FM 103.7 radio station as a study location to assess the motivations for listening to FM radio programmes and gratifications being derived. A self-completion questionnaire was administered to 200 students in different faculties/department in Delta State University, using simple random sampling procedure and the students selected were regular listeners of FM radio programmes. The respondents' data were presented in tables, pie chart, bar chart and descriptive statistic to unfold demographic profile of respondents and the listening patterns of FM radio programmes. Findings revealed that majority of students were more incline towards information derivation. The study also found information/knowledge as the most gratification to students. Further findings indicated the students' frequency of listening to DELSU FM radio programmes was consistent or regular noting the use of mobile media as facilitative devices for students' ability in listening to DELSU FM radio programmes. The study observes that the uses and gratifications theory of the media help underscore the students' actions and decisions in exploring the potentialities of FM radio programmes for self-benefits or gratifications affirming as well as the uniqueness of radio as a medium of mass communication in society.

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**Keywords:** Nigeria, Media Audiences. University Students, DELSU Radio FM 103.7, Uses and Gratifications Theory of the Media

### Introduction

Nigeria is a developing society with a landmass of 923,768 sq. km (356,700 sq. mile), a country in the south east of West Africa. It is bordered in the South by approximately 800 kilometers of the Atlantic Ocean, in the West by the Republic of Benin, in the North by the Republic of the Niger and in the East by the Republic of Cameroon [1; 2]. She has diverse languages of over five hundred including Hausa to Igbo, Yoruba, Ibibio, Fulani, Edo, Kanuri, Efik, Fulfulde and English Language is the official language in terms of spoken and as written expressions, and on which the populace understand them (see Maxiollum, 2012)

The country is made of thirty-six states and Federal Capital Territory (FCT) and 774 local government areas nationwide, with democratic principles and values, and institutions that reflect the democratic principles and policy frameworks of governance, and responsibilities between the Federal Government, the State Government and the Local Governments (Federal Republic of Nigeria Constitution 1999, Nigeria; Chinwe, 2015; Nairaland, 2016). The nation's economic policy direction lies on "free market system" with liberalization, deregulation and competition to stimulate economic growth and service direction (see Mordi, Englama and Adebusyi, 2017). There are three types of broadcasting systems: public (federal and states) private commercial (individual proprietorship) and community (grassroot or collective ownership). Remarkable to indicate is that both private and community broadcasting systems were the product of the 1992 deregulation policy, which marks a shift from centralisation of broadcasting (government domination) to decentralization policy (public, private and community broadcasting stations).

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Today, multiple broadcasting stations are in operation: television broadcasting stations and FM radio broadcasting stations with private sector ownership, funding and programmes diversity (3; Nwachukwu, 1995; Media Rights Agenda, 2001:10-11, 2010, Ihechu and Okugo, 2013; Shaibu, 2016). Ihechu and Okugo, (2013) explains that the deregulation of broadcasting in the country has opens up a new pattern of ownership and control as well as injection of competition in broadcasting and Nwachukwu, (1995) notes that the emergence of private broadcasting provide inspiration for healthier competitions with public service broadcasting citing quality programming as competitive strategies among broadcasters, to the diversity of programmes flow and programming for audience (see Sanyaoui, 1990).

Across the country, FM radio broadcasting stations is becoming more and more establish, driven by private sector participation in ownership and funding and easy to set up with compact equipment (digital radio transmitter and receiver) and infrastructure. Available figure indicates that there are over 318 FM radio stations spread across the thirty-six states including the Federal capital, Abuja and over 37 online radios. (Gusau, 2014; Nairaland Forum 2017: 6). This coincides with Anglo-American model of public broadcasting and private radio broadcasting and independent regulator of broadcasters to ensure conformity with standard broadcasting practice and professionalism. For Nigeria, the National Broadcasting Commission, NBC was established by the Nigerian Government through Decree No 38 with further amendment via Decree No. 55 of 1999. The commission is empowered to regulate and control the operational behaviour of broadcasters of public and private broadcasting stations (see NBC Code, 1996; Nyamnjoh, 2003: 114-137; Ajibulu, 2013; Udomisor, 2013; Ehusani, 2014: 8-9; Nazifi, 2017).

