

**ASSESSMENT OF ADULT LITERACY THROUGH EDUCATIONAL
BROADCASTING IN NIGERIA**

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Abstract

This paper undertook a cursory study at the extent of adult literacy attained through educational broadcasting in Nigeria. With a brief introduction on the origin and development of the concept of educational broadcasting in Nigeria. The paper highlights among others, the improvement in adult literacy in Nigeria through the effective utilization of educational broadcasting. The work identifies the importance of educational broadcasting to teaching and learning as a means of encouraging a greater understanding of a subject matter through the means of presentation which is always clear, straight forward and in simple language especially to the adults as target audience. Meanwhile, adult literacy or adult education is a practice in which adults engage in systematic and sustained self-educating activities in order to gain new forms of knowledge, skill, attitudes or values. It can entail any form of learning where adults and not children engage in beyond traditional schooling, encompassing basic literacy to personal fulfillment as a lifelong learner and to ensure the fulfillment of one's desires as an individual. However, some of the challenges of educational broadcasting in improving the level of adult literacy were identified. Some of the problems as observed include among others erratic and irregular power supply, inadequate man power resources, equipment, poor storage, facilities and timing. Hence the work recommends that bearing in mind the imperatives of educational broadcasting as a means of improving literacy among the teeming illiterate adults in the country the Nigeria government at all levels: local, state and federal should not only improve on educational broadcasting but adequately channels the resources for its improved utilization. In addition, the government should ensure that experts and professionals in the field of educational broadcasting are well trained, employed and enumerated in areas where they are needed so as to solve the problem of human resources and manpower in the sector.

Key word: Educational, Broadcasting, Assessment, Adults, Literacy, Nigeria.

Introduction

Broadcasting according to (Babalola, 2012) is the mode of spreading information widely through the use of sound and or vision to a group of people either in their homes or at the listening or viewing centers and in schools through electronic devices of several kinds. Broadcasting utilizes two important media channels of communication which according to (Onasanya, 2008) are the radio and television. In (Peters, 1999) broadcasting is defined as the distribution of audio or video content to a dispersed audience via any electronic mass communications medium but typically one using the electromagnetic spectrum (radio waves) in a one to – many models. The term broadcasting evolved from its use as the agricultural method of sowing seeds in a field by broadly scattering them about. It was however later adopted for describing the widespread distribution of information by printed material or by telegraph, (Douglas, 1987). Broadcasting began with AM radio which came into popular use around 1920 with the spread of vacuum tube radio transmitters and receivers. Before this, most implementations of electronic communication (early radio telephone and telegraph) were one-to-one, with the message intended for a single recipient. Broadcasting may be described also as the systematic assimilation of entertainment, information, educational programming and other features for simultaneous reception by a scattered audience with appropriated receiving operations. Broadcasting may involve sound only as in radio or visual or combination of both televisions. Sound broadcasting in this sense may be said to have begun in 1920 while television broadcasting started in the 1930s. With the advent of television in the early 1950s and the use of satellites for broadcasting beginning in the early 1960s, television reception improved and the number of receivable programme increased dramatically.

In Adelokun&Aderale (2011) as cited by (Laaro, 2014), broadcasting is the totality of the communication and technological process that allow for transmission of audio-visual signal to a large heterogeneous mass of people simultaneously. The broadcast media have a universal value because they can break the barrier of literacy and social science uses. This potential informed the conceptualization of broadcasting in the context of education, (Abidoeye et al, 2011). According to Nwabueze (2004) educational broadcasting has been defined as the process of teaching, training or learning through the broadcast media with a view to improving knowledge or developing skills of the audience. The electronic media such as radio, television and the internet play predominant roles in social changes and education of students through programmes (Agbamuche, 2015). Educational broadcasting is a type of programming that covers educational subjects with specific teaching and learning purposes through television medium (Akunde, 2014). For Nworgu and Nworgu (2008) the use of television for promoting learning or as a supplement for classroom teaching continues to attract much attention because of the major roles which the mass media play in the contemporary society. The instructional material which television provides is often channeled to the educational development of the adult population in Nigeria who may not have

the opportunity of formal education. However, in (Okunna, 1999) the potentials of educational broadcasting have not been fully utilized and the reason is not far-fetched. Many of the educational and instructional programmes in Nigeria broadcast media tend to have audience who are more or less passive consumers. Therefore, this study seeks to investigate the influence of educational broadcasting in achieving adult literacy in Nigeria.

