



INFLUENCE OF DEMOGRAPHIC VARIABLES OF COMMUNICATION ON BROADCAST MEDIA OPERATIONS AND MANAGEMENT

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ABSTRACT

This study aimed at determining the impact of demographic variables of communication on broadcast media operations and management. The researcher adopted the survey research design and used the population of 50 broadcast media owners and managers in Owerri Metropolis. The census sampling technique was used to sample same 50 media owners and managers as the sample size of the study. The stratified sampling technique was employed in this study. The instrument for data collection used in this study was questionnaire. Finding from this study shows that broadcast media stations not considering their audience demographic variables impacts negatively on the station and affects their whole communication process with the audience; this as well affects their media operations and management. The researcher concludes that proper consideration of audience demographic variables affects the whole communication process and acceptance of broadcast media programme operations and management. The researcher recommends that media proprietors and managers should always conduct thorough research to ascertain the needs of the audience and make an attempt to satisfy them in order to win and retain the patronage of broadcast media audience, guarantees profit in business.

Keywords: Demographic, Variables, Communication, Media operations, Management.

Introduction

The media overtime has some specialized purpose that helps it become useful to its audience and to gain listenership and viewership. The purpose of the media, be it broadcast, print, advertising or public relations, include primarily to establish and sustain the patronage of their various audiences. Once a media station fulfills these purposes, it results in their audience satisfaction and preference of their station or organizational services (Happer & Philo, 2013).

The earning of every media organization and station is greatly determined not just by the richness of their various programmes but a clear understanding of the demographic variables surrounding their programme target audience. The clear knowledge of these demographic variables helps each media station to plan better on strategic programmes to meet the need of their target audience per programme time (Oji, 2019). When a broadcast media programme has no effect on its target audience, it becomes a disadvantage to the broadcast media station and needs to be tackled if this station is to stay relevant and gain more listenership and viewership. Without any media gaining the listenership and viewership by its supposed audience, the media station will not earn income for the smooth running of the organization (Nsikam et al., 2022). This results to them not making profit, which then affects the payments of staffs and the funds to use in running the media operations and managements. Overtime, if this is not worked on, the said media station will go out of business (Quora, 2023). In other words, violating audience expectations can have a negative impact on the reception of media content.

In talking about the special feature of the mass media institution, Ndolo, (2006) as cited in Ishaku and Asicus (2022) avers that "the media institution is linked with industry and the market, through its dependence on paid work, technology and the need for finance". This comes down to the fact that media technocrats, operators and management must take into consideration demographic variables. This demographic variables, Ndolo(2006) refers to as "basic statistical data."

There are several demographics variables of communication that helps broadcast media run their organization to still stay afloat in the media business. Investopaedia (2024) states that these demographic statistical variables includes a clear understanding of the sex, education level, age, income level, race, religion, employment status, home ownership, cultural values, nationality and ethnic background of their target audience. A clear understanding of these demographical information helps broadcast media stations to make better generalisations about groups and allows them to identify their audiences who listen and view their various programmes aired daily (Olugbenga et al., 2013). This now gives them an advantage to now craft unique programmes that will meet these audiences personal and demographic needs, which over time results to the station gaining more listenership and viewership and getting enough funds to use in running their media operations as well as to manage the station properly (Hayes, 2024; Investopedia, 2024).

Statement of the Problem

Media messages do not have direct effects on the audience (Asemah et al., 2017). Media audience is made up of people with individual differences. Therefore, people perceive media messages differently because they have different demographic dispositions, past experiences, cultural expectations and social relationship. This is why Ndolo (2006, p.26) affirms that "these realities create diversities in the approach to the Nigeria media audience."

According to him media specialists and or researchers preparing for a media buy are faced with these diversities that must be reflected in their content. Media messages must be consistent with the needs, interest, beliefs, attitudes etc of the audience.

It is against this background that this study sought to ascertain the impact of demographic variables of communication on broadcast media operation and management, because if broadcast media proprietors over look these basic demographic statistics, winning and sustaining audience and patronage will be a herculean task.