This paper discusses one aspect of the country's broadcasting landscape; the FM broadcasting stations, programmes diversity and accessibility with focus on young adults, mainly the university students as an investigation. Next is the discussion on the theoretical position for the study

### **Theoretical Perspectives: Uses and Gratifications Theory of the Media**

Much has been said about the uses and gratifications theory of the media and on which the study of audience listening behaviour of private radio broadcasting stations in Nigeria is set up (Albarran, Tonya Anderson and co-researchers, (2007). The theory focuses on media-audience research and on need approach to underscore how individuals use the media to meet their needs and fulfilled their value-interest. As Papacharissi (2009) puts it, individuals select media and content to fulfill felt needs or wants, noting that the needs are expressed as motives for adopting a medium use. The author therefore submits those media users are active audience. Gora, (2017) notes that the uses of mass media are dependent on the perception, selectivity and previously held beliefs, values and interest of the people

The development of uses and gratifications theory, and its influence in media audience research is connected to earlier media researchers such as Lazarsfeld (1940) who studied the uses and gratifications theory in radio listening in USA, Herta Herzog, (1944) studied the relations of the uses and gratifications theory and the reasons why people chose specific types of media and identified emotional, wishful thinking, and learning as three gratifications of media use. McQuail, Blumler and Brown, (1972) draw on the uses and gratifications theory established the benefits of media use and emphasizes diversion, personal relationships, personal identity and surveillance as critical gratifications inconsumption

Furthermore, Katz, Blurnler, & Gurevitch (1974) and subsequently advances in media audience research and as need-fulfillment approach to engage media content consumption noting that people have certain needs that they wish to gratify from media usage behaviour. The authors appear to suggest that media use has the following goals and are; 1. The audience is active and its media use is goal oriented 2. People have various uses (needs) they seek to satisfy through media 3. Audience members take initiative to link need gratification to a specific media 4. The media compete with other sources for need satisfaction 5. People have enough self-awareness of their own media use, interests and motives to be able to provide researchers with accurate picture of that use and 6. Value judgment of media content can only be assumed by the audience.

Furthermore, Biocca, (1988) sees audience as a critical factor in media consumption noting that the active and passive audience categorization as a means understanding the processes of media content consumption. The author regards active audience as individuals who use the media relative to his own interpretative forms, interest and value system and freedom of usable behaviour while passive audience is always at the receiving end of media content flow

and the freedom to use the media in relations to own inclinations and meaning is non-existent. This researcher therefore argues that the flexibility of active audience in media usage behaviour is more crucial to pursue in this paper.

Blumler, (1979) advances the activity of the audiences within the framework of the uses and gratifications of the media, and point out that audience uses the media in diverse ways citing as follows; i. utility refers to using the media to accomplish specific tasks. ii. Intentionality occurs when people's prior motive determines use of media.iii. Selectivity refers to audience members' use of media reflects their existing interests and iv. Imperviousness to Influence: refers to audience members' constructing their own meaning from media content [5].

A more retrospective documentation on the stages of development of the uses and gratifications theory in media-audience research has found from the work of scholars such as Egede, (2013; Papacharissi, (2009); Ruggiero, (2000) and Obot, (2013) and on which the principles of U&G in radio news media research is linked.

### **The Relevance of the Theory to the Study**

The uses and gratifications theory of the media provides unique conceptual framework to explore the relations of private broadcasting and audience engagement. The concept of audiences in this study are the listeners of private radio broadcasting programmes in Nigerian and in which programming schedules influence choice of stations. Audience expectations of private broadcasting performance is connected back to the work of Katz, Blurnler, & Gurevitch (1974) which says that audience relates to the media and their contents on the basis of wants or motives and Blumler (1979) and Biocca, (1988) who sees audience as active with decisions and preference for consumption of private broadcasting programmes activities and the gratifications from respective programmes formats. The latter defines the gratifications derived from privatebroadcasting stations programmes flow. Gora, (2017) notes gratifications as the rewards and satisfaction experienced by audiences after the use of media, serving further to explain motivations relating to media use and habits of media usage behaviour. These discursive analyses provide ground to underscore the importance of U & G theory and on which the related studies on audience listening habit

### **Studies on Radio Audiences and Listening to Radio Programmes**

This section discusses three main issues and is: First, the concept of radio audiences. Second, audience listening habits of radio programmes and programing and Third, the factors influencing audiences' attitude towards radio listening.