Literature Review

The broadcasting media play very fundamental roles in positively affecting the educational sector. Harold Lasswell stated this when he drafted part of the traditional functions of mass media by stating that “when we inform, we educate” (Laswell 1948 as cited in Nworgu, 2017). The broadcast media thus aids education through educational broadcasting. Ike (2005) further argues that the media contribute a lot to the society by informing and educating the populace on what they need to know. The post-independence Nigeria government understood that education was the key to a better future for Nigerians, so they strategically used the mass media in educating the citizen, (Aneke, Onyebuchi & Obayi, 2019). Educational broadcasting is defined as the process by which educators and learners stimulate meanings in their minds mutually using verbal and non-verbal messages transmitted by radio and television to impact the learning environment in order to facilitate learning (Edwards & Helvie-Mason, 2010). Educational broadcasting is a concerted effort made to apply the philosophy and rudiments of broadcasting to enhance teaching and learning. This agrees with the understanding of education as a deliberate activity. It is possible to learn from any broadcast programme even though that programme may not be classified as educational but a broadcast that is initiated, planned and produced in line with educational criteria will achieve educational objectives more than a normal broadcast programme.

Effective educational broadcasting has significantly promoted education globally. Educational programmes on radio and television have improved literacy levels of target audiences in relevant cognitive areas in different parts of the world. Oyebode and Sonibare (2004:82) stated that “radio was used to teach children in Europe as early as the 1920 and in the United States in the 1940s”. It was also reported that Nigeria is one of the many developing countries where educational broadcasting has been used widely as a channel of education in different subject areas, especially in agriculture (Jenkins, 1981). The foregoing suggests that educational broadcasting can contribute to the efforts aimed at remedying the falling standards of education in Nigeria and it has become an issue in the 21st century education, (Ijeh & Oyebode, 2015). In other words, educational broadcasting is the exploration of the dynamics of the broadcast media of radio and television (and in recent times, the internet) to promote the effectiveness of education. Education in this context can be viewed as the process whereby the environment of an individual is deliberately managed to enable him/her learn something that will make him/her able to give out

or engage in specific behaviours under specific conditions. This entails building knowledge of facts, relations, rules and principles of one kind or another into the mind of the learner (Ijeh&Oyebode 2015). Nwabueze, Ugonna and Ngomsor (2012) underscore this learning facilitating role of educational broadcasting in their submission that it is one of the viable communication channels for public enlightenment and mobilization. They aver that educational broadcasting uses radio and television broadcasts to impart knowledge. This consists of the process of teaching, training and learning through radio and television in order to improve audience knowledge or develop its skills. Educational broadcasting is a process that does not happen instantaneously. Educational broadcasting just like every mass communication activity, is not a chance occurrence, it is premeditated, planned and systematic hence Oyebode and Sonibare (2004) described it as a “deliberate plan”. These are evident in the activities that precede educational broadcasting such as audience needs assessment, curricula development and outlining of educational objectives.

Adult Literacy as a Concept

The World Banks 2019 World Development Report on The Changing Nature of Work (2019) argues that adult learning is important to help readjust workers’ skills to fit in the future of work and suggest ways to improve its effectiveness. The primary purpose of adult education is to provide a second chance for those who are poor in the society or who have lost access to education for other reasons in order to achieve social justice and equal access to education. Therefore, attaining adult literacy through education is often a social policy of the government. The difficulty with attaining adult literacy in many countries is that education systems are channelled to children but the problem with adult literacy is that the adult brain works and learns very differently than a child’s developing brain. So, teaching a six-year-old how to write will be a very different process than teaching a thirty-year-old with similar skills to write. Although, functionally illiterate adults have similar literacy functions to developing children they differ greatly in how they will retain information. Adult learners have much more independence in tasks, a longer attention span and more discipline. Adult learners are also educating themselves out of choice rather than children who are forced to attend schools. Finally, the adult learners are likely to have increased anxiety in a classroom because with aging, “they are more likely to experience this fear of failure, which can heighten (their) anxiety especially if (their) experience of education in the past was not always positive.” All these contribute to a difference in the way adults need to be taught whether in or outside the classroom. Educating adult differs from educating children in several ways given that adults have accumulated knowledge and work experience which can add to the learning experience, (Bohonos, 2012).