Objectives of the Study

The objectives of this paper are to:

1. Examine the knowledge level of media owners and managers towards demographic variables that determine their broadcast media operations
2. Ascertain the influence of demographic variables of communication on broadcast media operations and management.
3. Find out how broadcast media owners tackle issues regarding demographic factors that influence their audience preferences for different types of broadcast media content.

The Concept of Communication

Many definitions and explanations abound of communication as there are many scholars and authors. Ndolo (2006, p.10), affirmed this assertion when he averred that "several communication scholars have tried to define communication from several perspectives". He cited Dance (1970), who said communication is "the process by which we understand others and in turn endeavour to be understood by them, it is dynamic, constantly changing and shifting in response to the total situation". According to Agee et al. (1998) as cited in Ndolo (2006), "Communication is the act of transmitting information, ideas, and attitudes from one person to another". Lasswell's definition of communication is usually "referred to as "Classical" Ndolo (2006). Lasswell defines communication as "who said what through what channel, to whom and with what effect". Nwele and Onuorah (2015,p.226), affirmed that communication is vital to maintaining relation between organisation and its publics or between one individual and another, and between a state and its people.

Communication means the verbal and non-verbal process by which individuals or groups share ideas, express their opinions or feelings, and disseminate information believe one another (Nwodu & Fab-Ukozor 2003). They also cited Baran (1999) who simplified the definition by saying that communication is the transmission of a message from a source to a receiver." Anyanwu (2015) also attested to the multiplicity of definitions of communication when he said that there are thousands of definitions on communication because it touches every sphere of human activity. He cited Konkwo (2003) who said communication is the "Integral element without which the human society cannot exist, develop or survive." Communication, according to Nworgu (2012, p. 69), "involves the interchange or exchange of messages in form of ideas, or information from and among different categories of people."

Communication can also be defined from two schools of thoughts namely: the semiotic school and the process school (Wayne 2009). The semiotic school defines communication as the production and exchange of meanings emphasizing the importance of the socio-cultural context in facilitating interaction between messages or texts and their receivers in order to produce meaning. It is concerned with the role of text and their meanings in the development of a people culture. The process school starts from a channel perspective defining communication as the mechanical transmission of messages from senders to receivers. This perspective focuses on how transmitters of messages use channels and media of communication.

It is the universal nature of communication that has led to countless definitions of the concept. Communication is any means by which a thought is transferred from one person to another. It is the process by which one person (or a group) shares and imparts information to another person (or group) so that both people (and group) clearly understand one another. Communication is not just the giving of information, it is the giving of understandable information and receiving and understanding the message. It is the transference of a message to another party so that it can be understood and acted upon.

Communication is central in human interaction. Attesting to this assertion Pate and Dauda (2015, p. 179) categorically stated that communication is a "social process that facilitates exchange of ideas and feelings among and between individuals in societies". Also, Onwuka (1998) as cited in Obasi (2003, p.8), defined communication as " the passage or transmission of information from a source to a receiver through a channel". Obasi (2003) further lists the types and forms of communication: verbal, intrapersonal, interpersonal and mass communication.

'Verbal communication involves the use of words which may be written or oral. Letters, manuals, magazine, newspaper contents, reports are examples of written form, while telephone messages, discussion, commands, radio and television messages are examples of the oral form. Intrapersonal communication takes place within an individual. It is a thought process that often becomes manifest in a decision which an individual takes to do or not to do something. According Ndolo (2006,p.15) as cited in Ishaku and Asicus (2022), intrapersonal communication "functions as our thought process'. The sender

and the receiver is one and the same person. The message is personalized and the feedback is immediate. It is also called soliloquy when the thoughts are spoken aloud when alone.

Interpersonal communication involves an external link. It typically involves two individuals who relate as sender and receiver. Ndolo (2006) aver that it involves person-to-person contact which involves every day exchanges which can take place anywhere by means of sounds, facial expression, words, postures, gestures etc.

Group communication is interpersonal communication within groups. Groups generally work in a context that is both relational and social. Group communication is an extension of interpersonal communication. It involves more than two persons in the exchange of ideas and interest. It also encourages the use of synergy in accomplishing tasks.

