

**PERCEPTION OF STUDENTS OF RADIO DELIVERY OF LECTURE
MATERIALS IN AUCHI POLYTECHNIC, AUCHI, NIGERIA**

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Abstract

The process and the practice of teaching and learning keep undergoing changes in order to maintain pace with developments and innovations in science and technology. Gradually but definitely, the profile and characteristics of the teacher, the learner, learning materials, teaching methodologies and the classroom have changed with significant implications for knowledge and skill acquisition. The need to improve pedagogical richness and increase flexibility of learning has resulted in the use of many non-face-to-face methods of which radio broadcast of lectures is one. The researchers set out to investigate students' perception of radio delivery of lecture materials in Auchi Polytechnic, Auchi, Nigeria. 300 copies of questionnaire specifically designed for the purpose were administered on randomly selected students. Data generated were used to answer four questions that were raised for the research. The outcome showed that students hold a positive perception of the use of radio in learning, believe the medium is sufficient to produce learning, but that the medium is disadvantageous to female gender. Appropriate recommendations were made in line with the research findings.

Key words: flexibility of learning, radio broadcast

Introduction

The drive to bring educational services within the reach of all, thereby democratizing access to education has drawn renewed attention to the power of radio to provide instruction for learners across broad geographical areas, including such areas that lack motorized access.

In Auchi Polytechnic, Auchi, under the tutelage and encouragement of the Commonwealth of Learning (COL), radio broadcast of lectures has been integrated in the repertoire of methods of teaching as part of its Flexible and Blended (FaB) approach to learning. On the surface, it is a widely welcome initiative. But it is necessary to investigate closely what students think of this method of teaching/learning which is clearly a departure from what they know is the norm. Thus, this research is conducted to determine the perception of students to radio delivery of lecture materials.

Literature review

Use of radio in learning

Radio has been used in different formats for educational purposes ever since it became available (Butcher, 2003; Chandar and Sharma, 2003). Although radio technology was first developed during the late 19th century, it became popular in education in the early 20th century.

Radio in education:

- Remains viable medium that has proven educational worth in terms of both pedagogical value and geographical reach.
- Can deliver high quality educational programming to highly diversified audiences across broad, geographical expanses at a low cost (Couch, 1997).
- When used as supplementary learning tool, it benefits weaker students (Tripp & Robby, 1996).
- And can exert greater learning effects than textbooks or teacher.

According to Pennyquick (1993), Interactive Radio Instruction (IRI) has proven to be characterized by highly co-ordinated instructional materials and delivery strategies which accommodate elements of active participation on the part of students.

Interactive Radio Instruction is effective, cost-effective and teachers are enthusiastic. The South African Institute for Distance Education (2004) states expressly that radio remains the key media to which most rural people have access and is effective in providing topical programmes and reaching large numbers of learners rapidly. This assertion is corroborated by Department of International Development (2001:14) as follows:

Our view is that radio is, for the time being, the most cost effective ICT for enhancing the quality of education in the classroom. Radio remains the most widespread and accessible ICT in Africa. In some countries, it has near universal penetration. The cost of producing educational materials for radio are one-tenth of the costs of producing materials for television which has much lower coverage and is more expensive to access.

Radio in learning exists in different nations such as:

- Southern Sudan Interactive Radio Instruction
- Zambia Quality Education Services Through Technology (QUESTT)
- Somalia Interactive Radio Instruction Program
- Farm Radio International
- Technology Tools for Teaching and Training in India
- Distance Education Beyond the Classroom (Haiti)
- Guyana Interactive Radio Instruction Programme.

Language skills, literacy, Mathematics, Life Skills, Science, Social Studies, Civics education and agricultural extension services are some of the subjects in which radio has been actively used.

Three general approaches to the use of radio have been advocated, thus:

1. Direct class teaching, where broadcast programming substitutes for teachers on a temporary basis.
2. School broadcasting, where broadcast programming provides complementary teaching and learning resources not otherwise available.
3. General educational programming over community, national and international stations which provide general and informal educational opportunities.

Jamison and McAnany (1978) identify the following strengths and weaknesses of radio in learning:

Strengths:

- Improved educational quality and relevance
- Lowered per student educational cost.
- Improved access to education, particularly for disadvantaged groups.

Weaknesses:

- Radio instruction lacks interaction
- Instructor feedback and clarification unavailable
- Lesson structure and pace is fixed
- Time for reflection is minimal

Statement of problem

Radio (or audio) broadcast of lecture materials is not new in teaching/learning. Not only has it enjoyed wide acceptance and full integration into the repertoire of teaching-learning but is has also recorded high degree of effectiveness in reaching out to varieties of learners globally. In Auchu Polytechnic, radio broadcast of learning materials is novel, infact, it has only been in use for the second semester running.

It has become necessary, therefore, to find out what the end users of the medium (students) think about the entire process.

Research questions

The study shall attempt to provide answers to the following questions:

1. What is the perception of students of radio delivery of lecture materials in Communication in English, Introductory French and Citizenship Education?
2. What is the perception of students of sufficiency of radio delivery of lecture materials in Communication in English, Introductory French and Citizenship Education?
3. Would radio delivery of lecture materials in Communication in English, Introductory French and Citizenship Education lead to low class attendance by students?
4. Does radio delivery of lecture materials suit male more that female students?

Significance of study

This study will provide useful information on effectiveness of broadcasting lecture materials through radio so that appropriate adjustments can be made to enhance its performance.