According to UNESCO, “Literacy is the ability to identify, understand, interpret, create, communicate and compute, using printed and written materials associated with varying contexts.

Literacy involves a continuum of learning in enabling individuals to achieve their goals to develop their knowledge and potential and to participate fully in their community and wider society (Montoya, 2021). Available statistics on (Giovetti, 2020) indicate that 781 million adults lack basic literacy skills with illiteracy being most prevalent in developing countries with one in every two adults lacking basic literacy skills. The National Council of Teachers of English broaden the scope of literacy beyond simple reading and writing skills to how we interact with the world around us and how we communicate with others, whether that communication is via reading and writing or by speaking, listening and creativity (Peterson, 2020). Regardless of the specific, literacy is foundation to education. Yet in low- and middle-income countries 53 percent of children do not gain basic reading skills by the end of primary school and the level is as high as 80 percent in poor countries, (World Bank, 2020).

Adult literacy has a significant impact on a person's ability to break the cycles of poverty for themselves and their family. Illiteracy limits economic opportunities, inhibits a parent's ability to properly cater for their children and often perpetuates the cycle of poverty. There are currently about 781 million illiterate adults worldwide a problem that is most prevalent in developing regions such as South Asia and Africa (Giovetti, 2020). According to the World Literacy Foundation, people who are illiterate or have low levels of literacy are more likely to experience adverse health outcomes, have poor health literacy and practice poor hygiene. Illiterate adults may be vulnerable to exploitation because they are unable to read and write or perform simple calculations or on business transactions. These hindrances often bring shame and negatively affects people's self-confidence, which may engender a defeated spirit that can prevent them from even hoping for a better future. This attitude often perpetuates the cycle of poverty as it is passed down from generation to generation. Adult literacy level is one issue that has continued to affect development in most third world countries. It should however be noted that with educational broadcasting today, radio and television can effectively be utilized to teach individuals or public the norms and values of society and reinforce same.

Educational broadcasting refers to television and radio programming providing or related to courses of study. The term "educational" is also applied at times to other programs that are particularly enlightening, informative or intellectually stimulating. It is typically used as a means for course material delivery and often integrated with various kinds of interaction. For example, in classrooms, discussion groups or via the telephone. The advancement which radio and television offer in education can be evident through accessibility to educative programs and instructional delivery like quiz, debate and so on. Babalola (2005) states that radio and television offer five distinct roles in education which are socialization, religion, subject, brain test and sex education.

Challenges of Educational Broadcasting in Adult Literacy

The benefit of education to the individual and the nation as a whole, according to (Brabzon,2007) is to provide “alternative answers, views and trajectories in an environment of blame and grievances”. Previous studies on radio educational/instructional programme have revealed a dysfunctional use of radio for learning. Onabajo (2000) in a study of the rural people of Badagry from 1995–2000 found out that the people and their leaders were not consulted in the conceptualization, planning and execution of development programmes targeted at them. This dysfunctional media use is what Moemeka (1981) described as the “shot-in-the dark approach to programming which leaves the target audiences” “forgotten” “while programmes are being planned, remembered” just before the programmes go on air and “forgotten” again as soon as the programs have been broadcast. This dysfunctional approach to programming led to the inability of past educational radio broadcasting to achieve its objectives.

The use of educational broadcasting to deliver formal education in Nigeria could be plagued also by the following challenges among others as opined by (Ijeh, 2010):Lack of interactivity that normally would exist in a classroom face to face teaching and learning; poor policy formulation and implementation; absence of effective collaboration among stakeholders in educational broadcasting; pro-entertainment disposition of the broadcast industry by the Nigerian audience and epileptic electricity supply. Radio and television programmes are largely one-way flow of messages except for live phone-in programmes and this creates lack of instant teacher-learner and learner-learner interactions (Chandar& Sharma, 2003). Even in live phone-in educational broadcasts, interactions are not as spontaneous and realistic as the classroom setting. Formal educational broadcasts therefore do not give room for face-to-face discussions and interactions which, according to (Mann, 2010) are essential for effective teaching and learning.