Communication from the Mass Communication Perspective

Mass communication basically involves standardized messages being transmitted to a mass audience through the mass media. The sender here becomes the source a conglomeration of professionals that include writers, cameramen, reporters, audio and video technicians, directors, floor managers, and editors etc who prepare and send messages through a mass medium to a huge audience. Obasi (2003) explains that "communication is said to be mass if its target is large numbers of people who cannot be communicated with on a face-to-face basis." Using public address system to address thousands of people in a hall is not mass communication but when the thousands of people are so scattered that reaching them at the same time involves the use of a special medium of transmission (mass medium), then mass communication becomes a necessity. Oparaeke (2016) opines that mass communication is the dissemination of information to a diverse and dispersed audience through the mass media channels simultaneously.

The traditional concept of communication is a very old one (Casmir 2011). A critical look at communication is apposite to enable us understand change management and what it means to communicate it to people. Casmir (2011,p.76) observed that "a world community can exist only with world communication, which means: common understanding, a common tradition, common ideas, and common ideals. Traditionally, idea of communication is from the Latin word "communicare", which means "to make common" or "share". The root definition harmonizes with the framework of communication for change platform and "communizing" its strategic goals, content, objectives and processes with the people.

Casmir (2011) documents a variegated and diversified communication perspective by highlighting certain crucial windows to the meaning of communication. He adds that: communication involves others- dialogue; communication is implicated than a simple information; an increased quantity of communication does not increase the quality and effectiveness of communication; and that communication is inevitable and irreversible.

The philosophy of communication sets out seven components as the essential framework of communication: people, the message (programme content), the channel (the medium by which a message moves from source to the recipient), feedback, code (systematic arrangement of symbols used to create meanings in another's mind), encoding and decoding, and noise any interference in the encoding processes that reduces message clarity. Casmir (2011) says "in what may appear as a concept endorsement of the process view of seeing communication as a change management tool.

According to Ndolo (2006,p.13-14), "Communication plays a central role in our lives. We are surrounded by others, trying to understand them and hoping that they understand us: friends, family,

spouses, students, teachers, co-workers, strangers and enemies. We speak, listen, read and write so much because we know that communication fulfils several, very important functions for us.”

The Broadcast Media

The term broadcast media covers a wide spectrum of different communication methods by which audio and video content can be distributed to a dispersed audience through any electronic mass communication medium, but typically one using electromagnetic spectrum, in a one-to-many models. Broadcast media transmit information electronically, via such media as film, radio, television and recorded music.

In the words of Nwabueze (2011), the broadcast media are the channels which make use of electrical signals to transmit information or coded messages. Because of the immediacy potency of broadcast media, they are also referred to as the "now" media. Also known as the electronic media, the broadcast media make use of transmission technology through which their signals are disseminated to distant places (Okunna, 1994, p.66).

Radio and television are the two broad and common broadcast media. They are also referred to as wireless communication media because of the technology they make use of which requires no direct wire from the transmitter which encodes the messages, to the television and radio sets which decode the messages into an audience consumable form. Agu (2011, p. 126) explains that broadcasting is the distribution of audio and or video signals to a number of recipients that belong to a large group. In the words of Idachaba (2015, p.47), electronic media constitute the most effective means of reaching the largest and accessible population with the advent of the Information and Communication Technology (ICT) which has led to their convergence. Concerning the potency of broadcast media in disseminating information, Aririguzoh (2015,p.14) said "television broadcast can affect the behaviour of those exposed to its messages."

The same vein, Adanri (2005, p. 142), expounds that television plays important, often taken for granted, roles in the daily lives of viewers because "it is a story teller; it tells stories to most people most of the time". According to Idachaba (2015) broadcast media are mostly spectrum-driven. The broadcast industry according to Owuamalam (2008, p.219), deals with either audio reports as in radio and audio-visual version for television, saying that broadcasting is one of the greatest technological marvels of the human society.