#### **Radio Audiences**

According to Hebert and Gibbons, (2000) mass media audience is a critical factor in mass communication process and that audience participation in media activity serves as a measure of media communicator performance and understanding their audience. The authors then refer to mass media audience as users of mass media. The concept of mass media audience relates to radio and television broadcasting and each with separate audience platform. Thus, radio audience is single out for discursive direction citing listeners of radio programmes as a definition (see Patricia, Solo-Anaeto and Jegede, 2015).

#### **Qualities of Radio**

The qualities of radio have been expressed by researchers citing for examples, Ofcom, (2013) notes that radio is an accessible medium, on a ubiquitous platform; a dependable companion; a deliverer of timely national and local information; and a source of a variety of entertaining and stimulating music and speech. These qualities are felt to have endured both over time and in relation to other media, whether traditional or new. Further, Birch and Tinley, (2016) sees radio as a medium of emotional connection claiming that people like radio for its companionship and for the connection it provides with the wider world.

#### **Listening to Radio Programmes**

Listening on radio has been discussed by several researchers who sought to know why people listen to radio programmes, with what gratifications, (Lazarsfeld, 1940; Albarran, Tonya Anderson and co-researchers,2007; Gathigi,2009; Thomas,2011; Birsen,2012; Cheatham,2012; Ajaegbu, Akintayo and Akinjiyan, 2015; Sharma, 2016; Mogambi, 2016).

The themes emerging from these researches is that audience listening to radio is driven by motives and gratifications in deriving the benefits of the medium noting that socio-demographic variables plays interventionist role in audience listening behaviour of radio (see Cordeiro, 2017).

Lazarsfeld, 1940 as cited in Garfinkel, 1987) regard radio as a potential medium for the advancement of education and refer to listeners of educational programmes as serious listening audience, claiming that there is existence of correlation between programmes preference and demographic characteristics of listeners (gender, age, urbanization, economic class; amount of radio listening (amount of time individual spends listening to radio). Lazarsfeld coined the term serious listening to describe listeners who are active users of media content suggesting further two directions of listener research either critical research (academic inspire research) or administrative research (policy-making inspire research) (see Lazarsfeld, 1941; Barker, Mathijs and Turnbull, 2015).

Further research evidence on the relations of critical research and audience radio listening behaviour are therefore cited and discussed. Albarran, Tonya Anderson and co-researchers, (2007) found from their study of radio listening of undergraduate students in USA aged 18-24 that majority of the respondents listen to radio, least 2 or more hours a day noting MP3 was the main usage device for listening, with flexibility of musical choice of entertainment programmes.

McClung, Pompper and Kinnally (2007 as cited in Birsen, 2012) isolate the motivations of listening to radio noting exciting, entertaining, putting me in a good mood, relaxation, helping to forget about school and homework, learning things about myself and others, helping me pass time when I am bored and using it to find out about the news and others as preferences.

Radio Advertising Bureau report on radio listening habits in UK (as cited in Thomas, 2011) explains that people regard as a lifestyle support system, helping people feel better as they go about their daily lives pointing out that majority of the people surveyed sees the medium as the biggest mood enhancer for people who listen to the radio. As the report explain, radio listening reached its highest level ever recorded in the first quarter as 47.3 million adults or 91.6 per cent of people aged 15 or above tuned-in to their favourite radio stations each week. The report indicates the new media of mobile phone, online radio and digital television to be boasting audience radiolistening habits.

Ajaegbu and his colleagues (2015) found that up-to-date information and entertainment were the main motives why Redeemers University students listen to radio noting that the students' ability on decision-making was further influence by the programmes content. The study also revealed that gender and discipline plays a key role in the students' listening behavior of radio programmes. Mogamsi, (2016) notes that the students of University of Nairobi listen to radio through their mobile phones and cited playing music of their choice, educational programmes and good programmes presenter as the main reasons for listening to radio. The study further revealed that the students listen to radio for 1 to 4 hours.

Mendelsohn, (1964 as cited in Cheatham, (2012) identified the motives for radio listening and are; companionship, filling a void in a daily routine, altering mood, relieving boredom, providing news and information, allowing active participation in events, and overcoming social isolation. For Kwacha, (2012) information was the most motive of listening to FM radio stations in Ghana relative to other programmes indicators in statistical findings.