Prospects of Educational Broadcasting in Adult Literacy

The use of educational broadcasting for attaining adult literacy holds quite a number of prospects in Nigeria in the areas of easy widespread reach, relative low cost and quality education. One of the basic features of broadcasting (including educational broadcasting) is easy simultaneous widespread reach (Onabajo, 2000). Educational broadcasting transcends the problem of distance between the source of formal knowledge and target learners in terms of location and timing. With educational broadcasting, lessons in formal classroom subjects can be delivered to learners in many different far-apart locations simultaneously, (Commonwealth Educational Media Centre for Asia, 2011). Another benefit of using educational broadcasting to deliver formal education to adult learners in developing countries (including Nigeria) is increased public access to education, especially in societies where dearth of educational infrastructure persists because of population explosion, rising demand for formal education and (insurgency) (Abuli& Odera, 2013). The use of educational broadcasting for adult education gives the learners opportunities to access rare and

varied experiences by harnessing the best teachers, educational resources and teaching skills aided by technological sophistications. Formal education broadcasters expose learners to unfamiliar professionals thus enabling them (learners) to gain fresh perspectives and in-depth learning, (Agbamuche, 2015). Educational broadcasting also helps to guarantee uniformity of curriculum implementation and standardization of educational contents, especially in developing countries such as Nigeria where formal education is derived largely from national curricula with or without minor local adaptations. Hence, educational broadcasting provides guidelines to teachers and even train and retrain them cheaply and quickly since they would receive the educational programmes in their different communities from a centrally located quality control unit simultaneously no matter the geographical and social terrain (Abuli & Odera, 2013).

Theoretical Framework

The study is centred on Hovland's 1953 learning theory which is based on the assumption that the success of learning a new thing will depend entirely on the persuasive language used (Pam, 2013). It is also based on the assumption that the repetition of a message increases learning. The repetition of the message is what Carroll referred to in his model of school learning as "opportunity to learn" which he said refers to the amount of time available to the learner to learn. According to (Carroll, 1989) good instructional design is vital to how a learner acquires new skills. Hovland's assumption on the repetition of a message presupposes that the more people are exposed to a message, the more they will remember and learn from it. For instance, in an instructional situation, the instructor is expected to repeat a word he or she wants the learner to learn more than once before asking the learner to say it. It is believed that how often an instructor repeats the word will make the message apparent to the learner and as such achieve the objective. According to Hovland (1953), understanding and internalizing a new thing depends entirely on the persuasive language used, therefore for learning to occur, the learners must go through the four stages of learning: attention, comprehension, yielding and retention, an individual must therefore attend to a message and comprehend the same before acceptance leading to action. Hence, the Hovland theory of message learning provided the theoretical basis for this study. This study also draws another theoretical perspective from the Development Media Theory (DMT). DMT is a normative theory propounded by Dennis Mcquail to explain how the mass media should operate in a developing country such as Nigeria in order to facilitate national development (Ijeh, 2010). The basic tenet of DMT relevant to the involvement of educational broadcasting in the delivery of adult literacy in Nigeria is that the mass media should accept and carry out positive development tasks in line with nationally established policies, (Nwodu & Fab-Ukozor, 2003; Worgu, 2013). The above position suggests that broadcasting in Nigeria could be actively involved in promoting national development through functional educational broadcasting. DMT also advocates a defined partnership (collaboration) of all stakeholders in national development with broadcasting so as to facilitate the actualization of

development objectives. The use of educational broadcasting to facilitate effective widespread and far-reaching adult literacy which is the focus of this study is clearly a phenomenon captured by the Development Media Theory (DMT).