Broadcast media involves the generation of electromagnetic signals which are transmitted through space, by means of radio frequencies and are received as visual or aural signals by a mass audience. Broadcast media's ability to reach various parts of the world with specific information which can be received at the same time irrespective of location, confers a special status on man's ingenuity in shrinking the world to a global village. The broadcast media certainly possess the characteristics that make them useful Kogah (2009). They have the following advantages: mass coverage, low cost, viewer empathy, selectivity, impact, creativity, prestige and social dominance. Bovee and Arens (1986, p.435) as cited in Olugbenga, Owolabi and O'Neill, (2013), said that "radio specifically enjoys the advantages of selectivity and efficacy as well as reach and frequency. It is obvious that the broadcast media, as can be deduced from Infante et al. (1997, p.43 8), can inform, influence, and motivate persons, institutions and members of the public. Supporting the widespread nature of broadcast media, Uzochukwu, Morah and Okafor (2015) opine that the media plays a remarkable role in raising public awareness and determining issues.

The Concept of Media Operations and Management

Media management is seen as a business administration discipline that identifies and describes strategic and operational phenomena and problems in the leadership of media enterprises. Media management contains the function of strategic management, procurement management, production management, organizational management and marketing of media enterprises. A uniform definition of the term media management does not yet exist and the field of media management in its present form is neither clearly defined nor cohesive. Notwithstanding this fact, among existing definitions, there is a shared base concerning the business administrative character of media management and the functional understanding of management. This is explained into two main concepts:

1. Media management consists of the ability to supervise and motivate employees.
2. The ability to operate and facilitate resources in a cost effective, profitable manner.

Media management covers all the goal-oriented activities of planning, organization and control within the framework of the creation and distribution processes for information or entertainment content in media enterprise. Broadcast media operations and management deals with the functionality of media organization; how they synergize to maximize profit (Iheanacho et al., 2024). The function of the media is to gather, produce, process, standardize and disseminate information to a mass of faceless, heterogeneous audience. Management therefore involves the combination of human and material resources to produce media product.

In simple terms, broadcast media operations and management are the processes and strategies involved in running and overseeing television and radio stations, as well as other forms of broadcasting outlet. This includes a range of activities such as content production, scheduling, advertising sales, technical operations, regulatory compliance, audience research, and personnel management.

According to Owuamalam (2008), management is the maximum utilization of operational opportunities in order to realize the objectives of the broadcast stations. Therefore, if the functions of media are to gather, produce, process, standardize and disseminate information to a mass of faceless, and heterogeneous audience, then management is how to combine material and human resources to get the product out.

Impact of Demographic Variables of Communication on Broadcast Media Operations and Management

The assumption by media theorists about the efficacy and viability of the hypodermic needle media model has been debunked as this theory did not reflect the realities on the ground, which were that many factors in society could prevent the media from having direct and powerful effect. Research provided the basis for "limited effects" model of the media which gradually replaced the "powerful effects" model (Okunna 1994).

Many factors come to mediate the successful transmission of media messages (Holmes 2005). These factors are referred to as intervening variables. They have the capacity to hinder the flow of communication and render it ineffective if not taken to consideration. They are:

- i. **Age:** Understanding the age of your target audience is arguably the most important factor when trying to establish a broadcast station. A media business man who wants to get return on investment must not discountenance this variable.
- ii. **Gender:** Gender is a range of characteristics pertaining to, and differentiating between, masculinity and femininity. Depending on the context, these characteristics may include biological sex, sex-based social structures, or gender identity. It is a socially constructed

definition of men and women. It is also determined by the conception of tasks, functions and roles attributed to women and men in society and in public and private life.

- iii. **Cultural values:** Cultural values are the core principles and ideals upon which an entire community exists. This is made up of several parts: customs, which are tradition and rituals; values, which are beliefs; and culture, which is all of a groups guiding values.
- iv. **Religion:** This is the set of beliefs, feelings, dogmas and practices that define the relations between human being and sacred or divinity. A given religion is defined by specific elements of a community.
- v. **Educational level:** This is the same as educational attainment of media audiences. It is a term commonly used by statisticians to refer to the highest degree of education an individual has completed.
- vi. **Socio-economic status:** Socio-economic status is an economic and sociological combined total measure of a person's work experience and of an individual's or family's economic and social position in relation to others, based on income-education, and occupation.
- vii. **Nationality:** Nationality refers to the country a person comes from. Everyone has a gender, race, sexual orientation and a nationality. It is a place where a person is a legal citizen, usually in the country where he is born.
- viii. **Ethnic background:** Ethnic origin refers to a person's "roots". It relates to a group of people having common racial, national, religious or cultural origins.