Tuffy, (2014) point out that people listen to radio for gratifications relating to entertaining, educational (current events), counseling and stress relieving adding that listeners now download musical stuff into their hand-held devices and MP3 player equipped with radio becomes the tool for listening. Moreover, Cunsolo, (2016) discusses why people listen to radio and cited its ability to connect listeners with contemporary music, both local and global news, and keeping listeners on track of programmes choice and reception noting that the new media of mobile phones has enhance listener's accessibility to radio stations programmes on the go.

These studies suggest that the uniqueness of radio, as a medium of mass communication that has enduring benefits in society. As Ajaegbu, Akintayo, and Akinjiyan, (2015) puts it radio can present news as it happens, brings the voices of news makers and artists into the homes of listeners, provides dramatic shows and other entertainment, which listeners can visualize even in the absence of visuals. They therefore submit that radio is a good companion that entertains and informs its listeners.

### Why University Students?

The university students are young people in Nigeria society with distinct background in terms of lifestyle and value system. They are generation who are grown up to experience public and private broadcasting stations and diversity of programmes and programming schedules for accessibility to choice of stations' programmes. The emergent of University FM radio stations in complementing public service broadcasting has expanded on students' access to programmes of their choice (see Liman, 2016; Nwabueze, 2017) and specifically Liman notes that university campus radio programmes borders on informing, entertaining and educating to which students are the most listeners. Moreover, Plummer, (2017) indicate mobile media (smartphone) is providing much options for listening to FM radio stations and Reyes, Maria E.C. and co-authors, (2012) notes in their study of FM radio listeners in Cagayan De Oro City that today's younger generation are more expose to new technologies, with radio becoming possessive to them or radio on their phones to listen to their preferred radiostation/programs.

Furthermore, the university students as individual have different interpretative processes in making sense of radio programmes in terms of content and form and on which the principles of selectivity (listening to choice of radio programmes and programming); utilitarianism (functionality of programmes genre to listeners or audience); intentionality (decision on programmes on radio listening is driven by interest and needs for such programme) and involvement (programmes listening and consumption involves individual interpretation to arrive at definite meaning for self-fulfilling gratifications in terms of benefits to the listeners) becomes the critical factors of individual listeners activity (See Biocca, 1988).

### Intervening Variables and Listening to FM radio Programmes

Earlier in the review, there were emerging factors mediating the listening behaviour of FM radio programmes reference to Lazarsfeld, (1940) on gender, age, urbanization, economic class; time); Ajaegbu and his colleagues (2015) on gender; Albarran, Tonya Anderson and co-researchers (2017) on age (18-24) and Mogamsi, (2016) on time frequency (1 to 4 hours). All of these constitute the basis of intervening variables serving as a determinant factor in understanding the relations of university students and listening to FM radio programmes and demographic diversity (see also Crossman, 2017).

The relation of time frequency in listening to FM radio programmes is another intervention variable on which the students' listening patterns of FM radio stations programmes is measurable...The work of Huesmann and co-authors, (1984) emphasize the relevance of intervening variables in researching television viewing behaviour. This discursive review provides the ground on which four research questions are set up to find out why and how the students listen to FM radio stations programmes. These are;

RQ1. Do demographic characteristics influence students' listening attitude towards FM radio programmes?

RQ2: Why do students listen to FM radio programmes?

RQ3. What is the frequency of students' listening to FM radio programmes?

RQ4. What gratifications do students derive from listening to FM radio programmes?

RQ5. Are there media technology impacting on students listening to FM radio programmes?

These questions are set up to understand the students listening attitudes towards FM radio programmes. Next is the discussion of methodology.

### Methodology

The study on listening to FM radio programmes lies on quantitative set up and survey procedure to gather data from the university students refers to as audience of FM radio broadcasting stations. As Burton, (2007) explains, survey enables data to be collected from individual, usually from large samples of a population for descriptive statistical interpretation and analysis. Keegan, (2014) sees survey method as a procedure of gathering quantitative data on those thoughts, feelings, and behaviour we have in common, or in which we differ. The author then adds that survey method asks a representative sample of people the same questions about opinions, values and beliefs noting empirical data, standardization, highly replicable, easy to score and cheap as the main advantages of survey practice.