Empirical Review

Previous scholars in communication studies and education have written and published various articles relating to communication, education, broadcasting and adult literacy which are related to this work. In a study by (Chander& Sharma, 2003) which researched on a radio program called “Bridges to Effective Learning through Radio” with Indira Gandhi National Open University as a case study, the survey focused on the audience perceived need for a radio channel dedicated exclusively to educational programming and provided respondent with an opportunity to suggest possible program content and formats. In another study by (Alhassan, 2012) which sought to determine the factors affecting adult learning and their persistence by reviewing the literature on the concept of adult learning and system theories. The research argued that adult needed institutional and environmental support to continue to graduation based on their learning experience. Nwaerodu and Thompson (1987) carried out a study on the use of educational radio in developing countries; Lessons from the Past. The study identified and discussed three methods to include farm radio forum, education and communication dialogue and innovation. The researchers included that there is no single best format for utilizing educational radio, adding that each situation in which educational radio is employed will be unique in some important ways which will impact instructional design considerations”. They noted that “there is a considerable support for the view that radio is an effective medium of instruction and it is widespread availability in the developing countries underscores its potential and importance in educational broadcasting (Nwaerodu& Thompson, 1987).

Educational broadcasting is a type of programme that covers educational subjects with specific teaching and learning purposes through the radio and television (Nworgu and Nworgu, 2008). The use of television for promoting learning or as a supplement for classroom teaching continues to attract much attention because of the major role of mass media in our contemporary society. The instructional material which television provides is often used in the educational development of students in Nigeria. Akude (2004) remarks that television is being used extensively for education and instruction. In Folarin (1998; 2013) one of the major reasons why the Western Nigeria television was established in 1959 was to use television as a surrogate teacher particularly in rural areas where the government at that time had inadequate teaching staff to service the free education policy of the Western regional government. However, there are notions that educational broadcasting is not appropriately captured in the minds of the students as the name applied because majority of the students perceive the radio and television programmes as mere entertainment. In line with this notion, (Okunna, 1999) states that the

potential of educational broadcasting has not been fully utilized and the reason is not far-fetched. Many of the educational and instructional programmes in Nigeria broadcast tend to have audience that are more of passive consumers.

Methodology of the Study

The researcher employed a survey research design for the study since it involved the collection of data from a given population to sample their beliefs and opinions on the subject matter. The population of the study comprised of stakeholders in the teaching profession and the broadcast industry. The instrument used for the study was a 10-item questionnaire structured on a modified 4-points scale of strongly Agree = 4, Agree=3, Disagree= 2 and Strongly Disagree = 1. The instrument was subjected to face content validity while the Alpha analysis reliability test yielded a coefficient of 10.75. The instrument was administered to the respondents through personal contacts. Out of the 50 copies of the distributed questionnaire, 46 copies were returned and considered valid for the study. The data collected were analysed using mean standard deviation.

Presentation and Analysis of Results

Question 1: What are the roles of educational broadcasting in promoting adults' literacy?

Table 1: Role of Educational Broadcasting in promoting Adult Literacy

S/NO	ITEMS	SCORES	MEAN	DECISION
	The following are the roles of educational broadcasting in promoting adult literacy			
1.	Educational broadcasting increases learners engagement and communication skills	156	3.8	Strongly Agreed
2.	Educational broadcasting enhances learning across geographical locations	156	3.8	Strongly Agreed
3.	Educational broadcasting allows educators and teachers to transform the mode of teaching and among adult learners	154	3.7	Strongly Agreed
4.	Sustenance of adult learners' attention cannot be guaranteed during educational broadcasting	125	3.2	Strongly Agreed
5.	Adult learners can engage in other activities and at the same time have access to formal education	156	3.8	Strongly Agreed
	Grand Mean		3.8	Positive

Data analysis in Table 1 above revealed the grand mean response of 3.8 which is rated as a positive response showing that educational broadcasting promotes adult literacy learning and

communication although with limited physical interactions. The analysis also revealed that educational broadcasting allows teachers and educators to transform the approach to teaching and learning especially among adult learners.

Question 2: What are the challenges of educational broadcasting literacy?

Table II: Challenges of Educational Broadcasting in Promoting Adult literacy

S/NO	ITEMS	SCORES	MEAN	DECISION
	The following are some of the challenges of educational broadcasting in promoting adult literacy			
1.	The handlers and managers of educational broadcasting may not have the expertise in formulating literacy classes for the adult.	154	3.7	Strongly Agreed
2.	Absence of inter-ministerial collaboration between all the stakeholders i.e. the Ministry of Education and the broadcast industries.	154	3.7	Strongly Agreed
3.	There is poor interactivity between the teacher and learner unlike the classroom face to face experience	154	3.7	Strongly Agreed
4.	Pro-entertainment disposition of the broadcast industry by the audience in Nigeria can affect participation in educational broadcasting	144	3.5	Strongly Agreed
5	There is no opportunity for measuring the levels of attentiveness and assimilation by the learners	143	3.5	Strongly Agreed
	Grand Mean		3.7	Positive