These variables impact seriously on broadcast media operations and management in so many ways.

According to Edwards (2003) as cited in Duffett (2017), advertisers interest in demographics arise from market research or advertising strategies that emphasize certain types of people as the target audience for their advertising. This is applicable to broadcasting operation and management. Commercial broadcasters, who earn their living by providing communication services to advertisers, are interested in demographics. Because advertisers are more interested in some demographic categories than others, the commercial broadcasters have a financial interest in designing programming that appeals to people in those more desired demographic categories. Uses of demographics to define and generalize about people are an instance of category thinking. The rationale is that the available social categories, such as age, gender, ethnicity and educational level, are associated with typical structures of opportunity and experience that in turn produce typical patterns of disposition, attitude, interest, behaviours etc.

Broadcast media operations and management aim at producing media content for audience consumption. Therefore, demographic issues, the basic statistical data of the audience, are very critical. In other word; broadcast media must take cognizance of societal influence. Media institutions are big business (Wall & Walker 2000). They exist to make profit. Just as car manufacturers or supermarket chains aim to earn money for their shareholders, so media institutions are owned by people who want to make as much money as possible.

Paul Lazarsfeld introduced empirical social research methods to establish the validity of theory between the 1930s and the early 1940s. These were the postulations of Baran and Davis (2009.p.30). It was Okoye and Ahmadu (2015, p. 355) who averred that Lazarsfeld research endeavour led to the conclusion that "media were not nearly as powerful as hoped at feared". Rather, media audience had several ways of resisting media influence.

Intervening variables are so called because these variables block, impede the flow or reduce the impact of the media message on the audience. Evidence from Lazarsfeld research show that there are many factors in society which could prevent the mass media (including the broadcast media) from having direct and

powerful effect on people. Called mediating factors or intervening variables, these factors determine how people react to mass media messages, and how much impact a particular message could have on attitudes and behaviour of members of the audience (Okunna, 1994).

According to Klapper (1960) in Ndolo (2006, p.31) the "yes" mass media was powerful but societal factors exerted considerable influence also. It is when the broadcast media address the question of intervening variables of communication that it can effectively serve broadcast media audience for which it exists. The aim of communication is to create effect on the receiver or audience. This is why Okoye and Ahmadu (2015, p.356) affirmed that understanding audience characteristics is therefore essential "in determining what people see, how they interpret it and what effect it has upon them".

Lasswell's definition of communication as "who said what through what channel, to whom and with what result", according to Ndolo (2006, p. 10) has become "simplistic" even though it is usually referred to as "classical". Ndolo observed that Lasswell's definition fails to take into consideration such intervening variables as sex, age, income, religion, education, nationality, race, and psychological mood etc. Audience consideration greatly determines the success of broadcast media (Nworgu 2012). For instance, news programmes from either radio or television are targeted at all classes of the audience simultaneously. Therefore, it makes the news programme appeal to all classes of people, the language must be less sophisticated, but not necessarily pedestrian.

Empirical Studies

A study by Mohammadreza (2012) on the effect of demographic variables on success of social media operations showed that the success of social media is more important among female students. Marriage situation shows that social media success variable is more important among married than single ones and, finally, this variable is more important among older people. A study by Jaupi and Llaci (2015) on the impact of communication satisfaction and demographic variables on employee engagement shows that the communication satisfaction dimensions strongly impact employee engagement. There is however a relationship between demographic variables and employee engagement.

A study by Duffett (2017) on the influence of social media marketing communications on young consumers' attitudes found that social media marketing communications had a positive on each attitude component among adolescents, but on a declining scale, which correlates to the purchase funnel. The results also revealed that teenagers who used social media for long time periods; updated their profiles frequently and were from the Colored and Black population groups, displayed the most favorable attitudinal responses to social media marketing communications.