### Study Location and Sampling Procedure

The location for this study is DELSU FM radio Station, Abraka, Nigeria and is located at the Abraka campus of the Delta State University. The University has student population of about 36,000 as the 2007/08 session and ten (10) faculties. The station transmits on 103.7 frequency spectrum space with transmitting signals coverage of Abraka community and beyond. The choice of DELSU FM radio as a location for studying students listening of FM radio programmes lies on its accessibility to the university environment (on-campus and off-campus) and on which survey of opinion on programmes genres and content can be carried out with ease of questionnaire distribution and retrieval.

A self-reported questionnaire were issued to students in different faculties and departments, in Delta State University on face-face contact and sample size of 200 students from all the faculties were involved through simple random sampling procedure to select students who are all undergraduate and listeners of DELSU FM radio programmes. The students were chosen for their significance and as active individual of young demographics group between the ages of 18to 24 years. This represents sizable proportion of generational literacy of 72.-79 percent withspoken and written expressions in English language (see Nigerian Population; TuscanAcademy, 2012). This suggests that the sampled students possess the abilityto take decision on the programmes they listen to on DELSU FM radio, with gratifications and meaning to them,

The questionnaire development is based on the research questions earlier advanced, broken into two sections. Section one deals with the demographic profile of the students such as gender, age and marital status. This research question one Section two deals with research question two on why students listen to FM radio programmes; research question three on the students' frequency of listening to FM radio programmes; research question four contained the gratifications for listening to FM radio programmes and research question five focused on the technological devices impacting listening to FM radio programmes. Findings take decision on the programmes they listen oonDELSUFMradio, with gratifications and meaning to them.

The data from the responses to the self-completed questionnaire on listening to FM radio programmes were presented in tables, pie chart and bar chart with descriptive statistics to unfold students' opinion to research question one to four. It is instructive to indicate that the derived data were those of Delta State University which were presented and analyses in relations to the research questions. The presentation and analysis begins with demographic picture of respondents.

**Table 1: Gender Distribution of Respondents**

Gender	Frequency	Percentage Distribution
Men	84	42%
Women	116	58%
Total	200	100%

**Source:** Field Survey (2017)

Findings from the data presented in Table 1 shows that majority of the respondents are women (58%) compared to men with 42%. This suggests the existence of gender influence in listening to FM radio stations implying further there is gender gap in listening to FM radio programmes in terms of involvement and utilization.

**Table 2: Age Distribution of Respondents**

Age	Frequency	Percentage Distribution
15-24	83	41.5%
25-34	64	32%
35-40	21	10.5%
40 and above	32	16%
Total	200	100%

**Source:** Field Survey (2017)

Table 2 presents four age categories of respondents noting that majority of them were in the age group of 15-24 (41.5%) depicting that this students group leans more towards listening FM radio programmes.

**Figure 1: Pie Chart Showing the Marital Status of the Respondents**

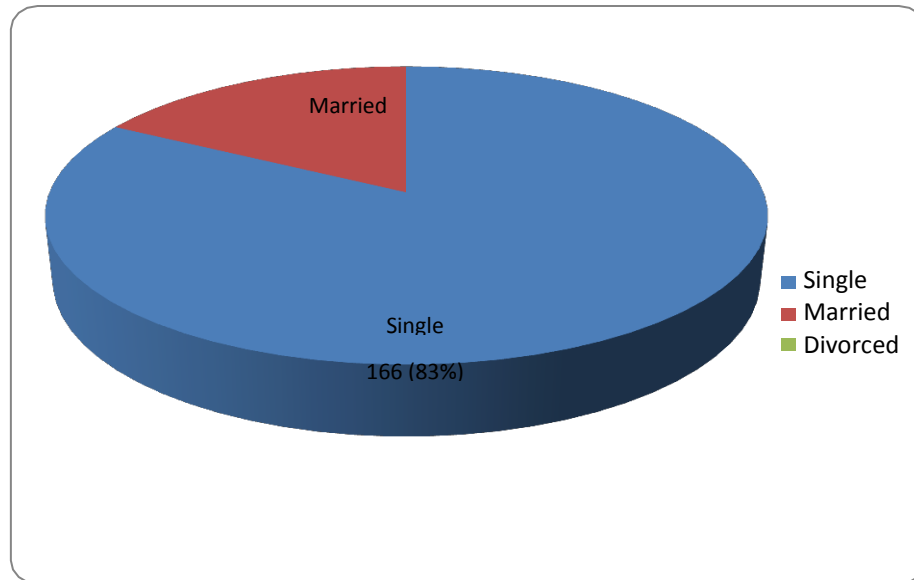


Figure 1 present three measures of marital status: single, married and divorce noting there were statistical differences between each of them. The result shows that majority of the students are single 166 (83%), compared to married 34 (17%) and divorce. The finding indicates sizable proportion of the students is single.