The data analysis in Table 11 above showed a grand mean response of 3.7 which is rated as a positive response showing that even though educational broadcasting can promote and enhance adult literacy but not without certain identified challenges. The analysis revealed and identified some of these challenges as lack of interactivity that usually exist in a classroom face to face teaching and learning method; poor policy formulation and implementation; absence of effective collaboration among the stakeholders in educational broadcasting and the broadcasting industry and finally poor and epileptic power supply in the country.

Discussion of Findings

The main purpose of this study was to examine the place of educational broadcasting in enhancing adult literacy among the illiterate class in Nigeria. The outcomes of the findings on the study however showed the relevance of educational broadcasting towards enhancing adult literacy especially in the areas of easy and widespread reach. This can be seen in Table 1 where all the five items of question had mean responses of between 3.5 and 3.8 signifying the roles of educational broadcasting in promoting adult literacy through wider reach across geographical location and learners' engagement as passive users. This is also in line with (Ijeh, 2000) who asserts that the use of educational broadcasting for formal education holds some prospects in Nigeria the areas of easy widespread reach; relative low cost and quality education. With educational broadcasting, lessons in formal classroom subjects can be delivered to learners in many different far-apart locations simultaneously (Common Wealth Educational Media Centre for Asia, 2011). The data analysis in Table 11 showed also that all the five items of the questionnaires had mean responses between 3.5 and 3.8 indicating that are challenges in the usage of educational broadcasting for adult literacy. Onabanjo (2000) observe that broadcasting in Nigeria generally suffers lack of properly articulated policies which deprives the country from deriving maximum benefits from the industry for education. Also, the poor electricity supply in the country is a huge challenge for educational broadcasting. Broadcasting as an electronic medium relies heavily on electricity for production transmission and consumption. This means that a society with abysmally poor electricity supply such as Nigeria broadcasting including educational broadcasting to deliver adult literacy or adult education cannot be expected to be hitch-free

Conclusion

The study focused on assessing the place of educational broadcasting in enhancing adult literacy among the illiterate adults in Nigeria. Educational programmes on radio and television are broadcast contents that are produced with the intention of using them to teach specific skills or concepts to the audience. The early use of broadcasting for formal education in Nigeria was reinforced in 1959 when the Western Region administration under late Pa. Obafemi Awolowo who stated categorically that the then newly established first television station in Nigeria (and indeed in Africa), the Western Nigeria Television (WNT), Ibadan would be used for formal education (Ijeh, 2014). Broadcasting was also employed to deliver formal education in Nigeria in the 1960s and 1970s by the then Nigerian Broadcasting Services (now Radio Nigeria) Ibadan, which produced and transmitted programmes teaching conventional school subjects in the Arts and Science (Oyebode & Sonibare, 2004). Educational broadcasting is a powerful tool for several control that affects the audience in a variety of ways and can be harnessed to accomplish in many purposes. In a nutshell, the power of radio and television when properly deployed to adult literacy can improve learning outcomes because it can make standardized high quality formal

knowledge available to the greatest number of learners with ease, relative low cost and at the convenience of both the learners, teachers and or facilitators

Recommendation

Furtherance to the conclusion and the findings of this study, the following recommendations were hereby made:

1. There is need for effective collaboration and synergy among all the stakeholders in education and broadcasting so as to be able to work hand in hand for optimal results.
2. The broadcast industry should be more innovative and creative in designing and producing educational programmes so as to make it more attractive to the target audience and the general public and in other to reduce greater preference of entertainment programmes over educational programmes on radio and television.
3. Adequate funding of educational programmes is an integral part of content creation so as to strengthen the involvement in the delivery towards adult literacy.
4. The Broadcast industry should ensure training and workshops aimed at improving educational programmes that would complement classroom interaction at all levels.
5. The production and packaging of educational broadcast programmes should be in such a way that would accommodate classroom work reflect education curriculum arouse and sustain the attention of the target audience in such a way as to reduce loss of interests.

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