Users of radio facility for teaching purposes will also find the outcome of this study useful to make required adjustments to enhance effectiveness of the medium.

Scope of study

The study covers only students' perception of the use of radio to broadcast learning materials at National Diploma level in Languages (Use of English and Introductory French) and Citizenship Education.

Research Methodology

This is a descriptive research to determine the perception of Auchu Polytechnic students of radio broadcast of lecture materials.

Population

Languages and Citizenship Education are three courses taken by all fresh students across the disciplines. The population of this group of students is about 3000, cutting across 28 academic departments in the Schools of Art and Industrial Design, Business Studies, Engineering, Environmental Studies and Information and Communication Technology. 60 respondents were randomly selected from each school, making a total of 300 used in the study.

Data Collection and Analysis

A ten-item questionnaire designed for the purpose was administered on the 300 selected students. In addition, the researcher engaged some of the respondents in face-to-face unstructured interview to obtain more detailed information on research questions 2 and 4.

The simple percentage was used to analyze responses with 60% set as acceptable point to answer each of the questions.

Findings and Discussion

Research question 1:

What is the perception of students of radio delivery of lecture materials in Use of English, French and Citizenship Education?

Table I: Perception of radio delivery of lecture materials

Response	Number	%
Positive	289	96
Negative	11	4
Undecided	-	-
Total	300	100

Source: Field work

Table I above shows that 289 respondents, constituting 96% of the total sample population, express a positive perception of radio delivery of lecture materials in Communication in English, French and Citizenship Education while 11 (or 4%) express negative perception of radio delivery of lecture materials in Communication in English, French and Citizenship Education.

This clearly answers the question on Students' Perception of the medium of learning.

Research question 2:

What is the perception of students of sufficiency of radio delivery of lecture materials in Communication in English, French and Citizenship Education?

Table II: Perception of sufficiency of radio delivery of lecture materials

Response	Number	%
Sufficient	185	62
Insufficient	115	38
Total	300	100

Source: Field work

On research question 2, Table II shows that 185 of respondents (or 62%) believe that radio delivery of lecture materials is sufficient, while 115 (38%) hold a contrary opinion.

Research question 3:

Would radio delivery of lecture materials in Communication in English, French and Citizenship Education lead to poor class attendance by students?

Table III: Radio delivery of lectures and class attendance

Response	Number	%
Yes	51	17
No	201	67
Maybe	30	10
Undecided	18	6
Total	300	100

Source: Field work

Table III shows four categories of responses: 51 (17%) believe that radio delivery of lecture materials could encourage poor attendance; 201 (67%) do not agree, while 30 (10%) are not sure, and 18 respondents or 6% are undecided.

The researchers go with 201 (or 67%) out of 300 respondents sampled that radio delivery of lecture would not cause poor class attendance.

Research question 4:

Does Radio delivery of lecture materials suit male more than female students?

Table IV: Radio delivery of lecture and gender suitability

Response	Number	%
Yes	237	79
No	35	12
Undecided	28	8
Total	300	100

Source: Field work

On whether radio delivery of lecture materials suits male more than female students, as the table above shows, 237 respondents (79%) give an emphatic 'yes', while 35 (12%) disagree, and 28 students are undecided.

Result of interview

The researchers supplemented data gathering process with one-on-one interaction with some of the respondents to get more information on students' positions on questions 2 and 4.

On question 2 in which 115 students (38%) hold the view that radio delivery of lectures is insufficient, their argument is anchored on the fact that:

- i. Apart from the teachers' facial expressions, other non-verbal teacher behaviours contribute to effective teaching and learning.
- ii. The period between radio broadcasts and real time class meeting to answer students' questions has a "cooling" effect on learning. According to them, most times they are unable to express their questions exactly the way they felt when broadcasts were being made.

On question 3, 118 students out of 237 respondents who answered yes to the question that radio delivery of lecture materials suits male students are female students! On further interaction, the girls argue that radio medium of teaching is not gender friendly. They explain that electronic and electrical appliances, apart from kitchen equipment, are constructed with men (and boys) in mind.

When reminded that all modern mobile hand phones have radio application, the ladies insist that the appliance is called "phone", not radio even when they agree that they play music on it!

Conclusion

In this study, an attempt has been made to determine perception of students of Auchi Polytechnic of radio delivery of lecture materials in Communication in (use of) English, Introductory French and Citizenship Education.

Although use of the medium (radio) in teaching is new, the study has given a tentative picture of its perception by students.

Recommendations

Given the findings and conclusion reached, the following suggestions are offered to enhance the use of radio in teaching and learning in Auchi Polytechnic and other institutions that may face the same challenge:

- i. Radio delivery of learning materials is a proven effective medium of learning, especially in Open and Distance learning. Therefore, institutions that have the capacity should deploy the facility to complement face-to-face, classroom teaching/learning.
- ii. Where radio broadcast of lectures is employed, a monitoring system should be put in place to ensure that lectures and students do not form the habit of missing class, believing that broadcasts are sufficient in themselves for effective learning.
- iii. Female students need to be enlightened and encouraged to develop a liking for the radio medium as an exciting source of information, not just for academic purposes, but also for general life awareness.
- iv. Selected students from target class audience should be invited to the studio with the radio lecturer so that their contributions (in terms of questions) can make the process interactive. Listeners may even be encouraged to phone in to a studio mobile number to participate in the programme.

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