**Concluding Remarks**

The findings in Table one, Table three and Figure one affirms the influence of intervening variables in listening to FM radio programmes, supporting earlier research by Lazarsfeld, 1940 as cited in Garfinkel, (1987) and Albarran, Tonya Anderson and co-researchers,(2017)

**Analysis According to the Research Questions**

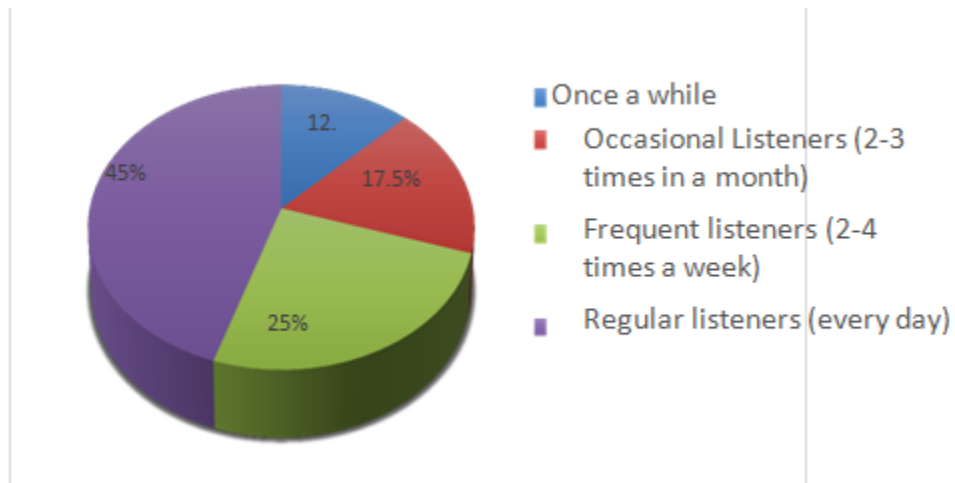
**Table 3: Reported Data on Why Students Listen to FM Radio Programmes**

S/N	Items	Frequency	Percentage
1	To be informed	104	52%
2	To be entertained	22	11%
3	For relaxation	23	11.5%
4	For diversion from stress and school activities	17	8.5%
5.	All of the above	20	10%
6.	No reason	14	7%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Source:** Field Survey (2017)

Table 3 present the results on why the students listen to FM radio programmes with seven options of response opinion being provided for respondents" determinants. The statistical picture shows different percentage variations and to be informed 104 (52%) indicate the most preferred motive for listening to DELSU FM radio programmes. This finding is consistent with earlier study of Kwakwa, (2012) who reported information as the main motive of listening to FM radio stations in Ghana.

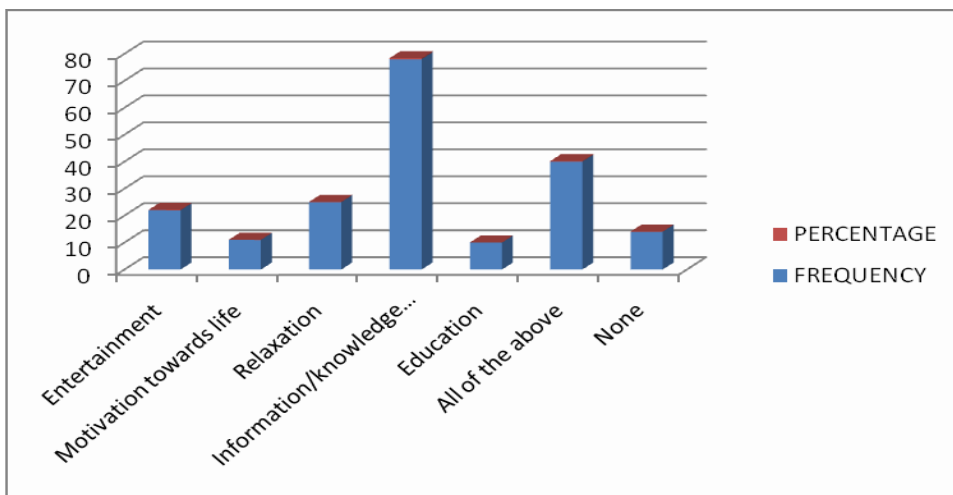
**Figure 2: Reported Frequency of Students' Listening to FM Radio Programme**