A related study was done by Vila et al., in (2019). This study sought to find out the influence of socio-demographic variables on audiovisual consumption. Results from this study revealed that consumption patterns vary according to gender, age, and formal education. Jones et al. (2020) did a study on reporting demographic variables. Their study found that previous research found that demographic variables were underreported in behavior-analytic studies dealing with particular populations (e.g., children with Autism Spectrum Disorder), interventions (e.g., verbal behavior), or for a subset of demographic variables. Demographic variables were often underreported, which may limit the broader dissemination of these behavior-analytic studies and the development of culturally responsive modifications to behavioral interventions.

A similar study by Rabbian and Akhter (2020) on the effect of demographic factors on academic performance of university student revealed varying effects of these factors on the academic performance of students studying at the university level.

A study by Omar et al. (2022), on analyzing the impact of demographic variables on spreading and forecasting showed that there is a very strong significant association between the population density groups and infected groups of COVID-19. And, from the ANOVA test, we observe a significant difference in the mean infected number of COVID-19 cases across the five different population density groups. Besides, the prediction model shows that the cumulative number of infected cases would be raised to around 500,000 in the most densely region of Bangladesh.

A study by Tomczyk et al (2022), on the socio-demographic and psychosocial profiles of multi-media use for risk communication in the general population found that disaster research has acknowledged the role of social media in crisis communication, the interplay of new (e.g., mobile apps) and traditional media (e.g., TV, radio) in public warnings has received less attention, particularly from the recipients' perspective. More than two-thirds (68%) reported mixed media use, with 20% relying on new media and 12% on traditional media. Traditional media users were older and reported lower levels of education, while new media users were significantly younger and reported lower trust toward traditional media (i.e., TV). Migrants were more likely to use new but not mixed media. In sum, most participants utilized a mixture of traditional and new media for warning purposes, which has implications for crisis communication. Though, vulnerable populations (e.g., older and less educated participants) mainly rely on traditional media, stressing the need for continued support. Thus, it is paramount to increasingly use mixed methods designs and concurrently examine multiple channels to reflect real-world warning practices and generate ecologically valid results.

A study by Andaleeb et al. (2022), on the demographic effects on TV news credibility found that gender and education level significantly impact overall credibility perceptions. Hadi, and Aslam, in (2023) did a study on the demographic factors and consumer attitude towards unsolicited mobile-based marketing messages. Their study finding showed the existence of significant differences in the mean scores for age, education, and profession. Furthermore, results of two-way ANOVA revealed the presence of significant main effect for age and gender, whereas no interaction effect was found for such variables. The study, interestingly, found the interactive role of profession, which was further probed and confirmed via post-hoc test.

A similar study done by ØstertunGeirdal, et al. (2024) on the association between demographic variables, psychosocial health, quality of life and happiness in the context of Covid-19 found that not having a spouse/ partner was associated with poorer quality of life, and older age was associated with lower happiness. The psychosocial health variables made the highest variance in quality of life (R2 change = 0.51) and happiness (R2 change = 0.46) and poorer psychosocial health had a mediating role between civil status and quality of life ($p < 0.001$) and between age and happiness outcomes ($p < 0.001$).

Theoretical Framework

This work adopts Klappers" (1960) Reinforcement theory. Reinforcement theory conceptually sets the tone for this study. Klapper (1960) formulated several generalizations on the effects of mass media. One of his research findings is that "mass media ordinarily do not serve as a necessary and sufficient cause of audience effect, but rather functions through a nexus of mediating factors and influences (Study.com, 2023). These mediating factors render mass communication as a contributory agent in a process of reinforcing the existing conditions". One of the main mediating factors which Klapper considers responsible for the functions and effects of mass communication is selective exposure. This is the tendency of people to expose them to information which are in agreement with their attitudes and interest (Tech Target, 2023).

This theory is important to this study in that the broadcast media uses its programmes to reinforce existing beliefs and ideas into the mind and lifestyle of its viewers, this is effective with the broadcast

media understanding the demographics variables of their audience hence using the best programme strategy that will persuade and influence their audience to buy in to the idea they are being sold to adopt. Broadcast media station audiences are more likely to adopt and maintain behaviours (including consumption habits) if they are reinforced with rewards or positive outcomes such as entertainment, information or social interactions. The media messages that must reinforce their audience beliefs must be consistent with the needs interests, beliefs, attitudes of the audience.