Source: Field Survey (2017)

Figure 2 addressed the research question two on the frequency of listening to FM radio programmes and four response options were provided to assess the students' opinion. The analysis of the respondents' data shows that majority of the respondents 90 (45%) listen to FM radio programmes on daily basis. This implies that the students are consistent listeners of DELSU FM radio programmes. The finding appears to extend Lazarsfeld, (1940 cited in Garfinkel, 1987) claims that the amount of time individual spends listening to radio underscore individual interest, needs and functionalities noting that the respondents as radio listeners have time-frame in listening to radio programmes.

**Figure 3: Reported Gratifications of Students' Listening to FM Radio Programmes**



Source: Field Survey (2017)

Figure 3 addressed research question three on gratifications arising from listening to FM radio programmes and seven measures were provided to assess the patterns of respondents' gratifications in listening to FM radio programmes. Findings from the analysis of data revealed statistical differences between respective gratifications measures, and information/knowledge 78 (39%) is the most consistent gratification to the students. This finding implies that the students are information conscious in the advancement of knowledge that could enhance or support their educational pursuit and self-development.



**Table 4: Reported Use of Media Devices in Listening to FM Radio Programmes**

S/N	Devices Used	Frequency	Percentage Variation
1	Radio Set	76	38%
2	Mobile Media	116	58%
3	Laptops	1	0.5%
4	Mp3 Players	7	3.5%
5.	Internet/Online radio	0	0%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>100</b>

**Source:** Field Survey (2017)

Table 4 addressed the research question four on media technologies impacting on listening to FM radio programmes. Four media devices were put forward to determine respondents' opinion on the utility of respective gadget in listening to FM radio. The results show that most of the respondents used mobile media with FM radio application in listening to FM radio programmes. This suggests the popularity of mobile media devices to the students in terms of receptivity and consumption. This finding supports previous studies of Plummer, (2017) who said smartphones has provided options for users to access FM radio stations and listen to programmes and Reyes, Maria and co-authors, (2012) who reported that today's younger generation are more exposed to new technologies, with radio becoming possessive to them or radio on their phones to listen to their preferred radio station/programmes. Livingston, (2004) notes that mobile media serves different purposes for user, citing the possibility of listening or recording FM radio stations programmes with FM radio application on mobile devices.

### Discussion

This study explored university students listening behaviour of FM radio programmes in Nigeria with five research questions to examine the patterns of listening, with what frequency of listening, gratifications derived and the media device applications in listening to programmes on FM radio. The study was influenced by the increasing FM radio stations which came on board in the aftermath of broadcasting deregulation in 1992, with public and private sector broadcasting stations operating side-by-side including university campus FM radios. The current study was designed to provide a much better understanding on how university students use FM radio as a route to accessibility of transmitting stations and programmes listening.

Two hundred students were surveyed in different department/faculties of Delta State University through self-completed questionnaire and simple sampling procedure. The respondents' data were presented in tables, pie chart, bar chart and analyses descriptive statistics. The findings are therefore discussed according to the research question. Research question one addressed whether demographic characteristics influence students' attitude towards listening to FM radio programmes. Findings from the results on Table 1; 2 and Figure 1 revealed evidence of intervening variables bordering on gender influence in which the listening habit of women is comparatively more than men in listening to FM radio programmes noting further the students between the ages of 18 to 24 years are more inclined to FM radio stations. The survey further found majority of the students were single revealing distinct generation of FM radio listeners. This implies what Lazarsfeld refers to as serious listeners of radio.