Methodology

The researcher adopted the survey research method for this study. This method allows for the sampling of opinions on the issue under investigation (Umoren et al., 2024). The population used for this study comprised media owners and managers in Owerri Metropolis. There are about 18 radio stations in Owerri Metropolis, plus two (2) TV stations. This gives us a population of 20 broadcast media stations in Owerri Metropolis. These stations owners and managers is estimated to be 50 in number. 50 became the population used for this study to represent the media station owners and managers. The census sampling technique was used to sample this same 50 media owners and managers to be the sample size of this study. The stratified sampling technique was employed to sample out these 50 participants in Owerri Metropolis used for this study. The instrument for data collection was the questionnaire. The questionnaire instrument was validated by a research expert who certified it valid and okay to be used for this study. The reliability of this research instrument was calculated using the Pearson product moment correlation was used to determine the reliability of the instrument between responses of 10 respondents in two separate occasions. The correlation result was 0.7, which shows that the research instrument is reliable to be used for this study. The research instrument was administered on a face-to-face basis. The data collected was presented in simple percentage tables.

Data Presentation and Analysis

The researcher printed and distributed 50 copies of questionnaire to the station owners and managers in Owerri Metropolis. The same 50 copies of the questionnaire were retrieved, presented and analysed in this study. This gave a 100% return rate.

Table 1:

Research Question One: What is the knowledge level of media owners and managers towards demographic variables that determine their broadcast media operations	Yes	%	No	%	Total (%)
Do you work in or own a broadcast media station/platform	50	100%	0	0%	50 (100%)
	SA	A	D	SD	Total (%)
Respondents response on knowing that demographics variables like sex, age, educational level, employment status, religion, race etc determine the operations of a broadcast media station.	25 50%	18 36%	4 8%	3 6%	50 (100%)
Level of Knowledge	Very High	High	Moderate	Low	Total (%)
Respondents response on the level of their knowledge to demographic variables influencing broadcast media operations	8 16%	31 62%	9 18%	2 4%	50 (100%)

Source: Field Survey, 2024

The finding got from the above table showed that the respondents all know that demographical variables like age, sex, educational qualification, race, religions etc. determine the overall operation of their station programmes. The respondents at 62% had high knowledge of this demographic variables that impact on their station programme acceptance by their audiences.

Table 2:

Research Question Two: What is the impact of demographic variables of communication on broadcast media operations and management	SA	A	D	SD	Total (%)
When programmes are not audience demographically tailored it impacts on the audiences inconsistent viewership and listenership to the broadcast media station programmes	21 42%	26 52%	2 4%	1 2%	50 (100%)
When programme sponsors notices poor listenership and viewership of their programmes, they withdraw, impacting on the stations realization of funds through paid programmes and adverts/commercials	22 44%	24 48%	2 4%	2 4%	50 (100%)
When programmes do not meet audience need, it leads to loss of interest of audience to the programmes aired in the broadcast media station	26 52%	20 40%	1 2%	3 6%	50 (100%)
When programme sponsors withdraw, it impacts and increases the workload and stress level of station staff	24 48%	21 42%	4 8%	1 2%	50 (100%)

Source: Field Survey, 2024

The table data above shows that at above 44% that the respondents all agree that not considering their audiences demographic variables impacts on: their audiences inconsistency to view or listen to their programmes; programme sponsors withdrawal of their sponsorship thereby cutting down the stations generated funds through paid programmes and adverts/commercials; loss of interest of audience to the programme aired; and the increase in their staffs workload and stress level.

Table 3:

Research Question Three: How do broadcast media owners tackle issues regarding demographic factors that influence their audience preferences for different types of broadcast media content	SA	A	D	SD	Total (%)
Segmentation of programmes based on audience demographic considerations	17 34%	24 48%	5 10%	4 8%	50 (100%)
Structuring programmes to represent the varying interest of their target audience for each programme	16 32%	28 56%	4 8%	2 4%	50 (100%)
Doing proper audience research to know the kind of programme most Owerri residents prefer to be aired to meet their personal desires and interest	24 48%	23 46%	2 4%	1 2%	50 (100%)

Source: Field Survey, 2024

The above table data showed at above 48% that broadcast media station owners agree to: segment their station programmes based on audience demography; structure programmes to represent varying interest of their audience per programme aired; and doing proper audience research to know the kind of programmes most Owerri residents prefer to get exposed to, that meets their personal desires, needs and interest, as

ways to tackle issues regarding demographic factors that influence their audience preferences for different types of programmes.

Discussion of Findings

Findings got showed that at 62% that Owerri Metropolis broadcast station owners and managers have high knowledge level to demographic factors influencing their audience preference and viewership of their station's programmes and operations. Mohammadreza (2012) study supports the notion that demographic variables contribute to the successful running of media outlets. Vila et al. (2019) found that media consumption patterns vary according to gender, age, and formal education. Tomczyk et al. (2022) finding agrees that traditional media users were older and reported lower levels of education, while new media users were significantly younger and reported lower trust toward traditional media (i.e., TV). Migrants not were more likely to use new but not mixed media. In sum, most participants utilized a mixture of traditional and new media for warning purposes, which has implications for crisis communication. These studies finding agree that demographic variables greatly influence audience preference and viewership of broadcast stations programmes and operations.

Finding got regarding research question two revealed at above 44% that the respondents all agree that not considering their audiences demographic variables impacts on: their audiences inconsistency to view or listen to their programmes; programme sponsors withdrawal of their sponsorship thereby cutting down the stations generated funds through paid programmes and adverts/commercials; loss of interest of audience to the programme aired; and the increase in their staffs workload and stress level. Jaupi and Llaci (2015) finding supports the above finding that the communication satisfaction dimensions strongly impact employee engagement. There is however a relationship between demographic variables and employee engagement. Rabbian and Akhter (2020) study finding on the effect of demographic factors concurs with this study finding, it states that, there are varying effects of demographic factors on the academic performance of students studying at the university level. Andaleeb et al. (2022) finding argues that gender and education level significantly impact overall credibility perceptions. There is both negative and positive impact of demographic variables on broadcast media operations and management, hence the careful tailoring of broadcast media programmes to suit their respective audience demographic variables.

Finding showed at above 48% that broadcast media station owners agree to: segment their station programmes based on audience demography; structure programmes to represent varying interest of their audience per programme aired; and doing proper audience research to know the kind of programmes most Owerri residents prefer to get exposed to, that meets their personal desires, needs and interest, as ways to tackle issues regarding demographic factors that influence their audience preferences for different types of programmes. ØstertunGeirdal, et al. (2024) study concurs with finding of this study. The reinforcement theory as well agrees that that there are mediating factors that render mass communication as a contributing agent in a process of reinforcing the existing conditions of audiences.

Conclusions

In order to keep pace with the reality of doing business in our country today, especially the business of media operations and management, consideration should be given to the need for a thorough appreciation of the demographic implications of establishing a broadcast media outfit. Feasibility studies are crucial before establishing a business outfit including broadcast media organization for several reasons. They provide valuable insights into a business idea's viability, enabling entrepreneurs to make informed decisions and minimize risks associated with launching a new venture. It was concluded that proper consideration of audience demographic variables affects the whole communication process and acceptance of broadcast media programme operations and management.

Recommendations

1. It is pertinent for broadcast media owners and managers to reiterate that demographic variables of communication are critical in helping media operators and managers meet the needs of the media audience for whom the media organisations exist. It would be suicidal of any media business operator or manager to overlook these variables when establishing broadcast media organization hence the need to made adequate plans towards understanding these variables.
2. It was recommended that since not considering demographic variables impacts negatively on the broadcast media overall results, broadcast media owners and managers should continue putting in more efforts to make sure that their programmes meet the needs of their varying demographic audiences.
3. It was recommended that media proprietors and managers should always conduct thorough research to ascertain the needs of the audience and make an attempt to satisfy them in order to win and retain the patronage of broadcast media audience, guarantees profit in business.

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