Research question two asked why students listen to FM radio programmes and six factors were provided as response options (see Table 3). The result shows that to be informed was the main reason of listening to FM radio programmes. This finding supports Mendelsohn, (1964) and McClung and Kinnally, (2007) who noted that news and information as the motivation for listening to radio stations. Research question three required the students to indicate the frequency of listening to FM radio programmes with four frequencies of listening time-frame (see Figure 2). The survey found that most students listen to FM radio programmes on regular basis. Similar finding was reported by Albarran, Tonya Anderson and co-researchers, (2007) who found that students listen to radio 2 or more hours a day and Mogamsi, (2016) who noted that students listen to radio for 1 to 4 hours. This difference is linked to the different society under which the studies were carried out noting that different societies do have diverse students' orientation and socialisation. This could have played a key role in their interest and freedom of time in listening to FM radio programmes. Research question four asked respondents on the gratifications derived from listening to FM radio programmes and seven response factors were provided to assess respondents' opinion (see Figure 3). The finding noted that majority of the students had preference for information/knowledge, as the most gratification obtained from listening to FM radio programmes.

The finding is consistent with earlier study which found up-to-date information as the most sought gratification in listening to FM radio programmes (Ajaegbu and his colleagues, 2015). Research question five asked the students which mobile media devices they use most to access and listen to FM radio programmes. This was evaluated with five different devices (see Table 4). The finding indicated mobile media (mobile phone with internet connection and smartphone) as the most preferred gadget in listening to FM radio programmes. The finding affirmed those of Cunsolo, (2016) and Mogamsi, (2016) who found mobile devices as effective tools for listening to FM radio programmes.

### **Conclusion**

The study shows that the university students which are of diverse demographic profile in terms of gender (men and women) ages differences, marital categories) are active individual listeners of FM radio programmes. Findings from the respondents' data analysis on the research questions one to four reveals the listening patterns of DELSU FM radio programmes indicating that the students are prone to information acquisition for the advancement of knowledge in terms of self-development and building confidence.

Furthermore, the study affirms the relevance of the uses and gratifications theory in understanding the processes of the university students' engagement of DELSU FM radio programmes noting the involvement of selective decisions relating to control and choice of programmes and programming, the intention which underline the programme listening habits, and the functions and benefits which are derivable in listening to DELSU FM radio programmes. This brings to the fore the issue of interactive activity of the students listening habits, bordering on utilitarianism and intentionality, reference to Biocca, (1988)

The study also shows the usefulness of mobile media technologies to the university students in listening to DELSU FM radio programmes and consumption, suggesting the uniqueness of radio as a medium of emotional connection, companionship and connectivity to the wider world (see Tinley, 2016), and affordance of the medium (affordable cost) and audience diversity (broad spectrum of individuals listeners with possession of radio as a medium of programmes reception) (see Gusau, 2014)

### **Limitations**

This study takes on DELSU FM radio broadcasting station as a study location and therefore the survey of students at Delta State University is not representative of the entire university students' population in Nigeria. This is seen as a major constrain on the statistical picture of the findings, rendering it too narrow to be generalized for the entire students listening patterns of FM radio programmes. This researcher therefore argues that the findings of this study can help predict future trend of university students listening attitude towards FM radio programmes in Nigeria. This limitation notwithstanding, the study illuminates the potency of FM radio programmes and on which the university students becomes an open platform to get a firm grasp on the motivation for listening to DELSU FM radio programmes and the gratifications arising from listening. Moreover, the study has made contribution to the advancement of knowledge in radio audience research, critical audience research tradition (see Lazarsfeld, 1941; Barker, Mathijs and Turnbull, 2015) and the inductive philosophy in social sciences research.

### **Future Research**

Private FM radio broadcasting system is still in its infancy, operating alongside the public service FM radio broadcasting and competition abound between them. The service direction of private radio broadcasting in terms of programmes and programming, their audience and professionalism of broadcasters to the ideals of broadcasting require better understanding and knowledge. The authors therefore argue the need for active research into private FM radio broadcasting operations and the research strategies such as quantitative and qualitative research methods is suggested. The current author's quantitative-survey study on university students listening behaviour of private FM radio broadcasting serves as a baseline for researchers to advance methodological thoughts and theoretical leaning. Furthermore, qualitative research design with focus groups to explore audience opinions (everyday life of listeners experience) is useful in researching private FM radio broadcasting (O'Sullivan and Lewis, 2006; Lister, Mitchell and O'Shea, 2009; Ofcom, 2013).

The overall submission of this study is its contribution to the advancement of knowledge in radio audience research, critical audience research tradition (see Lazarsfeld, 1941; Barker, Mathijs and Turnbull, 2015) and the inductive reasoning in social sciences research. All of these constitute the ground of this study.

## Notes

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